

Is Training What *Made* and *Nurtured* Transformational Leaders?

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Abstract

This quantitative and cross-sectional study examines the relationship between training and acquiring transformational leadership skills to discuss the assumption that transformational leadership skills can be acquired through training and that leadership is not a trait, personality, or character. James Kouzes and Barry Posner introduced a transformational leadership model named the Exemplary Leader. The authors claimed that leadership is not a trait, but a function and a skill available for everyone to acquire, and those who are willing to put the effort to apply and master the five practices of an exemplary leader can become great leaders and make extraordinary things happen in their organizations. For this study, a sample of 249 middle managers working in insurance companies in the UAE completed the LPI questionnaire and responded to questions regarding training history, training functions within their organizations, and their knowledge of transformational leadership. The study's mean values indicated that participants exhibited high leadership practice levels. Further, Pearson's correlation was deployed to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between training, knowledge of transformational leadership models, and exhibiting the five practices of an exemplary leader. Results revealed a weak positive correlation. In addition, an independent sample *t*-test was conducted to examine any difference between groups in relation to training functions within the participants' organizations; the results showed no significant difference. This concludes that no relationship existed between training and exhibiting transformational leadership, unlike Kouzes and Posner's assumption that leadership practices are not innate characteristics, but can be acquired by training.

Keywords

Transformational, Leadership, Training, Knowledge, Born, Made

1. Introduction

The UAE was formed in December of 1971 by the unity of seven neighboring states. It was the visionary and charismatic leadership that made this young country great. Within only five decades, the UAE built the world's highest building, sent a space mission to Mars, hosted Expo 2020, and constructed the Museum of the Future, which is considered today the world's most beautiful building. Further, the UAE is a major geopolitical player in the region and the world (Joshua, 2023).

1.1. Leadership

Research revealed three schools of thought attempting to explain why leaders are what and who they are:

The first is the “Born that Way”, initially articulated by Carlyle (1869), who constructed the “Great Man” theory and argued that these “Heroes” are the actual contributors to all significant historical events. He further elucidated that these unique and highly influential people are so due to their exceptional and natural traits and personalities; they are highly intelligent and possess superior heroic courage, divine inspiration, and decision-making abilities that have changed history. Although this approach to leadership is highly challenged today, there are still voices referring to the uniqueness of leaders; they even go further by defining the gene (rs4950 genetic marker) responsible for leadership traits (De Neve, Mikhaylov, Dawes, Christakis, & Fowler, 2013). Similarly, Wendong (2009) suggested that a study revealed that the DAT1 gene (a dopamine transporter) is related to leadership role occupancy. Therefore, lab researchers are re-exploring the 160-year-old assumption to find a relationship between DNA and leadership characteristics.

The second school talked about the environment where the leader was raised. Going back to the end of the nineteenth century, Spencer (1873) contended that the formation of leaders (Great Men) depended greatly on a long and complex series of incidents and situations that impacted and created the social environment where these leaders slowly grew and developed. He believed there is no scientific basis for accrediting significant historical events to a single individual's decision and sole contribution. Similarly, Liu et al. (2021) saw that leadership is developed from early childhood throughout adulthood, and even after retirement, leadership skills progress during the leader's lifespan. Further, other scholars argue that the origins of the ability and motivation to be a leader could be traced back to childhood experiences that developed or contributed to creating what could have been the foundation of leadership ability and inspiration (Popper & Mayseless, 2013).

The third school is the contemporary leadership model, mainly transformational leadership, which affirms that leadership is not a trait and that leaders are not born with innate characteristics that make them great leaders. On the contrary, leadership is a skill that can be learned, practiced, and mastered. Further,

those who work hard to acquire leadership skills can become exemplary leaders, transform their followers, and achieve extraordinary results for their organizations (Bass, 1985; Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

Piaw and Ting (2014) rejected the two main categories of leaders. Their findings depicted that life events, experience, and age play a role in shaping the leadership personality of a leader. The authors concluded that the age group 31 to 35 demonstrated high creative thinking while those aged 51 to 55 had a high critical thinking ability; accordingly, leaders tend to be more critical thinkers as they grow older. Furthermore, the group debating that leaders are born argues that certain innate traits are needed to develop into outstanding leaders when life experiences and circumstances present themselves. The group debating that leaders are made argues that training, hard work, and experiences result in the development of outstanding leaders. The answer is likely not just one viewpoint or the other, but a combination of both. Boerma, Coyle, Dietrich, Dintzner, Drayton, Early, and Williams (2017) concluded that the notion that leaders are born explains that certain inherent qualities are essential for individuals to evolve into exceptional leaders when faced with life experiences and circumstances. On the other hand, the group arguing that leaders are made contends that exceptional leadership can be cultivated through training, dedicated effort, and exposure to various experiences. The most plausible stance is not an exclusive endorsement of either perspective, but rather a synthesis of both ideas.

1.2. Transformational Leadership Model

Leadership is a highly studied topic that needs to be understood (Burns, 1978). For decades, scholars and practitioners have worked towards a universal definition of the word “Leadership”, but the mission was difficult and complex (Nort-house, 2018). However, the literature showed an evolution in how studies reformed from assuming that leaders are simply a different breed (Carlyle, 1869) to an assertion that leaders’ DNAs are not different and anyone with determination and willingness to learn can practice, acquire, and master leadership skills and become a great leader and lead his/her organization to an extraordinary success (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). The late nineteenth-century writings saw leaders as Great Men and Heroes who were the reason for countless historical events; Carlyle (1869) argued that these heroes are different and possess unique and special qualities that make them what they are. Also, during the twentieth century, the concept did not decay; the Trait Theory referred to the innate traits of a leader, but explained that such characteristics alone are not sufficient to make great leaders, but how they apply them in different situations. This theory also listed these traits: Intelligence, Self-confidence, Integrity, Determination, and Sociability (Stogdill, 1950). In essence, the Trait Theory assumes that such leaders possess such qualities.

While exploring the Skill Theory, Katz (1955) shifted the focus from leaders’ traits to skills and competencies that leaders can acquire and apply: the three es-

essential skills that could be practiced and mastered are Technical, Human, and Conceptual skills. However, when more leadership theories and models were explored, one can define around fourteen major leadership models between the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries (Northouse, 2018). Looking carefully at each of these theories, a paradox appears, making it challenging to eliminate the assumption that great leaders are different from others. Furthermore, it is also problematic to assume that leaders are what they are only because they were trained to become exceptional leaders.

Transformational leadership theorists argue that leaders are not born this way and do not have unique and innate characteristics or a different DNA; their brain scans are like everyone else's (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Nonetheless, new leadership theories attempt to look at leadership from a trait angle. For example, the Authentic and Servant leadership theories are based on possessed traits, not skills one could develop. As per Greenleaf (1977), servant leaders put the interest of their followers before their own; they are trustworthy, supportive, helpful, and active listeners. Additionally, scholars explored the Authentic Leadership approach; they did not eliminate that those leaders may have innate and genuine characteristics but argued that it can still be learned. They also elucidated that leadership behaviors can develop over a lifetime and could be triggered by a significant event in life, such as a crisis or a critical illness (Shamir & Eilam, 2005; Eagly, 2005; Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Similarly, charismatic leaders also may evolve during crises and challenging situations (Conger & Kanungo, 1987). Further, Eatwell (2006) explained that Adolf Hitler was a charismatic leader with extraordinary self-confidence that he could inspire confidence in others. Additionally, Bass and Riggio (2006) saw that Hitler was a charismatic transformational leader but in a destructive way and named this style pseudotransformational.

1.3. Research Question and Objective

Kouzes and Posner's (2017) transformational leadership model defined the five practices of the exemplary leader: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. Further, they affirmed that leadership is not a trait, but a skill anyone can learn and master. However, they failed to explain how many leaders who already possess the five practices already acquired them! If these skills are acquirable and learnable, does it mean some leaders already had them, and scientific research discovered and analyzed them to be taught in leadership development programs? Also, many argue that training and leadership development programs are the sources of learning leadership skills, but for those who did not participate in leadership training, where and how did they gain leadership skills?

This study examines relationships between training activities, training functions, leadership knowledge, and the level of leadership skills exhibited. The study objective is not to measure the effect of leadership development programs

on the level of leadership behaviors, but to explore if previous or ongoing training programs may have caused participants to exhibit leadership practices. The study participants are middle managers working in insurance companies in the UAE. Thus, the research objective is:

RO: To examine the relationship between training and transformational leadership practices of middle managers working in insurance companies in the UAE.

Accordingly, the research question is:

RQ: Is there a relationship between training and exhibiting transformational leadership practices of middle managers in insurance companies in the UAE?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Transformational Leadership Models

Northouse (2018) listed four main models of Transformational Leadership: Burns (1978), Bass (1985), Bennis and Nanus (2007), and Kouzes and Posner (2006). Burns (1978), a political scientist, was the first to introduce a contemporary leadership style while writing about political leadership. However, new terms such as transactional and transformational were first cited in his writings. For Burns (1978), transactional leadership is a relationship between leaders and followers based on the exchange of economic or political benefits; no relationship per se is established, and no any level of motivation is built. On the other hand, transformational is moral leadership that blends purpose and vision between leaders and constituents; this is achieved when people engage with one another so that leaders and followers elevate each other to new heights in motivation and morality (Burns, 1978). Similarly, Bass (1985) is regarded as one of the best and most influential writers in the leadership domain (Chammas & Hernandez, 2019). His contribution to the field of leadership is noticeable. It is hard to find literature on transformational leadership that does not refer to the works of Bass. Further, Bass and Avolio (1990) introduced transformational leadership in conjunction with transactional leadership and laissez-faire styles. Bass (1990) further explained that the three leadership styles, laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational, are, in fact, a single continuum spectrum rather than independent and distinctive styles. Additionally, Bass (1990) presented the four leadership dimensions: Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration; these four factors are commonly known as the “4 I’s” (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bass & Riggio, 2006).

2.2. The James Kouzes and Barry Posner’s Model

Kouzes and Posner (2017) articulated the five practices of an exemplary transformational leader: Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. They affirmed that these outstanding leadership practices are not innate characteristics or a trait. They further clarified that leadership is not an inherent or exclusive quality possessed by a few individuals; it is not predetermined or genetic. There is no concrete proof

that only some people are born with leadership abilities while others are destined to lack them. They also argue that Leadership is a learnable skill, but not everyone is interested in acquiring it, and not all who learn it become proficient. This is because achieving excellence demands self-belief, a desire to excel, consistent self-challenge, seeking support from others, and deliberate practice. The most effective leaders understand that continuous improvement is possible and are open to learning for further enhancement. In a nutshell, leadership is not a trait, and leaders do not have a different DNA or a unique gene that makes them great leaders.

The five practices of an exemplary leader are:

1) *Model the Way (MTW)*: Leaders must model the behavior they expect others to exhibit and have clarity about their guiding principles. These leaders establish beliefs and work/life principles regarding how people working with them should be treated while focusing on achieving personal and organizational goals. They create and demonstrate such standards of excellence for others to adopt.

2) *Inspire a Shared Vision (ISV)*: Leaders can make a difference from sheer conviction. They imagine what the future will look like and create a perfect and unique vision of what their organizations could develop into. They make future possibilities and potential look natural and make others see exciting things that will happen. They are active listeners to the goals and dreams of others; by incorporating them, people can enlist in a shared dream about the future.

3) *Challenge the Process (CTP)*: Leaders aspire to improve the status quo by searching for opportunities to grow and innovate, many outside their customary boundaries. They experiment, take risks, and gain momentum by achieving small wins. They look upon setbacks as learning opportunities for both them and their constituents.

4) *Enable Others to Act (EOA)*: Leaders foster collaboration, build trust, and create dynamic teams. They actively involve others and understand that mutual respect sustains extraordinary efforts; they strive to create an atmosphere of trust and human dignity. They strengthen others, making each person feel capable and powerful.

5) *Encourage the Heart (ETH)*: Leaders make people feel like winners. They keep hope and determination alive by appreciating the contributions that individuals make. They recognize that everyone's contributions are valued, creating a sense of community by celebrating the team's victories. They establish high expectations and standards, holding people accountable by ensuring that rewards and performance are linked.

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)

Kouzes and Posner (2017) devised the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) questionnaire as a data collection instrument. There are six behavioral statements for each of the five leadership practices, totaling 30 statements. This tool utilizes a 10-point unidirectional frequency Likert. Participating leaders complete the

LPI-*Self*, while others who directly work with them (the leaders under study) can complete the LPI-*Observer*. The instrument is the same: the LPI-*Self* is for self-assessment, and the LPI-*Observer* is for followers, peers, or managers of the Leader under assessment. Further, the 10-point Likert defined by the authors is as follows:

- 1) Almost Never: In less than 10% of the chances when I could have.
- 2) Rarely: In 10% of the chances when I could have.
- 3) Seldom: In 20% of the chances when I could have.
- 4) Once in a While: In 30% of the chances when I could have.
- 5) Occasionally: In 40% of the chances when I could have.
- 6) Sometimes: In 50% of the chances when I could have.
- 7) Fairly Often: In 60% of the chances when I could have.
- 8) Usually: In 70% of the chances when I could have.
- 9) Very Frequently: In 80% of the chances when I could have.
- 10) Almost Always: In more than 90% of the chances when I could have.

In a detailed statistical analysis, Posner (2016) presented the total scores of the six behavioral statements for each leadership practice for a sample size of 446,780 managers (leaders) who completed LPI-*Self*, results in **Table 1**.

The total scores can be scaled into mean values by dividing the total score of each factor by 6. This results in mean values with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 10. The outcome is shown in **Table 2**.

Referring to the 10-point Likert LPI, although there is no neutral mid-point compared to 5 or 7-point Likert, the middle point can be considered 5.50, representing an average leadership skill (Edwards & Aboagye, 2015). Therefore,

Table 1. Means and standard deviations for the LPI-*Self*.

N = 446,780	Leadership Practices				
	Model the Way (MTW)	Inspire Shared Vision (ISV)	Challenge the Process (CTP)	Enables Others to Act (EOA)	Encourage the Heart (ETH)
Means	46.14	42.72	44.00	49.50	45.25
Standard Deviation	8.11	10.29	8.89	7.12	9.69

Source: Posner (2016: p. 6).

Table 2. Mean values of Posner's (2016) total score of the five practices.

N = 446,780	Leadership Practices				
	Model the Way (MTW)	Inspire Shared Vision (ISV)	Challenge the Process (CTP)	Enables Others to Act (EOA)	Encourage the Heart (ETH)
Means	7.69	7.12	7.33	8.25	7.54
Standard Deviation	1.35	1.72	1.48	1.19	1.62

Source: Posner (2016) and recalculated by the author.

looking at **Table 2**, it is apparent that participants ($N = 446,780$) are above-average exemplary leaders with mean values of the five practices MTW, ISV, CTV, EOA, and ETH $M = 7.69$, $M = 7.12$, $M = 7.33$, $M = 8.25$, and $M = 7.54$ respectively. Also, when looking at the 10-point Likert, we notice that the mean values for the dimensions MTW, ISV, CTV, and ETH fall between “7—Fairly Often” and “8—Usually”. While for EOA, the mean value falls between “8—Usually” and “9—Very Frequently”. Therefore, the 446,780 participating managers exhibited the five dimensions of an exemplary leader. Similarly, [Senekal and Lenz \(2020\)](#) segregated their participants who scored 9 and 10 on the scale of the five practices and considered them highly exemplary Leaders. Accordingly, as per [Posner \(2016\)](#), the participants scored 7 and 9, making them exemplary leaders. Based on the above, the 446,780 participating leaders in the study of [Posner \(2016\)](#) showed that they exhibited the five practices of a transformational leader; the question is how did they acquire these skills? The research does not comment on this area. Therefore, [Kouzes and Posner \(2017\)](#) claim that leadership is an acquirable skill through training and practice, which is not substantiated or supported in their research.

2.3. Critiques of the Transformational Leadership Model

According to [Bryman \(1992\)](#), transformational leadership focuses more on leaders' traits than their behavior, and the claim that people can acquire Transformational Leadership may not be accurate. Similarly, [Bailey and Axelrod \(2001\)](#) argued that comprehending how transformational leader affects their followers is still a central problem in management studies. They highlighted that scholar failed in proving, without doubt, that transformational leader does “transform” followers. Further, there is no solid evidence that transformational leadership results in positive organizational outcomes such as organizational effectiveness and transforming followers. Furthermore, [Siangchokyoo et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Anderson \(2017\)](#) are apprehensive regarding the development of transformational leadership theory and the absence of empirical evidence for underlying assumptions that such leaders transform their followers; however, research showed that some level of change in rectifying poor performance of employees when transformational leadership is practiced ([Alexander Arthur & Hardy, 2014](#)). Therefore, [Hutchinson and Jackson \(2013\)](#) called for a review of the substantive evidence for transformational leadership effectiveness, as many dimensions of leadership still need to be explored and should be investigated. Despite its popularity, many voices call to revisit the theory and its construct ([Tourish, 2014](#)). Moreover, [Mhatre and Riggio \(2014\)](#) explained that to understand better the transforming effect, the research must comprehend the objective reality, which will lead to comprehending what constitutes effective leadership and the psychosocial processes that supplement it. Likewise, [Siangchokyoo et al. \(2020\)](#) highlighted that leaders cannot be called transformational unless there is an actual transformation, positive or negative.

2.4. Training

Scholars confirmed that a twelve-month leadership-focused program significantly increased the trainees' transformational and contingent-reward behaviors as leaders (Brown & May, 2012). Moreover, amplified productivity and improved job satisfaction are evidence of the effectiveness of development programs in adjusting the behaviors of the trainees-leaders. Similarly, a four-week training course on Transactional and Transformational leadership showed a noticeable improvement in the participants' leadership skills (Saravo et al., 2017; Anderson, 2017). However, the development program will not be effective unless trainees possess a strong will and determination to learn and apply the new skills (Gilbert et al., 2016). Further, studies showed that only 10% of leadership skills are developed through training (Liu et al., 2021). Similarly, specialists argue that out of one hundred participants in leadership development programs, 15% will benefit from the training course, 15% will not even attempt to apply what they learned, and 70% will give up trying (Walker, 2006). Likewise, Baxter, Grove, and Pitney (2020) studied the effectiveness of leadership training conducted to develop authentic and transformational leadership skills of mid-level law enforcement managers; their results showed that there had been no statistically significant difference in leadership skills after completing the program. Furthermore, Beer et al. (2016) wonder why organizations spend billions of dollars on leadership development programs when such investment is not yielding the desired outcome. However, to increase the effectiveness and feasibility of investing in a Leadership Development Program, Beer et al. (2016) recommend that top management must understand barriers to effectiveness and performance and that all departments and teams need similar skills development.

On the contrary, Bryant (2017) concluded that a two-year development and training program for teachers has significantly enhanced their leadership skills and behaviors. The research objective was to measure the difference in behaviors in pre- and post-two-year leadership development programs (applying paired sample *t*-test); the study's theoretical foundation was the Exemplary Transformational Leadership Model of Kouzes and Posner (2017). The dependent variables were the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, while the independent variable was the two-year development program. The authors utilize the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) as their data collection instrument. Equally, Hasson, von Thiele Schwarz, Holmstrom, Karanika-Murray, and Tafvelin (2016) conducted a pre-post study of the effectiveness of Leadership development programs. They confirmed that such programs positively impacted the perception of leadership skills. Similarly, a four-week training course on Transactional and Transformational leadership for nurses revealed that although the training program was comparatively short, it improved the participants' leadership practices (Saravo et al., 2017). Likewise, Anderson (2017) observes that Leadership training programs enhance the skills of leaders. However, training alone does not significantly change the leader's behavior unless the trainees are seriously deter-

mined to learn and apply the newly acquired skills (Gilbert et al., 2016). As well, Lamm, Sapp, and Lamm (2016) wondered if leadership development programs changed participants' degree of transformational leadership; results indicated an increase of 7% in the Leadership level of trainees' skills compared to previous research that indicators showed lower levels of leadership behavior enhancement of 1-2%. Furthermore, the researchers notice encouraging results when emerging leaders undergo leadership training.

On the other hand, Beer et al. (2016) argued that such change in behavior fades out with time, and costly development programs will not be as effective as when the participant completes the program. However, Pepper and Giles (2015) advised that middle managers need extra support from their direct managers. Furthermore, they must be offered tailored training programs to prepare them to become future organizations' leaders. Likewise, skills and behavioral changes gained after completing a Leadership Development program benefit the trainees and their subordinates. By implementing the new skills learned, the leaders will not only positively affect their performance, but their subordinates will also learn new leadership skills while observing the leader's behavior change (Tafvelin, Hasson, Holmström, & von Thiele Schwarz, 2019). On the contrary, Walker (2006) argued that only 15% of those who attended leadership training learn, apply, and experience a permanent behavioral change. However, Lacerenza, Reyes, Marlow, Joseph, and Salas (2017) explained that the duration of the training program, its contents, intended outcomes, and attendance policy influence the effectiveness of such training courses. Also, a properly well-studied and well-designed training program delivers better results.

As per Fischer (2017), leadership training should be offered to managers or team leaders at all levels. Also, participants in the training program should learn how to self-assess their leadership skills pre-and-post training and set up a leadership development program for themselves. However, studies reveal that billions of dollars are spent on leadership development programs, and such investments may yield different results than the desired results (Beer et al., 2016). Besides, many hurdles prevent trainee managers from applying what they learned during training. They further argued that these programs do not result in any significant betterment in organizational performance. Furthermore, they wondered why organizations continue to invest heavily in similar programs. However, some organizations witnessed a change in leadership practices by those who completed leadership training; the authors saw that the reason could be that the trainees' direct managers participated and believed in the program. They further explained that training programs alone do not cause a change in behavior as many other factors, such as the organization system and roles and responsibilities, may hinder this change.

2.5. Gap in Literature

The researcher could not trace much relevant literature on the leadership of middle managers working in insurance companies in the UAE or literature that

examines their leadership practices. Also, the researcher could not cite research rethinking the assumptions of [Kouzes and Posner \(2017\)](#) that leadership is not a trait but a function and a skill available for anyone to learn, practice, and master. Further, [Posner \(2016\)](#) collected over 440 thousand completed LPI-Self questionnaires; results showed that participants had exhibited the five practices of an exemplary leader. However, he did not make it evident that respondents had undergone leadership development programs to acquire these skills. Also, [Posner \(2016\)](#) could not eliminate the possibility that leadership skills were a trait. Therefore, a gap in the literature has surfaced, necessitating research on the relationship between training and leadership behavior.

2.6. Summary

Leadership theories in the nineteenth century, such as the Great Man theory, focus on the notion that leaders are born leaders; they possess unique qualities that make them heroes and that all major historical events can be attributed to these unique individuals. Also, during the early twentieth century, Trait Theory suggested that certain inborn qualities and characteristics make certain people great leaders. On the other hand, Transformational Leadership assumes that Leadership is a function and a skill that can be learned, mastered, and applied. The developers of this leadership model argue that leaders are no different and do not possess any innate characteristics or have a different DNA. However, in their studies ([Posner, 2016](#); [Kouzes & Posner, 2017](#)), the significantly large sample demonstrated that participants exhibited the five practices of a transformational exemplary leader. However, no evidence has been provided on how respondents acquired these skills. Furthermore, literature on the effectiveness of leadership development programs did explain that around 15% of participants showed a significant improvement in their leadership. However, others are still skeptical about the ability of leadership training programs to change the trainees' behavior and make them much better leaders. To conclude, the two schools of thought have always debated whether great leaders are born that way or were trained, developed, and nurtured to become great leaders. This paper asks the question of whether training is the reason why leaders become transformational.

3. Methodology

Although many pieces of literature on leadership apply a longitudinal research design, this research applies a cross-sectional design to ask participants about their engagement in training activities in general and leadership in particular to examine any relationship between training and leadership behaviors. Also, this quantitative research method will utilize a survey questionnaire for data collection.

3.1. Variables and Research Hypotheses

This paper will organize variables into four groups. The objective is to look for

relationships between training activities, training functions, and knowledge of transformational leadership that could affect or relate to the leadership behavior of the participants. The variables and their coding are listed in **Table 3**.

Further, the variables are organized into three different sets to examine the relationships among different variables and to test the research-related hypotheses:

Set 1: The independent variables are Training Activities, Training Function, and Leadership Knowledge, while the dependent variables are the five practices of the exemplary leader. The research hypotheses are listed in **Table 4** and demonstrated in the conceptual diagram in **Figure 1**.

Set 2: Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation, Employer Offering Leadership Training, and Employers Enrolling Participants in Leadership Development Programs are the dependent variables, while Knowledge of Transformational Leadership is the independent variable. The hypotheses and conceptual diagram are in **Table 5** and **Figure 2**.

Table 3. List of the research variables, grouping, and coding.

Group	Variable	Description
Training Activities	TRN1	Employers offering training by external trainers
	TRN2	Employers offering training by internal trainers
	TRN3	Employer Offering Leadership Training
	TRN4	Participants Attend Leadership Training
	TRN5	Employers Enrolling Participants in Leadership Development Programs
Training Function within the Organization	TD	Employers having a Training Department
	FT	Employers having Full-Time Trainers
	TC	Employers having Training Coordinators
Knowledge of Transformational Leadership	KOTL	Knowledge of Transformational Leadership
	YOTL	Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation
Leadership Practices of the Exemplary Transformational Leader	MTW	Model the Way
	ISV	Inspire Shared Vision
	CTP	Challenge the Process
	EOA	Enable Others to Act
	ETH	Encourage the Heart
	TLL	Total Leadership: The sum of MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, and ETH

Source: The author.

Table 4. Null hypotheses (Set 1).

Null Hypotheses	Variables
<i>H₀1</i> : Participants do not exhibit the five practices of an exemplary leader	MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH*
<i>H₀2</i> : There is no significant relationship between the Employer Offering Training by External Trainers and exhibiting Leadership Practices	TRN1 vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TTL
<i>H₀3</i> : There is no significant relationship between the Employers Offering Training by Internal Trainers and exhibiting Leadership Practices	TRN2 vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TTL
<i>H₀4</i> : There is no significant relationship between the Employer Offering Leadership Training and exhibiting Leadership Practices	TRN3 vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TTL
<i>H₀5</i> : There is no significant relationship between Participants Attend Leadership Training and exhibiting Leadership Practices	TRN4 vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TTL
<i>H₀6</i> : There is no significant relationship between Employers enrolling Participants in Leadership Development Programs and exhibiting Leadership Practices	TRN5 vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TTL
<i>H₀7</i> : There is no significant difference in exhibiting Leadership Practices based on Employers having a Training Department	TD vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TTL
<i>H₀8</i> : There is no significant difference in exhibiting Leadership Practices based on Employers having Full-Time Trainers	FT vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TTL
<i>H₀9</i> : There is no significant difference in exhibiting Leadership Practices based on Employers have Training Coordinators	TC vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TTL
<i>H₀10</i> : There is no significant relationship between Knowledge of Transformational Leadership and exhibiting Leadership Practices	KOTL vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TTL
<i>H₀11</i> : There is no significant relationship between Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation and exhibiting Leadership Practices	YOTL vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TTL

****H₀1*** is the first hypothesis to examine if participants demonstrate a high level of leadership practices (MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, and ETH). Descriptive statistics will be applied to test this hypothesis. Source: The author.

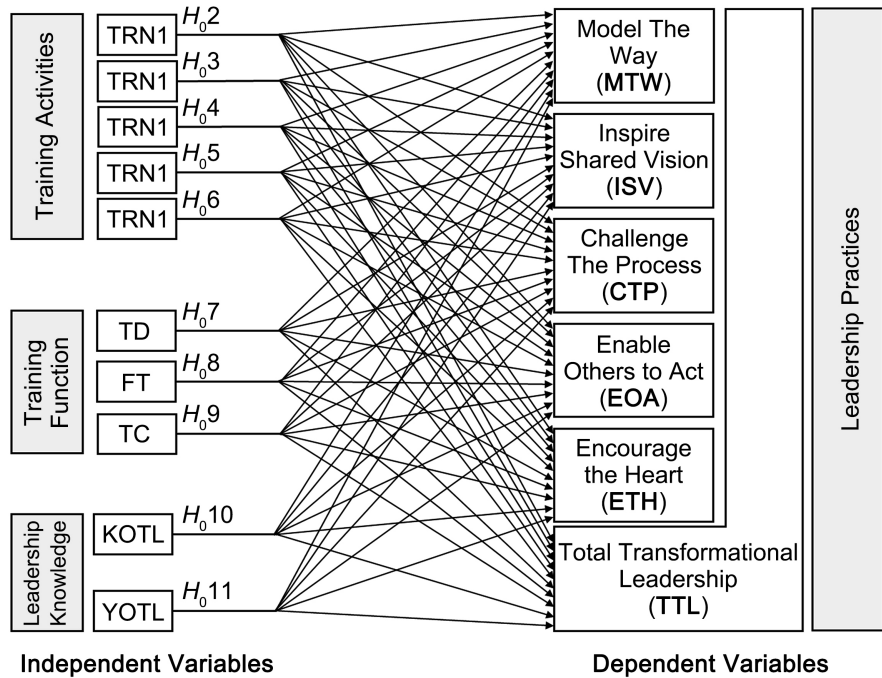


Figure 1. Conceptual diagram for research variables (Set 1). Source: The author.

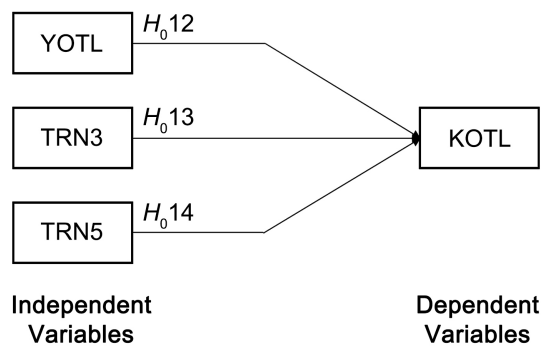


Figure 2. Conceptual diagram for research variables (Set 2). Source: The author.

Table 5. Null hypotheses (Set 2).

Null Hypotheses (Set 2)	Variables
H₀12: There is no significant relationship between Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation and Knowledge of Transformational Leadership	YOTL vs. KOTL
H₀13: There is no significant relationship between the Employer Offering Leadership Training and Knowledge of Transformational Leadership	TRN3 vs. KOTL
H₀14: There is no significant relationship between Employers Offering Leadership Training and Knowledge of Transformational Leadership	TRN5 vs. KOTL

Source: The author.

Set 3: The independent variables are Employers with a Training Department, Employers with Full-Time Trainers, and Employers with Training Coordinators. The dependent variables are Knowledge of Transformational Leadership and Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation. The hypotheses and conceptual diagram are in **Table 6** and **Figure 3**.

Table 6. Null hypotheses (Set 3).

Null Hypotheses	Variables
H₀15: There is no significant difference in Knowledge of Transformational Leadership based on Employers having a Training Department	TD vs. KOTL
H₀16: There is no significant difference in Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation based on Employers having a Training Department	TD vs. YOTL
H₀17: There is no significant difference in Knowledge of Transformational Leadership based on Employers having Full-Time Trainers	FT vs. KOTL
H₀18: There is no significant difference in Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation based on Employers having Full-Time Trainers	FT vs. YOTL
H₀19: There is no significant difference in Knowledge of Transformational Leadership based on Employers having Training Coordinators	TC vs. KOTL
H₀20: There is no significant difference in Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation based on Employers having Training Coordinators	TC vs. YOTL

Source: The author.

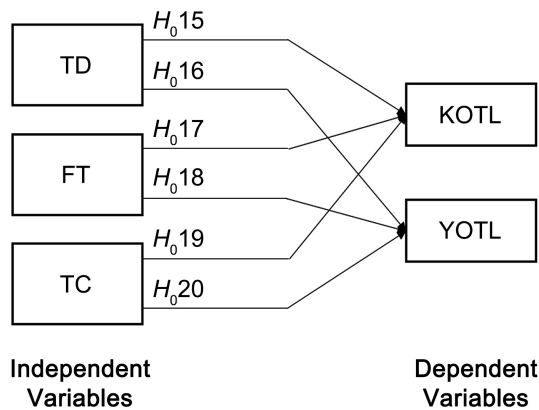


Figure 3. Conceptual diagram for research variables (Set 3). Source: The author.

3.2. Research Population and Sample Size

The population is middle managers working in insurance companies in the United Arab Emirates. The definition of a middle manager is a manager not within the senior management of an insurance company, so the category excludes all the C-suit executives, General Managers, Managing Directors, and any senior manager. A middle manager must manage at least two employees. Further, According to *Krejcie and Morgan (1970)*, since the population is unknown, the effective sample size should be 384. The researcher collected 249 usable surveys out of the 347 total submitted. There were 96 discarded surveys; either the respondents did not complete the survey, refused to participate after reading the consent, or did not meet the criteria of a middle manager as defined in the study.

3.3. Survey Questionnaire

The survey has four sections. The first section ensures that the respondent is a middle manager working in an insurance company in the UAE and leads at least two employees. The second requested participants to complete the LPI-Self, which has been slightly modified to ensure that the respondent is self-evaluating and that questionnaire items are gender-neutral. Further, the entire survey was translated into Arabic for Arabic-speaking respondents. A professional legal translator reviewed and approved the translation. The third section enquired about the participants' knowledge of transformational leadership. The fourth section collected data on training. Every statement was coded as below:

	Model the Way	Inspire Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart	Total Leadership*
Code	MTW1 - MTW 6	ISV1 - ISV6	CTP1 - CTP6	EOA1 - EOA6	ETH1 - ETH6	TTL

*TTL is the average score of the five Transformational Leadership Practices: MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, and ETH.

One statement related to the knowledge of participants about transformational leadership, the participants were requested to respond how familiar they were with transformational leadership is as follows.

Code	Statement
KOTL	How familiar are you with the theory, style, and practices of Transformational Leadership?

Participants were then given the definition of transformational leadership and were asked to score themselves accordingly.

Code	Statement
YOTL	In your opinion, and based on the above definition, how much of a transformational leader you believe you are

There are five separate questions related to training. For these statements, a 7-point frequency Likert was used.

Code	Statement
TRN1	My company offers me training programs delivered by “External” Trainers.
TRN2	My company offers me training conducted by “internal” trainers/professionals.
TRN3	My company offers me Leadership training and workshops.
TRN4	On a personal level, I attended training and workshops on leadership practices and theories.
TRN5	My company enrolls me in Leadership Development Programs.

Another three questions that were answered by Yes or No are:

Code	Statement
TD	My company has a training department.
FT	My company has full-time trainer(s).
TC	My company does not have a full-time trainer but has dedicated employee to manage and coordinate training.

4. Results of Statistical Analyses

4.1. Validity, Reliability, and Normality

Posner (2016) confirmed that LPI is valid and reliable. However, a reliability test was conducted for the LPI by calculating Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for the five dimensions: Model the Way (MTW), Inspire Shared Vision (ISV), Challenge the Process (CTP), Enable Others to Act (EOA) and Encourage the Heart (ETH). Results showed that all Cronbach’s alpha coefficients were higher than 0.70; **Table 7** indicates acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach, 1951). For validity, three university professors confirmed the construct’s face validity.

4.2. Measuring the Leadership Level of Participants

For statistical analysis, this quantitative study used Microsoft Excel and Jamovi for descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Further, independent sample *t*-tests and Pearson’s correlation tests were deployed to test null hypotheses. To test data normality, skewness and kurtosis values were calculated and found within an acceptable range (–2 and +2). Hence, data were assumed to be normally distributed regarding skewness and kurtosis. This allowed the application of parametric inferential statistical analysis, namely, Pearson’s correlation and independent sample *t*-test. Further, descriptive statistics were also used to calculate mean values and standard deviations, as in **Table 8**.

The total LPI-self scores of this study (N = 249) are compared with the total scores of Posner's (2016) original study (N = 446,780); Table 9 represents the comparative results.

Plotting the total scores of the original and this study results in Figure 4.

The presentation of Figure 4 shows that participating leaders in this study (N = 249) exhibited higher leadership skills than leaders who participated in the original research (N = 446,780) of Posner (2016). Further, by comparing the order of importance (descending order of total scores) of the five practices in both studies, it is apparent that there are many similarities between the results; Table 10 depicts the pattern. Further, EOA, CTP, and ISV have the same order in both studies, while MTW and ETH exchange places.

The total scores in Table 9 can be scaled into mean values by dividing the total score by 6. These results are means with a minimum value of 1 and a maximum of 10; the outcome is shown in Table 11.

The graphical presentation in Figure 5 shows that the study participants demonstrated the five practices of an exemplary leader between "Usually" and "Very Frequently" making them transformational leaders.

Table 7. Cronbach's alpha for the five practices.

Leadership Practice	MTW	ISV	CTP	EOA	ETH
Cronbach's Alpha	0.73	0.8	0.74	0.70	0.82

Table 8. Descriptive statistics of data.

	MTW	ISV	CTP	EOA	ETH	TTL*	KOTL	YOTL	TRN1	TRN2	TRN3	TRN4	TRN5
N	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249	249
Mean	51.13	49.15	49.47	53.32	52.15	255	3.37	7.79	3.96	3.79	3.74	4.32	3.39
SD	5.39	6.32	5.98	4.16	5.87	23.4	1.07	1.73	1.82	1.95	2	1.76	2.06
Minimum	33	32	30	40	30	179	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	60	60	60	60	60	300	5	10	7	7	7	7	7
Skewness	-0.85	-0.59	-0.62	-0.57	-0.88	-0.55	-0.81	-1.3	0.12	0.02	0.20	-0.10	0.41
Kurtosis	0.82	0.08	0.03	0.25	0.46	0.13	-0.1	2.07	-1.09	-1.24	-1.23	-1.13	-1.16

*TTL = Total TL (Transformational Leadership).

Table 9. Leadership practices LPI scores comparison between original study (Posner, 2016) and this research.

		MTW	ISV	CTP	EOA	ETH
N = 446,780 (Posner, 2016)	Means	46.14	42.72	44	49.5	45.25
	Standard Deviation	8.11	10.29	8.89	7.12	9.69
N = 249 (This Research)	Means	51.13	49.15	49.37	53.32	52.15
	Standard Deviation	5.38	6.31	5.98	4.15	5.85

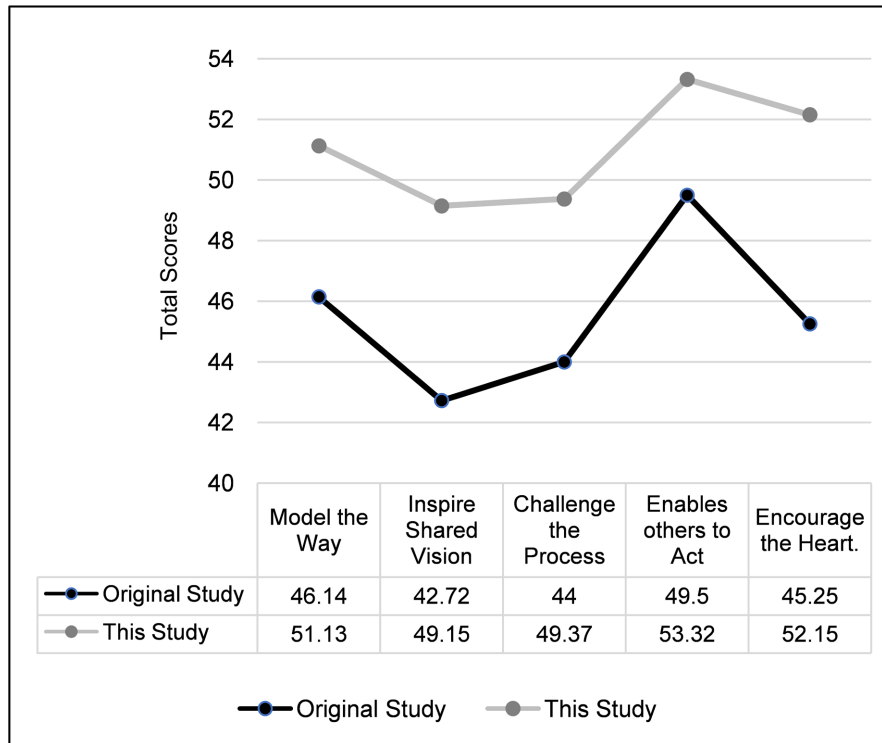


Figure 4. Comparing scores of the original study (Posner, 2016) and this study.

Table 10. Order of importance comparison between Posner’s (2016) study and this study.

Main Study (Posner, 2016)		This Study	
Practice	Total Score	Practice	Total Score
EOA	49.50	EOA	53.32
MTW	46.14	ETH	52.15
ETH	45.25	MTW	51.13
CTP	44.00	CTP	49.37
ISV	42.72	ISV	49.15

Table 11. Mean values of Posner’s (2016) total score of the five practices.

		Model the Way	Inspire Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Others to Act	Encourage the Heart
N = 446,780 (Posner, 2016)	Mean Values	7.69	7.12	7.33	8.25	7.54
	Standard Deviation	1.35	1.72	1.48	1.19	1.62
N = 249 (This Study)	Mean Values	8.52	8.19	8.23	8.89	8.69
	Standard Deviation	0.90	1.05	1.00	0.69	0.98

	Almost Never 1	Rarely 2	Seldom 3	Once in a while 4	Occasionally 5	Sometimes 6	Fairly Often 7	Usually 8	Very Frequently 9	Almost Always 10
MTW							7.69	8.52		
ISV							7.12	8.19		
CTP							7.33	8.23		
EOA								8.25	8.89	
ETH							7.25	8.69		

Mean Values of The Original Study
 Mean Values of this Study

Figure 5. Comparing LPI-Self mean values of Posner's (2016) original study and this study.

4.3. Hypotheses Testing

By examining **Table 9**, **Table 10**, and **Table 11** and **Figure 4** and **Figure 5**, it is apparent that the study participants ($N = 249$) possess a high level of transformational characteristics, evidenced by the high LPI-self scores. Therefore, H_01 is rejected, and participants exhibit the five leadership practices defined by Kouzes and Posner (2017).

To examine the strength and direction of the relationships between different variables, the Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated at $p = 0.001$; results are assembled in **Table 12**.

Based on **Table 12**, hypotheses testing (H_02 , H_03 , H_03 , H_04 , H_05 , H_06 , H_010 , and H_011) are summarised in **Table 13**. Results showed a weak positive relationship between all variables ($r < 0.5$). This means the absence of a statistically significant relationship between the variables.

Table 14 summarizes hypotheses testing (H_012 , H_013 , and H_014). Results showed a weak positive relationship between all variables ($r < 0.5$). This means the absence of a statistically significant relationship between tested variables.

Hypotheses testing (H_07 , H_08 , and H_09) are summarised in **Table 15**. The p -values are all higher than 0.05, meaning that the results are statistically insignificant; thus, there is no significant difference between the groups. However, two tests of sub-hypothesis showed significant differences ($p < 0.05$), TD-CTP and TC-CTP.

Hypotheses testing (H_015 , H_016 , H_017 , H_018 , H_019 , and H_020) are summarised in **Table 16**. The p -values are all higher than 0.05, meaning the results are statistically insignificant; thus, there is no significant difference between the groups. However, one hypothesis showed significant differences ($p < 0.05$), FD-KOTL.

Table 12. Pearson’s correlation test results.

	MTW	ISV	CTP	EOA	ETH	TTL*	KOTL	YOTL	TRN1	TRN2	TRN3	TRN4	TRN5
MTW	—												
ISV	0.74	—											
CTP	0.66	0.73	—										
EOA	0.60	0.54	0.59	—									
ETH	0.69	0.61	0.55	0.61	—								
TTL*	0.88	0.88	0.85	0.77	0.82	—							
KOTL	0.33	0.37	0.28	0.14	0.34	0.36	—						
YOTL	0.33	0.26	0.28	0.19	0.33	0.34	0.34	—					
TRN1	0.14	0.08	0.15	0.21	0.12	0.16	0.01	0.00	—				
TRN2	0.20	0.22	0.27	0.17	0.19	0.25	0.09	0.01	0.51	—			
TRN3	0.23	0.20	0.25	0.24	0.17	0.26	0.11	0.04	0.68	0.64	—		
TRN4	0.13	0.10	0.17	0.11	0.17	0.16	0.19	0.11	0.40	0.39	0.58	—	
TRN5	0.20	0.15	0.24	0.25	0.16	0.23	0.12	0.10	0.53	0.52	0.76	0.57	—

*TTL = Total TL (Transformational Leadership).

Table 13. Results of Pearson’s correlation (N = 249), $p < 0.001$ (Set 1).

Hypotheses	Variables	Variables Tested	Pearson Correlation	Conclusions	Null Hypothesis
H₀2	TRN1 vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TL	TRN1-MTW	$r = 0.14$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN1-ISV	$r = 0.08$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN1-CTP	$r = 0.15$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN1-EOA	$r = 0.21$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN1-ETH	$r = 0.12$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN1-TL	$r = 0.16$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
H₀3	TRN2 vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TL	TRN2-MTW	$r = 0.20$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN2-ISV	$r = 0.22$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN2-CTP	$r = 0.27$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN2-EOA	$r = 0.17$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN2-ETH	$r = 0.19$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN2-TL	$r = 0.25$	There is no significant relationship	Retained

Continued

H₀₄	TRN3 vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TL	TRN3-MTW	$r = 0.23$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN3-ISV	$r = 0.20$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN3-CTP	$r = 0.25$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN3-EOA	$r = 0.24$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN3-ETH	$r = 0.17$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN3-TL	$r = 0.26$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
H₀₅	TRN4 vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TL	TRN4-MTW	$r = 0.13$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN4-ISV	$r = 0.10$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN4-CTP	$r = 0.17$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN4-EOA	$r = 0.11$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN4-ETH	$r = 0.17$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN4-TL	$r = 0.16$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
H₀₆	TRN5 vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TL	TRN5-MTW	$r = 0.20$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN5-ISV	$r = 0.15$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN5-CTP	$r = 0.24$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN5-EOA	$r = 0.25$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN5-ETH	$r = 0.16$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		TRN5-TL	$r = 0.23$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
H₀₁₀	KOTL vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TL	KTOL-MTW	$r = 0.33$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		KTOL-ISV	$r = 0.37$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		KTOL-CTP	$r = 0.28$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		KTOL-EOA	$r = 0.14$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		KTOL-ETH	$r = 0.34$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		KTOL-TL	$r = 0.36$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
H₀₁₁	YOTL vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TL	YTOL-MTW	$r = 0.33$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		YTOL-ISV	$r = 0.26$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		YTOL-CTP	$r = 0.28$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		YTOL-EOA	$r = 0.19$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		YTOL-ETH	$r = 0.33$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
		YTOL-TL	$r = 0.34$	There is no significant relationship	Retained

Table 14. Results of Pearson’s correlation (N = 249), $p < 0.001$ (Set 2).

Hypotheses	Variables Tested	Pearson’s Correlation	Conclusions	Null Hypothesis
H_012	YOTL vs. KOTL	$r = 0.34$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
H_013	TRN3 vs. KOTL	$r = 0.11$	There is no significant relationship	Retained
H_014	TRN5 vs. KOTL	$r = 0.12$	There is no significant relationship	Retained

Table 15. Results of two-tailed independent sample t -test (Set 2).

Hypotheses	Variables	Variables Tested	t -test Results	Conclusions	Null Hypothesis
H_07	TD vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TL	TD-MTW	$t [247] = -1.19, p = 0.235$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		TD-ISV	$t [247] = -1.68, p = 0.095$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		TD-CTP	$t [247] = -2.17, p = 0.03$	There is a significant difference	Rejected
		TD-EOA	$t [247] = -1.57, p = 0.116$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		TD-ETH	$t [247] = -0.63, p = 0.53$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		TD-TL	$t [247] = -1.72, p = 0.09$	There is no significant difference	Retained
H_08	FT vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TL	FT-MTW	$t [247] = -0.66, p = 0.51$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		FT-ISV	$t [247] = -1.43, p = 0.15$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		FT-CTP	$t [247] = -1.13, p = 0.26$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		FT-EOA	$t [247] = -0.49, p = 0.63$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		FT-ETH	$t [247] = -0.40, p = 0.69$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		FT-TL	$t [247] = -1.02, p = 0.31$	There is no significant difference	Retained
H_09	TC vs. MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, TL	TC-MTW	$t [247] = 1.42, p = 0.16$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		TC-ISV	$t [247] = 0.88, p = 0.38$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		TC-CTP	$t [247] = 2.38, p = 0.02$	There is a significant difference	Rejected
		TC-EOA	$t [247] = 0.94, p = 0.35$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		TC-ETH	$t [247] = 0.413, p = 0.68$	There is no significant difference	Retained
		TC-TL	$t [247] = 1.44, p = 0.15$	There is no significant difference	Retained

Table 16. Results of two-tailed independent sample t -test (Set 3).

Hypotheses	Variables	t -test Results	Conclusions	Null Hypothesis
H_015	TD vs. KOTL	$t [247] = -0.76, p = 0.45$	There is no significant difference	Retained
H_016	TD vs. YOTL	$t [247] = 0.35, p = 0.73$	There is no significant difference	Retained
H_017	FT vs. KOTL	$t [247] = -2.37, p = 0.02$	There is a significant difference	Rejected
H_018	FT vs. YOTL	$t [247] = -0.66, p = 0.51$	There is no significant difference	Retained
H_019	TC vs. KOTL	$t [247] = 0.87, p = 0.34$	There is no significant difference	Retained
H_020	TC vs. YOTL	$t [247] = 0.55, p = 0.59$	There is no significant difference	Retained

4.4. Results

The participants in this study possess high levels of the five practices of exemplary transformational leaders, as defined by Kouzes and Posner (2017); they exhibit leadership skills “Usually” and “Very Frequently” according to the 10-point Likert. However, inferential statistical results show no significant relationship between Training Activities (TRN1, TRH2, TRN3, TRN4, and TRN5), Training Functions within the organization (TD, FT, and TC), Knowledge of Transformational Leadership (KOTL and YTOL), and exhibiting Leadership Practices behavior (MTW, ISV, CTP, EOA, ETH, and TTL).

Also, there has been no significant relationship between Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation (YTOL) and Knowledge of Transformational (KOTL). Also, there is no significant relationship between the Employer Offering Leadership Training (TRN3) and Knowledge of Transformational Leadership (KOTL). Further, there is no significant relationship between Employers Offering Leadership Training (TRN5) and Knowledge of Transformational Leadership (KOTL).

Furthermore, *t*-test results demonstrated no significant difference in Knowledge of Transformational Leadership (KOTL) based on Employers having a Training Department (TD). Also, there has been no significant difference in Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation (YOTL) based on Employers having a Training Department (TD). Furthermore, there is no significant difference in Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation (YOTL) based on Employers having Full-Time Trainers (FT). Also, there is no significant difference in Knowledge of Transformational Leadership (KOTL) based on Employers having Training Coordinators (TC). Finally, there is no significant difference in Transformational Leadership Self-evaluation (YOTL) based on Employers having Training Coordinators (TC).

Additionally, there is no significant difference in Knowledge of Transformational Leadership (KOTL) based on employers having Full-Time Trainers (FT); a one-tailed *t*-test result shows that participants working in a company that employs full-time trainers have higher knowledge of transformational leadership theory. However, there is no significant relationship between Knowledge of Transformational Leadership (KOTL) and exhibiting the five exemplary leadership practices (TTL).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

This research intended to examine the relationship between training and exhibiting leadership practices. According to Kouzes and Posner (2017), leaders are not who they are due to innate characteristics or traits, but due to developing such skills through training, practicing, and mastering such skills. For them, individuals with genuine determination can exhibit the five practices of an exemplary leader, which eventually results in extraordinary organizational results. This study’s participants were middle managers leading at least two employees and working in an insurance company in the UAE. The respondents’ leadership prac-

tices were measured by deploying the LPI-Self construct. Other questions were asked about training activities, training functions, their knowledge of transformational leadership, and rating themselves as transformational leaders based on a definition of transformational leadership.

The participants were found to have a high level of leadership practices; this means they are transformational leaders. Further, when comparing the mean values of the five practices of an exemplary leader with the original study (Posner, 2016), the research participants demonstrated higher values, concluding that they are better transformational leaders. However, there has been no relationship between exhibiting a high level of transformational leadership and training. Also, there is no significant difference between groups based on training history or the availability of training functions within the organizations where the respondents work. Therefore, the question remains: How did the participating managers acquire transformational leadership practices and skills? Could it be a trait, innate characteristics, personality, or other factors contributing to gaining a high level of leadership skills? Similarly, how did respondents of Kouzes and Posner's study acquire their leadership qualities?

Although the research failed to find any significant relationship between training and leadership skills for participants with a high level of leadership behavior, it does not conclude that respondents are natural leaders; however, it calls to rethink the notion of transformational leadership scholars that great leaders are so because they learned it through training and that anyone can become a great leader. Further, the study does not nullify the effectiveness of leadership development programs that could build or enhance leadership skills, nor does it assume that great leaders are born that way. However, this empirical data and statistical analysis do not support that transformational leadership skills are only gained through training; in the meantime, it calls for more profound research into what made great leaders who they are, away from the assumption that they are either born or made.

In conclusion, the debate between supporters of the "Born Leader" and those of "Made Leaders" needs more examination by exploring other factors that could have contributed to the development of great leaders. Further research should examine childhood, teenhood, unique circumstances, crises, and critical life events that may have contributed to building leadership skills and study and analyze to find possible correlations and trends. Hence, this research calls for understanding leadership without assuming that leadership is either an innate trait that a person is born with or a skill that can be gained through training. Therefore, the question, is training what made and nurtured transformational leaders? remains unanswered.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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