

## The Relationship Between Followership Styles and Leadership Styles

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<b>Abstract</b>	<b>Article Info</b>
<p><i>This study aimed at identifying patterns of the followership styles and their relation to the leadership styles of academic leaders as perceived by faculty members in public and private universities in northern Jordan. The researchers used the descriptive correlation approach. The Kelley's scale was adopted for the followership styles, and stellar's leadership scale for leadership styles. The study instruments were administered to a stratified random sample of 304 faculty members at (Yarmouk, JUST, Al-Bayt, Philadelphia, Ajloun Private University, Jerash Private University and Irbid Private University). The validity and reliability of the study tools have been verified. Chi-Square Goodness of Fit was employed to compare the expected with the observed distribution of frequencies. The results showed that the Exemplary followership type was the highest observed, followed by the pragmatic pattern and finally the Alienated and the Passive pattern. The results showed that the most prevalent leadership styles are the empowering, democratic, and autocratic. Study results also showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the leadership and the followership styles.</i></p>	<p><b>Article History:</b>  <i>Received</i>                      July, 05, 2018   <i>Accepted</i>                      April, 20, 2019</p> <hr style="width: 100%;"/> <p><b>Keywords:</b>  <i>Followership styles,                      leadership styles,                      Jordanian universities</i></p>

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**Introduction**

*"The best of men for you to hire is the strong, the trustworthy."* (Al-Qasas, vs 26). With these few words in their number, and the great in its meaning, the daughter of Shuaib - peace be upon him –summarized the importance of the availability of leadership qualities to occupy the leadership position, or as it is said today, put the right man in the right place. Leadership though, has an important and effective role to play in achieving the goals. The leader is as the captain of the ship who holds the reins of his hand; either he achieves his goals successfully or fails to do so and this eventually will affect the entire crew.

Hassan (2004) noticed that, leadership is a collective role since no one can be a leader alone, but can exercise leadership by actively participating in a group within a given situation. Thus, the leadership is the interaction of the leader and subordinates in a certain situation, each of these parties has a unique network that branch in several directions and intersect these networks with each other, and the network of these collective internal relationships is the real basis for the success of any institution. Institutional work passes through these invisible infrastructures (Chaleff, 2009) and failure to establish effective communication leads to the extinction of institutions. The basis of effective personal communication is how to listen to others. If the leader listens well he will offer a suitable climate in the relationship between the employee that climate which motivates individuals to accept opinions and ideas willingly (Black, 1957).



Leaders and followers account for the breakthroughs or breakdowns in organizations. However, leaders are often portrayed as the element that 'makes or breaks'. By contrast follower's role is undervalued or neglected. Followers are treated as 'silent or passive participants' rather than assertive doers. That is why leadership literature and research studies are "leader-centric" while followership received scant attention staying on the periphery rather than at the core of leadership research. Although some leadership scholars referred to the role of followers since 1960s (Zaleznik, 1977), they did not assign an active role to them. Searching for references on leadership and followership confirms the wide gulf in favor of the former (Chaleff, 2009; Ye, 2010; Kellerman, 2008). Bjugstad, Thach, Thompson and Morris (2006) attribute the pause of research on followership to the negative connotations of 'followership' as this term conjures up weakness, submission, passivity and dependence. A follower may be thought of as a person who is on the receiving end occupying a lower position in the hierarchy. Rost (1994) mentions that followers are usually viewed as "passive, submissive, unintelligent, not in control of their lives...". As Bjugstad et al. (2006) put it followership is both under researched and under-appreciated. However, followership is an imperative irrespective of any negative association. Moreover, there is no way to escape the 'disproportionate influence'. The fact is that most people act both as superiors and followers or only as followers and rarely a person plays the "superior" role all the time (Williams and Miller, 2002).

The interest in followership intensified since the 1990s, when scholars of management recognized the importance of followership in giving the organization a competitive edge. Conversely marginalization of followers may lead to their indifference and resistance. In sum, there is no leadership without followership. Kelley

(1992) stated that followers account for 80% of the success of organizations.

Several developments contributed to the increased interest in the role of followers; the globalization and the concomitant phenomenon of diversity in the workplace made it imperative for organizations considering the follower's role in the success of the firms. Diversity and change in the workplace highlight the need for examining dynamic relationships in more depth as organizations have become more complex. The advent of the information age and the "Knowledge based economy" made followers more expressive, empowered and engaged and thus transferred leadership from the hierarchy to the parallel, horizontal and distributive forms (Fujita et al., 2009). The expanding social networks and the growing empowerment of followers through their ability to access information more easily erodes the barriers between the traditional hierarchical echelons (Cross & Parker, 2004; Bjugstad et al., 2006) and calls for more flexible leader-follower relationships (Hackman & Wageman, 2007). This 'change' of glasses revealed the need for empirical studies. Uhl-Bien (2006) considered the paucity of research on followership in organizations a significant gap that should be bridged. Henry (2012) holds that studying followers is essential to understand the role due to the mutual relationship between both sides of the coin (leaders and followers).

Awareness in institutions of the importance of the role of followers spawned a series of empirical studies in firms as well as institutions of education and higher education where leadership positions are often rotated so that many academics time and again assume leadership positions. Oyetunji (2013) called for studying the behavior of followers in higher educational institutions. Strong and Williams (2014) considered the students as followers whose behavior



is worthy of research from this perspective. Although number of academics do not assume leadership positions, their influence on students inside and outside universities make them intellectual leaders. Murji (2015) finds it ironic to concentrate on the leadership part of the equation, while ignoring the followership despite the fact that leadership is the sum of mutual relationship between leaders and followers. Murji adds that the systematic review of research, books, articles and conference papers show that our interest is concentrated mainly on leaders rather than on followers. As we in the higher education prepare the leaders of the future, we should prepare them to understand the followership, she adds, suggesting that researching the followers is a new research line in its right own rather than a secondary variable. This is not meant to ignore the leadership research but is an approach from a different perspective.

Review of research on followership points to different lines of inquiry. Earlier studies analyzed types of followership styles (Kelley, 1992; Thody, 2003; Chaleff, 2009; Beekun and Badawi, 1999). Later researchers searched for correlation between followership and other concepts. Favara (2009) investigated followership styles and their relationship with job satisfaction and job performance. Almgheib (2016) studied the predictive power of followership style of followers' work outcomes in Libya. Ibrahimi (2016) investigated the correlation relationship between followership styles and organizational performance. Novikov (2016) studies the impact of followership styles on both 'in-role behavior' and 'organizational citizenship behavior'. Nejad, Naami and Beshlideh (2015) researched the relationship between followership styles and job motivation and job performance. Bjugstad et al. (2006) worked to articulate a model that combines followership styles and leadership styles. In his attempts to conceptualize the influence tactics in organizations (Yukl & Chavez,

2002; Yukl, 2013) addressed the upward and downward influence that is the influence practiced by followers on leaders and the influence practiced by leaders on followers. Expressed otherwise the relationship between followers and leaders flow in two directions rather than a one-way direction.

Despite the relative recent visibility of the studies on the followers' role there is still lacunae in research from more than one perspective. Kellerman (2008) holds that although theories and models were developed to understand the followership styles more research is needed to see how those theories are applied. Novikov (2016) believes that the findings on followership behavior are so far not conclusive therefore there is need for 'future empirical research on the relationship between followership patterns of behavior and other organizational dimensions and variables'. Kelley (1992) emphasized the significance of conducting research in Non-Western cultures as "Other cultures" generate different followership styles. Fujita et al. (2009) pointed to the role of culture in determining leaders-follower's relationship in six Asian countries. By the same token, Mohammad and Saad (2016) found that followers in the Malaysian culture show patterns of behavior that are related to a strong 'power distance' as coined by Hofstede. Thomas (2014) compared followership styles in two cultural contexts: American and Rwandan. The above observations of Kelley (1992), Fujita et al. (2009) and Mohammad and Saad (2016) provide support and justification to investigate the followership behavior in non-Western culture. It is within this context that this study of the followership styles is conducted in Jordanian universities as there is a dearth of research on the topic in this part of the world as far as the researchers are informed. The researchers found only few empirical studies on the subject in Arab countries. Only one of them is in Arabic language (Alfaouri, 2002) while the others were in



English (Behery, 2016; Al mgheib, 2016; Al-kalbani, 2015). Metcalfe & Murfin (2011) pointed to the deficit in the literature of research evaluating the impact of contemporary theories of followership on follower work outcomes in developing countries in the Middle East.

### **Statement of Problem**

The role of followers in organizations has been attached special significance in the last two decades (Barnhart, 2008; Johnson, 2009). Empirical research studies followed suit (Chaleff, 2009; Henry, 2012). However, there is still a paucity in research on the followership and followership-leadership relationship compared with the studies on leadership and leadership styles which are firmly established in the legacy of educational leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Arabic language literature is still dominated by leadership focused studies (Oplatka & Arar, 2017) and is almost reticent on followership. The present authors being academics affiliated with a university in North Jordan feel that the Arabic legacy on educational administration concentrates on leadership with a shy attention to the role of followers except to the extent that it may be annexed to the role of leaders. The authors submit that the role of followers should be investigated as an independent topic. Out of this concern the researchers conducted this research study which solicits answers for the following main and sub-questions:

The Main Question is “What are the followership patterns of behavior shown by the academic staff at Universities in Northern Jordan”. From this main question the following sub questions emanate:

- 1- What are the most followership styles practiced by the academic staff as perceived by academic staff at the universities of Northern Jordan?

- 2- What are the most leadership styles practiced by academic leaders as perceived by academic staff at the universities of Northern Jordan?
- 3- Is there any statistically significant relationship between leadership styles and followership styles as perceived by academic staff at the universities of Northern Jordan?

### **Significance of the Study**

The study is expected to contribute to the burgeoning literature on followership by providing data from different settings. The researchers assume as well that the study may be useful to policy and decision makers in the immediate setting of the study and beyond.

### **Terminology**

"Follower" as Kellerman (2008, p. 213) defines is a person with less power, authority and influence compared with the leader. The former provides support to the latter in a mutual relationship. The definition of "follower" in this study is: A faculty member in the universities of Northern Jordan, who did not occupy an administrative position at the time of the study, which gives him/her the authority to decide in his/her department.

Followers' styles are types of behavior produced by followers and measured by the research instrument developed for this purpose.

According to Al-Sakarneh (2010, p. 27) a leader is " the person who is influenced by the needs of the group, expresses the wishes of its members and then focuses attention, and unleashes the energies of the members of the group in the desired direction". The definition of "Leader" in this study is: A faculty member who holds academic position at the universities of Northern Jordan, which gives him/her





the authority to make decisions in his/her organizational units such as department heads, deans and others.

Leadership styles are types of behavior produced by leaders while performing their roles and will be measured in this study by the instrument developed for this purpose.

### **Limitations and Delimitations of the Study**

The study is limited to identifying the types of the followers' styles and leadership styles in the universities of North Jordan as perceived by the academic faculty in those universities in the first term of academic year 2017-2018. The findings could also be affected by the research tools and methodology and the extent of honesty in responses of participants.

### **Review of Related Literature**

This part starts with the significance attached by researchers to followers and followership, followed by an account on the followership patterns, leadership styles and the relationship between followership patterns and leadership styles.

### **Significance of Followership**

Researchers highlighted the importance of the role of followers and the significance of studying followership behavior. Barnhart (2008) and Johnson (2009) hold that the role of followers is not less important than the role of leaders and that both enhance each other. Corrothers (2009) described the relationship between both as that which exists between 'water and fish'. Hackman & Wageman (2007) and Antelo (2010) are of the view that leaders sometimes play the role of followers and the latter show sometimes the behavior of leaders.

## **Typology of Followership Patterns**

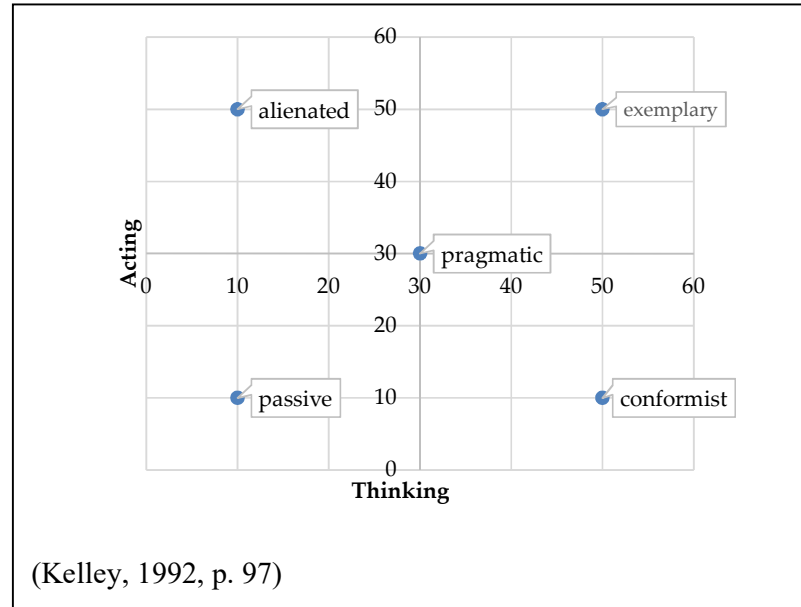
Having established the significance of followers and followership researchers embarked on categorizing the behavior of followers. Kellerman (2008) reported the following typology of followers: "Isolates", "Bystanders", "participants", "Activists" and "diehard". Chaleff (2009) classified the followers into the 'Implementer', 'Partner', 'Resource', and 'Individualistic'. However, it is Kelley's categorization which is the most widely used and is used in the current study. Therefore, the researchers will elaborate on it. Kelley (1992) classified followers into five categories:

1. The 'alienated' follower is competent, independent and critical thinker, but has a sense of 'no belonging' to the organization probably as a result of a perceived feeling of ignorance and under appreciation. He does not hide his feelings, but rather expresses his different views, his resentment and dissatisfaction. He does not have a high level of job satisfaction and may gradually lose job loyalty and motivation which leads to under performance. In general, he needs to be empowered and emancipated from negative feelings to get out of this alienation.
2. The "passive" follower is a dependent under-enthusiastic person. He lacks the capacity to perform tasks on his own; lacks innovation and ambition. Quickly he feels subdued and fatigue. In sum, he is ineffective and avoids tasks that need independent thinking or act. He does not invest extra time to complete tasks much less to go extra mile to accomplish them. He neither challenges instructions nor discusses their suitability.



3. “Mr. Yes/The conformist” appreciates the decisions of leaders and diligently implements them, but never critically participate in taking them or discuss the method to implement them. He does all his best to satisfy his leader literally and maintain a good relationship with him. He is happy with his job and maintains a friendly environment with defined parameters. He executes instructions without queries or quarrels and finds that through that he serves his personal interests. Therefore, he is prepared to sacrifice and compromise own needs to satisfy the leader or the organization. He has a low level of courage, initiative and sense of innovation.
4. “The exemplary” follower is prepared to initiate acts and inquire from leaders. He ponders the consequences of acts prior to undertaking those acts. He is interested in perfection and distinction; fits properly with colleagues, provides support and enlightened criticism. He is not reluctant to withdraw support from incompetent leaders without interrupting the institutional performance. He goes to the utmost to serve the best interests of the organization. He can configure what is required and works to accomplish it. He subscribes to the vision and mission of the organization, has the skills of self-management and evaluation and is interested to leave his impact on the organization.
5. “The pragmatic” follower projects the characteristics of the above types of followers and apply the type that is suitable to the situation. He prefers his interest to the interest of the organization. He carries out tasks, but not beyond expectations. When the organization faces a dilemma, he tries to walk out, but not necessarily to rescue the organization.

Figure 1.  
*Kelley Followership Model*



**Leadership Styles**

The Lewin, Lippit and White model of leadership styles has been described as the most widely cited studies in the history of leadership research and the benchmark study of its time (Billig, 2015). According to this model, leaders show the following three types of leadership styles:

1. "The Autocratic style" draws on and ab(uses) the official authority to coerce followers to execute instructions. An autocratic leader monopolizes power and set forth directions of work for all employees. This reflects badly on productivity, job satisfaction and performance. It may have a short-term positive



effect on productivity and may bring about discipline, but this may disappear with the absence of the leader.

2. “The Democratic Leader” derives power from human relationship. He gives freedom and trust to followers, takes a decision via consultation and keeps channels of communication open with employees at different levels so that individuals feel they are respected, important and appreciated.
3. “The Laissez-faire” style provides a wide space for followers to choose and decide for themselves. The leader keeps a low profile and may not have the final word, but without sacrificing the goals of the organization.

The above model was extended by many authors. Daft (2008) for instance, proposed four types of leadership styles (the authoritarian, participative, stewardship and servant). This study extended the above model to include the “Empowering Style” which is influenced by the ideas of empowerment, organizational learning, and the theories of parallel, distributive, horizontal, accommodative, servant and transformational management that emerged in the last few decades (Peachey, 2002; Hakimi, Knippenberg and Giessner, 2010; Konczak, Stelly & Trusty, 2000; Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). The thread that goes through these theories is that it is in the best interests of the organization to empower employees and make them responsible and accountable for their acts, decisions and problem solving after exchanging information and ideas with the empowering leader (Dierendonck & Dijkstra, 2012; Wong & Giessner, 2016). Such follower-centered theories seem more likely to empower followers and make them as partners to achieve important objectives. (Pearce, Yoo & Alavi 2004).

Aziri, Mazllami & Sulejmani (2016) wrote about newly emerging issues in leadership such as the "Subordination" issue, through which a leader is seen as the leader of subordinates who are parties to a process that complement each other. New issues also include different perceptions of the leader who has control versus "Leaders as Coaches" who help other to develop skills and obtain information. The article also examined the subject of "Ethical Leadership" which is based on ethical beliefs and values such as honesty, trust, and mutual respect. Finally, "Virtual Leadership", which revolutionized the workplace by providing a high level of responsiveness and flexibility, eliminating time and space barriers (Mehtab, Rehman, Ishfaq & Jamil, 2018). In addition, the concept of Leadership in our time examines many topics such as Aesthetic Leadership, Servant Leadership, and Leading with love.

### **Leadership and Followership Relationship**

Researchers investigated the relationships between followership and many other constructs such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment and engagement. Others examined the relationship with leadership theories: the transformational and servant theories to cite but few (Hollander, 2009; Winston & Hartsfield, 2004; Cerff & Winston, 2006; Rittle, 2007). This current study seeks to unearth the relationship between followership and leadership styles. One of the earliest models to articulate this relationship was Garen and Cashman's "Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX Model)" (Fujita et al., 2009). Drawing on the social exchange theory the LMX model conceptualized a reciprocal relationship between supervisors and followers that influences the performance of the organization (Yukl & Chavez, 2002). They pointed to the followers' influence (upward influence and impression management tactics) that denote actions taken by a



follower to advance a personal or organizational goal of influencing the boss. Bjugstad et al. (2006) presented a model for matching leadership and followership style drawing on Kelley's conceptualization of followership on the one hand and Hersey and Blanchard's situational theory on the other. The present study employed Kelley's followership model and the leadership styles typology as elaborated above.

### **Jordanian Universities and the Education System**

Universities are social institutions that can make a useful and constructive contribution to sustainable development and raise the level of education and scientific research, services and various issues that affect society in all aspects, in addition to contributing effectively to the renewal of the life of society. Therefore, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan attaches great importance to these higher educational institutions in order to become highly competitive and able to provide the community with lifelong learning experiences related to its current and future needs (Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research, 2019).

Most universities in Jordan apply the American University model based on the credit hour system, which gives students flexibility in choosing the number of hours, Morning or Evening. There are ten government universities, mostly affiliated with universities in the United States and the United Kingdom. There are also 17 private universities recognized at the level of Arab countries and some foreign universities, such as the American University. Jordanian universities attract a large number of Arab and non-Arab foreign students every year (Ibid, 2019).

Stages and degrees (Wikipedia, 2019):

- Degree of middle university diploma (diploma): a community college and two years.
- Undergraduate degree (bachelor): six years for medicine, five for engineering and pharmacy and four years for other.
- The second degree (Master): The duration of the study from one to two years, there are also non-Jordanian certificates in some private foreign universities equivalent to the Jordanian Master's Degree (DEA) Diploma of Advanced Studies (Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies) German Masters (Magisterstudium), and MBA (Business Management) for experienced students.
- Third degree: Doctorate (Doctoral) duration of study from three to five years, in very limited disciplines such as Sharia and Arabic.

### **Previous Studies**

This part includes studies on the behavior of followers and leaders, some researchers were interested in classifying followers' behavior, others looking at prevailing patterns, some linking patterns and other variables. Studies will be presented from oldest to newest.

Alfaouri (2002) conducted a study aiming at identifying the factors that influence a follower to accept the power of his superior. A sample composed of 213 employees of the bottom management in Muata University was administered a questionnaire for this purpose. The findings revealed that self-understanding and preparedness of the follower work to make him accept his superior. The responses were affected by some demographic variables such as sex, academic qualification and years in service while the responses were





independent of the age and position of respondents. In a study conducted by Johnson (2003) on the relationship between the followership styles and leadership styles in some selected schools in Jackson, Mississippi, a sample of 500 hundred teachers and 8 principals were administered two questionnaires one for the followership styles and another for the leadership styles. The findings revealed that followership styles correspond with leadership styles. The majority of followers seemed to emulate their leader's general style. Based on this finding the author concluded that competent, visionary, inspiring and stimulating leaders will predictably have followers who demonstrate similar traits. Responses were independent of the demographic variables.

Beever's qualitative study (2008) on the followers' styles in the light of the principles of the servant leadership used interviews with five of the nursing professors at two universities one is a small religiously oriented university and the other is a public university. The followers reported exemplary followership styles characterized by openness, caring, honesty, respect, trust and integrity which correspond to the characteristics of Kelley's 'exemplary' follower.

Favara (2009) conducted a study to examine followership styles and their relationship with job satisfaction and job performance. This non-experimental study employed a quantitative survey design with a set of surveys returned representing 131 employees at a Midwestern automotive engineering and manufacturing company. The three standardized instruments used in this study include the Followership Questionnaire (Kelley, 1992), the Job in General Scale (Ironson, Smith, Brannick, Gibson, & Paul, 1989), and the Organizational Citizenship Behaviors scale (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Findings indicate that a significant positive relationship exists between followership styles and

the two organizational variables job satisfaction and job performance. The findings enhance the theoretical study of followership by providing empirical evidence needed to validate further research

In Thailand Ye (2009) conducted a study to identify teachers' followership styles and Leadership styles in international universities in Thailand. The sample comprised 365 randomly selected instructors from a number of universities. The study found that (1) Followership styles from the most to the least frequent were pragmatist or exemplary followership, conformist followership, alienated followership and passive followership. (2) Study on Leadership Styles showed that most leaders were using Participative leadership, followed by Delegative leadership and Autocratic leadership. (3) To some extent; Autocratic leadership was likely to produce passive followers; (b) Participative leadership was likely to produce exemplary or pragmatist followers; and (c) Delegative leadership was likely to produce pragmatist or conformist followers.

Smith's study (2009) related the characteristics of followers' styles as categorized by Ricketson (2008) which includes (responsibility, service, challenge, change and ethical behavior) and some demographic and organizational variables besides organizational culture. The sample comprised 661 staff in 27 community colleges in Virginia. The findings revealed a correlation between responsibility and age, educational level, specialization and tenure. On the other hand, the service was related to sex, rank, specialization, tenure and organizational culture. The challenge was related to age, specialization and organizational culture. Change was related to tenure, sex, specialization and organizational culture. Finally, ethical behavior was related to tenure and age.



Ammon (2013) conducted a study on the relationship between teachers and principals from the perspective of followers in some secondary schools in Victoria, Canada. The researcher employed questionnaires and interviews and concluded that the 'exemplary' follower style is the prevailing among teachers. The responses were affected by demographic variables.

Oyetunji's study (2013) aimed to determine if there is a significant relationship between followership styles in relation to job performance. A total of 102 randomly selected lecturers from the two private universities completed followership and job performance questionnaires. The data indicate that in Botswana private universities: (a) followership styles include passive, alienated, pragmatist and exemplary followership styles. The most common followership style among the lecturers is pragmatist followership style. (b) There is no relationship between exemplary, pragmatist and alienated followership styles and job performance (c) there is a high relationship between passive followership style and job performance.

Walia, Bansal & Mittal (2015) conducted a study entitled 'Relationship Between Leadership Style And Followership Style' to measure the relationship between leadership styles and followership style (i.e. Independent thinking and Active Engagement) using 79 usable questionnaires obtained from employees who are working in Delhi NCR, showed important findings by using Pearson Correlation analysis: first, the most preferred style of leadership is Participative leadership style; second, Exemplary style of followership is most preferred followership style; third, Participative leadership is not significantly correlated with Independent & Critical thinking.

Nejad et al. (2015) conducted a research study to compare different kinds of employees in terms of their job motivation and job

performance. The statistical population consists of 320 employees of various parts of an industrial organization in Iran who were selected through the stratified random sampling. The researchers employed valid tools and scales for assessing the variables of this study. The analysis of variance was used for data analysis. Findings show that there are significant differences between various followers in their job motivation and job performance and Scheffe follow-up tests revealed that exemplary and conformist followers had substantially higher numbers of these job outcomes than other followers. The researchers concluded that leaders and managers of an organization should regard the worthwhile roles of their followers in the achievement and productivity of the organization.

Mohammad & Saad (2016) conducted a study to examine how the followership was constructed and how identities were enacted within the 'power distance' culture. It is a qualitative study, utilizing in-depth interviews with 20 employees in the Malaysian higher education sector, using purposive sampling. Findings demonstrate that in higher 'power distance' culture, the followers were more of dependent type with subdued behaviors, high obedience to higher authority and conformity to the leaders' directives. In organizational studies, these prominent features need to be embraced appropriately so as not to be the inhibiting factors to the development of creative and innovative society, as has been laid out in the country's transformation plan and strategies to achieve the developed nation that is able to compete in the global arena.

In a questionnaire study that employed the Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis Ibrahimi (2016) sought to explore the perceptions of executive academic officers in a number of eight Malaysian universities regarding the followership styles as predictors



of developing effective leadership. Quality management system was introduced a mediating variable. A sample of 395 of the executive officers in eight Malaysian universities participated in the study. The results revealed statistically significant relationship between the followership styles and leadership development.

Al Mgheib (2016) examined the relationships between leadership styles, followership behavior and three work outcomes (job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and work engagement) in Libya. A deductive approach is employed, using a questionnaire to collect data from 667 participants, from 141 work groups, from across 24 Libyan public sector organizations. The findings suggest that followers with high levels of performance characteristics demonstrate positive attitudes of job satisfaction and work engagement, while those who have strong relationship characteristics are associated with positive levels of work engagement. It also suggests that followers' relationship characteristics alongside transformational leadership predict follower organizational commitment. The study suggests that managers should adopt an appropriate leadership style to achieve the desired follower work outcomes and organizations would benefit from investing in followership development to enhance these work outcomes. Specifically, followers should be educated on how their characteristics might affect not only their own performance, but also that of their leader. Finally, organizations should recruit employees who exhibit positive characteristics that enable them to be more engaged in their work when this behavior is desired for achieving the job task.

Behery (2016) called for a new conceptualization of leadership and organizational identity with the followership styles introduced as a mediating factor. A sample of 847 employees from different sectors

in the United Arab Emirates were administered three measures one to measure the transformational leadership acts, another for the followership styles and one of the organizational identity. The main result is that the 'exemplary' behavior adds value to the organizational success.

Oplatka & Arar's (2017) study aimed at analyzing the leadership and the educational management researches in the Arab world since 1990 on a sample of 48 documents, the results of these analyses indicate that the vast majority of research focus on the style of leadership methods, and the directions and the barriers that the leader is facing when applying the leadership Models.

Afshari, Moein, Sharifi-Rad & Balouchi (2017) carried out a comparison of leadership patterns using a descriptive approach. A questionnaire was distributed to 300 faculty members at Zabol University of Medical Sciences in Iran. The study didn't show any significant evidence that could be attributed to gender, but statistical differences that could be attributed to practical experience.

Munir & Iqbal (2018) conducted a study to identify the leadership styles of principals in colleges of women and to find out the relationship between leadership styles and level of job satisfaction. The data were collected by using the Survey method from the selected sample comprising 1005 college teachers from 100 colleges all over the Punjab in India. Leadership style was identified using leadership style questionnaire and job satisfaction was measured by using job satisfaction questionnaire. Data were analyzed with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics. The major findings revealed that democratic leadership style is the most practiced leadership style in women colleges and this style has a positive and significant correlation with job satisfaction.



The above review of research shows that the followership studies are still in an embryonic or at best in a nascent stage in Arabic scholarship and research. The present study converges with some other studies in investigating followership styles and their relationship with leadership styles. It benefited from other studies in the design of the study and the general framework and in benchmarking the results.

## Method

### Participants

The population of the study consisted of all academic staff at the private and public universities in Northern Jordan (Yarmouk, JUST, Irbid Private University, Jadara, AlAlbait, Philadelphia, Jerash Private University and Ajloun Private University). A random sample of 304 academic staff representing 10% of the population was selected. Table 1 displays the population and sample:

Table 1.

#### *Population and Sample of the Study*

<b>University</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Sample</b>
Yarmouk	1052 (33.9)	102 (33.6%)
JUST	994 (32%)	98 (32.3%)
Irbid Private University	80 (2.6%)	8(2.6%)
Jadara	137(4.4%)	14(4.6%)
Al-Bayt	266 (8.5%)	25(8.2%)
Philadelphia	282 (9.1%)	28(9.2%)
Jerash Private University	193 (6.2%)	19(6.2%)
Ajloun Private University	100 (3.2%)	10(3.3%)
	3104 (100%)	304(100%)

The figures in table 1 show an uneven distribution of the population and the sample as more than 50% are affiliated with the two core universities, Yarmouk and JUST both are public universities.

### **Method and Procedure**

Kelley's questionnaire (1992) was used for the followership styles. It consists of 20 items evenly distributed along two dimensions: critical thinking (items 1,5,11,12,14,16,17,18,19 and 20) and effectiveness (items 2,3,4,6,7,8,9,10,13, and 15). Stellar's questionnaire was used for the leadership styles. It consists of 30 items distributed on three dimensions: the autocratic (items 1,4,7,10,13,16,19,22,25 and 28) the democratic (items 2,5,8,11,14,17,20,23,26, and 29) and the empowering (items 3,6,9,12,15,18,21,24,27 and 30). Translation-Back-Translation was used to ensure the accuracy of language. Face validity was used to ensure that the instruments measure what they claim to measure. A panel of 13 academics of Jordanian and Qatar universities was requested to judge the suitability of the questionnaires and accuracy of language. The internal consistency of the instruments was tested through Cronbach Alpha. A pilot study of 20 academics of the population was administered the initial instruments. Cronbach Alpha ranged between (0.78 and 0.79) for the followership styles and (0.71-0.84) for the leadership styles which are adequate for the purposes of the study.

### **Data Analysis**

To answer the questions of this study these methods are used:

1. The items representing every particular dimension were computed, then represented in the figure of followership styles to identify the intersecting point between the two groups (X and Y axis). In the ideal situation the numerical value on both





axes represents the “exemplary” followership style; the numerical value  $> 35$  on the acting axis and  $< 25$  on the thinking axis represents the ‘conformist’ style. Values (25-35) represent the “pragmatic” style. Values  $> 35$  on the thinking axis and  $< 25$  on the acting axis represent the “alienated” style. Finally, values less than 25 on both axes represent the ‘passive’ style. Such as (40 on acting, 45 on thinking = Exemplary) or such (20 on acting, 40 on thinking = Alienated), Then Chi-Square Goodness of Fit was used to reveal the values for each style.

2. To answer the second question, the total number of paragraphs represented for each field was calculated, the type of the largest value obtained by each style was adopted and considered as the practiced style, then used The Chi-square ( $X^2$ ) Goodness of Fit to reveal the values for each style.
3. The third question was answered by computing the “agreement Coefficient” of followership styles and leadership styles.

## Results

Question number 1: What are the most followership styles practiced by academic staff as perceived by academic staff at the universities of Northern Jordan?

Table 2.

*Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Regarding Followership Styles*

F Styles	Observed N	%	Expected N	Residual	Standardized Residuals	DF	Chi- square	Sig.
1. Exemplary	272	89.4	60.8	211.2	27.31	1		
2. Passive	1	0.3	60.8	-59.8	-7.75	1		
3. Pragmatic	30	9.86	60.8	-30.8	-3.93	1	927.67	0.00
4. Alienated	1	0.3	60.8	-59.8	-7.75	1		
5. Conformist	0	0.0	60.8	-60.8	-7.87	0		
<b>Total</b>	304	100				4		

\* statistically significant = 0.05

The figures in Table 2 suggest that there is a statistically significant correlation relationship at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) between the observed and expected frequencies of the followership styles as tested by Chi Square Goodness of Fit. The computation of the standardized resultant points to significant difference between the observed and expected styles. The findings show that the exemplary behavior ranked first (89.4%), followed by the pragmatic style (9.86%) then the conformist, passive and alienated styles which were almost not prevailing.

Question 2: What are the most leadership styles practiced by academic leaders as perceived by academic staff at the universities of Northern Jordan?



Table 3.

*Frequencies, Percentages and Chi-Square Regarding Practiced Leadership Styles*

Leadership Styles	Observed N	%	Expected N	Residual	DF	Chi-square	Sig.
Autocratic	89	29.3	101.3	-12.3	1		
Democratic	93	30.6	101.3	-8.3	1	6.401	0.041*
Empowering	122	40.1	101.3	20.7	0		
Total	304	100			2		

\* statistically significant = 0.05

The figures displayed in Table 3 show that all leadership styles are practiced with different levels as follows: The empowering (39.4%), the democratic (30%) and the autocratic (28.7%). Chi-square results suggest that the discrepancy is statistically significant.

Question Number 3: Is there any statistically significant relationship between leadership styles and followership styles as perceived by academic staff at the universities of Northern Jordan?

Table 4.

*The Relationship Between Followership Styles and Leadership Styles*

		Followership Style	Exemplary	Passive	Pragmatic	Alienate	Conformist	Total
LS	Autocratic	Number	80	0	9	0	0	89
		%	26.3%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	29.3%
	Democratic	N	83	0	10	0	0	93
		%	27.3%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	30.6%
	Empowering	N	109	1	11	1	0	122
		%	35.9%	0.3%	3.6%	0.3%	0.0%	40.1%
Total		N	272	1	30	1	0	304
		%	89.5%	0.3%	9.9%	0.3%	0.0%	100.0%
X2		3.15						
Sig.		.789						

The figures given in table 4 show that there are no statistically significant differences between the followership and leadership styles.

**Discussion**

- 1- The first finding revealed by this study was that “a considerable percentage of participants replied that they project the “exemplary” style”, that is they reflect critically on and engage to their best in their work. This finding may be lent support by the findings of previous studies (Beever, 2008; Ammon, 2013). VanDoren (1998) found that 75% of the respondents used exemplary followership, 22% used a pragmatic style and 3% conformist style. Alienated or passive styles were not used. The finding of this study also lends support to the findings revealed by Ye’s study in Thailand (2009) regarding the followership styles reported by teachers at



Thailand International universities but the rank order was different. While the exemplary pattern ranked first in this study Ye's descending order of followership styles was as follows: the pragmatist, exemplary, conformist, alienated and finally passive. It is highly probable that the prevalence of the 'exemplary' behavior is the function of the academic profession being one of the most respected and service-oriented professions. The advanced education and preparation of academics is more likely to make them aware of and dedicated to their noble mission (Strong and Williams, 2014; Oyetunji, 2013). The pragmatic style came second, which is a logical result as it is not reasonable to expect all academics to be 'exemplary' all the time. Some people sometime are expected to be realistic with practical considerations. It could be that 'exemplary' does not mean necessarily "idealism" much less "over idealism". Generally speaking, this finding converges with the finding arrived at by Ibrahim (2016) who found that except for the 'conformist' all other followership styles are practiced with different levels.

- 2- The second finding was that "all three leadership styles are displayed by the academic leaders at the universities of Northern Jordan with different percentage". This finding comes in contrary to the main followership style namely the 'exemplary' style practiced by participants in this study". The likelihood is high that the participants gave an ideal picture of themselves but gave a more realistic picture of their leaders. Another possibility is that the 'role expectations' and 'reference groups' of both categories are different. Leaders are accountable before a higher echelon in the management therefore academic leaders have to balance 'democracy' and

'empowerment' with using 'power'-related mechanisms such as applying laws and bylaws. Expressed differently they use both the soft and hard power. This mixture of soft and hard power may reflect a gradual shift from the "colleagueship" model according to which universities were traditionally run to the recent 'managerialism corporate' model which is 'busnocratic' model that calls to manage universities as any other business (Tight, 2004). This finding converges with the finding revealed by Ye (2009) and Walai et al. (2015) who found that the most used leadership styles practiced by leaders were the participative, followed by the delegative then the autocratic.

- 3- The present study did not find any significant relationship between the followership and leadership styles. This finding is not congruent with the mainstream literature and research. Bjugstad et al. (2006) anchored his integrated model on matching followership styles to leadership styles. Johnson (2003) found a correlation between the leadership and followership style. Similarly, Uhl-bien et al. (2014) related the passive style of followers to the autocratic style of leaders and the exemplary style to the empowering style. Ye (2009) found that to some extent the autocratic leadership was likely to produce passive followers, participative leadership was likely to produce exemplary or pragmatist follower; delegative leadership was likely to produce pragmatist or conformist follower. Whatever the reason this issue needs further investigations.



### Recommendations

Based on the findings the researchers recommend:

- As the followership styles are still an under researched topic, despite its importance further research is needed using different methodologies and in different settings
- As followership is still under appreciated further research re-conceptualization should be reconsidered to remove the negative 'stigma' which has been attached to it
- As the finding did not show a significant relationship between followership and leadership styles further research is needed to articulate the relationship between followership and leadership styles.

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## APPENDIX

Follower's behavior styles						
	Paragraph	Always	Usually	Sometime	Rarely	Never
1	Does your involvement help you fulfill some societal goal or personal dream that is important to you.					
2	Are your personal goals aligned with your student organization's priority goals.					
3	Are you highly committed to and energized by your involvement and organization, giving them your best ideas and performance.					
4	Does your enthusiasm also spread to and energize your peers.					
5	Instead of waiting for or merely accepting what the leader tells you, do you personally identify which organizational activities are most critical for achieving the organization's priority goals.					
6	Do you actively develop a distinctive competence in those critical activities so that you become more valuable to the organization and its leaders.					
7	When starting a new job or assignment, do you promptly build a record of successes that are important to the organization and its leaders.					
8	Can the leader of your organization give you a difficult assignment without the benefit of much supervision, knowing you					

	will meet your deadline with high-quality work.					
9	Do you take the initiative to seek out and successfully complete assignments that go above and beyond your role.					
10	When you are not the leader of a project, do you still contribute at a high level, often doing more than your share.					
11	Do you independently think of and champion new ideas that will contribute significantly to the organization's goals.					
12	Do you try to solve the tough problems (technical, organizational, etc) rather than look to the leader to do it for you.					
13	Do you help your peers, making them look good, even when you don't get any credit.					
14	Do you help the leader or organization see both the upside potential and downside risks of ideas or plans, playing the devil's advocate if needed.					
15	Do you understand the leader's needs, goals, and constraints, and work hard to meet them					
16	Do you actively and honestly own up to your strengths and weaknesses rather than put off evaluation					
17	Do you make a habit of internally questioning the wisdom of the leader's decision rather than just doing what you are told.					
18	When the leader asks you to do something that runs contrary to your preferences, do you say "no" rather than "yes".					





19	Do you act on your own ethical standards rather than the leader's or the group's standards					
20	Do you assert your views in important issues, even though it might mean conflict with your group or leader					
Leaders' behavior styles						
	Paragraph	Always	Usually	Sometime	Rarely	Never
1	My Boss retains decision-making authority in his inner circle.					
2	My boss tries to involve one or more of us in decision-making while retaining ultimate decision-making power.					
3	We and the boss vote when major decisions are made.					
4	My boss ignores our suggestions.					
5	My boss asks us to make suggestions and ideas for the future plans and projects.					
6	Major decisions must have the approval of the majority of us.					
7	My boss tells us what to do and how to do it.					
8	My boss calls for meeting to listen to our advice when things go in the wrong direction.					
9	In order to activate participation in the opinion, my boss uses e-mail, voice mail and memos.					
10	When things do not go as my boss wants, he informs us and record his remarks.					

11	My boss affords a key working environment where we feel that the project and the decision are ours.					
12	Our boss allows us to decide what to do and how.					
13	Our boss prevents the new staff to do initiative actions in the workplace.					
14	My boss seeks to know our work vision and take it in his consideration.					
15	My boss realizes that we know about our job more than him, so he leaves us to make decision about our work.					
16	When things do not go as my boss requires, he makes a new plan and commits us to do it.					
17	Our boss allows us to set priorities under his guidance.					
18	My boss delegates duties to us to carry out the work.					
19	My boss is observing how things are going to make sure we do the job.					
20	When our boss's vision differs from ours, we work together to resolve the dispute.					
21	Our boss gives us full responsibility to decide our duties.					
22	The main power is vested in him by his career name.					
23	My boss uses his vested power to help us develop.					
24	My boss prefers sharing power with his employee.					
25	My boss directs the employee to achieve the organizational objectives.					
26	My boss prefers self-management if we committed to work objective.					



27	My boss realizes that it's our right to decide our organizational goals.					
28	My boss thinks that things do not go on the right route without him.					
29	My boss realizes that we know how to use our potential to solve organizational problems.					
30	My boss sees that we can lead ourselves as well as.					