

THE APPLICATION OF WESTERN  
MANAGEMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF A MANAGEMENT EDUCATION  
PROGRAMME IN BAHRAIN

---

by

IBRAHIM S. J. ALHASHEMI

MSc, PGCE, FBIM

A thesis submitted to the Council for National Academic  
Awards in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Sponsoring Establishment: Department of Education  
Management  
Sheffield City Polytechnic

Collaborating Establishment: Gulf Polytechnic  
University of Bahrain

May 1987

**PAGE  
MISSING  
IN  
ORIGINAL**

**BEST COPY**

**AVAILABLE**

Poor text in the original  
thesis.

Some text bound close to  
the spine.

Some images distorted

## DEDICATION

TO H E DR ALI MOHAMMED FAKHRO; MENTOR, VISIONARY AND  
FRIEND WHO LEADS BY EXAMPLE AND MORAL STATURE,

AND

TO BAHRAIN; MY BELOVED COUNTRY WHOSE CALL WILL ALWAYS  
BE THE GREATEST DRIVE IN MY LIFE,

AND

TO MY PARENTS, WIFE AND CHILDREN FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND  
PERSEVERENCE.



## A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T

A research undertaking of this magnitude could not possibly have been completed without incurring too many debts.

No statement of gratitude can do justice to the support and encouragement I received from H E Dr Ali Mohamed Fakhro, Minister of Education and Chairman - Board of Trustees, the University of Bahrain. His Excellency's guidance, active interest in my work and inspiring commitment to the finest values of professionalism kept me going no matter how serious the obstacles seemed at times. My indebtedness to Dr Fakhro extends way beyond the scope of this thesis.

Together with H E The Chairman, members of the Gulf Polytechnic Board of Trustees, particularly the Deputy Chairman, Mr Saeed Tabbara, supported me in all ways possible. My profound appreciation for their encouragement and confidence.

My Director of Studies, Professor John Morris, went out of his way to facilitate my research and kindly took considerable time out of his busy schedule to accomodate my difficult work circumstances. Professor Morris's insightful coaching and his perceptive remarks

have contributed immeasurably to this study. Above all, his patience leaves me enduringly grateful to Professor John Morris, scholar and gentleman.

Ms Jenny Mundy, my research supervisor, has been a major influence in my professional life since my M Sc days at Sheffield City Polytechnic. From the first drafts of my research proposal to the finishing touches on the final draft of the thesis Ms Mundy was caringly involved and always ready to help. Many a time she had to rearrange her commitments on short notice to help this "unruly" researcher thousands of miles away. My appreciation for Ms Jenny's assistance can hardly be overstated.

Mr Len Watson, head of the Department of Education Management at Sheffield City Polytechnic, has kindly accepted to serve as another supervisor despite his many other responsibilities. His assistance at various stages in the development of the manuscript was most helpful. I can only convey my sincere thanks for his professional input.

No formal acknowledgement can truly reveal the depth of my gratitude to the many Chief Executive Officers, executives and senior managers, both Bahraini and expatriate, who participated willingly and generously

in many interviews, questionnaires, seminars and meetings conducted as part of this research. There can be little doubt that without the wholehearted support of the Bahrain management community, this thesis would not have been possible; in more ways than one, this research undertaking was as much theirs as mine. Their enthusiasm, inquisitiveness and genuine interest in my work were most encouraging. I can only hope that the final outcome warrants the long hours they have contributed.

Somehow I seem to have made a way of life out of imposing sacrifices on my family. My wife Fatima and children Suhaila, Seena and Sadiqa had to put up with my protracted failure to attend to their needs first due to my heavy work load, and then the additional load of the thesis. Either one would have, by any standard, amounted to a major ordeal on their part, and they lovingly and cheerfully supported me through both. I can only register my fond admiration.

Last but not least, I wish to register a warm note of appreciation to my colleague and "local" research supervisor, Dr. George Najjar. Many of the thoughts articulated in this thesis emerged during our long hours of discussion. His careful review of the manuscript was also of great help to me.

I should not fail to mention that my deep gratitude to all those who helped in any way does not change the fact that I am alone responsible for any remaining errors of fact or judgement.

## ABSTRACT

Management education and development are recognised as highly problematic in advanced industrial societies that have a relatively long tradition of management theory and practice. Problems of developing managerial competence become all the more acute in non-Western societies that require the transfer of managerial know-how from external, mainly Western sources.

The focus of this thesis is Continuing Management Education as a vehicle for Management Development with special reference to Bahrain as a transitional society. The investigation serves as a context for evaluating the transferability of selected Western Management theories to non-Western environments. Special emphasis is placed on the concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism, following a detailed empirical investigation of the Bahrain management culture at the macro, intermediate and micro levels. A strategy for Continuing Management Education is designed within the broader context of scanning four major management development options available to Bahrain, namely Westernisation, Bahrainisation, Japanisation and Pragmatisation. The latter option is recommended in the light of evidence generated through a collaborative approach involving an



extensive survey of the management community. The strategy is applied to Bahrain through evaluating Gulf Polytechnic's Continuing Management Education Programme (COMEP) against it and identifying areas where specific correctives are needed. An explicit attempt is made to develop some guidelines pertinent to cross-cultural management theory transfer with special reference to such variables as specificity of a particular theory, its level of analysis and its methodological structure. At a parallel level, an effort is made to derive pertinent lessons of experience; both in policy terms and on theoretical grounds, out of the Bahrain case by way of a series of tentative generalizations whose applicability extends beyond Bahrain to the Gulf region, the Middle East and possibly other transitional societies.

The research is based on a processual-developmental qualitative methodology and amounts to a managerial evaluation of a particular body of management theory and practice. This choice was partly influenced by the author's duality of roles as researcher and director of a major institution of higher learning. A future research agenda is also charted out.

## P R E F A C E

This doctoral thesis is in many ways auto-biographical. For the author, it was intended to be a major step in his professional experience; a testimony borne out of the strife and turmoils of a hectic but rewarding career over more than a quarter of a century.

By the mid 1970s, the author had all but completed his "passage" from engineering and technical education to the new frontier (new indeed in Bahrain) of management and management education.

No sooner had that passage started in response to a new call of duty, than the author was struck by the many differences between the two domains. As an engineer, he valued the easy access to Western technology and its "safe" transfer to Bahrain where it was almost invariably put to good use. His hard-acquired technical know-how was precise, structured, culturally neutral, transferable and, most of all non-controversial. Conceptual clarity and operational dexterity went hand in hand. Effects followed from causes and measurement was an unfailing international language. Knowledge was a direct and uncontested way to action.

With such a mind-set it was little wonder that he experienced more than his fair share of frustration during his first few years in the "brave new world" of management. The nebulousness of many of the issues he had to grapple with , the relativistic nature of culture-bound problems and "solutions", as well as the plurality of approaches that added up to a "management theory jungle", all were a far cry from the exacting stipulations so deeply engrained in the mind of an engineer.

There were times when the degree of frustration intensified to a point where the author found himself questioning the wisdom of his move away from the rigour of engineering to the "soft" and open-ended field of management. What further complicated the picture was that management at the time was an infant, one might say embryonic, profession in Bahrain mostly reserved for expatriates with relatively few nationals scattered in different organisations and moulded according to their respective corporate culture(s).

The move of the author, however, from engineering to management was not entirely voluntary. The second half of the 1970s was a period of rapid economic growth in Bahrain and gave the Gulf area its first experience of a boom that surpassed all expectations. Among other



things, this boom which considerably accelerated Bahrain's transformation towards an organisational society, widened the gap between supply and demand for managerial personnel and accentuated the dependency on expatriate expertise. Policy planners in Bahrain realised the dire need for remedial measures that would, at least in the long run, redress the imbalance. With the number of organisations in the country mushrooming and their scope of operations expanding, Bahrain awakened to its serious management gap and rallied to the call for upgrading the professional skills of its managers and multiplying their ranks.

By the early 1980s, the drive to develop national managers and minimize dependency on foreign expertise gained additional momentum. Bahrain, indeed the whole Gulf area, was described as being on the verge of a "management decade" where emphasis would shift from running boom-propelled businesses to building professionally managed organisations.

In that spirit the author who had just returned from the United Kingdom with an M.Sc in education management was commissioned as Director of Gulf Polytechnic, Bahrain's only institution for higher professional education in Management and Engineering. Actually,

Gulf Polytechnic (now part of the University of Bahrain) was in fact a regional organisation sponsored by and catering to the needs of four Gulf countries, namely Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Sultanate of Oman. This regional status gave the author a Gulf-wide perspective that was to serve him well in later years.

At the time when the author assumed his new role as Director of Gulf Polytechnic, the top strategic priority was upgrading the quality and widening the range of management education and training offered by the institution. External, non-degree programmes, which were then in vogue, were to be replaced by new degree and non-degree programmes customised to the needs of Bahrain but strictly in line with international standards. Designing the new programmes started immediately and took the better part of two years.

At a parallel level, one of the author's first challenges on the new job was managing, overnight with no prior preparation, a new government-sponsored scheme known as the 10,000 Plan and designed to qualify as many Bahrainis over a 10-year period to replace expatriates. Many of the trainees were in management-related fields and a programme had to be put

together for them as well.

During his first months on the job he was disheartened to "discover" what he has always known. Bahrain was embarking on a major manpower development project in an area where the choices were so alarmingly varied, the criteria far from obvious and the guidelines were often as problematic as helpful. The cross-cultural transfer of management knowledge and skills was fraught with serious risks of failure and even local needs were never systematically assessed.

This was perhaps the first spark that eventually illuminated the path which led to this research study. Ever since the first step was taken towards formalising a doctoral proposal, the researcher has been undergoing a creative duality in his double role as a researcher and director. The action demands of a manager were not always easy to reconcile with the open-ended inquisitiveness of a researcher. Between 1982 and 1986 this duality of director and researcher generated an inner tension that was behind most of the insights and new ideas experienced by the author. However, this dual role did give him some advantages. While the problem of access to data on management development would have been practically insurmountable to an "ordinary" researcher whose effort might have been

misunderstood or resented by many organisations, the position of this particular researcher gave him unlimited access to key individuals, privileged information and critical events. The director and researcher, however, speak with one voice in this thesis; an act of integration achieved through a confidence of both without a dilution of either. Such integration is perhaps one of the contributions of this thesis as it brought together perspectives not obviously linked and often disconnected. It is imperative to underscore the fact that this thesis is a series of closely related research and management contingencies many of which are owed to the directions provided by the managers themselves as the interactive subjects of the research.

The thesis developed its own momentum often fortuitously; unexpected vistas were opened up and the researcher was pushed into new uncharted territory.

When the author began his research work in 1982 he set out to investigate the role of continuing management education as a vehicle for management development. This interest in the subject began when as Director of Gulf Polytechnic he was commissioned to plan and implement the ambitious management development programme outlined above serving both the public and



private sectors. Learning from the shortcomings of the 10,000 Plan, he wanted the new programme to be based on a solid base of need-assessment. To that end a needs assessment survey which was the first of its kind in the country was administered in Spring 1983. The results of the survey raised as many questions as they answered and confirmed the author's intention to pursue the topic further through a doctoral study. By February 1984, Gulf Polytechnic had completed its analysis of the needs assessment survey results, designed the programme and launched it. However, during that time the author had been actively interacting with Chief Executive Officers and senior managers in the country in an attempt to find out more accurately what their notions of management development were and what they required of continuing management education. The picture that emerged in his mind was far from complete but enough to suggest to him the need to subject the new programme to regular evaluation as the expectations were varied and some indicator of its being on track was needed. Proceeding simultaneously as director and researcher, he heeded the wish of the senior managers he was in contact with and initiated by Fall 1985 a thorough evaluation of the programme by students, faculty and immediate supervisors.

The evaluation process revealed, among other things,

the existence of widely divergent criteria, expectations and goals that the new programme was looked at to satisfy. The difference, further investigations and a series of meetings with Chief Executive Officers confirmed, was mostly due to different organisational climates and internal environments. In reality this process can be traced back to informal origins in a series of discussions as early as 1981. It turned into a formal evaluation by 1985 and eventually gave a series of CEO seminars as documented elsewhere in this thesis.

The illuminating discussions that took place in that seminar opened two new avenues identified by Chief Executive Officers as critical areas. First was the general dissatisfaction with the piecemeal approach to continuing management education and a strong feeling against an incrementalist approach to management development. Secondly, came the "shock" of realising that we do not really know about the Bahraini manager as much as we originally thought we did. What was urgently needed, the seminar consensus urged, was a more systematic approach that would lead to a better understanding of the Bahraini managers.

The result of this recognition was another seminar, originally suggested and strongly supported by

participants in the first. The title of this seminar was "Towards a Strategy for Continuing Management Education in Bahrain" and came as a close sequel to the one on corporate culture.

As to the need for better understanding Bahraini managers, the idea went through successive stages of refinement and eventually materialised in a survey on a scale never before experienced in Bahrain. A series of questionnaires were designed and administered dealing with the Bahraini manager, his self-image, his position in the environment, and his specific constraints and opportunities. With these questionnaires came a structured Chief Executive Officers interview.

Data gathered from the series of questionnaires and the interview pointed out, in a sense unexpectedly, towards three key concepts that were considered by a majority of those surveyed critical to the future of management practice in Bahrain. Such a crucial clue led the author to focus further on these three critical concepts through a special Chief Executive Officers follow-up questionnaire dealing expressly with leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism in Spring 1986.

The Chief Executive Officers follow-up questionnaire in



turn furnished mixed evidence and suggested a fuller measure of the transition the Bahrain management profession is undergoing. The need to pursue many of the issues involved suggested the idea of another Chief Executive Officers seminar addressing the question of the "Bahrain Management Profession in Transition" held in Spring 1986. Among many other things, this new seminar revealed that the Continuing Management Education programme has had a considerable impact on the practice of management in Bahrain. Such an impact, however, had to be further assessed to determine whether or not success has been made in transferring management know-how from the training site to the job context. An impact questionnaire was thus designed and administered.

The point behind reconstructing aspects of the thought process that accompanied the writing of this thesis is to highlight its developmental nature and underscore its dynamic unfolding.

The reader may find the various chronological details difficult to follow and piece together. At the end of the thesis, there is a pull-out sheet meant as a chronology of major developmental steps in the research process.



It is hoped that the final work is dynamic but not disjointed. The thesis is meant to reflect the complexity and transience of the issues addressed, but not at the cost of disjointedness or loss of focus.

As an autobiographical piece of research, this work helped the author catch up with developments that have shaped his life and the lives of many other fellow Bahrainis. A different future is taking shape very rapidly in Bahrain and the Gulf area and it can only be hoped that this effort will contribute, however modestly, to the future prospects of the Bahrain management profession.

# C O N T E N T S

	PAGE
DEDICATION .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	iv
ABSTRACT .....	viii
PREFACE .....	x
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	xxi
CHAPTER ONE - <u>BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY</u> .....	1
BACKGROUND .....	2
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY .....	13
METHODOLOGY .....	15
HIGHLIGHTS, CONTENTS AND CHAPTER PROFILES .....	46
FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES .....	55
CHAPTER TWO - <u>A PERSONAL OVERVIEW OF THE BAHRAIN MANAGEMENT CULTURE</u> .....	57
INTRODUCTION .....	58
THE PROBLEM .....	59
CURRENT SITUATION AND SALIENT FEATURES OF THE MANAGEMENT CULTURES IN THE GULF REGION WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO BAHRAIN .....	65
THE BAHRAIN MANAGEMENT CULTURE .....	76
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION .....	104
FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES .....	107

<b>CHAPTER THREE -</b>	<u>WIDENING THE PERSPECTIVE: BAHRAIN MANAGERS SURVEYED WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE CONCEPTS OF LEADERSHIP, MOTIVATION AND PROFESSIONALISM</u> .....	111
	INTRODUCTION .....	112
	RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS .....	116
	THE CONCEPTS .....	128
	THE FABRIC OF LEADERSHIP IN BAHRAIN .....	136
	MOTIVATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS .....	159
	THE PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE .....	173
	KEY VARIABLES .....	194
	FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES .....	215
<b>CHAPTER FOUR -</b>	<u>MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT FOR BAHRAIN: SCANNING THE OPTIONS</u> .....	223
	INTRODUCTION .....	224
	SALIENT FEATURES .....	228
	MAJOR OPTIONS: .....	249
	1 THE WESTERNISATION OPTION ...	249
	2 THE BAHRAINISATION OPTION ...	254
	3 THE JAPANISATION OPTION .....	264
	4 THE PRAGMATISATION OPTION ...	278
	FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES .....	295
<b>CHAPTER FIVE -</b>	<u>MOVING TOWARDS A COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY FOR CONTINUING MANAGEMENT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN BAHRAIN: THE NEW MANAGERIAL APPROACH</u> .....	303
	THE ANATOMY OF A MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR BAHRAIN .....	306

	ELEMENTS OF STRATEGY .....	331
	FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES .....	352
CHAPTER SIX -	<u>EVALUATING COMEP AGAINST THE STRATEGY</u> .....	354
	OBJECTIVES .....	355
	BACKGROUND TO COMEP .....	357
	EVALUATION: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .....	373
	TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN EVALUATION .....	376
	EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND THE PRESENT STUDY .....	394
	THE COMEP EVALUATION PROCESS ...	395
	PARTICIPANT PROFILE(S) AND EVALUATION RESULTS .....	395
	THE TWO-TIER GRADUATE/ IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR COMEP <i>IMPACT</i> EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE SPRING 1986 .....	414
	FEEDBACK GENERATED THROUGH TIER-2: IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR QUESTIONNAIRE .....	420
	EVALUATION AGAINST STRATEGY ....	426
	FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES .....	442
CHAPTER SEVEN -	<u>THE COMEP KNOWLEDGE BASE: TRANSFERABILITY AND ADAPTATION</u> .....	445
	INTRODUCTION .....	446
	MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS .....	447
	WESTERN LEADERSHIP THEORIES ....	454
	WESTERN MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES ..	460
	IMAGES OF MANAGERIAL PROFESSIONALISM .....	467

	MANAGERIAL PROFESSIONALISM IN BAHRAIN: CAVEAT EMPTOR .....	472
	BEYOND TRANSFER: THE CHALLENGE OF ASSIMILATION .....	483
	CONCLUDING REMARKS .....	493
	FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES .....	500
CHAPTER EIGHT -	<u>REFLECTIONS ON THE BAHRAIN EXPERIENCE: MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT REVISITED</u> .....	507
	SOME KEY OBSERVATIONS .....	509
POSTSCRIPT: THE WAY FORWARD	.....	526
CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS -	.....	536
BIBLIOGRAPHY -	.....	540
APPENDICES -	VOLUME II ..... A - E1	
	VOLUME III ..... E2 - J	



# **C H A P T E R   O N E**

## **BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

## CHAPTER ONE

### BACKGROUND

The background to this study is the rapid transition Bahrain is undergoing towards becoming an organisational society. Over the last two decades the country has evolved into a major regional centre for business, finance, industry and services, and completed an ambitious infrastructure culminating in a causeway linking Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

Not surprisingly, of course, this massive metamorphosis required considerable manpower resources in a variety of skill areas including management. The lack of such resources locally led to a continuous influx of expatriates whose impact on Bahrain was considerable both socially and professionally. Expatriates, however, were never perceived as a long-term solution to the problem of infrastructure development outpacing manpower resources, and the sentiment for cultivating more local talent in various professional areas has always been very strong.

This sentiment is now an official policy known as Bahrainisation and the management sphere is one of its prime targets, as evidenced in the so-called 10,000 plan and a variety of other government policies

and stipulations. However, accelerated professional preparation is needed if Bahrainis are to join the ranks of management in numbers and gradually replace expatriates. Such preparation has taken a variety of forms including overseas study opportunities, participation in local academic and training programmes, in-house coaching, seminars within organisations and a wide range of management development methods.

Widely acclaimed at the beginning and optimistically perceived as the answer to Bahrain's shortage of managerial personnel, such management education and training outlets were heavily utilised by both public and private employers at a great cost and often with dubious results. However, close to 15 years of invariably disjointed, almost random, approaches to management development in Bahrain have had few visible benefits perhaps. This period also witnessed the emergence of Bahraini managers as a recognised professional group in the country. However, by the early eighties a growing sense of frustration was starting to build up into a conviction that disjointed, incremental and largely unevaluated approaches to management development are inadequate, unlikely to stand the test of cost effectiveness, and as investments in human capital were not producing



acceptable rates of return. Even the celebrated 10,000 plan introduced by the government as a programme for large scale Bahrainisation in key sectors did not manage to overcome these shortcomings.

#### THE 10,000 PLAN

It may not be readily apparent to the reader that all this wealth of information on management development in Bahrain, and rapid succession of research activities geared to it, are very much of a novelty in the country. Such, however, is the truth and it is very important to emphasize that it all began after 1980 when the so-called 10,000 Plan was launched. This plan, while fraught with many problems and short-comings was undoubtedly the beginning of a managerial awakening that has continued to snowball since and in a way, made this research project possible. It is therefore of some importance to put this major first step in perspective.

The realisation of lack of managerial ability caused Bahrain government to consider training as a strategic area linked to producing the kind of managerial talents needed for its continuous development. It was also believed that such an activity should have the governmental support and care which should take place in a planned and controlled way.

During the year 1980, the Cabinet appointed a special committee called 'Social Services Committee' comprising three key ministers - Minister of Education; Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, and Minister of Health. Its mandate was to look into policy issues relevant to the social service provided by the Government and to make recommendation; to the Cabinet.

Among the problems identified by this Social Services Committee was the high percentage of non-national labour force in the country which created a number of problems and in particular a drain on the economy. Analysis of the labour force showed that there were approximately 10,000 jobs in the various sub-professional technical and managerial jobs at all levels occupied by non-Bahrainis.

As a result of these findings, the Social Services Committee made recommendations to the Cabinet to approve a ten-year plan to train approximately 10,000 Bahrainis who were then employed in different sectors of the economy to be upgraded and moved into key jobs presently occupied by non-Bahrainis.

Such a massive operation in manpower development was an excellent idea to provide training opportunities for Bahrainis in the various strategic management related

occupations, but it was unfortunately a hastily conceived programme as far as planning and implementation were concerned.

Much of the work was passed on to Gulf Polytechnic by the Ministry of Labour manpower development section due to pressures for immediate implementation. The hastily assembled programme covered the following areas:

- \* accounting technicians
- \* clerical supervisory
- \* business management
- \* construction technicians
- \* mechanical engineering technicians
- \* electrical engineering technicians
- \* data processing

During the implementation of the above courses, a number of difficulties became apparent. Such difficulties included issues such as:

- \* lack of appropriate staff to teach the courses agreed upon
- \* lack of coordination between the Ministry of Labour manpower development unit, the industrial sector sponsoring applicants and Gulf Polytechnic
- \* poor selection of nominees. No methodology was followed and it was left to the applicant to choose the programme he felt appropriate
- \* lack of suitable teaching materials. The programme was implemented six months before the arrival of



text books

- \* unwillingness on the part of some of the sponsoring bodies to release trainees during working hours
- \* courses offered were of general nature and did not cater to the specific need of the individual
- \* management of the sponsoring bodies were not consulted on the content or the level of courses offered
- \* no follow-up of the trainees were made during or even after completing the courses

As a consequence of the above shortcomings, Gulf Polytechnic suggested a new approach to the 10,000 Plan that would attempt to remedy past difficulties and employ a systematic approach to management development within a framework of Manpower Planning as needed by the Government.

One of the main factors which were taken into consideration right at the planning stages of the new approach was the fact that within the field of management, the elements of education and training were not separated with any degree of rigidity, as they interrelate symbiotically and reinforce each other. It was this awareness that brought the issues of continuing management education to the forefront of Gulf Polytechnic priorities since the very inception of its new Business and Management programmes in October 1982. X

It was essential as far as management development was concerned to start with professional discussions and brainstorming with representatives of leading public and private organisations. The purpose was to develop a comprehensive system of continuing management education and training to serve the needs of Bahrain and the area at all management levels.

As part of this initiative, Gulf Polytechnic was asked to design and launch a new comprehensive programme in continuing management education. Following a planning period of one year, the Polytechnic introduced the Continuing Management Education Programme (COMEP) in February 1984. Since its inception COMEP was based on a management development philosophy markedly different from past practices in Bahrain.

Whereas previous development had been piecemeal COMEP was originally conceived to take account of 3 related levels.

- 1) The management development of individuals (i.e. micro level)
- 2) The development of individual organisations (i.e. the intermediate or corporate level)

### 3) The socio-cultural context of Bahrain (i.e. the macro level)

Clearly individuals would have diverse expectations, aspirations and development needs. Such needs may relate to them as individuals or be related to the kind of organisations (e.g. international or Bahraini) in which they work. Organisations would have their own culture and agenda for change which in turn, would be set within the socio-cultural context of Bahrain.

#### THE ANATOMY OF COMEP

Each of the five training levels within COMEP was made up of six courses totalling 18 credits and leading to a Diploma named after the training level which included:

- 1 Clerical Skills
- 2 Basic Supervision\*
- 3 Middle Management\*
- 4 Advanced Management\*
- 5 Executive Management\*

\* The last four levels are formally linked to full-time programmes.

Each training level above was given a detailed profile that specified its objectives, target participants, programme objectives, admission requirements and courses available, short course descriptions and details of syllabi. Also included was provision for a



series of specialised one to three day workshops dealing with specific subject areas relevant to particular groups of managers, with the intention of upgrading the performance of participant managers to a state-of-the-art level.

Other characteristics of this new approach were:

1. Prior assessment of manpower needs through survey that included major public and private organisations in Bahrain and focused on staff development needs over the following three years. The survey was undertaken jointly with major client organisations.

The survey covered the following areas:

- (a) Distribution of manpower in Bahrain by position level (for 1983), ie, clerical, basic supervision, middle management, advanced management, executive and others.
- (b) Distribution of manpower in Bahrain by functions, ie, office skills, personnel, marketing and sales, finance, computer, production, accounting, administrative support service and others.
- (c) Distribution of Bahraini participants in short management training programmes in Bahrain (1980-1983) by levels and by functions.
- (d) Distribution of Bahraini participants in short training programmes abroad (1980-1983) by position level and by function.

(e) Distribution of Bahraini participants in long-term training programmes abroad (1980-1983) by position level and by function.

(f) Vertical Distribution of Training Needs  
1983-1986  
(ie, levels of Training Needs)

(g) Functional Distribution of Training Needs  
1983-1986  
(ie, functions of Training Needs)

2. Nominations for any of the programmes mentioned earlier go through a series of screening procedures including entrance examinations and a detailed interview by a special committee representing Government, Industry and Gulf Polytechnic.

Courses offered operate on an inter-sectional and inter-organisational basis in the sense of seeking participants from all sectors and various organisations.

It is hoped that this way, the candidates may benefit from each others' experience and develop a deeper sense of perspective.

3. The programme is managed through a Continuing Education Steering Committee which is a joint body representing the Ministry of Labour, Civil Service Bureau and Gulf Polytechnic. The task of the committee is to oversee policy aspects of the programme and function as an overall planning, monitoring and quality control board.



Others involved are:

- \* Gulf Polytechnic Department of Business and Management which houses the programme and provides course instructions in various fields.
  - \* Gulf Polytechnic Industrial Liason Co-ordinator - a newly established office entrusted with co-ordinating Gulf Polytechnic's educational and training activities with client organisations.
4. The scheme has also developed a Performance Appraisal instrument which is intended to measure the job performance of candidates before they undergo training and six months following its Conclusion.
  5. Self assessment guides developed by the Polytechnic are used to sketch out a 'training profile' for each participant. The purpose of it is to allow prospective continuing education candidates to develop their own 'training profile' in the light of selected variables highly relevant to career development.
  6. The scheme also stresses to sponsors the need to appoint specialised preceptors to function as Counsellors, resource persons and quality control monitors for trainees they sponsor. This function of advisor and learning facilitator serve to ensure that trainees are not cut-off from their jobs while

undergoing training. It also helps to follow-up participants on their professional development and to help link their training at the Polytechnic to the requirements of their jobs and their organisations.

Bahrain, by international standards, is a tiny country, with a small population (430,000) and about (30) major companies. It has a clear sense of national identity and a stable government which gives impetus and focus to developments. The small scale of the country makes it possible for close network of relationships to be developed and to allow the kind of research undertaken in this thesis. However, in as much as Bahrain is an Arab country, with a long history and close connections with other Arab countries in the Middle East and particularly Gulf States, sharing many of their concerns, it is possible to view Bahrain, for the purposes of research as representing an example of Arab culture, and to view the research not simply as a country case-study but an illustration of the development of a management development strategy for an Arabic culture in transition.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study should be viewed against the 'background' outlined above. As such, the

following priorities emerge as important guideposts for the investigation:

1. Identifying and analysing major issues involved in management development in Bahrain at the macro (national), intermediate (organisational) and micro (individual) levels.
2. Highlighting choices for and tensions within the management profession in Bahrain at this transitional stage in its evolution, and addressing implications for management development.
3. Suggesting a strategy for continuing management education in Bahrain serving the twin purposes of accelerating management development and reinforcing norms of managerial professionalism. Such a strategy should rest on a thorough understanding of the Bahrain management culture and a clear sense of the nature, direction and pace of the required change.
4. Evaluating the present continuing management education programme at Gulf Polytechnic on grounds of objectives, scope, curriculum, delivery, correctives, impact, etc, to assess it against the required strategy, and suggest steps to rectify the



variance.

5. Examining the transferability of selected Western management ideas and theories to Bahrain. This section of the study is borne out of the fact that any management development strategy in Bahrain will inevitably be guided by a knowledge-base, probably Western and in all cases originating outside Bahrain. Compatibility of such theories with Bahraini realities cannot be taken for granted. Putting Western management ideas to work within the Bahraini environment should yield valuable insights into the cross-cultural transferability of such ideas as well as the Bahraini management environment itself.
6. Improving the effectiveness of management development in Bahrain and strengthening norms of managerial professionalism.
7. Deriving some tentative general observations on management development in the light of Bahrain's experience.

## METHODOLOGY

It should be borne in mind that the approach followed in this thesis is a result of three important



influences. The background of the author cast a visible shadow by way of merging action and learning in the pursuit of improvement in both. Another influence was the nature of the research terrain itself and the constant flux it is undergoing. No less important an influence was the need to develop the discourse in terms of managerial evaluation, broader than a strictly "scientific" treatise and sensitive to varied policy implications. The methodological observations made below should be understood in the light of these three key influences:

1. The biography of the researcher is in itself an important factor. He is approaching the study from the vantage point of being the director of Gulf Polytechnic which is the leading institution of higher management education in Bahrain. Before assuming this role, he served for a period of 25 years at the Ministry of Education. By virtue of this background, he is intimately familiar with most of the problems addressed in the thesis and can approach them with judgement refined and seasoned over the years. It was therefore felt that qualitative tools of analysis will allow the researcher to tap these personal resources more effectively and engage the issues raised with

greater depth.

2. The phenomena under investigation in this study: continuing management education, management development, and the Bahrain management culture are themselves undergoing a very rapid transition. As such they lend themselves to dynamic qualitative analysis more meaningfully than quantitative tools which require "freezing" certain variables for purposes of investigation. That such freezing is hardly feasible under conditions of complex and rapid change is all too evident in Bahrain. Although the research instruments in this study have been painstakingly constructed, it is evident that the research materials involved are difficult to quantify as they span a range of complexity that defies strict measurement.
3. By virtue of his position as director of Gulf Polytechnic, the researcher relates to a distinguished group of chief executives, government undersecretaries and corporate senior managers in a manner which allows him virtually unlimited access to them; a privilege obviously not available to an ordinary researcher. This familiarity has allowed him to arrange with them seminars, round tables discussions, brainstorming sessions, etc to tap

those colleagues' wealth of information to a degree which quantitative tools could not have matched. Interpreting this wealth of information is primarily a qualitative task. The author relates to his materials only partly as a detached researcher. In reality his posture is based on the duality of researcher and director involved in managing a dynamic institution, formulating policies, implementing programmes and monitoring results. The line is not always easy to draw but a conscious attempt is made throughout the work.

4. It is the writer's belief that emphasis on the qualitative approach will help to provide focus on explanation through developing understanding rather than through predictive testing. And an emphasis based on and inductively developed from data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967)<sup>(1)</sup> rather than on a priori deductive theory. Qualitative approaches lend themselves better to the emergence of unanticipated findings and are in many cases broader and more realistic in perspective than purely quantitative tools (Hari Das, 1983).<sup>(2)</sup> As such this will assist to focus on a discovery oriented investigation full of meaning, validity, richness and meaningfulness of data (Legge, 1984).<sup>(3)</sup> The preference for a more holistic



perspective is based on the assumption that the whole is more than the sum of its parts and hence any serious discussion of a phenomenon can happen only if its context (of occurrence) is carefully described and studied.

Within this chain of thought it is felt that a phenomenon such as leadership for example cannot be adequately understood by merely focussing only on a few variables such as the task structure, the leader's personality and the subordinate's goals. Rather, it should be addressed as a complex, situational phenomenon influenced by these variables and many others that are broader and socio-cultural in nature (Rosen, in Barbara Kellerman 1984).<sup>(4)</sup>

Failure to recognise this fact could lead to a naturalistic trap. By way of example, the late sixties and most of the last decade saw a proliferation of surveys and laboratory experiments on several topics in the organisational behaviour area (some of the more popular ones being motivation, leadership, group dynamics and decision making). However, there is a large number of researchers today in the field who question this approach and believe that by the very nature of the



subject, organisational behaviour cannot be adequately studied within neatly arranged compartments in isolated artificial settings, as (Mintzberg 1979)<sup>(5)</sup> noted.

5. In the final analysis, the choice in favour of qualitative research methods was primarily made in the light of the fact that unlike most evaluation research situations, the researcher in this case is himself a key decision maker. In this respect, the researcher was inspired by the recent work of Karen Legge 1984, Michael Patton 1980, Bodgan and Taylor 1975, Downey and Ireland 1979, Mintzberg 1978, and Pettigrew and Bumstead 1980<sup>(6)</sup> pointing the limitations of the positivistic paradigm in evaluation research. Legge's analysis of the crises afflicting positivistic research designs, namely the intricate problems of utilization, verification and accreditation clearly points out the limits of "hypothetico-deductive" research design guided by the positivistic ethos and employing quantitative techniques. Such research designs often force on the researcher a difficult trade-off between methodological purity in positivist terms and relevance to the needs of policy makers. Since the evaluation aspect of this study involves the author in a dual capacity as

researcher-decision maker, there seems to be little doubt that a qualitative-discursive or interpretive approach is more appropriate with the assumption that it will generate unexpected phenomena which can form the basis of new hypothesis (Lundberg, 1976).<sup>(7)</sup> It must be pointed out at this stage that the quantitative approach has not been neglected altogether. In some cases reference has been made to quantitative data for the purpose of enriching, and comparing observations as well as identifying emerging trends. The limits of quantitative analysis are insightfully addressed in the following observation:

"Measuring in real organisational terms means first of all getting out into the field, into real organisations ..... The evidence of our research ..... suggests that we do not yet understand enough about organisations to simulate their functions in the laboratory. It is this inherent complexity and dynamic nature that characterize phenomena such as policy making. Simplification squeezes out the very thing on which the research should focus. The qualitative research designs, on the other hand, permit the researcher to get close to the data, to know well all the individuals involved and observe and record what they do and say."

It is argued that the study of human behaviour in organised settings necessitates not merely the application of the canons of scientific method by researchers, but also an inter-subjective and

transobjective understanding of their data  
(Filstead, 1970).<sup>(8)</sup>

Within this framework, the study centres around a data base comprising the following instruments:

#### A. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS (CEOs) INTERVIEW

(Refer to Appendix A)

This interview was conducted in Spring 1985 by the author. It involved 23 Chief Executives of major public and private organisations in Bahrain. The purpose of the interview was to tap the experiences of a select group of corporate executives and Bahraini government officials at the undersecretary as well as Director levels as to the salient features of the Bahrain management culture, the present state of development of Bahraini managers and their future professional prospects. The interview thus helped to draw a profile of the Bahraini manager from an executive vantage point. This profile is meant to be as comprehensive and well rounded as practically feasible, in order for it to be useful to assessing the status of Bahraini management and its culture.

The interview dealt with issues such as:

- \* professional standing



- \* job expectations, commitment and motivation level
- \* comparison of the competence and productivity of the Bahraini manager to that of his expatriate counterpart
- \* major environmental factors (eg, cultural, social, economic, educational, religious values, concept of time, technological, authority, interpersonal relations, affluence, cost-consciousness) that influence his perceptions and actions
- \* the type of support level (eg, governmental, organisational, etc) and the incentive system available to him
- \* approaches followed in preparing future managers
- \* obstacles or barriers impeding or slowing his development
- \* awareness of major professional trends and developments at international level
- \* major concerns and worries
- \* Bahrain's experience so far with managerial technology transfer

## **B. COMPOSITE PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRES**

(Refer to Appendix B - components I & II)

This is one of the key instruments used in this study to piece together a comprehensive profile of the Bahraini manager in action. Another purpose of these questionnaires was to help Bahraini managers develop critical insight into their present situation and future prospects. As a professional, the modern Bahraini manager is faced with enormous challenges, not the least of which is the need to stay abreast of developments in his field and constantly upgrade his performance.



The set of questionnaires was given to 30 executives in both the public and private organisations. Twenty three responded in time. Given the size of Bahrain, 23 respondents provide a fairly substantial representation of major organisations.

The set of questionnaires comprised two components. Component I dealt with self perception of the Bahraini manager with reference to:

- \* Distribution of functions performed
- \* How critical is the manager's work in the organisation?
- \* His effectiveness in achieving goals or targets
- \* How seriously his role is taken in the organisation
- \* How committed is the organisation to his career development?
- \* How development is facilitated for him
- \* Educational background and training
- \* Career background
- \* Job satisfaction
- \* Methods of preparing managers
- \* Awareness of international management models
- \* Perception of other professions and their social status
- \* Correlation between managerial education and on-the-job performance
- \* The relevance of a technical background to the field of management
- \* How does the manager perceive the role of the expatriate manager?
- \* Applicability of management skills acquired in formal education and training programmes to Bahrain

- \* Involvement in community service
- \* Career path
- \* Satisfaction with organisational incentives

Component II comprised four basic parts, namely:

- \* Interpersonal networking
- \* The manager and his environment
- \* Approaches to decision making
- \* Concept of time and change

The first part 'Interpersonal Networking' dealt with:

- \* Formal and informal methods of getting business done
- \* Friendship ties, family or other means of influence
- \* Manner in which business discussion or a deal is conducted
- \* Loyalty versus efficiency and managerial performance
- \* Management style followed by Bahrainis
- \* Managerial practices of foreign businessmen or managers which can be learnt
- \* Personal traits and characteristics that contributed to the managers success

The second part, 'Manager and his Environment' dealt with:

- \* Incidence of outside consultation in decision making
- \* Role perception of managers by government officials and community
- \* Influence of job on family or community life

- \* Perception of manager's role inside and outside the organisations
- \* Difficulties or obstacles facing Bahraini managers
- \* Ideas, changes or programmes that a manager would want to implement but tradition, values, and customs restrict him

The third part, 'Approach to Decision Making' dealt with:

- \* Styles and methods of decision making
- \* Management of conflicts
- \* Problem solving: situations and methods

The fourth part, 'Concept of Time and Change' dealt with:

- \* Punctuality
- \* The concept of time in terms of planning
- \* Ideas about change and innovation
- \* Attitudes towards women in managerial positions
- \* The managers' time horizon
- \* Attitude towards advanced technology
- \* Independence from family, customs, religion and tradition
- \* Attitudes towards giving the new generation more freedom

Target data obtained through the above four parts covered:

- (a) Management style(s) that seem to be widely practiced in Bahrain
- (b) Highlights of the Bahrain management environment as they influence managerial behaviour
- (c) Patterns of decision-making commonly used in Bahrain
- (d) The professional standing of the Bahraini manager within the organisation and in the community

### **C. FOLLOW-UP CEO QUESTIONNAIRE**

**(Refer to Appendix C)**

This set of questionnaires was conducted in Spring 1986. It was addressed to the representative sample of CEOs and undersecretaries in order to further assess their views on dominant practices in areas of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism. In all these three areas, the aim was to identify the prevailing norms, explore emerging trends and chart out major choices facing Bahraini managers.

Among the issues that this set of questionnaires dealt with are the following:

- \* Leadership norms prevailing in Bahrain
- \* Leadership norms encouraged by organisations in Bahrain
- \* Traditional culture values and the management



profession

- \* Society's expectation of a manager to emphasize efficiency, public relations, employee satisfaction
- \* Management styles preferred by managers
- \* Society's expectation of a manager to demonstrate success
- \* Corporate motivational practices
- \* Motivation strategy as practiced by organisations
- \* Bahraini managers' motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic rewards)
- \* Professional excellence and motivational needs
- \* Manager's knowledge and involvement in the making of decisions
- \* Manager's commitment to self-development
- \* Manager's analytical and problem-solving skills compared with international counterparts
- \* Managerial professionalism
- \* Management development and Bahrainisation of materials
- \* Bahraini management and Japanese examples
- \* Satisfaction of Bahrain's management development needs
- \* Management professionalism
- \* Locally available management development programmes

#### D. MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT NEEDS QUESTIONNAIRE

(Refer to Appendix D)

The surveys on management development needs have been conducted twice. Once in 1983 and then in Spring 1985. Subsequently ~~they~~ have been updated. The attached appendix D presents the survey and analysis which was conducted in 1985 for the purpose of planning 1986 programmes. This questionnaire covered major

organisations of both the private and public sectors, with the purpose of determining present and future management development needs in terms of specialisations and numbers. A related objective was to determine the satisfaction of such organisations with local and international management development programmes they have participated in, and help them become more conscious of their goals in this respect.

Prior to the implementation of the questionnaires a series of meetings with different organisations were held to explain the COMEP programme and the rationale in conducting this survey. The 1985 survey covered 22 major organisations in Bahrain which also included organisations which normally nominate candidates for COMEP.

The instrument designed for this questionnaire was intended to be as comprehensive as possible so as to generate a database that feeds into the planning of management education and training programmes at various levels. Accordingly it was necessary to include items such as:

- \* Distribution of Bahraini employees by level in a selected number of organisations
- \* Distribution of employees by functional areas
- \* Number of employees by level and functional area

who have recently undergone or are now undergoing training in Bahrain

- \* Number of employees by level and functional area who are expected to undergo management training over the next three years
- \* Methods used to determine cost effectiveness of international programmes
- \* Degree of satisfaction of training officers with international programmes for which they sponsored participants
- \* Degree of satisfaction of training officers with Bahrain training programmes for which they sponsored participants
- \* Criteria used by organisations in selecting candidates for management training programmes at all levels and various areas of specialization
- \* Trainee expectations upon completing a training programme
- \* Linkage between management training and career development through specific individual career plan
- \* Motivation of trainee vis-a-vis management training programmes
- \* Variable(s) used by training officers to motivate management trainees
- \* Custom-tailored vis-a-vis mixed programmes
- \* Follow-up procedures and monitoring of the training performance
- \* Expected training programme duration
- \* Preference of organisations as to the type of training to be provided
- \* Duration of programme, its links with higher education
- \* The scheduling prepared by the organisation
- \* Motivation of management trainees
- \* Language of instruction



**E. STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES WITH PARTICIPANTS AND FACULTY IN THE CONTINUING MANAGEMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMME (COMEP) AT GULF POLYTECHNIC**

**(Refer to Appendix E)**

This instrument was designed to provide COMEP evaluation on a continuous basis. It has now been in operation for two years. So far two annual reports have been produced (refer to Appendix E) covering participants who joined the programme since 1983. These evaluation reports cover:

- \* participating organisations
- \* the screening process
- \* English language proficiency
- \* probation
- \* participant profile
- \* performance
- \* attrition
- \* lecture series
- \* lecture and courses/quality of instruction
- \* course lecture evaluations and self-assessment

The evaluation reports also included structured personal interviews with COMEP participants as well as participants' assessment questionnaire. Both included items such as:

- \* Career objectives and previous job held
- \* Attainment of career objectives and COMEP barriers



- \* Job-related skills acquired
- \* Application of skills from COMEP to job
- \* Relevance of subjects covered
- \* Usefulness of English language and communications
- \* Courses relevant and useful to job enrichment
- \* Teaching methods and delivery
- \* Quality of teaching faculty
- \* Weaknesses of COMEP
- \* Organisational recognition of COMEP
- \* Educational background of participants, training programmes attended
- \* Self-assessment
- \* Job elements critical to career development
- \* Degree of satisfaction with COMEP
- \* Comparison of COMEP to others outside Bahrain
- \* Expectation of the impact of COMEP
- \* Aspects of COMEP most and least appealing and expectations of the participants
- \* Comments and suggestions

#### **F. IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR QUESTIONNAIRE**

**(Refer to Appendix F)**

One of the major parts of evaluating COMEP was to interact with the immediate supervisors of participants while the participants were in the process of attending the programme. This questionnaire was conducted in

May, 1985 with the aim to elicit the supervisors assessment of the situation. The process of broad-based feedback ranging from effects to objectives is very essential. Thus, immediate supervisors, were involved in at least three stages of the COMEP. The first stage is related to the "Management Development Needs Questionnaire" (Appendix D) where they were involved in determining the present and future development needs of the organisations. The second stage was this very questionnaire (Appendix F) while the third came after completing the programme (refer to Appendix G, COMEP Impact Questionnaire). This means that the immediate supervisors are involved before nominating participants, during participants' attendance of the programme, and then after their graduation. This questionnaire as can be seen is intended to involve the immediate supervisor at an early stage of the evaluation process. Some of the key issues covered by the questionnaire were:

- \* Job titles of the supervisor and number of subordinates reporting to him
- \* Organisation's human resource plans
- \* Organisational development of career paths for COMEP participants and its relationship to COMEP
- \* Methods used to match training programmes with candidates' needs
- \* Basis for candidate selection to COMEP
- \* Methods used by the organisation to monitor progress

towards career objectives

- \* Job elements critical to participants (candidates)
- \* Job elements critical to participants' development according to COMEP level
- \* COMEP career development impact on participants
- \* Expectations of participants' career development impact on COMEP
- \* Steps taken to transfer participants' COMEP acquired job skills to job performance
- \* Appealing COMEP features
- \* Changes/improvements in participants on-the-job performance since joining COMEP
- \* Comparison of COMEP with similar programmes
- \* Suggestions to COMEP curriculum modifications or improvement
- \* Supervisors' awareness of the importance of identifying certain variables as critical to participant's career motivation: development of certain skills, concepts and specific management expertise

#### **G. COMEP IMPACT QUESTIONNAIRE**

**(Refer to Appendix G)**

This is a two tier instrument intended to assess the impact of COMEP on the Bahraini management community. In June 1985, the first group of COMEP participants who began the programme in Spring 1983-84, graduated. At the end of the following Fall 1985-86 term, the second group who joined COMEP in Fall 1984-85 followed suit. Since June 1985 and February 1986, both groups have had the opportunity to put their COMEP knowledge and skills



to test within their respective organisations. The two-tier report presented in Appendix G is an assessment of COMEP by:

(a) middle and advanced management graduates representing the groups of Spring 1983-84 and Fall 1984-85

(b) the immediate supervisors of these same participants

The participants questionnaire (Tier 1) looks specifically at areas such as:

- \* COMEP curriculum design, planning and implementation
- \* Job transferability of COMEP-acquired skills
- \* Relevance of COMEP material to the Bahrain experience
- \* Success of COMEP as a vehicle towards development of professional managers
- \* Chief organisation support of COMEP

The immediate supervisor questionnaire (Tier 2) covers the following variables:

- \* Organisation's commitment to management development
- \* COMEP objectives
- \* Impact of COMEP on participant performance
- \* Transferability of COMEP-acquired skills
- \* Comparison of COMEP to other training programmes



## H. CEO CORPORATE CULTURE SEMINAR

(Refer to Appendix H)

The first of its kind to be held in Bahrain, this seminar administered by the author in March 1984, brought together leading executives in the country to discuss the emerging theme of corporate culture in Bahrain and seek ways for facilitating corporate cultures more conducive to professionalism. The seminar was chaired by H E Dr Ali Fakhro, Minister of Education, Chairman Board of Trustees of Gulf Polytechnic. Among those present was a group of scholars and chief executives of major organisations in Bahrain. Some of the issues raised and discussed in the seminar included critical management concerns touching on Bahraini organisation, their inner culture, relationship with the environment, management styles, management development and the transfer of management level. Particularly striking were:

- \* Corporate culture and leadership
- \* Management styles and professionalism
- \* The Japanese approach
- \* The Bahraini or Gulf manager and what goes into his making
- \* Internationalisation of business in Bahrain
- \* The lack of manpower resources
- \* Management development and corporate culture
- \* The role of the leader in public and private organisations

- \* Transferability of other styles of management and cultures to Bahrain

## **I. CEO SEMINAR ON STRATEGY FOR CONTINUING MANAGEMENT**

### **EDUCATION IN BAHRAIN (Refer to Appendix I)**

Also organised by the author as the first of its kind in Bahrain, the seminar was conducted in May 1985. The seminar was of great significance to the professional dialogue on goals, strategies and methods of management development and continuing management education in the country.

The seminar programme comprised three sessions. The first session was chaired by H E the Minister of Education and the paper presented entitled 'The Philosophy and Methodology of Continuing Management Education in Bahrain' This paper laid down requirements for a successful continuing management education performance emphasising the four key attributes or criteria it should have. In order of importance those attributes were its being:

- \* Anticipatory - or futuristic
- \* Remedial - or interventionistic to rectify differences
- \* Developmental - geared to the growth needs of managers
- \* Interactive - multi-lateral and undertaken as a joint venture

The paper also pointed out that for this philosophy to become a reality it has to rest on a rigorous, well-defined methodology such as: needs identification at all levels; translation of manpower needs into programme categories; further development of programme categories into a full-fledged curriculum; screening participants; programme delivery; evaluation; and programme auditing.

The second session was chaired by the Governor of the Bahrain Monetary Agency; where two papers were presented and discussed. The first paper entitled 'The Making of the Bahraini Manager in the Public Sector' and it dealt with the authoritarian nature of Arab society and its reflection in managers' attitudes and behaviour. It stated that changes in knowledge, attitude and behaviour of individuals and groups can take time to evolve particularly at the top, and pointed out that middle management may be more adaptable. In identifying the need to be able to deal with people as a vital quality of a successful leader, the paper raised the classic question; are leaders born with leadership characteristics? Or are they made as a result of their environment? Though no answer was provided by the paper, it nevertheless drew distinction between authoritarian and democratic leaders. It also pointed out to the various styles of individuals



reflecting the different needs, social standing and self-fulfilment. This paper which was prepared and presented by a very senior executive in the public (government) sector, drew attention to the difference in roles between a manager in the public sector and a manager in the private sector with implication to their education and training.

The second paper in session two, entitled 'The Making of the Bahraini Manager in the Private Sector', tackled the process of training and development of young managers with particular reference to: selection processes, the kind of on-the-job training mixture, development of skills and guidance from senior management including evaluation of performance throughout their career path. The paper also referred to middle-management as a new concept in Bahrain and its implication in terms of delegation of responsibility. This paper which was prepared and presented by a very prominent Bahraini chief executive concluded by bringing to the attention of participants four areas where he believed progress can be made in developing managers:

- \* More delegation
- \* More conflict management
- \* Better management of time



- \* Developing skills to cope with an ever changing work environment

The third session was chaired by the author. The paper presented by a senior member of the Business and Management Department faculty entitled 'The Continuing Management Education Programme at Gulf Polytechnic'. This paper outlined the salient features of COMEP at Gulf Polytechnic, focussing on the problem of transferring classroom knowledge and skills to the workplace. The paper suggested four ways in which this issue could be tackled:

- \* By joint identification of key strategic problem areas in an organisation
- \* Joint diagnosis of specific problem areas therein
- \* The working out of simulated plans to increase market share and make the company more competitive
- \* By involving managers in brainstorming sessions focussing on particular problems

The paper also referred to the importance of continuous monitoring of COMEP and the way in which the evaluation procedure was constructed at Gulf Polytechnic, the survey of participating organisations, and how COMEP was linked to the full-time courses.

This seminar on Strategy for Continuing Management

Education in Bahrain provided a needed forum for management development in Bahrain. Besides the above mentioned papers, a number of other key issues were raised and discussed in some length. Among these were:

- \* Challenges facing Bahraini managers
- \* The issue of professionalism and the emerging of new management culture
- \* What management and leadership meant to Bahrainis
- \* What motivated Bahrainis, private versus public sector
- \* Leadership styles, and other characteristics and qualities needed for success
- \* The comprehensiveness of COMEP, linkage to objectives, flexibility, and meeting the individuals' needs, internationally recognised, etc
- \* Transferability of Western management philosophy to Bahrain and the need for more research into this field

#### J. CEO SEMINAR ON BAHRAIN MANAGEMENT PROFESSION IN TRANSITION (Refer to Appendix J)

This third in the CEO-seminar series was arranged by the author to examine the priorities, values and world-view of the management profession in Bahrain as it undergoes rapid transition and takes clearer shape. This seminar took place in May, 1986. The seminar

programme comprised two sessions. The first session was chaired by H E the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, and the paper presented entitled 'The Bahraini Management Profession: Problems and Prospects'. Besides the paper presentation by the Head of Business and Management Department at Gulf Polytechnic, there were three panelists all senior Bahrainis with different backgrounds and experience. One of the panelists reflected a business and investment experience, the second was a chief executive of a major national bank, and the third, a general manager of administration and finance of a national oil company. The paper dealt with the concept of 'professionalism' by starting with the distinctive characteristics of a professional association, then addressed implications to the emerging management practice in the country. It also touched on the identity crisis that the management profession is facing, the emergent climate in Bahrain emphasising efficiency, rationality, impersonality and an overriding work ethic. The paper also referred to the Western societies and how the 'management role' has evolved in comparison to Bahrain where management is something of a new-comer particularly in the absence of both professional regulation and binding tradition. It also referred to options available and concluded by suggesting the establishment of a Society or a Management Association to serve as the ultimate quality



control body for this important activity.

The second session was chaired by the Chairman of the Board of Gulf Petrochemicals Industries Company, and the paper presented entitled 'The Management Structure of Bahraini Organisations'. The paper was presented by the author, followed (as in session one) by three panelists with different backgrounds and experience. The first panelist was a very senior executive from the Ministry of Health with medical background; the second was a very senior executive from the Ministry of Education with education and planning background and the third a senior executive from a multi-national Ship Repairing Yard (Dry Dock) with an accounting background. The paper presented touched on the habitat of the various professions, then moved into highlighting the Bahrain society by comparing values and traditional norms and their influence on impersonal, efficiency-bound work place. It also addressed the effect of economic growth, and development on more advanced societies in the West. The paper referred to the term 'transitionalism' as the key characteristic of Bahraini organisations which has resulted in a number of problems including: weak management infrastructures; experimentalism; impressionism; manpower development imbalances and a poor research base. The paper concluded by proposing



to consider setting up a joint management research and development unit to operate on a multi-sector basis throughout Bahrain to provide three major types of services to organisations:

- \* General support information
- \* Specialised 'functional' information
- \* Consulting expertise in specific problem areas

The paper also suggested that Gulf Polytechnic will be prepared to house such an important unit.

Some of the comments, concerns and questions raised by the panelists and participants in both sessions were very vital to the development of management, with particular reference to the concepts of leadership, motivation and professionalism in Bahrain. Such key issues point out to statements and questions such as:

- \* The importance of management profession under the present recessionary conditions
- \* Is there a direct relation between qualification, professionalism, experience and appointment or promotion?
- \* Is there a serious participatory approach to management in Bahrain, or is it bound to remain authoritarian and centralised?
- \* Has the executive or manager sufficient control in our organisations to be able to perform his duties?
- \* Does society attach a high premium to productivity

or is it a question of lip-service and tokensim?

- \* What should be the leadership qualities of our future managers in Bahrain?
- \* How do we evaluate a successful manager?
- \* What criteria should we apply?
- \* What is the effect of technology on our management?
- \* The need to establish research in the area of management and management development

The fact that most of the instruments applied in this research are open-ended with ample room for reflecting on the personal experience of respondents, made it mandatory to emphasise interpretive understanding methodologies particularly in view of the fact that the terrain investigated is still taking shape and exhibiting very rapid change.

## HIGHLIGHTS, CONTENTS AND CHAPTER PROFILES

The following pages outline the development of the thesis:

- Chapter 1 Background, objectives, scope and methodology of the study.
- Chapter 2 The researcher's overview of the Bahrain management culture in transition.
- Chapter 3 Widening the Perspective: Bahrain managers surveyed with special reference to the concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism.
- Chapter 4 Management development for Bahrain: scanning the options.
- Chapter 5 Moving towards a management development strategy.
- Chapter 6 Continuing Management Education Programme (COMEP) evaluation against the strategy.
- Chapter 7 The COMEP knowledge base: transferability and adaptation.
- Chapter 8 Reflections on the Bahrain management development experience: some general observations.

Postscript: The way forward.

## Chapter 2

### The Researcher's Overview of the Bahrain Management

#### Culture in Transition

This opening chapter reflects the author's interpretation of the Bahraini socio-cultural context which constitutes the broad management culture within which managers have to operate and define their role. Bahraini cultural norms, values, leadership patterns, primary and secondary group loyalties, concept of time, change efficiency, interpersonal ties, etc, are explored in the light of the researcher's experience as an active member of and senior manager within this culture. The management profession emerges as an incipient development viewed with increasing confidence as a necessary response to the changing economic environment and struggling for acceptance on equal footing with more established professions.

Thus the purpose of this chapter is to highlight key features and several major influences that affect Bahrain management culture's receptivity to planned change. It is, nevertheless, an observer's account of a management force field undergoing rapid transition and has yet to be brought under careful research scrutiny.



### Chapter 3

#### Widening the Perspective: Bahrain Managers Surveyed with Special Reference to the Concepts of Leadership, Motivation and Managerial Professionalism.

Following the author's account of the Bahraini management culture, an attempt is made in this chapter to view the situation from within as directly experienced by a large group of managers. The themes, tensions, and problems explored in the second chapter from the vantage point of an observer are narrowed down and investigated more specifically in this chapter. Also the experiences of management practitioners in Bahrain are systematically tapped through a series of interviews, questionnaires and CEO seminars. The aim is to develop an integral profile of the Bahraini manager comprising both a self-image and a "significant others" image.

An important outcome of this chapter is establishing in the light of research evidence, the three concepts of Leadership, Motivation and Managerial Professionalism as the main variables around which to structure the discourse at three closely interrelated levels of analysis, namely: macro, intermediate and micro.

## Chapter 4

### Management Development for Bahrain: Scanning the Options.

Examining the inner tensions of the management culture from within reveals in depth the wide differences, and conflicts among managers as to available management development options. Again in the light of research, evidence presented and expressed by different groups of Bahraini managers, four such options are explored and explained, namely: Westernisation, Japanisation, Bahrainisation and Pragmatisation. The discussion that follows points clearly in favour of Pragmatisation the one option preferred by a majority of managers. It is argued that this option is based on dynamic need-assessment and long-range strategic planning offering a degree of problem-solving relevance and flexibility unmatched by any of the other options.

## Chapter 5

### Moving Towards a Management Development Strategy.

Having sketched out the broad features of the Bahrain management culture and developed an inside view of its major tensions and critical choices during the period of transition it is undergoing, and for the diagnosis attempted in chapter three and four to be carried to

its logical conclusion within the selected pragmatic option, there is a need for an integrative strategy to be formulated. Such is the task attempted in the fifth chapter which builds on the fourth and presents a blueprint for a management development strategy in Bahrain. The goal of this strategy would be a methodical implementation of the pragmatic option through fitting a continuing management education model within a management development frame of reference for Bahrain.

In a nutshell, this chapter addresses the need for a long-range strategic plan in the area of continuing management education. It begins by outlining a general format for strategic planning covering such components as goals, action plans, resources, implementation mechanism, feedback and evaluation. It then moves to apply this format to continuing management education as a vehicle for serving the long-term requirements of management development and upgrading of managerial professionalism in Bahrain. For such objectives to be served, continuing management education should aim at producing a manager with leadership qualities and a motivational make-up which allows him to work effectively within the Bahrain culture while simultaneously fulfilling his role as a change agent. Continuing management education should be at once



anticipatory, remedial, developmental and integrated. It also has to be comprehensive, ie, multi-sectoral and multi-level and delivered through a flexible programme resting on a constantly updated data base.

## Chapter 6

### COMEP Evaluation Against the Strategy.

In its first five chapters, this thesis unfolds in terms of first defining its research territory, then beginning the investigation through a detached researcher's look, an involved internal account of the relevant research subjects leading to a choice of a management development option, and a strategic framework for attaining that option. The strategic continuing management education plan suggested in Chapter Five is used as a yardstick against which the Continuing Management Education Programme (COMEP) currently offered by the Gulf Polytechnic is evaluated. This chapter presents a systems model of evaluation with emphasis on the illuminative aspects of the most ambitious management development programme undertaken in Bahrain to determine its consistency with the suggested strategy and compatibility with its major objectives. The programme is evaluated through a multi-instrument strategy covering participants, graduates, immediate supervisors, chief executives,



etc, and the evaluation centres around objectives, structures, contents delivery methods, quality of instruction, relevance to the environment, transfer of skills to job context, and likely long-term effect on professional values. All of this is attempted on the basis of empirical evidence obtained from participants, graduates, their immediate supervisors and course tutors. Loopholes in the programme are identified against the blueprint of Chapter Five and remedial changes recommended.

## Chapter 7

### The COMEP Knowledge Base: Transferability and Adaptation.

This chapter is of great significance because it addresses the conceptual aspect of management development and continuing management education in Bahrain. There can be little doubt that Bahrain's management development and continuing management education efforts are guided by frames of thought, assumptions, theories and generalisations that have not originated in Bahrain. In fact, most of the knowledge base for almost any management development plan or continuing management education programme in Bahrain is bound to be Western, as indeed is the greatest part of management thought in general. This chapter examines

this knowledge base, including assumptions and values that have to be transferred to Bahrain to propel its accelerated thrust into managerial professionalism and to determine whether and to what extent it can be integrated within the Bahrain management culture. Mutual patterns of adjustment and accommodation particularly in the areas of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism are explored and some tentative observations made. Selected theories will be reviewed from the specific vantage point of their transferability to Bahrain as a case example of non-western culture. It is hoped that the exercise will yield some relevant insights into the 'universality' of management development vis-a-vis its culture-bound comparative dimensions.

## Chapter 8

### Reflections on the Bahrain Management Development

#### Experience: Some General Observations.

In a sense this is a sequel to chapter seven that attempts to draw some tentative generalisations from Bahrain's management development experience and its mode of working out patterns of accommodation with Western management theory and practice. Both the cross-cultural applicability of international managerial know-how and intra-cultural changes due to

managerial pressures will be addressed. Some policy recommendations for Bahrain's future approaches to managerial manpower development will be made and, whenever possible, related to the broader Gulf Cooperation Council context.

Postscript: The Way Forward.

A concluding statement addressing the limits of this study in particular and any systematic attempt at investigating management development in the Gulf countries in general. Future research avenues that spring off from this study will be identified and possible guidelines suggested the context of the author's reflection on the research experience.



## FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Glaser, B.G., and Strauss, A.L. (1967) The Discovery Grounded Theory. Chicago: Allen and Arwin.
2. Hari Das, T. (1983) "Qualitative research in organisational behaviour," Journal of Management Studies, 20, 3, pp 301-314.
3. Legge, K. (1984) Evaluating Planned Organisational Change, London: Academic Press Inc. p 125-127.

The dominant paradigm no longer seems so ominous. The 1978 meeting of the Evaluation Research Society devoted substantial programme time to consideration of qualitative methods. Donald Campbell and Lee Cronbach, considered major spokesmen for the dominant paradigm in the past have recently advocated the appropriateness and usefulness of qualitative methods (Cronbach, 1975, Campbell, 1974).

4. Rosen, D. M. (1984) Leadership systems in world cultures. In B. Kellerman, Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives, Englewood Cliff, New Jersey; Prentice-Hall Inc., pp 39-62.
5. Mintzberg, H. (1979) "An emerging strategy of direct research," Administrative Science Quarterly, 24, pp 582-9.
6. Legge, K. (1984) Op cit.

Patton, M.Q. (1980) Qualitative Evaluation Methods Beverly Hills: Sage Publication.

Bodgan, R. and Taylor, S.J. (1975) Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods, New York: Wiley.

Doweney, H.K., and Ireland, R.D. (1979) "Quantitative versus qualitative: Environmental assessment in organisational studies," Administrative Science Quarterly, 24, pp 630-7.

Mintzberg, H. (1978) "Patterns in strategy formulation," Management Science, 24, 934-48.



- Pettigrew, A.M., and Bumstead, D.C. (1980) "Strategies of organisation development in different contexts." In P.A. Clark, J. Guist, and H. Thirry, (eds) Organisational Change and Development in Europe, London: Wiley.
7. Lundberg, C.C. (1976) "Hypothesis creation in organisational behaviour research," Academy of Management Review, 1, pp 5-12.
8. Filstead, W.J. (1970) Qualitative Methodology: Firsthand Involvement with the Social World, Chicago: Markham, p7.

## **C H A P T E R   T W O**

### **A PERSONAL OVERVIEW OF THE BAHRAIN MANAGEMENT CULTURE**

## C H A P T E R   T W O

### INTRODUCTION

Trained and experienced managers are being seen increasingly as a strategic 'resource', critical to the survival and future development of the Arabian Gulf including Bahrain, where growth in employment levels has rapidly outgrown domestic labour supply in all sectors of the economy. Greater efforts are, therefore, required to develop the managerial skills of the local labour force, otherwise the region's economy will continue to be increasingly dependent on foreign labour which, among other things, constitutes a growing drain on the financial and real resources.<sup>(1)</sup>

Bahrain's need for management development is urgent as evidenced by the degree of importance attached to it at the level of national policy. The emerging consensus is that management development should be integrated into the broader socio-economic transformation towards an "organisational society". This perhaps explains the increasing tendency of many Arab leaders to single management out as their most pressing problem, and recognize the need for designing and launching massive management development programmes. At face value, such programmes are expected to produce competent managers who are creative, resourceful and productive,

particularly at a time marked by rapidly diminishing financial resources. A related assumption is that well-planned management education and training would help develop a generation of Bahraini managers with the kind of leadership ability, priorities and competencies that enable them to work effectively within and at the same time help change their environment.

### THE PROBLEM

The success of management education and training in the Gulf area has not always been readily apparent. There are serious questions as to its value and impact on the development process. Some practitioners contend that training has no causal effect on measurable improvement in management performance.<sup>(2)</sup> Those who might in principle agree with this observation, point out that the fault does not lie with the concept of management training or education per se, but rather with methods, materials, and training approaches. The difficulty arises from the fact that it is not easy to formulate an optimal training strategy. To start with, Western management literature, which is largely American, stems from an environment sharply different from Bahrain's, and has branched out into a variety of theories ranging from "classical" to "contingency approach", and other variations on the open systems model.



Not to be overlooked, of course, is the fact that the institutional basis of Western management thought formed gradually over the first half of this century in the context of the accelerating development of an industrial society. It happened as part of the emergence of an "organisation society" with first generation managers reflecting on their practical experiences and formalizing them into a body of knowledge.

The classical beginnings of management thought as reflected in the "Scientific Management" of F. Taylor and the "Administrative Theory" of H. Fayol were part of the scientific spirit which was pervasive at the time and which led to the over-optimistic quest for a "universal science" of management with exact prescriptions whose applicability was not to be diluted by cross-organisational or cross-cultural differences.

Pursuit of the "one best method", POSDCORB, all purpose management principles, etc. flourished during the twenties and thirties. The predominant organisational model at the time was strictly mechanistic and almost entirely based on a closed system approach insensitive to the complexities of organisational interface with the environment. The formal technical requirements of the organisation as an economising entity were assigned

clear priority over any other set of requirements be they individual, group-centred, social or environmental.

Not only was the cross-cultural validity of this frame of mind highly questionable, but it even failed to hold its ground in Western society itself. First signs of failure came with the Human Relations School and the work of Elton Mayo on the Hawthorne experiments. However, Mayo was not bent on negating his classical colleagues but rather on augmenting their work by introducing the concepts of "social man" and "informal organisation". It should be clear, though, that the behavioural chapter in management history was as Western-bound as its predecessor and was not intended to cover special problems of management in a Western society.

It was not until the relatively recent emergence of the integrative systems approach that management theory acquired the capability to treat the organisation as a dynamic information-processing network that operates through corrective feedback coming from the environment; thereby improving its ability to explain organisational behaviour in a variety of environments.

The sensitivity to context characteristic of systems theory becomes more pronounced within the contingency

or situational approach which has now all but replaced the "universalism" of the early phase without always denying the possibility for multi-situational theories. Dynamism, flexibility and cross-cultural coverage continue to be key requirements for general theories of management today.

To be dynamic, cross-cultural adaptation cannot be restricted to specific managerial techniques but should be pursued within the broader context of different assumptions about human nature, the relationships of the individual to the organisation, the nature and limits of the learning process as well as the "mix" of management training programmes and methods necessary for the making of effective managers.

Concern with management programmes mix and delivery methods necessarily leads to the domain of management education; a highly controversial and hotly debated area in Western management circles. The variety of philosophies and approaches notwithstanding, most of the controversy seems to centre around the lack of causal relationship between management education and managerial performance. The problem is often magnified by the lack of clearly defined subject matter and commonly accepted criteria for evaluation.



Without attempting elaborate formal distinctions between management education, management training and management development, it should be pointed out that the first deals with pre-job preparation while the latter two refer to on-the-job self-renewal. All three have to go hand in hand in a transitional society like Bahrain in order to equip managers with technical skills and professional values conducive to managerial professionalism.

Recognition of cross-cultural differences has prompted many management scholars to approach with caution the transferability of Western management theories to other cultures. (Adler 1980; De Nisi et al 1983; Hofstede 1979, 1983, 1984; Miller et al 1971; and Negandhi 1971, 1983).<sup>(3)</sup> Other writers suggest that, to be effective, management education should be provided in a systematic, carefully evaluated fashion (Burgoyne 1975, 1977; Hamblin 1974; Hessling 1966; Easterby-Smith 1980; Hamilton 1976; and Warr et al 1970).<sup>(4)</sup> Various authors also have stressed that management education has to keep pace with, and complement, developments in the general socio-economic transformation of society which a national development programme entails (Ashton 1984; Drucker 1980; Hofstede 1984; Morris 1975; Peters and Waterman 1982; and Ouchi 1981).<sup>(5)</sup> Thus the



whole area of cross-cultural managerial know-how should be handled with due regard to its complexity.

The above discussion was partly intended to underscore the caution with which management development should be tackled. To be sure, simple transplantation is very appealing given the dire need of transitional societies like Bahrain and the promise of reducing the time required to bridge the gap with "organisational societies". However, failed management transplantation attempts in the Gulf region far outnumber the few success stories that may be cited. Most of the time, failure results from trying to transfer "inappropriate" managerial approaches, or not doing the necessary ground work for helping the recipient culture assimilate what is essentially a foreign body.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Bahrain has been more successful in transferring aspects of managerial know-how that are less dependent on cultural sensitivities and behavioural constraints. Various management science applications have found their way into the country and caught on fairly easily. The conceptual/behavioural side of management, however, is far more intricate in a place like Bahrain where norms of professionalism, efficiency and effectiveness might often come in conflict with deeply embedded values.

In the last analysis, the problem that continues to challenge the Bahrain management community is how to carve out an optimal management development strategy when the body of thought that guides such efforts has originated in a different environment and is yet to be successfully assimilated with Bahrain.<sup>(6)</sup>

#### CURRENT SITUATION AND SALIENT FEATURES OF THE MANAGEMENT CULTURES IN THE GULF REGION WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO BAHRAIN

In order for Bahrain to successfully tap the wealth of managerial know-how available in Western and other societies, and selectively incorporate relevant parts of it into its own management development programmes, it is essential to first highlight salient features of the Bahraini environment by way of understanding the new context within which Western know-how will have to be put to effective use. Of special relevance are such variables as: the national work ethic, culturally-sanctioned styles of leadership, motivation, decision making and professionalism.

Bahrain is undoubtedly different with respect to all such variables from the Western social order that gave rise to the various management concepts so far randomly transferred to Bahrain and used in preparing its future managers. Perhaps the difference between East and West vis-a-vis the above elements is better understood now

than before in view of the wave of interest in the Japanese model which serves to illustrate how different cultures follow their own ways toward preparing future managers while at the same time interacting with other cultures to facilitate the emergence of shared frames of reference.

The discovery of oil and the economic boom of the 1970s triggered a process of unprecedented economic expansion, the mushrooming of public and private organisations and created new levels of demand for managerial manpower. Sustaining the massive organisational infrastructure depends on the emergence of a skilled workforce of technicians, competent managers and administrators. The manpower shortage, especially skilled and managerial has led to dependence on expatriate manpower.

The need to recruit expatriate staff has also led to some problems. First of all, the competition for technical and managerial manpower is sharp, and so is the problem of retraining them. Secondly, there is the difficulty of understanding and motivating a multi-national staff with different attitudes, behaviours and life-styles. Moreover, expatriates in the country not only brought along their skills but also their ways of life and values, some of which are



at variance with those subscribed to by the local population. They are esteemed and looked up to; respected and resented; emulated and envied.

The economic boom of the 1970s has also created enormous business opportunities for the nationals. Thus, the Bahraini, while employed at the middle and higher organisational levels, found himself an opportunity to start his own business ventures. The manpower shortage, the governmental restrictions, discouraging non-nationals to own small business firms, and the increased demand for goods and services, all helped to induce the national employee to act as the local representative, the commercial agent, or a provider of the 'legal umbrella' for a foreign business firm. Some managed to engage as partners in local firms, own a small service establishment, or real estate sales and development outfits. These practices may have detrimental effects on organisational morale with implications to management practices in the Gulf region.

The challenge of training and developing managers for both public and private sector responsibilities confronts most Gulf states. As governments increasingly assume responsibility for an ever-broadening array of functions, fundamental problems of professional management arise.



A major consideration is the need for a better understanding of the variety of factors affecting managerial performance in the Gulf area in general and in Bahrain in particular. A major feature throughout the region is the expanded role of government. The result of this is that the range of management skills and competencies required and the amount of management manpower necessary to effectively manage that range are relatively more demanding than many other places and constantly on the rise.

A second major consideration is the broad and complex range of management tasks demanded by the modern organisations, and the difficulties their absence creates for implementing and sustaining ambitious schemes of economic and social development.

Thus, the complexity of the management situation, its historical underpinings, and the range of factors presently affecting it, is something that is not well understood. This is partly a consequence of inadequate research, and partly a byproduct of the teaching of modern management and administration much in the same way and with the same materials as one finds in Europe and the United States.

## WHAT ARE THE MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE PRACTICE OF MANAGEMENT?

As elsewhere, managerial behaviour in the Gulf region is heavily influenced by the social structure, and by values, norms and expectations of people. The manager, however, can also influence the society through his dynamic interaction which often challenges him to perform the role of a change agent. Managers' influence often extends not only to economic and technological changes but also to changes in social values and norms.

What is sometimes overlooked is that deep-rooted values and norms are slow to change, particularly when managers find themselves in an uneasy situation of introducing into their environment up-to-date and scientific methods and adopting them to local modes and life-styles. (Social values, norms and attitudes are known to change at a pace far slower than technology); a fact which has given rise to the term 'cultural lag'.

We can assume that managers in the Gulf region have been conditioned or socialized by common managerial practices and problems and that they are aware of and influenced by a commercial tradition that dates back to many centuries. And they share with each other exposure to modern business conditions through formal

education and/or interaction with other Arab and Western businessmen. The social and business environment in which a manager from the Gulf region lives and works has considerable impact on his attitudes and behaviour. The social structure of the Gulf region has certain distinctive characteristics which dominate managerial thinking and behaviour.

To begin with Arab or national managers share three closely interrelated bases of identity and commonality; history, religion and language.

The Arabs consider their history as a source of pride. The deep impact this history has on the Arabs was tackled by Albert Hourani:

"A full definition (of what is meant by Arab nation) would include also a reference to a historic process: to a certain episode in history in which the Arab played a leading part, which was important not only for them but for the whole world, and in virtue of which they claim to have been something in human history".<sup>(7)</sup>

Moreover, the Gulf states have become more aware of an Arab identity that extends beyond the immediate borders of the Arabian Peninsula. They have been exposed to the conflicting ideologies prevailing in the rest of the Arab world, an exposure that added a new dimension to their lives. These contacts with Western technology



and with Arab politics tended to upset their hitherto tranquil and relatively static lives; it created new problems and raised new questions for which they had to find answers. The simple, direct solutions offered by desert culture were no longer effective for coping with the new complex situations created by the discovery of oil. Irrespective of the division in the Arab world, the aspirations, hopes and dreams of unity persist. A good example is the formation of the Arabian Gulf Cooperation Council with the objectives to effect coordination, integration and interconnection between member states in all fields to achieve eventual unity between them. Other objectives are to deepen and strengthen relations, links and scope of cooperation now prevailing between their people in various fields such as economic and financial affairs, commerce, education, social welfare, health, information, legislation and administrative affairs.<sup>(8)</sup>

As for religion, Islam is a second basis for the feeling of identity and commonality. Islam is not simply a religion, it is a way of life<sup>(9)</sup> to which Gulf states are committed by their constitutions. They all seek to instil into and propagate among the populace the principles of Islam. Religion spells out almost every detail of private and public life and the Shari'a religious law takes precedence in many respects



over the civil law. Islamic teachings and laws cover the relations of man with God and with his fellow man, as well as man's relations towards himself. The duties of man towards the community and those of the community towards man are described and prescribed by Islamic teachings. Even for the non-Moslem expatriate, he is living in an Islamic environment which has been influenced by Islamic traditions for many centuries.

The third basis of identity among the Gulf states is the language which has been highlighted by many scholars to be the pre-eminent factor in the definition of an Arab. Arabic, besides being the official state language and medium of expression in daily life, is considered a key factor of Arab identity.<sup>(10)</sup> Commercial and Government laws are issued in Arabic; and governments are increasingly insistent on the use of Arabic as the medium of negotiations and contracts, whereas a few years ago English would have been sufficient. This adds to the complexities of managerial technology or know-how transfer and creates additional barriers against its acceptance and reasons to view it as a suspect foreign body.

In principle every Gulf state considers itself an integral part of the Arab world - most of them state this goal in their constitution and Bahrain is not different in this respect.

## THE MAKING OF MODERN BAHRAIN

Bahrain is a country in which the way of life has changed considerably. The impetus for change cannot be dissociated from the exploitation of oil with its complex technology and the affluence which it brought to the society. Bahrain's history since the early 1950s may be divided into three different stages: the formative stage in the 1950s, the pre-independence stage in the 1960s and nation-building stage in the 1970s. During the first stage Bahrain witnessed a period of national metamorphosis in which a Bahraini societal infrastructure was formed. Components of that infrastructure included an expanding governmental system and active labour base, an emerging intellegensia, an aggressive media, and a vibrant business class.

In the pre-independence stage of the 1960s, Bahrain began to prepare in earnest for the eventuality of political independence. This occurred simultaneously on several levels: domestic, regional, and international. On the domestic front, the Amir of Bahrain, H. H. Sheikh Isa Bin Sulman Al Khalifa and his advisors began to build and expand the administrative and legal structure of the government in 1961. New departments, which later became ministries, were formed dealing with different services and tasks; education,

information, commerce, finance, internal security, labour, welfare and social services, public services, industry and development.

The nation building stage, which began with independence in 1971, consisted of constructing a national independent political entity on all levels, a national government, a public administration, a cabinet, a chain of public services, and a socio-economic infrastructure. This meant the creation of a need for management expertise on a scale which has been steadily expanding since the early 1970's. In addition, Bahrain began to establish its international personality by seeking and receiving recognition from the League of Arab States and the United Nations and by an exchange of diplomats with other states.

In the early seventies, both the ruling family and the Bahraini elite endeavoured to create an image of an independent country with which the people would begin to identify as citizens. This process of identification was accompanied by specific steps designed to promote citizenship. The future direction of Bahrain as an Arab, Islamic state was defined in the Amir's Declaration of Independence speech.

In addition to the nation building process which the



country set afoot in the early seventies Bahrain made significant economic decisions which helped develop an entrepreneurial, service-orientated economy. These decisions reflected a realization on the part of the government that because of Bahrain's relatively limited oil reserve, economic wealth would have to come through diversification. In order to develop a vigorous service-oriented economy, Bahrain government had to persuade foreign companies to locate in Bahrain. By the end of the seventies Bahrain had succeeded in becoming the business centre of the Gulf.

By the beginning of the 1980s, Bahrain had experienced a decade of independence. The indicators of that independence were varied: a stable government; a bustling economy; a prosperous population; and a progressive society.

In the 1980s, Bahrain finds itself consolidating the gains made in the previous decade. We now see the country playing a significant role in regional integration, a role that contributed to the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council in May 1981. The region's leaders (political, intellectual, and business) are determined to play a serious role in regional stability and security. Nor is there much doubt that a regional perception of the concepts of



security and stability exists and that it differs from the one generally held by outside powers. The Gulf Cooperation Council is an attempt by six homogeneous states to take a collective position on questions of regional security, stability, and economic integration.

In late November 1986 the small island State of Bahrain was joined to mainland Saudi Arabia by a twenty-five kilometre causeway. The project is the latest expression of the close social, political and economic links between the two countries and a further development of the Bahrainis' ideal of their country as an offshore service centre in the Arabian Gulf.

#### THE BAHRAIN MANAGEMENT CULTURE

The concept of "Organisational Climate" has long been accepted as a useful explanatory construct in the literature. Chester Barnard used it in the 1930s to describe the intricate network and organisational beliefs, values and norms that institutions try to have members internalize.<sup>(11)</sup> This process helps in cementing employee membership within the organisation and consequently increasing their acceptance of what Scott and Hart referred to as the "organisational imperative".<sup>(12)</sup>

More recently the literature seems to have acquired

renewed interest in the conventional concept of "organisational climate" under the new label of "corporate culture". This concept seems to have been constantly on the rise since the 1970s. Its appeal is not restricted to Business School academics as it extends into the popular language of management consultants and corporate executives. Variations of usage notwithstanding, the term invariably refers to a corporate ethos, partly designed and partly spontaneous, which bestows meaning and purpose on organisational membership and shapes management practice in specific ways. In brief, a corporate culture is a generally invisible but highly potent bond which ties members together as a cohesive body in the pursuit of institutional goals. It is a powerful socializing agent affecting not only members' perception of the world but their self-image as well. The idea caught on fast in corporate circles as chief executives suddenly became busy reviewing their corporate cultures and engineering changes in new directions more conducive to productivity.

Perhaps the micro concept of corporate culture can be expanded and employed at a macro level as a management culture. In this sense, it would become possible to speak of management culture configurations such as American, Japanese, West European, and Gulf. A

national management culture is, in a sense, a combination of the different corporate cultures operating in a country or region. This view, however, could be simplistic as the management culture itself impacts whatever management practices occur within its boundaries. The relationship of the micro corporate culture and the macro or national management culture is one of mutual accommodation.

A national management culture is in many ways a reflection of the overall general culture. In some cases, particularly Japan, it is a mere extension of the general culture with apparently no visible tension between the two. In other cases, this element of tension can be felt as the emerging management culture starts to challenge some of the more conventional mores of the traditional system. The rift is particularly accentuated by the fact that some cultures are more organisational than others, in the modern sense of the term. The fact that the organisational phenomenon is more deep rooted in Western industrial societies, is hardly surprising. Those societies have had a longer period during which to assimilate the changes resulting from transformations leading to greater dependence on organisations. Part of the transformation toward becoming organisational societies, was going through the necessary adjustments in Western Europe and the



U.S., in individual value systems, family structures, social norms, etc. It can then be said that, in such societies, the management culture gradually came to dominate the general culture and shape its complex fabric.

The developing societies enjoy neither the harmony of Japan nor the long established accommodation of the West. These are still cultures in transition with visible tension between the traditional modes of behaviour, and the recently acquired corporate ethos. They provide striking examples of dualism: cultural, economic, and organisational. Bahrain is a case in point.

In Bahrain, a national management culture is yet to crystalize, although it has been in the making for the past three or four decades. At the micro level, one notices a variety of corporate cultures within the various foreign and local institutions operating in the country. The general picture is one of dynamic transition, fluidity and rapid change. Not having developed enough yet to force a certain degree of accommodation on the conventional culture, the Bahraini management culture continues to be, by and large, constrained by the general culture, and confined to whatever limits of tolerance it sets. This



relationship can be seen in a variety of ways, including: attitude toward work, motivation, time management, decision making, conflict/resolution, employee discipline, etc. In all such cases and many others, the trend so far seems to be one of unilateral accommodation on the part of the newly emerging management - corporate culture(s) to adjust to the dictates of the conventional culture.

Within this constraint the question of managerial knowledge and skill transfer assumes a new dimension altogether. As the issue involves transplantation of managerial know-how cross-culturally, the receptivity of the host culture to the corporate frame of mind embedded in the new technology suddenly becomes a critical factor in deciding success or failure. It is for this reason that the remaining part of this Chapter provides a cursory examination of the interface between the Bahraini conventional culture and the newly emerging managerial frame of mind. In all cases the focus will be on identifying specific spheres of influence where the general culture constrains management practice and in ways not identical to what is normally expected in the West.

This approach seems justified in view of the fact that the study in general focuses on identifying approaches

to the preparation and training of managers in Bahrain, consistent with the culture and capable of operating within it. The other side of the question is examining sources of managerial know-how: theories, concepts, techniques, etc. in their original Western context, and assessing their transferability potential to the Bahraini setting.

### SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Bahrain society is composed of groups historically dominated by Bahraini Arabs, other Arab groups, and Asians. The total population was 358,857 in 1981 - 242,596 Bahrainis, 116,261 non-Bahrainis, and expected to reach a total of 299,000 Bahrainis and 181,000 non-Bahrainis by 1990. The population is growing rapidly at present and is becoming increasingly urbanized. The newly completed Isa and Hamad towns are examples of model housing projects with implications affecting demographic distribution.

The age distribution of the population is imbalanced in favour of the young because of the increased birth rates associated with oil prosperity, rising incomes and improved infant health care. The non-Bahraini population is also imbalanced with almost three times as many males as females and a dominance of imported Asian labour in the twenty-to-forty age group. This

structure places increasing demands on education, provision of welfare services and, in the future, on employment. Despite a high literacy rate there is a shortage of skilled Bahraini labour and a resistance to filling certain menial tasks, but there is a very big labour force moving towards employment age.

According to statistics based on the 1981 census, the number of working Bahraini women has risen from 3.8% of the total workforce in 1971 to 13.3% in 1981. More significantly, however, there were more women employed in professional and technical occupations in 1981 than there were in all occupations in 1971.

Though the government has ensured equal educational opportunities for employment, promotions and pay for Bahraini women, the level of employment remains low among them. One problem is that Bahrain's new affluence has robbed many women of the incentive for financial independence - for example, early marriage as well as the concern for status which accompanies affluence makes a young family feel it has failed if it does not have at least one servant. Thus not only is the country losing one able-bodied worker in the form of a woman who marries and bears children young - her potential place in the labour market is taken by an expatriate - it is also seeing the problem of imported



foreign labour compounded to the tune of some 30,000 servants.

However, the Bahraini executive or manager lives and works in a society whose social structure, with all its diversity, has some distinctive features which have considerable impact on him. As already noted, Bahrain is part of the Arab Middle East and shares many of its characteristics. It is a culture permeated by Islamic beliefs, traditions, and norms of behaviour. It is a culture in which authoritarianism (up to a certain extent), traditions, and the extended family are powerful enough to reflect themselves both in its institutions and the interpersonal relationships of its members. Taboos play a major role as many actions are dichotomized into the permitted and forbidden, into the "shameful" and the acceptable. Perhaps more strikingly it is a male dominated culture where the inferiority of women is taken for granted. Thus the social structure that will be referred to in this study covers patterns of relationships between members of society as these relationships manifest themselves in institutions, groups, norms, mores and roles. It goes without saying that Bahraini managers, for example, live in a society where family and friendship are dominant factors even in the functioning of formal institutions and groups, hence reliance upon family and friendship ties for



getting things done within society and organisations. Thus traditionally, status still depends more upon family than acquired wealth, upon position rather than education, and upon age more than skill or profession. A typical social structure in the Gulf is one in which family and friendship still dominates many spheres of life, and in which primary groups are still far more important than secondary groups.

The society in Bahrain, as elsewhere in the Gulf is formed on the basis of primordial ties, such as family, neighbourhood, friendship, regional and religious affiliation, which are more pervasive and important than affiliation with a political party, for example, or a profession. This implies that an average Bahraini manager relies heavily on highly personalized and informal methods and styles in the management of his organisation. However, members of the young generation realize the fact that some of the experience, attitudes and beliefs which their elders hold are not always reliable or adequate for them in their effort to shape the future. They feel that the alternatives from which they have to choose are more varied and complex than those which their elders faced, and realize that they have to learn new ways and develop new guidelines for dealing with them. Consequently, it can be argued that a Bahraini executive or a manager is viewed as a person

who is at the helm of his organisation which, in turn, is perceived as an open social system embedded in the larger systems of community and society. Viewed from this perspective, one may regard the manager as being both a target and an agent of social influence and change. It is thus implicit that social pressures impinge on the attitudes and behaviour of a typical manager as well as business pressures such as restriction on women, value of time, work attitude, dislike of manual work, individualistic approach to work, and marketing constraints, centralized top-man syndrome, religion, non-business commitments and expectations.

The term social pressure refers here to the expectations, constraints or demands which society places on the individuals. These pressures can be seen as the price of membership which individuals must commit to belong to a social system. Such demands, expectations, and constraints originate from, and are shaped by socio-cultural values, norms and mores which have their roots in a long history of traditions, religion, and popular belief systems. Other pressures from the business and social community include:

- (a) Difficulties in separating business affairs from social or personal life, that is, inability to

compartmentalize business life, social life and personal life.

- (b) Reputation in the community and in particular family reputation which is at stake if one does not conform to the community's norms and expectations.
- (c) The inability to escape the insistence by clients, citizens, suppliers, and government to deal only with the head of the organisation. That is the feeling that only the top man of an organisation can get things done. And the inability to escape from many ceremonial duties such as invitations to social events, meetings, conventions, etc.
- (d) Social visits during working hours at the office, and in many cases without an appointment. This phenomenon is closely related to variables mentioned earlier such as value of time, and the fusion of personal, social and business life.
- (e) High expectations for success. That is pressure from colleagues, supervisors, governmental officials, who expect to succeed in every venture managers undertake.

What is often ignored in the training of managers in



the Gulf is the cultural aspects inherent in Western management know-how. It can be observed that the failure to make appropriate adjustments can result in less than effective output by those who have been exposed to Western management training. The examination of social pressures leads us to the important question of what specific behaviour or role is expected of these managers while focusing on the manager as a target of social influence and control, i.e. his role in the community and an organisational leader as the agent of influence and control.

(a) Role Expectation of the Organisation

Other images notwithstanding, a manager is primarily considered a decision-maker; a leader; a person who is responsible for the profitability and growth of the organisation and various other functions and duties relating to the efficient management of the organisation. In most private businesses managers or chief executives perceive their role as heads of an extended family. In addition to the usual demands for increased wages, better working conditions or promotion, a Bahraini manager often feels obliged to help employees with their family and personal problems.

As for employees, they expect to be treated well by their manager and their organisation. They see a good



manager as someone who is interested and willing to provide care and guidance to their problems, on and off the job. This is closely related to the expectations as seen by the executive, to play a father role, a classical self-fulfilling prophecy where the employee's expectations and behaviour towards the manager reinforce his perception of his role as a father figure.

#### (b) Role Expectation in the Community

The community here refers to the manager's friends, extended family, governmental officials, and business associates. This role expectation in the community refers to expected activities which he feels obligated to carry out. And with each role there is usually a pattern of reciprocal obligations and claims. The kind of reciprocity indicated here implies the give-and-take characteristics in which people are often mutually dependent on one another.

The extended family still plays an important role in spite of the economic development and modernization that has taken place in the Gulf area. This phenomenon is typical of the Arab world. On this issue Prothro and Diab conclude that:

"even though the extended family is not living in one household, it is nevertheless a strong social psychological reality".(13)

The patriarchal family system is still the basis of an Arab society. This can be observed when one Bahraini meets another for the first time: they usually attempt to establish each other's family identity. By contrast in Japan, for example, introductions are made with reference to one's organisation or company. While in the West, on the other hand, it appears that the initial conversation revolves around a person's profession or occupation.

A major social expectation of managers is extending financial assistance to friends and associates who are in difficulty, as well as supporting financially social activities and charitable groups. Managers and executives are expected to use family friendship and position ties to expedite, influence or advance actions in favour of other relatives.

#### (c) Interpersonal Networking

One of the features of the typical Gulf or Bahraini manager or executive is the obvious preference for a person-oriented approach to managerial actions. There seems to be a strong aversion to impersonal relationships even when conducting business. In the Gulf area the use of personal ties and connections is evident in a wide range of activities. This has become an important and necessary means of doing business. It

is assumed that time and effort will be minimized if the manager used his personal ties and connections instead of the formal channels. This is partly due to inefficiency of institutional procedures and the importance of family and friendship ties which are usually more powerful than institutional rules and procedures; and partly to the manager who is under social pressure and is expected to play the intermediary role. By virtue of the position of the manager in the community and in the organisation, he is expected to wield his power to influence the course of events in favour of relatives and friends. This practice can be detrimental to managers who do not have powerful connections as well as to those who do. Though some may argue that having and using personal ties and connections is necessary for conducting business, the question that immediately arises is how do foreign organisations and businessmen fit in this situation? This reinforces the use of the employment of a local agent or middleman where organisations do not have the necessary connections. This situation raises a number of questions centring around the relationships between personal ties, connections and middlemen.

The other aspects of interpersonal relationships is the use of social talk and amenities in conducting



business. It is generally regarded as impolite to start immediately with the business discussion. Reasons given for this phenomenon are getting to know the client/supplier on a person-to-person basis, to evaluate the person, to establish trust, to cement relations, and to break the tension and put the parties involved at ease. The majority of Arab managers be it in the Gulf area or elsewhere, tend to dislike impersonal and transient relationships when conducting business. On the other hand, most businessmen in the West, for instance, regard acquaintance and discussion periods as opportunities in which they try to make their points quickly and efficiently. In the Far East and certain European countries there are reservations against such quick business meetings or what some writers call the hit-and-run school of business behaviour.<sup>(14)</sup>

Western management thinking has been predicated since its inception on certain assumptions that might be very difficult to apply in Bahrain. The first among these assumptions relates to the organisation as an impersonal network of roles, rules and standardized procedures with little room for any personal recognition. Although other Western management theories of the behavioural bent tried to argue the need for a human face in the organisation, their



attempt never quite managed to replace the lingering image of the organisation as a machine geared to the attainment of maximum feasible efficiency.

The theme of impersonality and assignment of priority to the job not the incumbent continues to dominate formal organisational thinking today. This has brought about varied reactions ranging from acceptance and resignation, to ambivalence, rejection and alienation. Theoretical attempts have been under way as early as 1957 (Argyris) to suggest reconciliatory modes of management thinking and practice perhaps culminating in the modern day behavioural approach with its emphasis on organisational development, sensitivity training and T groups.

It is not insignificant to note that such a frame of reference is strange to the highly personalized management culture of Bahrain. As other sections of this Chapter reveal, the Bahraini management culture cannot deviate very far from the general culture whose fabric is woven around primary loyalties of family, kinship, tribe, neighbourhood and personal contacts.

The relevance of this issue to management education and training is obvious. The challenge is to design programmes that prepare future managers for a level of

performance that measures up to international standards but within the cultural constraints of Bahrain.

Another deeply rooted approach that exists in today's Arabian Gulf organisation including Bahrain is the open-door policy. This is part of the tradition stemming from the ruler's or Sheikh's majlis (assembly or visiting hall) where the visitor can request a favour, submit a grievance or pay his respect. Many managers in Bahrain accept the open-door policy as part of their role where they are expected to attend to work-related problems as well as personal problems of their employees. Some managers are trying to discourage this approach with the justification that this will have detrimental effects on the morale and effectiveness of their middle managers who are being bypassed and will set bad examples and precedents for employees; others still view it as a tradition and an integral part of the informal organisational structure. There are also managers who are aware of the inevitable dilemma which faces them when deciding whether or not to break the chain of command and allow employees to bypass their immediate supervisors. Their concern is the loss of valuable time when matters under consideration are urgent as well as the ways in which communication can become distorted when moving up and down the hierarchical levels.

A natural result of the predominance of informal relations with formal provisions in Bahraini organisations is that interpersonal networking often takes precedence over formal organisational structure, which undoubtedly appear to be incompatible with the rationale of the Western formal organisational thinking. An outsider or an expatriate manager not familiar with the local tradition will have difficulty adjusting to a situation where rules, regulations and procedures often have little bearing on the actual behaviour of middle and top level managers. Most young Bahraini managers realize the benefits of formal rules and procedures particularly as their organisation grows in size and complexity. One can argue that a well organised business has a better chance to reach higher levels of effectiveness and productivity. But at the same time they are constantly faced with the overwhelming pressures to apply personal and informal ways and means of getting the job done, both in and out of the organisation. Those who apply pressure and favour keeping to a minimum the formality of interpersonal relations, state that with informality a 'personal' and a 'humane' management approach is more possible. Within such an approach which they seem to value highly, and which is consistent with the image of the organisation as a family unit, loyalty may often receive priority over expertise.



However, from the point of view of most Bahraini managers, both loyalty and efficiency are expected to go hand in hand. Perhaps this is a Bahraini version of the classical dichotomy between employee orientation and the task orientation. Obviously the interpretation is that loyalty emphasises the person more than task; while the term efficiency with its connotation of capability and competence puts more emphasis on the task and the ability to get the job done. Most managers in Bahrain seem to value loyalty over efficiency. Their rationale is that if an employee is loyal, he can always be trained to improve on efficiency. Thus the attitude of loyalty first and efficiency second within the organisation seems to be in line with the larger societal values of group loyalty and paternalism.

#### (d) Approach to Decision Making

The central significance of decision making to management was first identified by Herbert Simon who insisted that the two can only be considered synonymous. As a dynamic process of choice among alternatives, decision making has continued since to occupy management theorists and practitioners alike. Perhaps a fair measure of the importance attached to decision making in the literature is the fact that it cuts across all the major schools and approaches from



classical to modern and from behavioural to quantitative.

Nor does the literature restrict itself to the substance of decision making. Style is also treated at length with due regard to trade-offs and implications affecting both the individual and the organisation. Differences of style range from authoritarian to Laisser Faire and touch on almost every other behavioural variable including communication, leadership, motivation, conflict and control.

Conditions of the Bahraini environment affect both the substance and style of decision making at the corporate level. Dominance of the one-man syndrome and the trend to deal with most organisational matters only at the very top create strong tendencies for centralization. The fact of the matter is that many of the Western decision-making theories do not match the realities of Bahrain where formal decision-making models are hardly if ever used. A more specific account of cultural constraints on decision making in Bahrain is presented below.

What is interesting in most cases of decision making is the emphasis on informality among managers and executives in the Gulf area. This is because they

prefer to use the consultative style. This consultation is usually carried out on a person-to-person basis whereby group meetings are avoided wherever possible. It is part of the culture's expectation that business should be conducted in an intimate and friendly atmosphere. What is important here obviously is the ability and capacity to exert influence and maintain control over actions of others which is also one of the more common definitions of the power concept.

The extent to which a manager or an executive in the Arabian Gulf shares his power of decision making with his subordinates under various conditions is an item which is worth highlighting. It is also significant to note the effects of socio-cultural, economic and political factors on the decision-making process. More specifically, such factors as the prevalence of paternalistic, familial social patterns, the recent economic boom, the manpower shortage, and the authoritarian culture have a concrete impact on how managers make decisions.

Observation of the managers' decision-making profile draws attention to the fact that in Bahrain, for instance, managers rarely ever employ one decision-making style irrespective of the type and

nature of the decision. It seems that they vary their style in accordance with the problem at hand. What seems to be predominantly preferred is consultation involving subordinates more in personnel-related decisions than in higher-level organisational decisions. In other words, managers tend to be less autocratic when dealing with problems related to the employees or their subordinates, and more authoritarian when operating at a strategic level. Moreover, the older the manager is, the more authoritarian he tends to be sharing less of his decision-making powers with his subordinates. One possible explanation could be that older managers, recognizing the Arab respect for age, are not as concerned about their subordinates' acceptance of the decision as their younger counterparts. Besides, the majority of the older managers have no university education and are more likely to rely on and trust experience. As for university degree holders, managerial styles could also vary partly depending on whether the manager has been trained in the West or in an Arab university.

There are also historical roots for consultation in the Arabian peninsula where tribal leaders have practiced consultation for millenia. It is a norm which is still practiced by present-day rulers. For instance, senior members of the ruling family, or the community, are



consulted on matters of importance, but the final decision is left to the leader who may or may not adhere to the advice of his senior men.

Consultation for some managers seems to be an effective human relations technique. It is used to please, to win over and placate persons who might be potential obstacles to one's ideas or actions. It is used to avoid potential conflict between an executive and subordinates and to provide the person being consulted with a face-saving outlet.

There are also strong expectations among senior managers, partners, and even some friends and relatives to be consulted. This is also done to avoid hurting or upsetting certain people. It is as well the practice of many managers to prefer individual consultation with each subordinate thereby, de facto, avoiding majority decisions.

The discussion above raises a very important question of conflict management and approaches towards resolution. It seems that consultation, tolerance for authoritarian behaviour, and avoidance of open confrontation all help to reduce the frequency of conflict that may arise between the manager and subordinates.



A closer examination of these issues would suggest that:

- (a) values and norms necessitate the use of a third party (a mediator) to convey a message or resolve a conflict. Other practices include the use of other indirect methods such as non-verbal communication or even complete avoidance of the issue to thwart open confrontation;
- (b) the frequency and magnitude of opposition and resistance are generally low;
- (c) consultation as indicated earlier is practiced extensively;
- (d) the use of position power, i.e. going ahead with a decision where manager favours and subordinate opposes, and non-decision making when manager opposes, and subordinate favours. The leader uses force to avoid the fear of losing power if conflict is encouraged;
- (e) pleasing the boss and thus avoidance of activities to which he may be sensitive.

Perhaps the above observations on Bahrain are not very far from issues raised in the literature on group

dynamics; a theme frequently addressed by managers, management scholars, social psychologists, industrial psychologists, etc. who joined efforts to highlight the informal influences affecting employee self-perception, morale, loyalty and consequently organisational health.

(e) Concept of Time

One of the difficulties facing most managers in the Gulf area, and Bahrain is no exception, is the lack of appreciation towards time shown by the people with whom they come in contact. Though most managers and executives would claim that they value time highly, it is observed that such responses are only nominal and formalistic as they are not necessarily indicative of actual behaviour.

One of the difficulties with time management is that there are other competing factors which often take precedence over the efficient use of time. For example, is it feasible at certain levels and in dealing with certain people to say no? Can the manager shorten a guest's visit in a country where norms of hospitality require politeness and maximum attention? How could an executive build personal ties, contacts and friendship without devoting sufficient non-productive hours to such matters?

Some of the reasons which inhibit appropriate utilisation of time include: a range of social pressures and constraints, social visits at the office, the top-man syndrome; inadequacy of the organisational infrastructure, poor communication, human resources constraints, public sector bureaucracy, poor delegation, and the manager's employee-oriented interpersonal style.

(f) Attitudes Towards Change

Change has been overwhelming in the Gulf states fuelled by the rapid increase in wealth, and transformations in the infrastructure but with a slower change in institutions and values. That is to say, industrialization and modernization are more or less superimposed on the same traditional, socio-cultural system. Such a process is bound to create some tension between the old and the new. This tension, however, is contained and kept short of incompatibility. Of course, no suggestion is made that the evolutionary path to modernization would inevitably lead to a Western type of modernity. It has been argued by some writers that the modern and traditional can and do co-exist in what is called the 'prismatic society'; a society no longer totally traditional but not Western either. Others have shown that tradition and modernity can be mutually reinforcing rather than conflicting.



Shaker in a case study of Saudi Arabia concludes that:

"modernisation does not necessarily entail destruction of traditional structures, but rather it allows for wide margins of co-existence between traditional and modern forms."(15)

It is perhaps along such lines that many governments of the Arabian Gulf states would like to see their countries achieve economic growth and modernization without jeopardizing the Arab culture and the traditions of Islam.

A major question to ponder is the specific mix of the traditional and the modern at different stages in the transition process. While environmental forces will mostly determine the nature of such "mix", the role of management in this process must not be understated. One can certainly argue that a manager is still in a position to influence the composition and the ingredients which make up the balance of the modern and the traditional. The manager is in a position to introduce change to society particularly through his professional outlook. The tensions caused by transition may well be internalized as opposing emotional attitudes towards the same object, or the simultaneous operation in the same mind of two sentiments pushing in different directions.

Perhaps some of the characteristics that managers in



the Gulf region would like to see practised by their people are strong work ethic, discipline; productivity; better time management; accuracy and precision; technical know-how and competence.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the preceding pages an attempt was made to sketch out a profile of a Bahraini manager against the changing background and an environment in transition. Three levels of analysis were pursued, namely: cultural, organisational and inter-personal.

Secondly, it was pointed out how socio-cultural values operating through the social structure, institutions, groups roles and social networks influence the attitude of managers.

Thirdly, we have also tried to underscore the role and the importance of a manager as a leader and as a change agent critical to the survival and future development of the country. This role calls for devising and launching appropriate management development programmes.

For the past few years, business and management schools, management research centres and academics have been engaged in a debate over the extent to which the Western frame of reference, managerial know-how and

practices are transferable to other cultures in transition.

The debate centres mainly around questions and issues which were identified at the outset of this Chapter, namely, the fluid nature of management development caused by the "jungle" of Western management theories and the transitional, almost elusive, quality of the Bahrain management environment. A more specific side of the same question touches on the means and vehicles for accelerating the transferability of managerial know-how from external, mainly Western, sources to Bahrain.

The need for a concerted effort towards management development in Bahrain emerges as the central feature of this Chapter. However, such development is too complex and problematic to be handled unilaterally. A clearer and more representative picture is called for. Invariably, the priorities, problems, means, constraints and promises of management development in Bahrain are most closely felt and experienced by the managers themselves. While, to the outside observer, the Bahrain management culture at the macro level, and as it filters down to the organisational level, is a set of remote abstractions, to the managers themselves it is a living reality they have to come to terms with

on a daily basis. It is significant to remember that what seemed far removed and speculative to the eyes of an outside observer, suddenly assumes a new urgency when approached from the vantage point of the managers themselves. The issues suddenly start to involve practical or operational considerations like efficiency, productivity, problem-solving expertise, etc. In view of this key observation, there seems to be a clear need for exploring the Bahrain management culture internally as it is experienced by managers themselves. After all, their observations and feed-back represent the ultimate cutting edge for any future management development steps that might be recommended. To that end, we now turn to Chapter Three and the direct testimonies of managers as sampled through a variety of research instruments mostly of the qualitative type.



## FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

1. World Bank Report 1979

Bahrain has recently established a Cabinet Committee on Strategic Choices including managerial manpower.

2. Mangham, I. L., and Silver, M. S.(1986). Management training: context and practice. A pilot survey commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council and the Department of Trade and Industry. School of Management, University of Bath.

3. Adler, N.J. (1980a) "Cultural synergy: The management of cross-cultural organisations." In W. W. Burke and L.D. Goodstein (eds) Trends and Issues in OD: Current Theory and Practice San Diego: University Associates.

Adler, N.J. (1980b) "Re-entry: Managing cross-cultural transitions." Paper presented at the Academy of International Business Meetings, New Orleans, October 25.

De Nisi et al (1983) "Management in transition: A study of management style in Saudi Arabia." Academy of Management Meeting, Dallas.

Hofstede, G. (1984) Cultural Consequences: International Differences in Work Related Values. Beverly Hills: Sage, .

Hofstede, G. (1983) "Motivation, leadership and organisation: Do American theories apply abroad?" Organization Dynamics, 9: pp 42-63.

Hofstede, G. (1979) "Value systems in forty countries: Interpretation, validation and consequences for theory." In L. H. Eckensberger, W.J. Lonner, and Y. H. Poortinga (eds) Cross Cultural Contribution to Psychology Lisse, Neth: Swets and Zeitlinger.

Miller, S.W., and Simonetti, J.L. (1971) "Culture and management: Some conceptual considerations," Management International Review, vol II: 6, pp 87-100.



Negandhi, A.R., and Parasad, S.B. (1971) Comparative Management. New York: Appleton - Century - Crofts.

Negandhi, A.R. (1983) "Cross cultural management research: Trends and future directions." Journal of Internatinal Business Studies, 14: 2, pp 17-28.

4. Burgoyne, J. and Cooper, C.A. (1975) "Evaluation methodology." Journal of Occupational Psychology, vol 48, no 1, pp 53-62.

Burgoyne, J.G. and Singh, R. (1977) "Evaluation of training and education". Journal of European Industrial Training, vol 1, no 1, pp 17-21.

Hamblin, A.C. (1974) Evaluation and Control of Training. McGraw-Hill: Maidenhead.

Hesseling, P. (1966) Strategy of Evaluation Research in the Field of Supervisory and Management Training. Van Gorcum, Assem.

Easterby-Smith, M.P.V. (1980) "The evaluation of management education and development: An overview." Personnel Review, vol 10, pt 2, pp 28-36.

Easterby-Smith, M.P.V. et al (1980) Auditing Management Development. Gower: Aldershot.

Hamilton, D. (1976) Curriculum Evaluation. Shepton Mallett: Open Books.

Warr, P.B., Bird, M.W., and Rackham, N. (1970) Evaluation of Management Training. Gower: Aldershot.

5. Ashton, D. (1984) "Cultural differences: Implications for management development." Management Education and Development, vol 15, pt 1, pp 5-13.

Drucker, P.F. (1980) Managing in Turbulent Times London: Pan Books.

Hofstede, G. (1984) Op. cit.

Morris, J. (1975) "Developing resourceful manager." In B. Taylor and G.L. Lippitt (eds)

Management Development and Training Handbook.  
McGraw-Hill Book: UK.

Peters, T.J. and Waterman, R.H. (1982) In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-run Companies. New York: Harper and Row, Pub Co.

Ouchi, W. (1981) Theory Z: How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

6. For instance many of the more recently developed participative management development have been created in a western culture where debate, vigorous discussions, conflict among peers and with tutors, is both encouraged and an expected feature. Such participatory and democratic approach and processes do not necessarily fit that easily with people from other cultures, where deference to authority may play a more significant role within their society.

For instance, Hofstede's much quoted article 'Why American Motivation Theories Don't Work Abroad', reflects the limitations of theories based on an instrumental view of the organisations' place in society.

7. Hourani, A. (1962) Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798 - 1939, London: Oxford University Press, p 2.
8. Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, pamphlet, p 7.
9. Hitti, P. K. (1971) Islam: A Way of Life, London: Oxford University Press.
10. Jafra, J. I. (1971) "Arab language and culture." In M. Adams, (ed) The Middle East: A Handbook, New York: Praeger.
11. Barnard, C. (1938) The Functions of the Executive, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

12. Scott, W. and Hart, D. (1971) "The moral nature of man in organizations: A comparative analysis" Academy of Management Journal 14, June pp 241-255.
13. Prothro, T. E., and Diab, L. N. (1974) Changing Family Patterns in the Arab East, Beirut, AUB, p 70.
14. Hall, G. T., and Whyte, W., (1960) "Intellectual communication: A guide to men of action," Human Organization, 19, No.1, pp 5-12.
15. Shaker, F.A. (1972) "Modernization of the Developing Nations: The Case Study of Saudi Arabia," Ph.D. thesis, Purdue University, p 383.

## **C H A P T E R   T H R E E**

**WIDENING THE PERSPECTIVE:   BAHRAIN MANAGERS**

**SURVEYED WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE**

**CONCEPTS OF LEADERSHIP, MOTIVATION AND**

**MANAGERIAL PROFESSIONALISM**



## C H A P T E R   T H R E E

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the inner workings of the Bahrain Management Culture. While the second chapter provided an observer's account written from a manager's perspective, this chapter is written from a researcher's perspective with insights gained from exploiting the manager's position. It taps the experiences of managers caught in Bahrain's rapid transition towards an organisational society. It should be reinforced at the outset, therefore, that the third chapter is not a linear extension of the second, designed to corroborate its major findings. It is partly an attempt to capture the diversity and tensions permeating the management profession in Bahrain at this critical juncture in its evolution. The assumption is that the potential impact of management education and training could be increased if it can be based on a better understanding of the techno-cultural framework it is meant to serve. The managers' assessment of their present status and future prospects came in response to two major questionnaires in addition to an interview designed especially for the purpose, as well as a series of seminars conducted at Gulf Polytechnic, University of Bahrain. One-to-one personal contacts

with a large group of senior Bahraini managers were also repeatedly made.

This chapter should be read in the light of four major observations:

(a) It is based on a prolonged and intensive investigation of management problems in Bahrain conducted by the author as part of a life-long interest extending well beyond the limits of this thesis. In a formal sense, this investigation has been under way since 1981 when the author started what was to become the largest single fact-finding operation Bahrain had ever known in the areas of managerial manpower planning at all levels and in various areas of specialisation. He conducted well above a hundred interviews with almost all managers, national and expatriate, of consequence in the country. In addition, about half a dozen questionnaires, many brainstorming sessions, interviews, four major seminars and an equal number of specialised workshops constitute the necessary background without which this Chapter would not have been possible.

(b) Not every bit of information gained through this major research "marathon" is directly utilised in

this Chapter. Nevertheless, previously acquired knowledge of the Bahrain management scene proved invaluable for constructing and administering the interviews and questionnaires around which this Chapter centres. This comes in addition to providing the author with an important sense of orientation that guided his approach and judgment as an investigator. Every effort is made to reproduce as authentically as possible the problems and tensions facing Bahraini managers while guarding against pitfalls of a disjointed narrative with no organic unity or clarity of direction. Managers' feedback appears at critical spots in the Chapter as part of the main discourse revolving around three strategic constructs namely: leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism. The fact that many of the managers cited often sound tentative, and possibly contradictory is in itself a measure of the flux the management profession is undergoing in Bahrain.

- (c) The author cannot escape the fact that he relates to the questions raised and indeed to the entire investigation in a dual capacity. On the one hand, he is a researcher involved in highlighting issues of major relevance to the country with as much detachment and objectivity as he can muster. On



the other hand, he has to perform his role as a director of a major polytechnic heavily relied upon in Bahrain for managerial manpower development and running a wide range of degree and non-degree management programmes. The role of director has proven invaluable to the task as researcher (Karen Legge: 1984) by way of offering a greater degree of closeness to the problems investigated and facilitating access to data otherwise beyond the reach of an "ordinary" investigator.

However, there were times when strict requirements of research came in conflict with the action requirements of a director, but the need for resolving such conflicts has actually triggered much needed creativity and resourcefulness.

(d) In developing this Chapter and as stated in chapter one, a conscious choice was made to emphasise qualitative approaches to research and reporting results and avoid the narrower, and hence more restrictive quantitative tools which often fail to account for large portions of the terrain concerned. Qualitative approaches were found better suited to the background of the author, his intimate first-hand familiarity with the issues raised as well as his executive, decision-making role as director of the leading institution of



higher professional education in Bahrain. Qualitative research methods perhaps rooted in phenomenology and verstehen psychology are heavily utilised in this thesis.

## RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

A number of different instruments have been utilised over a period extending from May 1984 to December 1986 (refer to pull-out sheet at the end of the thesis) to open up, test and extend the observers perception outlined in Chapter Two.

1. The first instrument was entitled 'Chief Executive Officer (CEO's) Interview (see Appendix A).

The impetus for both this tool and the subsequent questionnaire came from informal discussions that the author has had with a number of key Bahraini managers as well as the discussions that took place during the 'CEO Corporate Culture Seminar'. The interview which was conducted during Spring 1985 covered 21 questions directed towards the development of a "Profile of the Bahraini Manager" from an executive vantage point.

The CEO interview raised as many questions as it answered. Perhaps its major contribution was to

call attention to the need for a more in depth account of the Bahraini manager. It was particularly important to piece together managerial self-perception, group dynamics operating in the management community, interface with the environment and management style. In response to this need the Composite Profile Questionnaire (Appendix B) was introduced.

2. The objective of the questionnaire was to supplement the above interview thus putting together a comprehensive profile derived from the experiences of 25 senior Bahraini managers amounting, given the size of the country, to a substantial percentage of the total population of senior managers. This set of questionnaires was completed during the period April to June 1985, and it consisted of two components: Component I dealt with self-perception of the Bahraini manager whereas component II addressed 'interpersonal networking', 'manager and his environment', 'approaches to decision making', and 'concept of time and change'.

The Composite Profile Questionnaire yielded a wealth of information that exceeded the researcher's expectations. Particularly important

was the fact that it pointed out very clearly in the direction of three concepts namely: leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism as strategic variables affecting management practice in Bahrain. It became imperative to seek a clearer picture on how these three concepts operate within Bahrain management culture. To this end, the second CEO questionnaire (Appendix C) was constructed.

3. The CEO Follow-Up Questionnaire (see Appendix C) centred exclusively around the concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism and was addressed to 25 executives running the most important organisations in the country. This came as follow-up on the first structured interview and questionnaires ('Chief Executive Officers Interview' - Appendix A and 'Composite Profile Questionnaire - Appendix B). This questionnaire was also prompted by the seminar on 'Strategy for Continuing Management Education in Bahrain' (Appendix I) which took place in May 1985. The CEO follow-up questionnaire was conducted in May 1986 - which was found to be a very useful and important tool for providing the necessary preparatory work to a subsequent seminar which took place again in May 1986.



As indicated earlier this chapter has drawn on comments, statements, feedback, priorities and reflections made by senior managers and participants of the following seminars conducted at the Gulf Polytechnic and outlined in the introductory chapter under objectives, scope and methodology of the study. The material and analysis in this chapter is thus an accumulation of a series of research activities which have taken place at different times as indicated by their dates.

The Follow-up Questionnaire which centred around leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism alerted the researcher to the fact that each organisation moulds the workings of these variables within its own boundaries. Gulf Polytechnic had already sponsored a CEO seminar on the subject in March 1984. A fresh review of the proceedings in the light of the three concepts of leadership, motivation and professionalism suggested that Corporate Culture can be a potent catalyst in bringing about desirable leadership and motivational practices conducive to managerial professionalism. Although the Corporate Culture seminar was held prior to the CEO follow-up questionnaire, it intermeshed neatly with it



perhaps because many of the participants in both events were the same.

4. 'CEO Corporate Culture Seminar' (see Appendix H) conducted in March 1984. This seminar dealt with the theme of corporate culture by bringing together leading chief executives of the country. The Polytechnic through the seminar provided a forum for discussion, exchange of experiences and a general direction through an exposition of management theories and practices.

The events sponsored up to mid 1985 forced on the author in his dual capacity as director and researcher the issue of addressing the need for a conscious management development strategy in Bahrain. The Strategy Seminar was thus held.

.

5. CEO Seminar on 'Strategy for Continuing Management Education in Bahrain' (see Appendix I). The four papers presented, together with the discussions, were of great significance to the professional dialogue on philosophies, goals, methods, strategies of management development and, particularly, continuing management education in Bahrain.

The strategy seminar revealed, among other things, the loophole created by not having a unified framework for management practice in Bahrain. The need for such a framework led the reseracher to an investigation of the professional status of managers in Bahrain, particularly in so far as they compare to the more established professions. The investigation culminated in the CEO Seminar on the Bahraini Management Profession.

6. CEO Seminar on the 'Bahrain Management Profession in Transition' (see Appendix J). This seminar was conducted in May 1986, a third in the Chief Executive Officer seminar series. The forum provided critical insights, fruitful discussions and brainstorming on priorities, values, leadership styles, motivation patterns and world-view of the management profession in a country undergoing a very rapid transition.

Although clearly stated at an earlier stage (please refer to the introduction), it is of paramount significance to understand the iterative nature of these research instruments. They were at no point in time simultaneously conceived as parts of a master research design or as carefully fitted pieces in a grand research puzzle. Rather they seem to have sprung

up to life incrementally as clearly evidenced in the attached pull-out sheet. If they seem to fit into a kind of chain series it is only by virtue of each scratching the surface perhaps a little deeper than the one before and suggesting new avenues for investigation.

If such a research scheme can be justifiably described as untidy, it may be said in its defense that its major virtue is authenticity to a rapidly changing force field, and supremacy of substantive issues over technicalities pertaining to method and tools of investigation. In the final analysis this seems to be the only feasible approach to a research undertaking that had to be redefined more than once as it unfolded along lines that were often impossible to foresee or predict.

No sooner had the evidence generated in this chapter through the application of the research instruments listed above started to take shape, than it became apparent that the Bahraini managerial mind was centrally occupied with three key issues namely: leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism. Time and again, chief executives and other senior managers made repeated references to one or the other of these issues as a key bottleneck casting a long shadow on the future of management in Bahrain.



Actually, the clear preoccupation of the Bahraini management community with the three major concepts was the reason behind designing and administering the second CEO follow-up Questionnaire devoted exclusively to a more accurate understanding of how leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism were understood and, more importantly, practised by the Bahrain executive group.

Nor were the managers surveyed through the various research instruments unaware that all three key issues transcended the strictly organisational domain. Their insightful responses to questions suggested very clear awareness that leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism rested, of necessity, on beliefs, assumptions, values, norms, expectations, etc that were deeply imbedded in the general culture and reinforced through its subtle but potent network of sanctions, and profoundly inculcated into widely accepted codes of conduct.

Managers surveyed showed equal awareness of the fact that the three constructs of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism permeate organisations from within in so far as they influence the behaviour of individual managers. Whatever impact these constructs have can only be sustained to the extent that it is



internalised by individuals and reflected in their actions.

Partly in order to ensure that due allowance was made to the central importance of these three concepts as seen by managers themselves, it was found useful to organise the research evidence around them by making reference to each as a separate entity to the extremely revealing interrelationships among them.

Leadership is perceived by the executives surveyed as the 'tacit dimension' that enables a manager to take risks, venture into new territory and cope with uncertainty. In a word, leadership is a highly needed managerial quality exhibited by change agents and organisational innovations. Perhaps the strong sense of Bahraini managers of the transition that seems to have swept them partly explains the high premium they place on leadership. It could also be their natural response to expatriate domination and commitment to redress the imbalance as soon as possible.

If leadership is a relational concept, then motivation represents its other side. For the managerial elite in Bahrain to lead effectively it should succeed in activating and channelling the energies of the management community at large. Many senior executives

covered in this survey indicated their belief that motivation in Bahrain cannot be a replica of any other culture and that a thorough understanding of what stimulated Bahraini managers is a fundamental prerequisite for attaining the desired levels of managerial professionalism through accelerated management development.

It was equally striking to see how truly concerned the managers surveyed were with issues of managerial professionalism. Their concern, however, was hardly difficult to understand. They represented, after all, a new kind of expertise that made its advent to Bahrain in the short span of less than two decades and is still struggling for acceptance and recognition. Managerial professionalism is in many ways still subservient to strong vestiges of traditionalism not totally receptive to its requirements and often at odds with them. Under the circumstances it seems natural for senior managers to assert their professional identity while fully acknowledging that their new profession differs in many radical ways from the more established professions of Medicine, Engineering and Law. Management development is seen by them as a vehicle for accelerating the professionalisation of management practice in Bahrain and basing it on a specialised body of knowledge at

once universal and sensitive to the cultural particularities of Bahrain.

It did not take the researcher long to realise that there was much to be gained from centering the inquiry around the related constructs of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism. It soon became evident that through such an approach, he could better understand the inner workings of the Bahrain management dynamics and remain at the same time within the international mainstream of management literature where these very concepts loom large. It was found possible in developing this chapter to make special reference to selected management theories and research findings bearing on management development. Such a framework set the researcher on a promising track that would later yield a rich research agenda linking the transferability of Western management theories to applied programme design for management development in Bahrain.

Once the decision was made to approach the research evidence in terms of the three closely interrelated concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism with each viewed at the macro, intermediate and micro levels, it became necessary to develop more specific indicators for tracing and



understanding the workings of each of them in Bahrain at the three designated levels of analysis.

Again at this stage the managers themselves were very instrumental in suggesting the needed indicators. In the way they approached many of the questions raised in the battery of research instruments to which they were subjected, executives often expressed their thoughts by invoking or referring to specific perceptions. At times they suggested that a particular approach to leadership or motivation was more in line with the general culture in Bahrain (culturally sanctioned), or enjoyed a higher level of acceptance (legitimacy), or was perhaps more compatible with deeply held expectations of people (inherent expectations). They also identified certain modes of behaviour as predominant, likely or unlikely to change at a certain pace in the near future, are of limited or widespread diffusion in the community and subsequently have a minor or major impact.

Working with these indicators and refining them through subsequent stages of the research process, it was possible to develop a matrix that compares each of the three concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism viewed at the macro, intermediate and



micro levels against the same seven key indicators outlined above.

### THE CONCEPTS

It should be evident by now that approaching this Chapter in terms of the three related concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism was not random. These concepts, central to management literature in their own right, have over the years emerged as a central focus for management practice in Bahrain. As such, they have coloured management education and development on the island and came to occupy senior managers as revealed through personal contacts of the author, as well as interviews and questionnaires. If now is the time for modern management practice in the country to bolster its effectiveness it can only achieve that through being at once tradition bound and change-oriented. The three concepts identified represent vivid illustrations of the dynamic interaction between broad environmental forces and emerging sub-cultures that are struggling to gain acceptance. It is generally agreed that the objective of management development is to improve the level of professionalism exhibited by managers; a task which is at once behavioural and technical. Leadership and motivation<sup>(1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,)</sup> are undoubtedly among the most crucial behavioural variables affecting

management development while managerial professionalism is linked with technical and advanced levels of managerial performance. Moreover, these concepts are considered central to the management development process<sup>(7)</sup> which is the immediate focus of this thesis.

### THE EMERGENCE OF LEADERSHIP, MOTIVATION AND MANAGERIAL PROFESSIONALISM

To begin with the World Bank Reports of 1979 and subsequent ones have always emphasised and urged the governments in the Gulf area to make a greater effort to develop the managerial skills of the local labour force. Also important is the increasing tendency of many Arab countries to single management development out as their most pressing problem. Time and again the Gulf states including Bahrain, have stressed the need for massive management development with emphasis on producing competent, creative, resourceful<sup>(8)</sup> and productive managers. It is precisely this kind of issue that heightened interest in customised management development programmes such as COMEP.

A brief discussion of each of the three key concepts: leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism is now in order by way of establishing a framework for

examining the research evidence generated through the various instruments.

### THE THREE CONCEPTS AS UNDERSTOOD BY EXECUTIVES IN BAHRAIN

The proceedings of the seminars reveal the extent to which these three concepts were emphasized. The first CEO seminar took place in March 1984 and dealt with corporate culture in Bahrain (refer to Appendix H). A representative selection of statements relating to these concepts were:

- Page 7 "The personality of the Chief Executive and his managers and their inter-relation was very important, any change had to come from the top."
- Page 7 "The environment here was not conducive to the growth of ideas, to professionalism and therefore was a fundamental issue which should be examined before that of culture."
- Page 8 "The chief executive has a role to play in changing or even creating the climate within the organisation."
- Page 8 "A fundamental priority for us in Bahrain is the need for professional management."
- Page 10 "... to impress on a Bahraini employee the gravity of the situation and to get a positive response to appeals for greater productivity



when the situation everywhere else on the island appeared to be normal; an employee then feels a certain resentment that a kind of work ethic should be imposed which is not in keeping with what is seen around him particularly as his own government constantly seeks to reassure him that all is well. Thus the Bahraini at BAPCO working in a highly competitive international operation cannot reconcile his particular role with everything he sees around him - ..."

Page 12 "I tend to favour the incentive system and feel convinced that such schemes would greatly aid the establishment of the work ethic and a successful corporate culture."

Page 15 "Much more was tolerated, accepted or condoned in a growing organisation, which in a no-growth one would be totally unacceptable. In a no-growth organisation one of the few avenues to promotion was the normal course of attrition, of people retiring when everyone then moved up one step. The acceptance of this situation is new to the Bahraini who is used to rapid promotion through replacement of expatriates in an expanding organisation."

Page 17 "Speaking on the subject of incentives, it should be said that the introduction of certain schemes invariably means a conflict with the general culture and although the desirability of such schemes was recognised as being vital for the development of a sound corporate culture, it would take time to convert resistance to cooperation."



Page 18 "... expectations were being set too high, too soon - students were assuming that the degree obtained was a passport to employment, to automatic promotion ..."

Page 21 "Professions by definitions and the professional spirit cuts across organisational boundaries."

Page 22 "In conclusion, I have two points to make. The first is that I would like to see the seminar enlarged to identify contemporary problems and then secondly to work towards optimisation and professionalism."

The second seminar that took place in May 1985 on Strategy for Continuing Management Education (see Appendix I) again voiced greater concern with the workings of leadership, motivation and professionalism in Bahrain. Some typical statements made in the seminar were:

Page 6 "As an executive using Western-derived management terms and concepts I find that Bahrainis, although appearing to understand, have a different perception of these. May I then ask what motivated a young manager; was it company loyalty, wages and salaries, the ability to participate in decision making? What motivates him, gives him job satisfaction, makes him feel good about himself and therefore creates an environment in which he could be productive? I confess to

my inability to properly identify and quantify these issues."

Page 7 "To be effective, an expatriate executive needs to have an understanding of what management and leadership meant to a Bahraini, and what motivated him."

Page 8 "The Bahraini manager thus has to reconcile both his education and profession with his natural environment and culture and is faced with conflicts."

Page 10 "With regard to motivation, I feel that the appeal should be made to the sense of excellence of the manager, his interest in becoming a professional and his pride in professionalism."

Page 17 "In identifying the need to be able to deal with people as a vital quality of the successful leader, we can no longer avoid a key question; are leaders born with leadership characteristics? (The Trait Theory). Or are they made as a result of their environment and training?"

Page 23 "It has to be accepted that the traditional authoritarian attitude could not be changed overnight but he maintained that by persistence the change could be brought about though it will be gradual and extend over a long period."

Page 24 "... a special factor exists in Bahrain which has an impact on management style and

skill, for example, some subordinates expect to be consulted but not necessarily to have to make a final decision. Joint decision making may not be easy."

Page 28 "In referring to the era of accelerated promotions for Bahraini managers, it should be said that the impression is that unless you become a manager or general manager by the age of 40 then you are a failure. As a result, there is now a bottle-neck of middle-managers whose way is blocked by those in senior positions who are still young. Training programmes producing more young managers should give some thought to this fact ..."

Page 30 "While decision making by consensus was practised in some countries, Japan was a prime example, the traditional attitude in Bahrain was that only the leader should do so."

As to the third CEO Seminar namely: The Bahraini Management Profession in Transition (see Appendix J) - 5 May, 1986. There was even more emphasis on the concept of leadership, motivation and professionalism. Perhaps the most representative view was that of H E the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs where he stated that:

"Production factors have to be directed and managed appropriately in order to yield maximum return. Such is the role of management which is now recognised as a moving force for our collective capacities specially



with properly equipped state-of-the-art expertise. .... Besides the seasoning that comes with experience, managers today have to have professional preparation and technical qualifications as well as personal traits on equal footing with more mature professions. .... Nowadays, part of our different adjustments to the changing economic climate is to place greater emphasis on management as a profession committed to finding creative solutions for the complex problems of attaining efficiency and productivity. As such problems need to prepare future managers with vision and anticipatory approaches to problems in a strict spirit of professional discipline. The next stage of our development will undoubtedly be overshadowed by the increasing awareness of management as a strategic factor affecting socio-economic development and manpower planning, and contributing to the emergence of scientifically minded supervisors entrusted with running our public and private institutions."(9)

The purpose behind listing these typical statements coming from executives in Bahrain was to give a clear indication of the extent to which they are preoccupied with issues of leadership, motivation, and managerial professionalism. What adds to the complexity of the picture, however, is that these concepts are extremely controversial judging by the literature. It can perhaps be argued that the range of divergent opinion voiced by Bahraini managers scan the various polemics easily noticeable in management literature. such correspondence, however, is more natural than conscious as most of the managers surveyed are not necessarily aware of theoretical currents at the international level. The confusion which surrounds them in



management thought filters down to the level of management practice. This makes it imperative to examine them in the dynamic context of the Bahrain management culture.

### THE FABRIC OF LEADERSHIP IN BAHRAIN

At the macro-societal level, established patterns and norms of leadership in Bahrain are primarily patriarchal and its predominant modes are highly informal.<sup>(9)</sup> The man is the head of the family which is still a very strong and cohesive social unit in both its nuclear and extended forms. Leaders' legitimacy is sanctioned by tradition and they extend to followers protection and welfare. Such norms of leadership, deeply embedded in the country's history and culture, have withstood the test of time, the onslaught of modernization and massive transformations in the infrastructure. Naturally, they show little receptivity to change, are widely diffused throughout the socio-cultural fabric and exert a heavy influence on management behaviour.

In discussing the factors that have influenced the leadership fabric in Bahrain, a senior government official in an interview drew out attention to a number of interesting points. He said that:

"Leadership style in Bahrain and the Gulf States is;

- 1 a product of the personality and attributes of the leaders, who expect respect and obedience from their subordinates, and the leader who expects wisdom and brotherly concern.
- 2 a product of the ways in which leaders are selected, mostly for political, social or kinship reasons, rather than for reasons of competence or effectiveness.
- 3 a product of manager's education and training in technical and managerial matters. Many leaders have not been trained for democratic and participative leadership.
- 4 often backed by an implicit, if not explicit, power and force the effects of which may well go beyond organisational boundaries and into the personal lines and general welfare of the employees."

This theme was clearly voiced by a senior Bahraini manager in a recent seminar held at Gulf Polytechnic:

"... a rapid transition has taken place in Arab societies but the authoritarian nature of Arab society may still be reflected in managers' attitudes and behaviour. Changes in knowledge, attitude and behaviour of individuals and groups can take time to evolve particularly at the top of the management tree."(10)

Such influence has also been highlighted by a number of research studies which drew attention to the extent to which Gulf managers, including Bahrain, are at once inspired and constrained by their larger cultural milieu.(11, 12, 13) From a different perspective, for example, management in the Gulf has traditionally been able to neutralise workers' efforts to collectively organise in defence of their interests,

Because of their culturally legitimate power and position in the society, management could depend on the support of the government to induce employees to conform to company or organisation discipline. The culture provides the force which legitimises this managerial role. Without this legitimacy, managers who continuously supported unpopular policies would lose their power over time.<sup>(14)</sup> Direct evidence obtained from managers surveyed in this study fits within the same framework. The near unanimous reaction of respondents indicated their deference to culturally-sanctioned leadership norms which often trickle down to corporate level and condition their own management styles. Such norms are often expressed as expectations, both implicit and explicit, that managers are supposed to satisfy. Foremost among these expectations as experienced by managers are observance of specific interpersonal rituals and mannerisms,<sup>(15)</sup> maintaining an open-door policy where friends, relatives, employees and clients feel free to walk in almost any time and make a claim on the manager's attention. Closely related is the practice of by-passing the chain of command and communicating directly with personnel without involving their immediate supervisors. A majority of the managers covered in this research acknowledged the frequent occurrence of such 'irregularities' or deviations from



formal standards. The rest of the respondents were quick to point out that 'jumping the lines' can never be ruled out in Bahrain. Also fitting into the same category is the practice of circumventing standard operational procedures and resorting to shortcuts in order to get 'results'. Such a practice, of course, stands in stark contrast to formal management theory,<sup>(16)</sup> particularly its bureaucratic origins, and poses a serious challenge to academic management education which is increasingly becoming a major channel for preparing future managers in Bahrain.

A revealing statement by a CEO sheds much light on this issue:

"It is my experience that to a certain extent the very individualistic and tribal attitude still prevailed and chief executives tended to adopt very authoritarian attitude despite all the education and training."<sup>(17)</sup>

The expectations and pressures generated by the broad leadership patterns prevalent in society often force Bahraini managers to assume a patriarchal role themselves although evidence suggests that it is not favoured by a majority among them. The following responses were obtained when our sample of managers covered in the Questionnaires were asked about those pressures they felt most:

- (a) Providing moral & financial support to relatives  
(25%)
- (b) Advising on family affairs (13%)
- (c) Maintaining a steady success record (13%)
- (d) Being accessible & maintaining a favourable image  
(26%)

When asked about employee expectations on the other hand, the following responses emerged:

- (a) Protecting employee interest & being supportive  
(20%)
- (b) Being an effective problem-solver (10%)
- (c) Being fair and equitable (70%)

It is apparent that the Bahraini manager is expected to play the role of advisor and supporter to his family. Employees on the other hand expect the Bahraini manager to be a leader, innovator and a pace setter.

Perhaps in an attempt to reconcile these two sets of expectations, most Bahraini managers resort to human relations techniques to 'please, placate and avoid potential conflicts.'<sup>(18)</sup>

Nearly all the CEOs surveyed agreed to the statement: 'to be successful, the manager should not fail to be protective'. They also believe that the manager in

Bahrain is expected by the society to emphasise public relations and employee satisfaction more than efficiency in the job.

When 26 Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) were approached on the question of leadership in Bahrain, the majority (84%) either strongly agreed or agreed that it tends to be patriarchal and familial. Among the remaining respondents only very few indicated that they tended to disagree, a similar percentage disagreed and none strongly disagreed. (Appendix C, CEO Questionnaire, April/May 1986).

Here again, it is significant to note that our research findings concur closely with previous studies which underscored the impact of the family as a social unit, the more personalised approach to management, the open-door policy and the low regard for formal procedure.<sup>(19)</sup> However, our findings differ from Badawy's insofar as he asserts the prevalence of a generally authoritarian management style whereas the research findings on which this study is based suggest a majority of responding managers with a preference for some degree of consultation and a serious desire to involve subordinates without relinquishing their ultimate control.<sup>(20)</sup>



Our earlier investigation (Appendix B - component 2, Approach to Decision Making) also reinforces the trend towards a participative approach based on consultation in making decisions on personal and interpersonal matters, as well as in the more technical production-oriented domain.

Resorting to the participative mode would be easier to anticipate and explain in personal matters but its equal prevalence in the technical areas seems to be a reflection of a broader cultural norm.

It is perhaps a measure of the confusion and controversy surrounding many aspects of the Arabian Gulf Management Culture that Badawy's observations which contradict the findings of our study seem to have also been supported by other studies conducted in 1984.<sup>(21)</sup>

It seems that the argument is based on certain evidence from the culture which suggests that a consultative managerial style is not necessarily the most appropriate, particularly where business tends to be highly personalised. This is generally true of the Arab culture. For instance, many Easterners assume that to be successful, a company needs strong leaders who impose their wills on the organisation. As a

consequence, there is little delegation; decisions on even insignificant matters are made at the top.<sup>(22)</sup>

However, two other major studies - one published only a year earlier and the second one in 1985 reinforce our own work and suggest that Gulf managers are more informal and participatory than is normally acknowledged. The first study by Al-Jafary et al refer to Likert's System 3 in describing Gulf managers while simultaneously reporting that a follow-up study they conducted revealed that such managers can, on certain issues, lean towards the autocratic management styles.<sup>(23)</sup>

The second study by Ali and Swiercz<sup>(24)</sup> indicates that the consultative management style is not necessarily alien to the Middle East. Their findings also differ with Badawy, but supports our findings that the preference of Arabian managers toward consultative styles reflects influence of Islamic and tribalistic values and beliefs. Both Islamic and tribal law reinforce consultation in conducting all aspects of life. Ali and Swiercz also point out that 28% of their sample managers were oriented towards the pseudo-consultative style. The orientation towards this style might be explained by the following:

(a) It is the practice of the tribal society that the

members of the family and kinship be consulted on matters important to their welfare.

(b) Over the years, the authoritarian style has become embedded in Middle East cultures due to various factors which have shaped the norms and beliefs of the society. Such factors include the primacy of coercive force, fragmented kinship society, quality of leadership, the colonial presence of a centralised character, etc.

(c) The attitude of the public sector manager who has security of tenure where he does not have to strive for efficiency.<sup>(25)</sup>

It has been argued that participative leadership has merited attention because of its association with several beneficial effects. It has also been noted that consultation; tends to promote acceptance of resultant decisions and leads to much greater agreement than does directive leadership. This is what some Bahraini managers emphasised in the 1984 and 1985 seminars.<sup>(26)</sup> The overwhelming preference for the participative mode was equally strongly indicated in the attempt made to stimulate managerial problem solving situations (Appendix B - component 2, Approach



to Decision Making, Table II). One can hardly fail to note the apparent contrast between the origins of participative management in Bahrain as against Western societies. In the former it seems to be a continually ingrained norm trickling down to the organisational level, whereas in the latter, participative management started at an organisational level. Western management literature seems to lend credence to this interpretation.

Perhaps the controversy and the tensions between culturally-reinforced authoritarianism and the emerging consultative management styles can be better understood in the light of the following remarks made by a leading executive in Bahrain:

"With regard to authoritarian versus democratic management, may I suggest that this was an over-simplification of the task of running a company; ..... a combination of both was required, with the degree of each varying according to the situation. Style and technique of management had to vary according to who and/or what was being dealt with. I believe that oversimplification should be avoided; there was an elusive quality in good leaders which has existed for as long as man has. Bahraini employees in ....., when asked who were the best managers, will always cite the toughest, the most technically competent, the most demanding; they had honesty, fairness and consistency, the three qualities vital in a good manager. To these should be added technical competence and you then have the complete leader-manager. This elusive quality of leadership is the one which needs to be developed."(27)

The gist of the above quotation is that distinction of management styles are themselves culture-bound and not necessarily transferable.

This controversy is further fueled by the belief of some senior Bahraini executives that the authoritarian values of the broader culture create a greater impact at the top management level but get diluted as they trickle down to middle management.<sup>(28)</sup> The key to a successful resolution of the probable conflict between culturally sanctioned leadership norms in Bahrain and those styles more conducive to corporate efficiency is through 'a combination of education, training and experience'. The result should be a gradual reduction of authoritarian vestiges in Bahraini organisations.<sup>(29)</sup>

This view was also expressed by the very senior government executive when he responded to a question: whether democratic style could be taught to managers in an environment which has traditionally had a different frame of reference. He agreed that: "the traditional authoritarian attitude could not be changed overnight" but he maintained that, "by persistence the change could be brought about though it will be gradual and extend over a long period. Through knowledge and

example, however, the democratic principle will eventually succeed." (30)

It should be noted, however, that the optimism voiced by this senior executive and another Bahraini manager is not totally shared by other Bahrainis. A leading public executive warns against such optimism on grounds that many "senior managers had reached their positions not because of qualifications and training but because of personality and experience, and as a result there was a difference in mentality," (31) in method and in attitude between them and the younger managers" who, as a result, face constraints that affect their motivation and sense of achievement. (32)

This conflict of 'old' and 'new' was clearly echoed by a major Bahraini banker who emphasised the importance of management education and training in helping junior Bahraini managers adjust to the changing environment. (33)

Perhaps this duality of management styles and incipient tensions between cultural norms and efficiency requirements can be better explained when leadership is examined at the corporate level. Here, perhaps, the dominant corporate norm is at once consultative and authoritarian. Research evidence gathered through the



questionnaire and interviews clearly suggests that a majority of corporate cultures in Bahrain are informal-consultative to the extent that they have to accommodate their broader societal milieu but formal-authoritarian in an effort to promote norms of efficiency and accountability. In many instances it looks as though the style is participative but the substance is authoritarian.

Again this duality of corporate norms which are at once consultative and authoritarian emerged very clearly in our findings of the CEO questionnaire completed in April 1986 (Appendix C, Question 2). While a majority of the CEOs covered agreed that leadership norms encouraged by most organisations in Bahrain are patriarchal and authoritarian thereby reflecting the broader culture in which they operate, a minority of the CEOs were not sure but tended to disagree with the statement, and a smaller minority fully disagreed. This breakdown indicates the different styles adopted as well as a transition in progress of the corporate culture.

The duality of informal-consultative and formal-authoritarian can also be related to the conception of organisational structure which may be conceived in either instrumental or social terms and that this has

implications for leadership behaviour. An instrumental conception of structure is one in which the primary emphasis is on getting the job done. The relationship among various positions in the structure depends on the functional interdependency between them. By contrast, in a social conception of the structure, the various organisational positions are defined in terms of status. It follows that the positions would have to be organised hierarchically which implies a directive leadership style. This style also tends to inhibit participatory practices because participation may diminish the managers' power.

Leadership at the corporate level in Bahrain is legitimised through a combination, albeit with varying proportions of ascription, ie social status acquired at birth and achievement through personal effort.<sup>(34)</sup> There is little doubt, however, as clearly evidenced by the research data compiled for this study, that the trend is clearly moving towards emphasis on professional achievement as a basis for corporate leadership. A sizeable proportion of the managers surveyed indicated a high degree of satisfaction with corporate efforts aiming at upgrading their professional standing and heightening their self-image. This is a new trend caused by survival pressures. The majority (16 out of 20) of respondents

to a question touching on this issue indicated high positive correlation between organisational commitment to career development and perceived job significance. Similarly the majority (17 out of 23) of respondents revealed high positive correlation between perceived job significance on professional grounds satisfaction with organisational incentives. Interestingly enough, however, six respondents registered negative correlation where they continue to view their jobs as insignificant while indicating satisfaction with organisational incentives. However, the implication that Bahraini managers still have a long way to go on the road to world-class professionalism is also there.

In probing the correlation between satisfaction with organisational incentives on the one hand and perceived job effectiveness on the other, scattered evidence emerges. Correlation is generally positive as a majority tends to lean in this direction. Somewhat mixed evidence also emerges with respect to the relationship between organisational commitment to career development and perceived job effectiveness. In the majority of cases (16 out of 20) positive correlation is indicated whereas the correlation turns negative with respect to few (ie, the other 4 cases). This suggests the possibility of high job effectiveness coupled with low organisational interest in career



development. This was found to be true in the case of executive managers both expatriate and Bahraini. On the question of correlation between job significance and perceived job effectiveness not surprisingly all responses were positive.

As corporate cultures in Bahrain are still undergoing their formative stages, they seem to place equal emphasis in most of the cases covered on loyalty to the organisation and productivity on the job and try to attain and reinforce the two through a variety of means both formal and informal.

One possible explanation is linked with a form of leadership which is known as 'paternalism' which implies a parent-child relationship between superior and subordinate. It shares some features with an autocratic style, but in addition implies mutual obligation and personal loyalties. A typical case was highlighted by one of the CEOs who presented a factual example that faced his organisation in 1982 where they had to reorganise themselves to combat paternalism and complacency through campaign of internal reorganisation as an attempt to change the corporate culture.<sup>(35)</sup>

The whole question of emerging corporate culture(s) in Bahrain, including both inner dynamics as well as

tension-ridden relationships to the external environment was highlighted in a seminar on the subject held 11 March 1984 at Gulf Polytechnic with a select group of Bahraini and expatriate chief executives. Heated discussions centered around major choices that executives were called upon to make with respect to how far and in what direction internal organisational practices can deviate from the national culture. The clear consensus of the seminar was that a new corporate culture is indeed emerging in the country and with it a new awareness of the significance of the management profession. Issues of work, leisure, professional values, leadership, motivation, delegation, management development, Bahrainisation, etc were repeatedly raised with the general feeling that a state of flux of transition is now under way and clear-cut trends have yet to take shape.

Unlike established leadership norms at the macro-societal level, corporate leadership styles are more pragmatic and open to change partly due to their relative novelty on the island. Such a change, however, as research evidence overwhelmingly suggests does not seem to occur at an unusually rapid rate. For one thing, corporate entities are still trying to gain acceptance and recognition in the country and this is

partly pursued through adherence to established cultural norms.

This concern was shared by another senior manager from the public sector who pointed out that:

".... the type of management prevailing in the area was perhaps a different style of management and influenced by external and internal environment, the macro and micro. Culture, he maintained, was attitude. Management, whether studied at home or abroad was basically the same, what was different was the way the manager behaved; his way of looking at things and his way of dealing with people in the local situation. The chief executive has a role to play in changing or even creating the climate within the organisation."(36)

As diffusion and impact of the corporate culture ethos is limited in Bahrain, it still exhibits the characteristics of an enclave trying to break out of the constraints imposed on it and permeate the broader socio-cultural habitat.

This difficulty was expressed by a Bahraini chief executive officer in an interview when he stated that:

"The pattern of leadership varies with the size and ownership of the organisation and the personality of the chief executive. There was generally greater concern for human needs of employees in the public sector. There was also greater appreciation of the need for worker participation, in some form or another, in the possession of information and in decision making. .... there was greater power and force, albeit implicit rather than



explicit in many cases, born of the personal status and influence of the leader and of the official support granted his organisation. There was greater communication, sometimes unwarranted and misplaced, among some of the public sector leaders, with internal bureaucracy, possibly enhanced by size."(37)

From what has been observed and analysed at the corporate (intermediate) level, established patterns and norms of leadership in Bahrain are consultative/authoritarian and its predominant modes are formal/informal. Leadership at the corporate level is legitimised through a combination with varying degrees of ascription and achievement through personal effort. Leadership styles at this level are more open to change than leadership at the macro level. Some changes are beginning to occur but at medium rate gaining momentum slowly as the trend moves towards emphasis on professional achievement as a basis for corporate leadership. As the diffusion and impact of leadership at this level is limited, it suggests clear priorities for management development programmes.

Moving down in our analysis of leadership to the micro level, we encounter obvious reluctance on the part of the managers surveyed to identify with any one style. However, among the 26 CEOs included in the April 1986 survey, only a minority agreed with the statement that the 'management style preferred by a majority of managers in Bahrain is participative informal'. The

remaining 60% either tended to disagree with it or explicitly voiced their disagreement. One might conclude that a majority of managers in Bahrain still continue to identify more with a Theory X approach.<sup>(38)</sup> This conclusion, however, has to be cautious and tentative because of the rapid transition Bahraini management is undergoing. On the other hand, when questioned about the incidence of outside consultation in decision making (see Appendix B, component 2 - Manager and his Environment) a clear majority of respondents answered in the affirmative. The main reason for resorting to outside consultation was to obtain a broader data base. It is thus evident that the kind of consultation largely practiced in Bahrain is part of the fact finding preceding the actual making of the decision. Decision making itself continues to be a strictly managerial prerogative.

The majority of managers covered seem to perceive themselves as practitioners of contingency shifting their styles to cope with situational demands in ways not markedly different from Fiedler's constructs.<sup>(39)</sup> Their self-perception placed high premiums on professional competence with productivity as the over-riding objective. Research findings at this level clearly resonate such Western management theories as Owens' typology of trait, behavioural and

contingency orientation.<sup>(40)</sup> With their realistic acceptance of the 'power distance' element in Bahrain, managers identify more with formal cognitive leadership models without failing to show token adherence to participative styles perhaps in recognition of broader cultural demands.<sup>(41)</sup>

The propensity of Bahraini managers to change surfaced in their response to a question on the subject. All 23 who responded to this question favoured rapid incorporation of management innovation partly to stay tuned to the international scene also as a career booster.

Perhaps in a manner similar to that encountered at the intermediate corporate level, managers at the micro level seem to realise the need to operate within norms set by the broader environmental as they too still represent at this point in time a relatively minor enclave in society with all but limited impact outside their immediate domain. The picture becomes a little clearer when we contrast the managers' self-perception of their priorities. Our study<sup>(42)</sup> shows that the Bahraini manager's self-perceived role within the organisation includes planning and implementation (45%) and leadership (30%). Other roles mentioned are: contributing to the development of Bahrainis, problem



solver, professional manager, (25%). Outside the organisation, the Bahraini manager perceives himself as the spokesman for the organisation in the community (35%), ambassador of goodwill (25%), community work (25%) and functional management duties (15%).

Under the circumstances the important issue is the extent to which Bahraini managers are actually able to choose among leadership styles in different situations.<sup>(43)</sup> This is important because it can affect a wide range of management selection, placement, and promotion activities. It could be argued that if Bahraini managers can adopt a flexible leadership style, or if they can be trained to vary their style, then presumably they will be effective in a variety of leadership situations. If, on the other hand, managers are relatively inflexible in their leadership style, then they will operate effectively only in those situations that most closely match their style.

Diagram I is an attempt to piece together a framework that shed light on the workings of leadership dynamics in Bahrain by showing key elements that have a bearing on the process at different levels of analysis.

DIAGRAM 1 -- LEADERSHIP MATRIX

<div>VARIABLE LEVEL</div>	CULTURALLY SAN- CTIONED STYLE	BASIS FOR LEGITIMACY	INHERENT EXPECTATIONS	PREDOMINANT MODE	RECEPTIVITY TO CHANGE	DIFFUSION	IMPACT
LEADERSHIP MACRO LEVEL	Patriarchal	Tradition Ascription	Loyalty Conformity Protection	Informal	Low	Wide	Heavy
LEADERSHIP INTERMEDIATE LEVEL	Consultative Authoritarian	Ascription Achievement	Loyalty Productivity	Formal/ Informal	Medium	Narrow- Medium	Relatively Limited
LEADERSHIP MICRO LEVEL	Contingent	Professional Competence	Productivity	Formal	High	Narrow	Relatively Limited

## MOTIVATION AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Motivation, is the drive which causes, channels and sustains people's behaviour. The choice of behaviour and the impetus with which people engage in it is termed motivation. It is therefore a result of variables stemming from a combination of individual needs, value systems, and environmental conditions. Managers, by definition, work with and through people, but people are complex and sometimes irrational in their behaviour. their motivation are not always to discern.<sup>(44)</sup> Such a predisposition to act in a specific, goal directed manner, affects the kind of adjustment employees make to an organisation. The particular motives employees have for working at a particular place on a particular job affect productivity,<sup>(45)</sup> and thereby the desire and willingness of a person to expand effort to reach a particular goal or outcome, is a consequence of many forces operating simultaneously in the person and in the person's environment.<sup>(46)</sup> Thus the question of motivation is not only very much related to the national social, cultural, educational, economic and political environment in general and the organisational environment in particular, but also related to the attitudes and expectations of both managers and employee. The study of motivation is especially crucial in this regard. First, it assumes that human



beings are need-fulfilling and goal-achieving organisms. Furthermore, it assumes that people strategise behaviour that will satisfy their needs and achieve their goals. Although inter-societal individual differences clearly exist, the question remains whether or not we can observe differences between societies (cultures, nations, etc) that explain the differences in terms of identifiable variables. Studies of motivation concept relevant to the Bahraini management in the following pages should help to offer an effective understanding of these differences.

"Very often promotions were made which were not justified on merit but had to be made for political reasons and this was obviously a problem which had to be faced."(47)

Bahraini society is very demanding when it comes to setting motivational goals for managers. They are subjected to a wide array of pressures, both implicit and explicit, which they are expected to satisfy.<sup>(48)</sup> Foremost among such expectations are material affluence and upward social mobility. Once acquired, both indicators of corporate success are to be exhibited in certain ways which signal the right kind of message, at least according to a majority of the CEOs covered in the April/May 1986 questionnaire.<sup>(49)</sup>

This situation, as assessed by a majority of Chief

Executive Officers interviewed in this study, leads to 'high and unrealistic expectations among a majority of Bahraini managers',<sup>(50)</sup> while their commitment, according to the same assessment is seldom above average. However, such expectations have to be understood in the light of the fact that the majority (70%) of the executives interviewed also pointed out that general support levels for managers, government and corporate, are 'satisfactory', while again the majority (68%) of the CEOs covered in the second questionnaire of April/May 1986 suggested greater emphasis on monetary incentives although a large group among them were not convinced that Bahraini organisations have a motivational strategy of any kind.

The strong support levels, pressures for achievement and rapid economic growth during the 1970s and early 80s created conditions under which most managers as established in the research evidence are also often justified in terms of the need to speed up the Bahrainisation process and replace expatriates.

The bottom line of the motivational frame at the macro level is the attainment and exhibition of social visibility and material affluence. The pursuit of such goals is in some ways universal but in Bahrain it also takes a special dimension that can only be understood

in terms of 'the Arab culture's great emphasis on honour, pride and rivalry'.<sup>(51)</sup>

The entire motivational mechanism has been until recently fueled by the abundance of lucrative job opportunities for Bahrainis with a highly tolerant economic environment. This trend, however, is already showing signs of slow but clear change as the economic boom has given way to a period of consolidation and considerably slower growth rates. The fact is, however, that some hard adjustment is called for particularly on the part of second and third generation Bahraini managers who have to scale down their expectations and learn to compete harder for fewer resources. Such an adjustment is hardly facilitated by the fact that motivation patterns described earlier are still widespread and their impact is heavy and very hard to counter. One CEO is particularly adamant in complaining about this phenomenon.

"an employee then feels a certain resentment that a kind of work ethic should be imposed which is not in keeping with what is seen around him particularly as his own government constantly seeks to reassure him that all is well."<sup>(52)</sup>

At the corporate level, material and social motivators continue to play a key role but a new factor has already made its way, namely professional achievement.



While one chief executive officer was in favour of incentive schemes and was convinced that such schemes would greatly aid the establishment of the work ethic and a successful corporate culture,<sup>(53)</sup> another CEO showed some reservation and said that:

"the introduction of such schemes had, in his own experience, invariably meant a conflict with the general culture and although the desirability of such schemes was recognised as being vital for the development of a sound corporate culture, it would take time to convert resistance to cooperation."<sup>(54)</sup>

A third prominent CEO referred to the same issue but outside the seminar by stating that:

"Many of the top managers are often more interested in prestige, status and image than they are in real achievements. They therefore emphasise those functions and contact which can enhance their standing with their superiors, and their general reputation for the sake of maintaining or improving of their positions. They frequently take shelter behind genuine or insignificant problems for inaction. Many are quick to complain about all the difficulties and faults they perceive within the organisation and, without, but few are willing to look at the bright spots and the more positive points and actually take action."

Corporate incentives are formally justified (ie, its basis for legitimacy) on grounds of performance and proven potential although there is clear evidence that personal and extra-professional factors are rarely totally disregarded. Inherent expectations built into organisational incentives include both efficiency on

the job and loyalty to the institution. The vehicle for attaining both motivational objectives is a 'motivation mix' that often includes career planning and development programmes in Bahrain and overseas.

Such programmes claimed a total budget in excess of BD 20m by 1984 not all of which, as evidence shows, can stand the test of cost effectiveness.

Corporate motivational practices have so far exhibited a fair ability to change and accommodate shifting economic circumstances. But, as was indicated at the macro level, such change can only come slowly and painstakingly due to the wide diffusion of corporate practices that were affordable during the 1970s and their penetration deep into the fabric of expectations of Bahraini managers. There is generally no clear understanding within most Bahraini organisations as to what would make an 'optimal' motivational mix.

This concern was voiced by the chief executive officer who felt that in his use of Western derived management terms and concepts, he finds Bahrainis, although appearing to understand, have a different perception of these. He asked "What motivated a young manager? Is it company loyalty or salaries or ability to participate in decision making that makes him feel

good about himself, so could create an environment in which he can be productive?" He confessed to an inability to properly identify and quantify these. He went on to say that "This fact has had a negative impact on the much needed development of a training strategy."<sup>(55)</sup>

When asked to describe the motivational practices of their organisations, managers surveyed invariably used terms such as 'material', 'unfair', 'limited', inadequate emphasis on 'education and training' and not enough 'promotion opportunities'. It is interesting to note in contrast that a majority among CEOs believe that Bahraini managers have unrealistically high job expectations, are 'unwilling to go through the hierarchy', 'too keen on social prestige, material rewards and fast promotion'.

At the micro level, the Bahraini manager seems to have a motivational duality involving self-interest and status on the one hand and professional upgrading on the other. It is interesting to note that, according to 40% of the second group of CEOs covered in a specially designed questionnaire,<sup>(56)</sup> Bahraini managers are 'intrinsically' motivated, whereas the remaining group, at varying degrees of explicitness, attribute to the Bahraini manager greater attachment to



material rewards. This finding should be viewed in the light of the fact that a clear majority of the responding CEOs in the same group did not think Bahraini managers were 'generally conscious of their own motivational needs'. Some expatriate managers, however, feel that the Bahraini manager is a bit over-protected which reflects negatively on his/her level of motivation:

"Cash continues to be a more powerful incentive than the prospect of promotion because of Bahraini managers' traditional belief that promotion was automatic without the need to prove merit."(57)

While generally demonstrating adequate understanding of the central role of on-the-job performance to warrant high job expectations, many of the managers included in the survey acknowledged the important role that continues to be played by inter-personal alliances. Job expectations primarily centre around generous organisational rewards and an accelerated series of promotions as the highlight of rapid career mobility.<sup>(58)</sup> Elaborate and extensive emphasis on management development is a normal managerial expectation at this level although a trend towards greater realism in this area has started to surface lately.<sup>(59)</sup>

Among the managers surveyed, mixed evidence emerges on examining the relationship between organisational commitment to career development on the one hand and perceived job satisfaction on the other. In the majority of cases (18 out of 22) correlation is positive while it is negative in the case of the remaining 4. The implication is that job satisfaction could be the result of short-term considerations (job status, salary, etc) with little or no attention given to long-term implications. Job satisfaction among Bahraini managers, as the majority of responses suggest, follows a trend of positive correlation with perceived adequacy of organisational incentives.<sup>(60)</sup> This is clearly established in 12 out of 18 responses while the negative correlation with respect to the other 6 suggests perhaps the existence of intrinsic rewards built into the work itself irrespective of extrinsic factors.

This view concurs with a comment made by one of the Bahraini Directors (in a recent seminar on Strategy for Continuing Management Education)<sup>(61)</sup> who stated his belief in the development of management training with reference to motivation. He asserted the setting of challenges to young managers. These he claimed, "enabled managers to obtain a sense of achievement". He felt there were too few of these challenges and that

too many young managers were over-supervised and not given the opportunity to act on their own ideas. This, he believed, was stifling enthusiasm and discouraging innovation.

Job satisfaction among Bahraini managers was also found to correlate positively with job significance as organisationally defined. In all 23 responses to this question both variables moved in the same direction. With respect to career development and management training, around one half of the responses affirmed the value of management education as a job performance booster. Interestingly enough, 9 responses reflected doubts about the 'relevance' of management education/training for their specific job contexts thereby echoing a broader rift in the international management community.<sup>(62)</sup>

Both positions of 'believers' and 'sceptics' about the relevance of management education were carefully stated by Bahraini managers who have directly experienced the issues involved.

"... while there was pressure to promote the Bahraini manager, there was no shortcut to education, and experience and promotion should not be at the expense of efficiency."<sup>(63)</sup>

This option voiced by a Bahraini banker was reinforced



by another banker who considered management education and training an integral part of career acceleration. (64)

However, both opinions are challenged by the doubts and apprehensions of a third Bahraini manager:

".... graduates should realise the mere fact of having a degree does not in itself entitle them to automatic employment and a secure, clearly defined career path. Once recruited, graduates must prove that they have the ability in practice ..."(65)

In the final analysis, the motivational patterns of Bahraini managers will have to be explored not only in the light of immediate empirical evidence but also within the context of motivation theories that are mostly of Western origin. A key question is whether such theories furnish an adequate understanding of motivational problems in Bahrain.

In his study of Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Oman and the United Arab Emirates) Badawy (1979)<sup>(66)</sup> found the greater need was autonomy, a function of historical and cultural values. Badawy found that cultures have a greater effect on motivation than Westernisation of job content. The author found Middle Eastern executives to have a traditional (ie, stemming from their cultures)

approach to management, an offshoot in turn of their kinship-oriented society. Thus a significant cultural value is the importance of interpersonal relations. Arabs prefer to deal with people they know, with whom they have established relations, rather than with less well-known people. Another important cultural value mentioned in Chapter One is religion. Most Arabs place a high value on religion. For example, some will not do business with people who do not believe in God. In conclusion, Badawy suggests that motivational development programmes should target the ingrained culture; management should work with employee's heritage of culture to bring forth useful qualities in the subordinates abilities.

In other cultures, for example, one might expect a much higher individualism score which implies a 'calculative involvement' of managers in organisations. This explains the popularity in such cultures of 'expectancy' theories of motivation, which see people as pulled by the expectancy of outcomes, mostly consciously, rather than as pushed by unconscious drives.

Expectancy theory is probably the most sophisticated approach to motivation. It says that people are motivated by their expectations, by how effective they

expect their efforts to be. We perceive that our efforts will result in successful performance, leading to the satisfaction of specific needs.<sup>(67)</sup>

What is suggested here is that high effort or motivation will exist when an employee perceives a link between effort, performance and rewards.<sup>(68)</sup>

Perhaps unlike his Western counterpart, the motivation of the Bahraini manager cannot be adequately understood at the micro or atomistic level only. To a considerable degree, the motivation of Bahraini managers is a socio-cultural process whose success largely depends on its being approached in those terms.<sup>(69)</sup>

Diagram 2 attempts in the case of motivation essentially what was provided with respect to leadership.



**DIAGRAM 2 - MOTIVATION MATRIX**

<b>VARIABLE LEVEL</b>	<b>CULTURALLY SAN- CTIONED STYLE</b>	<b>BASIS FOR LEGITIMACY</b>	<b>INHERENT EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>PREDOMINANT MODE</b>	<b>RECEPTIVITY TO CHANGE</b>	<b>DIFFUSION</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>
<b>MOTIVATION MACRO LEVEL</b>	<b>Material Social Status</b>	<b>Entitlement National Need</b>	<b>Visibility Affluence</b>	<b>Lucrative Job Opportunities</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Wide</b>	<b>Heavy</b>
<b>MOTIVATION INTERMEDIATE LEVEL</b>	<b>Professional Material Social Status</b>	<b>Achievement Potential Seniority</b>	<b>Productivity Growth Loyalty</b>	<b>Motivation Mix Career Planning</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Wide</b>	<b>Heavy</b>
<b>MOTIVATION MICRO LEVEL</b>	<b>Professional Self-interest Status</b>	<b>Performance Connections</b>	<b>Reward Vertical Career Mobility</b>	<b>Management Development Training Assertiveness</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Wide</b>	<b>Heavy</b>

## THE PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE

".... in the Gulf and in the Arab world in general there was a problem with management or rather the lack of it ..... the problem was manpower resources but even before that, was the problem of environment. The environment here was not conducive to the growth of ideas, to professionalism and therefore was a fundamental issue which should be examined ..."(70)

On the same issue a leading Bahraini executive who was also among the panelists in a major seminar expressed his concern when he said that:

"In the last decade Bahrain has witnessed an unprecedented increase in its managers who came from a variety of different backgrounds with an attempt to build a strong management foundation based on the advanced Western management style. They came to management from a variety of paths, sources and backgrounds particularly those sectors that preceded others in starting their managerial infrastructures. The diversity of backgrounds among managers as well as their different social and intellectual backgrounds worked against the emergence of a unified tradition in Bahrain."(71)

"Bahraini managers are by and large unaware of major trends and developments in management knowledge."

"There is a need for improvement in the management knowledge of Bahraini managers" statements unanimously endorsed by all 26 CEOs interviewed. A majority among the Bahraini managers surveyed agree readily with this assessment; a disquieting fact further reinforced by having a clear majority of the second group of CEOs surveyed in April 1986<sup>(72)</sup> disagree that professional

excellence is a "priority objective for the Bahraini manager", although 80% of the same group showed inclination towards considering that a majority of Bahraini managers try to stay abreast of developments in management knowledge.

Managerial professionalism is at best a late-comer in Bahrain. Less understood and often less appreciated than older professional orders like medicine and engineering, management has had a harder time gaining acceptance and establishing its credibility.<sup>(73)</sup> The influence of the new professional groups was limited at first due to the sheer novelty of their presence, and their being overwhelmingly out-numbered by expatriate colleagues. This problem, of course, has been experienced by other countries besides Bahrain and is mainly caused by the fact the management is a 'loose' profession with no clear-cut entry and performance standards.<sup>(74)</sup> Its ranks are open to people from various backgrounds and many of its practitioners identify with other professional identities which helped them gain their entry to management ranks in the first place.<sup>(75)</sup> The majority of the CEOs surveyed in April 1986 had no difficulty agreeing with the statement that the "management profession in Bahrain is yet to gain the degree of acceptance enjoyed by older professions like medicine, engineering and law." This



same theme was further discussed at length in the special CEO seminar held at Gulf Polytechnic on 5 May, 1986 to address the question of the "Bahrain Management Profession in Transition". An overwhelming majority of the 40 participants felt that although the management profession has undoubtedly gained ground recently in Bahrain, it still has a long way to go before achieving full recognition.

Not only there was a problem of getting qualified managers who conformed to the professional profile, the numbers available were not even sufficient to cope with the demand. As Dr Najjar pointed out:

"... In view of rapid organisational proliferation and the emergence of a relatively large managerial group in Bahrain, it should be recalled that no amount of 'conversion' of other professionals into management positions would have been enough to satisfy the growing demands for supervisory personnel in the 1970's." (76)

However, the rising star of management was considerably helped by the changing economic climate which moved away from infrastructure expansion to greater reliance on managerial know-how for coping with the problem of dwindling resources. The 1980's have already been established as the 'management decade' where organisations have to become inward-oriented to build their long postponed management systems following an

earlier period of boom when there was little concern with efficiency or effectiveness.<sup>(77)</sup> A crucial statement which has been repeated and reinforced in all the seminars held at Gulf Polytechnic.

In recognition to the importance attached to this issue, two senior Bahraini chief executives reinforced the need for an expert know-how and sound management in Bahrain. They said that "unless we prepare the necessary management manpower who are qualified and trained as professionals, we would not be able to minimise this competitive and uncertain environment."<sup>(78)</sup>

Another chief executive referred to the same problem when he stated that an organisation cannot survive and continue with effectiveness unless the manager or the CEO is capable of being successful. He/she cannot be successful unless performance is measured against culture. But in Bahrain, we do not seem to have such a criteria. The manager is evaluated on the basis of loyalty to his chief executive not performance.<sup>(79)</sup>

The new era that is beginning to emerge around managerial professionalism at the macro-societal level is mostly associated with the increasing recognition of the role of expert know-how in this vital area. Such

know-how is now understood to require extensive education and considerable on-the-job experience (as a basis for its legitimacy). It can be seen not only in the rapidly increasing number of students who major in business studies, but just as significantly, in the number of managers who find time to upgrade their skills.

The implicit or inherent expectation is that the transfer of managerial expertise to Bahrain will be value-free in the sense of not straining the delicate web of dominant socio-cultural norms and values.<sup>(80)</sup> The need for upgrading managerial performance is accepted in Bahrain but the means through which it is to be achieved is argued to be consistent with the local culture.<sup>(81)</sup> A major vehicle for such change is planned management development pursued through a variety of means including direct hiring of expatriate managers, management contracts, short-range and long-range efforts aiming towards the professional development of local Bahraini expertise. The complexity of the picture is perhaps suggested by the fact that a good percentage of the 26 CEOs who responded to the April 1986 questionnaire either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that "traditional cultural values in Bahrain have generally facilitated the emergence of the management



profession', and a sweeping majority of the same group did not accept a statement "a manager in Bahrain is expected by society to emphasise efficiency much more than public relations or employee satisfaction." Along the same lines, many managers also approved of a statement suggesting that managers should not fail to protect their own people when efficiency is compromised. This is partly due to the pressures and expectations generated by the leadership patterns and expectations patterns prevalent in society (refer to Appendix A and B attached).

In the West, a clearer trend in the direction of "professionalising" management ranks started to take shape with the distinct promise of evolving a common language and to some degree an accepted code of practice. Citing an example would be the MBA which seems to be emerging as a common professional denominator among management practitioners. The other advantage of the Western countries is the existence of a relatively long tradition extending over a century which has led to the emergence of a professional climate emphasising efficiency, rationality, impersonality and an overriding work ethic. However, a number of Bahraini managers are still not on par with their international counterparts.

Though the importance of having appropriate academic qualifications and management training is realised and called for by many Bahraini organisations as well as executives, the doubt expressed by some Bahraini chief executive officers whether they could follow the American example of insisting on an MBA. Such doubts were based according to what many expressed on:

- 1 "that the supervisory-managerial personnel have no prescribed or standard entry requirements as they reflect a wider variety of backgrounds, disciplines, specialisations, values and expectations.
- 2 Managers approach their tasks in many different ways and identifying with a wide range of management philosophies, schools of thought, styles and problem solving techniques.
- 3 Management practitioners often express scepticism about the 'relevance' of any body of knowledge to what they do and operate with little more than the questionable guidance of trial and error."<sup>(82)</sup>

The Bahraini environment, it should be noted, has demonstrated its impressive ability to adjust to and cope with changes borne out of greater emphasis on management development. Such an adjustment and receptivity to change, however, can only proceed at a slow to medium pace to avoid tensions and ruptures caused by overloading. The strains of management

development mostly through the transfer of know-how from abroad are still partly countered by the limited diffusion of the new expertise and its 'contained' impact which, however, has clearly been on the rise in recent years.

Tensions and conflicts associated with management development in Bahrain were recently highlighted in a major specialised seminar held at Gulf Polytechnic and referred to earlier. A leading Bahraini manager noted the urgent need to be selective in what is incorporated to ensure that "whatever is transferred is compatible with the Bahraini culture and environment." (83) Taking issue with his colleagues, another Bahraini manager called attention to the dilemmas facing Bahraini management professionals who 'have to reconcile their education and professionalism with their culture'. But, this manager felt, "it is not the emerging management culture that has to be changed to suit the local culture but rather the reverse." (84)

While another chief executive in one of the largest international organisations stated that:

"Flexibility was essential, no single policy could be applied across the board so within the same organisation different cultures have to exist, not only exist but co-exist and this in itself can create problems. It is hoped that over a period of two to three years a fusion can take place in order that common



objectives and a common outlook may be achieved."

Though he agreed that this will provide a challenge for the chief executive, he concluded that:

"the personality of the Chief Executive and his managers and their inter-relation was very important, any change had to come from the top."(85)

Further pressing this point through a question posed to the group of 26 CEOs included in the April 1986 questionnaire (a year later) a majority of the respondents agreed that for management standards to be effectively developed the culture will have to change along Western lines. The remaining 36% actively disagreed.

This is an interpretation of the different philosophies, attitudes and values that Bahraini managers hold and practice. It also represents the dilemma facing some of the Bahraini managers as to the question of transferability of Western management practice in Bahrain. Those who fully support the idea that for management standards to be effectively developed the culture will have to change along Western lines are voicing the professionalism aspect of management. Such concerns were highlighted in the seminar which took place on May 5th, 1986 where a number of chief executives referred to modern

management systems and procedures, creativity, skills in par with expatriates, research and management information, academic qualification and training, organisational environment, etc.

At the organisational level, the effects of management development through incorporation of international know-how can be seen more clearly particularly through the attempts to combine the effective use of transferred managerial expertise with the emergence of a binding corporate culture which can help in cementing the professional identity of managers.

Managerial professionalism at the corporate level in Bahrain is to a large degree promoted by the large influx of Western managers and the clear emergence of the country as a regional financial and business centre thus reflecting the importance of know-how and corporate values. This makes it imperative to maintain close links with the international community and to operate according to international standards. Most corporations in Bahrain place heavy performance demands on their members who are encouraged to further develop their capabilities through a variety of management development opportunities. Among the CEOs interviewed, the majority favoured intensive educational and training programmes while the rest placed more emphasis

on greater exposure through membership in professional bodies.

The Bahraini corporate scene has undoubtedly witnessed major changes towards greater professionalism which is now widely accepted and diffused throughout the various sectors of the economy.

Perhaps a clue to how such changes can be found is suggested through the direct experience of a top executive in Bahrain:

"... corporate culture had an enormous influence on the capacity to change ..... corporate culture had to be managed and that the success depended on how it was managed ..... for 50 years many companies were managed from overseas under the umbrella of a successful profit making multi-national company .... management decisions were invariably shrouded in secrecy and the company existed in a virtual state of ignorance on the broader issues. This state of corporate imperialism existed until the late 70's ..... when a campaign of internal reorganisation was began to change the culture and consequently to change our self-perception ..... the result would be more consultation, less paternalism and more sharing of information. By 1983 a change in corporate culture was already apparent, a change initiated by the chief executive." (86)

At the micro or strictly managerial level obvious enthusiasm for the acquisition of management expertise and knowledge is clearly noticeable. Bahraini managers exhibit a strong 'achievement motivation' (87) as a



basis for legitimacy and expect recognition in return. Many of them have either been or currently are the beneficiaries of intensive management development efforts which have, among other things, made them highly receptive to change.

When asked to rank order barriers slowing their professional development Bahraini managers came up with the following list:

- (a) language
- (b) inadequate educational background
- (c) conflict with culture
- (d) diminishing promotional opportunities
- (e) high cost of management development
- (f) presence of expatriate managers
- (g) attitude of superiors
- (h) less qualified individuals holding senior positions
- (i) lack of family connections

Again, further follow-up achieved through the subsequent April 1986 CEO questionnaire sheds more revealing light on this important question. The majority disagreed with the statement 'that Bahraini managers are committed to self-development and spend adequate time reading professional subjects'.

The research evidence gathered during this study yields qualified support for the observation that Western

management systems are of limited relevance to the Arab world.<sup>(88)</sup> Research evidence also indicates as reflected in a majority of respondents to the questionnaires and through subsequent interview that managerial professionalism is highly valued and supported at both the macro and corporate levels. The sheer size of resources committed in its direction is in itself a strong indicator. Evidence also points out that the Bahraini managers have started to move in the direction of achieving parity with their expatriate counterparts. When asked to make a comparison between the two groups, the chief executive officers interviewed responded as follows:

Equally competent	3%
Generally less qualified	27%
No generalisation	10%

Among the April 1986 CEO group, the majority (74%), considered the analytical skills and problem solving ability of Bahraini managers not on par with expatriate counterparts.

The need to develop analytical skills and problem solving capabilities is significant to many Arab countries. For instance, Murrell in his article 'Understanding the Egyptian Manager: A Third World Management Development Experience', points out many problem areas of management in Egypt. One of which is

the analytical skills and the rational thinking process necessary to identify problems which is largely lacking in Egyptian managers.<sup>(89)</sup>

It also revealed through the research evidence, however, that a fairly good proportion of executives felt that Bahraini managers are still unaware of major international trends in management. They also cited the need for greater efforts in the direction of management education and training programmes. When asked to assess success achieved so far in the transfer of management technology to Bahrain, 43% indicated positive results, 13% limited results, 10% greater need for improvement, 7% thought the process was very fast and 7% judged it not planned. Executive views on what can be done to facilitate the incorporation of 'appropriate' managerial expertise to Bahrain were also indicative. Two kinds pointed in the direction of education, training and exposure to international companies and only a few (13%) recommended a selective approach compatible with Arab-Islamic culture. What seems implicit in many of the responses is the need to develop in Bahraini managers some capacity for 'reflection-in-action'<sup>(90)</sup> as part of their professional make-up. Such a skill would seem highly necessary to guide the transfer process.



Reflection in action, whether consciously undertaken or unconsciously practised, is increasingly evident in the ranks of Bahraini managers. Among other things, it is a creative process which allows managers to set themselves apart from the culture yet still function effectively within it. With a thorough understanding of the past and the present they had to take the lead through the seemingly impossible area of the future. It also enables them to undergo self-assessment thereby heightening their career awareness and building up their commitment to management development as a vehicle for reinforcing their professional standing, because technical and social evolution implies the necessity of changed and new qualification in life,<sup>(91)</sup> also bearing in mind as one of the successful CEOs put it:

"Management in isolation no longer worked; a manager had to be seen to be human, to be fallible, to be accessible, to be able to define objectives. A good manager had to be prepared for public success and failure and had to set examples which he would want others to follow. Responsibility had to be accepted and so had fallibility - the making of mistakes had to be accepted as part of the learning process, not avoided or hidden. These were the attitudes which had to be included if an efficient management team was to be developed."<sup>(92)</sup>

Diagram 3 should be approached in the same view as diagrams 1 and 2. Professionalism is subjected to the same variables as leadership and motivation. Its

dynamics in other words follows a similar pattern by showing key elements that have a bearing on the process at different levels of analysis.

**DIAGRAM 3 - PROFESSIONALISM MATRIX**

<b>VARIABLE LEVEL</b>	<b>CULTURALLY SANCTIONED STYLE</b>	<b>BASIS FOR LEGITIMACY</b>	<b>INHERENT EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>PREDOMINANT MODE</b>	<b>RECEPTIVITY TO CHANGE</b>	<b>DIFFUSION</b>	<b>IMPACT</b>
<b>PROFESSIONALISM MACRO LEVEL</b>	<b>Technical Know-How</b>	<b>Education Training and Experience</b>	<b>Slow and Cautious Transfer</b>	<b>Management Know-How</b>	<b>Medium- low</b>	<b>Limited</b>	<b>Limited Gradually On The Rise</b>
<b>PROFESSIONALISM INTERMEDIATE LEVEL</b>	<b>Know-How and Corporate Values</b>	<b>Org Needs Membership in Professional Bodies</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Management Development Mix</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Wide</b>	<b>Mixed</b>
<b>PROFESSIONALISM MICRO LEVEL</b>	<b>Expert Knowledge</b>	<b>Achievement</b>	<b>Recognition and Reward</b>	<b>Management Development Mix</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Heavy</b>



As addressed in this research work, managerial professionalism in Bahrain has to be understood in two different, but closely interrelated, ways.

On the one hand professionalism in management, at least in the Bahraini context, has been associated with what might be termed "task competence" or "functional mastery". On the other hand, however, managerial professionalism can also refer to an attitude, a predisposition, a set of values or, in a nutshell, a normative position. Each of these two meanings will now be addressed in brief.

#### Managerial Professionalism as Task Competence

Research completed as part of this work particularly primary data gathered through observation, interviews, questionnaires and CEO seminars, strongly suggests that there is wide subscription to the notion of managerial professionalism as task competence or functional mastery.

As such, professionalism is a highly desirable and intensely sought quality as it conveys, one or more of the following:

- Academic credentials.
- Technical competence.
- Demanding performance standards.

- Wide exposure to management development and training.
- Organisational recognition resulting from being in short supply.
- Aggressive career pattern marked by successive rapid promotions on merit.
- Meritorious incumbency of a senior management position.
- Performance on par with the best expatriates and possibly out-performing them on occasions.
- Demonstrating functional expertise in one or more areas of management: Finance, Accounting, Marketing, Production etc as well as key management processes: planning, control, innovation etc, etc.

The "task competence" notion of managerial professionalism is particularly popular among the new breed of young Bahraini managers who have, for the most part, either studied abroad or participated, often more than once, in overseas training and development programme. Many of them have a technical background in Engineering or allied disciplines with a Business and Management overlay. They view themselves proudly as the cutting edge of the Bahrainisation process. Their self-image is that of "managers" responsible for maintaining and promoting Bahrain's regional role and newly acquired international status as a financial centre.

Managerial professionalism as task competence is also

reinforced through the gradual move of Bahraini managers away from administrative positions and towards more technical positions in finance, data processing and production.

It should also be made clear that managerial professionalism as task competence is more of a short-run perception with a distinctly instrumental connotation. It is particularly prevalent at the middle management level and in some cases even at the supervisory level in Bahrain.

#### Managerial Professionalism as Normative Position

The task competence view of managerial professionalism is of course not unique to Bahrain. It is now more or less universal particularly in view of the rise of technocracy and the advent of the young aggressive managers with their MBA cult and "over-sized" egos.

In Bahrain, however, a different meaning of professionalism has also emerged perhaps more distinctly than elsewhere due to the country's relatively short experience with management and its dependence on expatriates for a long time.

As suggested earlier, this second notion of managerialism is associated with a state of mind, an



outlook, a perspective. In this sense managerial professionalism is associated as a long-term prospect with the following connotations:

- Objectivity and fair play.
- Commitment to professional ethics and community service.
- Commitment to self development, learning and staying abreast of relevant innovations.
- Respect for the local culture together with a universalistic or cosmopolitan frame of mind.
- Assisting in accelerating the Bahrainisation process and giving opportunities to deserving young Bahrainis.

There can be little doubt that these two notions of managerial professionalism can be mutually reinforcing. Professionalism as task competence is necessary for giving meaning and substance to the normative side. The reverse is equally true. Managerial professionalism as task competence needs to be sustained and renewed through a value system that ensures its continuity. Task competence taken in isolation is a purely technical notion that does not have the socio-cultural context essential for its gaining acceptance.

It is of course true that the two notions of professionalism can also undercut each other. A clear case in point has been taking shape in the West over the past decade or so. Managerial professionalism has

been more or less identified with the new breed of MBA graduates. Many of those have created corporate resistance by being intensely competitive, aggressive and "over-confident". To them task competence seems to have been dissociated from the supportive long-term normative framework. Under such conditions, of course, the two notions can be conflicting.

In Bahrain, the macro, socio-cultural buffer will work against this possible conflict. By having to operate within the broader culture outlined in chapters two and three, Bahraini managers will always have to moderate their task-competence with culturally sanctioned values.

### KEY VARIABLES

Having reviewed, however crudely, the intricate web weaving together aspects of the literature on leadership motivation and professionalism and the empirical evidence on how these concepts are understood and practised in Bahrain, it is now important to turn back to the seven variables identified earlier to examine how exactly do they shape the context of the management process in Bahrain as well as internal dynamics.

Without suggesting any strict order of sequentiality, and fully realising the degree of overlapping that is bound to exist among them, it will be recalled that

each of the three matrices comprised seven key variables that have been surmised from the statements and even more importantly, implicit assumptions evident in the research data generated for this chapter:

(a) Culturally-Sanctioned Style

(b) Basis for Legitimacy

(c) Inherent Expectation

(d) Predominant Modes

(e) Receptivity to Change

(f) Diffusion

(g) Impact

For a better understanding of these matrices and their explanatory function in this chapter, we now turn to a brief explanation of each of them.

(a) Culturally-Sanctioned Style

At the macro-societal level, established patterns and norms of leadership in Bahrain are primarily patriarchal, while at the corporate or intermediate level it is a mix of the consultative and the authoritarian styles. Moving down to the micro level there was reluctance on the part of the managers to identify with any one style but, perceived themselves as practitioners of contingency.



For the concept of motivation, it was found that the Bahrain society is demanding when it comes to setting motivational goals for managers. It seems that the motivational frame at the macro level is the attainment of social status and material affluence. At the corporate level, material and social status continues to play a vital role with a new dimension which has already made its way, namely, professional achievement. At the micro level, the Bahraini manager seems to have self interest, status on the one hand, professional upgrading on the other.

As for the concept of professional challenge, we found that at the macro level the trend is moving towards managerial professionalism mostly associated with the increasing recognition of the role of technical expertise. Managerial professionalism at the corporate level is affected by the influx of Western management emphasising the importance of know-how and corporate values.

At the managerial or micro level, the trend and the enthusiasm is for the attainment of management expertise and knowledge.

It should be noted that the key to understanding the dynamics of leadership, motivation and managerial

professionalism in Bahrain is the realisation that these three concepts or factors are profoundly affected by a culturally-sanctioned style. This style has evolved slowly and informally over a long period of time as part of the national culture and the intricate web of norms and expectations within it. As clearly indicated in earlier analysis, this culturally-sanctioned style operating mainly at the macro level is not always conducive to corporate efficiency and managerial professionalism.<sup>(93)</sup> In all cases, the analysis shows that this culturally-sanctioned frame of reference weighs heavily throughout the country and constitutes a major force to be reckoned with by all secondary sub-cultures whether established or emerging. Thus, it can be argued that no investigation of any respect of management in a country like Bahrain at his transitional stage in its evolution can be adequate without the recognition of the broadly cultural context.

(b) Basis for Legitimacy

Ever since Max Weber pioneered his classical study on forms of authority legitimisation, it became evident to researchers that different societies respond differently to the need for establishing solid basis for authority relationships. Such basis normally appear most explicitly at the macro-societal level but

undoubtedly cast a shadow on all lower levels involving a variety of primary and secondary microcosms. In our own analysis patterns of leadership in Bahrain, we found that at the macro-societal level, the family headed by the father is still a very strong and cohesive social unit in both its nuclear and extended forms. Leaders derive their basis for legitimacy from tradition and ascription, while at the corporate level, it is legitimised through a combination, albeit with varying proportions of ascription, and achievement through personal effort.

At the macro level, Bahraini managers identify more with formal cognitive leadership models. Their self-perceptions place high emphasis on professional competence as a basis for legitimacy with productivity as being the over-riding objective.

Looking at the concept of motivation , we found that strong support levels and rapid economic growth during the boom of the 70's and early 80's created conditions in which the majority of managers consider themselves 'entitled' to the ambitions and goals they establish for themselves which were also justified in terms of the need to speed up Bahrainisation of manpower. Thus the basis for legitimacy implied at macro level is entitlement and national need.



At the corporate level, incentives are formally justified (ie, derive its basis for legitimacy) on grounds of achievement, potential, seniority as well as personal and other professional factors such as efficiency and loyalty to the institution. At the micro level, the basis for legitimacy as demonstrated by managers, is derived from the understanding of the role of on-the-job performace as well as the equally important role that continues to be played by personal network.

For the professional challenge at the macro level, it was evident from the emergence of managerial professionalism that the basis for its legitimacy is the recognition of its specialised know-how obtainable through extensive education and considerable on-the-job training and experience. This trend has been observed in the rapidly increasing number of students majoring in management and business studies, as well as in managers who are also trying to upgrade or update themselves.

The corporate level has undoubtedly witnessed major changes towards greater professionalism with emphasis on organisational needs.

Similarly, at the micro level, the acquisition of

knowledge and expertise is clearly noticeable. Bahraini managers exhibit a strong achievement motivation as a basis for legitimacy.

The fact that culturally-sanctioned styles and basis for authority legitimisation are closely related is hardly surprising.<sup>(94)</sup> Again, in Bahrain one should expect an often problematic relation between traditional legitimation norms that are deeply embedded in the national folklore, and those new legitimation patterns emerging at the corporate and managerial levels with roots that can be traced back to other cultures. Tensions among different but not mutually exclusive bases for legitimacy at the three levels of analysis, constitute a major impetus for change a framework for any viable management development strategy in Bahrain.

#### (c) Inherent Expectations

Some of the most significant aspects of any culture are tacit or implicit and may never be formally articulated.<sup>(95)</sup> Bahrain is certainly no different as there is a delicate and enormously complex web of expectations operating at the macro, intermediate (corporate) and micro levels. The culture, through the process of socialisation for instance, helps to shape the needs, values, and personality of leaders and

followers. The personality of the leader will affect the kinds of behaviour he will reinforce. Further, culture norms create expectations and judgment about the appropriate behaviour of leaders and their group members. The cultural expectations of the society clearly influence patterns of leadership.<sup>(96)</sup> Such expectations are internalised as part of the socialisation process and can never be overlooked in understanding leader-follower relations, corporate incentive practices and managerial motivation patterns.

At the macro-societal level, the norms of leadership patterns outlined earlier very often trickle down to the lower levels and influence management styles which are often expressed as expectations, both implicit and explicit. This partly explains the tendency of Bahraini managers to assume a patriarchal role themselves. Thus, at the societal level the manager is expected to be loyal, to play the role of advisor and supporter of his family and relatives as well as protecting employee interest. He is also expected to practice human relation techniques to please, placate and avoid conflicts.

At the corporate level, it seems that the emphasis is placed in most cases on loyalty to the organisation and to productivity on the job. The organisations in



Bahrain try to reinforce these two elements through a variety of means both formal and informal. In a similar manner, managers at the micro level see the need to operate within the norms of the corporate as well as macro-societal levels, but there is far greater emphasis on productivity.

Moving to the concept of motivation, the expectations at the macro level seems to be material affluence and upward social mobility. This dimension is due to the influences of the Arab culture with its emphasis on honour, pride and rivalry. However, at the corporate level, emphasis seems to shift towards efficiency and productivity.

At the micro level, the majority of the Bahraini managers interviewed were generally conscious of their own motivational needs. Job expectations seem to centre around generous organisational rewards and accelerated vertical career mobility. Recent developments show that a fairly large proportion of the younger managers are also expecting to attend management education or training programmes.

With regards to managerial professionalism the environment has been very slow and cautious in accepting it. It is still less understood and possibly

less appreciated than older professions such as medicine and engineering. At the corporate level the need for upgrading managerial performance is accepted as evidenced by the recent increase in sponsoring participants for management development programmes. The feedback from this study suggests that their ultimate expectation is for better performance.

At the micro level, while the Bahraini managers are aware of the corporate expectation for better performance, their expectation continue to demand recognition and reward for their performance.

#### (d) Predominant Mode

A requisite condition for understanding the inner workings of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism in Bahrain is cognizance of the fact that all three concepts follow predominant modes that are often decisive in determining what may or may not work in a society like Bahrain. Awareness of this critical factor made it easier to interpret many of the answers given by the managers surveyed. It also facilitated designing the research instruments, formulating the questions and working through the subtleties of the Bahrain management scene.

Referring back to the earlier analysis of the fabric of

leadership, at the macro-societal level, it appears that the patriarchal leadership predominant modes are highly informal. The environmental influence was perhaps most apparent when the manager or the executive interpersonal styles were examined. Here we found that the social values and norms, as well as the social structural elements, encourage the managers to use 'personalised' and 'informal' approaches when dealing with people or employees.

At the corporate level the predominant modes tended to be both 'formal' and 'informal'. This is because corporate cultures in Bahrain are still undergoing their formative stages with equal emphasis placed on loyalty to the organisation and productivity on the job.

Looking at it from the micro level the majority of the managers identify with a more formal approach. It is also worth noting that what managers expressed and would like to follow might not necessarily be what is actually done in practice. Therefore there could be situations where the leadership practice at the micro level is basically informal.

Analysis of motivation at the macro level shows that the predominant mode is the availability of lucrative job opportunities. This is the result of the economic



boom of the 1970's which triggered a process of unprecedented economic expansion, the mushrooming of public and private organisations and the creation of demand for managerial manpower. At the corporate level, the picture is rather different. Inherent expectations built into organisational incentives included both efficiency on the job and loyalty to the institution. Thus, the vehicle for attaining both motivational objectives is a 'motivational mix' that often includes career planning and development programmes. The predominant mode at the micro level is clear emphasis on management training and development. This is a normal managerial expectation at this level although a trend towards greater realism in this area has started to emerge lately. Another aspect of the motivational mode which has also emerged is greater self assertiveness on the part of managers.

Concerning the concept of professionalism, the new aura that is beginning to emerge around managerial professionalism is grounded in the recognition of the importance and the role of management know-how. This has become now a predominate mode, thus, moving away from infrastructure expansion to greater reliance on managerial expertise for coping with the problem of dwindling resources.

At the corporate level, the organisations are also moving towards becoming inward oriented in order to build their long postponed management systems. The amount of resources committed towards management development and career planning is in itself a strong indicator and a serious commitment on the part of the organisation. This predominant mode for management development and training has also trickled down to the micro level.

In many ways, the predominant mode is the resultant of the three other dimensions discussed earlier, namely the culturally-sanctioned style, basis for legitimacy and inherent expectations.<sup>(97)</sup> it may be said that the predominant mode is a sharper, more explicit and more operational expression of the other three dimensions in so far as they influence the domain of action and surface in concrete programmes.

#### (e) Receptivity to Change

It is, of course, true that norms of leadership, motivation and professionalism in Bahrain, however rooted in culturally-sanctioned practices, justified through accepted terms of legitimacy, embedded in tacit and inherent expectations and operating through predominant modes, are still subject to change. Equally evident, however, is that different dimensions,

ie, leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism show different degrees of receptivity to change particularly when the focus shifts from one level of analysis to another.

Beginning with the fabric of leadership at the macro level, we have already seen how such norms are deeply embedded and have withstood the test of time, modernisation as well as massive changes in the infrastructure. As a result they show little receptivity to change. But moving down to the corporate level, the picture is different. As clearly evidenced by the research data compiled for this study, the trend is moving towards more emphasis on professionalism. Corporate leadership styles are more pragmatic and open to change. Some changes are beginning to occur but at a medium rate gaining momentum slowly as the trend moves towards emphasis on professional achievement. For the micro level, managers' self-perceptions placed high premiums on professional competence. They also favoured rapid incorporation of management innovation in order to boost their career.

The motivational mechanism has been until recently supported by the abundance of lucrative job opportunities for Bahrain. This trend, however, is



changing as the boom gives way to a period of slower growth. This means that the receptivity to change at the macro level is still low. However, corporate motivational practices have shown slightly better ability to alter and accommodate the changes that are taking place in the economy. This is equally true with the managers. Consequently the receptivity to change at both corporate and micro levels is medium.

With regard to the concept of professionalism, we found in our study that the majority of CEOs surveyed had no difficulty agreeing that the 'management profession in Bahrain is yet to gain a degree of acceptance as enjoyed by other older professions'. We have also seen that the Bahraini environment has demonstrated its impressive ability to adjust to changes born out of greater emphasis on management development. Such an adjustment and receptivity to change can only proceed at a slow to medium pace. At the corporate level the adjustment and receptivity to change is bound to be faster, ie, medium pace while at the managerial or micro level, the obvious enthusiasm for acquisition of management expertise is more noticeable. Many of the managers have either been or are currently undergoing management development programmes which have, among other things, made them highly receptive to change.

In reality, much of what is or is not feasible with respect to managerial professionalism in Bahrain, is profoundly affected by the degree to which change can be successfully introduced in leadership and motivational norms. Changes in management that radically outpace corresponding changes in leadership and motivation are unlikely to prove viable in the long run.

(f) Diffusion

How widely diffused in society each of the three concepts of leadership, motivation and professionalism under investigation is, and at what level of analysis is also an issue of obvious importance. The degree of diffusion is often directly proportional to the level of analysis but inversely related to change.

It was pointed out earlier that the leadership at macro level is patriarchal and its predominant modes are highly informal. Such norms which are deeply rooted in the culture and history have shown little receptivity to change are also widely diffused throughout the socio-cultural fabric. At the corporate level leadership norms are not as widely diffused as the macro level. Evidence from our study shows that at this level it is narrow to medium and at the micro level it is narrow.

Motivational patterns at micro level, described earlier which was fueled by enormous opportunities for jobs in the 70's and the early 80's are still widespread. Corporate incentives are formally justified on the grounds of performance and proven potential, and corporate motivational practices have also shown ability to accommodate shifting economic circumstances. Due to the wide diffusion of corporate and micro level practices such change can only come slowly, particularly when there is generally no clear understanding within most Bahraini organisations as to what would make an 'optimal' motivational mix.

At the professional macro level the picture is different. The new aura has only recently begun to emerge around managerial professionalism. Though the environment has demonstrated its ability to adjust and cope with changes, it has only proceeded very slowly. The strains of management training and education mostly through transfer of know-how from the West are still partly encountered by limited diffusion, while the Bahraini corporate scene has witnessed major changes towards professionalism which is now widely accepted and diffused. At the micro level there is even more enthusiasm for self development and acquisition of know-how. Though many Bahraini managers are still unaware of the development in management knowledge,



managerial professionalism is highly valued and consequently as an idea and target is highly diffused. Dimensions that are widely diffused at particular levels of analysis in Bahrain and, by and large, barriers to managerial professionalism suggest probable targets for planned efforts in that direction. On the other hand, cases of limited diffusion of variables conducive to managerial professionalism suggest clear priorities for management development programmes. In both cases, the significance of diffusion stems from its being an indicator of 'status' at this juncture in the transition of the Bahraini society. By the same token, changes in diffusion may be used to monitor progress in the direction of managerial professionalism and related development.

(g) Impact

Perhaps impact is the other side of diffusion. As such it follows patterns that are more or less identical to those discussed under diffusion (f) above. Whether the observed impact of anyone of the three concepts - leadership, motivation and professionalism - around which this chapter centres is heavy or limited at a particular level of analysis, is an issue of great significance. The heavier the impact of practices perceived by managers in Bahrain, as not conducive to managerial professionalism, the greater the need for

change through planned management development and the greater the barriers to be surmounted. For instance, we have seen that the norms of leadership at the macro level, are widely diffused throughout the socio-cultural fabric and exert a heavy influence on management behaviour. The same applies to the concept of motivation, particularly in a society which is very demanding when it comes to setting motivational goals for managers.

In the preceding pages an attempt was made to discuss very briefly each variable as the salient feature of the three key concepts. The true matrices summarise the salient features of the concepts of leadership, motivation and professionalism at macro, corporate and micro levels which is shown vertically against the seven variables which are shown horizontally. These matrices help in focusing attention on the central fact that the impact of management profession in Bahrain is fairly limited but clearly on the rise at the macro-societal level. It is somewhat mixed at the corporate level but appears again heavily at the micro-managerial level. Implications and consequences of this observation have surfaced time and time again in the comments, feedback, etc made by the managers surveyed in this chapter. These variables have helped in scanning the entire range of issues arising in the

context of examining interconnections between leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism in Bahrain.

The dynamic and complex picture of the Bahraini management culture described above warrants three major observations:

1. Cultural norms of leadership and motivation in Bahrain are not always conducive to managerial professionalism but on balance there are no essential incompatibilities. Emerging leadership and motivation practices at the corporate and managerial levels are by and large different from but reconciled to broader cultural norms.
2. Massive incorporation of managerial know-how is already a major fact of life and its impact is only bound to grow. So far, however, such incorporation has mostly taken the form of large-scale influx of expatriate know-how.
3. The Bahraini management community as seen by practicing managers today is a heterogeneous fabric undergoing rapid transition and fraught with major tensions. In the midst of this flux, Bahraini managers are struggling hard to find their way to



professional recognition against significant  
cultural obstacles. (98)

The heterogeneity and tensions afflicting the Bahraini management community surfaces very clearly when one addresses the question of which direction should management development take. Manager's feedback gathered formally through our surveys, as well as informally through numerous meetings and brainstorming sessions calls for the examination and construction of alternative scenarios. This will be the subject of chapter four which will be concerned with the direction of management development in Bahrain: exploring major options.

## FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Machin, J., Stewart, R., and Hales, C. (eds) (1981) Toward Managerial Effectiveness, Applied Research Perspectives on the Managerial Task, Farnborough, Hants: Gower.
2. Hickman, C. R. and Silva, M. A. (1985) Creating Excellence, London: Allen and Urwin.
3. Peters, T. J., and Waterman, R. H. (1982) In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies. New York: Harper and Row.
4. Stewart A., and Stewart, V. (1981) Tomorrow's Managers Today. London: Institute of Personnel Management.
5. Hunt, J. (1979) Managing People at Work, London: McGraw-Hill Book Co. (UK) Ltd.
6. Guest, R., Hersey, P., and Blanchard, K. M. (1977) Organisational Change Through Effective Leadership. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
7. Bennis, E., and Nanus, B. (1985) Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge, New York: Harper and Row Pub., p 219.
8. Morris, J., and Burgoyne, J. C. (1973) Developing Resourceful Managers. London: Institute of Personnel Management.
9. Address of H.E. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, to the Gulf Polytechnic Seminar, May 1986.
10. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) "Strategy for Continuing Management Education Programme in Bahrain." Proceedings of Seminar, p 19.
11. Anastos, D., Bedos, A., and Seaman, B. (1980)

"The development of modern management practices in Saudi Arabia." Colombia Journal of World Business, vol 15, no 2, Summer, pp 11-17.

12. Whitely, W., and England, G. (1980) "Variability and common dimensions of managerial values due to value orientation and country differences." Personnel Psychology, vol. 33, pp 77-87.
13. Kaynack, E. (1980) "Marketing in the Middle East and North Africa." Management Decision, vol 22, no 1, pp 23-29.
14. This is true for many of the Middle East countries See R.T. Moran, and P. R. Harris (1982) Managing Cultural Synergy, Houston: Gulf Publishing Co., p 81.
15. Observance of specific interpersonal rituals and mannerisms (see Appendix B., Component II - Interpersonal Networking). All respondents acknowledged employing pleasantries, social talk and refreshments prior to starting a business discussion. Such practices is felt to be beneficial and in line with Arab culture and hospitality.
16. Ronen, S. (1986) Comparative and Multinational Management, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc. pp 210-219.
17. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) "CEO Corporate Culture Seminar", Proceedings of the Seminar, p 22.
18. Composite Profile of Bahraini Managers - Component II (Refer to Appendix B).
19. Badawy, M.K. (1980) "Styles of Mideastern managers." California Management Review, vol XXII, No 2, Spring, pp 51-52.
20. One possible explanation is that Badawy's sample included many other Gulf countries beside Bahrain.



21. Yucet, V. (1984) "Management styles in the Middle East: A case example," Management Decision, vol 22, No 5, pp 24-27.
22. Badawy, M. K. (1980) Op. cit, pp 51-58.
23. Al-Jaffary, A., and Hollingsworth, A. (1983) "An exploratory study of managerial practices in the Arabian Gulf Region." Journal of International Business Studies, Fall, pp 143-152.
24. Ali, A., and Swiercz, P. (1985) "Managerial decision styles and work satisfaction in Saudi Arabia." Management Decision, vol 23, no 2, pp 33-42.
25. *ibid.*
26. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) CEO Corporate Culture Seminar, op. cit (Appendix H).  
  
Gulf Polytechnic (1985) "Strategy for Continuing Management Education Programme in Bahrain," op. cit (Appendix I).
27. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Op. cit, (Appendix I) pp 30-31.
28. *ibid.*
29. *ibid*, p 20.
30. *ibid*, p 24.
31. *ibid*, p 16
32. This problem calls for a radically different approach to the management of expectations. As the field gets crowded it will become increasingly unlikely for young Bahraini managers to duplicate the meteoric careers of their elders.

33. *ibid*, pp 28-29.
34. The terms "ascription" and "achievement" as used in this context are borrowed from sociological theory.
35. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) Op. cit (Appendix H) pp 15-18
36. *ibid*, p 21.
37. Chief Executive Officers Interview - Profile of Bahraini Manager, (Appendix A).
38. References is made here to the theory X vs theory Y dichotomy as introduced by Douglas McGregor. See D. McGregor (1960) The Human Side of Enterprise, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.
39. Reference is made here to Fiedler's pioneering research on contingency approaches to management, particularly in the area of leadership. See F. Fiedler (1967) A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness. New York: McGraw Hill.
40. Owens, J. (1981) "A reappraisal of leadership theory and training." Personnel Administration, no 1, pp 75-99.
41. For a more elaborate analysis for the concept of power distance, refer to J. Hofstede (1984) Cultural Consequences, International Differences in Work-Related Values, Beverly Hills: Sage Pub.
42. Please refer to "Profile of the Bahrain Manager", (Appendix B).
43. The term "leadership styles" as employed here is referred to the literature typology of Autocratic, Democratic, and Laissez-Faire. The same typology is also referred to in such terms as "tell" and "sell" etc. For a classic

treatment of this issue see R. G. Likert and J. G. Likert (1979) New Ways of Managing Conflict, New York: McGraw-Hill.

44. This issue is at the heart of the methodological debate as to the nature of social science, over-rationalistic models of man, particularly in economics and psychology.
45. This phenomenon has perhaps been first experienced with the Hawthorne Experiments and hence came to be known as the Hawthorne effect. In terms of modern motivation research, special reference should be made to the valance-Expectancy approach. See Porter, and Lawler.
46. Porter L. W. and Lawler, E. E. (1978) Managerial Attitudes and Performance. Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin.
47. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) Op. cit, p 29.
48. A detailed analysis of this phenomenon has been provided in chapter two.
49. Follow-up CEO Questionnaire, (Appendix C) p 12.
50. Chief Executive Officers (CEO's) Interview - Profile of the Bahraini Manager. (Appendix A).
51. Al-Jaffary, A., and Hollingsworth, A. (1983) Op. cit, pp 143-152.
52. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) Op. cit, p 26.
53. *ibid*.
54. *ibid*, p 41.
55. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Op. cit, p 8.



56. Follow-up CEO Questionnaire (Appendix C).
57. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) Op. cit, p 42.
58. Composite Profile of Bahraini Managers Component I - Self Perception (Appendix B).
59. ibid.
60. ibid.
61. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Op. cit.
62. Composite Profile of Bahraini Managers (Appendix B) Op. cit.
63. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Op. cit, p 24.
64. ibid.
65. ibid, p 33.
66. Badaway, M. K. (1980) "Styles of mideastern managers." California Management Review, vol XXII, no 2, Spring, pp 51-58.
67. Porter, L. W. and Lawler E. E. (1968) Op. cit.
68. ibid.
69. This fact, among others, weighed heavily in favour of approaching this investigation at 3 interrelated levels of analysis namely: macro, intermediate and micro.
70. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) Op. cit, p 20.

71. Gulf Polytechnic (1986) The Bahraini Management in Transition. Seminar proceedings (Appendix J) p 49.\*
72. Follow-up CEO Questionnaire (Appendix C).
73. Najjar, G. (1986) "The Bahrain management profession in transition: Problems and prospects," paper presented at the Seminar on The Bahrain Management Profession in Transition, Gulf Polytechnic, May.
74. *ibid.*
75. *ibid.*
76. *ibid.*
77. *ibid.*
78. Private interview with the author.
79. Composite profile of Bahraini Managers, Component II, (Appendix B) Op. cit.
80. For a more detailed analysis of this issue, please refer to chapter 2.
81. *ibid.*
82. Najjar, G. (1986) Op. cit.
83. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Op. cit., p 10.
84. *ibid.*
85. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) Op. cit., p 19.

86. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Op. cit, pp 15-17.
87. The concept of "achievement motivation" was first suggested by D. McClelland (1961) The Achieving Society. Princeton: Van Nostrand.
88. The question of management know-how transfer cross culturally is more explicitly addressed in chapter seven of this thesis.
89. Murrell, K. (1981) "Understanding the Egyptian manager: A third-world management development experience." Leadership and Organisational Development Journal, vol 2, no 3, pp 12-16.
90. Schon, D. A. (1983) The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action. London: Temple Smith Ltd.
91. Moran, R. T. and Harris, P. R. (1982) Managing Cultural Synergy. Houston: Gulf Pub. Co.
92. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) Op. cit, p 33.
93. For a more penetrating analysis of cultural constraints facing Bahraini management please refer to chapter two.
94. This interrelationship has been firmly established since Max Weber made his seminar contribution. See Max Weber (1968) Economy and Society. Translated by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Vol 3. New York: Bedminster Press.
95. See G. T. Hall (1959) "The Silent Language", Greenwich Ct: Fawatt.
96. Weber, M. (1968) Op. cit.
97. Please refer to pp 82 - 91 of this chapter.
98. This important observation was examined in depth in chapter two.



## **C H A P T E R   F O U R**

### **MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT FOR BAHRAIN: SCANNING THE OPTIONS**

## CHAPTER FOUR

### INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter explored the inner dynamics of the Bahraini management culture by tapping the experiences of managers and capturing the diversity and tensions permeating the management profession in Bahrain. An explicit attempt was made to allow managers to speak for themselves and voice their perceptions, frustrations and contradictions. As can be seen from the analysis, the diversity and tensions in the management community in Bahrain surface most clearly when the question of which direction management development should take. A case in point: in the Chief Executive Officers seminar on Corporate Culture (Appendix H) one of the participants commented on the issue of professionalism by saying that:

"Professional Management meant different things to different people, and there was room in the profession for people from all backgrounds. What then went into the making of a Bahraini or Gulf manager? What were the attitudinal, behavioural and skill requirements, and did they vary from company to company, sector to sector or management level to management level?"(1)

Another Chief Executive was concerned about Bahrain and its international links when he pointed out:

"Bahrain was really the melting pot for many nationalities and thus many corporate cultures. These different cultures intermingle against the background of the Bahraini general culture with its ethics and customs. The problem is to incorporate what is best for local needs into a good corporate culture."(2)

Yet another participant was concerned about the transferability of managerial know-how. He referred to it by posing questions:

"Could a locally trained professional manager really expect to master the full range of managerial skills needed without extensive experience in the particular industry? How transferable were these professional managers - it may be that for technical as well as for corporate culture reasons they are not as transferable as some might like to think?"(3)

A Chief Executive in support of the Japanese example made a reference to the Japanese corporate culture by pointing out that:

"It appeared as one uniform culture throughout Japanese industry." He wondered whether instead of grappling with the problems of developing different corporate cultures here, would it not be preferable to adopt that of the Japanese as it was obviously a successful one."(4)

In a seminar conducted a year later, (Chief Executive Officers Seminar on Strategy for Continuing Management Education, May 1985 - Appendix I) similar concerns were expressed again as to the direction that management development should follow.



One of the key Chief Executives expressly admitted confusion about what was an acceptable management culture to Bahrainis. He confessed that in his use of Western derived management terms and concepts he finds Bahrainis, although appearing to understand, have a different perception.<sup>(5)</sup> In the same seminar, another key Bahraini felt that the basic problems facing Bahraini managers stemmed from two major sources:

- "1. The quality of education and the difference or variance in educational philosophies. A majority of managers had undergone a Western style of education.
2. At work, the Western style of management has had to be accepted regardless of background."

He argued that: "The Bahraini manager thus has to reconcile both his education and profession with his natural environment and culture and is faced with conflicts." He strongly felt, however, "that it was not the management culture that should be revised to suit the local culture but rather the reverse; that socially, politically and economically, a degree of maturity was required to fuse with those cultures which have successfully evolved in the West."<sup>(6)</sup>

Responding to this remark a key Bahraini public executive took issue and voiced reservation:

"As management in Bahrain was relatively new the role of Gulf Polytechnic and similar institutions was to study the hidden contents of administration and to be selective in what parts of Western philosophy are accepted to ensure that only what was suitable to the Bahraini culture and environment was taught."<sup>(7)</sup>

Such and other similar comments stated in seminars, interviews or questionnaires by chief executive officers, senior public managers, and policy makers clearly reveal the inner tensions of a changing management culture from within, and uncover in depth the wide differences and conflicts vying to shape it.

While such options are enormously varied, almost open-ended, given the complexity and dynamism of the Bahrain management force field, only four are practical enough to warrant a serious investigation. In the order in which they will be examined, these four are:

1. The Westernisation Option
2. The Bahrainisation Option
3. The Japanisation Option
4. The Pragmatisation Option

These options will be explored in the light of the reference made in the previous chapter to the concepts of leadership motivation and managerial professionalism. However, such a discussion undoubtedly requires a prelude that addresses some salient features critical to any comparison of options. Such variables include: Values, beliefs, cognitive processes, and interpersonal skills.

## SALIENT FEATURES

### (a) VALUES

Values form a central part of the human personality and therefore may significantly influence the various facets of performance. England and Lee (1974)<sup>(8)</sup> discuss the impact of values on performance and suggest several reasons for their effect on leadership. For instance, values help to shape the leader's perception of a situation, influence decisions and solutions to problems, affect inter-personal relationships, define what may be or may not be ethical behaviour, and help to determine how well a leader will accept or resist various organisational pressures. England argues that values can influence behaviour through either behaviour channelling or perceptual screening, or both. The former has a direct impact on behaviour, the latter, an indirect impact through the individual's selection, filtering, and interpretation of what they see and hear. England's notion that value systems influence behaviour has received support from a study of Indian and Australian managers carried out by Whitely (1979)<sup>(9)</sup>. The choice of behaviour was found to be highly related to their values.

A characteristic of value systems is that they are relatively stable and do not change rapidly. Moreover,



as one ages, one's value system becomes less flexible and less susceptible to change. The stability of value systems may help explain why managerial styles exhibit a lagged response to changing environmental conditions. Managerial values embedded in a culture affect organisational leadership, goals and strategies.

According to the literature<sup>(10)</sup> three dimensions of particular consequences have been studied and categorised as "Traditionalism versus Modernity", "Pragmatism versus Idealism" and "Particularism versus Universalism". According to Bass, "Traditionalism places emphasis on family, class, revealed truths, reverence for the past, and ascribed status. Modernism on the other hand, places emphasis on merit, rationality, and progress". Bahrain seems to be caught between these two dimensions. This issue was referred to by one of the key participants of the May 1985 seminar when he asked:

"What could be done to blend the 'old' with the 'new' staff in order to build an efficient organisation? Many existing 'old' staff had reached senior positions during a period when accelerated promotion was common because of a shortage of qualified experienced Bahraini managers; today, the situation is different; competition for management posts is keener and young managers with enthusiasm and fresh ideas have to work with 'old' ones who may be set in their 'old' way."(11)

Bahraini organisations have to accommodate both. The traditional leader, patriarchal yet adjusted to modern business methods is still common to many organisations in Bahrain. Besides, there is also a reversion by many of the educated "professional" managers to a semi-traditional point of view, mainly due to social pressures for conformity and fear that valuing modernity might carry the risk of rejection by a conservative society or weaken the primary group loyalties they cherish.

In the Gulf area one can quite clearly see that industrialisation and modernisation are more or less superimposed on a traditional socio-cultural system. As seen earlier, this situation is bound to create tensions which seem to have been successfully contained so far. Some writers argue that the modern and the traditional can exist in a "prismatic society", i.e. a society no longer totally traditional but not modern in the Western sense as observed in chapter two. Shaker in a case study of Saudi Arabia argues that "modernisation does not necessarily entail destruction of traditional structure."<sup>(12)</sup>

The second dimension is "Pragmatism versus Idealism". Pragmatism seems to be associated with a high rate of advancement (Bass & Burger 1979)<sup>(13)</sup>. Bass<sup>(14)</sup>

quotes many researchers who found pragmatism, as measured by their Personal Values Questionnaire, related to success of managers in the United States, Australia, India and Japan. In all these countries, successful managers are more likely to hold pragmatic values emphasising productivity, profitability, and achievement. Pragmatists look for what will work, idealists search for the "truth".(15)

Value differences are important because they affect a manager's degree of pragmatism. According to the literature, studies carried out by England et al (1974)<sup>(16)</sup> suggest that Americans give more importance to the goal of profit maximization than to employee welfare. In England's study, for instance, it was found that Indian managers regard organisational stability as an end in itself, while profit maximization is a means towards the goal. For American managers, the relationship is exactly the opposite. Personal goals are another area of notable difference. Our study of Bahraini managers shows that they attach importance to dignity, job satisfaction, prestige and power.

Personal acquisitiveness versus social concern also vary across countries. In a study carried out by Bass, Burger et al, and in a multi-national survey of IBM



personnel completed by Hofstede (1978), wide variations were found. Factor scores also varied greatly in how the different nationals responded to questions dealing with national norms for personal acquisitiveness in contrast to social concerns. For example, Japanese personnel were most acquisitive and Scandinavians were most socially concerned.<sup>(17)</sup>

The third dimension is "Particularism versus Universalism". A particularistic value orientation implies institutionalised obligations of friendship, whereas the universalistic value orientation stresses institutionalized obligations to society and puts less stress upon interpersonal considerations.<sup>(18)</sup> A particularistic orientation stresses inter-personal ties, even if they may be detrimental to organisational effectiveness. In a country like Bahrain where particularism is still dominant organisational efficiency might suffer, together with effectiveness. Perhaps in Western societies, particularly the United States, universalism is likely to be more common, but there can be little doubt as to where Bahrain and other Gulf States fall on this continuum.

In the same way, the values of a culture affect individual expectations of organisational rewards. For instance, in the United States, workers see themselves

receiving wages in exchange for services, but in the Middle East, compensation is also partly an obligation of the employer, who is responsible for employee welfare. Compensation is less likely to be related to the services performed than to the individual's needs. Strict performance appraisal becomes difficult to apply under such circumstances. By the same token, wherever particularism flourishes, it is bound to result in intense loyalty to one boss and the formation of cliques.<sup>(19)</sup>

(b) BELIEFS

Values reflect an individual's normative orientation. Belief, in contrast, reflects individual's conceptions of what the world is like. Differences in beliefs reflect differences in how people construct social reality. Differences in perceptions of social reality lead, in turn, to different behaviours. As in other spheres (e.g. values and needs), there are similarities and differences in managerial beliefs across culture.

The assumption that managers can determine results for instance, has had a profound effect on the evolution of management concepts in the United States (Newman 1970)<sup>(20)</sup>. For example, emphasis on precise, accurate data and a belief in the importance of planning are possible only when people accept the

promise of self-determination. In cultures where fatalism is prevalent, emphasis on control may be diminished by the belief that external forces determine the resultant outcome. Management style would tend to be passive under these circumstances. An important aspect of manager's belief systems concerns the attitude towards participation. Although managers may have favourable beliefs concerning participative practices, they may also feel that the average worker prefers to be directed and to avoid responsibility (Haire, Ghiselli, and Porter 1966: Bascett and Bass, 1976, 1976)<sup>(21)</sup>. Such variations may be attributable to cultural differences. American managers, for example, tend to believe more than other countries, particularly the Middle East, that individuals have a capacity for exercising their initiative and displaying leadership behaviour. The tendency in the Gulf, including Bahrain, is towards the dominance of the one-man syndrome and the trend is to deal with most organisational matters only at the top, thereby creating strong tendencies for centralisation.

Closely associated with managerial values are managerial needs. Whereas managerial values directly affect an organisation's performance, managerial needs do so indirectly by influencing managers' satisfaction with their existing jobs. To the extent that an



organisation is unable to address the managers' needs, their satisfaction will be low. This, in turn, may affect aspects of behaviour, which have a strong bearing on performance.

The question of need has been studied by many researchers. Haire, Ghiselli, and Porter (1966)<sup>(22)</sup> surveyed approximately 3,600 managers from 14 countries. Need has been studied from the perspective of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, as well as from McClelland's perspective, which emphasizes the need for achievement, affiliation and power.

In agreement with the Bass, Burger, et al, findings (1979)<sup>(23)</sup> Maslow's (1954) higher level needs such as esteem and self-actualisation were judged important by managers in most of the countries studied. But the satisfaction of these higher needs was deemed inadequate, although the lowest level physiological needs, of relatively little importance were seen to be fairly satisfied. The need for security considered to be important, was relatively adequately fulfilled in line with expectations.

According to Bass,<sup>(24)</sup> the perception of one's degree of need fulfilment depends on his level of satisfaction and hierarchical rank in the organisation. For

example, in Japan it was found that lower management consistently indicated greater dissatisfaction in all areas surveyed than did upper management.

McClelland and his colleagues' work resembles Maslow's but only in some ways. Their original study (1961)<sup>(25)</sup> found that individuals had a higher need for achievement. Accordingly it was suggested that a positive relationship exists between the strength of achievement, motivation and a country's level of economic development. However, some variation does exist in the developed countries as well, but the extent of it is far less than the variation in developing countries. For instance, England (1978)<sup>(26)</sup> found that United States managers highly valued achievement and competence, whereas Australians placed a lower value on achievement, success, and competition.

As conceptualised by Maslow and McClelland, managers' and subordinates' differences in need strength should influence managerial styles. Because need strength varies across cultures, managerial styles should also be expected to vary. It is expected that in cultures in which safety and security needs dominate, cautious behaviour will predominate. In cultures in which self-actualisation is the dominant need, innovative

behaviours are much more likely. Individuals who have high safety needs may need a protective superior, individuals with high esteem needs would respond more to praise; and individuals with high self-actualisation needs would require more freedom and opportunity for participation. However, in the case of Bahrain the situation is more complex. To begin with, in most private businesses, Chief Executives perceive their role as heads of an extended family. For example, in addition to the usual demands for better working conditions, promotion, higher salaries, etc., a Bahraini executive feels obliged to help employees with their family and their personal problems; provide personal care and guidance as a father figure. The extended family is still the basis of an Arab society where it is important to establish family identity whenever two Bahrainis meet. In contrast, a Japanese manager would refer to the organisation, while the West appears to focus on a person's profession or occupation. The implication of these expectations are that Bahraini managers have a multiplicity of needs operating simultaneously without necessarily fitting into a hierarchical form as suggested by Maslow. The above discussions have illustrated very briefly how differences in need perception may lead to differences in appropriate leadership styles. It was also pointed out that differences in beliefs, though closely



associated with values, can have implications for management styles. Belief differences normally lead to content differences, and in this way shape the reality for managers. Cognitive processes can also affect how individuals view reality. A look at such processes is now in order.

### (c) COGNITIVE PROCESSES

As pointed out above, cultures differ in how they construct social reality. Researchers have pointed out that in constructing and trying to understand reality, individuals use a practical set of guidelines - a paradigm. Redding and Martyn-Johns (1979)<sup>(27)</sup> accordingly emphasize paradigms because they guide the process of cognition. To the extent that paradigms are influenced by culture, they are a form of social construct. According to Martyn-Johns, paradigms constitute an important guide to behaviour. It also affects motivation which, in turn, influences behaviour. A distinction is made between a unidirectional causal paradigm which is claimed to be found in Western societies, and a multi causal paradigm as a characteristic of many transitional societies. The literature refers to the difference between the two paradigms and its implications for management. It points out that Oriental cultures have a less-differentiated view of reality than Western

culture, and consequently it suggests that as a managerial activity, organising is difficult in Oriental cultures because abstract thinking is less natural for people. Using the Chinese firms as examples it is further argued that individuals in Oriental cultures cannot conceptualize the necessity of an organised planning system, formalized information, and clear allocation of responsibilities. Thus, their managers' behaviour may not enhance organisational effectiveness and efficiency. According to Wright, et al (1977)<sup>(28)</sup> managers from Oriental countries may be unrealistic in their assessment of situations, the various strategies they employ may lack maximal effectiveness from a strictly organisational perspective.

We may also view differences between Oriental and Western cultures from the perspective of shame and guilt. Oriental (shame) cultures tend to produce restraint on interpersonal behaviour: individuals accept the verdicts of others. A possible consequence is that autocratic behaviour may be more acceptable in these cultures. In a Western (guilt) culture, the tendency is for the individual to be largely accountable to himself or herself. Accordingly, the means of influencing subordinates must differ in these two types of culture. From these distinctions, Redding

and Martyn-Johns<sup>(29)</sup> suggest many possible hypotheses. For instance, they refer to the leadership style that managers in the Oriental countries employ will not rely on interpersonal confrontation with subordinates; the control of performance will be less formal, and managers will show less precision and less urgency in various matters. Some of these issues have already been highlighted in our analysis of Bahraini leadership style such as preference for a person-oriented approach, personalities and connection in a wide range of activities. By virtue of the position of the manager in the community and in the organisation in Bahrain he is expected to wield his power to influence the course of events in favour of relatives and friends. The majority of Arab managers tend to dislike impersonal and transient relationships when conducting business. Another example is the open-door policy as part of the manager's role where they are expected to attend to work-related problems as well as personal problems of employees.

The above discussion has emphasized besides values, beliefs and needs, how cognitive factors can exert varied influences on the process of management in different cultures.

If people's perceptions of reality are so thoroughly



conditioned by the cultural context of their socialisation, it should come as no surprise that differing attitudes can also be attributed to cultural differences. The concept of attitudes is very difficult and complex to define. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975)<sup>(30)</sup> describe attitudes as complex systems comprising the person's beliefs about particular objects and his or her action tendencies with respect to these objects (a person, physical object, place, etc.).

#### (d) TIME

The literature suggests that Oriental and Western cultures differ in how they conceptualize time. The modern sense of time originates in a mechanical perception of the world as mathematically divided into hours, minutes, seconds, etc. The emphasis is on precision and the future (Ronen, 1981; 1984)<sup>(31)</sup>. Industry follows this artificial, mechanical pace. For instance, Americans are socialized to be very sensitive to time. People plan for months or weeks ahead (as evidenced by the appointment book) and arrive promptly for appointments. In contrast, Middle Easterners tend to lump all time beyond a week into one category - the future (Nord 1976)<sup>(32)</sup>. Each of these attitudes towards time represents different kinds of cultural conditioning. Obviously, each attitude seems natural

when everyone works according to its assumptions.

Culture also affects the way people view and use space. For instance, the normal distance individuals maintain when interacting often varies from culture to culture. Hall (1959)<sup>(33)</sup> noted the difference between people in Latin America and the United States when they stand together. He also noted that different approaches to space affect the physical arrangement of offices.

(e) ACHIEVEMENT

McClelland (1961)<sup>(34)</sup> argues that entrepreneurial characteristics are important to successful industrialisation and that people who have a strong need for achievement tend to exhibit characteristics such as propensity for taking responsibility, a desire for concrete feedback, and a tendency to take calculated risks.

Achievement is an attribute that some societies recognize and encourage, whereas others might place lesser emphasis on the concept or lack of it altogether. From a managerial perspective, it is probably more important to consider how differences in need for achievement will manifest themselves in behaviour. For instance, modern Western management

theories emphasize the importance of giving employees the opportunity to satisfy their higher-level "growth" needs, including the need for achievement. Therefore, societies that underemphasize or actually discourage individual achievement, however, will not attach much importance to such opportunities. Bahraini managers, for example, are subjected to a wide array of pressures, both implicit and explicit which they are expected to satisfy. Such expectations include material affluence and social mobility.

(f) DIFFERENCES IN RISK TAKING

Bass (1981)<sup>(35)</sup> suggests that high risk takers are more influential in discussions than low risk takers. Bass also suggests that individuals who are prepared to take risks are likely to be potential leaders. Many authors such as Marquis (1962)<sup>(36)</sup>, Collins, et al (1964)<sup>(37)</sup> have reported results suggesting that high risk takers tend to be more persuasive and more cautious members of a group. Burnstein (1969)<sup>(38)</sup> also points out that high risk takers are characterised by high self-confidence. This motivates them to influence members of the group to follow their lead. The effect on one's influence in dealing with one's immediate group is one dimension of risk taking. From a managerial perspective, however, another important aspect of risk taking is its influence on one's



decision in relation to the external environment. Since achievement motivation varies cross-culturally, so does aggressiveness or conservatism in risk taking. Similarly, Farmer and Richman<sup>(39)</sup> point out that managers who have a relatively high achievement drive are the best risk takers. They are perhaps individuals who are neither conservative nor overly aggressive and speculative. What can perhaps be taken into consideration is that the boundaries of rational risk taking may be enhanced through better education, more information, and creation of a more favourable attitude toward the scientific method.<sup>(40)</sup>

(g) CONFORMITY

What is distinctive in most cases of decision making in Bahrain as our study has shown is the emphasis on informality among managers and executives. This is because they prefer to use the consultative style. This consultation is usually carried out on a person-to-person basis whereby group meetings could be avoided wherever possible. What is important here is the ability and capacity to exert influence and maintain control over actions of others which is also intended to encourage conformity. Conformity can exert a profound influence on individual behaviour. It would be difficult, for instance, to expect most people to work creatively on their own where attitudes towards

conformity are positive and those towards individuality are negative. On the other hand, it would be equally difficult to emphasize group cooperation in a society in which individuality is high prized and attitudes towards conformity are by and large negative.

The relative degree of conformity and individuality tend to vary from society to society. It has been hypothesized by researchers that in societies in which the socio-economic system encourages individual initiative, competitiveness will emerge as part of the dominant life-style. By comparison, a system that encourages less initiative will tend to produce a life-style stressing conformity. Such differing degrees of conformity have organisational implications. For example, the emphasis on cooperation within the Japanese work setting can be confusing to someone unfamiliar with the system - hence, the difficulty in indiscriminately applying Japanese management style say, in the United States or elsewhere such as Bahrain for that matter.

#### (h) LEADERS' INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND BACKGROUND

Undoubtedly, managers' or leaders' interpersonal skills and backgrounds differ across cultures. Such differences may affect their performance as well as their leadership styles. In some countries managers

should have a first degree to be selected for a managerial position whereas others insist on a post-graduate level of education, and, yet there may be countries that do not attach much importance to formal educational credentials.

There are also countries, where management positions are affected by family backgrounds, while in some others, the UK as an example, managers are normally selected on the basis of job performance. In France, on the other hand eligibility for top executive positions is to some extent a function of class rankings at the most prestigious schools.

These differences in managers' origin affect managerial style. There are cultures where children learn obedience to their elders and acceptance of authority within the family system (e.g. Gulf States, India). This could lead later on to a tendency in organisations for minimal delegation, and unquestioning acceptance of authoritarian leadership.

In the United States, however, where managers come from all classes, and are relatively well-educated, there is more of an emphasis on participatory decision making and delegation of authority.



Bass (1981)<sup>(41)</sup> suggests that the social perceptual skills, inter-personal competence, effective intelligence, and efficient work habits associated with leadership also tend to vary across cultures. Culture variations in these skills reflect the variation in need for such skills across cultures. Preferred awareness is the managers' willingness to be turned to others' feelings, to be concerned with subordinates' welfare, and to accept feedback. Actual awareness is the actual rather than the preferred dimension of understanding oneself and others. Submissiveness is the extent to which people resign to abiding by rules and submit to authority.

Reliance on others is essentially a state of dependence that affects problem solving. Favouring of group decision-making, concern for human relations and cooperative peer relations were other factors that Bass and Burger (1979)<sup>(42)</sup> related to interpersonal competence in a statistical analysis of the data on 12 countries.

In analyzing behaviour, we must also acknowledge the problem of ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism is the belief that "our way" of doing things is superior. Studies by Piaget (1970)<sup>(43)</sup> and Tajfel, et al, (1970)<sup>(44)</sup> showed that children learn which countries are "good"

and "bad" before they learn any thing else about these particular countries. Coupled with pervasive ethnocentrism, this lack of knowledge about other countries results in indefinite bias when attempting to understand how and why behaviour differs across cultures. Recognition of ethnocentrism is a key factor in avoiding its influence.

In conclusion, two main themes have emerged from the above brief discussion which should be taken into consideration when examining the different management development options available to Bahrain. Firstly, although leadership behaviour may have similar functions across cultures, the nature of these behaviours is likely to vary due to differences in values, needs, beliefs cognitive processes, risk preferences, leader's background and interpersonal skills. As situations vary across cultures, a theory applicable to one may be irrelevant to another.

The research findings on leadership are nevertheless important in emphasizing that culture affects leadership styles and thus contributes to a better understanding of leadership differences across cultures, though possibly from a predominantly Western view point. Secondly, cultural conditioning is powerful. Societies condition their members in one way

or another. Such conditioning affects not only behaviour, but actual perceptions of reality. The attitudinal differences that affect human behaviour stem from a variety of influences found within cultures. Important among these influences are conformity, achievement, time, space, and ethnocentrism. Awareness of these in different cultures can provide a knowledge and a chance to compensate for such differences. Consequently, understanding social conditioning, normally known as socialisation, is an important aspect of cross-cultural management studies. With this brief discussion in mind, we now turn back to examine the four major options that seem to be perceived by Bahraini managers as alternative directions for management development.

## MAJOR OPTIONS

### 1. THE WESTERNISATION OPTION

It must have become apparent by now that there are Bahraini managers who seem to equate management development, as indeed the whole process of modernity in the broader sense, with Westernisation.<sup>(45)</sup> Members of this group point out that modern management evolved in Western society in response to problems encountered as part of industrialisation and the emergence of an



organisational society. The West continues to lead the rest of the world, this view goes, in managerial know-how where it enjoys an edge more important than even its technological superiority. Is it not true, after all, that most of the successful first and second generation Bahraini managers were educated in the West and established their record in Bahrain through applying Western techniques? Is Bahrain not the beneficiary of the management expertise of large numbers of expatriates, mostly Western, who are to be found in all its major organisations? Are the universities and management institutes of Western countries not flooded by students and trainees from all over the world, including Bahrain who are there for the sole purpose of acquiring management skills which they hope to transfer back home? These and similar questions constitute the necessary background which explains the insistence of some managers in Bahrain to approach management development as the large scale transfer of Western managerial know-how with every effort made to ensure its success even if this means altering certain aspects of the larger socio-cultural context incompatible with the newly injected ideas. The world, after all, offers many examples of cultures, including Western culture(s), that had to undergo radical changes by way of

accommodating new modes of thought and behaviour. Bahrain is now at this stage, this group believes, and change is to be expected, accepted and facilitated.

While appealing at the surface to a country like Bahrain which values being in the international limelight, the Westernisation option, as many Bahraini managers suggest, is fraught with serious dangers. To start with, Westernisation is hardly one unified model clearly definable and transferable.

The earliest attempts to understand leadership centered on determining what specific traits make a person an effective leader. Later termed the great man theory, which means that some people have more of the leadership trait than others. Traits, however, are also affected by cultures as one Bahraini manager felt that was one reason for the incompatibility of such theories with Bahrain can be the Islamic culture<sup>(46)</sup>.

On the specific issue of leadership, one of the chief executive officer in the 1985 seminar was also concerned about the teaching of democratic (Western) style of management in an environment which offers a different frame of reference.<sup>(47)</sup>

To cite another example outside Bahrain, but in an Arab

country, Busson, et al (1984)<sup>(48)</sup> reported on deliberately choosing to introduce foreign concepts in a management development programme conducted for the joint Egypt-United States Business Council in Egypt. They consciously set out to teach Egyptian managers Western (American) management concepts and techniques because, they argued, the business climate was similar and there was a need to create a cadre of managers capable of operating effectively in a more competitive environment. The authors provide observations, from their experience of Egyptian management and further suggest that such characteristics are at odds with Western, particularly American, management development models.

Perhaps the main issue of Western (American) theories and their transferability is the awareness that organisations are culture-bound. This applies not only to the behaviour of people within organisations and to the organisations as a whole; even the theories developed to explain behaviour in organisations reflect the national culture of the author, and so do the methods and techniques that are suggested for the management of organisations.<sup>(49)</sup> Thus, the specific characteristics of the United States in many ways is very different from the Gulf states. The United States is high on pragmatism, emphasizing profit maximization,



organisational efficiency, and productivity. It is individualistic and action oriented, with a high tolerance for risk and a low uncertainty avoidance. Need for achievement is high, with stress on individual self-realisation, leadership, and wealth as life goals. Emphasis is on democratic leadership, favouring group decision-making and participation, with a low score on power distance. One-way communication is disliked. The masculinity index score is moderate, with a preference for considerate relations-oriented leaders. Americans believe in self-determination, resulting in decisions based on precise, accurate data, and an emphasis on planning. Rewards based on merit are considered appropriate because the individual is seen as being responsible for outcomes.

Possibly one of the main reasons why the culture concept has been resisted is that it throws doubt on many established beliefs. It has been argued that fundamental beliefs vary widely from one culture to the next. On this issue Ashton argues that:

"Both commonsense experience and academic investigations would agree that these cultural differences, which can influence the efficiency of a business - in terms, for example of the quality of communications, commitment and motivation of employees, and the appropriateness of organisational structure, control and management style."(50)

This does not mean that countries cannot learn from each other. In other words, the Westernisation option in management development calls on Bahrain to make critical selection of different intra-western models without clear and valid selection criteria at the time when lines separating such criteria are not clearly drawn. Equally evident is the fact that no developing country has yet managed to totally overcome problems of large-scale assimilation of Western managerial know-how. (51)

## 2. THE BAHRAINISATION OPTION

The Bahrainisation option referred to here does not represent the terminology as often referred to in Bahrain which means replacing the expatriate manpower with Bahrainis. The term Bahrainisation option used here refers to a direction or scenario for management development. A direction that is 100% Bahraini that implies in toto to the fabric of leadership and motivation at macro level. Bahrainisation as referred to here means total rejection of any external ideas, technology, change, innovation.

Unlike Western societies, the intricate roles and rules of complex organisations have yet to be assimilated into the broader socio-cultural

framework of Bahrain. There seems to be intensive soul-searching among managers covered in our surveys as to whether en masse Westernisation is a feasible course of action for Bahrain.

If the "Westernisation package" does not seem to suggest the answer to Bahrain's management development needs, could Bahrainisation fulfil the promise? Understood as a rejectionist response to Westernisation and couched in language emphasizing cultural authenticity, Bahrainisation seems to appeal to only a tiny minority of the Bahrain managers surveyed. In stark contrast to the "Westernisation" group, those who call for Bahrainisation base their arguments on an opposite set of assumptions. To be sure, those in favour of Bahrainisation invoke images not of patriotism or nationalistic pride but rather failed attempts at technology transfer especially in "soft" fields like management.

Bahrainisation would inevitably mean reinforcing the influence of the environment, on social behaviour and on the attitude of the executive as a whole. One of the most serious problems for the executive identified earlier was the low value placed on time by people around him.



Bahrainisation would also mean bringing in question the executive's role within the society's paternalistic and familial nature, thus encouraging the decision-making styles of the executive towards "personalised" and "informal" approaches when dealing with subordinates and employees in the organisation. It must be borne in mind that executives can and often do play a vital role in social change. They may do that consciously or unconsciously. Whatever the motives are, they can indeed be agents of social change. Bahrainisation may not assist in minimizing the fusion of business, social and personal lives. If executives prefer to discourage the traditional open-door policy by insisting that their employees go through the organisational hierarchy, then Bahrainisation would hinder this change as expected.

Those who emphasize Bahrainisation also prefer the authoritarian style of management, observance of specific inter-personal rituals and mannerisms, and maintaining an open-door policy where friends, relatives, employees and clients feel free to walk in almost any time. This also means the practice of by-passing the chain of command and encouraging deviations from formal standards.

It is true to say that in Bahrain a national management culture is yet to crystalize, although it has been in the making for the past few years. For instance, at the micro level, one notices a variety of corporate cultures within the various foreign and local institutions operating in the country. The general picture is one of dynamic transition and change that has yet to force a certain degree of accommodation on the traditional culture. The Bahrainisation option under such circumstances will push the Bahraini management culture to be continuously constrained by the general culture, and confined permanently to whatever limits of tolerance it gets. This, undoubtedly, will have an adverse effect on attitude towards work, motivation, time management, decision-making, conflict resolution, employee discipline, etc.

On the question of cross-cultural transfer of managerial know-how, Bahrainisation would not facilitate such transfer mainly because the general culture might constrain professional management practice. Those very few who argue for total Bahrainisation are concerned that Bahrain as part of the Arab world has a culture permeated by Islamic beliefs, traditions and norms of behaviour,

where the extended family is strong enough to reflect itself in the way institutions function as well as the inter-personal relationships of members. They believe that any diversion from it may also affect our way of life where taboos play a major role as many actions are dichotomised into the permitted and forbidden, into shameful and acceptable, and where the male is still dominant. Bahrainisation, for the minority that favours it totally is seen as a way of asserting the socio-cultural identity of a society "invaded" by multinational corporations.

Many members of the young generation are concerned about social and business pressures which impinge on the attitudes and behaviour of a typical manager in Bahrain such as restrictions on women, marketing constraints, work attitude, value of time, non-business commitments and expectations, etc. as well as the fact that some of the experience, attitudes and beliefs which their elders hold are not always reliable or adequate for them to shape the future of Bahrain. The young generation feels that the alternatives from which they have to choose are more varied and complex than those which their elders faced, and realize that the world has become more complex which necessitates learning new



ways and developing new guidelines for dealing with them. This issue was a concern of one of the leading Chief Executives in Bahrain who pointed out in his paper to the 1985 Seminar when he said that:

"the new breed of managers may find it frustrating that their seniors are slow to change, e.g. to introduce more delegation of responsibility or to invite constructive criticism."(52)

One Bahraini CEO was perhaps voicing a representative view when he indicated that instead of an "ideology" of total Bahrainisation, what was needed was a specific set of professional improvements. He referred to four areas where he believes progress should be made in developing management: (1) more delegation; (2) more conflict management; (3) better management of time; and (4) developing skills to cope with an ever-changing work environment.

Rather than total Bahrainisation which is hardly feasible perhaps some of the characteristics that managers in Bahrain would like to see practised by their people are strong work ethics, discipline, productivity, accuracy and precision, technical know-how and competence. The issues thus involve practical and operational considerations dealing

with productivity, efficiency and problem solving expertise. These are facts of life that have to be tackled. Organisations face increasing complexity and diversity not only in the external environment but in the internal environment as well. Given the increasing complexity and hostility of the environment, organisations in Bahrain need to adopt structures that are readily responsive to changing environmental conditions.

As a reaction to the present situation and the influence of the Bahraini culture at the macro level on management (i.e. the pull towards Bahrainisation), a leading chief executive in the may 1986 Gulf Polytechnic seminar argued that:

"What is important for Bahrain at present and in the future is following a modern approach to management emphasizing the scientific spirit, advanced technology and information systems. Such an approach would also allow managers a certain measure of freedom within a framework of strict accountability."(53)

A much stronger and comprehensive comment came from another key Bahraini executive who expressed his concern about the influence of the environment on the leadership style and management practice in Bahrain. Having acknowledged the economic

developments and progress made in Bahrain in the last few years, he pointed out to the contrast that exists between Western and Bahrain management practices and their respective environments. His statement on the Bahraini manager was related to the conflicts, contradiction and clashes that exist between him and his immediate surroundings. He argued that:

"a Bahraini manager faces conflicting demands and has to operate against the odds of individualism, selfishness and chaos. His credibility is normally the natural victim of this sad situation. Also affected is his efficiency and the morale of the whole institution."(54)

He posed a number of questions relating to a wide range of issues such as organisational design and employee selection, training and management development, attitude towards work, planning and control, professionalism and productivity. He was arguing for a shift from the existing quasi-professional and hybrid practices to more professional attitudes and approaches. It is quite evident that his concern and that of many others were for Bahrain to shift to an integrated approach to overcome the pitfalls of the Bahrainisation model that will only raise slogans of independence,



self-reliance and individual responsibility without actually achieving any of them.

It is also important that a majority (88%) of the April 1986 Chief Executive Officers surveyed disagreed with the premise that "sound management development requires near total Bahrainisation of materials and concentration on internal resources instead of importing ideas from outside". This, however, does not necessarily negate the conviction that managerial practices have to evolve internally and gradually to reflect norms, values and priorities embedded within the culture and capable of proving viable in the long-run. For management or any other profession is justified to the extent that it helps society attain its goals and objectives efficiently while preserving its ideals. To fulfil this role, management should reflect those very ideals and facilitate their penetration of intermediate subcultures in organisations so that they may be more effectively internalised by individual managers. There is a difference, however, between this gradual development and an "ideological" imposition from without.

Those who call for total Bahrainisation do not give

much weight to the argument that Bahrainisation is not feasible due to the presence of large numbers of expatriates in the country and the lack of Arabic-language teaching and training materials. The presence of so many expatriates, they counter, is the problem not the solution. It impedes the Bahrainisation process and creates conditions of perpetual dependency undercutting any genuine hope of evolving truly authentic management styles and home-grown know-how. In fact, the Bahrainisation group echoes a deep sentiment in the country when it voices scepticism against wholesale importation of management skills at a great cost and with no assured results.

Without committing themselves to total Westernisation, a majority of management professionals in Bahrain seem to have serious doubts concerning both the feasibility and desirability of Bahrainisation. Is it feasible they ask, to expect a country like Bahrain with little or no management experience to turn its back on all Western managerial know-how and develop its own repertoire of management techniques? Besides, the argument continues, can a regional service centre like Bahrain afford the price of not integrating into the international management

scene?

What many people do not appreciate is that, to a large extent, management is a Western subject, and the concept of management is almost always defined on the basis of Western assumptions and norms. No indigenous theory of management has been clearly formulated in the Orient to contrast with that of the West.<sup>(55)</sup> This is not, however, to say that there are no indigenous practices of management in the Orient: they do exist but, except for Japan, they are not clearly articulated.

### 3. THE JAPANISATION OPTION

With the impracticalities of both Bahrainisation and Westernisation made apparent, interest might shift to Japanisation as a possible solution. The problem with Japanisation, however, is that it is more of a cultural world-view than an isolated set of management techniques. In order to gain a proper perspective for examining the Japanese cultural tradition, we need to understand the ideology inherited from Tokugawa era - a period immediately preceding the modernisation of Japan from the beginning of the 17th century to the Meiji Restoration of 1868. The rulers of the era found an effective ideology in Confucianism imported from



China which concerned itself mainly with the correct observance of social relationships within a hierarchically oriented society. We consequently find in Tokugawa Japan a very rigid and vertically structural society with strong emphasis on authoritarian control on the one hand, and obedience on the other, giving rise to a series of highly regulated patterns of interpersonal relationships. The 1970s saw a remarkable resurgence of traditional values held by the Japanese long before modernisation.<sup>(56)</sup> These values include:

- Stress on discipline and duty, rather than on freedom.
- Emphasis on the family, the group, and the nation, rather than on the individual.
- Reliance on distinctions of status, rather than on social equality.

Hierarchy is established on the basis of age (older is superior), sex (male is superior), organisational status (higher rank is superior), and organisational power and size (large more powerful organisations are superior). The concept of hierarchy pervades every aspect of the culture - even the language. It has been argued by some authors that hierarchy promotes social

stability and harmony provides a frame of reference for relating to any other person, as well as being a measure of status. Bahrain society has similar characteristics but perhaps with different degrees of emphasis and the exception of an additional and powerful element which is the family or tribe of the manager. This dimension very often overrides all the other characteristics. Thus, there are situations where a person at a middle management or executive rank who works in a small organisation, might have a higher status than someone older, higher in position and works in a larger organisation.

The essence of the vertical relationships found in the Japanese society of the past and today may be expressed in the concept that refers to a traditional household of related members and also an artificial or simulated kinship group of unrelated individuals such as modern business firms. In Japan, therefore, the creation of informal and affective interpersonal relationships between leaders and subordinates is encouraged; leaders not only admit dependence on their subordinates but also use this situation to strengthen their relations with subordinates. Leaders act as coordinators to achieve goals collectively through the maintenance of harmony. In Japan, decision-making, for instance, is mostly approached through deliberation, consensus and

the involvement of all those who will be responsible for implementation of decisions. The ringi system of decision-making is considered as one of the most important features of Japanese management. In this system, responsibility for initiating actions rests largely with middle and lower-level managers who submit a proposal, while formal and ultimate authority to execute decisions remains at the top. It is important to note that a formal submission is almost always preceded by the informal discussions and consultations.

The Japanese believe that changes and initiatives within an organisation must come from those closest to problems. The top executive seldom sets out explicit objectives or issues orders. He considers himself primarily as a "facilitator of decision-making" whose task is to create an atmosphere in which his subordinates are motivated to seek a solution themselves. Responsibility for decisions is highly diffused, to the extent that the chief executive can absolve himself of responsibility on the ground that decisions are made collectively through active participation of his subordinates.

An organisation that maintains a wholistic approach to company decision-making forces employees at all levels to deal with each other as human beings and creates a



condition in which open communication, trust, and commitment can flourish. Japanese organisations process and circulate a vast amount of information at all times, and proposals being considered are sent to all levels. Information-gathering on the market place and competitors is constantly under way, and statistics are always being compiled. The life-time employment system and frequent transfer and training mean that Japanese managers always have networks of friends in other departments who keep them posted on developments in their area. Information exchange creates involvement for managers, stimulates creativity, enhances team work, and makes sure all parts of the organisation act in concert. A group member may be asked to accept responsibility for a decision he does not prefer, but which has been arrived at through a collective process. By contrast, the decision-making style in Bahrain is consultative and informal in style. It is carried out on a person-to-person basis whereby group meetings are avoided wherever possible. Decisions are normally taken at the top with tendencies towards centralisation. Thus, the Bahraini approach is top down in essence.

In Japan, at the lower management level, the joint sections (Vogel, 1979)<sup>(57)</sup> or task groups occupy a central position. They do not await executive orders

but take the initiative. Pascala and Athos (1981)<sup>(58)</sup> point out to an important factor, i.e. whether the lower managerial levels are vigilant and open to new ideas and whether they are willing to initiate them within their organisations. This aspect of Japanese bottom-up management is the evolution of work groups that seek to develop safer work methods, improve processes, and achieve better quality control through self-management. The concept involves tapping the skills and knowledge of blue colour workers to improve operations, quality, safety, and also profitability. Originally based on a United States concept of zero defects (workmanship with no errors). As Takeuchi (1981)<sup>(59)</sup> argues, the contribution of lower level initiative-taking to the improvement of overall product quality, i.e. the so-called quality-control-circles, has been a very important input to the overall strength of Japanese business activity. Thus, the top management has a directional rather than a strategy-formulation task orientation,<sup>(60)</sup> and creating significant meanings or subordinate goals,<sup>(61)</sup> in order to orient activity at lower levels in the organisation's hierarchy. Middle management has an integrating and monitoring role which requires extensive use of interpersonal skills typical of most boundary positions.

Comparing Bahraini with Japanese management systems, for instance, strategic activity is characterised by the exercise of power in which agreement is negotiated in the Japanese system. In Bahrain, on the other hand, the power processes are limited to top management. People at the lower level cannot influence the negotiated action sets. Accordingly, one can see that the distinctive different characteristics of the Japanese system stem from:

(a) a more homogeneous value system across organisational levels, which means that the various hierarchical levels in the Japanese organisations are oriented towards company aims. Causes of conflict in the Bahraini organisations such as inconsistent reward system, different time horizons, incongruent goals and beliefs, are less prevalent in Japanese firms. This Japanese identification with company aims is achieved through extensive "people-processing tactics" (Van Maanen and Schein 1979, Takeuchi, 1981)<sup>(62)</sup> and is continually reinforced in the so-called "Ringi-Process" (Ouchi 1981).<sup>(63)</sup>

(b) a unique way of thinking and interrelating. This means that Japanese people rely heavily on direct and immediate experience whereas westerners, for



instance, tend to use "abstract" and "logical" thinking, i.e. the use of "rational" management tools. Though Bahraini managers tend to be nearer to the Japanese for not using rational management tools, the difference is that the Japanese managers seem to be very able to recognise the difference between "task relevant information" and "interpersonal evaluative information" (Schein 1981).<sup>(64)</sup> By detecting this difference and managing this second component in a less explicit way, interactions among potentially conflicting interests tend to be less disruptive;

(c) understanding ambiguous decision situations. The formulation and activation of strategic initiatives are political processes in which the commitment of people at various levels of management with different preferences, has to be negotiated. Japanese see and accept the truly political nature of decision-making processes more easily than Bahraini managers who have not been trained to approach decision-making as open-ended and political in nature.

(d) intra-organisational configuration. The institutionalised configuration of a wholistic concern for people,<sup>(65)</sup> the well-known life-time

employment, the semi-autonomous work-group system,<sup>(66)</sup> and the attuned performance control system are all important factors that exist in the Japanese system. It has been argued that this configuration avoids the development of the kind of centrifugal forces we sometimes observe in a system based on "hard performance measures" (such as profit contribution), rather than social control; on individual accountability rather than group responsibility, and on a pressure for short-run performance rather than longer-term performance.

To be able to put preference aside and commit oneself whole-heartedly to company goals is the essence of a wholistic approach, which unfortunately is rare not in the Gulf states but perhaps the whole Middle East. "Labour, not the art of management, is the key to Japan's ascendancy" writes Bruce-Giggs in his critique of thory Z..... labour does what is expected of it. It is expected to work hard, work right, and not block productive improvements. Again, productivity and efficiency are among the key terms that most Bahraini managers are still chasing. Our analysis under motivation has shown in the previous chapter that Bahraini society is very demanding when it comes to setting motivational goals. This brings us to the key issue which Doktor, et al, points out:

"Productivity is a function of the way we think about management and organisation. Those commonly held thought processes are an integral part of a nation's culture. As such, culture becomes a potentially formidable ally of, or constraint on, productivity."(67)

On a similar theme Logun argues that there are three key aspects of the Japanese experiences that Western managers can learn.

- First, the success of many Japanese companies in developing loyalty and a sense of purpose is not a result of abstract or esoteric cultural traits. It comes instead from a deliberate, distinctive, and careful approach to the issue by the founders, executives, and managers of the companies.
- Secondly, the company's purpose is usually based on a set of high ideals and principles.
- Thirdly, the development of employee loyalty to the company's purpose is based on a very conscious set of management actions. The spirit, philosophy and communication skills of the chief executive officers are critical in this process.(68)

One of the underpinnings of Japanese management system is life-time employment, which has helped to create a high degree of employee loyalty and is also congruent with Japan's value set. The success of life-time



employment in the past has depended not only on its inherent values of providing a flexible and dedicated work force but also on an uninterrupted high rate of economic growth. In order to maintain life-time employment for instance, in Japan it has been possible to reassign workers into jobs such as messengers and door keepers which cannot be tolerated in a society like Bahrian where status has high consideration. Other examples include seniority-based promotion which is generally applied in Japan does not always work in a country like Bahrain where the issue of professionalism is now beginning to emerge as highly valued and supported at the corporate level, coexisting with other considerations such as ascription and family considerations. Moreover, the compensation system in Japan is extremely complex but reasonably and fairly uniform. To begin with management posts are occupied by the Japanese who have the necessary educational and training backgrounds. The Japanese company and its role, too, are affected by the Japanese concept of harmonious hierarchical groups.<sup>(69)</sup> The Japanese company's first responsibility is to provide employment and security for its regular employees (members of the group). Its next responsibility is to meet the expectations of other related groups. By contrast, the situation is different in Bahrain. Private organisations owned by families are primarily

interested in making more money with hardly any commitment to the society. Secondly, those privately-owned organisations import large numbers of non-Bahraini manpower. The majority of them do not provide any kind of manpower development. Normally organisations that take manpower development and Bahrainisation of workforce are the government ministries or quasi-public organisations. Thirdly, the presence of many non-Bahraini managers of different nationalities, backgrounds, interests, etc. does not in any way provide the necessary environment for either making a contribution to the country or for developing managerial know-how. Obviously, there are few exceptions, but they are the minority. Fourthly, many of the Bahraini managers are still inexperienced who are also going through a difficult and transitional stage which will take many years to mature.

Japanese management has maintained its powerful position in society over an extensive period of time, and consequently, has succeeded in enforcing its view at a societal level. Japanese management is also a unique by-product of a particular socio-cultural configuration that has evolved over centuries along lines hardly comparable to the Bahraini, Arabic or Islamic experience. It should also be borne in mind that the Bahraini society is not yet an organisational

society.<sup>(70)</sup> Individuals, community leaders, primary group loyalties, traditional cultural norms are still far more important than the impersonal, efficiency-bound work place.

The Japanisation option also has its protagonists among Bahraini managers who reflect their justified admiration for the Japanese experience<sup>(71)</sup> which has given rise to a highly respected international model competing successfully with its Western counterpart and influencing many of its practices.

Interestingly enough, this option relates paradoxically to either of the first two discussed above. On the one hand, it supports the basic philosophy of the Westernisation option by accepting in principle the possibility of massively incorporating the management experience of another country into Bahrain. On the other hand, this option accepts the premise emphasized by the Bahrainisation group, namely, that Western society is radically different from Bahrain, and many of its management answers are inadequate for solving Bahrain's problems. It is true, they argue, that Japan too is an alien culture external to Bahrain but its cultural norms and social fabric are closer to Bahrain than western norms, and its oriental philosophy is easier to appropriate within the Bahraini frame of



reference. However, it must be borne in mind that the Japanese industry did not develop its human resources management approach overnight. In fact, it was not until after world war II that human resources management was accepted as a key factor in productivity and competitiveness. When this became clear, Japanese still had to blend new concepts with tradition to create the human resource management approach evident in Japan today.

The Japanisation option derives its appeal from the obvious success of the Japanese model, the wide popularity of Japanese management ideas outside Japan, particularly in the United States, and its ability to present a serious alternative to countries keen on management development yet reluctant to lock themselves into a Western model that might well endanger their cherished cultural values. Bahrain's historic cultural proximity to the Far East also adds more appeal to the Japanese option, and carries the promise of accelerated management development with little or no culture shock. A revealing statistic to be considered in this connection is that the April 1986 Chief Executive Officers survey revealed 49% agreement with the statement that "instead of always looking West for new management ideas and techniques, Bahraini managers would do well by following the Japanese example."

Obviously, the remaining 51% disagreed.

On the same issue, a key chief executive officer from one of the leading industries in Bahrain said that it was not only the culture that was the reason for the Japanese success but he felt that many factors contributed to their success such as intelligence, creativity, technical skills, etc. He suggested that the culture might be a result of their success rather than vice versa.<sup>(72)</sup>

The conclusion that seems to force itself both conceptually and in the light of empirical feedback from managers is that Bahrain's only serious management development choice is to follow a pragmatic path based on a careful assessment of its needs. Such a course promises to selectively draw on each of the other three options without committing itself to it as a package. It begins with a careful assesement of management development needs, extrapolates from these goals for enhanced managerial professionalism and works out a strategy for achieving these goals. This strategy will be the focus of the next chapter.

#### 4. THE PRAGMATISATION OPTION

With an understanding of the Japanese and Western (American) management experience, we have to ask

ourselves, which practices and human resource policies are critical to obtaining high employee commitment and what shape these might take in Bahraini organisations which have quite different social, political, and historical contexts.

If the programmes for qualification and development of present and future managers are to be improved, one perhaps has to answer the question regarding the directions and objectives of such an improvement. Or to make the point even more directly: What are - in contrast or in addition to the past and present profiles - the essential requirements for a successful Bahraini manager in the future?

Quoting H.E. the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs in his opening address at Gulf Polytechnic 1986 seminar, after emphasizing the role of management and the importance of productivity:

"the emergence of management as a distinct profession on a global scale is a significant characteristic of the second half of our century..... Part of our difficult adjustment to the changing economic climate is to place greater emphasis on management as a profession committed to finding creative solutions for the complex problems of attaining efficiency and productivity. As such, we need to prepare future managers with



vision and anticipatory approaches to problems in a strict spirit of professional discipline."(73)

Similarly, another chief executive expressed his concerns by saying:

"management development in Bahrain and in particular the question of professionalism is one of the most pressing topics that needs to be dealt with seriously at all levels and, particularly, at this stage in time."(74)

In the same seminar, another chief executive again referred to the issue of managerial professionalism and leadership when he said that:

"Managerial professionalism has been on the rise .... The clear relevance of management to socio-economic development in Bahrain makes it imperative to develop trained managerial cadres particularly under the present circumstances of recession. Executive competence is an absolute requirement for seeing us through the present crisis. Flexibility and creativity are key requirements".(75)

Three themes or factors have emerged from the above statements and other remarks made by senior government officials and chief executives. The first factor, referred to the concept of managerial professionalism with particular reference to the problems and prospects of the Bahraini management

community. This issue was discussed at length in the May, 1986 seminar. From the discussions in the seminar, it became evident that professionalism should have the following distinctive characteristics:

- o Regulating entry routes to the profession and making such entry conditional on lengthy formal specialisation gained through passing set qualifications as established by recognized institutions.
- o Establishing and monitoring technical performance standards and enforcing guidelines which practitioners may not violate without incurring serious sanctions from the association in keeping with accepted international norms.
- o Enforcing among practitioners a strict ethical code which is often embodied in legislation and other rules of conduct and symbolized by the oath required by many professionals as part of the rites of initiation into their chosen profession.
- o Organising conferences, seminars, research activities, etc. around the specialized body of knowledge with which the profession identifies.

- o Providing members with a sense of identity that sets them apart from other groups. Such identity often transcends organisational lines and amount to what may be considered a universal code of practice.
- o Lobbying for and representing the interests of the profession with government, community leaders and other social groups. (76)

The second factor which emerged from the seminar and the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs' statement refers to the concept of leadership - a pivotal force behind successful organisations. In other words, to create vital and viable organisations, leadership is necessary to help organisations develop a new vision of what they can be, then mobilize the organisation to change towards the new vision. This suggests that the present problems will not be solved without successful organisations, and organisations cannot be successful without effective leadership. The concept of leadership is very important here and should not be confused with "management as usual" where routine and standardisation set in. Critical to leadership, "leading" is influencing, guiding, channelling actions and attitudes. In the words of



Bennis, et al, managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right things.<sup>(77)</sup> Thus, the former (i.e. managerial professionalism) is maintaining a high level of continuing effectiveness, while the latter (leadership) is also concerned with constant innovation.

The third factor which also emerges indirectly and links managerial professionalism to leadership is "motivation" through the development of viable organisational cultures. H E the Minister of Education, in the first Gulf Polytechnic seminar on "Corporate Culture", expressed his belief that "culture is an essential component in institutions within society." All this reminds us that any great organisation owes its resiliency not to its form of organisation or administration skills, but to the power of what is called "beliefs," and the appeal these beliefs have for its people. For instance, Peters and Waterman (1982)<sup>(78)</sup> assert that "every excellent company we studied is clear on what it stands for, and takes the process of value shaping seriously."

There is considerable support for this point of view both from comments of chief executives (refer

to 1984, 1985 and 1986 seminars) and other recent studies, particularly those comparing Japanese and Western management. For example, Pascale and Athos in The Art of Japanese Management<sup>(79)</sup> conclude that what distinguishes great companies (Eastern and Western) from the average are their clear values, purpose and meaning which they are able to create. Given this "discovery" of the importance of values; organisational culture to business performance which entails leadership, professionalism and motivation, it is not too surprising that some people have jumped into treating this area as the latest "quick fix" available to organisations. Such an approach involves ignoring what anthropologists and organisation analysts have long pointed out - that organisational cultures and their values are complex interrelated systems with built-in resistance to rapid change. The sound-organisational approach to cultural change is not a quick, imposed and unplanned solution. Rather it has to be based on helping individuals tackle key questions about the values and life styles. It should build out from there towards a network of professional and competent managers. The process requires a reasonably long time perspective measured in years rather than months.

It requires considerable vision and skill on the part of management, particularly at senior level to encourage, enable and participate in the process of management development. In the advanced industrial societies, the existence of a long organisational tradition has led to the emergence of a professional climate with emphasis on efficiency, rationality, impersonality and an overriding work ethic as well as a clearly understood "managerial role" with a concomitant self-image, corporate profile and community expectations.<sup>(80)</sup> In the case of Bahrain, where management is something of a new-comer, the pressing nature of questions related to motivation, leadership and professional managerial skills are self-evident particularly in view of Bahrain's status as a regional and international business centre.

The other three options (Westernisation, Bahrainisation and Japanisation) notwithstanding a majority among Bahraini managers seem to prefer a less doctrinaire, more flexible option that is based on a careful assessment of the countries' needs and a selective approach to satisfying them. Perhaps for want of better term this option will be referred to as the Pragmatisation Option.



A crucial point to remember here is the fact that the Gulf environment as pointed out in the 1985 seminar had changed enough to give rise to a radically different frame of reference emphasizing post-oil economies, efficient deployment of increasingly scarce resources, cost consciousness, rationalisation of government spending and acceleration of the transfer from expatriate to national manpower. True, it is important for this option to accept the broader cultural system, acknowledging the inevitable occurrence of mutual adjustments between the two, and seeking to steer management development away from ideological traps and towards pragmatic handling of actual professional problems.

It can be argued that this pragmatism option calls in reality for indentifying objectives, taking into consideration that in a country like Bahrain people should be prepared not only to be managers within international organisations with professional values and, economically competitive global environment, but also within an Arabic environment with its cultural variables, religion and beliefs. As to the problem of conflict between the emerging management culture and the broader general culture, it was felt by one of the

participants in the 1985 Gulf Polytechnic seminar that:

"neither could totally dominate the other, they had to learn to live with each other in a pattern of reciprocal accommodation."(81)

This option allows for selectivity, for instance, as to what parts of the Western model(s) we accept, ensuring that only what is suitable to Bahraini culture and environment is taught.(82) According to another chief executive: "prudent selection of Western practices could benefit progress in Bahrain in terms of management development"(83), but traditional attitudes and beliefs, "could, of course, impose constraints on what someone can or cannot apply, an area which has to be given consideration." However, we should not forget the "cosmopolitan nature of Bahrain, its commerce and industry and, in particular, the variety of cultures co-existing."(84)

The Pragmatisation Option calls for establishing what needs to be done in the sphere of management development, surveying alternatives for its achievement, marking resources that would be necessary, charting obstacles to be overcome, and introducing a viable implementation set up with

built-in correctives. It is time to say that certain norms and assumptions of the general culture had to be reflected in the corporate culture but short of total enslavement. What must be borne in mind is that institutions are ideally placed to be able to change attitudes where necessary. Thus, it is a major function of an executive to perceive where change was required and take the necessary action.

A difficult issue which has to be grappled with in any management development effort whether in Bahrain, in the West or anywhere else, concerns the combination of technical and non-technical skills which go into the making of a manager. It has been argued that the technical and behavioural skills have to go hand in hand in the making of manager.<sup>(85)</sup> The critique of the Western or the Japanese approach is not so much on grounds of technical training but mainly on the relevance of the behavioural skills,<sup>(86)</sup> because management has been more successful in managing technology than in managing people.

In taking decisions, the Bahraini manager is faced with a much wider range of options operating in a much more complex system, all of which make much



greater demand on his intelligence and analytical powers. As a manager or a representative of a multi-national company, he will have to resolve a wide range of potential conflicts and reconcile the global and the local in his own management style. On the one hand, he must adapt to a wide range of different multi-national organisations. On the other hand, in doing so, he must not endanger the central and unified management of the group as well as societal obligations and expectations. This calls for such prerequisites as empathy, tolerance, flexibility, language skills, management and technological knowledge.

One of the strong features of the Pragmatisation Option is selectivity, relevance and gradual transformation rather than mere transfer of management knowledge to the Arab culture. This option enjoyed the support of the greatest majority of the chief executive officers covered in the April 1986 questionnaire.

In the final analysis, the ability of the pragmatic option to sustain itself in the long run hinges on its success in appropriating varied influences and channeling them harmoniously toward transforming Bahraini organisations into active learning

systems. The pragmatic option should offer a cohesive framework while keeping an open door to changing contents in view of the changing nature of the environment. Whether or not such a complex agenda is satisfactorily handled should be the subject of periodic evaluation; an essential element for introducing necessary correctives.

A primary objective of the on-going evaluation would be to ensure the ability of the pragmatic option to renew itself through assimilation of management knowledge and skills from a variety of sources. Assimilation would be the acid test for measuring up to the maxim "think globally, act locally".

However, if it is to follow this format, the Pragmatisation Option would have to amount to an integrated management development strategy. Such a strategy is the focus of the next chapter.

Massive incorporation of managerial know-how in Bahrain is already a major fact of life and its impact is only bound to grow. So far, however, such incorporation has mostly taken the form of large-scale influx of expatriate know-how. Recently, however, those involved in the process

have started to realize the need for better planning in order for the impact to be lasting. The new trend is clearly towards management development for Bahrainis themselves. Unfortunately, however, some of the earlier efforts in this direction were hasty and not based on careful needs assessment.

Judging from the current offerings in management curricula in some of the business and management schools, and from the negative feedback voiced by management graduates and their employers, the general orientation and content of management education and its relationship to management practice is in serious question.

Dissatisfaction with the workings of management education has also been expressed by prominent educators even in the West in recent studies - too numerous to review here. Suffice here to mention that the works of Drucker,<sup>(87)</sup> Livingstone,<sup>(88)</sup> and McGuire,<sup>(89)</sup> among others, demonstrate that the evidence on the ineffectiveness, marginal relevancy, and the weak link between management education and management practice is mounting. There is also strong evidence that management theory and research, on



the one hand, and management practice, on the other hand, are too far apart contrary to the time-honoured traditions of professional or applied disciplines. While no field of knowledge can truly grow and mature without a solid joint partnership between theory and practice, this strong partnership in the case of management development in Bahrain requires a different strategy. Careful examination, however, reveals that the success stories of most first-generation Bahraini managers are to be credited more to personal drive and the "opportune moment" than formal professional credentials and planned institutional support. The combined effects of a rapidly growing economy and the dramatic shortfall of national manpower made it possible.

It is no exaggeration to assert that Bahrain's future prospects largely depend on its success in developing advanced managerial capabilities that can gradually reverse its dependence on expatriate expertise. Perhaps more than any other single group of specialists, Bahraini managers will cast a long shadow on the country's future well into the twenty-first century. What is clear in the mind of all managers and executives interviewed is the vital role and importance of management

development. Almost every manager questioned either "agrees" or "strongly agrees" that a well-thought out and comprehensive management development programme offered by an educational institution can have an impact on the management profession in the long run.

If the new priority for Bahrain is accelerated and sustained through management development, then the question of the nature, direction and pace of such development assumes critical importance. The recent interest in continuing management education should, therefore, be understood in this context. As many as 96% of the April 1986 Chief Executive Officers seminar considered that a "well thought out and comprehensive management development programme offered by a local educational institution can have an impact on the management profession in the long run."

For continuing management education to yield the required return it should address priority needs, offer well-designed programmes, adopt optimal delivery styles, and develop built-in evaluation mechanisms. Its philosophy should rest on a regularly renewed consensus as to what Bahrain requires of its managers; what should go into their

making, what values they are to uphold, what performance standards to keep and what self-image they are to cultivate. These and related questions will be raised in the next chapter as part of a broader concern with a strategy for continuing management education in Bahrain.



## FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) "Chief Executive Officers Corporate Culture," Proceedings of Seminar, P 22.
2. *ibid*, p 33.
3. *ibid*, pp 52-53.
4. *ibid*, p 39.
5. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) "Strategy for Continuing Management Education Programme in Bahrain," Proceedings of Seminar, p 8.
6. *ibid*, pp 9-10.
7. *ibid*, p 11.
8. England, G. W., and Lee, R. (1974) "The relationship between managerial values and managerial success in the United States, Japan, India, and Australia." Journal of Applied Psychology, 56(4), pp 411-419.
9. Whitely, W. A. (1979) "Across national test of England's model of managers value systems, and their relationship to behaviour." In G. W. England, A. R. Negandhi, and B. Wilpert (eds). Organisational Functioning in Cross Cultural Perspective, Kent, O. H: Kent State University Press, pp 19-47.
10. Bass, B. M. (1981) Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership, New York: The Free Press, P 529.
11. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Op. cit, pp 28-29.
12. Shaker, F. A. (1972) "Modernization of the Developing Nations: The Case Study of Saudi Arabia," Ph.D. thesis, Purdue University, P 383.

13. Bass, B. M. and Burger, P. C. (1979) Assessment of Managers: An International Comparison, New York: Free Press.
14. Bass, B. M. (1981) Op. cit. p 530.
15. Ronen S. (1986) Comparative and Multi-national Management, Wiley Series in International Business, p 200.
16. England, G. W., and Lee, R. (1974) Op. cit., p 411 - 419.
17. Bass, B.M., Burger, P.C., Doktor, R., and Barrett, G.U. (1979) Assessment of Managers: An International Comparison, New York-Free Press.
18. Bass, B.M. (1981) Op. cit., p 530.
19. In Bahrain, inherent expectations built into organisational incentives include both efficiency on the job and loyalty to the institution. However, there are still many managers who would prefer subordinates loyalty to their efficiency on the job.
20. Newman, W.H. (1970) "Is management exportable?" Colombia Journal of World Business, Jan-Feb pp 7-18.
21. Haire, M., Gihiselli, E. E., and Porter, L. W. (1966) Managerial Thinking: An International Study, New York: Wiley.  
  
Barrett, G. V., and Bass, B. M., (1976) cross-cultural issues in industrial and Organisational Psychology. In M. D. Dunette, (ed) Handbook of Industrial and Organisational Psychology, New York: Rand McNally, pp 1639-1686.
22. Haire, M. et al, (1966) Op. cit.
23. Bass, B. M., et al (1979) Op. cit.

24. Bass, B. M. (1981) Op. cit. p 535.
25. McClelland, D. C. (1961) The Achieving Society, Princeton: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
26. England, G. W. (1978) "Managers and their value systems: A five Country Comparative Study." Colombia Journal of World Business, Summer 13 (2) pp35-44.
27. Redding, S. G., and Martyn-Johns, T. D. (1979) "Paradigm differences and their relation to management, with reference to South-East Asia." In G. W. England, A. R. Negandhi, and B. Wilpert (eds) Organisational Functioning in a Cross-cultural Perspective, Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, pp 103-125.
28. Wright, G. N., et al (1977) "Cultural Differences in Probabilistic Thinking: An Extension into South East Asia." Technical Report 77-1, Decision Analysis Unit, Brunel University.
29. Redding, S. G., and Martyn-Johns, T. D. (1979) Op. cit, pp 103-125.
30. Fishbein, M., and Ajzen, I. (1975) Belief, Attitude, Intention and Behaviour, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
31. Ronen, S. (1981) Flexible Working Hours: An Innovation in the Quality of Work Life, New York: McGraw-Hill.
32. Nord, W. R. (1976) "Culture and organisational behaviour: Concepts and controversy." In W. R. Nord (ed) Organisational Behaviour, Santa Monica: Goodyear, pp 197-211.
33. Hall, G. T. (1959) The Silent Language, Greenwich CT: Fawatt.



34. McClelland, D. C. (1961) Op. cit.
35. Bass, B. M. (1981) Op. cit., pp 534-539.
36. Marquis, D. G. (1962) "Industrial responsibility and group decisions involving risk." Industrial Management Review, 3, pp 8-23.
37. Collins, B. E., et al (1964) A Social Psychology of Group Processes for Decision Making, New York: Willey 1964.
38. Burnstein, E. (1969) "An analysis of group decision involving risk," Human Relations, 22, pp 381-395.
39. Farmer, R. N., and Richman, B. M. (1965) Comparative Management and Economic Progress, Homewood IL: Irwin.
40. Bass, B. M. (1981) Op. cit., pp 522-549.
41. Bass, B. M., and Burger, P. C. (1979) Op. cit.
42. Ibid.
43. Piaget, J. (1970) The Moral Judgement of the Child, M. Gagain, trans, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
44. Tajfel, M., et al (1970) "The development of children's reference for their own country: A cross-national study." International Journal of Psychology, (J C4) pp 245-253.
45. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Op. cit. pp 8-10.
46. ibid, pp 15-16.
47. ibid, p 24.

48. Busson, R. et al (1984) "Integrated management organisation development in a developing country: A case Study." Journal of Management Development, vol.3, no.1, pp 3-15.
49. Hofstede, G. (1984) Culture's Consequences: International Difference in Work-Related values, London: Sage Publications, p 252.
50. Ashton, D. (1984) "Cultural differences: Implications for management development." Management Education and Development, vol.15, pt 1, p 6.
51. Al-Araji, A. (1981) "The relevancy and the irrelevancy of the more advanced management educational programmes to Arab countries' needs," International Review of Administrative Science, vol. 47, part 2, pp 105-114.
- Schaeffer, W. G. (1985) "The formation of managers for developing countries: The need for a research agenda," International Review of Administrative Sciences, vol. L 1, no. 3, pp 239-247.
- Seddin, J. W. (1985) "Issues in Practice: the education and development of overseas managers." Management Education and Development, vol. 16, pt 1, pp 5-13.
- Hofstede, G. (1984) Op. cit.
52. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Op. cit. p 26.
53. Gulf Polytechnic (1986) "Chief Executive Officers Seminar on The Management in Transition," May, p47.
54. ibid, p50.
55. Redding, S. G. (1980) "Management education for orientals," In R. Garratt, and J. Stopford, (eds): Breaking Down Barriers: Practice and Priorities for International Management Education, London: Gower.

56. Burks, A. W. (1981) Japan: Profile of a Post-Industrial Power, Boulden, Colorado: Westview Press.
57. Vogel, E. (1979) Japan as Number One: Lessons for America. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
58. Pascale, R., and Athos, A. (1981) The Art of Japanese Management: Applications for American Executive, New York: Simon and Schuster.
59. Takeuchi, H. (1981) "Productivity: Learning from the Japanese." California Management Review, Summer 4: pp5-19.
60. Ouchi, W. (1981) Theory Z: How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge. Reading: Addison-Wesley.
61. Pascale, R., and Athos, A. (1981) Op. cit, pp 177-199.
62. Van Mannen, J., and Schein, E. (1979) "Towards a theory of organisational socialisation," In B. Staw (ed) Research in Organisational Behaviour, Greenwich: JAI Press, pp 205-264.
63. Ouchi, W. (1981) Op. cit, pp 43-46.
64. Schein, E. (1981) "Does Japanese management style have a message for American managers?" Sloan Management Review, Fall: pp 55-68.
65. Ouchi, W. (1981) Op. cit, pp 51-55.
66. Hatavany, N. and Pucik, V. (1981) "An integrated management system: Lessons from the Japanese experience," Academy of Management Review, 6, pp 469-480.



67. Doktor, R. Kawase, T., and Haig, J. H. (1986) "Cultures as a constraint on productivity," International Studies of Management and Organisation, vol.XV, no 3-4, pp 8-16.
68. Logun, G. M. (1984) "Loyalty and sense of purpose," California Management Review," vol. XXVII, no.1, Fall, pp 149-156.
69. Marshland, S., and Beer, M. (1983) "The evolution of Japanese management: Lessons for U.S. managers," Organisational Dynamics, Winter, pp 49-67.
70. Al Hashemi, I. S. J. (1986) "The management structure of Bahrain organisations," Gulf Polytechnic Seminar on: The Bahrain Management Profession in Transition; Paper presented in the seminar, May, pp 25-35.
71. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) Op. cit, p 13.
72. *ibid*, p 39.
73. Address of H.E. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, to the Gulf Polytechnic Seminar, May, 1986. (Appendix J) pp 3-6.
74. Gulf Polytechnic (1986) Op. cit. p 45.
75. *ibid*, p 12.
76. Najjar, G. K. (1986) "The Bahraini management profession in transition: problems and prospects," Gulf Polytechnic Seminar on: The Bahrain Management Profession in Transition: paper presented May, pp 1-2.
77. Bennis, W., and Nanus, B. (1985) Leaders, The Strategies for Taking Charge, New York: Harper and Row, p 21.

78. Peters, T., and Waterman, R. (1982) In Search of Excellence, New York: Harper and Row, p 280.
79. Pascale, R., and Athos, A. (1982) Op. cit.
80. Najjar, G. K. (1986) Op. cit, pp 16-17.
81. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Op. cit, pp 13-14.
82. ibid, p 9.
83. ibid, pp 9-12.
84. ibid, p 15.
85. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) Op. cit, p 22.
86. ibid, p 21.
87. Drucker, P. (1969) The Age of Discontinuity, New York: Harper and Row, p 372.
88. Livingstone, J. S. (1971) "Myth of the well-educated manager." Harvard Business Review, 49, Jan-Feb.
89. McGuire, J. W. (1982) "Management theory: Retreat to the academy," Business Horizons, July-Aug., pp 31-37.

# **C H A P T E R   F I V E**

## **MOVING TOWARDS A COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY FOR CONTINUING MANAGEMENT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN BAHRAIN: THE NEW MANAGERIAL APPROACH**



## C H A P T E R   F I V E

Chapter three sought to explore the inner workings of the turbulent management environment in Bahrain at this critical juncture in its transition. In chapter four, an attempt was made to identify major issues, highlight critical choices and construct alternative options in the light of the data base gathered through tapping managerial feedback aided by a variety of research instruments. A case was made for management development as planned intervention towards higher levels of managerial professionalism.

To that end, management development is assigned the task of facilitating the personal growth of the individual manager and channelling it along lines conducive to organisational learning.<sup>(1)</sup> Individual managers, of course, may mature and develop without external intervention. However, they may do so slowly, or be blocked at a particular stage in the development process. Formal training should thus be viewed as a catalyst.

However understood though, management development cannot be a self-contained process. It will have to be guided by a philosophy that gives it direction. It is in this context that the four options of Westernisation,

Bahrainisation, Japanisation and Pragmatisation were considered.

If, as argued earlier, the fourth option is best suited for Bahrain's needs, it should be made operational through a well thought out strategy for continuing management education in Bahrain bearing in mind some key characteristics of the country explicitly singled out in the 1985 seminar held at Gulf Polytechnic.

Foremost among these characteristics is Bahrain's inclination towards moderation in its economic growth policies; a fact partly due to its smaller scale, more diversified economy and a stronger sense of scarcity compared to other Gulf countries. Bahrain also occupies a special position with the GCC group due to its status as a regional service centre offering banking, educational and training facilities, sensitive to the needs of the area yet fully integrated within the international system. To these two factors should be added the fact that Bahrainisation as a planned process of better developing and utilising national manpower to replace expatriates is older, more feasible and more advanced than similar policies in other Gulf countries.

However, for the development of a national managerial

manpower base to take its course in Bahrain, and for the transition from running businesses to building modern organisations to be achieved smoothly, and for cost-consciousness to be cultivated, nothing short of a strategy for management development is needed.

### THE ANATOMY OF A MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR BAHRAIN

At the outset it is important to appreciate the fact that the pragmatism option rests on continuing management education as a vehicle for management development. It was the consensus of a seminar on the subject held at Gulf Polytechnic in 1985 that no type or degree of pre-employment schooling is adequate today for equipping managers with all the conceptual and operational skills necessary for their work. It was pointed out that such skills are constantly changing as a reflection of sweeping metamorphosis in technology, social systems, values, attitudes, work ethic. etc. Continuing management education was seen as a preventive or anticipatory measure designed to help managers resist obsolescence and practice self-renewal.

It was also pointed out in the same seminar that management is a "loose" profession in the sense that entry into its ranks is not as strictly regulated as the more established professions like medicine or



engineering. This makes it imperative to try to cultivate common themes, create a unifying language, generate shared perceptions of problems, and chart out a commonly accepted frame of reference and joint approaches to problem solving.<sup>(2)</sup> Part of the same process is the need to pay special attention to the preparation of future managers and the establishment of a professional forum where management problems can be consciously articulated and alternatives mapped out.<sup>(3)</sup>

The pragmatic approach to management development through continuing management education as outlined in Chapter four rests on a set of objectives linked to present and future needs of Bahraini organisations as clearly documented through the battery of research instruments used in this thesis. Among other things, these objectives include:

1. Injecting into Bahraini management leadership capabilities consistent with the enduring fabric of the Bahraini culture yet capable of fostering values of hard work, productivity, discipline, acceptance of change and professionalism, particularly in view of the need to upgrade the performance of the average Bahraini manager vis-a-vis his expatriate counterpart.

This point was clearly made by one chief executive officer in Bahrain when he insisted that:

"The future of management in a rapidly changing world requires that today's executive be highly adaptive, creative, tolerant of ambiguity and capable of timely self-adjustment."(4)

This statement was reinforced by another chief executive officer who thought that:

"A manager is not just a leader. That is only one function; he (also) has to be able to train, communicate, motivate, plan, use advanced techniques, innovate and evaluate."(5)

It was also pointed out by members of the Bahrain management community that middle management is a new concept in Bahrain; the new breed of managers might find it frustrating that their seniors are slow to change, reluctant to delegate and not receptive to constructive criticism. Accordingly, one chief executive officer identified four critical areas that should be given priority in managerial development namely, delegation, conflict resolution, time management, and skills to cope with a rapidly changing environment.(6)

In every one of the research instruments used in this thesis as well as countless informal meetings

with Bahraini managers, the theme of leadership kept cropping up as a major focus for future management development programmes. This is perhaps mainly due to the fact that the young Bahraini executives of today will occupy leadership positions for the next few decades and shape management practice in Bahrain well into the twenty-first century.

If the shape of future Bahraini management will be decided by the leaders of today, then the major task is to forge out a sense of direction (strategy) out of the lack of consensus on management styles so obvious at present. Such a task is admittedly forbidding as its prerequisites include managing the tension between emerging corporate cultures and the broader environment, as well as transforming work attitudes. Difficult as it may be, though, the task can be accomplished, as a key chief executive officer believes, through continuing management education and balanced management development.<sup>(7)</sup>

A major challenge for the Bahraini management elite is coming to grips with the fact that management on the island is:



".....a new-comer deprived of the  
benefits of both professional  
standardization and informal  
tradition."(8)

Consequently, the problem of regulating management practice assumes added urgency. To start with, the disproportionate importance of managerial skills for the utilisation of the country's resources is self-evident particularly in view of Bahrain's status as a regional and international business centre. It is no exaggeration to assert that Bahrain's future prospects in this connection largely hinge on its success in developing advanced managerial capabilities that can gradually reverse its dependence on expatriate expertise.

2. Helping Bahraini managers appreciate the necessity for life-long learning as a safeguard against managerial obsolescence at a time characterised by rapid change in all spheres of life: educational, technological, behavioural, etc. Lifelong learning through continuing education has to be inculcated into Bahraini managers so that they may attain self-sustained professional growth. This was clearly conveyed by Jardine when he argued that:

"Management education in the future is not simply to be a matter of a once-in-a-lifetime experience in which a manager gets a few techniques under his belt, but a continuous process, enabling

the individual to use fresh tools to cope with his own changing managerial roles and the alterations in the environment."(9)

In reality this objective is no less complex than the first as there are strong influences working against it in Bahrain. Not the least of these influences is the fact that only a minority of Bahraini managers today appreciate the absolute necessity of lifelong professional education as a basic requirement for coping with today's complex management problems. Once a manager, there is a strong temptation for the young Bahraini professional to settle for reaping the considerable social and economic fruits of his "achievement" and fall behind the current state of job-related knowledge. Another important reason is that many Bahraini organisations have yet to acquire an advanced managerial infrastructure necessary for setting and monitoring managerial performance standards. Without such standards and the strict accountability that they make possible, pressures on management to acquire and sustain world-class expertise are unlikely to generate the required critical mass. As evidenced through the executive feedback reported in chapter three, the move in this direction is already apparent, mostly due to the economic recession and the need for

greater competitiveness.

3. Pressing on Bahraini managers the need to practice self-development. This new approach to management development linked to self-sustained professional renewal, is a key concept supported by a number of major authors (Burgoyne, Pedller, Boydell, 1978, Burgoyne, 1981, Pedller, 1984) as well as (Mintzberg, 1973, Mumford 1986, Kotter, 1982, and Argyris, 1982.)<sup>(10)</sup>

Self-development means, among other things, that the manager will take charge of his own learning process and transform management development from something done to him to something done with him.

The concept of management learning is central to self-development. A manager who is aware of his learning needs will be able to learn more effectively. The issue was clearly stated by one of the chief executive officers in Bahrain:

"If an individual can be helped to learn more effectively, he will be able to contribute much more both to meeting his own needs as well as the needs of his organisation."<sup>(11)</sup>

That same executive pointed out that in his view,



self-development should include self-reliance, understanding of self-capacity, personal career planning and a clear sense of the future.

Perhaps one of the important aspects of self-development is the emphasis on manager's own perception of reality, as well as the identification and use of those learning opportunities which managers recognise most readily. What should also be borne in mind is that managers do learn on the job, but in most cases they fail to recognize many of the opportunities which come their way. Thus, management development strategy ought to include a viable process which helps managers to see that they can define and use their own opportunities, and obliges them to look at the way in which they behave in the real world, has major advantages of both practicality and acceptance.

Many managers in Bahrain admit that much more work needs to be fulfilled on the role of the boss in all areas of learning opportunity, and this is certainly the author's view that the employers have underplayed this role, particularly where outside consultants or advisors have been involved, where they have tried to take people away from frustrations, obstacles and blockages. Similarly, educational institutions in the past have not played their role either in the way of

providing the necessary forum for brainstorming, workshops, seminars or in involving the employers in the development of managers as joint development activities.<sup>(12)</sup>

It can be argued that if the manager has not been helped to understand his/her own learning processes, to understand not only the opportunities available but also the requirements for learning from them, and the relationship between those requirements and his/her own preferences, self-development activities will remain at the level of desirable but unfulfilled or perhaps partly fulfilled activities. Thus, an important issue under this self-development activity is to help managers understand their own learning processes, as well as the choice of how to learn, taking into consideration that self-development must focus itself through effective attention to learning process if it is to be really meaningful, and that any activities ought to be undertaken in full recognition of the context in which the manager will subsequently operate.

Irrespective of its shortcomings, it is to be acknowledged that the Continuing Management Education Programme (COMEP) introduced by Gulf Polytechnic in 1984 was intended to raise the general level of awareness in the country regarding the importance of

life-long learning for modern management professionals.

4. Facilitating for Bahraini managers the process of internalising professional values. Such values include integrity, service, high performance standards, flexibility, initiative, innovation and task competence without uncritically subscribing to a particular managerial "ideology" that stereotypes what a manager does or is supposed to do. Management literature itself has recently started to shed revealing light on this aspect, and focus on the many serious variations between a priori stipulations of the managerial profile and the findings of empirical investigations of how managerial job time is structured. (Kotter, 1982, Mintzberg, 1973, Stewart, 1976).<sup>(13)</sup>

This issue is closely linked to the previous one and is in many ways a derivative of it. This internalisation process is partly hampered by the generally weak organisational structures as well as the sheer novelty of management as a late-comer to the island.

Any serious strategy for continuing management education will have to take into account the fact that in Bahrain, as elsewhere, there is more to



management development than the simple acquisition of technical expertise. Different versions of managerial profile notwithstanding, one common denominator is the need for creating and reinforcing a professional identity without which the image of the Bahraini manager cannot be established at present or in the future.

This issue was raised repeatedly at the Chief Executive Officers seminar organised by Gulf Polytechnic on 5 May, 1986 to address the question of the "Bahrain Management profession in Transition." Participants invariably agreed that management development efforts, however ambitious, are unlikely to yield the desired results unless attention is paid to the all-important issue of professional values. Discussion centered around the feasibility of working towards a professional code and even the formation of a Bahrain Management Society to promote professional values and standards. The idea received added support when senior officials of the Ministry of Labour endorsed it as an important future goal.

5. Integrating the professional development of the individual manager and the overall organisational development of his/her institution. The two may

thus be synchronised thereby avoiding problems created by either one outpacing the other. This suggests that senior managers need skills which will assist organisational learning and change (Argyris, 1982,)<sup>(14)</sup>. These skills can be basic to the ways in which general managers take action and communicate with others. This leads naturally into assigning for continuing management education the goal of addressing questions connected to corporate culture, and trying to help evolve these cultures along lines conducive to the very same priorities stressed in management development.

Again this issue surfaced insistently in the May 1986 Chief Executive Officers seminar through lengthy discussions which drew attention to 5 key weaknesses of Bahraini organisations that have to be gradually overcome if management development is to realise its full potential in the country. The 5 points in question were as follows:

- o Experimentalism understood as a trial and error approach to problems without the benefit of tested guiding principles or serious commitment to corporate planning. Experimentalism leads to disjointedness and relatively frequent decision reversals.

o Weak management infrastructures. As used in this context, the term management infrastructure refers to the overall planning, decision-making, feed-back and control system that permeates an organisation and forms its nerve centres. Such an infrastructure reflects institutional maturity and is necessary for organisational survival especially under conditions of severe uncertainty.

In Bahrain, a majority of organisations were first established in the "gold rush" fever of the 1970s as little more than ad hoc set-ups designed for short-term operations in an environment rich with opportunities. As such, they tended to be highly centralised outfits not prepared for the painstaking tasks of building management infrastructures or embarking on serious management development. Having a managerial infrastructure is a sign of successful institution-building while ours are still organisations in the making.

o Organisational experimentalism. Experimentalism is essentially a state of mind. In management, its symptoms are disjointedness, a reactive approach to policy making and decision reversals. Deprived of long-standing operating



traditions, and often caught in a web of unplanned diversifications, some Bahraini organisations ended up on occasions taking shots in the dark. This was at times inadvertently encouraged by the over-protectiveness extended to the private sector and its feeling that the government was there to cushion and bail out. The strict, competitive, results-centred climate necessary to test the calibre of management and weed out unproductive elements was thus not encouraged. Under the circumstances, amateurishness often prevailed and the emergence of "battle-tested" professional management was delayed. It is only now, thanks to the growing awareness, that the times have changed that some organisations are sobering up to the hard realities and trying to streamline their management structures.

- o Impressionism. Impressionism is the guiding spirit of experimentalism. Senior managers, not coached in the rigours of analytical techniques or seasoned by long years of experience, often resorted to hunches and intuitive behaviour that would not have been possible in a more mature profession.

Perhaps it is important to note that the management of any organisation should identify and express the values it espouses and manifests. When this is done satisfactorily, it can then undertake management development with a competent awareness that change or reinforcement of attitudes, skills and knowledge probably will affect these values, and it will be in a position to control the degree and manner in which new values are inculcated, or old ones modified.

However, if study reveals that an organisation's value system is the result of dogmatic, authoritarian attitudes rather than rational adjustments, the inability of its present management to keep pace with a changing world may render useless whatever management development takes place in the individual employee.

Again, such dangers were sometimes hidden by an over-supportive environment and the managers concerned became even more set in their own ways. Managerial patriarchalism was thus encouraged with excessive centralisation as its most obvious indicator. Impressionism is undoubtedly at the heart of many expensive excesses that could have been easily avoided.

o Manpower development imbalances. Bahrainisation is both a national priority and an economic expediency for Bahraini organisations. It is the most viable long-run solution to many of the managerial ills outlined above. Motivated by this important consideration many Bahraini organisations have massively embarked on educational and training programmes as a sure vehicle for Bahrainisation. The problem, however, is that this massive investment in human capital was generally based on short-term, stop-gap needs with little regard for long-range implications. In many cases, this meant our being one step behind the problems we were trying to solve. Nor is the reason very hard to find. One does not need to look much further than the lack of adequate training needs assessment capabilities in many organisations to realise that the prevailing approach to managerial manpower development was grossly lacking in methodology and seems to have confused the process with the product. A related observation is that despite the obvious successes that were achieved by some organisations as evidenced by the sharp increase in the number of qualified Bahraini managers, this major investment was generally not subjected to careful measurements



of its return to the effect of harbouring inefficiencies and failing to produce results commensurate with the volume of resources allotted to it.

- o The widening research gap. Bahraini organisations are grossly under-researched. Precious little reliable information is available for them or on them. While modern management is so heavily information oriented we have yet to fully appreciate the extent to which we are falling behind on this important aspect. Whether reference is made to economic forecasts, salary surveys, job evaluation, cost estimates, attitude surveys, management styles or motivational patterns, the unfortunate reality is that our organisations underestimate the importance of reliable and accurate information.

This point can hardly be overemphasized. Without reliable information, what chance do we have for operating under norms of rationality, linking causes to effects, cultivating diagnostic problem-solving skills and teaching our younger managers that they belong to a profession with criteria and quality control values that may not be ignored. In reality, no amount of training,

management development, motivation or leadership is likely to take us very far unless and until this research gap is bridged to the effect of generating, storing, updating and retrieving relevant information as needed.

6. Encompassing the entire managerial and organisational range through offering multi-sectoral and multi-level continuing management education programmes. This is of great importance in view of the need to create an impact across the organisational-managerial spectrum in order for professional gains not to erode under the pressures of segments in the system untouched by the management development process. In other words, for any of the effects of management development to be lasting, the whole organisational microcosm has to be touched by it.

Integrating management development into the overall organisational set-up to produce systematic transformations rather than "reformed," and perhaps frustrated, managers requires a vehicle. The ideal vehicle should be a multi-level programme capable of creating not only a "bandwagon effect" but, more importantly, a "trickle down" effect in order for induced professional improvements to be sustained.

This seems to be a central fact in Bahrain where many a management development training programme has failed because it was directed at one level only and failed to account for other decision-making levels. There is some agreement on the need for key interpersonal skills for managers, in order for them to effectively deal with peers and subordinates in the resolution of conflict.

A common complaint of middle management trainees currently enrolled at Gulf Polytechnic is to have their superiors exposed to the same management development influence they are getting. Short of such exposure, they insist, their gains are bound to be short-lived and to get "choked" by higher levels. Too many bitter lessons of experience in piecemeal management development have led most managers in the country today to seriously re-examine some of their preconceived ideas and start advocating integrated multi-level management development programmes. Both in 1985 and 1986 the specialized Chief Executive Officers seminars organised by Gulf Polytechnic echoed this widely-felt need.

7. Helping organisations acquire a pro-active outlook necessary for coping with a rapidly changing local,



regional and international environment. As such organisations can benefit from a sound continuing management education programme to identify future manpower needs which may or may not bear resemblance to the present.

One problem with organisations in Bahrain is that they have taken their environment for granted. Actually, many of these organisations were established in the boom decade (1970s) and lavishly enjoyed the support and over-protectiveness of an affluent, rapidly expanding economy. Under the circumstances, most organisations settled more for the trappings than the substance of modern management and gave clear priority to effectiveness over efficiency. Against this rather unusual background, it should come as no surprise that Bahraini organisations did not develop environmental scanning capabilities or "boundary mapping" skills. As a result, they tend to be reactive, making ad hoc adjustments to situations after the fact.

For management development programmes to be viable in the long run they must contribute to reversing this trend and help organisations improve their skills in managing interface with the environment

which is growing more complex, uncertain and turbulent. Many senior managers in Bahrain are now convinced that such skills will be essential for organisational survival in the future.

8. Improving the quality and quantity of managerial performance through creating avenues for the effective transfer of management skills from the training scene to the job context.

Just like the bitter experience of disjointed, poorly targeted management development programmes not based on methodical need assessment, failure to specifically address the need for building bridges to transfer training-acquired skills to the job context has had an adverse effect on Bahraini organisations. The practice of "rounding up" trainees hastily, drilling them for few days or weeks in the hope they will learn relevant skills has proved its shortsightedness in Bahrain.

The problem is in reality two-fold. Overseas institutions to which Bahraini organisations sent their trainees were just too far and too big for these organisations to have any control over their programmes. Evaluations and follow-up efforts were equally difficult and for all practical purposes

impossible. At the same time local programmes were simply not available, and following their introduction not credible enough to compete with international counterparts.

This unfortunate reality was evident for Gulf Polytechnic when it launched its Continuing Management Education Programme in 1984. A major characteristic of the programme was its provision for a comprehensive need assessment linking programme design to actual corporate needs and creating avenues for monitoring performance and transferring classroom-acquired skills to the job context.

A point unanimously emphasized by senior Bahraini managers whenever interviewed or invited to contribute to a seminar, is that short of such linkages, managerial development cannot measure up to the many challenges ahead.

9. Building confidence among employees, managers and the business community in the quality of local management development programmes by offering state-of-the-art training comparable to what is available overseas.



10. Forging close ties of cooperation between management education, development and training institutions on the one hand, and the management profession on the other. Such a collaborative approach would be, among other things, immensely beneficial to teaching institutions by way of heightening their sensitivity to industry needs and inputting their follow-up and evaluation. This should gradually lead to the emergence of a partnership between the two cemented by the commitment to professional excellence. Such partnership should, in due course, give rise to an active management forum that can be used for raising timely professional issues, identifying emerging needs, bringing theory and practice closer together and constantly orienting management education in directions relevant to the country.

When approached with the suggestion to create such a management forum, Bahraini managers reacted very enthusiastically. One after another they spoke during the 1986 April seminar strongly in favour of creating such a forum as a vehicle for dialogue and long-range professional steering.

A closer look at these objectives reveals that their accomplishment is closely linked to the three central

concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism. In fact, these three concepts not only cut across all these goals but also constitute a requisite condition for their satisfactory accomplishment. Preceptorial executive leadership is necessary for creatively managing the tension between the emerging sub-culture and the broader environment, evolving a corporate culture conducive to continuing managerial learning, professional excellence and synchronized organisational development, helping organisations acquire a proactive profile, fostering norms of managerial professionalism in the outside community and committing scarce organisational resources for the attainment of all these objectives.

The tasks that lie ahead for such leadership in Bahrain are particularly difficult now in view of two main developments. In the first place, taking into consideration cultural sanctions, dominant expectations, modes of operation, diffusion and impact, i.e. elements of the matrix developed in chapter three, it should be clear that the margin of change open to executive leadership is rather limited as broader cultural norms continue to have the upper hand. Secondly, executive leadership is still relatively weak and not fully established. In other words, any strategic management development plan should be

realistic in terms of how much can be expected from management leadership before they themselves are considerably strengthened.

By the same token, sound goals and supportive preceptorial leadership in no way substitute for the crucial role of motivation, particularly at the middle management level. Lifelong learning, daring to question one's values, internalising professional norms, striving for excellence, struggling for higher performance levels and contributing to the larger management community are, even under the best of circumstances, for the dedicated minority of achievers who are driven by a strong motivation.

The problem of motivation in Bahrain is in many ways daunting. Although reliable, research-based, studies are all but non-existent, most executives included in our surveys as well as those who participated in Chief Executive Officers seminars seem to feel that Bahraini managers are not lacking in motivation. Their motivation, however, should, in some cases, be rechannelled along professional lines and towards less emphasis on social and economic success indicators.

As for managerial professionalism, it goes without saying that it is at the heart of the management



development process. In a sense, professionalism is at once the motive for and the goal of management development and the bottom-line criterion for all continuing management education. The fact that the strategic goals of continuing management education in Bahrain are also closely linked to leadership, motivation and professionalism, the very notions used in interpreting managerial feedback in chapter two is very suggestive. It indicates that these three notions should be firmly established as focal points of management development and continuing management education programmes in Bahrain, and made to permeate materials presented to participant trainees. A major question, of course, is what style(s) of leadership, approaches to motivation, and aspects of professionalism are to be propelled through such programmes? The need to be selective simplifies things in one sense but undoubtedly adds to the complexity of issues in many ways. This theme will be formally addressed in a subsequent section and raised again in chapter six.

### ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY

Having identified the long-term goals of management development through continuing education and established the crucial role of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism for their attainment, we

turn to a discussion of the plan needed to operationalise implementation. Therefore discussion of the management development - continuing management education - plan for Bahrain will unfold in terms of the following items:

- o Goals
- o Values
- o Target Group(s)
- o Programme(s)
- o Delivery Methods
- o Criteria for Assessment
- o Resources
- o Time Frame
- o Professional Linkages
- o Transfer Avenues
- o Follow-up Capability
- o Monitoring, Feedback and Evaluation (Impact Analysis)

### GOALS

Goals that should be built into the management development plan are, in fact, operational formulations of the objectives established in this chapter. As such, the following may be identified:

- (a) Training Bahraini managers to assess their present leadership styles against the future tasks for them and their organisations to determine what changes are necessary and how they may be brought about. These goals, then, centre around the acquisition and use of leadership styles that match the present stage of development of corporate cultures in Bahrain.
- (b) Enabling Bahraini managers to learn and practice self-assessment and use this knowledge for coping with change through sustained personal development, career monitoring, a self-image of continuous learning, and ability to identify and tap sources of career-related specialized knowledge.
- (c) Socializing Bahraini managers into valid inter-national norms and guiding values of the management profession, altering them to possible barriers for transferring such values to Bahrain, and helping them make a planned transition.
- (d) Inculcating into Bahraini managers a pragmatic understanding of their own professional development in the context of their organisations including decision-making levels other than their own. In this sense, management development becomes, in



fact, organisational development.

- (e) Catering to different levels and specialisations of Bahraini managers through a multi-faceted programme with clear inter-level and inter-disciplinary linkages.

Ideally, given the great appeal of academic degrees in Bahrain, a viable continuing management education programme should have linkages not only among its various levels, but more importantly, should lead into an academic programme that culminates in a degree. Almost every one of the participants in COMEP at present has indicated his/her strong desire to use the programme as a springboard towards a B.Sc or some other academic qualifications. Although it may be argued that such qualifications are not always necessary for the job, yet the appeal of the degree as a motivator should not be underestimated in a developing society like Bahrain.

As relatively little reliable information is available in Bahrain linking leadership and motivation to other significant organisational variables like turnover, morale, productivity, etc., a concerted research effort should be

launched in this direction. Such a data base is a prerequisite for all subsequent efforts aimed at identifying leadership style, and motivational "mixes" best suited for Bahrain.

(f) Reinforcing classroom learning through supportive outside professional activities that help in further sharpening the professional identity of participants.

(g) Establishing mechanisms for transferring skills into the job context and facilitating their acceptance.

(h) Helping in bridging the gap and creating a dialogue between management theory and practice in Bahrain in the interest of improved professional standards.

(i) Constantly expanding and updating management development and continuing education facilities in Bahrain to cope with escalating demand.

### VALUES

Any plan designed to achieve the above set of goals will inevitably have to rest on certain implicit and explicit values. Foremost among these values are:

- (a) Commitment to lifelong management education as a guiding principle for the modern manager. By developing such commitments Bahraini managers will be in reality achieving close integration into international management circles and a better ability for taking charge of their own learning process. There seems to be a direct relationship between a process understanding of professional learning and motivation towards living up to its requirements. It may be feasible in the long run at least according to some "radical" Bahraini managers, to link organisational promotions and other rewards to producing evidence certifying regular enhancement of professional ability through continuous exposure.
- (b) Recognition of management as an inter-disciplinary profession with a specialized body of knowledge and emerging code of practice on equal footing with other professions.
- (c) Respect for Bahrain cultural values, norms and traditions and working within them to build a management sub-culture that fosters their essence even when there are apparent conflicts at the surface. Such tensions can be constructively used as a source of innovation.



(d) Acceptance of change as a constant process that should be approached proactively lest we lose control over our own destiny.

### TARGET GROUPS

For a management development - continuing management education - plan to be viable it should be based on a careful, methodologically-sound need assessment covering both quantitative and qualitative aspects, i.e. numbers to be trained and areas of specialization to be emphasized. Proper targeting is a primary requirement for success to the extent that the majority of managers surveyed (Appendix C - Follow-up Chief Executive Questionnaire) agreed to the statement that:

"To satisfy management development needs, Bahrain should first determine its own requirements and seek to satisfy them irrespective of competing international models."

In the context to Bahrain, effective management development is bound to be comprehensive, cover all levels of decision-making and different areas of specialisation as was suggested earlier. Given that, attention turns immediately towards selection procedures, screening of candidates and their placement within particular levels. This is obviously a delicate process that should take into consideration

organisational needs, job requirements, career plans, managerial background, academic qualifications and personal interest. Anything short of that will not, in all likelihood, ensure proper matching of continuing management education levels and contents with trainee need and ability. Elaborate procedures for each of these requirements should be set, tested and regularly updated.

As far as targets are concerned, provision should be made for the following breakdown in order for the entire management spectrum to be covered.

It should be remembered that an organisation may develop different needs for managerial leadership, depending upon its stage of growth. A small organisation trying to establish itself may need a few dynamic and autonomous executives who can coordinate and communicate through others. A well-established corporation with years of success behind it may well want its executives to concentrate on community and other external relations that can contribute to larger service goals. These differences need to be continually assessed in establishing and executing the objectives of the programme.

### Clerical Level Certificate

Clerical or operator-level employees are in various employment sectors: Government, Banking, Insurance, Oil and other industries, as well as services. Candidates may also come from different functional areas: Accounting/Book-Keeping, Personnel, Finance, Office Practice, etc.

### Basic Supervision Diploma

First-line supervisors (foremen) or equivalent job holders in various sectors and functional skill areas. Sectors include Government, Banking, Insurance, Oil and other industries, as well as services. Functional skill areas include various aspects of Accounting, Finance, Personnel, Office Management, etc.

Para-professional technical and engineering candidates who are about to assume or have recently assumed supervisory responsibilities.

Competent and seasoned rank and file employees nominated for promotion to a supervisory position.

### Middle Management Diploma

Lower and lower-middle managers (superintendents) drawn from various sectors and throughout the range of functional skills including the junior management ranks



of the civil service, public utilities, the industrial sector, banking and insurance. Trainees at this level share the important characteristic of rapid mobility in their respective organisations where they are generally placed one level above foremen or first-line supervisors. Participants who fit this description should spread across a range of functional diversity (Finance, Personnel, Accounting, Data Processing, etc.) that matches their sectoral distribution. This category also includes para-professional, technical and engineering candidates.

#### Advanced Management Diploma

Middle-managers two or more decision-making levels above first-line supervisors in various organisations on a cross-functional basis. Course distribution and contents should reflect the fact that many of these managers are heading for senior management positions where they will be called upon to exercise executive leadership as professional, technical, and engineering personnel on an accelerated management career path.

#### Executive Management Diploma

Top-level managers in public and private organisations and in various functional capacities who wish to acquire executive-level training in one or more

management subjects. While such high-level participants are encouraged to enroll in all 6 courses constituting the diploma requirement, they may opt for one or more courses that meet specific needs they might have without totally committing themselves to a predefined course sequence. Engineering and other technical professionals who are at a career stage that might require specialized management knowledge of an advanced nature in certain areas.

#### PROGRAMME(S)

There probably will never be such a thing as a universally applicable management development programme. Canned or packaged management training which emphasizes one skill or another may be of questionable benefit unless it is quite obvious that such skills can be appropriately woven into the fabric of a larger, well-rounded management development plan. Normally such plan considers the multiple organisational needs and seeks to satisfy them.

In the last analysis, management development and continuing management education plans work only to the extent that they are embodied in viable training programmes that serve their ends and promote their values. As such, any strategy for Bahrain should rest

on a solid programme base subject to the following criteria:

- (a) Management development programmes should be directly linked to the objectives, goals and values of the broader strategy.
- (b) Programmes should be comprehensive enough to cover most, if not all, of the spectrum of management needs as assessed by planners.
- (c) Programmes should be at once integrated and flexible. This means showing a high degree of purposefulness and organic unity, but at the same time recognising multiple paths to management development and sensitivity for allowing variations to serve special needs of one or more participants (Burgoyne, 1981, 1983).<sup>(15)</sup>
- (d) Programmes should be designed such that they simultaneously reflect international professional standards and state-of-the-art know-how on the one hand, and salient features of the Bahraini management culture on the other. Such a difficult balance requires great and constant monitoring.
- (e) Programmes should be at once theory-rich and



practice-relevant. Again, striking such balance requires detailed knowledge of both realms and an ability to help participants master their symbiotic relationship.

(f) Programmes have to lend themselves to regular evaluation in order to incorporate necessary modifications and remain tuned to the changing needs they are meant to serve.

(g) Finally, management development programmes should capture the imagination and trigger the energies of participants in a pattern of challenge-response that can sustain long-term interest.

### DELIVERY METHODS

A management development/continuing education programme, no matter how accurately targeted and well designed, ultimately depends on the soundness of its delivery. This aspect, of course, includes such variables as physical premises, scheduling arrangements, part-time, full-time options, teaching and training methods, instructional strategies, teaching/training aids, reinforcement techniques, trainee involvement and participation as well as training materials. Specific choices will have to be made with respect to each of these variables with

regular adjustments and modifications until an optimal level is reached.

### CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

Criteria for assessment refer to the yardstick which is to be used for evaluating a management development programme. Developing and applying such criteria is no easy task particularly in view of the need to establish agreement on priorities, time frames, evaluation methods and interpretation of results assuming such agreement already exists with respect to broad objectives and strategies. Such difficulties notwithstanding, such a serious task has to be addressed no matter how limited the information base or bounded the rationality of evaluators and decision-makers.

Obviously, we are presented with some interesting challenges and choices. Challenge, in some senses to our assumptions about the relevance of the knowledge base of much of our management programmes versus skill base which a study of management activities would tend to emphasize. Also, there is implied a need to differentiate effectiveness in terms of the business and the individual manager. We need also to find some basis of self-assessment which can be built into our programmes - analytical, contingency-based models which

will help managers discover for themselves what is important for their own development, plus a greater emphasis upon key managerial skill development within our framework of management development programmes.

In the context of Bahrain, there seems to be consensus among all those concerned with managerial development as to the following:

- (a) Assessment is to be approached in terms of impact on managerial performance as perceived and determined by organisations to which participants belong.
- (b) Assessment has to include such variables as image of the institution and the programme in the management community, participant enthusiasm, attrition rate, frequency of complaints, comparisons with similar programmes elsewhere, etc. etc.
- (c) Also part of assessment are long-term effects on levels of managerial professional values, post-graduation zeal for continued learning and accelerated career development.
- (d) At a time characterised by mounting cash flow problems and cost-consciousness, the assessment of



a management development programme should also include cost effectiveness, particularly in comparison to alternative programmes.

## RESOURCES

It is hardly more than a truism that programmes require a resource base. For management development in Bahrain to be viable at present and in the near future, the following resources are highly critical:

- (a) Adequate physical facilities necessary for offering a pleasant professional setting. This includes classroom space, small group meeting rooms, individual research stacks, on-site social and recreational facilities, etc.
- (b) Educational resources including competent staff, timely and relevant training materials, library and computer facilities, etc.
- (c) Financial resources to support management development programmes through constant updating. This is also a precondition for attracting staff, providing facilities and offering other support activities.
- (d) Psychological resources particularly commitment on

the part of the management community which, for a long time, has been expatriate-dominated and not always supportive of local programmes, and which admittedly, were often below standard.

### TIME FRAME

As suggested earlier, the time frame for management development programmes varies from a short-term one year period, to a medium-term five year span, and a long-term ten year horizon.

In the case of Bahrain, this aspect generates some difficulty as the programme needs to show some early results to gain acceptance and overcome scepticism without succumbing to the temptation of a short-term plan. It seems clear that a multi-phased management development/continuing management education programme is needed. Such a programme produce some evidence of its success within a reasonably short period, say one to three years without limiting its horizons to this short stretch. In general, the shorter the period the more clearly defined and operational goals should be. Within this framework, the short-term plan should be to create a positive effect on the job performance of participants while the medium and long-term effects can hopefully satisfy the broader professional and value-laden aspects.

## PROFESSIONAL LINKAGES

The long-term impact of a management development programme depends in no small measure on its ability to strike roots in the environment and build bridges with employers, graduates and professional management associations at home and abroad. Such bridges will help in constantly improving the data base on which it rests, particularly in the areas of need assessment, candidate selection, content evaluation, delivery methods and final direct and indirect contributions. In Bahrain, the following variables warrant special attention:

- (a) The need to involve sponsor organisations in all aspects of the management development programme in order to build support and gain acceptance.
- (b) The importance of approaching targeting of different aspects of the continuing education programme, as well as candidate selection, jointly with sponsor organisations, to ensure a proper "fit" between felt needs and whatever is being offered in response.
- (c) The advantages to be gained through impressing on sponsor organisations the need to work on immediate supervisors of management development candidates as



well as training managers and department heads to solicit their support and encouragement. Part of this process is to build into sponsor organisations the understanding that management development is a systematic activity which is bound to engulf the entire organisation and not just the candidates.

Productive management development almost invariably means that desirable change will be effected in both individual and organisational practices. Reinforcement and follow-up are essential to freezing and maintaining management learning at new levels. Two major factors must be present: the behaviour of senior executives should manifest support for and belief in the development programme instituted for the middle management or junior executives so as to establish a climate in which achievement is possible, and desired change in performance should be equitably rewarded by promotion or increase in pay, or by some other concrete indication that a goal has been reached and the fact is appreciated. Management development thus becomes organisational development so as to piece together managerial and institutional growth. Should this aspect be neglected, there is always the danger of sending participants back to hostile organisational environments oblivious to what they have learned.

## SKILL TRANSFER, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

If skill transfer, attitudinal change and professional adolescence are the overt objectives of management development programmes, the need for close monitoring and constant evaluation becomes evident. Evaluation, of course, may range from informal impressions to formal evaluation research with all sorts of compromises in between. Such skills are totally new to Bahrain and so is the intellectual climate needed to sustain them. This element of novelty affects, among other things, availability of professional and experienced evaluators, their relationship to policy makers, their perceived role in the change process as well as the willingness to allocate resources to the evaluation process.

Given such constraints, it is perhaps wise to undertake evaluation as a joint venture between managerial development institutes and employment organisations as users of this professional service. This way, modifications introduced as a result of evaluation will be understood and accepted by the client system. An important byproduct is the greater probability of creating a supportive climate within which acquired skills may be applied on the job and sustained by the institution.

The purpose of this chapter was primarily to introduce the key elements of a continuing management education strategy as a vehicle of management development in Bahrain. To this end the concept of strategy was introduced and its basic elements highlighted with special reference to Bahrain.

The Pragmatisation Option is not only the option favoured by most Bahraini managers but also the path most consistent with Bahrain's present state of transition. In logical sequence, objectives, goals, plans, programmes, etc. related to the pragmatisation strategy were addressed and always by way of setting up a framework or reference point to guide management development action in Bahrain. Such action has indeed started prior to undertaking a comprehensive view of management development via continuing management education. One such programme was introduced in the early eighties and a second more ambitious attempt was made in 1984. We now turn to an evaluation of this experience in the light of the framework developed in this chapter and as seen by its major participants and the organisations where they work.



## FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Burgoyne, J. (1983) "Approaches to integration in management education and development." In C. L. Cooper (ed) Developing Managers for the 1980s, London: Macmillan.
  2. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) Chief Executive Officers Seminar on : Strategy for Continuing Management Education, May, p 13.
  3. *ibid*, p 17.
  4. A statement made by a Chief Executive Officer during the interview relating to the profile of the Bahraini manager (Appendix A).
  5. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) op cit, p 21.
  6. *ibid*, pp 26-27.
  7. *ibid*, p 25.
  8. *ibid*, pp 50-52.
  9. Jardine, C. (1985) "Business schools learn their lesson." Management Today, Dec., p 95.
  10. Pedler, M., Burgoyne, J., and Boydell, T. (1978) A Manager's Guide to Self-Development. Maidenhead, Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Book Co. (UK) Ltd.
- Burgoyne J. (1981) "Moving forward from self-development." Management Education and Development, vol 12, pt 2, Summer.
- Pedler, M., et al (1984) "Self development groups for managers," Manpower Services Commission.
- Mintzberg, H. (1973) The Nature of Managerial

Work, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey:  
Prentice-Hall.

Mumford, A. (1986) "Learning to learn for managers," Journal of European Industrial Training, vol 10, no. 10, pp 3-28.

Kotter, J. P. (1982) The General Managers, New York, N.Y.: The Free Press.

Argyris, C. (1982) Reasoning, Learning and Action, Jessey Bass.

11. Chief Executive Officers Interview - Profile of the Bahraini Manager, May, 1985 (Appendix A).

12. Morris, J. (1980) "Joint development activities: From practice to theory." In J. Beck, and C. Cox (eds) Advances in Management Education, Chichester: John Wiley and Sons. pp 97-122.

13. Kotter, J. P. (1982) op. cit.

Mintzberg, H. (1973) op. cit.

Stewart, R. (1976) "To understand the manager's job: Consider demands, constraints, choices." Organisational Dynamics, Spring, pp 22-32.

14. Argyris, C. (1982) op. cit.

15. Burgoyne, J. (1981) op. cit.

Burgoyne, J. (1983) op. cit.

# **C H A P T E R   S I X**

## **EVALUATING COMEP AGAINST THE STRATEGY**



## C H A P T E R   S I X

### OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the Continuing Management Education Programme (COMEP) introduced by Gulf Polytechnic in 1984 as the most ambitious management development plan ever attempted in Bahrain. The programme has now catered to some 300 participants, completed 2 1/2 years (five semesters) and graduated by now groups totalling 100 managers at its four active levels. While it is true that this period is too short for a complete formal evaluation against the strategy, it is also true that enough experience has been gained to allow a preliminary assessment focusing mainly on how COMEP is perceived by its constituency. This may prove very essential for introducing necessary correctives. Like many other facets of this research, such an evaluation brings to the surface the dual capacity in which the researcher relates to his materials: at once a detached researcher and an "involved" director of a dynamic institution for higher professional education. The evaluation partly rests on an empirical base gathered through two annual evaluations involving questionnaires and interviews, as well as a two-tier questionnaire for graduates and

their supervisors. (Refer to Appendices D, E and F).

The dual role of the author has put this evaluation exercise in a context that has more than one purpose. To borrow the terms used by Easterby-Smith<sup>(1)</sup>, there are in fact three purposes: proving, improving and learning with different emphasis depending on the perspective and the interest of the stakeholder. As a director of the institution, the perspective tends to shift towards "improving" as a valid purpose to evaluation. This purpose of evaluation has been supported by many authors, for example, Warr, Bird and Rackham (1970).<sup>(2)</sup>

The emphasis of the researcher tends to move towards proving, i.e. the aim being to demonstrate conclusively that something has happened as a result of training or developmental activities, and that this is linked to judgments about the value of the activity. As a researcher, one would also expect evaluation studies to contribute insight into the dynamics of change underlying the effectiveness of the management development programme.

Whether one looks at it from the point of view of a director of an institution or as researcher, one cannot escape the fact that evaluation also contributes directly to the learning process. Easterby-Smith points out that evaluation should be regarded as an integral part of the learning and development process itself.

### BACKGROUND TO COMEP

A group of experienced specialists worked on designing COMEP during the year that preceded its official launching in February 1984. Their task, commissioned by the Civil Service Bureau and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs respectively representing the public and private sectors, was to come up with a better alternative to the earlier 10,000 Training Programme introduced hastily in 1980 to train in 10 years as many professionals in a wide spectrum of professional and para-professional areas. The many loopholes in the 10,000 Training Programme: inconsistencies, lack of follow-up, etc. were becoming increasingly apparent and a decision was made to sponsor a more advanced version to be housed at and run by Gulf Polytechnic.

One of the earliest priorities of the group in charge of designing the new programme was to conduct a needs assessment survey based on a detailed questionnaire distributed to all private and public sector



institutions of any consequence in Bahrain. The return rate was 100% and it yielded extremely important information both vertically (decision-making levels) and horizontally (functional specialisation areas - Appendix D).

The evidence clearly suggested the need for a multi-level programme roughly corresponding to the decision-making hierarchy in most organisations. Following a series of intensive meetings with client organisations, it was decided to try to design a programme comprising the following levels in ascending order:

- Clerical Skills level
- Basic Supervision level
- Middle Management level
- Advanced Management level
- Executive Management level.

Each level was to cover six subject areas in addition to English language (Accelerated Learning Skills) extending over 18 months on a part-time basis.

The following objectives were set for each of the five levels:

## CLERICAL SKILLS LEVEL

- To develop and reinforce specific operational skills directly or indirectly bearing on job performance in government, industry and services. Courses at this level are to be skill-oriented in terms of contents and format.
- To augment technical-operational skills with appropriate back-up facility, particularly in such areas as written and verbal communications, problem-solving, methods of accelerated learning and inter-personal relations.
- To help participants broaden their occupational perspectives through understanding the wider organisational context within which they operate. This should reflect positively on their contribution to departmental and organisational goals as they will come to identify with an institutional chain in which their job is only a link.
- To upgrade the general educational level of participants in order to help them reach a point where they become capable of self-learning through continued exposure to new methods relevant to their respective areas. This is undoubtedly a strategic

objective whose attainment would lead to consolidating and sustaining all other objectives pursued at this level.

#### BASIC SUPERVISION LEVEL

- To develop and reinforce basic supervisory skills mostly relevant to the first-line supervisor on a cross-sectoral and to some extent cross-functional basis. Such skills include both technical and inter-personal (behavioural) elements.
- To cultivate in first-line supervisors an appreciation of their role as a key link in the inter-connected managerial chain. This is to be attained through planned exposure to selected skills built into management functions and processes. Such exposure is necessary to help tap the promotion potential of qualified trainees at this level.
- To help accelerate the professional development process of participants through learning how to transform conceptual knowledge to operational techniques.
- To equip participants with a working understanding of choices and trade-offs available in their line and help them develop their "optimal" supervisory



mix in the light of specific organisational needs.

- To upgrade the general educational level of participants and offer them opportunities for further professional development.

#### MIDDLE MANAGEMENT LEVEL

- To improve performance and facilitate career development of participants/trainees on the basis of an integrated flexible curriculum evenly divided between general management skills and specific lines of technical expertise. Course distribution includes conceptual, technical and inter-personal concentrations.
- To generate and sustain in participants/trainees a well-rounded understanding of variables, choices and complex trade-offs comprising the managerial role within a dynamic problem-solving approach.
- To help prepare participants/trainees for future managerial responsibilities (middle and upper management) which entail greater reliance on conceptual and inter-personal skills.
- To assist participants/trainees in reflecting on and systemizing their varied experiences and developing new insights into familiar problems through assimilating a new professional perspective.

- To create for participants/trainees an opportunity for disciplined interaction among themselves in the interest of cross-fertilization and shared understanding of common problems.

#### ADVANCED MANAGEMENT LEVEL

- To provide in-depth coverage of functions, operations, skills and problem-solving. Such a mandate necessarily involves both process courses, e.g. decision-making, communication, control, etc. and functional skills courses, e.g. finance, personnel, accounting, general management, etc.
- To accelerate the professional development of participants/trainees through the acquisition and assimilation of advanced management knowledge with special emphasis on the development of analytical capabilities useful for exercising judgment, evaluation, and assessment.
- To help participants/trainees become effective members of the international management profession through familiarity with its standards, techniques, specialized language, concerns, issues, values, etc. both regionally and cross-culturally.
- To offer participants/trainees an opportunity to

exchange experiences and develop common grounds relevant to the future of management practice in Bahrain and the Gulf region.

- To tap and develop the learning potential of participants/trainees in order to stimulate in them self-sustained professional growth through keeping up with rapid developments in their field. This also includes opportunities for further management education toward recognized university degrees.

#### EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT LEVEL

- To provide highly specialized executive training in selected management areas relevant to senior decision-makers. Such training caters simultaneously to the newly promoted executive as well as the veteran senior manager seeking refresher courses to keep up with a rapidly developing field.
- To respond to the legitimate and increasing need of technical professional turned managers (mostly engineers) to acquire advanced management skills without having to go through a lengthy formal academic programme. Such a trend is now internationally recognized.



- To make available locally high quality Business and Management short training programmes comparable to overseas offerings that attract Bahraini executives.
- To create a professional forum for identifying and discussing emerging managerial issues relevant to the present and future of the management profession in Bahrain.

In no case were these objectives set unilaterally by Gulf Polytechnic. Before, during and after conducting the needs assessment survey, individual meetings, group sessions, workshops and informal seminars were arranged with key representatives of major organisations in Bahrain as well as the Civil Service Bureau representing the public sector and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs representing the private sector. The purpose was to involve the potential users of this new programme in planning its strategic objectives to ensure their compatibility with their own corporate needs and strategies. Each of the five levels underwent a series of successive refinements that eventually culminated in developing a profile for that level including parameters within which it was supposed to operate. Obviously, not all organisations had identical perceptions of these levels a fact which forced the planning team to go back to the drawing

board on several occasions, feed information back to the client group and seek common denominators on bottom line positions. The results of this intricate process were the objectives listed above for each level. That some of them ended up actually reflecting the priorities of some organisations more than others is undoubtedly true.

To serve these objectives, a basic curriculum was set for each level as follows:

Clerical Level:

Accelerated Learning Skills

Office Organisation and Records Management

Basic Business English

Book-Keeping

Effective Communication

Effective Supervision

Basic Personnel Skills

Computer Appreciation and Word Processing

Basic Cost Analysis

Basic Supervision:

Accelerated Learning Skills

Introduction to Computer Programming

Basic Supervision Skills

Practical Financial Accounting

Introduction to Finance

Basic Management Skills

Fundamentals of Personnel Management

Supervisory Decision-Making

Basic Quantitative Methods

Middle Management:

Accelerated Learning Skills

Supervision and Control

Survey of Economics

Survey of Accounting

Fundamentals of Marketing

Introduction to Computer Programming and Packages

Fundamentals of Finance

Building Management Skills

Organisation and Management

Quantitative Methods for Managers

Effective Personnel Management

Advanced Management:

Accelerated Learning Skills

Accounting for Managers

Advanced Management Systems

Personnel and Human Resource Development

Corporate Planning

Managerial Finance

Production and Operations Management



Marketing Management

Management Information Systems

Managerial Budgeting

Job Evaluation and Compensation Management

Business Computer Systems

Executive Management:

Strategic Corporate Planning

Research Methods in Management

Executive Information and Decision Support Systems

Strategic Manpower Planning and Human Resource Development

Financial Analysis for Executives

Project Evaluation and Management

Seminar in Personnel Management

Marketing Research

Executive Self-Development

The Bahrain Executive Environment

Nor was the process of developing the programme for each level any less complicated than that followed for reaching agreement on objectives. In working with potential client organisations, an attempt was made to discuss major job needs, skill categories and performance gaps and then try to translate them jointly to training contents. For most organisations, the process involved working with both policy-makers and line departments in an effort to aggregate needs,

always keeping to mind the failures of previous training efforts both in-house and outside the organisation.

Aware of the rapidly changing needs and the built-in uncertainties, it was mutually agreed upon that the contents as originally formulated would be considered tentative and reevaluated on an on-going basis. It was further agreed that COMEP was to have, at a subsequent stage, a Management Research and Development Unit that would, among other things, provide for continuous monitoring, evaluation and fine tuning of contents both at a programme level and with respect to specific subject matter areas. This unit has not been established yet, but a subsequent seminar held in December 1986 at Gulf Polytechnic showed a widening support base for the idea at the highest policy levels. This makes it quite probable that it will be successfully launched in the near future.

Selection criteria and admission requirements were also set, in addition to inter-level avenues, allowing for transfer to a higher level upon successful completion of a lower one. A particularly appealing feature of the programme was its allowing, under appropriate quality controls, for continuation of studies towards an Associate Diploma, and eventually a B.Sc degree for those who complete a COMEP level with a certain average

and meet other entry requirements.

Given the general format of the programme, it is expected that trainees are self-motivated and eager to reap the many personal and professional rewards of high-quality training. It is also true that one of the goals COMEP is to improve the confidence level of participants so that they may approach their job requirements more assertively.

As they are all practitioners with track records behind them, and in view of the fact that they have been consciously and purposely selected by their organisations, it is of paramount importance to integrate their training into their respective organisational contexts in pursuit of institutional objectives.

Since the early stages of COMEP, it was strongly felt, both by the planning team and client organisations, that unlike other training avenues, COMEP was not to have an open admissions policy. Candidate-screening was to be taken very seriously in order to ensure, as closely as possible, its concurrence with corporate strategies of sponsor organisations as well as the career development plans of most participants. Organisational nomination, present position of



candidate, future career targets, previous educational and professional attainment, as well as English language proficiency were to be part of the screening formula. A screening committee was set up for each level with representation covering the planning team, Gulf Polytechnic, the Civil Service Bureau and the Ministry of Labour. The screening interview was carefully developed as a structured instrument and designed to offer hopefully valid and reliable indicators. Such indicators included candidate self-image, career consciousness, skill level, and motivation. On a number of occasions the committee took issue with specific organisational nominations of candidates for a particular level and recommended a different one.

To avoid the shortcomings of past programmes, due attention was given even at the inception stage to building linkages with client organisations. Plans were laid for careful monitoring of participants in the programme, aiding the process of knowledge and skill transfer from the classroom to the job context, and working towards developing ways for each organisation to assess improvements in job performance for its candidates. Each organisation was to assign preceptors from among its managers to facilitate the learning of candidates and help create an organisational climate

conducive to their needs and receptive to their new ideas.

This provision was originally meant to serve two important purposes. First, continued organisational commitment to the nominated candidates and, secondly, providing a much needed avenue to facilitate the transfer of COMEP-acquired knowledge and skills from the classroom to the job context. It was also hoped that in meeting this important challenge, feedback would be generated as to the performance of the programme, its continued relevance, impact and need to introduce specific changes. It turned out, however, that despite the original enthusiasm, most organisations were not willing or able to assign preceptors and continued to rely on training officers. This barrier has persistently had an adverse effect on COMEP which found itself forced to rely on "second-best" options for checking on the transfer of knowledge. It also meant that COMEP personnel faced problems of discontinuity in dealing with their client organisation counterparts who were often changed suddenly to the extent of losing momentum. This issue will be raised again with client organisations in a new bid to implement the preceptor idea.

Also, by way of providing for a comprehensive

wide-reaching programme, it was agreed to run some "support" activities considered essential for the success of COMEP in the long run. Such activities included special one-day Chief Executive Officers seminars, short-term (3-4 days) training programmes, involving "distinguished" practitioners to serve on COMEP staff and publish a news letter.

This aspect of COMEP is generally recognized as one of its brightest spots. Since February 1984, 2-3 such activities are held each year to serve a variety of purposes ranging from technical management seminars offered on demand to middle and senior managers who are not regular members of COMEP, to one-day Chief Executive Officers forum that address emerging problems that have yet to take shape in Bahrain.

A related activity is the "distinguished practitioner" series. Each month a leading Bahraini manager is invited to address participants on a major professional issue relevant to the practice of management in a particular sector or in the country at large. A major objective of these auxiliary COMEP functions which were introduced as a result of the first round of evaluation undertaken in Spring 1985 is to keep a high level of interest in management development among various organisations and help generate inter-organisational



dialogue on such issues. Proceedings are circulated after each meeting.

A step which is soon to be launched in this connection is a COMEP newsletter to serve as a medium for exchanging management development "news and views" in Bahrain. The idea was first suggested by COMEP staff and received a warm reception from various organisations.

Following extensive consultations between Gulf Polytechnic and client organisations, it was decided not to activate the Executive Management level as a full-fledged diploma course until Fall 1986 and hold instead regular short-term seminars for executives. All other levels were to culminate, as suggested earlier, in diplomas issued by Gulf Polytechnic. The first two batches of diploma holders graduated in June 1985 and February 1986 respectively.

## EVALUATION: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### INTRODUCTION

Education management and training have normally been regarded as purposive. However, whether or not and to what extent specific programmes meet their purpose is the subject of evaluation. Unfortunately, management

education and training activities are often ambiguous and subject to widely varying perceptions. Ambiguity over goals and, perhaps, lack of clear knowledge of how to achieve them, and what progress indicators to use as well as lack of coherent strategies of evaluation, could all add to the problem. Moreover, the reasons why it may be appropriate to evaluate management education programmes are at least as numerous as the various parties interested in the outcome of such programmes. Views about the nature and purpose of evaluation have developed quite dramatically over the last two decades. Unfortunately, many people's expectations about what evaluation should accomplish have not kept pace with these developments. In addition, there has been a large amount of work carried out on the evaluation of general educational and social programmes, and much of this is parallel and complimentary to the evaluation of management training. To have an evaluation imposed is obviously threatening and implies heavy-handed control by managers incompatible with the creative process of learning. Imposed evaluation is most likely to occur as an over-reaction against a previous lack of systematic feedback but it could backfire and jeopardise the evaluation process. Another widespread reaction to evaluation is that it is desirable in principle but too difficult in practice. Perhaps the

difficulty is that the literature itself is confusing with respect to concepts, terminology and techniques employed. Such problems are at once connected to the existence of different research and methodology traditions, complexities inherent to the behavioural sciences, and problems arising from the variety of factors influencing managerial behaviour and the management task.<sup>(3)</sup> Even within the training field, people carrying out management development often try to distance themselves from general training, particularly if evaluation is on the agenda. The fact that such differences do exist should not reflect negatively either on evaluation or on management development. Measures of success may be less obvious and not all outcomes are predictable. However, such differences should not negate the need to evaluate management education or development. It can only mean that different techniques and different kinds of data may be required.

Since the real worth of a business and the efficient running of an organisation are determined less by its physical assets than by the quality of its management, and since that quality can be affected by education and training, it would seem essential to evaluate management education or training schemes in a systematic manner. Thus, this chapter seeks to present



and evaluate major aspects of the newly introduced Continuing Management Education Programme at Gulf Polytechnic as perceived by its constituency and against strategy. But before discussing the task of evaluating COMEP, a selective survey of the trends and developments in evaluation literature is in order.

### TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN EVALUATION

The literature seems to relate differently to the evaluation of educational programmes as compared to training. Educational programmes are seen to involve longer, full-time programmes with larger numbers of students, while training programmes are characteristically shorter, often of a part-time nature, and involve smaller numbers of participants. Different writers on the subject suggest widely varying approaches to evaluation. Various terms are used to describe different facets of evaluation and sometimes different terms are used to refer to the same event. It is also possible that different evaluation activities are meant by different author's usage of the same terms. For instance, we can contrast "internal" and "external" validation,<sup>(4)</sup> "formative" and "summative" evaluation,<sup>(5)</sup> or "short" and "long" cycle evaluation.<sup>(6)</sup> On the other hand, training outcomes have been described as "immediate," "intermediate" and "ultimate,"<sup>(7)</sup> or as "reaction,"

"learning," "behaviour" and "results."<sup>(8)</sup> To this complexity can be added genuine difficulties ranging from time shortages to methodological issues relevant to evaluation research. The literature also refers to different aspects of evaluation. It refers to "Input Evaluation" which assesses the appropriateness and adequacy of all resources that go into a training programme. It focuses on elements of the design, including performance objectives, instructional design and sequencing plans as well as the training materials to be used by the trainers, facilities and physical resources. Thus, assessment of the instructor's competence and evaluation of the behaviours participants bring with them are considered important elements of input evaluation.

"Context Evaluation": It attempts to assess the environment's attitudes towards the role of training and development. An example would be salary increases for those who complete programmes and improve on-the-job performance. Context evaluation also deals with the purpose of specific programmes such as developing new skills, enhancing current skills, achievement of organisational goals and objectives, or overcoming specific company problems. It also focuses on objectives, and probes into their desirability and feasibility.

Researchers have realised the importance of context and treated it as one of the variables which would affect the results of training. At a common-sense level, it is clear that the expectations established before a course and the support, or lack of it, received after the programme are critical to whether anything is learnt, or changed, as a result of training. Accordingly, interest in the context of training has moved during the last 20 years from attempts to negate the effects of context, to acceptance that context must be included. In all cases, however, context is viewed as a set of "givens" that determine the nature and context of a programme, thereby profoundly influencing the way a programme unfolds, and the messages and ideas that participants take away with them.

"Process Evaluation": It deals with the implementation of a programme's design and addresses questions such as what takes place during the training process: and how effectively instructors use resources and materials made available to them. Are the instructors aware of the participants' learning styles? Are training activities compatible with these styles? Are instructional strategies appropriate for the selected objectives?

"Project Evaluation": Project evaluation assesses the



competencies of participants who complete programmes and changes in their on-the-job performance. It argues that if pre-tests have been administered, post-tests can be used to determine participants' gains in knowledge, skills and on-the-job performance. The design and selection of evaluation measures are of critical importance to this process.

"Impact Evaluation": It assesses the cumulative training efforts made in the organisation's productivity, efficiency and profitability, and offers training and development staff an opportunity to demonstrate to chief executives the importance of training, either for cutting costs, increasing profits or otherwise improving the financial position of the organisation.

With regard to management training some 20 years ago, the focus was on measuring the value of training so that it could be entered into cost-benefit analysis. This involved specifying a range of performance-based measures. It has been argued that this kind of approach may produce valid results when evaluating operative training, but becomes rather suspect when looking at management training. The argument was that for managers, the "output" (the change that is supposedly produced by the programme) cannot always be

specified and operationalised. This forced researchers to focus on the few things that are measurable with the result that there are always a host of alternative explanations for their findings.

The question of "output" was examined in more detail by researchers in the early seventies. Some started to subdivide the term "output" into what Burgoyne and Singh called "a chain of consequences,"<sup>(9)</sup> a notion which was fundamental to the evaluation models prepared by Hesselting, Warr, Bird and Rackham, and Hamblin<sup>(10)</sup>. The cycle of evaluation may be seen as a sequence of training outcomes which correspond to the various levels of objective setting. Once training needs and goals have been identified (context evaluation) and training resources and contents have been examined (input evaluation) the next level of objective setting and evaluation is concerned with trainees' reactions to course content, trainers, other trainees, training setting and so on. Following this, there are three distinct levels of training outcomes corresponding to what Warr, et al, call immediate, intermediate and ultimate objectives. These are similar to Hamblin's concepts of "learning," "job behaviour," "organisational effectiveness" and "ultimate value" levels of evaluation.

This approach has, however, had some drawbacks in the sense that it is difficult to measure "learning" with any degree of confidence. Particularly difficult are attempts at measuring the value of ultimate outcomes.

Many researchers have emphasized that the purpose of evaluation is decision-making. For instance, Warr, Bird and Rackham<sup>(11)</sup> imply that a major purpose of evaluation should be to help the trainer make decisions about a particular programme. Thus, the evaluation may assist in clarifying the objectives of a programme, or in helping the trainer to decide what teaching methods and styles are most appropriate (context and input evaluation). Gowler and Legge<sup>(12)</sup> make a similar distinction addressing the analysis of planned organisational change. This is the distinction between formative and summative evaluation: the former is seen as providing regular feedback on the planning and implementation of a programme in order to aid-day-to-day decision-making; the latter involves an attempt to identify as accurately as possible the results of a particular programme after it has been completed. Similarly, in an educational context formative evaluation is seen as an attempt on the part of the evaluator to help in the formulation of goals and the design of the programme, before following its progress as it is implemented; while the summative



evaluation is often presented as an after-thought to see how the programme went. This is sometimes paralleled in management training by the distinction between short and long cycle evaluation, aiming to aid decisions about current and future programmes respectively.

On the notion of decision-making, Burgoyne and Singh<sup>(13)</sup> have two major contributions. The first contribution is the distinction between evaluation as "feedback" and evaluation as adding to the body of "knowledge" and facts about training and education. Evaluation as a feedback was seen to provide transient and perishable data relating directly to decision-making, while evaluation as adding to the body of knowledge was seen as generating paradigms including knowledge about education and training processes. The second contribution refers to a wide range of decisions that may be taken about training in a hierarchy of levels. The five distinct levels at which evaluation may be pursued as identified by Burgoyne and Singh are:

1. Inter-method decisions: how particular methods are handled such as lectures;
2. Method decisions: whether to introduce a topic through a lecture or a case study;
3. Programme decisions: the nature and length of particular programmes;

4. Strategy decisions: the best arrangement of resources, or the way institutions are to be organised.
5. Policy decisions: the overall provision of resources and the nature of institutions to be funded.

An evaluation which is concerned with "objectives" of training, an emphasis on identifying the "outcomes" of training, and a stress on providing "feedback" about these outcomes to those people involved in providing the inputs to training, is known as "The Systems Model." This model which has had a widespread use, mainly in the evaluation of training, seems, according to Easterby-Smith,<sup>(14)</sup> to have certain limitations. He refers to three criticisms of the features outlined above. On the issue of "objectives", he refers to the question of whose objectives are they? i.e. objectives of training defined by the organisation, by the trainers, by the trainees' bosses, by the trainee, or by some external validating body?

Secondly, the issue of "outcomes" as, a feature of the systems model represents a machanistic view of learning. Easterby-Smith points out that "it assumes that learning consists of placing facts and knowledge in people's heads in the hope that this will become

internalised, before gradually becoming incorporated in their behavioural responses." The third feature is the notion of "feedback" which assumes that data provided from evaluations of what has happened in the past can only contribute marginally to decisions about what should happen in the future. According to Easterby-Smith, "they can only contribute to incremental adjustments based on past designs, and cannot in themselves indicate whether any more radical changes should be made in the future."<sup>(15)</sup>

During the early 1970s there was a reaction by some researchers to the serious limitations in the approaches that relied heavily on quantitative measures. Special targets were results obtained at specific points in time, or those that relied on comparisons between matched groups, and those that were based on measures of achievement, compared to the formal goals of a programme. As a result, various researchers came up with alternative approaches emphasizing certain elements more than others. For example, Michael Scriven<sup>(16)</sup> proposed a radical view that the evaluator should avoid finding out what the formal goals and objectives of a programme are. Instead, the evaluator should spend most of his time talking to participants and tutors and observing what takes place during and after the programme. Only in



this way, Scriven argues, can they evaluate or avoid being "contaminated" by those who have vested interest in the programme. This approach is known as "Goal-Free Evaluation," And criticised for the tendency on the part of the evaluator to look only for the outcomes that are expected by various groups at the beginning of the programme and not noticing changes in direction if they happen during the programme.

Thus, the goal-free evaluation starts from the assumption that the evaluator should avoid consideration of formal objectives in carrying out his or her objectives. This philosophy has been also supported by Deutscher, (1976)<sup>(17)</sup> who also warned against the dangers of basing evaluation studies on the formal goals of programmes. He argued that the formal goals of a programme are often framed in order to attract sponsors or participants, and they may represent only a small part of what the tutors hope the programme to achieve.

The other style of evaluation which originated in the United Kingdom is called "Illuminative Evaluation," although it has much in common with goal-free evaluation. With this approach it has been argued that there is a danger on the part of the evaluator to look only for the outcomes that are expected by various

groups at the beginning of the programme and will not notice any changes in direction if they happen during the programme.

This type of evaluation is seen primarily as an alternative to comparative evaluation. As Parlett and Hamilton<sup>(18)</sup> describe it, the purpose of illuminative evaluation is to contribute towards decision-making, keeping in mind that information should be gathered about the processes of a programme, rather than the outcomes.

With illuminative evaluation, there tends to be more emphasis on adopting a flexible and open-ended approach to the research as indicated by Ruddock (1981)<sup>(19)</sup>. Parlett<sup>(20)</sup> also comments upon what should be the proper purposes of illuminative evaluation to increase communal awareness of a particular programme and processes involved. The stages of this type of evaluation according to Ruddock, (1981) are three. "First, observation, further enquiry, attempts to explain; second, a progressive focus upon what appear to be key issues, after requiring extended interviews with participants; third, seeking general principles and placing findings within a broader explanatory context."<sup>(21)</sup>

In conclusion it should now be obvious that approaches to evaluation will vary according to the purpose for which the evaluation is intended. For trainers, evaluation feedback is an essential part of the cycle of systematic training. It links learning outcomes both to specific detailed objectives and to more general aims (such as self-developement). It thus highlights the effectiveness of the training methods; it provides a quality-control mechanism for the system, and it links post-training job behaviour to the needs as originally identified. Evaluation may also be used as feedback to the participants (trainees) giving them knowledge about the results of their learning. Feedback thus may be construed as positive reinforcement, as the elimination of errors or as reductions in areas of uncertainty for the participants depending on the theoretical underpinning of the learning methods and models being used.

Evaluation may be used to make links from training or management development activities to organisational purposes. At one level, control questions may focus on whether management development is the best available solution to a particular problem. A more common control question arises when there is more pressure to examine whether the management development or training function as a whole or a particular event is "cost



effective." Another control perspective concerns the extent to which the management development or training function is meeting the needs of the organisation; whether there is some positive correlation between the programme given and the desired direction of development for the organisation. Control evaluation in this sense is concerned with policy and decision-making issues within the management development function and with its relation to the rest of the enterprise.

In a research framework, evaluation seeks to contribute to knowledge. Research evaluation seeks to establish significant connections between learning or the utilisation of learning and the events contributing to learning in a way that may be generalised across different training activities and trainee populations. Research evaluation (whether using quantitative or qualitative methods) aims to maximize rigour and thus contribute to decision-making only in the longer terms.<sup>(22)</sup> Another function of evaluation research is to improve the techniques available to other evaluative end-users such as feedback or control.

In treating evaluation as a form of organisational intervention, we are recognizing that management developemnt or training activity, and the subsequent

evaluation work on the organisation produce a variety of effects beyond the immediate learning goals. Intervention is what Goldstein has called "a fourth stage of evaluation efforts." An intervention may be overt and deliberate or may arise as an unplanned (though often predictable) side-effect of evaluation processes.<sup>(23)</sup> Tracey<sup>(24)</sup> has written of the parallels between stages in problem solving and stages of evaluation to the extent that a particular evaluation has a problem solving orientation; it is being used for an interventionist purpose. Evaluation research may have an interventionist emphasis, when it is concerned not only with outcomes of the training staff but also with the "moving target" which the evaluation processes themselves create. This process is described by Burgoyne<sup>(25)</sup> as an evaluation linked to business school courses. He uses the terminology of "action research" to describe the process in which the research is taking place. Subsequently, the influence of the evaluation is itself also monitored by the researcher.

Most evaluation involves some aspects of power, i.e. the manipulative use of data, regardless of its validity, to assist in some organisational power conflicts. In essence, it is possible for some evaluators to determine a desired conclusion and then

assemble "evaluative evidence" to support that conclusion. This is in a sense evaluation as intervention, but it must be treated as a separate evaluation purpose because the primary emphasis for the activity does differ.

The foregoing conceptual overview of evaluation literature was intended as theoretical grounding for the COMEP evaluation process.

As for the present evaluation exercise, it is essentially illuminative in nature, contributing to decision making with the objective of learning, a process which should be truly collaborative involving participants (learners), researchers (evaluators) and policy makers. As such, it seeks to capture the developmental dynamics of COMEP as qualitatively and open-endedly as possible. The objective is not to prove or disprove any particular set of propositions, but rather to identify trends, assess general progress, pinpoint loopholes and chart out future possibilities. The contribution, perhaps is a managerial approach to evaluation, similar in kind to a management audit.

It is of great importance to remember as we approach the task of evaluating COMEP against strategy, that the programme emerged in response to the shortcomings of the 10,000 Plan some three years prior to any serious



thinking went into the development of a strategy.

Having been designed and launched before a formal strategy was conceived, it is natural for COMEP to overlap with the strategy, satisfy some or most of its specifications without being totally aligned to it. The time difference between COMEP and the strategy should be clearly taken into account in approaching the following evaluations and putting key recommendations in perspective.

As indicated by the chapter title, the intent is to evaluate COMEP against the strategy outlined in Chapter Five. However, there are serious constraints that cannot be overlooked in this context:

1. COMEP is still undergoing its formative stages and has yet to take final shape. This important fact means that a programme in the making is not easy to subject to a formal methodologically-tight evaluation against a comprehensive strategy. Rather, it has to be more generally assessed using the strategy as a background so that the broader picture can be drawn at this early stage. Subsequently, of course, a more detailed evaluation may be undertaken.

2. As COMEP is still in its early stages, the way it is perceived by its constituency (participants, organisations, staff, etc) is absolutely essential for its survival. As a result, an attempt has been made to undertake an evaluation sensitive to the need and perceptions of this constituency. That this evaluation does not always coincide with the strategy does not undermine the fact that there is substantial overlapping between the two.

Self evident as it may be, it should still be mentioned that the COMEP evaluation incorporated in this chapter was not all undertaken individually by the author. A part of the work was originally accomplished by a group of staff evaluators as part of an on-going process initiated by the author and undertaken under his guidance. The involvement of the author with the staff members and corporate representatives active in the on-going evaluation serves as a clear example of his dual roles as director and researcher.

Not all COMEP levels receive the same degree of evaluation scrutiny. Advanced and Middle Management have been dealt with at far greater length than lower levels. Again, there are a variety of reasons for this decision including:

- The upper two levels are properly "managerial" in the strict sense of the term taking into consideration the nature of participants: their backgrounds, organisational positions, career potential and decision-making responsibilities.
- The feedback-generating ability of the upper two levels far exceeds that of the lower two. This is true not only with respect to awareness level, communicative ability and expectations of participants but also to the wider range of their needs and far stronger sense of alternatives.

To arrive at a well-rounded understanding of COMEP, three different groups were involved in the evaluation. These groups were participants themselves, their immediate supervisors, and the trainers, i.e. Gulf Polytechnic faculty who were involved with COMEP.

As the evaluation process is equally taxing for organisations themselves as well as COMEP planners and staff, it would not have been feasible to expect their full cooperation to cover all four active levels of COMEP. Actually, the demands of the time and energy of senior managers in those organisations were quite substantial as it were. Adding to it on a regular basis would have seriously risked losing their hard-earned cooperation.



As the needs of COMEP participants at the Basic Supervision and Clerical Skills levels are considerably narrower and more limited than the other two, it was felt that the material given to them was more or less standard with a substantially smaller risk of failure, particularly with respect to relevance. The assumption was able to stand the test on the two different occasions when the lower two levels of COMEP were evaluated, albeit, on a more limited scale.

The significant gap between the two upper levels of COMEP and the lower two would have required evaluators to use a different set of evaluation instruments for these lower levels. It was therefore felt that such a substantial investment could not have been justified at this point in time given the resource constraints.

#### EVALUATION METHODOLOGY AND THE PRESENT STUDY

For the purpose of this study, three sets of interviews and questionnaires were used. The first set "Structural Interviews and Questionnaires" with participants and faculty in the Continuing Management Education Programme (Appendix E) was conducted three times. Twice for the participants of 1983-84, once for the participants of 1985-86. The reason for conducting it twice for the first group was to test the feasibility and the usefulness of the instrument prior

to formal application.

It should be noted that reference will only be made to the "Middle" and "Advanced" management levels. The purpose of these interviews was to establish professional and career objective profiles as well as evaluating COMEP in terms of needs assessment, quality of instruction and professional relevance.

Using course evaluating questionnaires, COMEP participants at all levels were asked to evaluate each COMEP course they had taken. At the end of the term, lecturers were requested to write a progress report for each participant in the course they had taught. As such, a composite report of each participant was prepared.

In Appendix E, two comprehensive reports are shown. The first report dated 1984-85 and the second annual report 1985-86 covering all participants who have joined the programme since 1983.

## THE COMEP EVALUATION PROCESS

### PARTICIPANT PROFILE(S) AND EVALUATION RESULTS

In view of the above, COMEP evaluation in action focused on the Advanced and Middle Management groups.

It began with the Advanced Management group of Spring Semester 1983-84 which, of course, was the first to join COMEP.

A mixed group of 13 participants were interviewed and 10 among them responded to a detailed evaluation questionnaire. All participants involved in the evaluation were senior managers with key positions in the following areas:

- Data Processing
- Marketing Management
- Personnel Management
- Accounts
- General Services
- Information and Public Relations

A selected list of tasks performed by them includes:

- Sales and Contracting
- Purchasing
- Research
- Forecasting and Planning
- Supplies and Maintenance
- Liaison
- Support Services
- Media Production
- Programme Implementation
- Personnel Relations
- Financial Analysis and Control
- Auditing
- Budgeting
- Credit Analysis



Participants' span of control varied from 1 to 400, and they all exhibited a high level of career consciousness. By and large, they knew where they were heading and, slight delays notwithstanding, made sure they were on target. Also, all participants had successfully completed their secondary education and some had college qualifications. A number of them also had specialized diplomas in a variety of areas including:

- Engineering
- Computers
- Business Studies
- Accounts
- English Language

All participants save two have had previous training exposure in various areas of management either on a short-term, medium-term or long-term basis. A selected list of training/educational programmes attended earlier covers the following:

- Management (Human Relations)
- Management (Personnel and Manpower Planning)
- General Management
- Hotel Management
- Human Resources Development
- Data Processing
- Management Communication Skills

A majority of group members have been with their organisations for over 10 years, and 70% among them are consciously preparing themselves for more senior management positions.

### ADVANCED MANAGEMENT GROUPS

The first observation that surfaces from the evaluation is that COMEP seems to have been fairly successful in transferring to Advanced Management participants specific concepts and techniques, both behavioural and technical in nature. However, the record is quite mixed as to whether COMEP has been successful in helping participants acquire self-assessment skills. The general impression, though, is that it has not been very successful. Its strength seems to be far more with structured, cognitive learning rather than unstructured process learning.

On balance, however, all Advanced Management Participants covered in the evaluation indicated, in varying degrees, positive satisfaction with COMEP results as follows:

- Fairly satisfied (20%)
- Generally satisfied (60%)
- Highly satisfied (20%)

Also, all of them found COMEP to compare favourably with similar programmes they have been exposed to or are familiar with. The proportions:

- Favourable (20%)
- Generally favourable (50%)
- Highly favourable (30%)

As to whether COMEP has actually met their expectations, the following reactions were registered:

- 60% found that COMEP has met their expectations.
- 20% indicated that it has gone beyond their expectations.
- 20% complained that it has fallen short of their career expectations.

It may be noted that of the 20% (2 respondents) whose expectations were not quite met, one does not, as yet, hold a middle management position; it is questionable whether or not he is professionally qualified for this advanced level, although he is reported to be making steady progress. The other respondent may be over-qualified for COMEP, or at least for the level of participants presently accepted into Advanced Management. Where most participants are dependent on lectures directly related to textbooks, she has



expressed dissatisfaction with this method and would rather have lecturers discuss matters related to the subject at hand and on a broader basis but not simply explaining, or parroting the text. (For more information, please see "Structured Personal Interview with COMEP Participants 'Advanced Management' S'84 Group of Spring 1984-1985").

Does this result necessarily indicate a positive impact for COMEP? Again, on balance, the picture seems a bit hazy as no less than 70% of the participants cited "organisational policies" as a possible barrier for putting COMEP-acquired knowledge to practical use and attaining their career objectives. In comparison, only 20% referred to educational barriers. Interestingly enough, a majority of respondents, 60%, again criticised COMEP for giving them cognitive skills, and helping them assess the skills of others: colleagues, subordinates and superiors but not their own. As a result, COMEP has now taken a turn towards emphasizing managerial self-assessment skills. The issue assumed obvious importance following this evaluation as 80% of the participants indicated priority interest in self-development skills whereas 60% in being better equipped to handle new and more challenging responsibilities and 40% expected promotion.

Partly as an effort to rectify the self-development gap, a short 3-day seminar was organised in June 1986 to a group of 22 executives to deal with executive self-development. The response to such simple techniques as managerial learning curves, job expectations curve, performance curve and development curve, was very encouraging. Particularly well received were career planning games in which participants immersed themselves very enthusiastically. At the end of the seminar, the formal evaluation of participants was overwhelmingly positive and invariably they all demanded a series of future seminars along the same lines. Apparently what appealed most to them was the availability of a generic learning process whose contents were for them to come up with using their own career plan.

Returning back to COMEP evaluation, respondents among this group generally registered a favourable response to COMEP and indicated that their managerial skills have improved as a result of the programme. They were also generally clear in suggesting that they felt they have been provided with new management methods and tools to help them carry out their present and probably future duties. Some, however, had anxieties about their success in transferring knowledge and skills acquired through COMEP to their jobs. This was no

negative reflection, they pointed out, on COMEP which they were asked to identify as "least appealing," and most selected general management subjects as "most appealing".

#### FALL 1984-85 PARTICIPANTS

Moving to the Advanced Management, Fall 1984-85 group, the above picture tends to be generally reinforced. The number involved was 15 senior managers with the following distribution of positions:

- Production Management
- Personnel Management
- Staff Development
- Information and Public Relations
- Operations Management
- General Administration

A "random" list of tasks performed by the group would include the following:

- Supplies and Maintenance
- Training
- Liaison
- Industrial
- Monitoring
- Bahrainization



- Supervision
- Forecasting and Planning
- Survey and Research
- Support Services
- Media Production
- Office Management
- Customer Services
- Recruitment
- Coordination
- Assessment
- Budgeting
- Quality Control
- Report Writing

All participants are looking forward to career mobility. For short-term objectives, time spans vary from "any time" to 2 or 3 years. Long-term goals cover 5 to 10 years. Change is occasionally dependent on expansion and opportunities. In some cases, companies are satisfied with the participants' work and do not favour moves. In other situations, titles will remain unchanged but responsibilities will increase. Limited and unlimited opportunities are causing three individuals to seriously consider leaving their present organisations. The cases respectively involve the following reasons:

- a Opportunities are not available.
- b One position is sought and if not obtained the individual will start his own business.
- c Opportunities are available but participant wants to move around to get an overview before settling down; he may eventually decide to open his own business.

With the exception of one who only has primary education, all other participants have completed secondary school and 4 hold B.Sc degrees in Engineering. Most of them have earned overseas diplomas in a wide range of management and technical subjects. With the exception of one who has not participated in company or individual training programmes\*, all participants have at some point participated in in-house and/or outside training programmes. Short-term programmes (1-6 weeks) in Bahrain, Jordan and United Kingdom were in the areas of:

- Public Relations
- Management - Introduction
- Management - Supervisory Development

---

\* This participant has a M.Sc degree.

- Management - Construction
- Correspondence - Writing Skills
- Data Processing
- Accounts - Budget
- Information Systems

Medium-term programmes (2-9 months) in Bahrain, India and the the United Kingdom were not as numerous and were in the fields of:

- Supervision - Stores
- Management - Managers
- Management - Development
- Management - Introduction
- Public Relations - Press/Job Relations
- Personnel - Manpower Development
- Engineering - Traffic

Long-term programmes varied in length from 1-2 years or were made up of a series of courses over a 5 or 6 year period. Primarily in Bahrain and the United Kingdom, programmes were in the fields of -

- Management - Business
- Management - Leadership
- Management - Objectives
- Management - Finance



- Management - Supervision
- Management - Administration
- Management - Training
- Engineering - Industrial

Members of this group were more articulate in addressing the question of COMEP-acquired job-related skills. Although many participants listed courses directly related to COMEP, in general they appear to have a firm grip on their job-related abilities. Skills fell into the following categories:

- Communications
  - 1 English Language
  - 2 Report Writing
- Accounts
  - 1 Managerial Accounting
  - 2 Finance
  - 3 Budgeting
- Other
  - 1 Human Relations
  - 2 Marketing (including Customer Relations)
  - 3 Management
  - 4 Personnel
  - 5 Economics
  - 6 Insurance Skills
  - 7 Research
  - 8 Training

Members of this group were clearly motivated in seeking higher educational qualifications and professional enhancement. However, about half of them identified organisational policy as a barrier to their career development. Some complained that top management was just lacking in confidence and failed to adapt to changes that were perceived as a potential threat to its authority.

All members of the group except 2 expressed satisfaction with COMEP, and similar to their colleagues in the first group stressed the need for including more self-development skills in the programme. As for COMEP-related expectations, around 50% linked it to promotion aspirations and career plans, whereas 40% indicated professional self-satisfaction as their priority.

#### FALL 1985-86 PARTICIPANTS

Total number of participants in this group was 17, 50% of whom were graduates of the Middle Management COMEP level.

Their job distribution was as follow:

- Public Relations

- Administration
- Operations
- Marketing
- Personnel
- Accounts
- Customer Relations
- Data Processing

### Career Objectives

Most of the participants look forward to promotion. With the exception of one private sector participant who hopes to move across lines, the other 10 private sector participants look forward to promotion and were able to identify targeted slots. Time ranged from "not sure" to 10 years to "until we are number one in Bahrain and one of the biggest in the GCC." In Contrast, government sector participants tended to be evasive. Of the 4, 3 hoped for promotion, but only one was able to identify a targeted slot which presently is occupied by an expatriate.

The majority perceive COMEP as helping them achieve their career objectives. Specifically, COMEP is helping them develop specialized skills, in particular management, and is exposing them to a broad spectrum of management-related target areas.



### Organisation Recognition of COMEP

In sharp contrast to the results of the Graduate/Immediate Supervisor study (Spring 1985-86) emphasizing the existence of company support of COMEP participants, this group appears negative. One-third expect no recognition from their organisation as a result of successful completion of COMEP. Half said they had joined COMEP with self-development/improvement in mind. 50% saw COMEP as a means towards promotion in the future.

As to COMEP relevance, once again Personnel and Human Resource Development is perceived as the most relevant course taken thus far, and is followed by Advance Management Systems. One-third found all the courses to be relevant to career objectives.

When asked to identify COMEP-acquired job-related skills, participants were able to identify 70 skills falling into the following areas:

- Budget and Finance
- Management
- Communications
- Personnel
- Inter-Personal Relations

- Problem-Solving

50% of the participants identified Budgeting in particular. 69% said that they are presently applying all the skills which they had individually identified.

One aspect of COMEP criticized by this group was the screening process which is part of admission. They recommended more strict screening based on management position.

#### MIDDLE MANAGEMENT GROUPS

In a manner similar to that followed with Advanced Management participants, two Middle Management groups were surveyed through a questionnaire and an interview.

The Spring 1983-84 group included 22 participants with management positions distributed as follows:

- Accounts
- Personnel
- Data Processing
- Marketing
- Operations
- General Services

A majority among them have clear career objectives and a strong drive for upward career mobility within their respective organisations within a time frame ranging from the immediate to a 10-year period. They seem, by and large, bent on taking control of their career future and see COMEP as a convenient vehicle towards that end. As to the educational backgrounds of participants, they all have secondary or post-secondary credentials. Most of them have at some point participated in in-house and/or outside training programmes mainly in the field of management development as well as other miscellaneous areas. They were generally short-term (2 days to 4 weeks) in duration. Training took place primarily in Bahrain, but also in Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Egypt and the United Kingdom.

Short-term training programmes were in Management, Administration, Personnel, Communications, and Training.

Medium-term (11 weeks to 9 months) training programmes were in data processing and English language, while long-term (1 to 3 years) training programmes were in English language again and airline support services.

With regard to career barriers, participants identified organisational policy and educational background as the



main barriers to attaining career objectives. Dependence on formal education or advancement is reflected in participants' difficulty to identify and/or assess job-related skills they may have. They were able to list coordination, planning, communication, leadership, management, report writing and training as primary skills which they possess.

### Returning Graduates

Among the Middle Management Spring 1983-84 graduates, eight returned to COMEP in Fall 1985-86 to pursue studies at the Advanced Management level and two returned in Spring 1985-86. Thus, 50% of the Middle Management graduates are still with COMEP at a higher level.

### Performance

A full 85% of this group take COMEP very seriously and indicate a high level of support for the programme. Like their Advanced Management colleagues, they point out clearly in the direction of greater emphasis on self-development. Generally, participants were pleased with COMEP as indicated by the high number of those who returned to the Advanced Management level. They found the programme to be work-related, useful, and a means to further pursue educational goals for those not able to study on a full-time basis.

The Fall 1984-85 Middle Management group included 12 members with the following distribution of positions:

- Information and Public Relations
- General Services
- Operations
- Accounts
- Personnel

Educational background included secondary and post-secondary diplomas. They have all had prior management training experience in Bahrain and abroad.

#### Career Objectives of Participants

The participants are motivated, in pursuit of higher professional standards and looking forward to upward professional mobility. The majority seek to attain middle management positions and senior management positions as well as improved working conditions.

#### Barriers to Professional Development

Participants identified organisational policy and educational background as the main barriers to attaining their objectives. The group overwhelmingly registered a high level of satisfaction with COMEP and a strong desire to implement most of what they have learned.

The Fall 1985-86 Middle Management group totalled 17 members who again indicated a high level of satisfaction with COMEP. Their group, however, seems a bit poorer than the first two. The positions they hold are generally lower and in a reflection on screening procedures, one has to wonder whether many among them would not have done better at the Basic Supervision level.

**THE TWO-TIER GRADUATE/IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR COMEP**  
**IMPACT EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE - SPRING 1986**  
**(Refer to Appendix G).**

June 1985 witnessed the graduation of the first group of COMEP participants who joined the programme in Spring 1983-84. At the end of the following Fall 1985-86, the second group who joined COMEP in Fall 1984-85 followed. Since June 1985 and February 1986, both groups have had the opportunity to try their COMEP "wings" and put their COMEP-acquired knowledge and skills to test within their respective organisations.

In May 1986 it was decided that the time was ripe for involving these graduates from the Middle Management and Advanced Management levels, and their supervisors in a two-tier questionnaire (see Appendix G ) aimed at evaluating their COMEP experience.



The major participants in the questionnaire were:

1. Middle Management (MM) and Advanced Management (AM) graduates representing the groups of Spring 1983-84 and Fall 1984-85.
2. The Immediate Supervisors of these same groups.

The participant questionnaire (Tier-1) looks specifically at the following variables:

- A. COMEP curriculum design, planning and implementation (Questions 1, 19).
- B. Job transferrability of COMEP -acquired skills (Questions 3, 12, 13 and 20)
- C. Relevance of COMEP materials to the Bahrian experience (Questions 9, 16 and 17).
- D. Success of COMEP as a vehicle towards development of professional managers (Questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11).
- E. Client organisation support of COMEP (Questions 14, 15 and 18).

Tier-2, the immediate supervisor questionnaire covers the following variables:

- A. Organisation commitment to management development (Questions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 19).

- B. COMEP objectives (Questions 1, 6, 7 and 20).
- C. Impact of COMEP on participant performance (Questions 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17 and 18).
- D. Transferrability of COMEP acquired skills to the job context (Questions 9 and 15).
- E. Comparison between COMEP and similar management development programmes (Questions 14 and 16).

In order to ensure that questions were properly understood and to increase the chances for a higher response rate, questionnaires were hand-delivered to graduates and their supervisors. Filling in the questionnaire often came close to the interview format.

FEEDBACK GENERATED THROUGH THE TIER-1 COMEP GRADUATES QUESTIONNAIRE (Refer to Appendix G).

The responding group totalled 44 Middle Management and Advanced Management graduates, amounting to 80% of the total population.

- A. COMEP Curriculum Design, Planning and Implementation (Questions 1, 19). Graduates generally thought that COMEP was a well-planned programme based on the job requirements of Bahraini organisations (66% agreed, and 16% strongly agreed (Question 1). However, 14% thought that COMEP was poorly organised and loosely administered (Question 19).

8. Job transferrability of COMEP-acquired Skills  
(Questions 3, 12, 13 & 20).

While a minority felt that management knowledge was impossible to be taught in a classroom, more than two-thirds were of the opinion that it could be (Question 20). In support of this position, 80% indicated an appreciable improvement in their job performance (Question 12). A full 77% of the graduates surveyed perceived COMEP as a channel facilitating the transfer of knowledge from the classroom to the job context (Question 13); while 86% actually indicated success in transferring COMEP-acquired knowledge and skills to their job and experienced improved job performance (Question 3). This is a very significant indication for it suggests that against serious odds, mostly organisational barriers, a substantial transfer occurs and <sup>participants</sup> put their COMEP knowledge to good practical use. However, how much COMEP knowledge was actually transferred in each case is bound to differ. An interesting related observation is that graduates seem far more optimistic about COMEP than participants who are still in the system. As suggested earlier may be the benefit of distancing themselves from COMEP and reflecting retrospectively on the experience was a positive influence.



**C. Relevance of COMEP material to Bahrain (Questions 9, 16 and 17).** A majority of graduates (61%) indicated that materials covered in COMEP were relevant to Bahrain while 20% disagreed (Question 9). Even more significantly, 57% perceived leadership concepts covered in COMEP as being "culture-adapted" to the Bahraini environment (Question 16), and 61% also agreed that motivation concepts as well were "culture-adapted" (Question 17). These last responses are also of special significance due to the central role assigned to concepts of leadership and professionalism in this research. The fact that COMEP is perceived to have succeeded in transferring these concepts from their origins in Western management literature and adjusted them to the markedly different Bahrain management environment is quite significant.

**D. SUCCESS OF COMEP AS A VEHICLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL MANAGERS**

Questions, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11 deal specifically with the idea of the COMEP-trained and targeted career manager who must function within the constraints of the Bahrain environment. 73% agreed (53% "agreed" and 20% strongly agreed") that with the aid of COMEP they were on their way to becoming career managers (Question 4); and another 73% were aware of being more effective leaders within their organisations by the end of the

programme (Question 8). More importantly, COMEP has helped participants (91%) function more effectively within the constraints of the environment, and simultaneously improved the image of the Bahraini manager, 82% (Questions 10 and 11 respectively). 91% agreed (i.e. 55% "agreed" and 36% "strongly agreed") that COMEP had relayed to participants the importance of "managerial leadership" (Question 7). As a result, 91% felt better able to motivate their subordinates (Question 6), and 73% felt better motivated themselves (Question 5).

Again, these observations hold special relevance as they touch on another key concept central to this research, namely managerial professionalism. The evidence seems to be in favour of COMEP as a medium for creating and reinforcing norms of managerial professionalism in Bahrain.

E. Client Organisation Support for COMEP (Question 14, 15 and 18). Organisation support appears to be somewhat controversial. While 66% stated that their organisations were committed to "management development as a vehicle for Bahrainisation" (Question 15), and an equal number received strong support from their organisations during their COMEP experience (Question 18), 54% felt frustrated when organisational barriers

prevented them from applying COMEP-acquired knowledge and skills to their jobs (Question 14).

**FEEDBACK GENERATED THROUGH TIER-2:  
IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR QUESTIONNAIRE  
(Refer to Appendix G)**

The responding group totalled 33 representing 75% of the total population.

A. Organisational commitment to Management Development  
(Question 2, 3, 4, 5 and 19). 85% of the respondents felt that their organisations emphasized managerial professionalism (Question 2). However, while 76% saw management development for young Bahrainis as a top organisation priority (Question 19), 70% stated that earlier management development was integrated into manpower planning (Question 3); 58% thought management development needs were assessed formally and accurately (Question 4); and only 61% of the respondents actually played a decisive role in enrolling his/her trainee in COMEP (Question 5)

B. COMEP OBJECTIVES  
(Questions 1, 6, 7 and 20).

Supervisors often appeared uncertain of their ability to assess COMEP in terms of the achievement of its objectives. About 73% felt they needed more information about COMEP (Question 1) while 45% were not sure if COMEP had fallen short of meeting its declared



objectives (Question 20), and 52% were not sure if COMEP emphasized "leadership styles compatible with the Bahrain environment" (Question 7). This wavering on the part of immediate supervisors has de facto negative implications for COMEP. In all probability, the reason behind most of the respondents to this question claiming lack of accurate information on COMEP is failure to develop proper organisational linkages, and particularly not being able to activate the preceptor idea. Another probable reason is that most of the effort to introduce COMEP to organisations in Bahrain centered around Chief Executive Officers and General Managers who were not represented in the immediate supervisor questionnaire, as none of the graduates reported directly to a Chief Executive Officer.

C. Impact of COMEP on Participant Performance (Questions 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17 and 18). COMEP was considered to have had an appreciable impact on graduates by 61% of the immediate supervisors, while another 58% noticed an improved professional self-image on the part of subordinates, and 50% thought that these subordinates were now better able of motivating others as a result of COMEP was, by and large, seen as having remained realistic in its goals without a "corruptive" influence

on participants through creating expectations that could not be met. Finally, 45% of the immediate supervisors saw an improvement in leadership styles among COMEP graduates.

There can be little doubt that this feedback reflects rather favourably on COMEP. With a majority of immediate supervisors acknowledging its "appreciable" impact on graduates, particularly towards their professional self-image, the programme clearly seems to be at least partly on target. This observation is further reinforced when COMEP's positive influence on graduates by making them at once better motivators and better motivated is taken into account. COMEP's effect on enhancing the leadership style of graduates should be viewed in the same light. All in all, COMEP clearly reflects, but perhaps not fully the importance of the key concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism already established as instrumental to management development in Bahrain and strategic for any continuing management education programme.

**D. Transferrability of COMEP-acquired Skills (Questions 9 and 15).** Perhaps in a manner not markedly different from the pattern described above, responding supervisors showed same uncertainty as to significant COMEP details. However, 73% thought COMEP was

effective in transferring knowledge to the job, but 30% saw these skills as being "often not job relevant" as opposed to 48% who saw the relevance.

E. COMPARISON OF COMEP TO OTHER TRAINING PROGRAMMES  
(Questions 14 and 16).

Among the supervisors covered, 52% were not able to assess COMEP vis-a-vis similar overseas programmes, and 48% were unable to assess COMEP vis-a-vis other local programmes. This is an obvious reflection on the awareness level of the group; a fact not altogether unusual in view of the novelty of management development in Bahrain and the relatively thin experience of most of the supervisors.

Graduates were more sure of their responses than their supervisors who admitted to limited knowledge of COMEP. And while supervisors perceived a transfer of skills from the calssroom to the job, their responses reflected a degree of uncertainty in comparison with those of the graduates.

The majority of the respondents, participants and supervisors alike, perceived their organisations as being committed to management development and Bahrainisation. However, participants felt blocked by organisations unwilling to allow them to freely apply



and practise newly acquired COMEP skills. Is this resistance indicative of companies' uncertainty of COMEP course relevance (as indicated by supervisors)? Or have the graduates broken certain "sound barriers, as it were?

The gist of both evaluations respectively covering advanced management and middle management participants as well as graduates and supervisors, is that COMEP has to be considered on balance fairly effective. A majority of all 4 populations seems to believe that COMEP objectives are reasonably well targeted, its programmes acceptably relevant to the needs of Bahrain, its management development effect significant enough to warrant recognition, its ability to transfer participants into better managers appreciable and its transfer mechanisms essentially sound.

Moreover, it seems equally evident that COMEP contents are essentially effective particularly in so far as the 3 concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism are concerned. Participants, graduates and supervisors leave little doubt that through COMEP, managers emerge more aware of the significance of leadership styles to management, better couched in leadership practices compatible with the culture, and ultimately more capable of leading others. A parallel

development is equally noticeable with regard to motivation where managers show signs of becoming better motivated and more capable of motivating others. COMEP's record in the area of managerial professionalism seems no less viable. All three groups of respondents acknowledge its impact on upgrading norms of managerial professionalism in the country. This fact becomes all the more obvious if we take into account the scores of auxiliary professional activities organised under COMEP auspices.

So far this chapter has dealt with COMEP as though it was self-contained. In other words, the parameters of this evaluation focus on COMEP as a programme designed to replace an earlier less effective alternative, namely the 10,000 programme. It falls short of viewing COMEP in the context of the broader strategy of management development through continuing management education developed in chapter five.

## EVALUATING AGAINST STRATEGY

The foregoing analysis was intended as a questionnaire-based evaluation of COMEP as perceived by participants, their superiors, graduates and staff. Obviously, it cannot be said that this approach to evaluation, necessary as it may be, matches the strategy developed in the previous chapter. However, prior to undertaking an evaluation linked to the strategy, it was important to shed an evaluative light on COMEP in so far as the feedback of its broader constituency is concerned. In many ways this feedback is as critical, possibly even more critical, at least in the short-run prospects for COMEP than meeting the requirements set in the strategy. It is hoped, of course, that in the long run the two evaluative perspectives will merge within the framework of the strategy. In any event, we should not overlook the apparent overlapping of the two evaluative structures even at this stage.

It should be recalled that intensive research referred to in chapter five has established 9 key objectives for a viable management development programme relevant to Bahrain. Such objectives were:

A. Helping senior Bahraini management require



leadership capabilities consistent with the general culture yet capable of facilitating planned change within it.

- B. Establishing life-long learning as a key priority for Bahraini managers as a prerequisite for developing and sustaining world-class expertise.
- C. Improving performance standards among Bahraini managers and within their organisations.
- D. Integrating the professional development of the manager *with other decision-making levels in the institution.*
- E. Offering a multi-sectoral and multi-level programme in order for the newly acquired expertise not to be relegated to a "contained" pocket that can be easily choked by other parts of the organisation.
- F. Encouraging organisations to develop a futuristic anticipatory outlook not limited to remedial steps.
- G. Enhancing the credibility of local management development programmes in the eyes of key organisations and the community at large.
- H. Forging close ties of cooperation between management education, development and training institutions on one hand, and the management profession on the other.
- I. Integrating the professional development of the manager with the overall organisational development strategy of the institution so that the two may mutually reinforce each other.

If COMEP achievements are to be examined against the above set of objectives a mix is bound to emerge. While it seems warranted by the evidence to suggest that COMEP has gone some way towards the satisfaction of objectives A, C, E, and G, it is far less sure whether the same can be said about the rest of the objectives listed. Feedback gathered through the various questionnaires and interviews seems to leave little doubt that such goals as cultivating values of life-long education, integrating management development into broader organisational development plans, and creating proactive corporate cultures are still far in the horizon. It may be argued, of course, that the second set of goals are either more long-term in nature or may be considered by-products of the first set and hence unlikely to occur simultaneously with them but rather to follow subsequently and further down the line.

Whether COMEP has been more successful with respect to some goals than others, or whether it is in the nature of such goals to be more difficult to attain, a more immediate test of COMEP is to see whether and to what extent it is consistent with the structure of the management development plan that was linked to the long-term goals in chapter five.

The plan, it should be recalled, comprised the following variables:

I. GOALS

- A. Helping Bahraini managers acquire self-assessment and self-development knowledge that would facilitate their attaining optimal leadership styles, and self-monitor their professional progress.
- B. Injecting into Bahraini managers norms and values of the international management profession.
- C. Assisting managers in integrating their own professional growth within the management dynamics of their organisation.
- D. Offering a multi-level management development programme to help attain goal C. Above.
- E. Reinforcing classroom learning with various other steps designed to reinforce the professional identity of managers.
- F. Creating workable avenues for the transfer of management knowledge to the job context.

Viewed against the above set of goals, COMEP receives mixed ratings. While it seems to have failed so far in fully satisfying the self-development needs of managers, its record seems more positive with respect



to integrating individual and managerial development and even more encouraging when it comes to transfer avenues.

## II. VALUES

Major values of the "optimal" management development plan as developed in chapter three were:

- A. Life-long management education.
- B. Management as a profession.
- C. Cultural authenticity.
- D. Anticipatory approach to change.

While COMEP seeks to inculcate in participants awareness of the crucial significance of career-long, indeed life-long learning, its success is in bringing about the required attitudinal change. For one thing, COMEP has yet to create a mechanism for reinforcing this key message and link its acceptance to some tangible rewards expected and valued in Bahrain. Merely restating this objective to participant managers whenever the occasion presents itself is not enough. It is highly questionable whether as a result, a majority of participants have derived the appropriate lessons or made the necessary adjustments in their work habits or life style.

With respect to the professional status of management, it has to be said that under the auspices of COMEP, two major seminars were held in May and December 1986 respectively, to address the transitional nature and future prospects of the Bahrain management profession. The two seminars were heavily attended by chief executive officers, senior managers and COMEP participants. However, it is quite evident to any keen observer of the Bahrain management scene that we have indeed a long way to go before the desired change in the professional status of management starts to take shape. COMEP falls short of what is stipulated in the strategy (item B under values). The credit that COMEP can claim so far is its being the first programme ever in Bahrain to have raised the demand for professional recognition of management. Whether or not this goal will be achieved, however, is an open question for the future.

Cultural authenticity is another dimension of the strategy where COMEP might have future potential but cannot claim much of a record as of now. Besides the fact that it is still undergoing its formative stages, COMEP was bound, during its original phase, to emphasize basic management concepts and skills to ensure a bottom line of familiarity with the core of expertise necessary for management before it can raise

more advanced questions touching on transfer and authenticity. An attempt is currently under way to develop local materials for various training programmes but again this is a far cry from cultural authenticity in the sense implied in the strategy. For cultural authenticity to become an integral part of COMEP, a radically new approach is needed where an indigenous management culture is allowed to grow unhampered and a vastly ambitious research programme is undertaken in that direction.

As for the anticipatory approach to change, COMEP has been reasonably successful even at this early stage in making it an integral aspect of what it stands for. Through the various research activities it undertakes and the seminars it holds, it seeks to identify future trends, and pinpoint future problems relevant to the practice of management in Bahrain. Without being unduly critical of COMEP, however, it should be accepted that COMEP's major strength so far has been more remedial than anticipatory, perhaps as a necessary first step given the odds against which it started.

### III. TARGET GROUPS

COMEP seems to be very much in line with the parameters established in chapter five with respect to identifying



its target groups.

It is multi-purposive, multi-sectoral and multi-level; all key criteria considered essential for any such programme in Bahrain. In fact COMEP breakdown into clerical, basic supervision, middle management, advanced management and executive management; coincides remarkably well with the format established earlier as a necessary framework for a multi-level management development plan in Bahrain. As such, COMEP certainly seems to have the "right" anatomy; a characteristic that is by all means necessary but hardly insufficient.

That the anatomy of COMEP is in line with the strategy is a fact attested to and well received by the COMEP constituency. Feedback from managers seems highly supportive of COMEP in so far as it is multi-purposive, multi-sectoral and multi-level. They strongly emphasize that being the only programme of its kind in Bahrain it has no choice but to provide a broad-based management development scheme as widely representative as possible.

Some managers, particularly immediate supervisors of COMEP participants wonder, however, if materials (subject matter areas) covered at each level are always on target. Content analysis conducted in-house at Gulf

Polytechnic in response to this feedback substantiated the criticism and led to introducing some of the necessary correctives.

#### IV. PROGRAMME(S)

A management development programme for Bahrain, it was established in chapter five, should be evaluated subject to the following criteria:

- A. Strong links to the broader strategy.
- B. Comprehensiveness.
- C. Integration and flexibility.
- D. International credibility and local relevance.
- E. Conceptual soundness and operational viability.
- F. Provision for regular evaluation.
- G. Challenge

Although COMEP was originally<sup>1</sup> conceived prior to formulating a clear management development strategy, managers with whom the strategy was discussed, as well as COMEP participants and staff who participated in the in-house departmental evaluation, agreed that COMEP is within the frame-work<sup>1</sup> of the strategy and clearly linked to it.

On grounds of comprehensiveness, however, the same evaluation process yielded a mixed verdict. There was

general agreement that COMEP has the potential to be comprehensive but so far its actual record falls short of the goal. For one thing, its highest level, the executive, has not been activated until Fall 1986 and even at the other levels there are specific organisational requirement<sup>e</sup> that COMEP is not yet equipped to meet.

An almost identical reaction was obtained when the in-house evaluation of COMEP against the strategy which also involved managers and organisational representatives, addressed the question of integration and flexibility. COMEP received high marks on vertical integration of its levels as well as on integrating the various components of the learning process from the seminar site to the job context. As far as flexibility is concerned, however, there was some appreciation for COMEP's provision of multiple entry routes. Routing COMEP graduates to the academic programme, however, was generally considered problematic.

COMEP's "international credibility and local relevance" was also put to test as part of the in-house evaluation against strategy. Again, the general feeling was that the potential is there but much is yet to be done before COMEP gains the desired level of international visibility. However, as most of those who participated



in the evaluation have had prior international management development experience, their judgment was that COMEP compares very favourably with other programmes they have experienced abroad.

Feelings were very strongly expressed to assert COMEP's relevance to local management development needs as jointly assessed by Gulf Polytechnic and participant organisations.

Assessing COMEP's "conceptual soundness and operational viability" also occupied a major part of the in-house evaluation against the strategy. Evidence was mixed and, at times, confused. A major bone of contention was whether emphasis should be on the acquisition of management knowledge or whether greater emphasis should be placed on management skills. Some felt that more thought should have gone into this issue by COMEP planners. The strategy, they argued, will undoubtedly entail a level of clarity on this issue not obviously clear in COMEP.

Compared against the strategy on grounds of content, it is clear that COMEP's present curriculum does not emphasize the concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism to a degree commensurate with the research findings of this thesis. As

suggested earlier, COMEP, of course, addresses all three aspects albeit implicitly and often indirectly. The discrepancy has to be explained by the fact that COMEP came prior to the strategy and at a time before the concepts have fully crystalised. It can be expected now in the light of new evidence that COMEP will undergo partial restructuring to reflect the full measure of importance that leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism seem to hold in Bahrain.

All those who participated in the in-house review thought highly of COMEP's provision for regular evaluation in line with what is stipulated in the strategy. Actually, this is the first programme in Bahrain where evaluation is built on an ongoing basis.

#### V. DELIVERY METHODS

COMEP seems to have earned some well-founded criticism from participants and their organisations with respect to delivery methods. So far it seems to have been closer to the traditional lecture method and not to have ventured enough into more flexible delivery styles. Also its scheduling arrangements seem to have been the source of some dissatisfaction.

While some of those who contributed to the in-house evaluation of COMEP against the strategy thought it

justified, a majority insisted on the need to diversify delivery methods to include greater emphasis on non-traditional styles such as case studies, management games, role playing, etc. COMEP seems to fall short of the strategy in so far as its delivery methods are concerned.

## VI. CRITERIA OF ASSESSMENT

COMEP seems to pose no particular problems at this level. It submits rather neatly to such established criteria as impact on managerial performance, image, attrition rate, professionalism and cost-effectiveness. Of course, not all of these criteria can be applied with equal reliability at this still relatively early stage of COMEP, is an important observation.

It was strongly felt almost unanimously by participants in the in-house evaluation that it is perhaps premature to evaluate COMEP formally against the strategy due to its newness. However, such evaluation, they insisted, should be carried out within two years.

## VII. RESOURCES,

So far, COMEP seems to have enjoyed an acceptable resource base mostly thanks to the commitment of Gulf Polytechnic and support of the Civil Service Bureau and



Ministry of Labour. The latter, however, will have to start passing on a larger share of the burden to various organisations due to the budgetary cuts it is facing. The way this will reflect on COMEP remains to be seen. Again, in line with the strategy, it was felt that COMEP's resource base should be constantly replenished. However, COMEP, perhaps, has not done enough in that direction.

#### VIII. TIME FRAME

Again, COMEP seems to be on the right track in structuring its cycle around the 18 months period required for the diploma. This seems to be long-enough to make a lasting impact on participants yet short enough for COMEP to be perceived as producing results within a relatively short period.

#### IX. PROFESSIONAL LINKAGES

COMEP has undoubtedly faced some problems in this area. Despite the strong efforts made in linkages with sponsor organisations, candidate screening and selection, as well as the preceptor formula, the record leaves something to be desired. Efforts are under way now to rectify the situation and bring it closer to what is required in the management development strategy.

## X. SKILL TRANSFER, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Here too, COMEP will have to be recognised as presenting a mixed record. The skill-transfer aspect is partly satisfied although there seems to be a general feeling that more needs to be done. The monitoring and evaluation aspect of COMEP is undoubtedly one of its most developed facets. A structure seems to have been successfully put in place and poised for gaining more momentum.

In Conclusion, it is important to point out that the foregoing evaluation of COMEP is more of a trend identification than a final picture. The programme is still taking shape and will undoubtedly undergo a number of modifications in the light of feedback constantly generated, and the desire to conform to the strategy. The importance of this preliminary evaluation, however, is that it increases the chances of implementing major findings before the programme "hardens" and loses some of the flexibility associated with early stages of growth.

It should come as no surprise that COMEP appears in a more positive light when evaluated by participants, graduates and supervisors than when assessed against the strict criteria of the integrated strategy developed in chapter five. One reason is due to the

fact that the strategy itself is only a blueprint at this stage, and it might have to undergo changes when put to the test of implementation. The other reason, of course, has been already pointed out, namely COMEP's novelty and the fact that it is still taking shape now.

In many ways this evaluation exercise points out in two significant directions. First, COMEP, in its present form, is not at loggerheads with the strategy, and is essentially compatible with its requirements after having already started to meet the key challenges raised by it. Secondly, COMEP's survival chances seem to hinge on its ability for self-renewal through regular access to sources of management knowledge outside Bahrain. The nature, direction and constraints of this access is the theme of our next chapter.



## FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Easterby-Smith, M. (1986) Evaluation of Management Education, Training and Development. Aldershot: Gower Publishing Co. Ltd., pp 12-17.
2. Warr, P. B., Bird, M. W., and Rackham, N. (1970), Evaluation of Management Training. Aldershot: Gower.
3. Legge, C. (1984) Evaluating Planned Organizational Change. London: Academic Press Inc.
4. Manpower Services Commission, Glossary of Training Terms, HMSO, London, 1980.
5. Stake, R. (1977) "Formative and summative evaluation." In D. Hamilton, D. Jenkins, C. King, B. Macdonald and H. M. Parlett (eds) Beyond the Numbers Game. London: Macmillan.
6. Rackham, N. (1973) "Recent thoughts on evaluation." Industrial and Commercial Training. vol 5 no 10, pp 454 - 61.
7. Warr, P.B., Bird, M. W., and Rackham, W. (1970) Op. cit.
8. Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1967) "Evaluation of training." In R. L. Craig and L. R. Bittel (eds) Training and Development Handbook. New York: McGraw-Hill.
9. Burgoyne, J. and Singh, R. (1977) "Evaluation of training and education," Journal of European Industrial Training, vol 1, no 1, pp 17-21.
10. Hesseling, P. (1966) Strategy of Evaluation Research in the Field of Supervisory and Management Training. Anssen: Van Gorcum.

Warr, P.B., Bird, M. W. and Rackham, N. (1970) Op.cit.

Rackham, N. (1973) Op. cit.

Hamblin, A. C. (1974) Evaluation and Control. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

11. Rackham, N. (1973) Op. cit.
12. Gowler, D. and Legge, K. (1979) "The evaluation of planned organisational change: The necessary act of the possible?" Journal of Enterprise Management. 1, pp 1-12.
13. Burgoyne, J. and Singh, R. (1977) Op. cit.
14. Easterby-Smith, M. (1986) Op. cit, pp 31-36.
15. ibid, pp 32-36.
16. Scriven, M. (1972) "Pros and cons about goal-free evaluation," Evaluation Comment, vol 3, no 4, pp 1-4.
17. Deutscher, I (1976) "Toward avoiding the goal-trap in evaluation research." In c.c. Abt (ed) The Evaluation of Social Programmes. Beverly Hills: Sage pp 249-88.
18. Parlett, M. and Hamilton, D. (1972) "Evaluation as illumination: A new approach to the study of innovatory programmes." Occasional Paper 9. Centre for Research in Educational Sciences, University of Edinburgh.
19. Ruddock, R. (1981) Evaluation: A Consideration of Principles and Methods, Manchester: Monographs 18.
20. Parlett, M., and Hamilton (1972) Op. cit.

Parlett, M. and Dearden, G. (1981) Introduction to Illuminative Evaluation, Society for Research into High Education, Guilford.

21. Ruddock, R. (1981) Op. cit.
22. Easterby-Smith, M. (1986) Op. cit., pp 16-17.  
Burgoyne, J. and Singh, R. (1977) Op. cit.
23. Goldstein, I. L. (1978) "The pursuit of validity in the evaluation of training programmes." Human Factors, vol 20, no 2, pp 131-44.
24. Tracey, W. R. (1968) Evaluating Training and Development Systems. American Management Association Inc.
25. Burgoyne, J. (1973) "An action research experiment in the evaluation of a management development course." Journal of Management Studies, Feb, pp 8-14.



## **C H A P T E R   S E V E N**

**THE COMEP KNOWLEDGE BASE:**

**TRANSFERABILITY AND ADAPTATION**

## C H A P T E R   S E V E N

### INTRODUCTION

In the previous analysis an attempt has been made to chart out a strategy for continuing management education in Bahrain and use it as a yardstick for evaluating efforts already made in that direction. The resulting assessment clearly points out in the direction of having to undertake specific developmental and remedial steps to ensure that management development will be kept on track.

It should be obvious that ever since their inception, management development programmes in Bahrain have consciously or unconsciously reflected assumptions drawing on a knowledge base that have originated elsewhere. Part of the problem, of course, is that such assumptions and knowledge base were often transferred uncritically to Bahrain without due regard to their compatibility with local conditions. It may even be argued that some of the key assumptions and objectives behind such programmes were left unarticulated and rather naively presumed to hold universal and cross-cultural relevance.

The purpose of this chapter is to address the key assumptions as well as knowledge base on which Bahrain

management development programmes were built. Special reference will be made to theories of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism to maintain consistency with the approach developed earlier and also because these three constructs represent major issues bearing on the transferability of managerial know-how to Bahrain.

### MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS

In varying degrees, of course, management development efforts in Bahrain seem to have heretofore assumed an environment that was either relatively stable or changing in predictable ways. The future was essentially treated as an extension of the present and very little input has gone into mapping of futuristic scenarios. This fact is particularly true in the case of assuming that the dynamism and boom of the 1970s will continue. As a result, very little was done by way of treating management development as an investment in human capital and attempting to achieve maximum feasible return on it. Management development was treated more as a luxury than a dire need and subsequently next to no effort went into a careful screening of the management knowledge base to evolve criteria for selecting what was relevant to Bahrain. The result was an essentially random attitude towards management knowledge incorporated into professional



development programmes. The Bahrain environment seemed accommodating and so supportive that there simply was no pressure in the direction of screening whatever was transferred.

An equally important assumption that seems to have influenced management development efforts in Bahrain was that management development programmes, however conceived, were bound to be useful. Assuming random relevance as a self-evident truth has naturally led to little or no interest in programme evaluation techniques. Successive batches of management trainees were subjected to a variety of 'hit and run' programmes to be returned back to their jobs or promoted to higher ones with no apparent interest in assessing the impact of any of these programmes. At times, it almost seemed as if management development was a 'ritual' to go through rather than a professional learning experience that should be carefully designed, administered and evaluated.

No less serious an assumption was the generally relaxed attitude towards the credentials of individuals, groups and outfits that were marketing management development programmes. At the height of the economic boom of the 1970s when institutions were still in the early stages of their life cycle, with loose management infrastructures and underdeveloped management systems,

organisations unwittingly bought into poorly designed and hastily offered management development programmes lacking in substance and incapable of having a lasting effect. It was not easy to single out such programmes in the absence of systematic program evaluation.

As a result of the climate reflected in the three assumptions listed above it became convenient for some organisations in Bahrain to treat management development as a dimension of public relations and establish their records in terms of such criteria as training projects, number of seminars offered, number of trainees covered, etc. etc. The fact that such criteria do not necessarily offer a realistic insight into programme effectiveness, relevance, and long-term viability often escaped unnoticed. This is, undoubtedly, partly due to the lack of clear management development objectives, a fact in turn resulting from the near total absence of corporate strategic planning.

The fact that such and similar assumptions dominated the Bahrain management development scene almost totally up to the point when COMEP was introduced in 1984, and continue to dominate, albeit on a more limited scale, even today has meant, among other things, that Western management theories were introduced to Bahrain subject to the convenience of management trainers rather than any other formal criterion of relevance.

Leadership is a good case in point. Even a cursory review of materials on leadership and motivation introduced to Bahrain before COMEP reveal the predominance of the following approaches.

- Trait theory, now all but discarded in Western management literature, also appears among leadership training materials used in Bahrain before COMEP. This is true particularly in the context of the 10,000 programme and the amazing variety of "packages" introduced to the island by commercial management training outfits. This fact is partly due to the cultural appeal of this approach in Bahrain as it appears consistent with popular expectations. Even with that, however, its use turned out to be very limited mostly due to its static nature and narrow focus as a training tool.

- Another sweeping approach to leadership training that seems to have enjoyed immense popularity in Bahrain is McGregor's "theory X and Y". Without addressing pressing issues of culture-relevance and situational requirements, Bahraini managers were "over-exposed" to the "virtues" of being participative and made to link it with being modern, up-to-date and professional. Important streams of subsequent research on contingency and situationalism were largely ignored.



- Carrying along similar lines, Bahrain management development "manuals", mainly up to the time COMEP was introduced in 1984, and on a more limited scale since, go heavy on "leadership style" approaches mostly to emphasize the superiority of "participative" over "autocratic" styles. Again little if any cultural allowance is made for Bahrain to the effect of losing any sense of contextual grounding that might help to orient Bahraini managers.

- Among the more "advanced" approaches to leadership training in Bahrain introduced in the late 1970s are the behavioural "technologies". Included on the list are such titles as "organisational development", "sensitivity training", "T-Groups", "managerial grid" etc. Again, the failure to examine carefully latent value assumptions, mostly of a culture-bound nature has resulted in general failure and trainee resentment. Actually there were instances when such programmes were discontinued as they were perceived to be getting "out of hand".

The unfortunate fact in Bahrain is that no serious research has yet been conducted on predominant or required leadership patterns, or, for that matter on available "Western" alternatives.

The latter point, i.e. scanning Western leadership models is particularly important as it is bound to affect Bahraini practices given their predominance on the one hand, the country's keen interest in importing managerial know-how, and its international position on the other.

- Maslow's hierarchy of needs with special reference to leadership as a process pertaining to the upper end of the scale. No methodical attempt has been made to address the culture-bound nature of this concept and the many qualifiers conditioning its cross-cultural applicability. The fact that in Bahrain, the different stages of Maslow's scheme could easily occur simultaneously, subject to no strict pattern of sequentiality received very little attention.

Nor was the fate of motivation material any better. In general terms, such materials suffered the same limitations as leadership. However, special reference should be made to the following:

- Motivational contents of management development materials used in Bahrain, particularly in the late 1970s and early 1980s were often random selections of the same sources used for leadership. Particularly favoured was Maslow's hierarchy followed by a variety

of related concepts centering around group dynamics, participative management and especially MBO. The material was presented "generally" with no "adjustment" to Bahrain and little regard to the complexities of its cross-cultural application. This issue of cross-cultural adaptability of motivation materials is of unusual significance to Bahrain; an environment where most national employees enjoy de facto job tenure, and relatively affluent life styles. Under such conditions monetary incentives are unlikely to have an appeal that matches the West and alternative motivation styles will have to be developed.

- Also remarkable is the fact that by and large, motivational materials introduced to Bahrain did not take into account the novelty of the institutional experience in the country and the absence of a management tradition. Under such circumstances it was not unusual for some to consider their job an "entitlement" that hardly calls for exerting undue effort. The limited population base coupled with relative material abundance and a patriarchal social system did little to change this fact. It should then come as little surprise that motivational materials introduced out of context and treated as "self-evident" had very limited relevance.



- A related observation is that motivation materials incorporated into management development programmes in Bahrain were often too "psychologistic"<sup>(1)</sup> and not grounded in a firm understanding of prevailing corporate cultures.

### WESTERN LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Taking a brief look at leadership literature, it will be noticed that researchers have for a long time now shifted their attention to the study of leader behaviour as an alternative to the personality approach. This shift marked the beginning of the behavioural phase of leadership research, which held that leaders may be best characterised by how they behave. For instance, studies conducted at Ohio State University and the University of Michigan during the 1960s revealed two important facets of leadership behaviour: (a) consideration to how much a leader is concerned with his or her members' well-being (employee-centredness) and (b) initiation of structure which deals with how leaders organise subordinates' work group activity, i.e. job-centredness. The major drawback of these studies was the limited attention given to situational differences that might influence leader effectiveness.<sup>(2)</sup> Thus, the results of these studies conducted in the United States have not been clear-cut. For instance, in the United States

subordinates tend to be more satisfied with a considerate leader, but a leader's effectiveness appears to vary with the situation. Similar results emerged from Likert (1961)<sup>(3)</sup> and Fleishman (1973)<sup>(4)</sup> studies. They have generally concluded that more effective leaders are supportive of their subordinates, use group methods of supervision and decision making, and set high performance goals. This essentially translated into a managerial style that is both employee and task-centred. In Blake and Mouton terminology (1964)<sup>(5)</sup>, this is 9.9 style: it embodies maximal concern for both production and people. Mouton and Blake (1970)<sup>(6)</sup> report uniform agreement among managers from various cultural backgrounds (United States, South Africa, Canada, Australia and Japan) that the 9.9 style is the ideal managerial style. However, there are many problems with these theories. For instance, Bass (1981)<sup>(7)</sup> reports that much of this uniformity across countries is apparent rather than real. When describing their actual behaviour, for instance Japan and South America expressed a greater concern for production than people. (Bass also notes the possible presence of artifact on Blake and Mouton's work). Vroom (1976)<sup>(8)</sup> also raises another issue: the employee-centred/ production-centred principle is very broad. Broad leadership principles do not cover the complexities of situational differences nor

implications of these differences for leadership behaviour. The two-factor distinction that Blake and Mouton postulate is not helpful to managers who wish to choose an appropriate response for concrete situations they face daily.

The contingency or situational approach emphasizes the importance of the situation. Researchers have focussed specifically on contingency aspects that influence effective leadership. Leader characteristics, subordinate characteristics, and the nature of the situation are all culturally determined. Differences in these dimensions across cultures will yield different behaviours and different performance outcomes. Three well-known situational theories are Fiedler's contingency theory (1967)<sup>(9)</sup> Vroom and Yetton's normative model (1973)<sup>(10)</sup> and House and Mitchell's path-goal theory of leadership (1974).<sup>(11)</sup> Fiedler's contingency model considers the situation along with the leader's personality as a determinant of the leader's effectiveness. According to Fiedler, the model can help predict which leaders would be most effective in which situations. A central aspect of this theory is that leaders differ in a personality variable (called LPC) that indicates the extent of their social responsiveness. The LPC score measures the leaders' feelings about an individual with whom



they work least effectively. Thus leaders with low LPC scores see their least-preferred co-worker in negative terms, whereas the high LPC leaders do not impute negative attributes to those with whom they have difficulty working. Fiedler's work is not without its problems or critics.<sup>(12)</sup> First of all, evidence shows, training and experience play a role in leader effectiveness and, secondly, there is some doubt whether the LPC scale is a true measure of leadership style. Critics contend that its interpretation is speculative and inadequately supported. Moreover, conditions vary across cultures; a theory that has some applicability in one culture may be irrelevant to another. For example, Bennett (1977)<sup>(13)</sup> found that high-performing bank managers in the Philippines are low on Fiedler's LPC scale, whereas comparable managers in Hong Kong score high on it. Just as contingencies vary across cultures, so does the relationship between LPC scores and performance.

House's path-goal model (another contingency theory)<sup>(14)</sup> states that leadership behaviour is contingent on the characteristics of the subordinates and the nature of the task. The leader's goal is to reduce the impediments that hinder employees in reaching their goals. There is an obvious cultural dimension to this theory. After all, cultures are

likely to differ in terms of subordinates' and leaders' personal characteristics, thus implying that different managerial styles will be appropriate in dealing with them. However, research conducted to test it has yielded mixed results. Three criticisms suggested by some studies are: First of all the path-goal theory is extremely complex which has made its practical application particularly difficult. Secondly, the complexity of path-goal theory has made measuring the relevant variables contained in the theory especially difficult and, thirdly, although many possible predictions are suggested by path-goal theory, not all have been thoroughly researched. Empirical research has largely concentrated on predictions associated with directive and supportive leader behaviour.<sup>(15)</sup>

The path-goal theory is not explicitly normative, but, because the optimal style depends on the nature of the contingency, it does have normative implications. Vroom and Yettons' model (1973),<sup>(16)</sup> on the other hand, is prescriptive and is based on the assumption that no single leadership style is applicable to all situations. This model's focus is the degree of subordinate participation that is appropriate in the given situation. Vroom and Yetton have developed a series of problem attributes that together determine the appropriate managerial style, ranging from no

subordinate participation to group decision making. Again, this model like the others has also been criticised. First of all, researchers argue that there are decision-making methods besides the five identified by Vroom and Yetton. Secondly, normative theory considers seven problem characteristics by posing seven separate questions. Should other characteristics be considered? What about the need for secrecy. Thirdly, recognizing the limitations of bounded rationality, it is possible that managers are not sufficiently rational to apply normative theory under the best conditions, let alone given limited time and the stresses of work. Moreover, it is questionable whether the problem attributes referred to earlier in this model are transferable to non-western cultures; however, the significant conclusion (from a comparative management point of view) is that styles ranging from highly autocratic to highly democratic can be effective in particular situations. This clearly implies that managers must fit the decision-making process to a particular situation and that a leadership style effective in one culture may be ineffective in another.

So much for the cross-cultural difficulties of leadership theories that have been developed in the United States.



The key observation, however, is that whatever filtered to Bahrain in this area was, in general, either randomly selected, outdated or ethnocentric.

### WESTERN MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES

The situation in Bahrain with regards to Western motivation theories can only be described in terms identical to what was said on leadership. As such, it may be useful to provide a brief review of Western motivation theories and practices before making some salient observations in the light of Bahrain's experience. Theories of motivation include content and process. Content theories, such as Maslows, McClelland, and Herzberg, attempt to identify specific factors that motivate people. Maslow's<sup>(17)</sup> need hierarchy theory assumes that people are motivated to satisfy the need or needs that are important at that point to their lives. Furthermore, the strength of any particular need is determined by its position in the need hierarchy and the degree to which it and all lower-level needs have been satisfied. Maslow claims that the five types of needs are instinctive; they should therefore be universal across cultures. More recently, however, other researchers have questioned the validity of this assumption of universality. Hellrizel, et al (1983)<sup>(18)</sup> points out that the theory provides less complete information as to why the needs

originate. Bedeian (1985)<sup>(19)</sup> points out that "although people do generally place a great deal of emphasis on satisfying their lower-level needs (e.g. hunger, thirst), research suggests that once these needs are satisfied most people do not climb Maslow's needs hierarchy in the proposed manner." Bedeian also points out "that contrary to what Maslow proposed for lower-level needs, at the highest level of the need hierarchy a reversal occurs in the satisfaction-importance relationship." Thus, for self-actualisation, increased satisfaction leads to increased rather than decreased motivation. Tannenbaum (1980)<sup>(20)</sup> discussing the potential difficulty of cross-cultural analysis, suggests that even the assumption that members of an organisation are motivated by the organisation's rewards and incentives may not apply in all cultures. Redding (1977)<sup>(21)</sup> questions the applicability of Western "ego-centred paradigms" that focus on the individual (through concepts such as achievement and self-actualisation) to a non-Western culture in which the focus is on relationships.

McClelland<sup>(22)</sup> achievement motivation theory states that people are motivated according to the strength of their desire to perform in terms of standard of excellence or their desire to succeed in competitive

situations. McClelland has provided evidence that individuals' levels of achievement motivation in a society are directly related to that society's economic growth. Though there is reasonable support for McClelland's theory, other studies have reached different conclusions. For example, Iwawaki and Lynn (1972)<sup>(23)</sup> found that English and Japanese workers had roughly the same need for achievement. The theory predicts that the two countries' economic development should be roughly equivalent, but this was not the case. Another study by Krus and Rysberg (1976)<sup>(24)</sup> found, for instance, that need for achievement motives of Czechoslovakian executives was half of those of American executives; yet contrary to the theory's prediction, the rate of economic development of these countries was not nearly as disparate. Perhaps achievement motivation takes on different forms in different cultures (Kormadt, et al, 1980)<sup>(25)</sup>. Perhaps, too, the American tendency to define achievement strictly in terms of entrepreneurial success is questionable in other countries (Maehr, 1977)<sup>(26)</sup>. Along these lines Hofstede (1980)<sup>(27)</sup> argues that many Western concepts (such as achievement) cannot even be translated into other languages, thus indicating their lack of appropriateness for use in these cultures.



Herzberg's two-factor theory, like Maslow's and McClelland's theories, primarily focuses on attempting to specify why employees value certain job-related outcomes. The first factor, motivators, includes the work itself, recognition, advancement, and responsibility. The second factor, hygiene, includes company policy and administration, technical supervision, salary, working conditions, and interpersonal relations. Motivators are also known as intrinsic factors or internal factors, and, hygiene are known as extrinsic or external factors. Bedeian<sup>(28)</sup> again points out that research has not supported Herzberg's conclusion about motivators and hygienes, and refers to three points. To begin with evidence fails to support Herzberg's contention that hygiene can prevent dissatisfaction, but cannot satisfy employees. This failure has raised questions about whether the factors leading to satisfaction and dissatisfaction are really different from each other. Secondly, it appears doubtful whether the theory applies to workers in different economic and educational categories. Thirdly, doubts have been raised about Herzberg's methodology.

As noted above, the content approach was concerned with what motivates managers to behave in a certain way. In contrast, the process approach which will be briefly

outlined below is concerned with how people are motivated.<sup>(29)</sup> It focuses on the direction or choice of behavioural patterns. The three process theories that have generated the most interest are Vroom's expectancy theory, Adams' equity theory, and Skinner's reinforcement theory.<sup>(30)</sup>

The expectancy theory popularised by Vroom holds that motivation is determined by: (a) the belief that effort will be rewarded and, (b) the value attached to specific rewards. In other words, expectancies can be separated into two types. They are Expectancy 1 - the belief that effort will lead to performance; and Expectancy 2 - the belief that performance will lead to rewards.

Lyman W Porter and Edward E Lawler have extended the principles of the basic expectancy theory model to examine the factors that influence an employee's job performance and satisfaction. They relate the distinct concepts of motivation, satisfaction, and performance in non-traditional ways. In essence, they argue that satisfaction is an effect rather than a cause of performance; i.e. performance determines rewards that, in turn, produce variations in employee satisfaction.<sup>(31)</sup> Overall, expectancy theory is generally considered to be one of the better frameworks

for understanding motivation but this theory is not without its critics. Bedeian points out that the very complexity of this theory has made its practical application and testing very difficult. Also he points out that "it is doubtful if managers actually attempt to calculate Expectancy 1, Expectancy 2, and balance estimates in making descisions."(32)

Adams Equity Theory is a theory of social comparison processes. It focuses on individuals' feelings of how fairly they were treated when compared with others. First, it assumes that individuals evaluate their social relationships just as they would evaluate the buying or selling of a home or a car. The theory views social relationships as exchange processes in which individuals make contributions or inputs and expect certain outcomes. Secondly, people do not operate in a vacuum. Instead, they compare their own situation with others to determine their relative equity position.(33)

Equity theory is intuitively appealing and has received a great deal of attention. However, it has also received some criticism such as: (a) little is known about how people decide with whom to compare themselves, (b) it is difficult to define inputs and outcomes are combined to resovle a perceived inequity



and (d) little is known about when and how combinations of inputs and outputs change over time.

The final process theory referred to earlier is based largely on the work of B. F. Skinner, known as reinforcement theory. Its guiding principle is that human behaviour is a function of its consequences. Or, stated more formally, behaviours that result in desirable consequences will be more likely to recur; those that result in undesirable consequences will be less likely to recur. The reasoning involves three components:

- (a) Stimulus - an event that leads to a response.
- (b) Response - a behaviour pattern that follows stimulus.
- (c) Reinforcement - a consequence of a response.

According to this theory, behaviour modification holds that current behaviour is solely determined by a person's past history of reinforcement. Thus, according to behaviour modification, if a particular stimulus-response pair is followed by a desirable consequence, it will be more likely that stimulus involved will prompt the same response in the future. Conversely, if the consequence is undesirable, the response will be less likely to recur. In fact,

according to this theory , the consequences of a person's behaviour are made dependent upon his or her response to a stimulus.<sup>(34)</sup> Bediean refers to the reinforcement theory as the most controversial of the motivation theories he has examined, and it has also received a fair measure of criticism. He lists these criticisms as:

- (a) It ignores the social processes that exist in any human system (recall the Hawthorne studies) as well as individual employee differences.
- (b) It is too rigid and programmed in its methods, failing to consider the importance of individual needs, expectancies and valences.
- (c) It overemphasises the importance of external outcomes (e.g. pay and promotions) and ignores the role of internal outcomes (e.g. feelings and recognition) that result from simply doing a task.
- (d) It raises ethical concerns. Many critics feel the use of "punishment" and the term "behaviour modification" itself smack of employee manipulation.<sup>(35)</sup>

### IMAGES OF MANAGERIAL PROFESSIONALISM

From the very brief overview of leadership and motivation theories developed in the West (United States) we have noted that these theories are hardly

one unified model clearly definable and transferable. On this issue a key figure from the public sector in the 1985 seminar expressed his concern on the transferability of management philosophy and methodology, and pointed out how often attempts to transfer a successful system from one country to another had failed due to social, cultural or other incompatibilities.<sup>(36)</sup> As most scholars would agree, the western management model is in reality a series of loosely connected and often with little bearing on management practice as evidenced by recent wave of criticisms of management education curricula in Western countries.<sup>(37)</sup>

This issue is of central significance for management education is closely linked to managerial professionalism and often used as a key argument in its favour. Loopholes in management education are bound to reflect negatively on managerial professionalism either by way of undercutting its basis or widening the rift between the two domains. Some thoughts on management education are thus in order prior to a discussion of managerial professionalism.

Mintzberg (1973) has pointed out the fact that management studies degrees are not being seen as a



necessary, nor even, according to many managers, a desirable preparation for management.

"Although the management school gives students MBA and MPA degrees, it does not in fact teach them how to manage. Hence these degrees can hardly be considered prerequisites for managing, and the world is full of highly competent managers who have never spent one day in a management course."(38)

Another test of the practical value of an MBA is the career achievements of those who graduate. A recent European study found that:

"The continued reluctance of the business world to accept wholeheartedly the verdicts of the educational system, coupled with the fluid nature of the managerial 'careers', suggests that the correspondence between the hierarchy of educational certificates and the positions of power and privilege in the occupational system is less direct than some advocates of the credentialling thesis have implied."(39)

The same authors also point out that:

"Business education seems to be perceived by many employers as the formal sanction given to qualities obtained from quite other bases, rather than as an extra item of 'cultural capital' that systematically distinguishes its holders from those who do not possess it."(40)

What is in question here is perhaps the nature of management. The nature of management is conceptualised in terms of what it is thought that managers need to

know. In business schools this is defined either by the underlying academic disciplines that are thought to be relevant or by the functional divisions of management, such as finance, accounting or marketing or a mix of two. What is perhaps missing is any integrating conception of the nature of management. Such integration has been missing in the development of management studies as has been pointed out over the years by many researchers.<sup>(41)</sup> They also argue that what has been done so far is to make assumptions about the knowledge that managers require and then to devise programmes accordingly. Some also have criticised management education for overemphasising formal learning. Others have argued that the desire for academic prestige has over-rated the extent to which management is a knowing, as distinct from an action or a doing occupation. For example, the case study with its emphasis upon 'what would you do'? On this issue, Mintzberg has argued that:

"There is clear evidence that all managerial jobs require the incumbent to perform a common set of roles, but there is remarkably little evidence of the requirement for formal learning in the performance of any of these roles."<sup>(42)</sup>

Stewart, on the other hand, argues that:

"A critical examination of management

education must start with the assumption about the nature of management underlying both what we teach and how we teach it."<sup>(43)</sup>

But the difficulty is with the nature of the manager's job which is so diverse and has to respond to a variety of problems according to studies<sup>(44)</sup> carried out by Mintzberg (1973). Stewart (1976), Stewart, et al (1980), to the extent that for instance, Mintzberg (1973) and Stewart (1976) refer to management as a predominantly verbal activity,<sup>(45)</sup> Sayles (1964) refers to informal network of reciprocal relationships based upon trading,<sup>(46)</sup> Pettigrew (1973), Mays and Allen (1977) refer to the use of 'influence to obtain ends not sanctioned by the organisation,<sup>(47)</sup> and Kotter (1982) refers to the extensive network building that managers are engaged in.<sup>(48)</sup>

According to Stewart (1984) the research into the nature of managerial work and behaviour has posed more questions for management academics than it has provided answers. Most management programmes assume that management is a common activity, though some distinctions between levels in the hierarchy are made. The differences between management jobs and in managerial behaviour required even in similar jobs that are shown by recent studies cast doubt upon the extent of the common core in managerial jobs,<sup>(49)</sup> and



moreover, Kotter has also suggested that the knowledge that managers acquire even in general management jobs can be so distinctive that movement to a different and inappropriate environment can be fatal.<sup>(50)</sup>

Leavitt <sup>(51)</sup> criticises management education in the West by first defining the elements of the management process into "path finding", "problem solving", and implementing, and then by pointing out to the business schools which have tended to emphasize problem solving, with less attention to implementation and often totally ignoring of the path finding element. He refers to the emergence of large bureaucratic organisations, the development of orderly and specialised, systematic, top down organisational designs, and the rejection of leadership as an attribute of individuals in favour of power equalisation concepts.... as contributors to the decline of vital innovative 'path finding' behaviour in the West. Thus, he relates the decline of American management to the rise of the American business school.

### MANAGERIAL PROFESSIONALISM IN BAHRAIN:

#### CAVEAT EMPTOR

So much for the criticism of management education and its curricula in the Western countries. Moreover, what should be realised is the fact that management itself is very much American, and the empirical basis for

American management theories is American organisation. As Cool<sup>(52)</sup> reminds us, a particular societal culture - as a system of values shared by a majority of the population, which finds its origin in a variety of ecological factors lead to the development and maintenance pattern of specific social institutions. These institutions have a particular structure, underlying purpose and way of functioning . Similarly, Hofstede's<sup>(53)</sup> study reflects the appreciation in the last decade by organisational scientists that cultural differences influence management and restrict the generalizability of certain organisational theories. Hofstede underscores the significance of culture, or the "collective mental programming", in determining attitude and behaviour. For example, in both Bahraini and American management systems, strategic activity is characterised by the exercise of power in which agreement is negotiated. These power processes in Bahrain are only limited to the top management. People at the lower levels cannot influence the negotiated action sets, whereas in most Western organisations the exercise of power is still not recognised as legitimate management process. Westerners tend to use 'abstract' and 'logical' thinking. The logical approach is reflected and fostered by the much more abundant use of 'rational' management tools in the West (especially in the United States) than in Bahrain. The belief among

many Bahraini managers, that in reality, nothing is absolute or determinate but everything is ambiguous and dependent on the will of 'God' is a belief system which guides <sup>many</sup> Bahraini management styles. Western counterparts, on the other hand, because of the tools and training they received, tend to minimize rather than manage the uncertainties. At the same time, whereas westerners relate much more easily to 'rational' analysis and discernible decision-making in terms of rational step-by-step procedures, the dominance in Bahrain is towards the one-man syndrome (i.e. the trend to deal with most organisational matters only at the very top) and emphasis on informality. Such a predominance of informal relations with formal provisions in organisations in Bahrain leads to a situation where interpersonal networking often takes precedence over formal organisational structure, which undoubtedly is incompatible with the rational framework of Western formal organisational thinking. Many of these practices have been highlighted in Chapter two and Chapter three that show a variance between Western and Bahraini organisations. The fact is that the organisational phenomenon in the West is more deep rooted for these societies have had a longer period during which to assimilate the changes resulting from transformations leading to greater dependence on organisations. American management



theories are based on a society which has gone through the necessary adjustments in individual value systems, family structures, social norms, etc where the management culture has gradually come to dominate the general culture and shape its complex future. The Bahraini management culture has not developed enough yet to absorb a large mass of Western organisational ideas. This can clearly be seen by attitude toward work, motivation, time management, leadership styles, decision-making, conflict resolution, employee disciplines, planning and control, etc. Absorption of western ideas, however, may not be the best option open to Bahrain. Actually as argued under the pragmatic option in chapter four it is not.

The work of Hofstede and his colleagues very strongly refers to organisations as being heavily culture-bound. Hofstede argues that this not only affects people's behaviour within organisations, but such cultural influences also limit how much (and how well) theories developed in one culture can be used in another. The dimensions that Hofstede identified affect different facets of organisational functioning. For instance, from a leadership perspective, individualism and power distance are the most important phenomena. In the United States, the various leadership theories listed earlier are based on the

premise that each individual seeks his or her own self-interest. American theories of leadership are written according to Hofstede from a middle-range power distance background (i.e. the United States ranks 15 out of 40 on the Power Distance Index). Some of the most popular are McGregor's (1960) Theory Y versus Theory X, Likert's (1967) System 4, and Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid (Blake, et al, 1973). What these theories have in common is that they all advocate participation in the manager's decision by his or her subordinates (participative management).

On the same issue, Hofstede<sup>(54)</sup> reminds us that "If leadership is only a complement to subordinateship, a key to leadership is the type of subordinate expectations we are likely to find in a country." He argues that American theories of leadership which have been widely exported to all parts of the world, have been presented in a normative way, without cultural provisos. He also contends that neither McGregor nor Likert nor Blake and Mouton or any other United States leadership theorist has taken the collective values of subordinates into account. According to his study Theory X, for instance, is more frequently found among subordinates in large power distance countries, that Likert's participative management is less popular in some countries than others, and that the perceived

leadership behaviour between "task" and-"people"-orientation of Blake and Mouton is a function of the country's power distance level as well as Fiedler's contingency model. Hofstede singles out Fiedler's contingency theory of leadership which allows for a certain amount of cultural relativity. Fiedler also states that different leader personalities are needed for "difficult and easy" situations and a cultural gap between superior and subordinates is one of the factors that make a situation difficult.<sup>(55)</sup>

Specifically, we have to be aware of the limitations of particular management theories or practices for different operating circumstances. For example, Likert has argued that a fully participative management style - what he calls "System 4" - will give better performance in any business organisation.<sup>(56)</sup> In fact, the premise that such an approach makes superior-subordinate relationships run counter to existing cultural beliefs in several parts of the world particularly the Middle East should be seriously considered. The conflict or confusion in such countries resulting from any straight-forward attempt to implement "System 4" would undoubtedly worsen business performance, not improve it.

Referring back to the concept of motivation we would



also find that high individualism implies a "calculative" involvement of the Americans in organisations. This explains the popularity in the United States of "expectancy" theories of motivation, which state that people are pulled by the expectancy of outcomes, mostly consciously (Vroom 1964), rather than as pushed by unconscious drives.

Low uncertainty avoidance combined with fairly high masculinity as described by Hofstede to be associated with high scores on "need for achievement" according to McClelland achievement motive stands for the value pattern of the masculine risk taker, most clearly visible in the United States. This explains the popularity in the United States of McClelland's motivation theory. By the same token the combination of high individualism, low uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity in the United States for example, explains the popularity of Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs. Maslow's highest category, self-actualisation, is a highly individualistic motive. Herzberg's popular two-factor theory of motivation is also culturally determined. Thus, relevant research on the subject continues to cast serious doubt on the cross-cultural transferability of such leading theories as behaviour modification, psychoanalytic motivation, need hierarchy, McClelland-Atkinson need theory and

McGregor's Theory X and Y. Their analysis of Japanese motivational practices sheds revealing light on non-western societies and offers possibly relevant analogies for Bahrain.

Planning and organisation design management theories are also largely a product of the United States environment. Planning and Control for instance, reflect a below-average Power Distance, and low Uncertainty Avoidance societal norm. In addition, they were developed in a particular socio-economic setting; competitive capitalism, abundant resources, political stability, overall economic expansion, and non-intervention of government. Under these conditions, according to Hofstede, an entire family tree of planning and control systems has grown up from the groundworks by Taylor to the strategic management of the 1970s though even in the United States it is extremely difficult to know how effective planning and control really are. There are obviously defenders and critics for the same system. The point is not that planning cannot be transferred to or carried out in a country like Bahrain; but rather that methods, tools and various approaches are based on the American model; a fact that cannot be ignored in any consideration of cross-cultural potential. A particular example is the Planning-Programming-Budgeting System (PPBS) as tried

in the 1960s in the United States. The combination of power distance and uncertainty avoidance typical for a country's culture affects the structure of organisations that will work best in that country. In the United States, as Hofstede points out, "Hierarchy is not a goal by itself; but a means towards obtaining results, to be changed if needed". Breaking with hierarchical and bureaucratic traditions is going to be extremely difficult to do in a culture like Bahrain. Laurent<sup>(57)</sup> showed that statements expressing tolerance for ambiguity in hierarchical structure are accepted more by managers from some countries than others. Thus, matrix organisations for instance, implying a multiple hierarchy should probably be less acceptable in a more uncertainty-avoiding culture, even if people in these cultures feel at the same time that their present structures are ineffective. It can be argued that to make matrix organisation work in a culture where there is a high uncertainty avoidance and high power distance like Bahrain, it is desirable to translate it in hierarchical terms. Another difficulty with matrix organisations is their latent assumptions about individualism. In a country like Bahrain, the feasibility of matrix or similar temporary system will depend to a large extent on whether organisation members possess sufficient basis for identity and professionalism.



Another example of failed transfer is MBO. MBO, of course, has been considerably more successful where results are objectively measurable than where results are a matter of subjective interpretation. Even MBO has been criticised in the United States as industrial engineering with a new name applied to higher management levels and with the same resistance.<sup>(58)</sup> MBO first advocated by Peter Drucker (1955) reflects an American value position which is based, as Hofstede<sup>(59)</sup> points out, on the following assumptions:

- (a) that the subordinate is sufficiently independent to negotiate meaningfully with his boss (not too large power distance).
- (b) that both superior and subordinate are prepared to take some risks (Weak Uncertainty Avoidance), and
- (c) that performance is seen as an important criterion by both.

The key issue above is the focus on participation. But as one of the Chief Executives in Bahrain pointed out "There was no real employee's participation in decision-making."<sup>(60)</sup>

In discussing the transferability of corporate culture to Bahrain the majority of managers pointed out that:

"no culture could be transferred with a guarantee of success. Individual companies had to develop their own culture to suit business requirements and with due regard to the general culture prevailing"

Another participant of the corporate culture seminar (Gulf Polytechnic, 1984) expressed doubts as to transferability of skills learnt in the United States and elsewhere.

"To be really effective the manager had to be fully acculturated within a particular organisation of accultured and skilled in a particular functional industry."(61)

In another seminar (Gulf Polytechnic, 1985), a leading high level government official focussed on the transferability of management (Western) philosophy and methodology and pointed out.

"how often attempts to transfer a successful system from one country to another had failed due to social, cultural or other forms of incompatibility."(62)

As for professionalism as an interrelated set of values, specialised knowledge, expertise and commitment to self-development it was hardly evident in any of the management development programmes "marketed" in Bahrain prior to COMEP. On this count, pre-COMEF programmes were mostly "disjointed" in the sense of not presenting an integrated image of modern management practice but

rather "bits and pieces" of information often suffering from near total absence of organic unity.

This fact is partly due to the prevailing management development philosophy which was mostly remedial in nature. It practically meant that training programmes were mostly intended to improve employee performance on a job he was already occupying rather than as a career development vehicle. In other words, managerial professionalism suffered because of the ad hoc nature of most programmes and the fact that, they tried to project a "skill" image that was often not there.

#### BEYOND TRANSFER: THE CHALLENGE OF ASSIMILATION

The purpose of this quick review of the knowledge base that seems to have guided management development efforts in Bahrain before COMEP, was to establish the predominance of randomly chosen concepts and a "naive", uncritical approach to cross-cultural transferrability of managerial know-how and consequently, undue optimism, as to expected results.

With the introduction of COMEP in 1984, the question of cross-cultural relevance of management knowledge was consciously addressed. Part of the premises under which the programme was designed was the need to reconcile international credibility with local



relevance. COMEP, in other words, was conceived from the very start as a "planned" effort necessarily partaking of an international pool of knowledge albeit on a discriminating basis and subject to methodical need assessment in Bahrain.

More specifically, the improvements represented by COMEP in the area of cross-cultural transferrability of management knowledge to Bahrain were as follows:-

- Greater emphasis in the first place on the mostly culture-relevant nature of leadership and motivation research and the often problematic nature of its practical applications even in advanced industrial societies where it has originated. In Bahrain, such problems are bound to arise more insistently and management development participants should be sensitised against indiscriminate experimentalism. In the process, it is hoped that COMEP can contribute towards improving the ability of participants to use their judgment and cultivate their skills as practitioners of "contingency".

- Instead of the largely static materials on leadership and motivation referred to earlier, COMEP introduced to Bahrain adjusted versions and trends of theory and practice with conscious reference to their problems

within the Bahrain context. Contingency theories, valence-expectancy constructs, achievement literature, and specifically comparative perspectives were emphasized and presented in ways that expressly address their relevance to Bahrain and the barriers that might work against them at the level of the general culture, the organisation or the individual manager.

- Part of the operating philosophy of COMEP was to open avenues for Bahraini managers in order to become "reflective practitioners"<sup>(63)</sup> capable of linking theory and practice within their rapidly changing job context. Included among such avenues are case studies involving Bahraini organisations, locally developed management games and a related series of activities undertaken as part of "Bahrainising" teaching materials; a code word used to refer to introducing necessary cultural adaptations touching both the substance and style of management development.

The fact that COMEP's knowledge base represents a radical improvement over previous efforts with respect to cultural grounding should not be interpreted to mean that no loopholes remain in this respect. The point rather, is that COMEP was a major step towards creating requisite awareness of the issue and developing some experience as to how it can be practically approached.

In the relatively short period of two years, COMEP and the related evaluation experience has yielded some tentative observations as to both criteria that affect the inter-cultural validity of management theories<sup>(64)</sup>, as well as specific theories that were found more adjustable cross-culturally.

On the question of criteria, three emerge as particularly important:

- The cross-cultural validity of a management theory seems to be directly proportional to the breadth of its level of analysis. In other words, those theories undertaken partially or totally at a macro level were more likely to prove transferrable to the Bahrain context. Obviously, the reverse was also found to be equally true. The more micro-focused a particular theory was the greater the difficulty encountered in "displacing" it to the Bahraini culture.

Nor should this observation pass lightly. While seemingly obvious, what it actually suggests is that management theories that take their cultural context for granted will probably face transferrability difficulties. Obvious examples as indicated earlier include Maslow's hierarchy, the trait theory of leadership, Herzberg's theory of motivation and a good



part of the "behavioural" stream.

- The more methodologically-rigorous a particular management theory is, the easier it is to assess its cross-cultural relevance. Theories that are testable and empirically-based, are in this sense, better candidates for cultural adaptation.

On the other hand, empirically based research like McClelland need theory, Hofstede's cross-cultural investigations, Fiedler's contingency constructs and Vroom's valence were easier to assess and, in most cases put to good practical use despite their difficulties addressed earlier.

- A third, and closely related criterion, was discovered to relate to the "conceptual structure" of the management theory in question. Theories that are, more or less "closed" or "finalistic" generally tend to be the least transferrable mostly due to their dependence on prescribed parameters. Examples include some of the works in compensation theory, and most of the, again "psychologistic" research focusing on job design as a motivational tool and the managerial mid-career crisis as a probable motivational downturn.

Within this same logic, open-ended theories, or perhaps

process theories, were found to enjoy considerable cultural flexibility precisely because they only set general boundaries while leaving contexts to management trainees and practitioners themselves to be filled in the light of their own experience. Prime examples of this trend can be found in the newly emerging literature on managerial self-development as a continuous process undertaken by managers subject, of course, to expert assistance as required. Within COMEP, as well as elsewhere in Bahrain's recent experience shows that such theories that interestingly enough combine elements of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism, were found to be almost immediately transferrable to Bahrain's context and highly viable as management development tools.

In the same category of theories found to be relatively easily transferrable to Bahrain is a good part of the system's tradition. Again, it is the process aspect that seems to make such theories appealing. They seem to achieve at once an operational link between various levels in institutional interface (macro, intermediate, micro), and offer an operational view of the organisation as an input-output conversion process. In systems theory one finds that not much "tie in" exists by way of specific substance. A process is offered for practitioners in another culture who have to come up

with their own contents.

Addressing separately the question of managerial professionalism is bound to be a more forbidding problem. For one thing, the professional nature of management is still controversial despite the major grounds gained recently in this respect. The "classical" argument on whether management is an art or a science is highly relevant to Bahrain for it affects major choices bearing on the making of future managers and reshaping those already on the job.

The controversy is partly due to the co-existence of competing images of managerial professionalism at the international level. Such images vary from considering management a mere "overlay" superimposed on a "hard" technical core acquired at an earlier stage, to a full-fledged view of management as a separate and independent profession on par with older and more established counterparts like medicine or engineering. This controversy is no more resolved in Bahrain than elsewhere and managers are quick to line up on either side. In essence, however, the issue boils down to an intricate web of social acceptance, practical necessity and career planning. Such a web, however, is hardly a self-contained development particular to Bahrain. The experience of COMEP, particularly the series of CEO



seminars held under its auspices made it clear that evolving scenarios of managerial professionalism in Bahrain were strongly influenced by the following outside considerations:

- Absence of international consensus as to the preferred image of managerial professionalism and the fact that the issue as a whole is still undergoing sharp changes in Western societies.

- Lack of a coherent research body on the subject not only with respect to comparisons between national models but also within the same cultural configuration as well. Bahraini managers, in other words, can easily be at a loss as to what can be transferred to their culture from abroad in this connection mostly because norms and conceptualisations of managerial professionalism are not only widely divergent but, more seriously, not articulated formally.

- As the question of "professional images" in management is closely linked to corporate culture and the existence of traditions, we notice a clear trend among various "international" companies in Bahrain to transfer those images originating in or most consistent with their national cultures. The result is often firmly entrenched de facto "bastions" of management

practice reflecting particular flavours and resistant to "liberal" transfers of managerial values or tools perceived as hostile to vested professional interests. This could obviously block the transfer of particular alternatives.

The above picture notwithstanding, certain international developments in the area of managerial professionalism appear to have already made their way to Bahrain or to be presently in the process. Particularly encouraging is the active interest in establishing an executive forum in the country and a professional management association along lines inspired by specific international developments. This same momentum has given rise to greater interest in "professional standards", or the "bottom line" necessary for earning "management wings".

It is paradoxical only at the surface that in turning inwards to what is relevant within their own context Bahraini managers are becoming, far more than ever before, genuinely cosmopolitan and international. Gone seem the old days that preceded the coming of age when Bahraini managers passively worked with whatever tools were "made" available to them. A common topic of professional conversation among some of them now are the latest management "bestsellers"<sup>(65)</sup> and the

chances they have for possible application in Bahrain.

A major observation that should not pass unnoticed is that this is the first time the Bahrain management culture at all 3 levels: macro, intermediate and micro becomes active and offers itself as an arena to be included in international management debates. As such, the significance of the "event" is not mainly in the "theoretical revisions" it yields immediately, but rather in the fact that it is taking place at all. The future implications obviously outweigh the present picture which is still taking shape in a manner and at a pace that make formal evaluation difficult, and tentative at best.

Despite this, however, some criteria seem to have emerged in the light of this work that may shed some light on the still mostly nebulous body if thought on "managerial professionalism". The most significant among these criteria are:

- Total convergence of professional images on management is most unlikely to be achieved in the foreseeable future, except at the prohibitive cost of undercutting diversity; a price that makes such convergence undesirable and not feasible.



- Irrespective of the immediate issue of cross-cultural transferrability, managerial professionalism is unlikely to enjoy more consensus than the body of knowledge that guides it. If a set of general "principles" is essential for the emergence of any profession, the management still has a long way to go due to the "theory jungle" that will ensure multiple and often conflicting perceptions in this area.

- The understandable push for managerial professionalism within one country or internationally should be tempered by the advantages of diversity, variety and open-endedness. Such attributes are becoming increasingly essential for an environment, both national and international, increasingly characterised by turbulence, uncertainty and crisis situations. Perhaps, in this case, as the Bahrain experience reveals, diversity will facilitate innovation which is rapidly becoming a survival necessity.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

In a nutshell, the theoretical lessons gained from the Bahrain experience seem to point out in two conflicting directions. First comes the disquieting thought that despite its voluminous size the international management literature seems "hopelessly" thin when it

comes to providing specific guidance for the transfer of management knowledge from one culture to another. There seems to be much repetition and new attempts to raise old themes but not much by way of originality and no "breakthrough" in sight. At times international management literature, particularly in the three main areas selected for this study seem "arrested" under its own weight and unable to overcome either the relevance barrier or the cross-cultural gap. Hard core management techniques mostly in the management science/operations research, finance and accounting areas offer major exceptions but even in those "safe" specialisations, transferability is hardly totally culture-free. There seems to be a general crisis in international management knowledge and a growing sense of alienation separating academics and practitioners. It is particularly significant in this connection that practitioner-generated literature quickly attains "best seller" status and becomes the centre of much curiosity. In contrast, much of the "purely" academic work seems mostly directed at other academics and "out of touch" with changing management realities whether nationally or internationally. Bahrain offers a remarkable example of this trend as much of its management development activities seem inspired by contributions either at or closer to the practitioner end of the management knowledge spectrum. Because of

the highly personalised nature of management styles in a country undergoing rapid transition, successful management development programmes in the country seem to have a "natural" affinity with some of the new consultant-authored works linking excellence to personal commitment. It seems that recent "discoveries" in advanced industrial societies are "natural" or instinctively practiced management styles in Bahrain sustained by the need for corporate consistency with broader cultural norms. Nor is the personal vs impersonal dichotomy the only one of its kind that emerges as a result of this study. Another with no less significant implications is the contrast between the elaborate "labour relations" literature in the West that often fails to achieve its objectives, and the spontaneous attainment of such objectives in a society with practically no formal labour relations mechanisms. A further case in point is the elaborate Western management set-up dealing with such "behavioural" issues as "team building", "trust", almost to a degree that assumes "clinical" proportions, and the direct, unassuming manner in which healthy human relations are practised in many Bahraini organisations due to the extra-professional influences of kinship, primary group and social pressure. Many of the problems pictorially described in macro accounts of the changing Western work ethic are either non-existent



or far milder in Bahrain.<sup>(66)</sup> Alienation is perhaps the clearest example.

Lest the point be missed, what is being referred to here are "natural" barriers to management theory transferability in Bahrain due to the non-existence or mild occurrence of the problems addressed by such theories. If the first set of indicators yielded by this research study of the Bahrain management culture seems negative in so far as certain Western management theories are concerned, there is definitely another set pointing in a different direction. Perhaps the most encouraging of the positive indicators as suggested by the Bahrain experience is that some management universals do exist, that more can probably be generated through carefully designed country studies that are not purely descriptive. Developments in the area of managerial professionalism, particularly the concern with professional standards and self-development are striking examples.

Three important conclusions emerge as the most significant contributions of this chapter. What follows is a brief overview of each:

- o Major loopholes exist in our management knowledge particularly in the area of assessing the

cross-cultural transferability of management theories. Much of what seems to be accepted in this respect is either assumptive, impressionistic or of limited coverage. Western authors are still a long way from a "general theory" of management knowledge transferability. This observation holds equally with respect to both conceptual and operational variables. In a sense, we often fail to recognise the very things we are supposed to be looking for. What constitutes a management theory? What are the major avenues of transferability in management? When does the transfer of management knowledge take place? What are the respective roles of values, behaviours and skills in the process? How can we tell that successful transfer has taken place? These are some of the key questions raised by the Bahrain experience.

- o The successful transfer of management knowledge is not a one-way process. The image of a donor and a recipient might be just too static to accommodate a dynamic pattern of reciprocity whereby evidence generated through the transfer process will find its way into the original theory and alter one or more of its dimensions. As such, management theories and concepts could either have their major

premises confirmed or negated. This research avenue has a potential far beyond the formal confines of comparative or international management.

- o The other side of management knowledge transfer is the theory-generating potential of carefully designed country studies . It should be considered a major limitation if a research study of this scope and depth are to have no conceptual implications extending beyond the specific country in question. In other words, it would be hard to contain questions focusing on whether and to what extent this study can be said to yield generalisations extending beyond Bahrain. The outside scope that naturally comes to mind is the Gulf region which has been undergoing very rapid change including the emergence of corporate cultures and the building of management systems. The general environmental characteristics prevailing in the GCC countries are not much different from the picture portrayed in chapter two and three. However, key differences might exist at the intermediate and micro levels. This makes it all the more inviting to carry the analysis a bit further and examine if the key findings of this study, while formally limited to Bahrain can assume regional proportions. The answer is significant



for on it hinge not only a good part of the conceptual calibre of this work as a major analytical case study,<sup>(67)</sup> but also the prospects for management learning without having to go through the same traps. For the above reasons and related others this issue is of unusual significance both in its own right and, in many ways, as a logical extension of this chapter. In recognition of this fact, it will be focused upon more extensively in the following chapter (eight) and linked to the major questions encountered earlier in the context of transferability.

## FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Please see the chapter entitled "The age of organisations: The sublimation of politics." In S. Wolin (1961) Politics and Vision. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
2. Fiedler, F. E. (1967) A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness, New York: McGraw-Hill.
3. Likert, R. (1961) "An emerging theory of organisations, leadership and management." In L. Petmillo, and B. M. Bass (eds) Leadership and Interpersonal Behaviour, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
4. Fleishman, E. A. (1973) "Twenty years of consideration and structure." In E. A. Fleishman, and J. G. Hunt (eds) Current Developments in the Study of Leadership, Carbandak: Southern Illinois University Press.
5. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) "Strategy for Continuing Management Education Programme in Bahrain." Proceedings of Seminar.  
  
Blake, R., and Mouton, J. (1964) The Managerial Grid: Key orientation for Achieving Production Through People, Houston: Gulf Pub.
6. Mouton, J. and Blake, R. (1970) "Issues of transnational organization development." In B.M. Bass, R. Cooper, and A. H. Hass (eds) Managing for Accomplishment. Boston: Heath, pp 208 - 224.
7. Bass, B.M. (1981) Stogdills Handbook of Leadership, New York: The Free Press.
8. Vroom, V. H. (1976) "Leadership". In M. D. Dunettee (ed) Handbook of Industrial and Organisational Psychology, Chicago: Rand McNally, pp 1527-1551.
9. Fiedler, F. E (1967) op cit.

10. Vroom, V. H., and Yetton, P. W. (1973) Leadership and Decision Making, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
11. House, R. J., and Mitchell, T. R. (1974) "Path goal theory of leadership," Journal of Contemporary Business 3. pp 81-97.
12. Bedeian, A. G. (1986) Management, Chicago: CBS College Publishing, The Dryden Press.
13. Bennett, M. (1977) "Testing management theories cross-culturally," Journal of Applied Psychology, 62 (5): pp 578-581.
14. House, R. J. (1971) "A path goal theory of leader effectiveness," Administrative Science Quarterly, 16, pp 556-571.
15. Bedeian, A. C. (1986) op cit, p 477.
16. Vroom, V. H. and Yetton, P. W. (1973), Leadership and Decision Making, op cit.
17. Maslow, A. H. (1954) Motivation and Personality, New York: Harper and Row.
18. Hellrizel, D., (1983) Organisational Behaviour, New York: Harper and Row.
19. Bedeian, A. G. (1986) op cit, pp 437-438.
20. Tannenbraum, A. S. (1980) "Organisational Psychology." In H. C. Triandis, and R. W. Brislin, (eds) Handbook of Cross-cultural Psychology - Social Psychology, Vol.5, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp 281-334.
21. Redding, S. G. (1977) "Some Perceptions of Psychological Needs Among Managers in South East Asia." In Y. H. Poortinga (ed) Basic Problems in Cross-cultural Psychology, Amsterdam: Swets and Zeitlinger, pp 338-343.



22. McClland, D. C. (1961) op cit.
23. Iwawaki, S., and Lynn, R. (1972) "Measuring Achievement Motivation in Japan and in Great Britain." Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology, 3: pp 219-220.
24. Krus, D. J. and Rysberg, J. A. (1976) Industrial Managers and nAch." Comparable and Compatible Journal of Cross-cultural, pp 491-496.
25. Kormadt, H. J., et al (1980) "Cross-cultural Research on Motivation." In H. C. Triadis, and Lonner (eds) Handbook of Cross-cultural Psychology, Vol.3, Basic Processes, Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
26. Maehr, M. L. (1977) "Socio-cultural Origins of Achievement Motivation." International Journal of Inter-cultural Relations, 1: pp 81-104.
27. Hofstede, G. (1980) Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work Related Values, op cit.
28. Bedeian, A. G. (1986) op cit, pp 442-443.
29. Hellrizel, D., et al (1983) op cit, p 363.
30. Vroom, V. (1964) Work and Motivation, New York: John Wiley and Sons.  
  
Adams, J. S. (1963) "Toward on understanding of inequity." Journal of Abnormal Psychology 67, no 5, pp 422 - 346.  
  
Skinner, B. F. (1953) Science and Human Behaviour, New York: Free Press.
31. Porter, L. W. and Lawler, E. E. (1978) Managerial Attitudes and Performance. Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin.

32. Bedeian, A. G. (1986) op cit, p 446.
33. ibid, p 451.
34. ibid, p 456.
35. This is a key criticism of all "behaviorist" and "new-behaviorist" approaches and relates broadly to the ethical responsibilities of the social (behavioural) scientist. For a relevant perspective on this issue see Bedeian, A. G. (1986) ibid, p 456.
36. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) op cit, p 9
37. Leavitt, H. J. (1983) "Management and management education in the west: What's right and what's Wrong?" London Business School Journal, Summer, pp18-23.  
  
Mandt, E. J. (1982) "The Failure of Business Education and What TO DO About it", Management Review, Aug., vol 71, no 8, pp 47-52.  
  
Osbalderton, M., and Warner, A. (1985) "In Search of Excellence in Business Schools," Personnel Management, March, vol.17, no.3, pp 30-34.  
  
Behram, N. J. and Levin, R. I. (1984) "Are Business Schools Doing Their Job?" Harvard Business Review, Jan-Feb, pp 140-147.
38. Mintzberg, H. (1973) The Nature of Management Work, New York: Harper and Row, pp 187-8.
39. Whiteley, R., Thomas, A., and Marceau, J. (1981) Master of Business, Business Schools and Business Graduates in Britain and France. London: Tavistock, p 211.
40. ibid, p 214.
41. Dubin, R. (1962) Human Relations in

Administration. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall.

Stewart, R. (1966) "Management Education and our knowledge of Managers' job." International Social Science Journal, XX, 1, pp 77-89.

Mintzberg, H. (1975) "The Manager's Job: Folklore and fact," Harvard Business Review, July-August.

Handy, C. B. (1974) "Pitfalls of management development." Personnel Management, Vol.6, pp 20-25.

42. Mintzberg, H. (1973) op cit, p 187.

43. Stewart, R. (1984) "The nature of management : A problem for management education," Journal of Management Studies, 21, 3, pp 323-330.

44. Mintzberg, H. (1973) The Nature of Management Work, op cit.

45. Stewart, R. (1976) Contrasts in Management: A Study of Different Types of Manager's jobs; Their Demands and Choices, Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.

Stewart, R., Smith P., Blake, J., and Wingate, P. (1980). The District Administrator in the National Health Service, King Edwards' Hospital Fund for London: Pitman.

Mintzberg (1973) op cit.

Stewart, R. (1967) Managers and Their Jobs. London: Macmillan.

46. Sayles, L. R. (1964) Managerial Behaviour. New York: McGraw-Hill.

47. Pettigrew, A. M. (1973) The Politics of Organisational Decision Making. London: Tavistock.

Mayes, B. T., and Allen, R. W. (1977) "Toward a definition of organisational politics," Academy of Management Review, 2, pp 672-8.



48. Kotter, J. P. (1982) The General Managers, New York: Free Press.
49. Stewart, R. (1984) Choices for the Manager: A Guide to Managerial Work and Behaviour, Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.
50. Kotter, J. (1982) op cit.
51. Leavitt, H. J. (1983) "Management and management education in the West: What's right and what's wrong?" op cit.
52. Cool, K. O., and Lengnick-Hall, C.A. (1985) "Second thoughts on the transferability of Japanese management style," Organisation Studies, Vol.6, No.1, pp 11-12.
53. Hofstede, G. (1984) op cit.
54. Hofstede G. (1980) "Motivation, leadership, and organisation: Do American theories apply abroad?" Organisational Dynamics, Summer.
55. Fiedler, F. E. (1987) "The contingency model and the dynamics of the leadership process." In L. Berkenitz (ed) Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, vol 11 New York: Academic Press.
56. Likert, R. (1967) The Human Side of the Enterprise, New York: McGraw-Hill.
57. Laurent, A. C. (1978) "Matrix Organisations and Latin Culture." Working Paper 78-28. Brussels: European Institute for advanced Studies in Management, p 129.
58. Levinson, H. (1970) "Management by whose objectives," Harvard Business Review, vol.48, no.4, pp 125-134.
59. Hofstede, G. (1980) op cit, p 58.

60. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) Chief Executive Officers Corporate Culture Seminar, p 27.
61. ibid, p 53.
62. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) op cit, p 9.
63. Schon, D. A. (1983) The Reflective Practioner: How Professionals Think in Action. London: Temple Smith Ltd.
64. While specific reference is only made to those management theories explicitly touching on leadership, motivation and professionalism, it may be agreed that these criteria as suggested by the COMEP experience do apply more generally to other aspects of managerial knowledge.
65. Peters, T. J., and Waterman, R. H. (1982) In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies, N.Y.: Harper and Row Pub.  
  
Naisbitt, J. (1982) Megatrends: Ten New Directions Transforming our lives. London: Macdonald and Co.
66. Problems refered to include such work-related "crises" as alienation, anomie, isolation and estrangement.
67. A major objective of this study is to suggest observation based on the Bahrain experience but possibly relevant to the experiences of other countries. As such, this research work seeks to transcend the strict confines of a case study.

## **C H A P T E R   E I G H T**

### **REFLECTIONS ON THE BAHRAIN EXPERIENCE: MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT REVISITED**

{



## C H A P T E R   E I G H T

This research piece aspires to be more than a mere country study. The issues it raises centre around continuing management education and management development in so far as the present experience and future prospects of Bahrain are concerned. Such issues, however, represent profound challenges to countries and organisations particularly those undergoing rapid change. They are also, and to the same extent, at the heart of management research and occupy scholars to no lesser extent than practitioners.

Although the Bahrain experience is still taking shape and has yet to mature, it can already suggest certain observations that transcend its immediate parameters. Such observations touch on both the practice and theory(ies) of management development.

In the first instance, and as indicated earlier, Bahrain's socio-cultural, environmental and economic structures are very similar to other countries in the Gulf area, and in many ways the rest of the Arab world. A close examination of its achievements and constraints in the area of management development can offer an accurate indicator of what to expect elsewhere in the region. On that basis, an attempt will be made

to highlight some key dimensions of Bahrain's experience with a view to their regional applicability throughout the Gulf area and the Arab world. Perhaps to some extent, these same observations might be relevant to a wider spectrum of developing countries grappling with the problems of building indigenous management skills and capabilities.

### SOME KEY OBSERVATIONS

#### 1. Management Development is a Joint Venture.

Perhaps the most significant lesson of experience that may be derived from Bahrain is that management development is a joint venture involving managers themselves, government, and centres of management education and training. None of these parties can accomplish the task unilaterally and none should. It is through the concerted efforts of all parties that a broad base of support, mutual understanding and shared perceptions can be built. It is also through such a concerted effort that the necessary data base for making intelligent decisions can emerge and the equally vital resource base can be generated. If a decade of unilateral, isolated attempts at building management development in Bahrain did not leave much of an impact, it is a sobering fact that should be seriously considered by other countries facing similar problems. Strong

evidence indicates that other Gulf States either have faced or are now facing such problems and stand to gain considerably from a careful look at Bahrain where more was accomplished over the past four years than the fifteen that preceded them mainly thanks to this change of approach.

The collective, multi-sectoral joint venture towards upgrading the quality and scope of managerial performance through planned management development, stands out as Bahrain's contribution to the region.

2. A second observation closely related to the first and equally borne out of Bahrain's experience is that management development has to be approached at three interrelated levels (macro, intermediate and micro) if it is to have an enduring effect. Attempts that view the organisation as a self-contained entity and fail to account for the profound influence of the broader culture are faulty and short-sighted. In this context, management development becomes a fine balancing act between continuity and change, particularism and universalism, reinforcement of tradition and incorporation of modernity. In this balancing act, admittedly very difficult and precarious at times



there are no final answers, only intelligent choices and "mixes" that reflect particular policy priorities.

The choices have to be very carefully identified and alternatives charted out as the implications are very serious and could cast a long shadow well into the distant future.

### 3 The Need For Strategy.

A clear derivative of the first two observations is that incrementalist, atomistic, piecemeal approaches to management development are unlikely to measure up to the enormity of the challenge that lies ahead. What Bahrain stands out to demonstrate is that no less than a strategy is needed.

Irrespective of labels, what seems to be clearly required is a long-range management development plan with clear goals, operational targets, progress indicators, implementation set-up, and perhaps most importantly an evaluation framework.

### 4. A remarkably striking feature of the Bahrain management development experience is that integration represents a fundamental requirement for success. The required integration links

together aspects of the same process that could otherwise remain disjointed. From the training site or management development venue to the job context is a long journey that can be aborted at various junctures along the way. The first decade of management development experience in Bahrain offers many examples of management training not only failing to impact job performance or contribute to problem-solving but even producing frustrated employees and higher turnover rates.

Another aspect of the required intergration touches on management development programmes content which should be brought as close to job requirements as possible. In the absence of such a link relevance of management development remains an open question and credibility is undermined.

Integration also involves screening of candidates for various management development programmes on the basis of present job demands and future career plans. Random selection of candidates has produced much resentment in Bahrain and led to the mutual dissatisfaction of trainer and trainee.

One of the more successful aspects of Bahrain's recent experience in management development is the

attempt to integrate into one chain effect job evaluation, training need assessment, training programme design, programme delivery, monitoring, evaluation and feedback. Admittedly, however, this kind of integration is extremely difficult and can often create an illusory sense of control then slip out un-expectedly. It can also break down at any of its closely linked stages and render the rest of the chain ineffective. It also further complicates the task of designing general-purpose management development programmes as the integrated approach is far more suited to customised programmes.

Implied in the integrated approach to management development as experienced in Bahrain is an investment approach that seeks to establish, however crudely, the returns derived from the substantial resources committed to training.

During the boom years of the 1970s there was little incentive in Bahrain or elsewhere in the Gulf, to subject management development to any serious cost/benefit calculus. The changing times today have already started to push Bahrain strongly in that direction and other Gulf states are soon to follow.



Part of the investment approach is to build organisational capabilities for absorbing the results of management development and incorporating the new skills. This indeed, is one of the most difficult lessons of integration as it requires the gradual transformation of the whole organisational system. Organisational learning is now making its early advent in Bahrain; a sign that will spread to the rest of the region sooner than one might think.

Organisational learning not only improves the changes of effectively utilizing the fruits of management development but generates feedback essential to better targeted management development in the future.

Last but not least integration entails building inter-organisational bridges so that institutional experiences may be shared and collective intelligence may be developed. Again the Bahrain experience in this respect will undoubtedly prove highly relevant to the entire region. In Bahrain inter-organisational bridges are built and sustained through a variety of channels including seminars, workshops, meetings etc. All of these actually are part of a newly established management forum sponsored by Gulf

Polytechnic - University of Bahrain, and actively supported by senior managers from all sectors.

This forum which was started in 1983 has generated thus far a level of management development awareness and a degree of commitment to upgrading standards of managerial performance probably unmatched in the region.

5. One key effect of the integrated management development programme recently attempted in Bahrain, is the generation of a management development data base that is admittedly still in its earliest stages. The integrated strategy, propelled by the forum, has heightened the consciousness of managers that organisations in Bahrain, much like the rest of the Gulf and the entire Middle East area, are grossly under-researched.

Managers seem to have suddenly become aware in Bahrain that institutions suffered enormously due to the lack of accurate information about, among other things, job requirements, performance criteria, employee appraisal, organisational performance indicators etc etc... They also realised that such information can only be

approached from within the organisation itself not acquired ready-made from a third party. In search for a viable solution, close links between organisations and centres of management learning are currently being forged to plug the serious information gap and update it regularly in the future. Something of a national management data bank might emerge in the process in Bahrain. That such an idea will catch on in the rest of the region is a very safe prediction judging by the interest already shown and the curiosity exhibited by visiting managers.

6. Perhaps one of the most far-reaching implications of the Bahrain management development experience is the already visible trend towards professionalising management practice. Until recently, the Bahrain management profession was not conscious of itself as a unified specialised group bound together by the practice of a type of expertise that has to be acquired through formal training. It started to seek professional recognition on par with the more established professions like medicine and engineering without having all of their characteristics. Actually, management is a second profession to many of its practitioners and the way it co-exists with the previous background of the



managers can be extremely instructive. Never before in the Gulf, the Arab world or the Middle East did a country undergo so much soul-searching about the management profession like Bahrain. There surely is a long way to go in this direction for Bahrain and other countries in the region but a trend has already been established and it will only grow in the future. The professional momentum building up in management will by its very nature act as a change catalyst creating rigorous demands for standards. It will also, and as part of the same process, generate greater insistence on constant upgrading of professional management skills and urge practitioners to take seriously such activities as self-development and self-renewal.

A higher degree of managerial professionalism in Bahrain will also lead at once to greater sensitivity to local environmental particularities and better integration into the international professional set-up. The two trends will be increasingly viewed as complimentary rather than contradictory as it is in the nature of professions to evolve flexible delivery systems without compromising their technical core.

7. With professionalism comes a better understanding of the changing environment and acceptance of the adjustments that might have to be made as a result. Nowhere are these adjustments more visible than in the sphere of managing expectations. First-generation Bahraini managers have, by virtue of their extremely limited number, experienced rapid vertical career mobility and came to occupy sensitive positions within a relatively short period. The period, of course, was also one of rapid economic growth and expansion. Those managers, in key positions today, often serve unwittingly as role models for younger managers and students who often expect a similar career path. That such expectations are becoming increasingly unrealistic however is a fact brought home to many by the narrowing job market and dwindling mobility prospects. Second and third generation managers in Bahrain have to undergo a major adjustment of expectations if future frustrations are to be avoided. An effort in that direction is already underway in Bahrain and will soon spread to neighbouring countries where the management of expectations may even be more traumatic.
8. The Bahrain experience is also ripe with timely lessons on the nature of management expertise

transfer cross-culturally. If anything, this experience suggests that for such transfer to be viable it has to amount to a serious transformation of the imported knowledge and skills in order for it not to be rejected by the host culture. Transformation entails mutual accommodation and a high degree of selectivity. It also entails a certain professional "value added" on the part of recipient organisations by way of enriching the incorporated know-how and contributing whenever possible to its improvement. Examples of successful transformation are already evident in Bahrain, COMEP being perhaps the most visible. But there are also other examples in the banking sector and industry as well. Such examples will undoubtedly inspire other countries in the Gulf region to follow the Bahrain examples.

9. There can be little doubt that one of Bahrain's most important lessons of experience in the area of management development is tying the process to the three concepts of leadership, motivation and managerial professionalism. For management development to prove enduring and be sustained in the long-run it should address the latent capabilities of Bahraini managers and appeal to ideals that transcend the strict requirements of



specific jobs.

Bahrain has perhaps been grappling with problems of management development longer than other Gulf states and feel the need to establish strategic priorities for itself in this important area. As such, its recent emphasis on those three priority areas which comes from the managers themselves is indeed very promising. As countries in the GCC group, perhaps more so than the rest of the Arab world, are remarkably similar to Bahrain, it seems only a matter of time before such an approach suggests itself to them.

It does not necessarily follow from this that other countries have to link their management development programmes to these three concepts and no others. In the light of their own circumstances and needs they might select different concepts. What matters in the approach which emphasizes that management development should be linked to strategic priorities that transcend strict technicalities.

10. Also important as a lesson of experience emerging out of Bahrain's management development attempt is not to seek quick results and "magic fixes". Management development is essentially a learning

process and as such it is slow by nature and long-term in effect. Since it also involves change, attitudinal, individual, organisational and social, it is bound to meet serious resistance and run into any number of barriers.

This observation holds special significance as organisations in Bahrain or elsewhere are under considerable pressure to produce quick results and "solve" problems. This temptation, however, will have to be resisted to the extent possible.

11. The Bahrain experience points out very clearly towards the need to forge new avenues of cooperation between centres of management learning and their client organisations. Such new avenues should seek to transcend even the collaborative approach. A case in point is COMEP'S apparent difficulties in implementing its preceptors provision. Perhaps for such a provision to be activated a formula should be found for the would-be line preceptors to be encompassed in the learning process itself. This is undoubtedly a major future challenge for COMEP.

These eleven observations made in reflection on Bahrain's management development record address to

a large extent issues relevant to the practitioner. Such issues, however, represent only a part of the total picture as they should also include those that relate to management theory and management education.

Three major observations seen particularly significant from a "theoretical" perspective:

1. The interdisciplinary body of knowledge subsumed under "management theory", "management education", etc. does not have ready or standardised packages of know-how to offer to a country like Bahrain. Rather, this body of knowledge covers a wide array of subjects and is often conflicting and highly tentative in the guidelines it offers. This does not by any means make it less useful. Its relevance, however, cannot be taken for granted and it has to be approached selectively and often continuously lest we fall into the compatibility trap and develop unwarranted expectations.

It is unfair though to simply criticise the literature for failure to offer the required know-how as the roots of failure often extend to poorly conceived and hastily defined needs. It is probably the random selection of "theories",



approaches, models etc. and the uncritical propagation of particularly appealing ideas that have caused most of the failures. For Bahrain at some point, and indeed for many other developing countries it is a "transactional analysis" wave, followed by an "organisational development" phase only to give way to a "managerial grid" wave etc. etc. Short of a methodical assessment of our own needs we are likely to carry on holding randomly to whatever new management ideas come our way only to blame later for unavoidable failures.

Bahrain seems now poised for a serious break away from such practices and in so doing it may offer a good example to the region and to other developing countries involved in importing managerial know-how.

2. The interface between recipient countries - Bahrain or any other - and international management theory(ies) and know-how should change from a one-way to a two-way relationship. So far, it was at best simply a question of whether a particular theory, approach or model applies in a certain recipient country. It seems important in the light of Bahrain's experience that this state of mind should change in favour of greater emphasis on comparative management research and modification of

imported theories in the light of host environments.

The outcome of such a change could be in the interest of better theory practice. Actually, short of such a major transformation management theory will continue to be mostly ethnocentric and management practice in developing countries will not pull out of its randomised dependence on imported know-how. The attempt already underway in Bahrain to work closely with organisations in order to produce local management development materials. Again this is a trend that will soon spread to other countries in the region.

3. The third "theoretical" observation is closely related to the second. Bahrain's short management development experience is enough to suggest the strong need for joint research ventures between centres of management learning in Bahrain and abroad. For the cross-fertilisation referred to in the previous observation to take its course, it has to be supported by basic and applied management research jointly undertaken by Bahraini institutions and individuals working closely with international counterparts. It is through such channels that professional issues can be addressed, problems defined and shared perceptions developed.

Such a new development promises one viable way out of the current impasse facing the international applications of Western management theory.

The preceding observations represent an attempt to answer the question of how generalisable is Bahrain's experience. Obviously there can be no suggestion that a clear-cut final answer is possible at this stage. Bahrain's experience is still at its early stages and it might yet take new turns, positive or negative, not clearly apparent at this point in time. Such tentativeness, however, cannot be used as a justification for not attempting to extend whatever lessons have been learnt in Bahrain to the region and beyond for shortcomings not to be duplicated.

What is important, however, is that these observations should be understood as trends in the making with no degree of finality attached. Perhaps in so doing, we can achieve the twin goals of focusing on specific policy issues relevant to Bahrain without losing touch with the broader theoretical aspects of these policies.



**POSTSCRIPT:**  
**THE WAY FORWARD**

In retrospect, perhaps the most rewarding dimension of this study is the polarity of director and researcher as the two intertwined roles of the author.

There were times when one of the two roles reacted sharply to the demands of the other. As director of a major institution involved in management development, the author was often under pressure to subjugate his research interest to the requirements of short-term decision-making. As a researcher, he experienced frequent temptations to "postpone" pressing decisions so that fruits of this research may be incorporated more effectively.

On balance, each of the two roles contributed to putting the other in perspective. Given the potentially all-encompassing nature of each, it was useful to identify partly with the other. As such, problems were approached in each case with greater distance, less immediacy and more detachment. Each of the two roles was challenged by the other to prove its primacy, as it were. In the process, a greater measure of analytical rigour was gained without jeopardising the equally important criterion of relevance.

Analytical rigour as the rallying call of the researcher had to be served without totally succumbing

to conventional pressures for methodological purity understood as adherence to narrow technique. Developmentalism was the intellectual alternative to "methodism" and it served equally well the needs of researcher and director.

To the researcher, developmentalism meant the uncertainty of not having a master design at the very outset. A particular step often opened new and unexpected doors with the need to restructure the rest of the process.

To the director, developmentalism meant a combination of long-range planning and short-term correctives.

Director and researcher roles often converged around the need for a modicum of manageability in an infinitely complex picture. To simplify without distortion and isolate without disconnecting was the shared burden of both.

It was a burden worth carrying. The momentum needed not to despair under the enormity of the task was primarily derived from the task itself. Here was a new world emerging to shape the future of a country in transition and ready to be explored. The temptation was irresistible, the results, hopefully justifiable.



Harmony in duality and complimentarity in tension is the valuable lesson of experience gained from this effort.

It is often said that a "good" research study raises more questions than it answers. Judging by this standard, it is hoped that this thesis has not been a failure.

To start with, it makes no claim whatsoever to exhaustiveness. The issues it addresses are prohibitively varied and complex to allow for anything beyond drawing the general framework in a first study no matter how thorough. This indeed is the major constraint of this work, namely, its being a first study on management development and continuing management education in Bahrain and the rest of the region. As such, it had to sail most of the time in uncharted waters and experience the mixed fortunes of a path-breaking attempt. Triumph and frustration were often inseparable.

Nor was there much to draw on by way of literature either. Despite the abundance of theoretical works touching on every aspect of management theory and practice, precious little is available on cross-cultural transfer of managerial know-how, or the

integrated approach to continuing management education.

The way the thesis is structured, the decision to base it on the direct experience of the author and other managers in Bahrain, as well as the effort made to reflect as authentically as possible, the Bahrain management community, meant being less "bookish" and more open to action alternatives.

That this thesis has called attention to the wide range of problems it addressed is its major contribution. An ambitious research agenda was developed but this work is a long way from satisfying its various dimensions. Only a first step has been taken towards a journey that will undoubtedly invite others.

Subsequent research work is urgently needed if this attempt is to have a sustained effect in the long run. The issues it covers are still developing and need to be followed closely. The various management surveys, questionnaires, interview, etc. should be conducted again after say, 2-3 years so that results may be compared. This also would be a practical necessity for updating the data base of COMEP.

Perhaps one of the modest contributions of the thesis was a new emphasis on developmental-processual methodology necessitated by a research terrain that

does not lend itself to a logico-hypothetical framework. The dual but integrated director-researcher posture meant that the study was not approached in the mind set of one academic addressing others. The manager's voice comes out strongly and distinctly at all critical junctures.

The author often found himself at the centre of a continuum linking together past experience and future prospects. Feedback often led to feedforward in the sense of carving out avenues for action that could hardly have been anticipated had it not been for the process of systematically tapping experience.

A major by-product of this research is establishing the case for managerial evaluation in a manner that comes fairly close to managerial accounting. It is perhaps in managerial evaluation that this work can claim something of an original contribution. It seems to integrate within one overarching construct the developmental-processual methodology, the researcher-director as well as the learning-action tension.

The duality of director and researcher meant, among other things, that this thesis was not a "self-contained" research work. The developmental



process of which it is a part started well before it was formally conceived and continued unabated after the thesis took its course.

Two specific events of marked significance have taken place after the thesis was put in "final" form. In December 1986, another seminar was held at Gulf Polytechnic - University of Bahrain on the "Future Prospects of the Bahrain Management Profession". The guest speaker was Prof. John Burgoyne of Lancaster University who made an engaging presentation on management development options and their organisational correlates. Prof. Burgoyne's audience were senior Bahraini executives many of whom have actively participated in the array of research activities conducted as part of and reported in the thesis.

A sequel seminar was also sponsored by Gulf Polytechnic in late March 1987. The theme was "Management Development Evaluation: The Bahrain Experience" and the guest speaker was Prof. John Morris, Professor Emeritus of Management Development at the Manchester Business School. Prof. Morris made a perceptive presentation on the processual approach to management development with special reference to organisational integration. Again, a select group of executives participated in the discussion and pushed the frontier

a little further. More such activities are lined up as the momentum continues to snowball.

Both events are rich with future implications that will undoubtedly be further researched as they continue to gain in urgency. With respect to "Future Prospects", the logical next step seems to be a series of applied research activities focusing on different manifestations of managerial professionalism in Bahrain. As far as managerial development is concerned, the next item on the agenda will have to be another seminar dealing exclusively with evaluation methodologies and techniques.

Managerial evaluation as the thrust of this thesis, should lead the new forms of activities practically unknown in Bahrain up to this time. It is highly integrative in bringing together the manager as a "reflective practitioner", the organisation as "learning system" and the task environment as a changing web of threats and opportunities.

Perhaps management evaluation and within it, the necessary future continuation of COMEP monitoring can be carried out within the framework of the Management Research and Development Unit proposed in the "Bahrain Management Profession: Problems and Prospects" seminar

held in December, 1986. Such a unit, of course, would only be the beginning of a long process that would hopefully ensure the long-term sustaining of the management development strategy for Bahrain. The fact that the proposed unit will be partly staffed by members of the teaching faculty should not be allowed to bias results. Managerial input into the process should be actively sought. Through dynamic interaction with its broader environment, this unit carries the promise of bringing together researchers, managers and policy makers in pursuit of higher professional standards.

It should also be of great interest to duplicate, to the extent possible, this study in other Gulf states to observe patterns of congruence or variance. This indeed would be a very promising prospect not only from a policy analysis perspective but from a theoretical perspective as well.

Equally inviting is the prospect of extending the study in the form of a more ambitious research project focusing on management "technology" transfer, i.e. the cross-cultural applicability of management theories. Perhaps the proposed study can center specifically around one or more of the three key concepts of leadership, motivation and professionalism.



This last concept, managerial professionalism, in the context of Bahrain, is undoubtedly one of the key contributions of this work as it was never before raised on the island. However, much work remains to be done by way of better understanding this new phenomenon and examining ways for accelerating its development. A separate study focusing exclusively on this one issue is in order.

A study of managerial professionalism would also be highly relevant regionally and internationally. Professionalism, after all, is a unifying framework in which theory and practice merge.

Perhaps, in conclusion, it is important to recall that this research study is essentially autobiographical. There were times when the author questioned the legitimacy of this motive but only to remember that he is but an improbable addition to a distinguished group of managers who succumbed to the same temptation. To have attempted to be simultaneously in the two domains of thought and action was difficult enough. But not to have attempted would have been very limiting.

# CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

DATE	ACTIVITY	FOLLOW-UP REMARKS
1980	SETTING UP OF 10000 PLAN	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CREATING A WAVE OF INTEREST IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT.</li> <li>2. DESIGNING AND OFFERING A PACKAGE OF MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES.</li> </ol>
1980	ENABLING DECREE FOR GULF POLYTECHNIC	UPGRADING THE INSTITUTION AND EXPANDING ITS MANDATE
1981	LAUNCHING MANAGERIAL MANPOWER SURVEY THAT PRECEDED COMEP	BUILDING AN ACCURATE DATA BASE ON MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT NEEDS IN TERMS OF DECISION-MAKING LEVELS AND SPECIALISATIONS
FALL 1982	INTRODUCING NEW PROGRAMMES IN BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT AT GULF POLYTECHNIC	FIRST-TIME AVAILABILITY OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT DIPLOMA AND DEGREE EDUCATION IN BAHRAIN
SPRING 1983	EXTENSIVE INTERACTION AND NETWORKING WITH BAHRAIN MANAGEMENT COMMUNITY	HIGHLY SUPPORTIVE PERCEPTION OF THE NEW MANAGEMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES. DISSATISFACTION WITH 10,000 PLAN PROGRAMMES AND CONSENSUS ON THE NEED FOR A BETTER ALTERNATIVE
FEBRUARY 1984	BIRTH OF THE CONTINUING MANAGEMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMME (COMEP) AS A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN GULF POLYTECHNIC, INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT.	INTRODUCTION TO BAHRAIN OF A QUALITY MULTI-LEVEL MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME WITH AN EXTENSIVE FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION MACHINERY.

DATE	ACTIVITY	FOLLOW-UP REMARKS
MARCH 1984	NEW ROUND OF MEETINGS WITH MANAGEMENT COMMUNITY TO EXPLAIN COMEP AND DISCUSS POLICY ISSUES RELEVANT TO MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT IN BAHRAIN. HEIGHTENED AUTHOR CONCERN WITH MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT ISSUES.	BUILDING SUPPORT AND MOBILISING RESOURCES TO SUSTAIN COMEP. GULF POLYTECHNIC SPONSORS CULTURE SEMINAR - THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN BAHRAIN.
APRIL 1984	INCEPTION OF THE Ph.D PROJECT AND DEVELOPMENT OF SUCCESSIVE VERSIONS OF THE PROPOSAL.	COMMENCING THE RESEARCH PROCESS WITH A DUAL ROLE OF DIRECTOR OF GULF POLYTCHNIC AND DOCTORAL RESEARCHER.
SUMMER 1984	FINALISATION OF PH.D PROPOSAL AND SUBMISSION TO CNAA-INTENSIVE MEETINGS WITH ALL 4 SUPERVISORS.	CLARITY OF RESEARCH AGENDA AND COMMENCEMENT OF WORK.
OCTOBER 1984	DRAFTING CHAPTER 1 OF THE THESIS WHICH BECAME 2 IN THE FINAL VERSION.	EYE-OPENER FOR A WIDE RANGE OF SUBSDEQUENT STEPS.
OCTOBER 1984	CREATING AND ACTIVATING A FRAME-WORK FOR EVALUATING COMEP. COMMENCING WORK ON DEVELOPING A PROFILE FOR THE BAHRAINI MANAGER.	DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRST SYSTEMATIC PROFILE OF THE BAHRAINI MANAGERS. APPENDIX A AND B.
NOVEMBER 1984	AUTHOR FAMILIARISATION WITH EVALUA-TION LITERATURE AND IN-DEPTH EXAMI-NATION OF QUALITATIVE VS QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES.	REDEFINING OF RESEARCH TASK AND BETTER UNDER STANDING OF THE MODUS OPERANDI.
JANUARY 1985	VISIT OF SUPERVISOR MS. JENNY MUNDY TO BAHRAIN. CEO INTERVIEWS AND FURTHER WORK ON DEVELOPMENT OF THE DATA BASE.	DEVELOPMENT OF TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR VARIOUS RESEARCH STEPS. COMPILING AN EXECUTIVE PERCEPTION OF MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS IN BAHRAIN.



DATE	ACTIVITY	FOLLOW-UP REMARKS
SPRING 1985	REFINING COMEP EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS. LAUNCHING A NEW NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY SIMILAR TO THAT OF 1983. MEETING WITH TEACHING MANAGERS.	COMPLETING THE NECESSARY EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS FOR COMEP. UPDATING THE MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS DATA BASE (APPENDIX D) CROSS-CHECKING DATA-BASE AGAINST PERCEPTIONS OF TRAINING MANAGERS.
MARCH 1985	EVALUATING COMEP THROUGH PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS (APPENDIX E). IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR QUESTIONNAIRE (APPENDIX F).	IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEM AREAS. INTRODUCING NECESSARY CORRECTIVES. (APPENDIX E AND F).
MAY 1985	SEMINAR (APPENDIX I). STRATEGY FOR CONTINUING MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN BAHRAIN.	BUILDING CONSENSUS ON FUTURE STEPS FOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT IN BAHRAIN.
SUMMER 1985	INTENSIVE LITERATURE REVIEW COVERING: - MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT - STRATEGIC PLANNING - EVALUATION REVIEWING THE DATA BASE COLLECTED EARLIER. DISCUSSION WITH SUPERVISORS.	LINKING THEORY-BASE TO DATA AND RESTRUCTURING THIS RESEARCH PROCESS TO BETTER EXAMINE THIS "FIT" BETWEEN THE TWO.
NOVEMBER/ DECEMBER 1985	DESIGNING CEO FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE ON LEADERSHIP/MOTIVATION AND PROFESSIONALISM IN ORDER TO ASSESS IMPORTANCE ASSIGNED BY CEOS TO THE 3 CONCEPTS. SECOND VISIT OF SUPERVISOR MS. JENNY MUNDY TO BAHRAIN.	UNPRECEDENTED ACCOUNT IN BAHRAIN OF CEO PERCEPTION OF THE ROLE OF THE 3 INTERRELATED ELEMENTS WITHIN THE MANAGEMENT PROCESS. (APPENDIX C).
FEBRUARY 1986	DESIGNING COMEP-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRES TO GRADUATES AND SUPERVISORS.	MAKING AVAILABLE A TESTED INSTRUMENT FOR ASSESSING COMEP'S IMPACT.

DATE	ACTIVITY	FOLLOW-UP REMARKS
SPRING 1986	IMPLEMENTING CEO FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONNAIRE AND COMEP IMPACT QUESTIONNAIRE.	FIRST FEEDBACK BY COMEP GRADUATES ON ITS SUSTAINED IMPACT. (APPENDIX G).
MAY 1986	DRAFTING FIRST 4 CHAPTERS OF THESIS VISIT TO UK.	MAKING REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO REFINE WORK AND INCORPORATE SUPERVISORS' FEEDBACK.
SUMMER 1986	EXTENSIVE READING AND DATA ANALYSIS.	PREPARING FOR DRAFTING AND REDRAFTING SECOND HALF OF THESIS.
FALL 1986	DRAFTING CHAPTERS 5-9.	PREPARING TEXT AND MODIFYING IT THROUGH SUPERVISORS' EVALUATION.
SPRING 1987	SUBMISSION OF FINAL DRAFT.	IDENTIFICATION OF FURTHER RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS.

## B I B L I O G R A P H Y

1. Adams, J. S. (1963) "Toward an understanding of inequity." Journal of Abnormal Psychology 67, no 5.
2. Address of H.E. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, to the Gulf Polytechnic Seminar, May, 1986.
3. Adler, N. J. (1980a) "Cultural synergy: The management of cross-cultural organisations." In W. W. Burke and L. D. Goodstein (eds) Trends and Issues in OD: Current Theory and Practice San Diego: University Associates.
4. Adler, N. J. (1980b) "Re-entry: Managing cross-cultural transitions." Paper presented at the Academy of International Business Meetings, New Orleans, October 25.
- 5.a. Al-Araji, A. (1981) "The relevancy and the irrelevancy of the more advanced management educational programmes to Arab countries' needs," International Review of Administrative Science, vol. 47, part 2.
- b. Al Hashemi, I. S. J. (1986) "The management structure of Bahrain organisations," Gulf Polytechnic Seminar on: The Bahrain Management Profession in Transition; Paper presented in the seminar, May.
6. Ali, A. and Swiercz, P. (1985) "Managerial decision styles and work satisfaction in Saudi Arabia." Management Decision, vol 23, no 2.
7. Al-Jaffary, A., and Hollingsworth, A. (1983) "An exploratory study of managerial practices in the Arabian Gulf Region." Journal of International Business Studies, Fall.
8. Anastos, D., Bedos, A., and Seaman, B. (1980)



- "The development of modern management practices in Saudi Arabia." Colombia Journal of World Business, vol 15, no 2, Summer.
9. Argyris, C. (1982) Reasoning, Learning and Action, Jessey Bass.
  10. Ashton, D. (1984) "Cultural differences: Implications for management development." Management Education and Development, vol 15.
  11. Badawy, M. K. (1980) "Styles of Mideastern managers." California Management Review, vol XXII, No 2, Spring.
  12. Barnard, C. (1938) The Functions of the Executive, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
  13. Barrett, G. V., and Bass, B. M., (1976) "cross-cultural issues in industrial and organisational psychology." In M. D. Dunette, (ed) Handbook of Industrial and Organisational Psychology, New York: Rand McNally.
  14. Bass, B. M. (1981) Stogdills Handbook of Leadership, New York: The Free Press.
  15. Bass, B. M., and Burger, P. C. (1979) Assessment of Managers: An International Comparison. New York: Free Press.
  16. Bedeian, A. G. (1986) Management, Chicago: CBS College Publishing, The Dryden Press.
  17. Behram, N. J. and Levin, R. I. (1984) "Are Business Schools Doing Their Job?" Harvard Business Review, Jan-Feb.
  18. Bennett, M. (1977) "Testing management theories cross-culturally," Journal of Applied Psychology, 62 (5).

19. Bennis, W., and Nanus, B. (1985) Leaders, The Strategies for Taking Charge, New York: Harper and Row.
20. Blake, R., and Mouton, J. (1964) The Managerial Grid: Key Orientation for Achieving Production Through People, Houston: Gulf Pub.
21. Bodgan, R. and Taylor, S. J. (1975) Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods, New York: Wiley.
22. Burgoyne, J. (1981) "Moving forward from self-development." Management Education and Development, vol 12.
23. Burgoyne, J. (1983) "Approaches to integration in management education and development." In C. L. Cooper (ed) Developing Managers for the 1980s, London: Macmillan.
24. Burgoyne, J. (1973) "An action research experiment in the evaluation of a management development course." Journal of Management Studies, Feb.
25. Burgoyne, J. and Cooper, C. A. (1975) "Evaluation methodology." Journal of Occupational Psychology, vol 48, no 1.
26. Burgoyne, J. and Singh, R. (1977) "Evaluation of training and education," Journal of European Industrial Training, vol 1, no 1.
27. Burks, A. W. (1981) Japan: Profile of a Post-Industrial Power, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
28. Burnstein, E. (1969) "An analysis of group decision involving risk," Human Relations, 22.
29. Bussom, R. et al (1984) "Integrated management organisation development in a developing country: A case Study." Journal of Management

30. Chief Executive Officers Interview - Profile of the Bahraini Manager, May, 1985 (Appendix A).
31. Collins, B. E., et al (1964) A Social Psychology of Group Processes for Decision Making, New York: Willey.
32. Composite Profile of Bahraini Managers Component I - Self Perception (Appendix B).
33. Composite Profile of Bahraini Managers - Component II (Refer to Appendix B).
34. Cool, K. O., and Lengnick-Hall, C. A. (1985) "Second thoughts on the transferability of Japanese management style," Organisation Studies, vol. 6, no 1.
35. Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, pamphlet.
36. De Nisi et al (1983) "Management in transition: A study of management style in Saudi Arabia." Academy of Management Meeting, Dallas.
37. Deutscher, I. (1976) "Toward avoiding the goal-trap in evaluation research." In C. C. Abt (ed) The Evaluation of Social Programmes. Beverly Hills: Sage.
38. Doktor, R. Kawase, T., and Haig, J. H. (1986) "Cultures as a constraint on productivity." International Studies of Management and Organisation, vol XV, no 3-4.
39. Downey, H. K., and Ireland, R. D. (1979) "Quantitative versus qualitative: Environmental assessment in organisational studies." Administrative Science Quarterly, 24.



40. Drucker, P. F.(1969) The Age of Discontinuity, New York: Harper and Row.
41. Drucker, P. F. (1980) Managing in Turbulent Times, London: Pan Books.
42. Dubin, R. (1962) Human Relations in Administration. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall.
43. Easterby-Smith, M. P. V. et al (1980) Auditing Management Development. Alershot: Gower Publishing Co. Ltd.
44. Easterby-Smith, M. P. V. (1986) Evaluation of Management Education, Training and Development. Aldershot: Gower Publishing Co. Ltd.
45. Easterby-Smith, M. P. V. (1980) "The evaluation of management education and development: An overview." Personnel Review, vol 10.
46. England, G. W. (1974) "Personal value systems and expected behaviour of managers: A comparative study in USA, Japan, Korea, Australia and India." Paper presented at the Eighteenth International Congress of Applied Psychology, July, Montreal, Canada.
47. England, G. W. (1978) "Managers and their value systems: A five country comparative study." Colombia Journal of World Business, Summer 13.
48. England, G. W., and Lee, R. (1974) "The relationship between managerial values and managerial success in the United States, Japan, India, and Australia." Journal of Applied Psychology, 56(4).
49. Farmer, R. N. and Richman, B. M. (1965) Comparative Management and Economic Progress. Homewood IL: Irwin.

50. Fiedler, F. E. (1967) A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness. New York: McGraw-Hill.
51. Fiedler, F. E. (1987) "The contingency model and the dynamics of the leadership process." In L. Berkenitz (ed) Advances in Experimental Social Psychology. vol 11, New York: Academic Press.
52. Filstead, W. J. (1970) Qualitative Methodology: Firsthand Involvement with the Social World. Chicago: Markham.
53. Fishbein, M., and Ajzen, I. (1975) Belief, Attitude, Intention and Behaviour. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
54. Fleishman, E. A. (1973) "Twenty years of consideration and structure." In E. A. Fleishman, and J. G. Hunt (eds) Current Developments in the Study of Leadership. Carbandak: Southern Illinois University Press.
55. Glaser, B. G., and Strauss, A. L. (1967) The Discovery Grounded Theory. Chicago: Allen and Unwin.
56. Goldstein, I. L. (1978) "The pursuit of validity in the evaluation of training programmes." Human Factors, vol 20, no 2.
57. Gowler, D. and Legge, K. (1979) "The evaluation of planned organisational change: The necessary act of the possible?" Journal of Enterprise Management. 1.
58. Guest, R., Hersey, P., and Blanchard, K. M. (1977) Organisational Change Through Effective Leadership. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
59. Gulf Polytechnic (1984) "Chief Executive Officers Corporate Culture," Proceedings of Seminar.

60. Gulf Polytechnic (1985) "Strategy for Continuing Management Education Programme in Bahrain." Proceedings of Seminar.
61. Gulf Polytechnic (1986) "The Bahraini Management in Transition." Proceedings of seminar.
62. Haire, M., Ghiselli, E. E., and Porter, L. W. (1966) Managerial Thinking: An International Study. New York: Wiley.
63. Hall, G. T. (1959) The Silent Language. Greenwich, CT: Fawatt.
64. Hall, G. T., and Whyte, W., (1960) "Intellectual communication: A guide to men of action," Human Organization, 19, no 1.
65. Hamblin, A. C. (1974) Evaluation and Control of Training. McGraw-Hill: Maidenhead.
66. Hamilton, D. (1976) Curriculum Evaluation. Shepton Mallett: Open Books.
67. Harbison, F. and Myers, C. (1959) Management in the Industrial World: An International Study. New York: McGraw-Hill.
68. Handy, C. B. (1974) "Pitfalls of management development." Personnel Management, vol 6.
69. HariDas, T. (1983) "Qualitative research in organisational behaviour," Journal of Management Studies, 20, 3.
70. Hatavany, N., and Pucik, V. (1981) "An integrated management system: Lessons from the Japanese experience," Academy of Management Review, 6.
71. Hellrizel, D., (1983) Organisational Behaviour. New York: Harper and Row.



72. Hesseling, P. (1966) Strategy of Evaluation Research in the Field of Supervisory and Management Training. Van Gorcum, Assem.
73. Hickman, C. R. and Silva, M. A. (1985) Creating Excellence. London: Allen and Unwin.
74. Hitti, P. K. (1971) Islam: A Way of Life. London: Oxford University Press.
75. Hofstede, G. (1979) "Value systems in forty countries: Interpretation, validation and consequences for theory." In L. H. Eckensberger, W. J. Lonner, and Y. H. Poortinga (eds) Cross Cultural Contribution to Psychology. Lisse, Neth: Swets and Zeitlinger.
76. Hofstede, G. (1980) "Motivation, leadership, and organisation: Do American theories apply abroad?" Organisational Dynamics, Summer.
77. Hofstede, G. (1984) Cultural Consequences: International Differences in Work Related Values. Beverly Hills: Sage.
78. Hourani, A. (1962) Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798 - 1939. London: Oxford University Press.
79. House, R. J. (1971) "A path goal theory of leader effectiveness," Administrative Science Quarterly, no 16.
80. House, R. J., and Mitchell, T. R. (1974) "Path goal theory of leadership," Journal of Contemporary Business 3.
81. Hunt, J. (1979) Managing People at Work. London: McGraw-Hill Book Co. (UK) Ltd.
82. Iwawaki, S., and Lynn, R. (1972) "Measuring achievement motivation in Japan and in Great

Britain." Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology,  
no 3.

83. Jafra, J. I. (1971) "Arab language and culture." In M. Adams, (ed) The Middle East: A Handboo. New York: Praeger.
84. Jardine, C. (1985) "Business schools learn their lesson." Management Today, December.
85. Kaynack, E. (1980) "Marketing in the Middle East and North Africa". Management Decision, vol 22, no 1.
86. Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1967) "Evaluation of training". In R. L. Craig and L. R. Bittel (eds) Training and Development Handbook. New York: McGraw-Hill.
87. Kormadt, H. J., et al (1980) "Cross-cultural Research on Motivation". In H. C. Triadis, and Lonner (eds) Handbook of Cross-cultural Psychology. vol 3, Basic Processes, Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
88. Kotter, J. P. (1982) The General Managers. New York, N.Y.: The Free Press.
89. Krus, D. J. and Rysberg, J. A. (1976) "Industrial Managers and n\ch:" Comparable and Compatible Journal of Cross-cultural research.
90. Laurent, A. C. (1978) "Matrix Organisations and Latin Culture." Working Paper 78-28. Brussels: European Institute for advanced Studies in Management.
91. Leavitt, H. J. (1983) "Management and management education in the west: What's right and what's wrong?" London Business School Journal, Summer.
92. Legge, C. (1984) Evaluating Planned

Organizational Change. London: Academic Press Inc.

93. Levinson, H. (1970) "Management by whose objectives," Harvard Business Review, vol 48, no 4.
94. Likert, R. (1961) "An emerging theory of organisations, leadership and management." In L. Petmillo, and B. M. Bass (eds) Leadership and Interpersonal Behaviour. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
95. Likert, R. (1967) The Human Side of the Enterprise. New York: McGraw-Hill.
96. Likert, R. and Likert J. (1979) New Ways of Managing Conflict, New York: McGraw-hill.
97. Livingstone, J. S. (1971) "Myth of the well-educated manager." Harvard Business Review, 49, Jan-Feb.
98. Logun, G. M. (1984) "Loyalty and sense of purpose," California Management Review," vol XXVII, no 1, Fall.
99. Lundberg, C. C. (1976) "Hypothesis creation in organisational behaviour research," Academy of Management Review, no 1.
100. Machin, J., Stewart, R., and Hales, C. (eds) (1981) Toward Managerial Effectiveness, Applied Research Perspectives on the Managerial Task. Farnborough, Hants: Gower.
101. Maehr, M. L. (1977) "Socio-cultural origins of achievement motivation," International Journal of Inter-cultural Relations, no 1.
102. Mandt, E. J. (1982) "The failure of business education and what to do about it," Management Review, Aug., vol 71, no 8.



103. Manpower Services Commission, Glossary of Training Terms, HMSO, London, 1980.
104. Marquis, D. G. (1962) "Industrial responsibility and group decisions involving risk." Industrial Management Review, no 3.
105. Marshland, S., and Beer, M. (1983) "The evolution of Japanese management: Lessons for U.S. managers." Organisational Dynamics, Winter.
106. Maslow, A. H. (1954) Motivation and Personality. New York: Harper and Row.
107. Mayes, B. T., and Allen, R. W. (1977) "Toward a definition of organisational politics", Academy of Management Review, no 2.
108. McClelland, D. C. (1961) The Achieving Society. Princeton: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
109. McGregor, D. (1960) The Human Side of Enterprise. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.
110. McGuire, J. W. (1982) "Management theory: Retreat to the academy," Business Horizons, July-Aug.
111. Miller, S. W., and Simonetti, J. L. (1971) "Culture and management: Some conceptual considerations," Management International Review, vol II: 6.
112. Mintzberg, H. (1973) The Nature of Managerial Work. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
113. Mintzberg, H. (1975) "The Manager's Job: Foklore and fact," Harvard Business Review, July-August.
114. Mintzberg, H. (1978) "Patterns in strategy

formulation," Management Science, no 24.

115. Mintzberg, H. (1979) "An emerging strategy of direct research," Administrative Science Quarterly, no 24.
116. Moran, R. T. and Harris, P. R. (1982) Managing Cultural Synergy. Houston: Gulf Pub. Co.
117. Morris, J. (1975) "Developing resourceful manager." In B. Taylor and G. L. Lippitt (eds) Management Development and Training Handbook. McGraw-Hill Book: UK.
118. Morris, J. (1980) "Joint development activities: From practice to theory." In J. Beck, and C. Cox (eds) Advances in Management Education. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons.
119. Morris, J., and Burgoyne, J. C. (1973) Developing Resourceful Managers. London: Institute of Personnel Management.
120. Mouton, J. and Blake, R. (1970) "Issues of transnational organization development." In B.M. Bass, R. Cooper, and A. H. Hass (eds) Managing for Accomplishment. Boston: Heath.
121. Mumford, A. (1986) "Learning to learn for managers," Journal of European Industrial Training, vol 10, no 10.
122. Murrell, K. (1981) "Understanding the Egyptian manager: A third-world management development experience." Leadership and Organisational Development Journal, vol 2, no 3.
123. Naisbitt, J. (1982) Megatrends: Ten New Directions Transforming our lives. London: Macdonald and Co.
124. Najjar, G. K. (1986) "The Bahraini management profession in transition: problems and

prospects." Gulf Polytechnic Seminar on: The Bahrain Management Profession in Transition.  
Paper presented, May.

125. Negandhi, A. R. (1983) "Cross-cultural management research: Trends and future directions." Journal of International Business Studies, 14: 2.
126. Negandhi, A. R., and Parasad, S. B. (1971) Comparative Management. New York: Appleton - Century - Crofts.
127. Newman, W. H. (1970) "Is management exportable?" Colombia Journal of World Business, Jan-Feb.
128. Nord, W. R. (1976) "Culture and organisational behaviour: Concepts and controversy." In W. R. Nord (ed) Organisational Behaviour, Santa Monica: Goodyear.
129. Osbalderton, M., and Warner, A. (1985) "In search of excellence in business schools," Personnel Management, March, vol 17, no 3.
130. Ouchi, W. (1981) Theory Z: How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
131. Owens, J. (1981) "A reappraisal of leadership theory and training." Personnel Administration, no 1.
132. Parlett, M. and Dearden, G. (1981) "Introduction to Illuminative Evaluation," Society for Research into High Education, Guilford.
133. Parlett, M. and Hamilton, D. (1972) "Evaluation as illumination: A new approach to the study of innovatory programmes." Occasional Paper 9. Centre for Research in Educational Sciences, University of Edinburgh.



134. Pascale, R., and Athos, A. (1981) The Art of Japanese Management: Applications for American Executive. New York: Simon and Schuster.
135. Patton, M. Q. (1980) Qualitative Evaluation Methods. Beverly Hills: Sage Publication.
136. Pedler, M., Burgoyne, J., and Boydell, T. (1978) A Manager's Guide to Self-Development. Maidenhead, Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Book Co. (UK) Ltd.
137. Pedler, M., et al (1984) "Self development groups for managers," Manpower Services Commission.
138. Peters, T. J., and Waterman, R. H. (1982) In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies. New York: Harper and Row.
139. Pettigrew, A. M. (1973) The Politics of Organisational Decision Making. London: Tavistock.
140. Pettigrew, A.M., and Bumstead, D. C. (1980) "Strategies of organisation development in different contexts." In P.A. Clark, J. Guist, and H. Thirr', (eds) Organisational Change and Development in Europe. London: Wiley.
141. Piaget, J. (1970) The Moral Judgement of the Child. M. Gagain, trans, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
142. Porter, L. W. and Lawler, E. E. (1978) Managerial Attitudes and Performance. Homewood, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin.
143. Prothro, T. E., and Diab, L. N. (1974) Changing Family Patterns in the Arab East. American University of Beirut, Beirut.
144. Rackham, N. (1973) "Recent thoughts on

evaluation." Industrial and Commercial Training, vol 5 no 10.

145. Redding, S. G. (1977) "Some perceptions of psychological needs among managers in South East Asia." In Y. H. Poortinga (ed) Basic Problems in Cross-cultural Psychology. Amsterdam: Swets and Zeitlinger.
146. Redding, S. G. (1980) "Management education for orientals." In R. Garratt, and J. Stopford, (eds): Breaking Down Barriers: Practice and Priorities for International Management Education, London: Gower.
147. Redding, S. G., and Martyn-Johns, T. D. (1979) "Paradigm differences and their relation to management, with reference to South-East Asia." In G. W. England, A. R. Negandhi and B. Wilpert (eds) Organisational Functioning in a Cross-cultural Perspective, Kent, OH: Kent State University Press.
148. Ronen, S. (1981) Flexible Working Hours: An Innovation in the Quality of Work Life, New York: McGraw-Hill.
149. Ronen, S. (1986) Comparative and Multinational Management, New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
150. Rosen, D. M. (1984) "Leadership systems in world cultures." In B. Kellerman, Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives. Englewood Cliff, New Jersey; Prentice-Hall Inc.
151. Ruddock, R. (1981) Evaluation: A Consideration of Principles and Methods. Manchester: Monographs 18.
152. Sayles, L. R. (1964) Managerial Behaviour. New York: McGraw-Hill.
153. Schaeffer, W. G. (1985) "The formation of managers for developing countries: The need for

a research agenda," International Review of Administrative Sciences, vol L 1, no 3.

154. Schein, E. (1981) "Does Japanese management style have a message for American managers?" Sloan Management Review, Fall.
155. Schon, D. A. (1983) The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action. London: Temple Smith Ltd.
156. Scott, W. and Hart, D. (1971) "The moral nature of man in organizations: A comparative analysis" Academy of Management Journal 14, June.
157. Scriven, M. (1972) "Pros and cons about goal-free evaluation," Evaluation Comment, vol 3, no 4.
158. Seddan, J. V. (1985) "Issues in practice: the education and development of overseas managers." Management Education and Development, vol 16, part 1.
159. Shaker, F. A. (1972) "Modernization of the Developing Nations: The Case Study of Saudi Arabia," Ph.D. thesis, Purdue University.
160. Skinner, B. F. (1953) Science and Human Behaviour, New York: Free Press.
161. Stake, R. (1977) "Formative and summative evaluation." In D. Hamilton, D. Jenkins, C. King, B. Macdonald and H. M. Parlett (eds) Beyond the Numbers Game. London: Macmillan.
162. Stewart A., and Stewart, V. (1981) Tomorrow's Managers Today. London: Institute of Personnel Management.
163. Stewart, R. (1966) "Management education and our knowledge of managers' job". International Social Science Journal, XX, 1.



164. Stewart, R. (1967) Managers and Their Jobs. London: Macmillan.
165. Stewart, R. (1976a) Contrasts in Management: A Study of Different Types of Manager's jobs; Their Demands and Choices. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.
166. Stewart, R. (1976b) "To understand the manager's job: Consider demands, constraints, choices." Organisational Dynamics, Spring.
167. Stewart, R. (1984a) Choices for the Manager: A Guide to Managerial Work and Behaviour, Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill.
168. Stewart, R. (1984b) "The nature of management: A problem for management education," Journal of Management Studies, 21, 3.
169. Stewart, R., Smith P., Blake, J., and Wingate, P. (1980). The District Administrator in the National Health Service, King Edwards' Hospital Fund for London: Pitman.
170. Tajfel, M., et al (1970) "The development of children's reference for their own country: A cross-national study." International Journal of Psychology, (J C4).
171. Takeuchi, H. (1981) "Productivity: Learning from the Japanese." California Management Review, Summer 4.
172. Tannenbraum, A. S. (1980) "Organisational Psychology." In H. C. Triandis, and R. W. Brislin, (eds) Handbook of Cross-cultural Psychology - Social Psychology, vol 5, Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
173. Tracey, W. R. (1968) Evaluating Training and Development Systems. American Management Association Inc.

174. Van Maanen, J., and Schein, E. (1979) "Towards a theory of organisational socialisation." In B. Staw (ed) Research in Organisational Behaviour. Greenwich: JAI Press.
175. Vogel, E. (1979) Japan as Number One: Lessons for America. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
176. Vroom, V. H. (1964) Work and Motivation. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
177. Vroom, V. H. (1976) "Leadership". In M. D. Dunnette (ed) Handbook of Industrial and Organisational Psychology, Chicago: Rand McNally.
178. Vroom, V. H., and Yetton, P. W. (1973) Leadership and Decision Making. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
179. Warr, P. B., Bird, M. W., and Rackham, N. (1970) Evaluation of Management Training. Aldershot: Gower.
180. Weber, M. (1968) Economy and Society. Translated by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Vol 3. New York: Bedminster Press.
181. Whiteley, R., Thomas, A., and Marceau, J. (1981) Master of Business, Business Schools and Business Graduates in Britain and France. London: Tavistock.
182. Whitely, W. A. (1979) "Across national test of England's model of managers value systems, and their relationship to behaviour". In G. W. England, A. R. Negandhi, and B. Wilpert (eds). Organisational Functioning in Cross Cultural Perspective, Kent, O. H: Kent State University Press.
183. Whitely, W., and England, G. (1980) "Variability and common dimensions of managerial values due

to value orientation and country  
differences." Personnel Psychology, vol 33.

184. Wolin, S. (1960) Politics and Vision. Boston:  
Little Brown & Co.

185. Wright, G. N., et al (1977) "Cultural  
Differences in Probabilistic Thinking: An  
Extension into South East Asia." Technical  
Report 77-1, Decision Analysis Unit, Brunel  
University.

186. Yucet, V. (1984) "Management styles in the  
Middle East: A case example," Management  
Decision, vol 22, no 5.