

The Prevalence of Unethical Leadership Behaviour: The Role of Organisational Oversight

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The purpose of this paper is to explore the role of organisational oversight in predicting unethical leadership behaviour within Algerian public companies. Using an exploratory qualitative design, 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted with leaders currently serving in Algerian public companies. The findings showed that ineffective rules enforcement, lack of control mechanisms, lack of transparency and access to information, and positive reinforcement are the underlying precursors of unethical leadership behaviour. The generalisation of findings is difficult, since the study relies on a small qualitative sample size from the Algerian context. However, the study offers a proper analysis of selected organisational factors that predict unethical leadership behaviour. The study presents important implications for public companies and grounds for further research. This study also enriches our understanding of unethical leadership behaviour. In summary, the study provides practice and policy implications that can improve the development of effective organisational oversight mechanisms in this context.

Key words: *Public companies, Unethical behaviour, Unethical leadership, Organisational oversight, Qualitative.*

Introduction

Leaders' unethical behaviours have grave consequences at all organisational levels, and for all stakeholders including leaders and followers demise, organisational failure, and followers disenfranchisement/mistrust (Chandler, 2009; Pelletier, 2010). For the past few years, the mounting bulk of research in moral psychology and behavioural ethics has demonstrated that even good individuals could and often do commit bad practices (Gino, 2015). One of the key questions in regard to leadership behaviour is concerned with the situational and organisational forces that drive leaders to act unethically. Lašáková and Remišová (2015)

posited that the identification of antecedents of unethical leadership behaviour is very significant towards understanding unethical leadership (Lašáková & Remišová, 2015). Moreover, increased public awareness towards leadership scandals, recent downfall of a number of financial organisations and wide societal challenges faced by both private and public institutions showcases the need for prompt and dedicated attention on the ethics of leaders (Zhu, Zheng, Riggio, & Zhang, 2015). In the context of Africa, it is noted that corruption is widely believed to be the main cause of social and economic problems of the African nations. Temple (2012) stated that, regardless of the richness of a nation or an organisation, large-scale corruption, untrustworthy conduct of its affairs, misappropriation of public assets, no responsibility, and persistent falsification of reports will lead to that society's or organisation's failure (Temple, 2012).

Corruption and unethical practices are some of the primary challenges faced by African societies and their leaders, threatening to shatter democratic stability and sustenance, undermine economic growth, and hinder development efforts. In all societies, transparency and good governance are critical, but more so in poor nations seeking to break the cycle of lack of development and poverty (Adisa & Gbadamosi, 2018). In Algeria, over the past three decades, public sector companies have experienced several grand scale corruption cases. Economic and social institutions in the country have suffered the consequences of corruption and unethical practices. Among the famous corruption scandals are; Sonatrach 1, Sonatrach 2 and Khalifa Bank, which involved high profile managerial and political leaders. According to the Global Integrity Report 2019, Algeria is labelled as a state with very weak transparency and accountability, alongside allegations of corruption against senior level politicians and/or civil servants of any level not being investigated by an independent body and citizens having no access to such information.

In addition, according to the World Economic forum, the country ranked 96/140 in terms of incidence of corruption (Forum, 2018). Also, the country ranked 105/180 in the transparency international corruption index. In many Arab governments, powerful individuals have actively influenced government policies and diverted public funds and state assets for their own self-interest and enrichment at the expense of citizens. This reduces anti-corruption efforts to merely ink on paper, where laws pass, but are rarely enforced or implemented (International, 2019). However, in spite of the various reports and data that signalise the problem of corruption and unethical practices within the governmental sector in Arab and African nations, very little attention has been paid to the role of the organisational forces in contributing to the prevalence of unethical leadership behaviours, especially in the context of Algeria. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the role of organisational oversight mechanisms in predicting unethical leadership behaviour within Algerian public companies.

Previous studies on unethical leadership behaviour suggest that the antecedents of leaders' unethical behaviours range from individual to organisational, cultural, and situational forces (Askew, Beisler, & Keel, 2015; Gino, 2015; Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Treviño, 2010; Padilla, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2007). Among these forces, it is believed that the most important antecedents in understanding the unethical behaviour of leaders is the organisational environment, as it can impact the behaviours of employees on many levels (Askew et al., 2015; Knoll, Lord, Petersen, & Weigelt, 2016). Yet, most of the studies on unethical leadership behaviour are from a western perspective, most of the previous research was conducted within western countries of different cultural and organisational characteristics. Little is known about the role of organisational and situational forces in predicting unethical leadership behaviour in Arab and African states. The argument of this study is that the current situation pertaining to transparency, accountability, checks and balances, and rule of law within the Algerian public companies has contributed to the prevalence of unethical leadership behaviours. In line with this, Padilla et al. (2007) stated that destructive leaders will find difficulty in succeeding within stable systems with strong institutions with adequate checks and balances on power and control. Effective institutions, system stability, and proper checks and balances, along with strong followers have a tendency to overcome attempts to take over the system (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010).

This paper thus focuses on the role of organisational oversight in predicting unethical leadership behaviour within Algerian public companies. Therefore, this paper seeks to bridge the gap in literature on unethical leadership behaviour in the context of Algeria, by focusing on the influence of the different tools of organisational oversight on leaders' unethical practices. The empirical findings of this paper also shed light on the issue of unethical leadership behaviour in a non-western context. In so doing, this paper provides an opportunity to enhance understanding of leaders' unethical behaviour in Algerian public companies. In pursuing these objectives, the paper draws on the experiences of leaders in public companies across Algeria. It is therefore hoped that this study will benefit researchers, organisations, policymakers and the Algerian leaders in their efforts to study, comprehend and achieve good leadership behaviour. This paper has been divided into four sections: first, unethical leadership behaviour will be contextualised, followed by a description of the methodology. Subsequently, the research findings are discussed. Finally, conclusion and implications are drawn.

Research Method

The study used an exploratory qualitative approach to investigate issues that are embedded in the experiences and behaviours of the respondents. The use of qualitative approaches is well-established in investigating complex and under-studied phenomena. The qualitative approach in research is chosen when there is a need to explore an issue or a problem in detail. By

following a direct interaction with respondents in their place of activities or their natural settings, this approach allows us to uncover detailed and rich understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This also presents the opportunity for respondents to express their perceptions, opinions, and stories regardless of what we expect or what we have encountered in previous research (Creswell, 2013). Studies on issues of unethical leadership behaviour in the context of Algeria are very scarce, and the different variables attached to the problem of unethical behaviour among leaders are unknown in this context. Therefore, qualitative design provided the proper tools to investigate the issue of this study and to meet the objective of this research, allowing in-depth exploration of the various issues that emerged around the topic of unethical leadership behaviour and organisational oversight in the public companies context in Algeria.

In the current study, semi-structured interviews with 15 respondents were conducted during the period from the end of May to mid-September 2017. A purposive sampling strategy was used, as this method of non-probabilistic sampling was deemed appropriate because of the exploratory nature of the study. The respondents were purposefully selected based on their years of experience and the key positions they occupy (occupied) in the selected public companies in Algeria. Table 1 presents demographic details of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Data

Respondent	Position Held	Experience	Age	Gender
1	Head of Department	12	43	M
2	Head of Department	5	41	M
3	Former Head of Department	23	61	M
4	Head of the Division	/	46	M
5	A “new” head of the Department	5	32	M
6	Chief of Sub-department	7	42	M
7	Chief of Services	17	54	M
8	Supervisor of Department	10/11	46	M
9	Head of Department	21	50	F
10	Head of Division	19	50	M
11	Chief of Department	12	42	M
12	Chief of Department	13	42	M
13	Head of Department	18	45	M
14	Chief of District	30	49	M
15	Former Deputy General Director	35	60	M

Respondents’ eligibility to participate in the study is based on the managerial or leadership role they held and years of experience within public companies. The respondents in this study had a minimum of five years of experience. A consent form was presented to each

respondent, informing them that they have the right to withdraw from the study and that their participation is completely voluntary. Interviews' duration last between 30 to 90 minutes, at the beginning of the interview session the interviewer started with an introduction to the research theme for the purpose of explaining the importance of the issue being investigated to public companies in Algeria. Interview questions focused on uncovering the role of organisational oversight mechanisms in predicting the unethical behaviour of leaders from the perspective of the participants as leaders and members of public companies. As was mentioned earlier, the study included 15 interviews, this number was satisfactory after reaching theoretical saturation during data collection.

The study used pre-determined but flexible interview protocol and the interview sessions were audio recorded with the consent of the respondents. Subsequently, all interviews were transcribed and thematically analysed by the researchers. The process of analysis included coding the transcribed statements of respondents (i.e. discerning and categorising relevant concepts). Following this, codes sharing similar ideas were labelled and properly consolidated to form a content category or area. The process of coding was performed with open-mindedness to ensure that the emerging themes were not a combination of prior-imposed codes. Moreover, the researchers considered the identification of the final categories that emerged after a thorough analysis, as the dominant themes which represent the accurate and correct perspectives uttered about the role of organisational oversight tools in predicting unethical leadership behaviour within Algerian public companies.

Findings and Discussion

The emerged themes suggested that in many cases, unethical behaviour of leaders is linked to the present situation of organisational mechanisms in Algerian public companies. The findings indicate that several factors related to organisational oversight in these companies have created organisational conditions which gave unethical practices of leaders a wider margin. Overall, four main themes have emerged from the analysis of the collected data. These themes incorporated issues and problems related to the effectiveness of the tools by which companies can keep activities and behaviours of leaders under control. The four core themes are ineffective rules enforcement, lack of control mechanisms, lack of transparency and access to information, and positive reinforcement. The findings of this study propose that the element of organisational oversight within these companies is not implemented in the most effective way and this has resulted in affecting the ethical performance of leaders and given rise to unethical leadership behaviours. The analysis and discussion of each theme in this study are presented below.

Ineffective Rules Enforcement

In this theme, most of the respondents witnessed that the one of the primary organisational precursors of leadership unethical practices within public companies in Algeria is the ineffectiveness of rules enforcement on wrongdoings of top managers and leaders. It was suggested by respondents that the main challenge is the enforcement of organisational rules. In addition, the respondents explicitly stated that there are several cases where leaders' violations and unethical practices within these companies have remained unaddressed. Also, respondents of this study have explicitly stated that the problem of leadership unethical behaviour cannot be addressed without managing the current situation of the fragile rules enforcement in public companies. In the following quote, respondent three illustrated that public companies have all the necessary rules and regulations to control any deviant behaviours, but they lack an effective rules enforcement procedure, especially for individuals occupying leadership positions.

“There are the organisation rules and regulations and the laws which are adopted by all public or private organisations in this country. There are enough rules and laws and I do not think there is a lack in terms of rules and regulations. However, when it comes to the implementation; we find ourselves facing the challenge of enforcing those laws on top leaders or people who have power and authority.” (Respondent three)

Impunity of leaders in the face of prosecution and accountability motivates more unethical and corrupt behaviours within Algerian public companies. Organisational leaders are more prone to unethical practices in cases where they are not held responsible for their ethical violations. In a similar vein, Beckers (1968), stated that “individuals rationally decide whether to engage in criminal activities by comparing the expected returns to crime with the returns to legitimate business. Hence, crime is less attractive if the government increases the probability (certainty) and severity of punishment” (Garoupa, 2007). Based on the perspectives of leaders who took part in this study, it was evident that the means of rules enforcement in the Algerian public companies are ineffective and insubstantial. In the following statement, one of the respondents referred to the bias of laws enforcement.

“When it comes to the effectiveness of the laws and rules; this is depending on the implementation. As you can see, sometimes the laws are only enforced on some people. I believe that the problem is not in the existing laws, but the problem is in the way of enforcing the laws.” (Respondent four)

Moreover, in the next statement, respondent seven referred to the role of rules enforcement in stopping individuals from breaking organisational rules.

“If breaking the rules will not have consequences, then individuals, especially leaders in the companies, will not be cautious or afraid of doing whatever they want, I think rules must be enforced on everyone, leaders or otherwise.” (Respondent seven)

In agreement with the previous statements, another respondent stated that the effectiveness of law enforcement is dependant on the person in charge and that rules are not enforced properly on the ethical violations of some individuals.

“When we talk about the effectiveness of these rules and regulations, I must say it depends on the person in charge, meaning when you put the stick in the right hands. Some people commit violations, but they are protected, and the law will not be applied to them. The law enforcement in this country did not get a supreme and an absolute authority yet.” (Respondent nine)

The harmony and coherence of an organisation depends on its rules and regulations. As Hall (1995) explains, rules are “vital to the existence of all organisations”. The specification of procedures, penalties, and rules determines much of what goes on within the organisational settings. Certainly, formalisation is a key defining feature of all organisations, since behaviours are not random and are guided by some degree of formalisation towards an objective (DeHart-Davis, Davis, & Mohr, 2014). However, the analysis in this category suggests that despite the presence of the necessary rules and regulations within public companies in Algeria which are projected to ensure adherence to organisational goals, the central problem is the way in which these rules and regulations are enforced on some organisational members. As was mentioned frequently by respondents of this study, rules enforcement is ineffective, particularly, on individuals who have power and authority, and those at the top ladder of leadership in these companies. Extant literature on the ethics of leadership also stressed the importance of the compliance of leaders with legal, organisational, and social rules and regulations and emphasised the behaviours of transactional leaders in relation to disciplining ethical/unethical behaviour of employees (Eisenbeiß & Brodbeck, 2014).

Lack of Control Mechanisms

A recurrent category during the interviews was a sense among respondents that the lack of control of the activities and decisions of leaders is a major predicting factor of leadership unethical behaviour in Algerian public companies. Interviewees on the whole emphasised the lack of control mechanisms of behaviours and actions of leaders within these companies, which made the Algerian public companies more susceptible to corrupt and unethical behaviours, especially by their leaders. In line with this, Pedilla et al (2007), suggests that there are four main forces which are important for prevalence of destructive leadership

behaviour, namely: the absence of checks and balances, institutionalisation, instability, cultural values, and perceived threat (Padilla et al., 2007). There were unanimous perspectives by the respondents regarding the fragility of control mechanisms in the Algerian context. For instance, one interviewee, in his response, emphasised the need in this sector for solid organisational control over the activities of leaders to minimise the risk of losing organisational resources.

“We need to create solid control mechanisms and enhance transparency in this sector, otherwise this sector will keep losing a lot of efforts and resources.” (Respondent five)

Likewise, another respondent referred to the absence of a robust organisational control over the actions of leaders and the influence of this factor on the widespread nature of unethical behaviours.

“Also, the lack of concrete control and transparency of leaders’ actions is a contributing factor in intensifying these problems.” (Respondent seven)

By the same token, respondent fourteen further demonstrated the problem of control mechanism in Algerian public companies. The respondent highlighted the need of these companies for effective organisational control mechanisms, especially in finance departments. This recurrent call for the need of strong organisational control over the activities of leaders suggests the present control mechanisms have failed to keep leaders of Algerian companies under control.

“In terms of control mechanisms, we used to have good tools a few years ago, we had monthly reports, yearly reports. However, now we have an absence of control and lack of transparency of leaders, companies’ activities, and resources. Especially when it comes to finance departments, we need strong control mechanisms. Accountability and transparency can ensure and prevent leaders as well as other members of the organisations from acting unethically or using public resources for their own interests.” (Respondent fourteen)

Furthermore, in the following statement, respondent fourteen pointed out the crucial role of these control mechanisms within organisational settings in preventing leaders from using the company resources for their private gains and ensuring that leaders will not fail ethically.

“I believe that control mechanisms are needed not just to keep leaders on the right moral path but also to protect them from the authority, power, and access which comes with their leadership status. In an organisational environment where there is an absence of control, transparency, and accountability, leaders are more prone to act unethically and use their

positions for private gains. This is one of the main organisational lapses within the Algerian state-owned companies.” (Respondent fourteen)

The ineffectiveness of control systems in companies results in behavioural violations by its members and could disperse organisational efforts. Similarly, according to Agency Theory, when deviant behaviours in organisational settings are perceived to be an issue of incentives, agents will go against the interests of principals whenever they can and whenever there is a lack of effective institutional mechanisms that hinder a close monitoring of the behaviours of agents (Osrecki, 2015). Control over the activities and decision-making processes of leaders within organisational settings is a decisive mechanism by which the organisation can keep the efforts of its members geared towards achieving optimum performance.

Management researchers have also emphasised that intra-employee and inter-company relationships require the application of organisational control to attain their organisational goals. Developing and maintaining inter-firm and intra-firm cooperation requires sufficient organisational control (Kang, Wu, Hong, Park, & Park, 2014). Furthermore, it can be suggested that the solution to the issue of control is to structure the organisation to align interests between the organisation and its members (Zhang & Yao, 2015). Likewise, organisational control mechanisms are very crucial in aligning the interests, goals, and efforts of all the members. Regardless of its formal goal, an organisation is formed of individuals with their own personal goals. Even if these people and groups are willing to assist in achieving organisational purposes, the organisation must unify their efforts and guide them to achieve specific purposes. Therefore, the organisation must control or persuade the behaviour of its members if they are to realise its plans and attain its purposes. The decisive characteristic of an effective control system is goal congruence, an identity between the goals of organisational members and the organisation as a whole (Flamholtz, 1996).

Lack of Transparency & Access to Information

The responses from participants also indicated the issue of transparency and access to information; according to these respondents, the Algerian public companies are managed vaguely. Their perspective suggested that there is a lack of access to information and inadequate disclosure of information pertaining to leaders’ activities within this sector. Transparency means that sufficient information is available to verify or assess the data exchange taking place (Nicolaou & McKnight, 2006). Moreover, transparency with regards to leaders’ behaviours aims at encouraging trust through disclosures that contain openly sharing information and expressions of leaders’ true thoughts and feelings (Walumbwa, Luthans, Avey, & Oke, 2011). The following depicts the respondents’ views regarding the issue of transparency: -

“We need to create solid control mechanisms and enhance transparency in this sector, otherwise this sector will keep losing a lot of efforts and resources.” (Respondent five)

“Also, the lack of concrete control and transparency of leaders’ actions is a contributing factor in intensifying these problems.” (Respondent seven)

In collaboration to the above assertions, respondent fourteen portrayed a further explanation for the problem of lack of transparency: -

“The lack of transparency will allure leaders to violate the rules. We cannot just rely on the consciousness or ethical sense of leaders, but we also need to protect leaders from losing their way by drawing limits for them and by having strong and effective control means in the organisation. I believe that there is a huge lack of transparency and accountability within the Algerian state-owned companies. Leaders are free of control; they have almost complete authority over resources.” (Respondent fourteen)

Transparency is an important factor in the success of institutions, its decisive role in organisations emerges from its positive influence on public and private businesses. Several studies (e.g., Bennis, Goleman, & O’Toole, 2008; Fombrun & Rindova, 2000; Jahansoozi, 2006; Tapscott & Ticoll, 2003; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008) have proposed that in the current state of continuous corporate failures, transparency has been seen as a remedy for the various problems that accompany troubled relationships between an institution and its stakeholders through its acknowledged capability to recreate stakeholders trust in the institution (Schnackenberg & Tomlinson, 2016). Moreover, transparency assists in gaining several positive outcomes, including the improvement in employees’ loyalty, strengthening their values of synergy and collaboration, minimising ambiguity, reducing corruption, improving results, enhancing clarity, and increasing employees productivity (Al Shobaki, Naser, & Ammar, 2017).

The results under this category show that public companies in Algeria need unobstructed and clear disclosure of information pertaining to the activities and decisions of leaders, which can guarantee efficient and effective management of resources. The results also show that lack of access to information on leaders’ actions will give the opportunity to unethical leaders to take advantage of the organisational resources without the fear of being held accountable for their wrongdoings. Particularly, unrestricted transparency and access to information create an organisational environment where deviant behaviours can be corrected. Accordingly, establishing an organisational culture that prioritises transparency and clarity in its business should be one of the main strategies of any institution that wishes to achieve positive and sustainable outcomes.

Positive Reinforcement

The final issue that emerged during the interview process was the absence of incentives for good leadership behaviour in Algerian public companies. Based on the perspectives of respondents, an effective positive reinforcement system to stimulate good leadership behaviour is absent. Positive reinforcement is a process to stimulate and strengthen new behaviours by adding rewards and incentives rather than by eliminating benefits. It can be used in the workplace through benefits, promotional opportunities, and pay. Rewards can be labeled into two intrinsic and extrinsic categories. Extrinsic rewards can be in the form of money, promotion, job security, and workplace freedom, whereas intrinsic rewards imply something intangible like recognition and praise. These two forms of positive reinforcement are closely linked to the achievements of organisational members (Wei & Yazdanifard, 2014).

One of the respondents explained the lack of incentives in the following statement: -

“When it comes to incentives, I can say that we lack a culture or a strategy where we give incentives for good behaviour or good working attitudes. In other words, the leader who is ethical and effective will only secure his position at most, there are not many chances for career development or real incentives. We need tangible incentives.” (Respondent eleven)

Other respondents also stated that tangible rewards for good behaviour are absent within public companies in Algeria. The reward system is a very vital tool in steering the behaviours of organisational members towards the right track and motivates individuals to show good and effective performances (Noor, Fareed & Isa, 2018). Nevertheless, the findings suggest that there are no real incentives for both leaders and followers. The following statements by respondents explain the issue further.

“As a leader I use all the available means granted to me by this position to stimulate good behaviour or to punish those who get involved in bad behaviour. Yet, there is no tangible incentives for employees or leaders when they are behaving ethically.” (Respondent four)

“Punishment needs to be in accordance with the rules and regulations of the company. On the other hand, the “carrot” approach to me is applied by building trust between me and my employees, motivating them to do better. However, tangible incentives for good behaviour are not available.” (Respondent seven)

“As a leader I have the power to punish and to use my authority in order to make sure the laws are respected. When it comes to real incentives for good behaviour; we do not really have that in our state-owned companies. There are no incentives for leaders or employees for good behaviour.” (Respondent one)

Previous research established that positive reinforcement, whether intrinsic or extrinsic is positively associated with the performance of organisational members (Fareed, Isa, Ahmad & Laeeq, 2016; Noor et al., 2008; Salleh, Zubair & Hamzah, 2018). It is particularly very effective in increasing and strengthening behaviours (Wei & Yazdanifard, 2014). However, the analysis in this category shows that public companies in Algeria lack an effective positive reinforcement system that could encourage and promote good behaviour among its leaders. In addition, rewards as well as punishment tools have a crucial role in directing ethical behaviours of people in organisations. Members of the organisation pay close attention to rewards and punishments which help in modelling effectiveness. Based on the modelling theory, rewards and punishments encourage learning in an indirect and anticipatory way. Consequences of behaviours (whether rewarded or punished) inform members of the organisation about the benefits of modelled ethical behaviours as well as about the negative effects of modelled unethical behaviours (Treviño & Brown, 2005).

Conclusion

In this study, the purpose was to explore the role of organisational oversight in predicting unethical leadership behaviour within Algerian public companies. The study has highlighted four key issues related to organisational oversight in Algerian public companies. These issues have contributed to the prevalence of unethical leadership behaviour. The investigation of the link between organisational oversight in Algerian public companies and unethical leadership behaviour has shown that ineffective rules enforcement, lack of control mechanisms, lack of transparency and access to information, and positive reinforcement; are among the main forces that play a role in paving the way for unethical and corrupted practices of leaders.

The findings of the study have significant theoretical and practical implications. From the theoretical perspective, the findings support the fact that the organisational environment has an important role in shaping the behaviour of leaders. Unstable organisational systems with weak organisational oversight mechanisms and inadequate control over leaders' actions provide suitable conditions for the spread of unethical practices of leaders in organisational settings. Hence, the study proposes more theoretical advancement that takes into cognisance sector-specific and country-specific organisational variables that might contribute to the prevalence of or the controlling of unethical leadership behaviours. From a practical perspective, it is clear that public companies in Algeria need to reevaluate and restructure their organisational oversight policies by initiating comprehensive assessment of the current situation. The findings in this study have clearly indicated that public companies in Algeria endure various problems linked to rules enforcement, control mechanisms, and transparency. These organisational elements are very crucial in promoting and ensuring good leadership behaviours and assisting in keeping organisational leaders under control. Organisational



oversight tools also protect these companies from contingent behavioural deviations. Thus, if these companies are to be successful, the aforementioned issues need to be addressed. Furthermore, the findings of the study suggest that public companies in Algeria are advised to recondition their rewards policies to support and stimulate good leadership behaviour.

While the current study has offered valuable findings for public company leaders and established pointers for future research, it also has a few limitations. The interpretation of the findings of this study should take into account that the sample of the study was restricted to a limited number of leaders from public companies in Algeria, therefore the findings might not be generalisable to other cultural and organisational contexts. Moreover, female leaders were under-represented in this study. Future research should include data from employees of public companies which might offer new insights into the issue of unethical leadership behavior. Additionally, conducting quantitative research on the same issue will make findings more widely generalisable, as survey studies can include larger sample sizes. The study of unethical leadership behaviour is a new research area in the Algerian context, examining similar issues in different organisational settings could assist in establishing a deeper understanding of unethical leadership practices in Algeria.

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