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## A COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS OF GERMAN AND UNITED STATES MANAGERIAL ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LEGITIMACY OF ORGANIZATIONAL INFLUENCE <sup>1</sup>

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A major issue facing U.S. corporations in their decisions to purchase established, overseas operations or to engage in multinational joint ventures is the degree to which they can expect to quickly and efficiently exert their influence on the operations of a prospective foreign acquisition or business partner (6, 10). To the extent that they can anticipate agreement on areas of legitimate influence, tension and conflict can be minimized. Mutually accepted and recognized boundaries of legitimate influence also provide a foundation for sound communication and better understanding.

It is a well-established fact that different cultures possess differing organizational norms and behavior standards and that they recognize these as legitimate forms of influence (11, 15). The present study does not attempt to explain the operation of these norms and behavior standards. Rather, it attempts to note the similarities and dissimilarities of these influences as perceived by two culturally divergent groups and, by inference, to identify, the values and attitudes which guide their actions.

Values and attitudes about which there is little mutual agreement often lead to organizational conflict. Such circumstances may even result in the delay or eventual failure of organizational plans. Difficulties in a recent General Motors overseas acquisition attest to such an occurrence (12).

This study focuses on the problems of cross-cultural industrial conflict by attempting to identify areas of high and low influence legitimacy in a cross-cultural study of German and United States managers.

### Method

Data analyzed in the present study were collected by means of the Schein-Ott Legitimacy of Organizational Influence Questionnaire (14).

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This questionnaire is designed to measure the legitimacy of organizational influence in 55 behavior and attitude areas, ranging from highly job related (e.g., working hours) to highly personal (e.g., attitudes toward sexual morality). Survey respondents are asked to answer "yes," "no," or "uncertain" to each questionnaire statement depending on whether or not they feel that it is legitimate for organizational influence to be exerted in that area. Responses are analyzed by computing an Influence Index (II) for each area of inquiry. The closer an Influence Index is to +100, the greater the number of survey responses marked "Yes" for an area of inquiry; the closer an index is to -100, the greater the number of "No" responses. For complete scoring information, see Schein and Ott (14).

In the present study, the Schein-Ott questionnaire was administered between October 1973 and May 1974 to 46 male German managers residing in the German states of Bavaria, Hessen, and Rhineland-Palatinate. Although some variations existed in the age, rank, and seniority of this group, it could accurately be described as middle management. To assure understanding, the questionnaire was translated into German and, with all but minor exceptions, it was administered in a face-to-face setting.

For purposes of comparison and analysis, the survey results obtained were matched with comparable 1972 U. S. data provided by Kemp (8). The Kemp data were chosen for use not only because they were the most current U. S. data available, but also because the sample (80 supervisory employees from three manufacturing and one nonmanufacturing organizations) was roughly comparable to the German group.

The hypothesis tested was that *there would not be a significant relationship between the Influence Index values (derived from the Schein-Ott questionnaire) of the U. S. managers and those of the German managers.*

Use of the Schein-Ott questionnaire has been reported in a number of studies, but never in a published international cross-cultural analysis. The original studies on the legitimacy of organizational influence conducted by Schein and Ott (14) and Schein and Lippitt (13) have been followed by the later works of Davis (1), Heizer (4), Heizer and Litton (5) and Kemp (8, 9).

### Results and Interpretation

*Test of Hypothesis*—The data did not support the hypothesis. Using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, rho, the rank-order correlation (based on Influence Index values) between the German and U. S. managers' responses was +.55 ( $p < .01$ ). Although this correlation indicated a significant relationship between the two sets of Influence Index values, there were general areas of *disagreement* between the German and U. S. managers concerning areas of legitimate organizational influence. Approximately 70 percent of the variance in the managers' rankings was unexplained.

*High Legitimacy Items*—High legitimacy items generally concerned job related performance. The six items on which there was agreement indicating

high legitimacy (i.e., Influence Index value of  $+ .50$  or higher for both groups) are identified in Table 1. A strong shared legitimacy existed concerning performance at the workplace. For example, the items of highest legitimacy value were tidiness of office or work area (item 44), how work day is divided among various duties (item 45), and time spent talking to wife on telephone while working (item 10). Items 7 (alcohol consumed during working day) and 27 (working hours) clearly fall into this category.

**TABLE 1**  
**Items with Agreement of High Legitimacy**  
**(Influence Index Value of 50 or Higher) Among Two Groups**

<i>Item</i>	<i>U. S. Managers<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>German Managers</i>
7. Alcohol consumed during working day	100	63
10. Time spent talking to wife on telephone while working	80	63
27. Working hours	67	72
34. Kind of temperament exhibited on job	100	51
44. Tidiness of office or work area	100	96
45. How work day divided among various duties	100	68

<sup>a</sup> Abstracted from Kemp (8).

Item 34 (kind of temperament exhibited on job), however, also poses an interesting difference. This is an area which is especially difficult to influence. As interpreted by Schein and Ott (14, p. 687), efforts directed at influencing personal temperament will very likely meet with "strong emotional resistance" and result in either (a) "surface compliance and suppression of natural tendencies yielding undersirable emotional by-products such as displaced aggression" or (b) "chronic conflict . . . with neither party being aware of the basic source of the[ir] difficulty." Comparing the Influence Index values in Table 1, the greatest absolute difference (49 points) in German and U.S. scores was reported on item 34 (kind of temperament exhibited on job). Both groups regarded organizational influence in the area of temperament to be legitimate, but U.S. managers seemed to consider it much more legitimate than did their German counterparts. Indeed, the 80 U.S. managers surveyed were completely unanimous in their feelings on this item as well as on three of the remaining five items of Table 1. Such extremes of difference present a dangerous area of potential cross-cultural conflict. Clearly, there is a widespread general cultural belief among the U.S. managers studied that on-the-job performance is an area of high legitimacy of organizational influence. The data collected, however, suggest that such widespread cultural beliefs may not be found among German managers.

*Low Legitimacy Items*—For the most part items of low legitimacy related to personal beliefs and acts, particularly behavior at home. Table 2 identifies 18 items on which there was agreement of low legitimacy (i.e., Influence

**TABLE 2**  
**Items with Agreement of Low Legitimacy**  
**(Influence Index Value of -50 or Less) Among Two Groups**

<i>Item</i>	<i>U. S. Managers<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>German Managers</i>
2. Amount of money given to charity	-100	-71
3. Leisure time spent with superiors	-67	-77
8. Owning own home or rent	-87	-75
9. Kind of car driven	-87	-79
12. Place of residence	-100	-53
15. Political affiliation	-100	-73
17. Kind of women married	-100	-62
18. Who friends are	-73	-73
21. Number of children	-100	-53
28. Leisure time spent with peers	-87	-77
29. Church attended	-100	-74
33. Attitudes toward smoking	-100	-56
35. Attitudes toward sexual morality	-60	-53
41. Amount of life insurance held	-100	-73
47. Quantity of alcohol consumed at home	-73	-67
49. Amount of entertaining	-87	-81
51. Close friends in a rival company	-73	-58
54. Whether wife works or not	-100	-73

<sup>a</sup> Abstracted from Kemp (8).

Index values of  $-.50$  or lower for both groups). The items of least legitimacy in Table 2 are: church attended (item 29), political affiliation (item 15), amount of life insurance held (item 41), and whether wife works or not (item 54). Other areas of low legitimacy (for example: items 8, 17, 21, 33, 35, 54) also largely concern matters of personal beliefs and acts.

A number of the items in Table 2 possibly can be interpreted to involve an organization's activities and reputation. Item 3 (leisure time spent with superior) and item 51 (close friends in a rival company), when combined with items 18 (who friends are) and 49 (amount of entertaining) might violate informal or formally stated company behavior patterns. Items 9 (kind of car driven) and 12 (place of residence) easily could involve a company's image or in the case of an automobile, a product bias, because of a supplier or customer relationship. Item 2 (amount of money given to charity) is of note in light of the pressures many U.S. organizations exert to obtain 100 percent employee participation in community charity drives (e.g., the United Fund). To the extent that a multinational company might attempt to exert influence in these areas, it would seem that its efforts might meet with resistance by both its U.S. and German managers.

*Items of Disagreement*—Although Table 2 might lead one to surmise that both German and U.S. managers believe that an organization's influence ceases to be legitimate outside of working hours and within the boundaries of personal beliefs and action, this is not completely true. It is this disagreement that forms the greatest contrast between the two groups. Table 3 identifies twelve items of substantial disagreement (i.e., Influence Index

TABLE 3

**Items with Substantial Disagreement Among Two Groups Regarding  
Degree of Legitimacy of Influence (Difference of 50 or More  
Between Index Values)**

<i>Item</i>	<i>U.S. Managers<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>German Managers</i>	<i>Index Difference</i>
1. Importance attached to getting along with other people	100	41	59
4. Wearing beard, mustache, etc.	47	-63	110
5. Attitudes toward unions	80	-63	143
6. Using profanity at work	80	20	60
11. Willingness to play politics to get ahead	60	-17	77
14. Competition with peers for promotion	67	5	62
20. Use of credit and responsibility in meeting debts	13	-66	79
36. How critical of the company in public	100	32	68
37. Manner of supervising subordinates	67	11	56
50. Where charge accounts maintained for personal shopping	20	-66	86
52. Number of drinks during lunch time	67	9	58
53. Degree of participation in noncompany public activities	-7	-66	59

<sup>a</sup> Abstracted from Kemp (8).

values with an absolute difference of 50 or more between groups). As may be seen, Table 3 includes items not only relating to job performance and behavior (e.g., item 1, importance attached to getting along with other people; item 6, using profanity at work; item 14, competition with peers for promotion; and item 37, manner of supervising subordinates), but also contains several items which pertain to personal acts free of job involvement (e.g., items 20, use of credit and responsibility in meeting debts, and 50, where charge accounts maintained for personal shopping).

To be fully understood, each item of disagreement should be considered with respect to the history and culture of both the United States and Germany. For example, both German and U.S. managers felt it to be legitimate for an organization to influence the amount of alcohol consumed during the working day (Table 1, item 7), but they disagreed on the legitimacy of influencing the number of drinks at lunch time (Table 3, item 52). This contrast is understandable when one considers the role of wine and particularly beer at mealtime in Germany. Disagreement on such personal items as 4 (wearing of a beard or mustache), 20 (use of credit and responsibility in meeting debts), and 50 (where charge accounts maintained for personal shopping) similarly can be explained. The wearing of a beard and/or mustache in Germany has never carried the connotation that it does in the United States. In regard to items 20 and 50, it should be realized that consumer credit and charge accounts (with the exception of catalogue sales and purchases such as automobiles) are not traditional in German retail businesses.

Concerning item 5 (attitudes toward unions), the U.S. managers surveyed were largely in agreement regarding the legitimacy of organizational influence in this area. A majority of the German managers, however, felt otherwise. This disagreement becomes understandable when the unique form of labor relations in Germany is considered. Workers participate at all levels of management decision making in a required legal relationship known as "codetermination" (7). According to German law, all private firms employing at least five (in agriculture, 10) persons must establish a works committee to express the views of the firms' employees on all economic as well as social matters affecting their relationship. Further, at least one-third (in the mining, iron and steel industries, one-half) of the positions on the board of directors of all joint-stock companies must be held by employees. In certain heavy industries it is also a legal requirement that an employee-nominated director of labor serve on the Executive Committee of all firms.

The disagreement over items 1 (importance attached to getting along with other people), 6 (using profanity at work), and 37 (manner of supervising subordinates) is more difficult to explain. In general, working relationships in Germany are much more formal than they are in the U.S.; as such they are less openly frank (2, 3). It could be posited that in a situation of this nature, sensitive topics such as the above (dealing partially with personal behavior) would not be considered proper for discussion (or influence). This also may partially explain the contrast previously noted in the Influence Index values of item 34: kind of temperament exhibited on job (see Table 1).

The disagreement surrounding items 11, 14, 36, and 53 is of equal note. U.S. managers rated item 11 (willingness to play politics to get ahead) an area of high legitimacy, whereas German managers believed it to be an area of low legitimacy. U.S. managers were unanimous in judging item 36 (how critical of the company in public) an area of high legitimacy, whereas the German managers surveyed were not as strong in their feelings.

Items with Influence Index values near zero indicate either a conflict among respondents (equal numbers of yes and no answers), an inability to decide (high number of uncertain responses) on the legitimacy or non-legitimacy of a survey item, or both. Items 14 and 53 are of this nature. Item 14 (competition with peers for promotion) showed an Influence Index value of +67 for U. S. managers (indicating high influence legitimacy), but only +5 for German managers (indicating that this is an area of conflict, uncertainty, or both). Item 53 (degree of participation in non-company public activities) showed an Influence Index value of -66 (indicating low influence legitimacy) for the German managers surveyed, but only -7 for the U. S. managers.

## Summary and Conclusion

The rank-order correlation of the items studied and the preceding analysis indicate that there are areas of considerable disagreement between the behavioral attitudes and values of the German and the U. S. managers surveyed. Members of both groups appeared to recognize that certain legitimate areas of management influence do exist; however, they disagreed on both the proper extent and composition of this influence. This disagreement existed in both related and nonrelated job performance areas and on items related to personal beliefs and actions. In many cases these differences of opinion are explainable in terms of cultural variations, and they suggest one source of tension within multinational undertakings. If substantial agreement exists regarding the legitimacy of influence in a particular area or on a certain point, then all parties involved are likely to recognize a common ground. On the other hand, if efforts at influence are directed in an area considered by one cultural group to be legitimate and by another to be illegitimate, strong feelings of resentment are likely to arise.

In general, then, multinational corporations should be aware of the similarities and dissimilarities existing between cultures in their evaluation of the legitimacy of organizational influence. By anticipating areas of potential conflict, an improved interaction between groups can be achieved. As a result, tension and conflict can be minimized and the effectiveness of communications can be increased.

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## A MANOVA APPROACH TO DISENTANGLING CORRELATED DEPENDENT VARIABLES IN ORGANIZATIONAL RESEARCH<sup>1</sup>

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The analysis of correlated dependent variables poses a problem in organizational research. Difficulty arises in the interpretation of relationships involving sets of multiple dependent variables if there is reason to believe variables within these sets are interdependent. Misleading interpretations may result from analyzing such variables without considering interactions among them. The examination of interdependencies also provides more understanding than can be attained by considering these variables separately.

This study examines the multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) approach to analyzing data when multiple dependent variables are correlated. For illustrative purpose, a portion of a prior field study (4) was replicated and results were compared from a univariate and multivariate analysis of variance. MANOVA procedures consider group relationships with multiple dependent variables (12). These relationships are simultaneously observed on the dependent variables. In MANOVA this correlation, referred to as the pooled within cell correlation, plays an important role in determining the variance ratio. In ANOVA this correlation is disregarded. Consequently, it was expected that additional information useful in examining confounded relationships would result from the MANOVA analysis.

Research investigating the relationship between job satisfaction, employee age, and length of service (tenure) has generated conflicting findings (5, 6,

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