

UAE CULTURE: EFFECTS ON EXPATRIATE LEADERS' MANAGEMENT

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Structured Abstract

Purpose: An increasing number of managers are working in overseas organizations. Many face difficulties managing the local staff due to cultural differences. Increasing leadership awareness is required to enhance expatriates' abilities to address cultural differences to enable a smoother working experience. The article provides comprehensive insight and guidance for those leaders who intend to undertake employment in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Design/methodology/approach: Interviews are utilised to explore the factors relating to UAE culture that effect expatriate leader management. Practical experiences of expatriates in relation to UAE cultural factors are highlighted.

Findings: Our findings show that Islamic principles and religious practices, Arabic language, custom of female dress, and time management affected expatriates' management in the UAE culture. A number of strategies are provided based on expatriates' experiences.

Practical implications: This research provides a greater comprehension of the effects of the UAE national culture on expatriate leaders' management of local staff. It offers practical examples related to the UAE culture and how to apply the lessons learned in workplace situations to avoid misunderstandings created by cultural differences. This will improve expatriates' management of staff at the strategic level.

Originality/value: This article adds to the field of research in cross-cultural management and human resources by focusing on cross-cultural leadership, specifically in the UAE. Much research has been conducted relating to cross-cultural management. Fewer studies have been undertaken on cross cultural management in UAE organizations.

Keywords: Expatriate leadership, cross-cultural management, Islam, Arabic language, time management, custom, UAE.