Personal Reliance on Alternative Event-Management Processes in Four Countries

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Organization members seek information from different sources, depending on how familiar they are with the work situations they encounter from one moment to the next. Event-management processes are the sources of information that organization members use to interpret and respond to the sequence of events they experience. Questionnaire items were constructed to ask employees how much they use five event-management processes to respond to two categories of events — day-to-day situations and unusual problems (i.e., exceptional situations). The questionnaires were administered to employees in five electronics-related manufacturing plants located in four countries — the U.S., U.K., Japan, and Hong Kong. The results indicate that the respondents find the distinction among different event-management processes in all four countries. Applications to process-oriented rather than traditional structure-oriented contingency management models for research and application are addressed.

A major development in organization studies has been to link individuals and organizations as complementary information processing systems. This article describes a step toward designing survey measures to assess the extent to which five kinds of organization processes affect members' information processing. There is a long history of social science theory for modeling both kinds of information processing systems. Cognitive psychology, extending

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back to the 19th century, has dealt with perception as an information-analyzing process. Expectancy motivation theory treats motivation in quasi-rational information processing terms. Modern social psychology emphasizes unconscious and conscious information processing systems and knowledge structures that guide perceptions of a changing flow of events (Markus & Zajonc, 1985). Many classics in organization theory treat organization structures as providing programming for individual and systemic decision processes (e.g., Galbraith, 1973; March & Simon, 1958; Thompson, 1967). The modern progression in both individual and organization theory has taken us to the point where organizations are viewed as systems that impinge on how members process information and how they implicitly decide how to behave.

Some of the more useful organization behavior research programs recognize that organization members do not process information about their work situation as a single homogeneous "thing." Instead, work situations present themselves as a series of episodes or events, some recurring and some quite distinctive. On the surface, differences between handling unprecedented, unexpected events and ordinary, routine work seem obvious. However, many well-established organizational research programs implicitly classify the organization phenomena that members encounter as homogeneous. For example, jobs are treated as having a consistent degree of autonomy, feedback, or certainty over time (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). Contingency models for research and managerial action that are based on such a presumption of consistency over time direct a manager to mistaken or uncertain application. Members of organizations recognize that their context does not appear as uniformly formal or informal, organic or mechanistic. Instead, things happen. Conversations occur. Meetings are held. All manner of events happen that require responsive thought, interpretation, and action. Much of daily management of one's self and others does not require that some stable level of task structure or other characteristic be changed. Management involves getting people to notice what you notice, interpret events the way you see them, and frame actions in the context that you want to see them framed. Management is a continuous, negotiated social process. Researchers are showing signs of catching up with the intuitions of managers about the dynamics of changing situations.

The measures described below do not directly reflect dynamics and processes. They do, however, provide a cross-sectional representation of people's memories of how they have made sense out of their situation, not just as a vague, undifferentiated mass, but as separated into the routine and the nonroutine. The measures reflect the use that employees believe they

make of alternative event-management processes when interpreting a situation and selecting actions to take. Event-management processes are information structures-in-use through which members interpret and respond to the work situations they encounter. Organizations provide many sources that members can use to interpret the events they experience and to guide their responses (Smircich & Morgan, 1982; Smith & Peterson, 1988). Event-management processes having an organizational source can supplement, strengthen, or override employees' own cognitive structures and processes. In some organization cultures, control systems and supervisory practices are bureaucratically designed with the ideal of constraining employees so tightly that they have no room to think or make choices. Regardless of what even a bureaucratic management might like, members implicitly select among alternative event-management processes to interpret situations and select actions. Their selections are the most generic contingencies that influence the extent to which managerial control through formal rules and leadership will affect members. The present article describes measures of these contingencies.

A key link between rational organizational control and tacit organization operation is the idea of "event" (Smith & Peterson, 1988). The idea of event is frequently found in organization theories which view social processes as episodes that can be given many meanings (e.g., Kahn et al., 1964, p. 26). These meanings are constrained very loosely by an external physical reality. Events are the elements in a social situation that are constructed and given meaning by a social actor. March and Olsen (1976) use the term "event" in a similar way, and the concept has filtered into the organizational literature, although rarely is it fully articulated. Mintzberg (1973) used the term to describe segments which he could abstract from the flow of activities in a manager's daily work (Martinko & Gardner, 1984). The term is applied similarly to experienced physical processes by Russell (1961, e.g., pp. 607-614) and Whitehead (1929, e.g., p. 90). The concept has an only partially realized potential for maintaining a process perspective on what happens in organizations.

In the present use, the social actors are individuals working in a manufacturing context, and events are grouped simply as "usual" or "unfamiliar" work situations. This two-category grouping parallels a common management distinction between ordinary situations that might be handled by standard operating procedures and exceptional situations that might be brought to the attention of superordinates. This categorization is a beginning response to one of the legitimate subjectivist criticisms of typical organization empiricism. That is, quantitative contingency research has pretended that

situation *dynamics* are taken into account by identifying constant, typical, or overall differences between settings. For example, contingency leadership models (e.g., House, 1971; Sheridan, Vredenburgh, & Abelson, 1984) sometimes pretend that it is enough to say that one subordinate's work is more structured than another's. The hypothesis is then tested that a leader must provide different degrees of initiating structure toward subordinates experiencing different degrees of task structure. An alternative hypothesis is that a single subordinate's work varies over time in its degree of structure. In effect, a subordinate's situation consists of events some of which are quite familiar and some of which are not. A leader may need to provide more or less direction within any single day as a subordinate encounters more or less familiar events. Affirming such a hypothesis produces quite different implications for how a manager behaves than does affirming the typical contingency hypothesis. It means that a manager's behavior must change over the course of a day or week to correspond with changes in the events that subordinates are encountering. Such variability in behavior in response to changing situations is exactly what is really found in work organizations. The present study begins to provide conceptual direction and design measures that allow event-based contingency hypotheses to be tested and training and change models to be constructed.

Questionnaire items were prepared and piloted to ask employees how much they use five different event-management processes for handling both ordinary and unfamiliar work events (Peterson, 1987). Several notions similar to the idea of event management processes have been identified in the organizational literature, but their implications have not been fully developed, especially in questionnaire design. Mintzberg (1979) distinguishes among coordination achieved through mutual adjustment, direct supervision, and standardization by work processes, outputs, and skills. Galbraith (1973) proposes that organizations differing in the complexity and uncertainty of work will place different degrees of emphasis on rules and procedures, hierarchy, goal setting, and various lateral linking mechanisms. All of these have substantial social information processing elements to them. However, the primary application in all of the above is to the fitting together of work activities, especially at an interdepartmental level. They do not explicitly address the complete set of problems faced in management, and they certainly do not indicate how the kind of surveys used for research or in-house attitude monitoring should be designed to take social information processing into account. Also, each of the above has a structural emphasis which assumes a certain uniformity in the particular events or circumstances that occur within structures and that are handled on the basis of structures.

The more comprehensive information processing emphasis of March and Simon's (1958) notion of programmed and nonprogrammed choice processes, encompassing potentially all aspects of interpretation and choice, comes closer to the present process emphasis. Similarly, even though Kahn et al.'s (1964) classic role conflict and ambiguity book places its greatest empirical emphasis on identifiable social actors who affect role incumbents' information processing, it also includes formal rules and informal norms as additional event-management processes for role activities. These elements are incorporated to some extent in subsequent measures of role characteristics (e.g., Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970), however their use does not emphasize the distinct, particular situations to which managers must give meaning and take action.

By combining the process and information orientation of March and Simon with the role set notions of Kahn et al. (as augmented by their theory if not their measures), five event management processes emerge. It was expected that manufacturing employees in many countries could give information about the relative use they believe they make of five event-management processes when facing unfamiliar problems and handling daily events. These are: (1) formal, explicit organization rules and procedures, (2) informal norms, (3) formal hierarchical leadership, (4) peers and semi-formal leaders — those who must rely on expert and referent power, and (5) self-direction or discretion. Separate research literatures are available on each of these topics. However, measures had not been previously developed that permit direct comparison of individual differences in employees' relative use of different event-management processes.

METHOD

The study was done as part of a cross-national assessment of electronics companies in four countries. The larger project was designed by a research team interested in loosely interconnected topics in leadership and organization theory. The researchers recognized a need to collaborate to pursue their individual, but partially intersecting, interests, and to also go beyond the bounds of their home countries. The study reported here deals with the organization theory themes central to one of the researchers' interests.

The cross-national context helps to avoid any tendency to attribute universal applicability to constructs which are later found to be culture-bound. However, the study actually compares selected sites in four countries, not the overall management characteristics used in four countries.

Questionnaire data were collected in electronics production facilities in the U.S., U.K., Japan, and Hong Kong. The inclusion of two English-speaking occidental countries and two oriental countries helped to avoid the temptation inherent in two-country studies to overinterpret any differences found as being due to cultural characteristics of those two countries. It was hoped that sufficiently similar sites could be accessed in all four countries to make possible an occidental versus oriental culture comparison. As noted in the description of hypotheses below, that hope was realized to only a very limited extent.

Electronics companies were selected for several reasons. Because sub-stantial cross-national heterogeneity was expected, similarity in technology and industry culture was sought to make measure design and analysis managable. The electronics industry, broadly conceived, has been central to international economic relations in the countries studied. Access to electron-ics plants, at the researchers' initiative, was also expected to be more likely than access to many other types of organizations. However, site access on the researchers' terms actually proved quite problematic, especially for U.S.-owned companies.

The participating electronics plants included two sites of a Japanese company, one located in the southeastern U.S., and one in southwestern Japan. The plant located in Japan was more fully automated and made greater use of robots than did the U.S. sister plant. Other sites were a Japanese-owned plant and a British-owned plant, both in England. Respondents in the U.S., U.K., and Japan sites included people performing a variety of production tasks. These tasks included machine operation, inspection, equipment main-tenance, and materials handling. The remaining site was a U.S.-owned plant located in Hong Kong. All plants used a sophisticated, semi-automated assembly technology. Data were obtained from 229 out of 232 employees in the U.S. plant, all 134 employees to whom surveys were distributed in the plant in Japan, 199 of 450 employees in one British plant, 79 of 800 in the second British plant, and all 116 employees who inspected preassembled semiconductor components in the Hong Kong plant. In general, the sites are more similar in technology and employees than would be, say, electronics manufacturing sites compared to handwork textile, banking, or government sites. However, as is typical in international research, the investigators did not have sufficient control of site access and site-management practices to compare identical plants with identical histories having identical employees. Consequently, pure country effects cannot be abstracted.

A set of 10 questions asked employees the extent to which they personally use five different event-management processes in responding to two catego-

ries of events. (Other topics covered in the survey were supervisory leader-ship, workgroup effectiveness, individual satisfaction, and, in the U.S. and Japan, compensation practices [Smith et al., 1989]). Questions correspond-ing to the five event-management processes noted above were phrased to ask how much use respondents make of: (1) the company's manuals on proce-dures and policies, (2) unwritten but accepted company and departmental policy, (3) advice from your superior, (4) advice from other experienced co-workers, and (5) your own previous experience and training. The extent to which respondents use each of these event-management processes was asked separately for two categories of work events. One set of 5 questions asked, "When you face an unfamiliar problem in your work, to what extent do you use each of the following:", followed by each of the five above-noted event-management processes. A second set of 5 questions asked, "In your usual day-to-day work to what extent do you use each of the following:", again, followed by the five event-management processes. Answers were given using a five-point Likert scale ("very great extent" to "very small extent"). Previous research in a real estate sales company showed that similar measures had convergent and discriminant validity in relation to sales per-formance and work attitudes (Herreid, Peterson, & Chang, 1985).

The items were originally written in English through collaboration be-tween the U.S. and U.K. authors. Translations into Japanese and Chinese were done by collaborators in Japan and Hong Kong who solicited com-ments from other bilingual researchers. The analysis plan is intended to provide a better indication of item equivalence than is provided by consul-tation among translators or by back-translation alone. The analysis plan, as described below, is also designed to minimize often insurmountable prob-lems in translating response alternatives. These are problems of cultural variability in the use of extreme adjectives even when a traditional translation check indicates that the meaning of the adjectives is equivalent between translations.

Instead of the factor analysis and homogeneity analysis methods used to check similar scales in the real estate study, the format considered appropriate for the questions suggested another analysis approach. Table 1 displays the scaling analysis in a format that follows a multitrait-multimethod logic. First, the items were standardized for each respondent. That is, the five items asking about event-management processes when problems occur were standardized relative to one another, as were the items concerning event-management processes in day-to-day work. The standardized items indicate the use that each respondent reported to make of each event-management process relative to the use made of all others. Standardizing across items for each respondent

is quite different from the more common practice of standardizing scores across respondents within items.

The standardization accomplishes two purposes. It reduces the operation of response biases that affect a person's average answer (e.g., acquiescence and halo). It also reduces the effects of any national tendencies toward such response biases or of response alternative translation differences. A different standardization procedure, within groups rather than within individuals, was used by Hofstede (1984) for some of the same reasons. However, whereas Hofstede's interest was in country-level analysis, the present study recognizes differences in individuals' use of various event-management processes.

HYPOTHESIS

One portion of the analysis is guided by an obvious hypothesis arising from the intent in constructing the measures. In all four countries, the use of each event management process for handling unfamiliar problems will be positively correlated with the use of the corresponding event-management process for handling day-to-day work situations; correlations between the use made of different event-management processes will not be significantly positive.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The second portion of the analysis is guided by what could, with a certain degree of brashness, be stated as a hypothesis. This portion compares the relative emphasis that employees in the four countries place on the five event-management processes. By subgrouping the countries, hypotheses could be tested comparing Oriental (Japan and Hong Kong) with Anglo-American management. However, given the weakness of the appropriate international research base, the new measures being used, and the confounding of country with site and respondent characteristics, the rationale for the second analytic step is best described less formally as a hypothesis. Prior work from Hofstede (1984) or the Meaning of Work research group (1988) might be used to form specific culture-based hypotheses linked either to nation or to multiple-nation subgroups. For example, it might be hypothesized that people in high "power distance" countries, like Hong Kong, will report that they make above average use of formal leadership or formal rules, while people in high "individualism" countries, like the U.K. and especially the U.S., might believe that they make above average use of self-direction. However, while the present data are helpful for checking whether the present

measures are bound by culture (whether site-specific or national), they are only moderately useful for testing hypotheses about the operation of national culture. Technically, the hypotheses that the second section of the data analysis test are the exploratory hypotheses that: (a) the ranking of the five alternative event-management processes by country of location, and (b) the magnitude of the differences in emphasis on different event-management processes will correspond to country of location. The implications of any differences found must be left to the subjective judgement of readers who may hold more specific hypotheses.

RESULTS

The analysis of five event-management processes (analogous to "traits") and two situations (analogous to "methods") is presented in Table 1. At the intersection of event-management process for the two categories of events is a set of four correlations. From top to bottom, and left to right at each intersection are correlations for the U.S., the U.K., Japan, and Hong Kong, respectively. The sets of correlations enclosed in squares on the diagonal are correlations between the same event-management process as used for the two categories of events (i.e., unfamiliar problems and usual day-to-day work). The off-diagonal correlations are between the use of different event-management processes for the two categories of events. Ordinarily, a complete multitrait-multimethod table would include two additional sets of correlations. One set would be among the event-management processes as used for unfamiliar problems, and a second set as used in day-to-day work. However, the standardizing within person across items results in nearly all correlations in these two sets being negative. Consequently, they are not shown.

The results shown in Table 1 indicate statistically significant, positive correlations for all countries in all of the on-diagonal sets. The off-diagonal correlations are all negative. The smallest on-diagonal positive correlation ($r = .30$) is larger in absolute value than the largest off-diagonal negative correlation ($r = -.28$). The results support the convergent and discriminant validity of the five pairs of event-management items regardless of translation or country of location.

Looking more carefully at the correlations on the diagonal in Table 1, several differences among variables and among countries are evident. Correlations involving reported use of unwritten policy are generally lower than those for any other event-management process. Also, the correspondence

TABLE 1
Personal Reliance on Alternative Event Management
Processes Correlations (U.S., U.K., Japan, H.K.)

Use when facing unfamiliar problem of:	C.M.		U.P.		S.A.		E.C.		E.T.	
Company	.49	.63	−.07	.05	−.08	−.19	−.20	−.34	−.21	−.13
manuals (C.M)	.41	.53	.06	−.04	−.22	−.23	−.16	−.33	−.07	−.02
Unwritten	−.09	.11	.35	.36	−.05	.00	−.18	−.20	.02	−.24
policy (U.P.)	.04	.06	.30	.30	−.12	−.10	−.21	−.21	−.04	−.09
Superior's	−.21	−.11	.00	.09	.61	.56	−.17	−.15	−.28	−.16
advice (S.A.)	−.09	−.27	−.24	−.17	.54	.54	−.06	.10	−.25	−.11
Experienced	−.22	−.45	−.23	−.25	−.22	−.09	.68	.67	.01	.04
coworkers (E.C.)	−.25	−.13	−.05	.00	−.02	.11	.46	.26	−.08	−.20
Experience and	−.06	−.17	−.06	−.02	−.27	−.25	−.09	−.07	.53	.58
training (E.T.)	−.16	−.26	−.06	−.07	−.22	−.26	.02	.23	.49	.39

NOTE: Figures are Pearson correlations between items asking about the use of the five event-management processes under the two circumstances of: (1) when facing unfamiliar problems, and (2) in day-to-day work. The correlations are arranged into sets of four for each item, where the top two correlations were obtained, respectively, in data from the U.S. and U.K., and the bottom two in data from Japan and Hong Kong.

between reliance on experienced co-workers for day-to-day and unfamiliar problems is higher for respondents in the U.S. and U.K. than for those in Japan and Hong Kong. These differences in correlations could be due to differences in item reliabilities, or to substantive aspects of respondents' beliefs about how they handle situations. Since the idea of "unwritten but accepted company and departmental policy" is more abstract than the other four event-management processes, and since there were more instances of nonresponse for these items than any others, respondent interpretation problems are likely.

Although the item-analysis results in Table 1 generally support the items' validity, they also show substantial differences between items referring to day-to-day work and those referring to unfamiliar problems. That is, the correlations between analogous items referring to the two categories of events are not high enough to generate reliability (homogeneity) coefficients that meet the usual criteria for further analysis. Therefore, multiple-item

scales and powerful inferential statistics that assume stable measures are not reasonable. Consequently, scores must be interpreted with more analytic subjectivity than might be preferred. The purpose of replication is achieved to some degree by separately analyzing the partially overlapping (i.e., moderately correlated) data for "day-to-day" and "unfamiliar" events. In the context of a basically routine, relatively controlled technology like semi-automated manufacturing processes, the distinction between these two categories of events is not likely to be as extreme as might be the case in internal work environments that are less protected from external turbulence.

Differences among countries and for both kinds of work situations in the basic ordering of the five event-management processes are shown in Table 2. Three analysis methods were used. The first two methods transform the average use made of each event-management process within each country into ranks. Analyses were conducted separately for "day-to-day" and "unfamiliar" situations. A Friedman test (a generalization of the Sign test for matched samples) shows a statistically significant similarity across countries in the ranking of event-management processes for both "day-to-day" and "unfamiliar" work situations (chi-square (df 4) = 11.8, p < .01, and 17.8, p < .01, respectively). Kendall's coefficient of congruence indicates that the similarity in ranking within countries represents a very large proportion of the maximum possible variance in rankings (.74 and .86, respectively). In all countries, greatest use is reported of previous experience and training, followed by superior's advice, experienced co-worker advice, and (about equally) unwritten policy and company manuals. Within these plants, the basic order in the use employees believe they make of various event-management processes is a broadly shared characteristic.

The first two analysis procedures disregard all but the rank order of the event-management processes. A series of one-way analysis of variance were used on the data standardized within individuals to identify differences between countries in the magnitude of relative use reported to be made of each event-management process. In these analyses, the four countries are treated as a predictor of individuals' responses to each standardized item. In every case, statistically significant differences (p < .01) were found according to country. The smallest differences were found in the use of unwritten policy for both unfamiliar problems and daily work. When considered in relation to the low correlations in all four countries for the use of the unwritten policy for the two kinds of events, it is likely that these are simply less reliable items than the others. More substantive issues emerge from this analysis for the other four event-management processes.

TABLE 2
Analysis of Variance Predicting Personal Reliance on
Alternative Event Management Processes from Location

Source of Guidance	Average Standardized Means for Sites in Each Country (S. D. in parentheses)				
	U.S.	U.K.	Japan	H.K.	F^a
For Unfamiliar Problems					
Company manuals	−.437	−.731	−.443	−.030	20.78
	(.910)	(.739)	(.779)	(.861)	
Unwritten policy	−.238	−.337	−.588	−.366	6.16
	(.787)	(.700)	(.721)	(.729)	
Superior's advice	.407	.332	−.006	.140	10.49
	(.753)	(.689)	(.796)	(.722)	
Experienced coworker advice	−.180	−.019	.410	.107	17.99
	(.772	(.777)	(.647)	(.721)	
Previous experience and training	.441	.679	.623	.126	19.99
	(.701)	(.619)	(.715)	(.777)	
For Usual Daily Work					
Company manuals	.013	−.644	−.550	−.536	27.02
	(.860)	(.755)	(.697)	(.857)	
Unwritten policy	−.399	−.259	−.404	−.152	4.19
	(.785)	(.672)	(.730)	(.668)	
Superior's advice	.206	.194	−.159	.369	12.42
	(.674)	(.700)	(.828)	(.823)	
Experienced coworker advice	.104	−.154	.514	−.220	31.28
	(.709)	(.778)	(.636)	(.739)	
Previous experience and training	.047	.788	.603	.539	41.77
	(.767)	(.624)	(.665)	(.722)	

All ANOVAs are significant at p < .01; df range from df $_{3,657}$ to df $_{3,702}$.

Country differences in the use of previous experience and training and use of company manuals are exactly opposite to one another. Company manuals are reported to be used the least in the U.K. and, secondarily, in Japan for

both unfamiliar problems and usual daily work. The respondents in Hong Kong believe that manuals are used more there than do respondents in the other countries for unfamiliar problems. Those in the U.S. indicate more use of company manuals in ordinary daily work than do those in the other countries. In contrast, previous experience and training is reported to be used the most by the employees in the U.K. and Japan. It is reported to be used relatively little to handle unfamiliar problems by employees in Hong Kong or to handle usual daily work by employees in the U.S. plant.

Since data from multiple countries continues to be overinterpreted as representing pervasive between-country differences, the nature of the present results which compares individuals from selected plants located in four countries, not the four countries themselves, bears repeating in the Results section. Although the plants were selected so that comparison would lean in the direction of providing between-country information, even plants with the same basic technology within one country can vary tremendously in their labor history, organization cultures, management practices, and technology details. Some readers may find it useful to subjectively evaluate the present results in light of their own personal experiences, or to speculate about whether the results do or do not tend to support their beliefs about between-country differences. However, such subjective speculations are not direct generalizations from a strong empirical grounding. For most practical purposes, cross-national research need not document universal characteristics of particular countries. After all, a multinational corporation is most interested in the situation that exists (or could be induced) in just one or a few plants it is operating in any particular country.

DISCUSSION

The present research introduces a survey method focusing on process-oriented variables that may prove useful in contingency research. Driven, perhaps, by a pragmatic, management-oriented value base, an earlier generation of measures emphasized the experienced *efficacy* of various sources of meaning and action guidance. For example, many measures reflect the quality of support and guidance provided by a supervisor. Similarly, group-process measures evaluate the quality of work-group cohesion, the quality of group processes, the appropriateness of work norms, or the prevalence of stress. The quality of experienced formalization and corporate policies are expressed in job design and role-quality measures, like task variety, feedback adequacy, or role conflict and ambiguity.

Variability in individuals' *use* of sources of meaning are left implicit in such measures. Of course, an individual's use of alternative sources of meaning and guidance will be affected by an evaluation of their quality. However, many individually-oriented contingency theories use measures of experienced quality when measures to capture *use* of sources of meaning might contain a greater proportion of variance reflecting the intent of the theory. For example, contingency models of task design typically use need-related personality or demographic measures as surrogates for the use made of self-direction. Leadership contingency theories have used personality (Abdel-Halim, 1981) or adequacy of task structure (House, 1971) as surrogates for the extent to which people use formal leadership. Rather than simply adopting process-quality measures originally designed to directly predict individual satisfaction and performance, process-use indicators which directly reflect contingency constructs are needed.

MEASUREMENT ISSUES

The present measures have clear limitations. The items about informal norms appear to need further clarification. Phrasing for a more complete set of event-management processes is needed. Additional categories of events beyond just day-to-day situations and unfamiliar problems need to be developed. More fundamentally, the items are limited because they are based on questions which ask directly about the sense-making of respondents. Their correspondence to nonconscious sense-making processes and to the respondents' behavior as seen by others is uncertain. However, earlier pilot study results suggest that the kinds of measures described here are more than fantasies or simple rationalizations of past behavior with no subsequent significance. For example, in a separate study (data available from the author), sales managers indicated that new salespeople are the ones who depend most on sales manager leadership. New salespeople also report making above-average use of sales managers' leadership. These two pieces of information are consistent with one another, and also generally fit the common sense idea that inexperienced people need personal support and guidance.

The present measures, like verbal measures of all kinds, undoubtedly reflect conscious rationalizations of past actions. As Nisbett and Wilson (1977) have emphasized, the fact that conscious beliefs are inferences drawn from prior conscious cognitions does not preclude the possibility that they correspond to what observers might describe as "reality." They may serve as an alternative to other attitude-based measures used in moderator research,

with the recognition that they share many of the limitations of the *genre*. Like all survey measures, they should not stand alone as the sole method of verifying a theoretical position about alternative sources of meaning used in organizations. The theoretical position taken here assumes less rationality than do the perspectives which produce the process-quality measures noted above. However, it is not consistent with a subjectivist extreme which views conscious experience as completely illusory.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Managers with exposure to U.S. business schools are accustomed to the ideas and implications of traditional contingency theories. One of the more recent contingency theories, for example, suggests that the utility of mechanisms to encourage the use of rules, direct supervision, and implement various forms of standardization, depends on qualities of the events an organization typically encounters (Mintzberg, 1979). Among these qualities are the comprehensibility, predictability, and diversity of the organization's work, and the required speed of organizational response to environmental changes. Each element in this, and in most contingency models, assumes a certain homogeneity over periods of days, weeks, and months in the kinds of events that are being experienced by organization members.

The present perspective forces a more dynamic, process-oriented way of managing to complement the management approaches recommended by traditional structural contingency theories. That is, in addition to contingencies between organizations (whether in different countries or otherwise), and over long evolutionary periods in the organization life cycle, there are important contingencies over short segments of time. Among these are the occurence of unusual problems faced by individuals which are separated from daily routine. In the absence of well-documented models to indicate how these event contingencies operate in the context of better understood global organization contingencies, managers need to do some creative diagnostic work. Questions need to be asked about how to manage organizational culture (informal rules), written rules, supervisory leadership, informal peer leadership, and individual employee training so that both the expected and unexpected can be managed well.

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