

Developing Global-Ready Leaders in Egyptian Multinational Companies: Exploring Experiences of Leaders Through Blended Experiential Learning

Ashraf Elsafty¹ & Peter Mounir Melek²

¹ Chair Professor, Eslsca University, Egypt

² Peter Mounir Melek, MBA, ESLSCA University, DBA Candidate, GUC University, Petalent Co., Founder/ HR consultant, Cairo, Egypt

Correspondence: Ashraf Elsafty, DBA, MBA, B.Sc, Chair Professor, Eslsca University, Egypt. E-mail: ashraf.elsafty@eslscu.edu.eg; ashraf@ashrafelsafty.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9377-7286>

Received: January 26, 2026

Accepted: March 4, 2026

Online Published: March 12, 2026

doi:10.5430/ijba.v17n1p55

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijba.v17n1p55>

Abstract

Leadership competencies represent a critical function in the achievement of multinational companies, an effective decision-making and adaptability are essential for all companies, and for leaders. Egyptian multinational companies face demanding situations in developing leadership competencies that align with growing organizational demands. The traditional training methods often fail to offer the analytical abilities needed for effective decision making or strategic thinking, and group leadership. This research examines how blended experiential learning is perceived to influence leadership competency development, focusing on a key learning approach consisting of offline learning, micro learning, gamification, simulations, coaching and mentoring. Existing literature supports the effectiveness of the blended experiential learning in improving leadership development. The immersive learning environments enable leaders to navigate complex challenges more effectively. This study explores the leadership competency development through the combination of blended experiential learning which complements the leadership framework of multinational companies and bridging the gap between theoretical expertise and practical application. The theoretical framework used is the integrated leadership development model as a holistic approach to provide insights into how groups can improve and enhance leadership development programs to build future leaders. Using qualitative analysis to highlight how leadership develops and transfers across industries using 15 semi-structured interviews. The study used a hybrid framework, combining framework analysis, reflexive thematic, and content analysis. Three cross-case issues emerged: supported development of blended learning competencies, guided experiential learning, and culture-embedded competencies. Findings suggest that resources and managerial assistance strengthen blended techniques, guided experiential learning, and cultural reinforcement embeds competencies into everyday behavior.

Keywords: experiential learning, organizational support, leadership competency development

1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of Egypt's multinational groups, the establishment of effective leadership is very important. Traditional training methods often fall short in addressing the complex challenges that these corporations face. Blended experiential learning, which integrates online training methods with practical methods, actual and real-world cases, has emerged as a promising approach to improve leadership competencies, this type of learning is important for preparing leaders for success. This research aims to explore how blended experiential learning influence the leadership competency development within Egypt's multinational corporations, employing the Nine Elements model to offer a comprehensive evaluation (Elsafty., 2020).

Egyptian multinational companies operate across multiple sectors, which include categories such as infrastructure, industrial, and the commercial projects. As the landscape of these companies evolves, they face growing demands for leadership adaptability and innovation. Multinational businesses have become key drivers of economic development and globalization in rising markets, which include Egypt. As firms operating in multiple countries, multinational corporations contribute to host economies by transferring capital, technology, and managerial knowledge while

fostering employment and economic diversification (Dunning & Lundan, 2008). In current years, the Egyptian government has implemented widespread economic reforms, supported by global financial establishments, to enhance the investment climate and attract overseas direct funding (FDI). These reforms include currency liberalization, tax incentives, and the establishment of special economic zones such as Suez Canal economic zone (OECD, 2020).

As a result, prominent multinational organizations expanded their presence in Egypt, investing in sectors such as energy, fast-moving consumer goods, telecommunications, and manufacturing (GAFI, 2022). The operations of multinational companies in Egypt have played a transformative role by improving productivity, modernizing industries, and integrating local businesses into global supply chains (World Bank, 2022). Furthermore, those organizations make a contribution to human capital development through education, information transfer, and professional improvement applications for nearby employees. Nevertheless, their presence raises challenges including labor market competition, cultural integration, and compliance with evolving regulatory frameworks (UNCTAD, 2023). The traditional methods and strategies for leadership development, such as in-class training may not fully prepare leaders for the complexities of managing projects, workforce dynamics, and regulatory compliance. Implementing blended experiential learning requires an organizational culture that values continuous learning and is open to adopting innovative training approaches (Bersin, 2004). Combining hands-on experience, mentorship, and virtual training may provide a more effective means of enhancing leadership competencies within the organization (Kolb D. A., 2015).

The management function within multinational companies is essential for operating groups toward their strategic goals. These functions depend on the size of the organization, as smaller companies may not have all functions that larger companies possess. Managers are responsible and accountable for planning, organizing, leading, and controlling resources efficiently, and ensuring management objectives are achieved as per the management functions (Fayol, 1949). Leaders are responsible for ensuring the project execution, engaging stakeholders, and overseeing overall financial performance. However, a significant challenge exists in preparing middle-level and senior managers with the critical leadership competencies necessary to navigate increasingly competitive and dynamic industries (Northouse, 2021). Companies that implement blended experiential learning can improve key leadership competencies including the strategic thinking, decision making, problem solving, emotional intelligence, and people management, these competencies can be a very critical for effective leadership inside multinational companies, these competencies are critical for effective leadership within multinational companies, and they vary according to the company's strategy, timing, and the specific competencies required for each strategy.

Leadership competency development plays a critical role at all organizational levels, from supervisory roles to top management, faces challenges that require customize development programs (Rabin, 2013). Leadership development in multinational companies must be addressed at more than one organizational level, to prepare the second line for each level. Proficiency in leadership is essential and competencies must align with the company's vision and the long-term objectives to achieve sustained success. Middle managers also play a crucial role in executing strategies and bridging communication between executives and the employees. Project managers, site supervisors, and the team leaders also require leadership training to maintain problem-solving and decision-making skills, though at different proficiency levels than senior executives. Implementing blended experiential learning across all these levels will enhance leadership competency development address skill gaps and improve the management effectiveness throughout the organization (Yukl G., 2019). By providing specific learning programs for each leadership level, organizations can ensure a consolidated leadership development strategy that aligns with overall organizational goals (Morgan W., 2010).

Blended experiential learning expose leaders to real world case situations helping to develop their leadership abilities. The HR department should integrate leadership development with the talent management cycle ensuring that high potential employees receive practical learning opportunities that complement traditional training (Armstrong, 2020). Leaders in all business functions must possess competencies that allow them to manage resources optimally, drive innovation, and respond to market changes, as volatile market conditions affect resource allocation (McCauley C. e., 2013). For example, leaders in the marketing department can participate in simulations that expand their knowledge of consumer behavior, digital marketing and strategic brand management, while leaders in supply chain management can benefit from scenarios that enhance strategic logistics planning and risk management skills (Sharma, 2010).

There are many challenges in Egypt, for multinational companies operating in Egypt such as, political instability, highly fluctuating economic conditions, and regulatory adjustments influence business operations (World Bank,

2023). Blended experiential learning can prepare leaders with situational adaptability and crisis management skills.

Traditional training methods are not sufficient to address company challenges including supply chain disruptions, skilled labor shortage and sustainability concerns. Integrating blended experiential learning allows for the customization of content to align with industry needs, ensuring that leaders develop capabilities relevant to their area, certainly the blended experiential learning provides this opportunity to leaders. This targeted approach complements the application of learning outcomes, enabling leaders to deal with enterprise specific challenges effectively and drive their teams toward sustainable success (Schwalbe, 2022).

Several external factors influence leadership competency development in multinational companies, including technological advancement, regulatory frameworks, and Market trends. The rise of virtual transformation in learning, calls for leaders can manage resources efficiently (McKinsey, 2021). Blended experiential learning programs can incorporate modules that address these external factors, equipping leaders with the skills and adaptability to navigate them effectively. By understanding and anticipating changes in the external environment, leaders can develop proactive strategies to mitigate risks and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

The internal environment consists of organizational culture, employee demographics, internal processes, and technological infrastructure. A supportive internal environment is essential for the successful implementation of blended experiential learning programs. Modern and dynamic organizations follow any processes to identify threats, opportunities, weaknesses, and strength (Weihrich, 1982). Internally, multinational companies face challenges related to skilled employee retention, diversity, and organizational culture. A strong leadership pipeline is crucial for maintaining organizational stability and increasing employee engagement, but traditional leadership training methods and strategies may not effectively address the real global changes faced by employees in the business setting. By integrating experiential learning strategies including mentorship programs, job rotation, and simulation, companies can foster a more agile and adaptive leadership workforce (Goleman, D, 2013).

Given the rapid evolution of the business environment and growing investment, the demand for effective leadership development is urgent. Delayed implementation of blended experiential learning may result in leadership gaps, decreased project efficiency, and reduced competitive advantage. A structured timeline for implementing these methods, along with applications, exams, assessments and full-scale deployment, is essential for ensuring long-term success. The effectiveness of blended experiential learning must be continuously evaluated within a defined timeline to explore how it relates to leadership competencies and organizational performance. This enables the company to adapt management development techniques in response to emerging trend and challenges, ensuring that leaders remain capable and competitive in a dynamic marketplace (Kotter, 2018).

1.1 Research Problem

Multinational companies in Egypt operate in a complex and dynamic environment that demands leaders with superior, adaptable, and globally relevant abilities. Traditional leadership development programs often rely closely on theory, lacking practical relevance, and fail to adequately put together leaders for real-world organizational demanding situations. While blended experiential learning is increasingly utilized in leadership programs, corporations regularly lack clarity on how this method contributes to the development and transfer of management talents across different industries. This misalignment limits the effectiveness of leadership development initiatives and constrains their contribution to organizational performance.

1.2 Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of leaders in Egyptian multinational companies and how blended experiential learning contributes to their development as global ready leaders. Specifically, the study aimed to explore how leaders understand blended experiential learning to improve their leadership competencies, connect theoretical knowledge with practical application and support the transfer of these competencies to different organizational contexts.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 How do leaders of Egyptian multinational companies experience blended experiential learning in relation to their leadership development?

1.3.2 How do leaders perceive blended learning as supporting the development and transfer of leadership competencies?

1.3.3 How do organizational support, culture, and engagement shape leaders' experiences of competency development?

1.3.4 How do assessment, feedback, competency frameworks, and evaluation processes influence leaders' perceptions of their learning and development?

1.3.5 How do leaders describe the ways in which these factors contribute to sustainable and effective leadership practices in multinational organizational contexts?

1.4 Theoretical and Empirical Background

Effective leadership is essential as it's become one of the top priorities for organizational success, and modern methods like experiential learning, gamification, and microlearning enhance leadership development (Tianshi Hao, 2024). This literature review explores how these strategies influence leadership competency development, emphasizing the rules of learner engagement, assessment and feedback and organizational support.

Cumberland et al. (2016) emphasize the evaluation and enhancement of leadership capabilities on the workplace, highlighting the growing need for experiential learning processes. This study focuses on the role of hands-on experiences, cross cultural exposure, and leadership simulations in fostering the critical leadership competencies. Moreover, the study aligns with the perspective that industry specific challenges influence leadership development needs. The overview underscores the importance of integrating competency-based frameworks to develop effective leaders in a volatile and rapidly changing international business environment (Cumberland, 2016). A growing body of research emphasizes the significance of approaching leadership development as a holistic and integrative process that simultaneously supports individual leader and the broader management systems within organizations (Schwartz & Bilimoria, 2021). They propose a comprehensive model that views leader and management development not as isolated efforts but as interconnected processes shaped by personal growth, relational dynamics, and organizational context. This model underscores the importance of self-awareness, continuous learning, and the co-construction of meaning between leaders and followers, suggesting that effective leadership development must extend beyond traditional training programs.

Leadership development research highlights the importance of interpersonal competencies, feedback mechanisms, and organizational support in shaping effective leaders (Day et al., 2014; Boyatzis, 2006). These studies also, highlight Kolb's experiential learning model which is central to this study, as it incorporates reflection, feedback, and active learning through experience (Kolb D. A., 1984).

Coates (2013) proposes the Integrated Leadership Development (ILD) model, which integrates strategic alignment, competency frameworks, experiential getting to know, blended learning strategies, and continuous evaluation to support leadership capability development (Coates, 2013).

Another leadership development model, the leader identity development (LID) model suggests that leadership is not merely a role, but an evolving aspect of identity, interpersonal skills, self-concept, shaped through social validation (Day, 2014). Additionally, the role of 360-degree feedback and intentional change theory is emphasized in leadership development (Boyatzis, 2006).

Leadership development is most effective when it is continuous, socially embedded, and aligned with both individual and organizational growth. The literature indicates that leadership extend beyond traditional skill sets, requiring the ability to navigate cultural complexity, think strategically across borders, and adapt behavior a cross diver's context. These scholars argue that a mindset characterized by openness, cognitive complexity, and cultural empathy is foundational for effective global leadership, and that these skills are best advanced through immersive, experiential learning (Osland, 2012).

The 70–20–10 model suggests that leadership capability develops primarily through challenging job experiences (70%), developmental relationships (20%), and formal training (10%) (Lombardo & Eichinger, 1996).

Blended experiential learning combines face-to-face and digital learning strategies, allowing leaders to apply theoretical knowledge in practice, thereby enhancing talent acquisition, engagement, and retention (Brown, 2011). The debate continues over whether management can be effectively discovered in class room settings or through experience (Allio, 2005). Prior research indicates that combining on-line and experiential learning enhances engagement and skill development (Hiasat, 2018). The effectiveness of experiential learning also depends on individual differences (Waller, 2017).

Integrating online and face-to-face learning approaches enhances accessibility, engagement, and performance while also supporting organizational sustainability. Blended learning further promotes critical thinking, problem solving and strategic thinking (Caird & Roy, 2019).

Raver, Ledford, and Norton (2022) highlight the need to develop not only emerging leaders but also those

responsible for nurturing leadership talent. Emphasizing continuous rather than one-time training fosters sustainable, and effective leadership, supporting evidence that blended experiential learning enhances leadership development through active engagement and practical application (Thomas, 2024).

Similarly, Machida and Shaubrochek (2011) argue that a high level of self-confidence enables leaders to undertake challenging tasks, and pursue development opportunities. In addition, self-directed learning fosters a growth-oriented mindset (Machida & Schaubroeck, 2011).

Wahat, Krauss, and Othman (2013) emphasize workplace learning as a key driver of leadership development in Malaysian organizations. Kolb's experiential learning cycle vertical (experience and reflection) and horizontal (observation and experimentation) dimensions when combined with mentoring, job rotations, and reflection, enhances leaders' adaptability, problem-solving, and decision-making skills (Kolb, 1984; Wahat, 2013). Simulation-primarily based training further supports leadership development across all organizational levels and functions (Salas, 2016).

Microlearning approaches have also been used in leadership training to deliver short, competency-focused learning interventions that support continuous development (Zhang, 2019). Microlearning has been widely recognized for its ability to improve learner engagement and knowledge retention among professionals, making it a valuable tool for leadership development within organization (Taylor, 2022). Microlearning modules enhance workplace performance by delivering applicable content material in a structured and accessible manner. The effectiveness of microlearning lies in its flexibility, personalization, and just in-time delivery, which enable leaders to develop competencies without disrupting their workflow.

Organizational support plays a critical role in enhancing leadership development within organizations. Longenecker (2018) identifies key practices for senior leaders to strengthen leadership development, including demonstrating commitment, implementing leadership development strategies, allocating resources, fostering a learning culture, and modeling appropriate behaviors (Longenecker, 2018). These practices improve the legitimacy of authority, enhance engagement in the development process, increase commitment and reduced dysfunctional behaviors (Kanat-Maymon, 2018). Both transformational leadership and organizational support undoubtedly affect employee empowerment.

Tan et al. (2019) examine the relationship between ethical leadership, perceived organizational support and leaders' behaviors, demonstrating how leaders who show ethical behavior promote a supportive organizational environment, thereby increasing employees' confidence in organizational support. This study reinforces the role of employee behaviors that benefits the business (Tan, et al., 2019). Collectively, these studies underscore the important role of organizational support in fostering effective leadership development. Organizational support is categorized under strategic alignment within the ILD model (Lombardo & Eichinger, 1996).

2. Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive qualitative research design to explore and understand how leaders experience blended experiential learning, organizational support and culture & engagement and how these experiences relate to the development of leadership competencies in multinational companies operating in Egypt. This design is appropriate for illustrating existing practices, perceptions, and competency development without introducing experimental manipulation (Saunders & Thornhill, 2019).

2.1 Population and Sampling

The population of this research consists of leaders and managers operating in multinational companies operating in Egypt across diverse sectors such as construction, real estate, technology, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, banking, and telecommunications. Multinational companies have been selected because they commonly adopt established leadership development programs that combine blended and experiential learning techniques to enhance management competencies (Allio, 2005; McCauley et al., 2010). The sampling criteria focused on individuals who have participated in or supervised leadership or expertise development applications within their organizations, as they possess firsthand experience relevant to the study's objectives. A purposive sampling method was employed to ensure that participants had direct exposure to leadership practices and could provide contextually rich insights to explore how blended experiential learning relates to the development of leadership competencies in international settings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

Data for this study were collected through semi-structured interviews with 15 leaders and managers in multinational companies operating in Egypt. Participants had been recruited purposively through the researcher's LinkedIn contacts, primarily based on their managerial roles and involvement in leadership development applications. Each

participant turned into invited to participate voluntarily, and all interviews have been conducted through Zoom meetings to deal with participants' schedules and locations. The interviews lasted approximately 45-60 minutes and had been recorded with participants consent. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim, supplying textual facts suitable for qualitative analysis and allowing for in-depth insights into how leadership competencies develop and transfer across industries. Illustrative in Table 1.

2.2 Qualitative Research Design

This study follow qualitative analysis examines how leadership capabilities develop and transfer across industries using 15 semi-structured interviews. The study applied a hybrid analysis framework analysis to organize data against integrated leadership development model domains (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994), Reflexive Thematic Analysis to interpret patterns (Braun & Clarke ,2006), and Content Analysis to summarize coverage and code co-occurrences (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Three cross-case themes emerged: (1) Supported blended practice (2) Guided Experiential practice; (3) Culture Embedded Competencies. Findings suggest that time, resources, and manager sponsorship are associated with the perceived benefits of blended methods; feedback structures convert experiential assignments into guided improvement; and cultural reinforcement enables competency models to shape daily behavior. Implications include protecting time/resources, embedding feedback checkpoints, and pairing competency frameworks with psychological safety and recognition.

2.3 Qualitative Structured Interview Questions Linked to Variables

Table 1. Research Questions and Measured Themes

Qualitative Question	Measured Variable
1. Can you share an experience where you had to lead a team? What did you learn about yourself as a leader? (McCauley C. D., 2004).	Leadership competency development
2. How has your leadership style evolved over time through your professional experiences and organizational programs? (Yukl G. &, 2004)	
Experiential Learning (Kolb D. A., 1984).	
3. Describe how the learning experience allowed you to practice leadership in real situations	Experiential Learning
4. Can you describe a hands-on learning experience that shaped or enhanced your leadership abilities?	
Blended Learning (Garrison, 2008).	
5. How did combining online and face-to-face elements improved your leadership development?	Blended Learning
6. What aspects of blended learning (flexibility, interaction, feedback) were most effective in enhancing your leadership development?	
Assessment & Feedback (Yukl G., 2004).	
7. Can you share how feedback from managers or peers influenced your competency development?	Assessment & Feedback
8. Do you feel that performance assessments in your organization help you grow professionally? Why or why not?	
Organizational Support (Schein E. H., 2010).	
9. In what ways did the organization's culture support or hinder your leadership growth?	Organizational Support
10. Can you share an example when organizational support enabled you to overcome a professional challenge or achieve a goal?	
Competency Framework (CIPD, 2019).	
11. Was there a clear structure or framework guiding your development?	

How did it help?	Competency Framework
12. How clear are the leadership or job competencies expected of you in your role, and how were they communicated?	
Measurement & Evaluation (Yukl G., 2004).	
13. How did evaluations or assessments help you track your leadership progress?	Measurement & Evaluation
14. Can you recall any post-training evaluations? How did they influence or inform your ongoing leadership development?	
Culture & Engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2002).	
15. How engaged did you feel during the learning program, and did this affect your competency growth?	Culture & Engagement
16. What role does employee engagement play in driving leadership behaviors in your team or department?	

2.4 Theoretical Framework

While previous studies have examined experiential learning, blended learning, organizational support, corporate culture, assessment & feedback in the context of leadership development (Kolb, 1984; Dai & Ryan, 1985; Lombardo & Eichinger, 1996; McCauley, 2004; Hug, 2005; Hao, 2024) this research adopts a descriptive approach, using a selected theoretical model. This study aligns specific predictions of the integrated leadership development model (ILD) with each component as it represents a holistic approach widely used in leadership development and the variables of this study are included in this model (Lombardo & Eichinger, 1996).

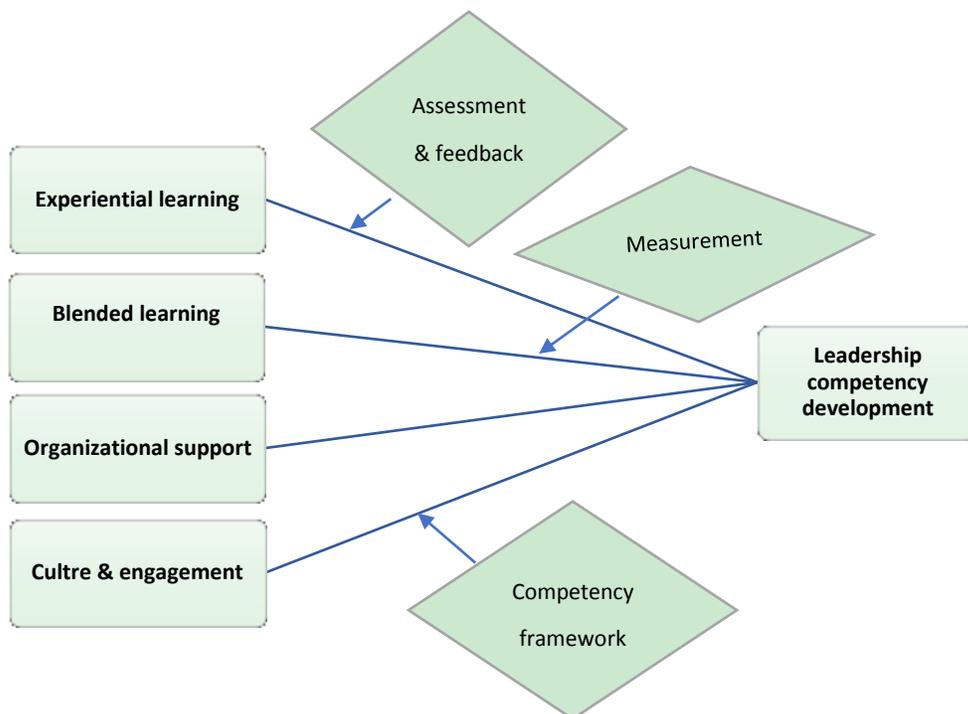


Figure 1. Theoretical framework for leadership competency development (adapted based on Lombardo & Eichinger) (Lombardo & Eichinger, 1996)

3. Results

3.1 Analytic Strategy

15 semi-structured interviews with leaders from multinational companies operating in Egypt were analyzed using a reflexive thematic approach. The analysis targeted on understanding how participants defined their leadership development experiences within blended experiential learning contexts. Through iterative coding and evaluation across interviews, recurring patterns have been diagnosed and organized into coherent issues. The analytic procedure become documented through an audit path, and interest changed into given to divergent accounts to strengthen interpretive credibility.

3.2 Supported Blended Transfer

Participants described blended experiential learning as most significant whilst it became supported through sufficient time, organizational resources, and energetic managerial sponsorship. Rather than viewing learning as a discrete event, leaders emphasized the importance of sustained engagement that allowed them to experiment, reflect, and adapt their leadership practices over the years. The combination of in-person workshops, digital learning, and applied real activities turned into perceived as in particular effective in allowing this continuity. Several members explained that organizational support created the situations essential for behavioral alternate. One manufacturing-sector leader reflected on a shift away from micromanagement toward an extra empowering leadership style, noting that publicity to dependent learning and practical application helped them trust their teams and focus on developing problem-solving capabilities. Others highlighted the flexibility of blended learning formats, particularly in multinational environments characterized by heavy workloads and common travel. A technology-sector participant defined that asynchronous online learning allowed persevered development without disrupting operational obligations, whilst face-to-face sessions provided possibilities for deeper reflection and peer exchange.

3.3 Guided Experiential Practices

Experiential learning activities were consistently described as imperative to leadership development, especially when they were accompanied by means of structured feedback and reflection. Participants emphasized that real-world demanding situations together with main complex projects, managing uncertainty, or coordinating across features created possibilities to apply leadership concepts in exercise. These experiences have been often defined as intense and demanding, yet rather developmental.

A construction-sector participant mentioned coping with an unexpected design mission in the course of a large-scale projects, which required fast stakeholder alignment and decision-making underneath pressure. Such situations were defined as moments where leadership theories have become tangible and actionable. However, participants stressed that experiential learning alone was inadequate. Feedback mechanisms, consisting of post-application tests and supervisor evaluations, were regarded as important for making sense of those reviews. One telecommunications leader referred to that follow-up comments helped them recognize regions for development and encouraged continued refinement in their leadership approach.

3.4 Culture-Embedded Competencies

Participants also highlighted the position of organizational culture in shaping how leadership competencies were sustained over the years. Competency frameworks provided a shared language for leadership expectations, at the same time as supportive and attractive cultures reinforced the consistent application of those behaviors. Leaders defined how alignment among competency models and organizational values made leadership development experience applicable and embedded in daily work rather than disconnected.

Engagement emerged as an outcome and a motive force of leadership practice. Participants defined that when teams felt engaged, leaders had been greater influenced to lead by using instance and continue to be conscious of the impact of their conduct. One participant reflected on how their own energy and attitude prompted group dynamics, reinforcing the reciprocal nature of leadership and engagement within multinational settings.

3.5 Synthesis of Findings and Emergent Model

Taken together, the findings illustrate leadership development as a dynamic and socially embedded process formed shaped by learning experiences, organizational conditions, and reflective practices. Blended experiential learning provided opportunities for practical engagement, even as organizational support, feedback, and cultural alignment stimulated how leadership competencies were evolved and transferred across roles and contexts.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the model derived from the qualitative analysis integrates those factors to reflect how leadership development unfolded in participants' lived experiences. Rather than representing a linear process, the

model captures the interconnected nature of experiential learning, organizational support, and competency enactment within multinational companies operating in Egypt.

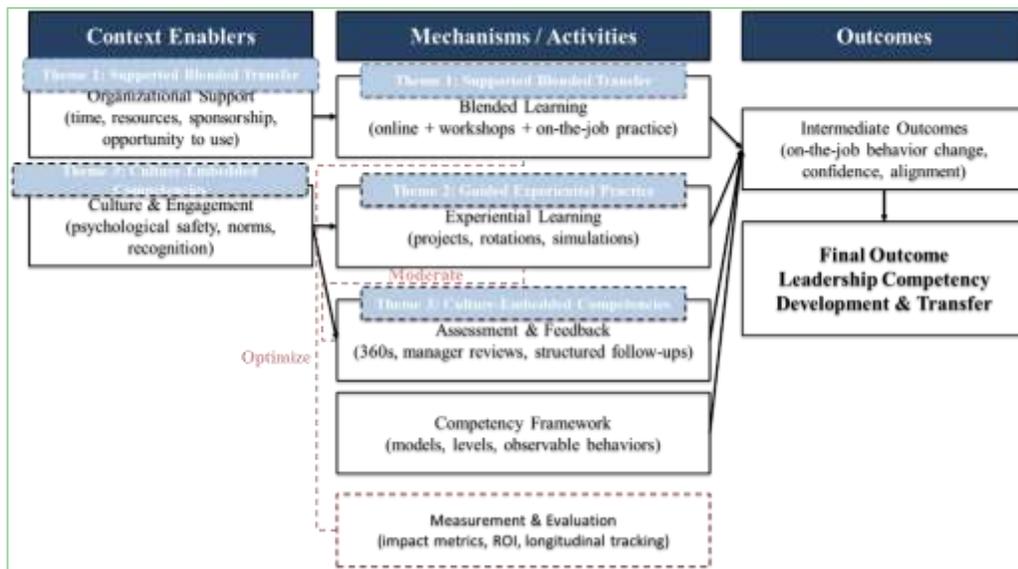


Figure 2. Data-Driven Model Illustrating Leadership Competency Development Pathways Identified Through Qualitative Analysis

4. Discussion

Leadership competency development in multinational organizations emerges as a process shaped by the interaction between learning mechanisms and organizational context. The findings support the Integrated Leadership Development (ILD) model with the aid of showing that leadership competencies develop most effectively when learning is experiential and embedded in real managerial practices. Activities including simulations, coaching, and structured reflection enabled participants to translate theoretical principles into realistic decision-making, allowing them to check leadership approaches and regulate their behavior based on observed outcomes. This suggests that experiential learning functions as a mechanism through which abstract leadership concepts become operational within complex organizational environments.

Beyond learning design, the organizational context played a decisive role in shaping development outcomes. Participants emphasized that managerial sponsorship, team culture, and access to developmental resources prompted whether newly acquired competencies could be applied in practice. This indicates that leadership development initiatives depend not only on program quality but also on the presence of supportive organizational conditions that inspire experimentation and learning transfer. In environments in such support was limited, the practical impact of leadership learning regarded constrained.

Evaluation and feedback processes similarly strengthened feedback processes development by promoting reflection and self-awareness. Rather than functioning completely as performance assessment tools, competency frameworks and feedback mechanisms helped participants identify functionality gaps and monitor their progress over time. This indicates that developmental assessment structures make contributions to leadership growth by means of guiding continuous learning and facilitating the gradual integration of new behaviors into managerial practice.

Taken together, the findings conceptualize leadership development as an iterative procedure combining experiential learning, supportive organizational systems, and reflective evaluation. Within multinational environments characterized by complexity and cultural diversity, blended experiential learning seems particularly relevant as it permits ongoing learning even as remaining carefully linked to managerial realities. These insights extend existing leadership development studies by illustrating how integrated learning approaches can support the preparation of globally capable leaders within multinational companies.

4.1 Areas for Future Research

Future research should study how leadership development themes vary throughout industries, as contextual elements may also shape the relative importance of blended practice, experiential learning, and culture-embedded competencies. Leadership competency emphasis varies across industries, showing how each industry emphasized specific sub-theme for instance, stronger attention to assessment and feedback in sectors with formal review structures. Building on those findings, future studies are recommended to conduct comparative analyses throughout industries to validate these styles and to expand tailor-made leadership development processes that align with sector-specific needs.

5. Conclusion

This study underscores the critical role of experiential and blended learning, organizational support, and culture and engagement in advancing leadership development within multinational companies in Egypt. Through a qualitative approach, the research provides nuanced insights into how managers perceive and experience these factors in their organizational context. Findings reveal that integrating theoretical knowledge with practical real-world experiences enables managers to increase essential competencies, inclusive of strategic thinking, decision-making, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, and people management.

Furthermore, structured assessment and feedback, in shaping competency frameworks and measurement and evaluation, which help to ensure that leadership development initiatives are aligned with the organization's goals and achieve meaningful results. Using a holistic approach based on the Integrated Leadership Development (ILD) model, multinational companies can systematically improve leadership skills at all management levels, from supervisors to managers.

Overall, this research demonstrates that contextually applicable, continuous, and experiential learning practices are essential for fostering a flexible, adaptive, and high performing executive workforce capable of navigating complex and dynamic business environments. These qualitative insights provide practical guidance for businesses designing leadership development programs which can be both effective and tailored to real-world challenges (Nowell et al., 2017). While the findings are context-specific, they highlight potential pathways for leadership development and offer a foundation for future research to discover their applicability throughout different organizational settings and industries (Yukl, 2013; Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Acknowledgments

We greatly appreciate the valuable contributions of our participants, sharing and exerting time to share required data.

Authors' contributions

Ashraf Elsafty was responsible for full supervision, guidance, reviews throughout paper development, originality, conceptualization, methodology development, validation, data revisions, and project administration.

Peter Mounir Melek was responsible for paper development, writing/editing, literature review, data curation, data collection, data analysis, visualization, discussion, conclusions, and paper formatting with references needed.

Funding

This work received no funds from any party, yet fully funded by researchers.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of Sciedu Press.

The journal and publisher adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

Open access

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

References

- Allio, R. J. (2005). Leadership development: Teaching versus learning. *Management Decision*, 43, 1071-1077. <https://doi.org/10.1108/00251740510610071>
- Anning, D. T. (2021). Organizational culture and leadership as antecedents to organizational flexibility: Implications for SME competitiveness. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 13(5), 1309-1325. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEEE-08-2020-0288>
- Armstrong, M. (2020). *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice* (15th ed.). Kogan Page. Retrieved from https://books.google.com/eg/books/about/Armstrong_s_Handbook_of_Human_Resource_M.html?id=g7zEDwAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y
- Bank, W. (2022). *Egypt economic monitor: Navigating through the crisis*. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/egypt/publication/egypt-economic-monitor>
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1995). *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Manual*. Redwood City: Mind Garden.
- Bersin, J. (2004). *The blended learning book: Best practices, proven methodologies, and lessons learned*. Pfeiffer.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (2006). Developing sustainable leaders through coaching and compassion. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 5(1), 8-24. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2006.20388381>
- Brown, K. G. (2011). Training and employee development for improved performance. In *APA Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Vol. 2: Selecting and developing members for the organization* (pp. 469-503). American Psychological Association.
- Caird, S., & Roy, R. (2019). Blended learning and sustainable development. *Encyclopedia of sustainability in higher education*.
- CIPD. (2019). *Leadership Development: Research and Practice*. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
- Coates, D. (2013). Integrated leadership development programmes: Are they effective and what role does coaching play?. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, 5(7), 39-55.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2017). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Cumberland, D. M. (2016). Assessing the Development of Leadership Competency: Perceptions of a Leadership Training Program. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 18(4), 461-477. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Denise-Cumberland/publication/301915607_Assessment_and_Development_of_Global_Leadership_Compencies_in_the_Workplace_A_Review_of_Literature/links/5c5c985092851c48a9c17e3f/Assessment-and-Development-of-Global-Leadershi
- Day, D. V. (2014). Advances in leader and leadership development: A review of 25 years of research and theory. *The*

Leadership Quarterly, 25(1), 63-82.

- Dunning, J. H., & Lundan, S. M. (2008). *Multinational enterprises and the global economy* (2nd ed.). Edward Elgar.
- Elsafty, A. (2020, March 28). *Research Design. Purpose 1/6. Research Methods*. Youtube. Retrieved from https://youtu.be/Mex5S18i_Ew?si=rz-gXxxHctGZThcz
- Elsafty, A., & Oraby, M. (2024). The Impact of Training on Employee Retention: An Empirical Research on the Private Sector in Egypt. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 17(5), 58-74. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v17n5p58>
- Elsafty, A., El Sayad, H., & Shaaban, I. (2020). A Business Analysis Perspective for Engineering Education in Egypt. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*.
- Elsafty., A. (2020, January 21). *The 9 Elements Model developed by Dr Ashraf Elsafty*. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/y-jDT2iOOhU?si=K6JZpVRbZO7PV9QA>
- Fayol, J. H. (1949). *General and Industrial Management*. London: Pitman.
- GAFI, G. A. (2022). *Investment opportunities in Egypt*. Retrieved from <https://www.gafi.gov.eg>
- Garrison, D. R. (2008). *Blended Learning in Higher Education: Framework, Principles, and Guidelines*. Francisco: CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2013). *Primal leadership: Unleashing the power of emotional intelligence*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Han, X. C. (2023). Implementation of blended learning at the course level. In M. Li, X. Han, & J. Cheng (Eds.), *Handbook of educational reform through blended learning*. Springer. Retrieved from https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-99-6269-3_2
- Hao, T. L. (2024). Gamification as an effective method in developing leadership skills and competencies. *The Scholarship Without Borders Journal*, 2(1), Article 6.
- Hiasat, L. (2018). Blended and experiential learning for Emiratis in tertiary education. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, 15(3), 874-884. <https://doi.org/10.18823/asiatefl.2018.15.3.874>
- Hug, T. (2005). Micro learning and narration: Exploring possibilities of utilization of narrations and storytelling for the designing of 'micro units' and didactical micro-learning arrangements. *fourth Media in Transition conference* (pp. 1-6). USA: Cambridge (MA).
- Hug, T. (2017). Microlearning: A Strategy for Ongoing Learning. In T. Hug (Ed.), *Didactics of Microlearning: Concepts, Discourses, and Examples* (pp. 139-155). Münster: Waxmann.
- Kanat-Maymon, Y. Y. (2018). Organizational support, legitimacy, and workplace outcomes: A mediation model. *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology*, 5(3), 229-237. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts5.88>
- Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1959). Techniques for evaluating training programs. *Journal of the American Society of Training Directors*, 13(11), 3-9.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Kolb, D. A. (2015). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (2nd ed.). Pearson Education.
- Kotter, J. P. (2018). *Leading Change* (Rev. ed.). Harvard Business Review Press.
- Lombardo, M., & Eichinger, R. W. (1996). *The career architect development planner* (1st ed.). Minneapolis: Lominger Limited, Inc.
- Longenecker, C. (2018). Senior leaders' strategic role in leadership development. *Strategic HR Review*, 17(3), 143-149. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SHR-02-2018-0014>
- Machida, M., & Schaubroeck, J. (2011). The Role of Self-Efficacy Beliefs in Leader Development. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051811404419>
- McCauley, C. D. (2004). *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development* (2nd ed.). Jossey: Bass.
- McCauley, C. E. (2013). *Experience-Driven Leader Development: Models, Tools, Best Practices, and Advice for*

On-the-Job Development. John Wiley & Sons.

- McKinsey. (2021). *The Next Normal in Construction: How Disruption is Reshaping the World's Largest Ecosystem*. McKinsey Global Institute.
- Milne, C. L. (2009). The differential treatment of adolescents as a principle of fundamental justice: An analysis of R. v. B. (D.) and C. (A.) v. Manitoba. *The Supreme Court Law Review: Osgoode's Annual Constitutional Cases Conference*, 47, pp. 235-257.
- Morgan, W. M. J. (2010). Recasting Leadership Development. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 3(1), 3-19. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/industrial-and-organizational-psychology/article/abs/recasting-leadership-development/1770C14763828D2502D2560722E2EEC9>
- Northouse, P. G. (2021). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (9th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- OECD. (2020). *Investment policy review: Egypt. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/investment/investment-policy-review-egypt.htm>
- Osland, J. S. (2012). Developing global mindset and global leadership capabilities. In G. Stahl, M. Mendenhall, & G. Oddou (Eds.), *International Human Resource Management* (5th ed., pp. 110-126).
- Rabin, R. (2013). *Blended Learning for Leadership: The CCL Approach*. Center for Creative Leadership.
- Raver, C. K. (2022). A strategic organizational approach to developing leadership developers. *Journal of Character & Leadership Development*, 15-28.
- Salas, E. W. (2016). Developing leadership skills through experiential learning: The role of simulation-based training. *International Leadership Journal*, 20(5), 865-875. Retrieved from <http://internationalleadershipjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Summer-2016-Vol.-8-No.-2.pdf#page=105>
- Saunders, M. L., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students* (8th ed.). Pearson.
- Schaufeli, W. B.-R., & Bakker, A. B. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 3(1), 71-92.
- Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (4th ed.). San Francisco: CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Schwalbe, K. (2022). *Information Technology Project Management* (9th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Schwartz, H. M., & Bilimoria, D. (2021). Holistic leader(ship) development: An integrative process model of leader and leadership development. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Business and Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190224851.013.288>
- Sharma, P. (2010). *Blended Learning: Reimagining Effective Learning Experiences*.
- Tan, L. P. (2019). Ethical leadership, perceived organizational support and citizenship behaviors: The moderating role of ethnic dissimilarity. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 40(8), 877-897.
- Taylor, A. (2022). The effects of microlearning: A scoping review. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 70(1), 363-395. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11423-022-10084-1>
- Thomas, C. C. (2024). Promising Practices for Leadership Development: Exploring a Collaborative Professional Learning and Coaching Program. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 204, 88-103. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1425651.pdf>
- Tianshi Hao, J. G. (2024). Unlocking potential: Systematic review the use of gamification in leadership curriculum. *Education and Information Technologies*, 12305-12346.
- UNCTAD. (2023). *World Investment Report 2023: Investing in sustainable energy for all*. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
- Wahat, N. W. (2013). Leadership development through workplace learning in Malaysian organizations. *Asian Social Science*, 9(8), 9, 286-294. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/bac9/682721b6bd84b81020e7186e0770f3dbb7fc.pdf>
- Waller, L. R. (2017). Experiential learning as preparation for leadership: An exploration of the cognitive and physiological processes. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 513-529. Retrieved from <https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/67657/1/Experiential%20learning%20as%20preparation%20for%20leadership.PDF>

Wehrich, H. (1982). *The TOWS matrix—A tool for situational analysis*. *Long Range Planning*.

Yukl, G. (2004). *Flexible Leadership: Creating Value by Balancing Multiple Challenges and Choices*. San Francisco: CA: Jossey-Bass.

Zhang, J. (2019). Designing microlearning instruction for professional development through competency-based intentional learning. *TechTrends*, 63(2), 310-318. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-019-00449-4>