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Lackey, L. L.; And Others

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to determine the effects of command position-battalion commander and company commander-upon evaluations of the desirability of certain leader actions. Twenty-two U.S. Army officers who had served as battalion commanders (Group I) and 22 who had served as company commanders (Group II) rated 36 leader actions on their desirability for battalion and for company commanders. Battalion commanders do not differentiate between the two command levels on the desirability of leader actions. Company commanders differentiate about actions concerned with the centralization of authority and responsibility and consider these to be more desirable for both command levels. Both groups rated positive motivation and emotional support as desirable and punitive or negatively motivating actions as slightly undesirable. The implications of the differences in expectations about leader behavior on effective organizational functioning, leadership doctrine, and training are discussed. (Author)



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The Effects of Command Position Upon Evaluations of Leader Behavior

L L Lackey, Joseph A Olmstead, and Harold E Christensen

HUMAN RESOURCES RESEARCH ORGANIZATION 300 North Washington Street • Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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L.L. Lackey, Joseph A Olmstead, and Harold E. Christensen

HumRRO Division No. 4
Fort Benning, Georgia
HUMAN RESOURCES RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

Work Unit FORGE

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The Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) is a nonprofit corporation established in 1969 to conduct research in the field of training and education. It is a continuation of The George Washington University Human Resources Research Office. HumRRO's general purpose is to improve human performance, particularly in organizational settings, through behavioral and social science research, development, and consultation. HumRRO's mission in work performed under contract with the Department of the Army is to conduct research in the fields of training, motivation, and leadership.

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FOREWORD

The primary purpose of the research described in this report was to determine the effects of command position upon judged desirability of certain empirically derived leader actions for battalion commanders and company commanders. An additional purpose was to identify differences between the two command levels in terms of desirability of the actions for incumbents of the positions.

The report describes the results of a further analysis of data collected in a study by Major James I. Muir in support of Work Unit FORGE, Factors in Military Organizational Effectiveness, a research project conducted by the Human Resources Research Organization. The study was in partial fulfillment of requirements for completion of the Human Factors Elective of the Infantry Officers Advanced Course, U.S. Army Infantry School. The questionnaire used in the study was developed by Major Allen Pasco, also in partial fulfillment of requirements for the Human Factors Elective.

The study was supervised under Technical Advisory Service by HumRRO Division No. 4 at Fort Benning, Georgia. Further analysis of the data was carried out under Work Unit FORGE. Dr. T.O. Jacobs is Director of the Division and Dr. J.A. Olmstead is FORGE Work Unit Leader.

Military liaison and support were provided by the U.S. Army Infantry Human Research Unit. LTC Chester I. Christie was Unit Chief when this research was conducted and LTC Willys E. Savis is the current Chief.

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Meredith P. Crawford
President
Human Resources Research Organization



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

MILTARY PROBLEM

The effectiveness of a military organization depends upon the mutually complementary activities of its personnel. However, a serious impediment to effectiveness can arise when individuals who occupy different command levels possess conflicting views concerning the leadership behavior appropriate for their respective roles.

Such differences in viewpoint are frequently reported, but neither the precise nature of the differences nor their sources have been identified previously. Specific knowledge concerning such differences, their nature, and their origins would provide useful bases for leadership doctrine and training.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The purpose of the study was to determine the effects of occupancy of two command positions—battalion commander and company commander—upon evaluations of desirability of certain common leader actions for incumbents of the two positions. An additional objective was to determine whether experienced officers judge the actions to be differentially desirable for the two positions.

METHOD

Two groups of U.S. Army officers completed a questionnaire on which respondents were required to judge 36 leader actions in terms of their desirability for battalion commanders and for company commanders. The officers were classified according to command experience. Group I consisted of 22 staff members of the U.S. Army Infantry School who had recently served as battalion commanders. Group II consisted of 22 student officers in the Advanced Course of the Infantry School who had recently served as company commanders.

For purposes of analysis, each of the leader actions was assigned to one of four "functional areas" according to a modification of Bales' category system for interaction process analysis. The functional areas were as follows:

- (1) Task Centralized Actions, those actions concerned with the mission or task which center authority or responsibility in the leader.
- (2) Task Decentralized Action, those actions concerned with the mission or task which decentralize authority or responsibility to subordinates.
- (3) Social-Emotional Positive Actions, those actions that principally affect the interpersonal, emotional, and motivational relations of the leader with other personnel and that are usually interpreted as positive or rewarding.
- (4) Social-Emotional Negative Actions, those actions that principally affect the interpersonal, emotional, and motivational relations of the leader with other personnel and are usually interpreted as negative or punishing.

Ratings by the two officer groups of the desirability of the leader actions for each of two "levels of command" (battalion commander and company commander) were compared on the basis of functional area scores through the use of analysis-of-variance procedures.



PRINCIPAL RESULTS

- (1) A significant interaction was found between command experience, rated level of command, and functional area, indicating that battalion commanders and company commanders rated leader actions differently for the two levels within certain functional areas
- (2) Within each functional area, ratings by battalion commanders indicated no differences between levels of command in desirability of leadership actions
- (3) Task Centralized actions were judged by company commanders to be more desirab¹ of for company commanders than for battalion commanders.
- (4) Company commanders rated Task Decentralized actions as more desirable for a battalion commander than did battalion commanders.
- (5) Company commanders rated Task Decentralized actions as more desirable for a company commander than did battalion commanders
- (6) For combined command levels and groups, Task Decentralized and Social-Emotional Positive actions were rated as more desirable than other functional areas.
- (7) For combined command levels and groups, Social-Emotional Negative actions were judged least desirable among the functional areas.
- (8) Within the Social-Emotional Positive and Social-Emotional Negative areas, each group rated such actions as equally desirable for both levels of command.
- (9) No category of leader actions was judged by either experience group to be desirable for one command level but undesirable for the other.

CONCLUSIONS

- (1) Command position influences the evaluations of officers with regard to certain leader actions. This conclusion is compatible with a finding of the U.S. Army War College Study of Leadership for the Professional Soldier that perception of the relative importance and desirability of leadership actions varies among grade levels.
- (2) Battalion commanders do not differentiate between command levels as to the desirability of leader actions. Company commanders differentiate between command levels with regard to actions concerned with centralization of authority and responsibility.
- (3) Company commanders consider decentralized actions to be more desirable for both battalion commanders and company commanders than do battalion commanders
- (4) Both battalion commanders and company commanders consider positively motivating actions to be highly desirable for both command levels and punitive or threatening actions to be slightly undesirable for both levels
- (5) The results represent the best judgments of experienced battalion commanders and company commanders, and, accordingly, warrant consideration by leaders and designers of leadership training.
- (6) The small number of individuals included in the sample suggests the necessity for caution in generalizing the results to the total officer population. Furthermore, since the study was limited to Infantry officers, caution should be exercised in generalizing the results to the technical services



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The Effects of Command Position Upon Evaluations of Leader Behavior

INTRODUCTION

MILITARY PROBLEM

A military organization is a complex system and its effectiveness depends upon the mutually complementary activities of all personnel. An especially serious impediment to effectiveness can arise when individuals who occupy different command levels possess conflicting views of their roles. Such differences may result in blocked communication, duplication of effort, errors of omission and commission, and, in some instances, outright antagonism between individuals who occupy critical leadership positions.

Because conflicting views concerning the execution of leadership functions may lead to problems, a battalion commander may encounter difficulty in obtaining precisely the performance he desires from a company commander if his views and his subordinate's views of their leadership responsibilities differ them a different perspective, a company commander may feel restricted in the execution of his duties according to his own best judgment, because his concept of leadership differs from that of his battalion commander.

Differences in viewpoint concerning leadership are frequently reported, but neither the precise nature of the differences nor their sources have been previously identified. Accordingly, specific knowledge concerning such differences, their nature, and their sources would provide useful inputs for leadership doctrine and training.

BACKGROUND

Differences in viewpoints concerning desirable leadership behavior may be due to simple variation between individuals. However, there is considerable evidence that the role a person occupies is a more influential determinant of his view of leadership, and that perspectives change as he moves through the chain of command (1). It appears that individuals who occupy the same levels within an organization will develop somewhat uniform conceptions about leadership, and these ideas may be different from those held by personnel at either higher or lower levels (2, 3). Thus, an individual may possess one concept of leadership as a company commander, but service as a battalion commander can result in some modification of his views concerning desirable leadership behavior for both a company commander and a battalion commander.

The effects of such differences in role perceptions have been documented (4, 2, 5). One common difficulty is the overt conflict between superior and subordinate that may arise because of differing perceptions of the proper role for the subordinate. A more complex problem is the internal conflict that may be experienced by a subordinate who is aware that his view of how he should lead differs from his superior's expectations concerning his leadership actions. A similar conflict may be experienced by a superior officer if he becomes aware that his convictions about how he should lead contradict a subordinate's image of desirable leadership by superiors.

It is apparent that occupancy of different organizational levels may result in differing views of desirable leadership behavior, and that these views can cause serious problems which may impede effectiveness.



RESEARCH PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to identify differences, if any, between the judgments of battalion con-manders and company commanders concerning the desirability of certain common leader actions for both battalion commanders and company commanders. Specifically, the study was designed to answer the following questions

- (1) Do battalion commanders and company commanders differ in their evaluations of the desirability of certain common leader actions for battalion commanders?
- (2) Do they differ in their evaluations of the desirability of the same actions for company commanders?
- (3) No battalion commanders and company commanders judge the actions to be equally desirable for both?
- (4) If differences are found in connection with Questions 1, 2, or 3, what kinds of leader actions are involved?

METHOD

The study was designed to allow a comparison between the judgments of former battalion or brigade commanders and those of former company commanders concerning the desirability of a number of leader actions for battalion and company commanders.

PARTICIPANTS

Two groups of U.S. Army officers participated in the study, which was conducted at Fort Benning, Georgia. One group was composed of former brigade or battalion commanders; the other group consisted of former company commanders. The 14 participants had acquired their command experience during service in the Republic of Vietnam.

Contingent upon their level of command experience, participants were placed in Group I or Group II. Group I was composed of 22 officers, of whom 19 had commanded battalions, one had commanded a brigade but not a battalion, and two had commanded brigades and battalion-equivalent units (U.S. Special Forces C Detachment Commander and Battle Group Deputy Commander). In the remainder of the report, this group will be referred to as "battalion commanders." Group II consisted of 22 officers whose most recent command experience was that of company commander. Characteristics of the two groups are presented in Table 1.

At the time of the study, all participants were assigned to Fort Benning. The former company commanders were students in the Infantry Officers Advanced Course, U.S. Army Infantry School (USAIS), and the former "battalion commanders" were members of the staff of the Infantry School.

DATA COLLECTION

Comparisons between the two groups were made on the basis of responses to a questionnaire dealing with ratings of desirability of various types of leader behavior. The respondents were given the questionnaire and asked to return it after completion. The questionnaire was designed to elicit ratings of actual leader actions and to permit analyses of scores for functional areas.



Table 1

Characteristics of Subjects

Descriptors	Group I	Group II
Rank		
COL	8	••
LTC	14	
MAJ		2
CPT	••	20
Mean military experience (years)	20.6	7 2
Mean age (years)	418	28 3
Education		
High school		1
1-3 years college	1	3
4 years college	11	17
Graduate work	10	1

Development of the Questionnaire

The objective was to develop a questionnaire that would be relevant for military personnel and would be conceptually sound. To obtain a pool of relevant items, 180 members of Infantry Officer Advanced Class No. 68-1 (USAIS) were asked to list 10 behaviors that are frequently exhibited by battalion commanders, battalion staff officers, and company commanders, and to rank the behaviors in order of desirability. The behavior descriptions thus obtained provided a pool of genuine leader actions from which items could be selected for inclusion in the questionnaire.

Bales' (6) categories for interaction process analysis served as the conceptual basis for item selection. Bales devised 12 categories that encompass most of the behavior exhibited by group members during problem-solving interaction. These categories, in turn, are grouped into four boad functional areas: (a) Task-Oriented Questions, (b) Task-Oriented Answers, (c) Social-Emotional Positive Reactions, and (d) Social-Emotional Negative Reactions.

For this study, the Bales system was adapted for a military context. Leader actions relevant to each of Bales' 12 categories were selected from the item pool. To make them more appropriate in a military operational context, two of the Bales functional areas were renamed. In the questionnaire used in the study described here, items can be grouped into four functional areas:

- (1) Task Centralized Actions (TC). Those actions that are mainly concerned with the mission, task, or work and that serve to increase personal control of the leader or to otherwise center authority or responsibility in the command level being evaluated.
- (2) <u>Task Decentralized Actions (TD)</u>. Those actions that are mainly concerned with the mission, task, or work and that serve to decentralize authority and responsibility or to otherwise increase the contributions of subordinates.
- (3) Social-Emotional Positive Actions (SE+). Those actions that principally affect the interpersonal, emotional, and motivational relations of the leader with other personnel (superiors, peers, subordinates) and that are usually interpreted as positive or rewarding.



<u>cual-Emotional Negative Actions (SE—)</u>. Those actions that principally affect the interpersonal, emotional, and motivational relations of the leader with other personnel (superiors, peers, subordinates) and that are usually interpreted as negative or punishing.

Items were randomly distributed within the questionnaire and were not identified as related to any functional area. However, such classification permits recovery of data by area, and amputation of area scores makes it possible to compare desirability of actions according to the function served.

Forty-five leader actions were selected for inclusion. The questionnaire was then administered to 160 members of the Infantry Officer Advanced Course Class No. 68-2 (USAIS). The respondents were required to rate the desirability of each item for battalion commanders and company commanders on a six-point scale (described below). The responses were analyzed and each item was evaluated for reliability, clarity, and content validity. After faulty items were discarded, 36 descriptions of leader actions were retained.

Thus, the items contained in the questionnaire were descriptive of actual leader actions as provided by experienced officers, they were selected on the basis of an extensively tested conceptual framework, and both the items and the response procedure were pretested with subjects similar to many of those who participated in this study

Format

The questionnaire is shown in Appendix A. The respondents were required to judge each of the 36 leader actions in terms of its desirability for each of two command levels—battalion commanders and company commanders. They rated each action by recording a number indicating degree of desirability in a blank space next to each of the command levels listed below the action description. The desirability scale and the values corresponding to each alternative were:

Very Undesirable 1
Undesirable 2
Slightly Undesirable 3
Slightly Desirable 4
Desirable 5
Very Desirable 6

The scale forces respondents to record a definite positive (desirable) or negative (undesirable) response for each item. Neutral or undecided responses were not permitted. This procedure was used to forestall a frequently noted tendency to over-respond in the central area of a scale when a mid-point alternative is provided.

The questionnaire included a cover sheet on which respondents recorded personal data—rank, age, length of commissioned service, education, and military experience according to position and time served in position under both combat and noncombat situations. This information was needed to provide data concerning characteristics of the sample surveyed and for the classification necessary for comparisons between levels of command experience. Respondents were not required to identify themselves.

ANALYSIS

Data were available concerning the desirability of leader actions for battalion commanders and company commanders, as rated by former "battalion commanders" and former company commanders.

An item score is the desirability value assigned to an action for a particular command level. Therefore, within each group, two scores for each action were available



6

for analysis. Functional area scores were also computed for each rated command level. Appendix B presents the classification of questionnaire items by functional area.

Functional Area Scores. Within each command level, a score for a functional area is the group's mean of item scores for all actions subsumed under that area. The use of means was necessary for comparisons between functional areas, because numbers of items within areas were not equal.

Group Comparisons. The study was designed to provide comparisons of command-level functional area scores between two groups of subjects who differed according to command experience. The main analysis involved the use of analysis-of-variance procedures for repeated measures (7) in a 2 x 2 x 4 (Command Experience x Rated Level of Command x Functional Area) design. This method permits analysis of the effects of command experience upon desirability ratings for each command level and each functional area. Where significant interaction was found, simple main-effects tests (8) were used to identify sources of interaction.

RESULTS

The means and standard deviations of ratings by the two groups for each leader action according to rated levels of command are shown in Appendix B. The results discussed in this section are concerned with group comparisons of functional area scores; ratings given to specific actions may be ascertained from A_I pendix B.

A comparison of group functional area scores is shown in Table 2 and results of the principal analysis of variance are shown in Table 3. No significant differences were found between levels of command experience when this variable was considered alone. On the other hand, significant differences were found between Rated Level of Command and between Functional Areas.

Table 2

Comparison of Functional Area Scores

	Rated Level of Command	Functional Area								
Command Experience		Task Task Centralized Decentralized			Social-Emotional Positive		Social-Emotional Negative			
		М	\$ D	М	S D	М	S Đ	M	\$ D	
Bn CO	Bn CO	4.06	.67	4 41	.98	4.76	.89	3 09	.86	
	Co CO	4.29	.85	4.25	.90	4.80	.91	3.19	79	
Co CO	Bn CO	4.09	.57	4.97	.53	4.69	.41	3.35	68	
	Co CO	4.50	.60	4.71	.51	4.89	.40	3.35	73	
Total		4 23	.70	4.59	.81	4.78	.70	3.24	78	

Significant interaction occurred between Rated Level of Command and Functional Area and between Command Experience, Rated Level of Command, and Functional Areas. These significant interactions indicate that levels of command were rated differently for the several functional areas, and that judgments of former battalion commanders and company commanders were different for Rated Level of Command in at least some functional areas.

Table 3

Analysis of Variance for Functional Area Scores

Sources	df	MS	F	ρ
Between Subjects	43			
A (Command Experience)	1	4 03	1 52	NS
Subjects within groups	42	2.66		
Within Subjects	308			
B (Rated Levels of Command)	1	.40	8 00	<.01
AB	1	.00	<1	NS
BxSubjects within groups	42	05		
C (Functional Areas)	3	41 19	76.28	<.01
AC	3	1 02	1.89	NS
CxSubjects within groups	126	.54		
ВС	3	1.06	24.65	<.01
ARC	3	.16	3.72	<.05
BCxSubjects within groups	126	043		

Because of the significant interactions, direct interpretation of the main effects was not feasible. In order to identify the sources of differences within the different levels of each variable, significant interactions were analyzed further by tests of simple effects (8). Table 4 shows the simple effects test performed in further analysis of the significant \overline{BC} interaction (Rated Level of Command x Functional Area).

Table 4

Summary of Analysis of Variance for Simple Effects

Associated With the

Rated Level of Command x Functional Area Interaction

Source	df	MS	F	ρ
Test for simple effects of		<u></u>	<u> </u>	.L
Rated Level of Command for				
Functional Areas.				
Functional Area TC	1	2.23	49.56	<.01
Functional Area TD	1	1.00	22.22	<.01
Functional Area SE+	1	.31	6 89	<.01
Functional Area SE-	1	05	1.11	NS
Error B+BC	168	.045		
Test for simple effects of				
Functional Area for				
Rated Level of Command.				
Bn CO	3	20.37	70.24	<.01
Co CO	3	21.89	75.48	< 01
Error C+BC	252	.29		

When judgments of the two experience groups are pooled, results of the simple effects test show that the company commander position received significantly higher ratings than the battalion commander position for both TC and SE+ actions. For the TD functional area, it was judged significantly more desirable for a battalion commander to display this type of behavior than for a company commander to do so. Furthermore, differences between functional areas occurred within each rated level of command. However, these results must be qualified by the additional analysis of the significant ABC interaction.

Table 5 shows the results of the simple effects test performed in further analysis of the significant ABC interaction (Command Experience x Rated Level of

Table 5

Summary of Analysis of Variance for Simple Effects

Associated With Interaction Between

Command Experience, Rated Level of Command, and Functional Area

Source	df	MS	F	p
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
Test for simple effects of Command				
Experience on Rated Level of				
Command for Functional Areas	_	50	<1	NC
Bn CO for Functional Area TC	1	.50	• • •	NS < or
BN CO for Functional Area TD	1	2.41	4.30	<.05
Co CO for Functional Area TC	1	.01	<1	NS < 05
Co CO for Functional Area TD	1	3.44	6.14	<.05
Bn CO for Functional Area SE+	1	.10	<1	NS
Bn CO for Functional Area SE—	1	.27	<1	NS
Co CO for Functional Area SE+	1	.06	<1	NS
Co CO for Functional Area SE—	1	.79	1.41	NS
Error within cell	33 6	.56		
Test for Command Experience x				
Rated Level of Command Inter-				
action for Functional Areas				
Functional Area TC	1	.20	4.44	<.05
Functional Area TD	1	.05	1.11	NS
Functional Area SE+	1	.17	3.78	NS
Functional Area SE—	1	.07	1.56	NS
Error AB+ABL	168	.045		
Test for Command Experience x				
Functional Area Interaction for				
Rated Level of Command				
Bn CO	3	.29	1.00	NS
Co CO	3	.89	3.07	NS
Error AC+ABC	252	.29		
Test for Functional Area x Rated				
Level of Command Interaction for				
Command Experience				
Former Bn COs	3	.91	21.16	<.01
Former Co COs	3	.30	6.98	<.01
Error BCxSs within groups	126	.043		

Effects of Command Experience Upon Desirability Scores

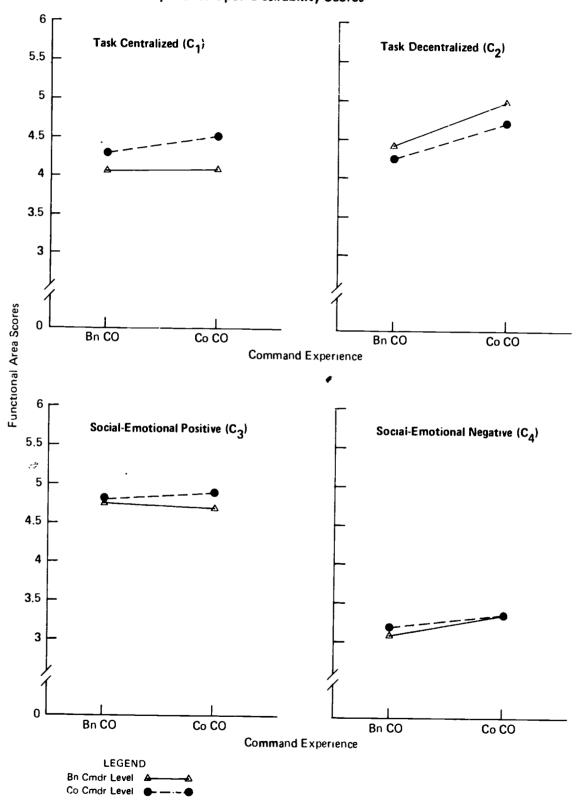


Figure 1

Command x Functional Area). For assistance in interpretation of Table 5, Figure 1 illustrates the scores for each functional area according to rated level of command and experience of the raters.

From the section of Table 5 that shows the test for simple effects of command experience upon ratings assigned the two levels of command for each functional area, two significant results can be noted. The first is concerned with the effects of command experience upon ratings given the battalion commander position for Task Decentralized actions (F = 4.30, p < .05) and indicates a difference between the command experience groups in judging the desirability of leader actions that serve to decentralize authority and responsibility. Reference to Figure 1 shows that former company commanders assigned higher desirability ratings than former battalion commanders to decentralized actions for battalion commanders. The second result indicates a significant effect of command experience upon the desirability of Task Decentralized actions for company commanders (F = 6.14, P < .05). Figure 1 shows that former company commanders rated these actions more desirable for company commanders than did former battalion commanders.

In that section of Table 5 covering the test for interaction between command experience and rated level of command for each functional area, a significant result is shown only for Task Centralized actions (F = 4.44, p < .05). From Figure 1 and Table 2, it can be concluded that former battalion commanders consider these actions equally desirable for both levels, whereas former company commanders judge them to be more desirable for company commanders. Both former battalion commanders and company commanders consider TC actions about equally desirable for battalion commanders. Of special significance here is the fact that former battalion commanders did not discriminate between command levels within any functional area. The noted difference for Task Centralized actions is due solely to the differential judgments of former company commanders.

The last section of Table 5 shows that interaction between functional area and rated level of command was significant for both command-experience groups. These results indicate that scores for each level of command varied, according to functional area, for each command-experience group considered separately.

DISCUSSION

The principal purpose of this study was to determine whether individuals who occupy two levels of command within a battalion differ in their views concerning the desirability of leadership actions for incumbents of the two positions. The discussion to follow will be addressed to this issue and its implications. It should be noted that mean ratings for each of the leader actions included in the questionnaire are shown in Appendix B. Reference to these data will provide information concerning the desirability or undesirability of any specific action, as judged by experienced officers.

The results of this study indicate that company commanders do, in fact, differ from battalion commanders in their evaluations of leader actions; however, the differences are localized within certain specific types of behavior and, mainly, are due to greater differentiation between levels by company commanders. Principal differences were found in evaluations of leader actions concerned with the assignment and supervision of missions, tasks, or work (Task Centralized and Task Decentralized Actions). Thus, company commanders judge it to be more desirable for both levels to decentralize authority and responsibility than do battalion commanders. Because battalion commanders consider Task Decentralized actions to be somewhat more than "slightly



desirable" for both command levels, ratings of these actions by company commanders were significantly higher and approached "desirable" for both levels.

On the other hand, both company commanders and battalion commanders judge the centralization of authority and responsibility to be only "slightly desirable" for battalion commanders. In addition, battalion commanders judge these actions to be no more desirable for company commanders than for themselves, company commanders, however, consider centralized actions significantly more desirable for themselves than for battalion commanders.

Both company commanders and battalion commanders consider positively motivating and rewarding actions (SE+) to be equally "highly desirable" for both levels of command. Both groups also judge punitive and negatively motivating actions (SE+) to be "slightly undesirable" for the two levels. Battalion commanders and company commanders do of differ in their evaluations of positive and negative motivating actions, and neither group differentiates between levels of command with regard to these actions.

Probably the most significant result of this study is the finding that battalion commanders do not differentiate between desirability of leader actions for the two command levels within any of the functional areas, whereas company commanders make such differentiations with regard to actions concerned with task or mission accomplishment and supervision of work. Apparently battalion commanders hold to the frequently cited concept which states that "leadership is the same for all levels, but the problems become more complex as one moves up the chain of command." On the other hand, company commanders see some genuine differences between the two levels with regard to the centralization of responsibility and extent of detailed supervision of operations.

The principal source of differences lies in the stronger advocacy by company commanders of decentralization and, what is more, of increasing decentralization as one moves up the chain of command. These differences could be attributed to many causes—the greater experience of battalion commanders coupled with their having been exposed to the problems of both levels, the broader perspective resulting from the command of a battalion, the reaction of company commanders against what is perceived as excessive control by higher levels, or the more recent exposure of the company commanders to instruction in current doctrine that advocates decentralization. However, reasons for the differences, while relevant, do not alter the fact that occupancy of different positions in a battalion is accompanied by corresponding differences in perceptions of roles and responsibilities.

The results of this study are compatible with findings of the U.S. Army War College Study of Leadership for the Professional Soldier (9). In the "ar College study, differences between grade levels were found in perceptions of relative importance and desirability of various leadership actions. From the results of these two studies, it is apparent that the perspective of organizational position influences perceptions of leadership behavior and, therefore, determines the ways in which such behavior will be evaluated by both superiors and subordinates.

Several implications are suggested by the results. First, the data are the pooled opinions of experienced officers who have recently served under current combat conditions, in the positions of battalion commander and company commander, respectively. The noted differences between the two groups of officers have significance for the effectiveness of battalion operations. It would appear that the effectiveness of leaders at both levels might be improved, or at least their problems might be simplified, if leadership training included instruction concerning potential differences in viewpoints between the levels.

The second implication is concerned with leading company commanders like those represented by the sample used in this study. Leaders are most effective in influencing subordinates when the views of superior and subordinate agree concerning their respective

leadership roles $(5, \underline{10})$. Differences such as those noted in this report are potential impediments to such effectiveness; accordingly, where possible, the differences should be clarified and resolved. If this resolution is not achieved, the minimum requirement is that the subordinate clearly understand his commander's concept of both leadership roles. Thus, even if the subordinate does not entirely agree with his commander's concept, he will have no doubts concerning the commander's expectations of him and will also be able to predict the superior's actions with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

Effective performance of leadership roles comes about through understanding, and the effects of differences such as those noted in this report can be resolved, or at least minimized, when superior officers take the initiative to establish communication concerning leadership activities with subordinates. Subordinates are usually reluctant to initiate resolution of differences or clarification of role expectations, so if such actions are to occur, the initiative will usually fall to the superior in the relationship. Because role relationships develop best when they have a good beginning, effectiveness will be enhanced if the superior makes himself sensitive, at an early stage, to the problem of his relationship with subordinates. It also will be helpful if he knows clearly what leadership roles he perceives for his subordinates and for himself, because he can then anticipate any incompatibilities that may arise. Finally, it is important that he carefully and clearly communicate his views to his subordinates and, furthermore, that he ensures that his subordinates understand what he intends their leadership roles to be.

A final implication is that the results confirm the value of a research-based approach for understanding military leadership. They demonstrate that it is possible to identify in concrete terms specific sources of potential leadership problems and to determine directions for improved training and application.



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Appendix A

RESEARCH OUESTIONNAIRE

<u>Purpose</u>: The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine the desirability of particular leadership behaviors in Battalion and Company Commanders.

Personai	Data			
1.	Rank			
2.	Age			
3 .	Length of service	yrs.		
4.	Education:			
	a. High School	yr s.		
	b. College			
	c. Graduate School	yrs.		
5.	Experience: Indicate type priate blanks the length of	_		
		Cor	nbat	Noncombat
	Battalion Commander			
	Battalion XO			
	Battalion Staff Officer			
	Company Commander			
	Platoon Leader			
	*			
NOTE:	This questionnaire is an and will not be identified in any answers. Please answer fran	y way by name. Th	nere are r	no right or wrong



INSTRUCTIONS

Please rate each of the actions described below for its desirability in a Battalion Commander and for its desirability in a Company Commander, according to the following scale:

- 1. Very undesirable
- 2. Undesirable
- 3. Slightly undesirable
- 4. Slightly desirable
- 5. Desirable
- 6. Very desirable

Rate each action by placing a number indicating its degree of desirability (based on the rating scale given above) for a Battalion Commander and for a Company Commander in the blank space next to each position.

ACTIONS TO BE RATED

1.	Often stresses formality in his relationships with subordinates.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
2.	Is often primarily concerned with the men's safety and welfare.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
3.	Often places the mission ahead of men's safety and welfare.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
4.	Frequently maintains informal relations with subordinates.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
5 .	Frequently coordinates work of subordinate officers.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
6.	Frequently lets subordinates make their decisions about how to carry out
	the missions he assigns them.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
7 .	Is often antagonistic and aggressive toward subordinates.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
8.	Frequently helps subordinate officers in personal matters.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
9.	Often reprimands subordinates for lack of effort.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
10.	Frequently appears irritated.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander



- 1.
- 2.
- Very undesirable
 Undesirable
 Slightly undesirable
 Slightly desirable
 Desirable
- 4.
- 5.
- Very desirable

ACTIONS TO BE RATED

11.	Makes few decisions without consulting subordinate officers.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
12 .	Often appeals for good performance.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
13.	Often asks subordinate officers for suggestions.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
14.	Often warns subordinates against poor performance.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
15.	Often agrees with subordinate officers' ideas and suggestions.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
16.	Is often accessible to subordinates.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
17.	Makes most decisions without consulting subordinate officers.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
18.	Often agrees with fellow officers' ideas and suggestions.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
19.	Frequently provides information about the task or mission.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
2 0.	Closely supervises every detail of missions he assigns.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
21.	Often displays a sense of humor.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
22.	Frequently suggests ways to accomplish mission.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
23 .	<u>-</u>
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander



- 1. Very undesirable Undesirable
- 2.
- 3. Slightly undesirable
- Slightly desirable Desirable 4.
- 5.
- Very desirable 6.

ACTIONS TO BE RATED

24.	Often rewards and praises subordinates for their efforts.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
25.	
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
26.	Frequently checks on every step of subordinates' execution of assignments.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
27.	Often explains or gives reasons why things should be done.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
28.	Often asks for opinions of subordinates.
	Battalion Commander
00	Company Commander
29.	Frequently checks on mission accomplishment rather than on each step of
	its execution.
	Battalion Commander
20	Company Commander
30 .	Often reprimands subordinates for inadequate accomplishment. Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
31	Often gives opinion to subordinates.
01.	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
32.	Frequently disagrees with subordinate officers' ideas and suggestions.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
3 3.	Frequently seeks information from subordinate officers about the task or mission.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
34.	Often disagrees with senior officers' ideas and suggestions.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
35.	what performance is expected of subordinates.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander
36.	Often agrees with senior officers' ideas and suggestions.
	Battalion Commander
	Company Commander



Appendix B

COMPARISON OF FUNCTIONAL AREA SCORES FOR
RATED LEVEL OF COMMAND BY COMMAND EXPERIENCE GROUP

	Rated	Command Experience				
Leader Actions (Within Functional Areas) ^a	Level of	Battalion C	Commander	Company C	Commande	
	Command	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
ask Centralized (TC)				<u> </u>		
Frequently coordinates work of	Bn CO	4 0	1.6	4.1	1.3	
subordinate officers (5).	Co CO	4.5	1.8	5.1	.9	
Makes most decisions without con-	Bn CO	3.0	1.2	2.2	.7	
sulting subordinate officers (17).	Co CO	3.3	1.3	2.8	`1.0	
Frequently provides information	Bn CO	5.5	1.4	5.6	.6	
about the task or mission (19).	Co CO	5.4	1.4	5.7	.5	
Closely supervises every detail of	Bn CO	3.4	1.6	3.5	1.5	
missions he assigns (20).	Co CO	3.8	1.8	4.2	1 4	
Frequently suggests ways to	Bn CO	4.4	1.2	4.7	.9	
accomplish mission (22).	Co CO	4 5	1.3	4.9	8	
Frequently checks on every step of	Bn CO	2.6	1.4	2.6	1.1	
subordinates' execution of assignments (26).	Co CO	3.1	1.4	3.3	1.4	
Often gives opinion to subordinates	Bn CO	4.6	1.0	4.2	1.1	
(31).	Co CO	4.6	1.1	4.3	1.3	
Often indicates what performance	Bn CO	4.9	1.4	5.5	.6	
is expected of subordinates (35).	Co CO	5.0	1.3	5.7	.6	
ask Decentralized (TD)						
Frequently lets subordinates make	Bn CO	4.7	1.9	5.6	9	
their decisions about how to carry out the missions he assigns them (6).	Co CO	4.3	1.8	5.2	.9	
Makes few decisions without consulting	Bn CO	3.1	1.5	4.2	1.5	
subordinate officers (11).	Co CO	3.0	1.5	4.3	1.1	
Often asks subordinate officers for	Bn CO	4.7	1.4	5.1	8.	
suggestions (13).	Co CO	4.5	1.3	4.9	.8	
Often asks for opinions of	Bn CO	4.5	1.5	5.2	6	
subordinates (28).	Co CO	4.5	1.5	5.0	.7	

(Continued) -

	Rated		Command	Experience	
Leader Actions (Within Functional Areas) ^a	Level of	Battalion (Commander	Company Commander	
	Command	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Frequently checks on mission accom-	Bn CO	 5.5	1.1	5.2	1.2
plishment rather than on each step of its execution (29).	Co CO	5.3	1.2	4.8	1.2
Frequently seeks information from	Bn CO	3.8	1.5	4.5	1.3
subordinate officers about the task or mission (33).	Co CO	3.9	1.5	4.0	1.3
ocial-Emotional Positive (SE+)					
is often primarily concerned with the	Bn CO	5.1	1.3	4.4	1.2
men's safety and welfare (2).	Co CO	5.1	1.3	4.6	1.3
Frequently maintains informal	Bn CO	4.0	1.5	3.0	1.3
relationships with subordinates (4).	Co CO	3.9	1.5	3.8	1.5
Frequently helps subordinate officers	Bn CO	5.0	1.1	4.9	1.1
ın personal matters (8).	Co CO	5.4	1.1	5.4	.9
Often appeals for good performance (12).	Bn CO	4.2	1.5	4.7	1.3
	Co CO	4.4	1.6	4.7	1.3
Often agrees with subordinate officers'	Bn CO	4.6	1.1	4.6	.6
ideas and suggestions (15).	Co CO	4.5	1.1	4.5	.7
Is often accessible to subordinates (16).	Bn CO	5.3	1.5	5.5	.6
	Co CO	5.4	1.4	5 .9	.3
Often agrees with fellow officers' ideas	Bn CO	4.4	1.0	4.3	.9
and suggestions (18).	Co CO	4.4	1.1	4.3	.8
Often displays a sense of humor (21).	Bn CO	5.3	1.1	5.2	.6
	Co CO	5.2	1.2	5.3	.5
Often rewards and praises subordinates	Bn CO	5.7	1.1	5.6	.6
for their accomplishments (23).	Co CO	5.6	1.1	5.8	.5
Often rewards and praises subordinates	Bn CO	5.6	1.1	5.3	.7
for their efforts (24).	Co CO	5.5	1.1	5.5	.6
Often explains or gives reasons why	Bn CO	4.4	1.6	4.6	1.0
things should be done (27).	Co CO	4.5	1.7	4.9	1.1
Often agrees with senior officers'	Bn CO	4.0	1.2	3.9	1.1
ideas and suggestions (36).	Co CO	4.0	1.2	4.0	1.1
ocial-Emotional Negative (SE –)					
Often stresses formality in his	Bn CO	3.5	1.4	4.5	1.2
relationships with subordinates (1).	Co CO	3.5	1.4	3.8	1.5
Often places the mission ahead of	Bn CO	4.3	1.7	4.8	1.0
men's safety and welfare (3).	Co CO	4.1	1.7	4.6	1.1

Leader Actions (Within Functional Areas) ^a	Rated Level of Command	Command Experience			
		Battalion Commander		Company Commande	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Is often antagonistic and aggressive	Bn CO	1.7	.8	1.8	1.0
toward subordinates (7).	Co CO	1.7	.8	1.7	1.0
Often reprimands subordinates for	Bn CO	4.1	13	4.1	1.4
lack of effort (9).	Co CO	4.3	1.5	4.4	1.4
Frequently appears irritated (10).	Bn CO	1.9	1.2	2.1	1.2
	Co CO	2.0	1.2	2.2	1.3
Often warns subordinates against	Bn CO	3.2	1.6	3.1	1.5
poor performance (14).	Co CO	3.7	1.6	3.3	1.5
Often disagrees with fellow officers'	Bn CO	2.8	1.3	3.0	1.0
ideas and suggestions (25).	Co CO	2.8	1.3	3.1	.9
Often reprimands subordinates for	Bn CO	4.2	1.3	4.1	1.3
idadequate accomplishment (30).	Co CO	4.5	1.3	4.4	1.3
Frequently disagrees with subordinate	Bn CO	2.9	1.0	3.2	1.0
officers' ideas and suggestions (32).	Co CO	3.0	.9	3.2	1.0
Often disagrees with senior officers'	Bn CO	2.4	1.0	2.6	1.1
ideas and suggestions (34).	Co CO	2.4	1.0	2.6	1.1

 $^{^{\}rm a}{\rm Numbers}$ in parentheses are questionnaire item numbers.

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Security Classification DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D (Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overell report is classified) ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Cc:porete author) 2 REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) Unclassified 300 North Washington Street 25 GROUP Alexandria, Virginia 22314 THE EFFECTS OF COMMAND POSITION UPON EVALUATIONS OF LEADER BEHAVIOR 4 DESCRIPTIVE HOTES (Type of report and inclusive detec) Technical Report 5 AUTHOR(5) (First name, middle initial, lest name) L. L. Lackey, Joseph A. Olmstead, and Harold E. Christensen 6 REPORT DATE November 1972 DAHC 19-73-C-0004 98 ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBERIS HumRRO TR 72-32 b. BROIFET NO 2Q061102B74B 96 OTHER REPORT NO (5) (Any other numbers that may be essigned this report) Approved for public release; distribution unlimited. 11 SUPPLEMENTART NOTES 2 SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY Research performed at HumRRO Division Office, Chief of Research and Development Department of the Army No. 4, Fort Benning, Georgia Washington, D.C. 20310 B ABSTRACT The study was designed to determine the effects of command position—battalion commander and company commander—upon evaluations of the desirability of certain leader actions. Twenty-two U.S. Army officers who had served as battalion commanders (Group I) and 22 who had served as company commanders (Group II) rated 36 leader actions on their desirability for battalion and for company commanders. Battalion commanders do not differentiate between the two command levels on the desirability of the leader actions. Company commanders differentiate about actions concerned with the centralization of authority and responsibility, and consider these to be more desirable for both command levels. Both groups rated positive motivation and emotional support as desirable and punitive or negatively motivating actions as slightly undesirable. The implications of the differences in expectations about leader behavior on effective organizational functioning, leadership doctrine, and training are discussed.

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Security Classification KEY WORDS ROLE WT ROLE ROLE Battalion commander Company commander *Leadership
Leadership evaluation
Leadership training
Military command
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