ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 12 titles deal with a variety of topics, including the following: communication and perceptions of organizational climate; perceptions of communications between federal and local educational agencies; intraorganizational conflict in the purchasing decision making process in the hospital environment; the interrelationships between a secondary school administrator's written messages to parents and parental attitudes toward the school; the correlations between acquisition of basic speech competencies and supervisory level, salary, self-perceived job performance, and self-perceived job satisfaction; strategic planning for organizational effectiveness in managing relations with critical publics; communication networks and influence patterns in industrial buying behavior; shared decision processes in educational organizations; a communication theory of organization; participativeness, uncertainty, and environmental complexity of supervisors; communication between user/managers and information service department personnel; and the implications for social control of organizational stories as an expression of management philosophy. (RL)

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TIONAL CLIMATE: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Order No. 7917670

ALBRECHT, Terrance Lynn, Ph.D. Michigan State University,
1978. 193pp.

This dissertation reports a study of communication and
members' perceptions of the environmental "climate" of the
organization. Specifically, the study investigated differences
in perceptions based on aspects of involvement in the informal
communication system of the organization.

The research questions pursued in the study were developed
after an extensive review of previous climate research in the
fields of communication and organizational behavior. Prior
studies in both fields had not fully examined climate perceptions
from a communication perspective. That is, neither body of
work had conceptualized the nature of perceptions based on
communication theory with constructs concerning aspects of
the information flow in the organization.

The present study sought to overcome these inadequacies by
developing an approach to the study of climate, based on a the-
ory which specifies how attitudes are shaped by the nature of
information flow. Since Durkheim (1938), organizational the-
orists have recommended the utility of studying cognitive pro-
cesses in conjunction with social structure. This conceptual
approach followed the recommendation by combining force ag-
gregation theory with the constructs of communication struc-
ture, information needs, and communication rules. The results
of the study conducted in a unionized manufacturing plant show
that such a framework of attitudes and information flow is par-
ticularly useful for explaining the nature of environmental per-
ceptions.

Specifically, the study found several significant differences
in perceptions between "key" communicators and "non-key"
communicators (those often isolated from informal message
flow). Support was found for hypotheses asserting that key com-
municators tend to perceive themselves psychologically "closer"
to managers, as well as more central to their cognitive environ-
ments. In addition, overall properties (e.g., size and shape) of
the cognitive spaces for the two groups tended to differ, with
the space for the key communicators showing somewhat less
variability. The report of the study concludes with directions
for future research.

PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN FEDERAL
AGENCIES AND LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES

BERDINER, Pauline, Ed.D.. University of Southern California,
1979. Chairman: Professor John Stallings

Problem. This study was directed toward the problem of
analyzing the perceptions of the total effectiveness of initial
written communication, subsequent communication, and general
communication between federal agencies and local educational
agencies and to identify some methods which may contribute to
improved communication effectiveness between those agencies.

Procedure. A six-part survey instrument was developed to
collect the requisite data. During a pilot study, the instrument
was critiqued and appropriately modified. Data were collected
from two sources: (1) Fifteen school districts randomly se-
lected from four Southern California counties and stratified by
amount of enrollment. The instrument was administered to
fifteen personnel designated by the superintendent as federal-
level liaison. (2) Fifteen federal agencies within the USOE
randomly selected from those agencies which administer pro-
grams directly to local school districts. The instrument was
administered to fifteen officials responsible for local-level
liaison. To determine statistical significance, the chi-square
analysis, Mann-Whitney U-test, and Kruskal-Wallis one-way
analysis of variance were applied to the tabulated responses.

Findings. (1) The majority of LEA (85.7%) and FA (100.0%)
respondents generally agreed that there was a need to improve
communications between the federal and local levels. (2) The
majority of LEA respondents generally disagreed while the
majority of FA respondents generally agreed that federal
rules and regulations were written in a suitable manner
effective implementation. (3) The majority (80.0%) of LEA

respondents generally agreed while the majority (58.1%) of FA
respondents generally disagreed that guideline flexibility was
needed to implement federal programs successfully. (4) The
majority (77.9%) of LEA respondents generally disagreed while
the majority (71.4%) of FA respondents generally agreed that
subsequent communication received from various federal per-
sonnel was communicated consistently. (5) The majority of LEA
(84.6%) and FA (91.7%) respondents generally agreed that it
was feasible to further improve communications between both
agencies by elevating Education to cabinet-level status. (6) The
majority of respondents generally agreed that communication
effectiveness between agencies could be improved by federal
agencies incorporating the following: (a) citation of legal codes
and references, (b) writing in layman terms, (c) direct com-
munication with the program contact person, (d) establishment
of joint LEA/FA conferences, (e) provisions to inform LEA's
of appropriate federal-to-state communications.

Conclusions. (1) The total effectiveness of initial written
communication and general communication was perceived to
be inadequate by both agencies. (2) Subsequent communication
was perceived to be essential for clarification purposes by both
agencies. (3) Federal agencies demonstrated positive percep-
tions toward LEA's recommendations to improve communica-
tion effectiveness between both agencies. (4) Educational back-
ground, degree of fiscal involvement, and years as FA/LEA
liaison exerted no significant influence over LEA's perceptions
of communication effectiveness between the local and federal
levels. District size was influential in the perception of the
functional need of subsequent communication.

Recommendations. (1) Federal agencies should evaluate the
current procedures and practices used in writing application
forms, compliance obligations, and funding eligibility to mini-
mize the clarification need of subsequent communication.
(2) Federal agencies should provide periodic in-service for
agency personnel to establish a clear understanding of program
goals and to promote consistent communications to the LEA's.
(3) Federal agencies which administer programs to LEA's
should implement joint conferences to provide leadership or
assistance and to afford each agency the opportunity to express
concerns. (4) Current procedures for writing federal guide-
lines and regulations should be reviewed. The written form
should clearly communicate the federal intent to LEA's to fa-
cilitate effective implementation. (5) A study should be initiated
to evaluate the current organizational structure of USOE within
the HEW hierarchy. Consideration should be given to making
Education a separate entity.

AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF INTRAORGANIZATIONAL
CONFLICT IN THE PURCHASING DECISION-MAKING
PROCESS IN THE HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT

Order No. 7919221

COCHRAN, Daniel Stewart, Ph.D. University of Arkansas,
1979. 223pp. Major Professor: Dr. Donald White

The purpose of this study was to investigate intraorganiza-
tional conflict as it exists in the purchasing decision-making
process in general short-term hospitals. The objectives of
the study were to: (1) determine how frequently intraorga-
nizational conflict exists in the purchasing decision-making
process, (2) determine the effect intraorganizational conflict
has on the purchasing decision-making process (whether func-
tional or dysfunctional), (3) determine the location of conflict--
i.e., between which buying center members, (4) determine
which conflict resolution strategies are being utilized most
frequently, and finally, (5) determine what relationship the
following categorical variables have with intraorganizational
conflict: (a) hospital organizational size, (b) hospital profit
orientation, (c) hospital respondent's perception of conflict,
and (d) hospital purchasing situation (routine versus non-
routine).

Two different, yet complementary, data gathering and sub-
sequent data analysis techniques were utilized in this research
design to accomplish the five research objectives developed
for the study. A thirty-three item structured questionnaire
sent to all ninety general short-term hospitals in Arkansas
produced a sixty-two percent usable response rate. ANOVA
and MANOVA were the primary statistical techniques used to
analyze the questionnaire data. Nine hospitals were selected

for indepth interviews based on the results of the questionnaire. Respondents from each hospital selected were given the statistically significant findings from the questionnaire analysis and asked their opinions as to the probable causes of each.

Eleven statistically significant findings were reported in this paper relative to the research objectives.

Frequency of Conflict:

1. Administrators perceived a greater frequency of conflict than did purchasing managers.

2. Conflict occurred more frequently in non-routine purchasing situations (high $ value transactions) than in routine purchasing situations (lower $ value transactions).

3. Conflict occurred more frequently in large hospitals ($200 beds), followed then by small hospitals ($\approx$ 100 beds). Conflict in medium size hospitals (100-199 beds) occurred the least frequently.

Effect of Conflict:

4. Conflict was perceived as being more functional (helpful) than dysfunctional (harmful).

5. Administrators perceived conflict as being more functional than did purchasing managers.

6. Conflict was perceived as being more functional (helpful) in non-routine purchasing situations than in routine purchasing situations.

Conflict Resolution Strategies:

7. Overall, the conflict resolution strategy used most frequently was the win/win strategy, in which a consensus is reached and everyone is satisfied with the decision.

8. In non-routine purchasing situations the win/lose strategy, in which the person in the authority position makes the final decision and some of the individuals involved end up not being satisfied, was used most frequently.

Conflict Location:

9. Conflict was located most frequently between the administrator and the medical staff.

10. In non-routine purchasing situations, conflict was located more frequently between the board and the administrator.

11. Conflict between the administrator and the board occurred more frequently in small hospitals than in large hospitals.

A STUDY OF THE INTERRELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE WRITTEN MESSAGES OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR TO PARENTS AND THE ATTITUDE OF THOSE PARENTS TOWARD THE SCHOOL   Order, No. 7915789

DUFFY, Linda Ann, Ph.D. University of Maryland, 1978. 129pp. Supervisor: Dr. Clarence A. Newell

The study investigated the relationship between the written messages of a secondary school administrator to parents and the attitude of those parents toward the school.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of the written messages of a school administrator to parents about their child's performance in school on the attitude those parents have toward the school. It investigated whether those written messages have different effects on attitude if they are negative only, positive only, both negative and positive, or, if there are no written messages, what effect the absence of communication has on parent attitude toward the school. The study also investigated the indirect effect of these messages by measuring the attitude of the students whose parents comprised the four groups.

The following questions were posed:

1. What is the effect of written administrator messages that are negative information-giving on parent attitude toward the school?

2. What is the effect of written administrator messages that are positive information-giving on parent attitude toward the school?

3. What is the effect of written administrator messages that are negative information-giving followed by positive information-giving communication on parent attitude toward the school?

4. What is the effect of no written message from the administrator on parent attitude toward the school?

The same questions were raised in relation to the four student groups.

Procedures

Four groups of parents constituted the sample for this study. Each of the four groups of parents were given a survey about their attitude toward the school, whether it is positive (approving) or negative (disapproving), after they had received either a negative written message, a positive written message, both a negative and a positive written message, or no written message from the school administrator. The students about whom these messages were written were also surveyed in four similar groups to determine the indirect effect of written messages from a secondary school administrator on their attitude toward the school.

The two instruments used to survey the parents' and the students' attitudes were the Bullock School-Community Attitude Assessment for Educational Administrators and the Buxton Student Attitude Questionnaire.

Data generated from the two instruments were analyzed using the one-way analysis of variance.

Conclusion

The data did not statistically support the hypothesis of this study that the attitude of parents who receive written negative messages, written positive messages, written negative and positive messages, or no written messages from the school administrator will be significantly different.

Recommendations

As a result of this study, several areas for further research relative to written messages of secondary school administrators have been identified. Some of these are:

1. What are the factors which generated the negative attitudes toward the school when only positive letters had been received from the school?

2. How many letters would be required to effect an attitude change from negative to positive?

3. What would be the effect of written messages that were positive on parents of students who were not discipline referrals?

4. What different research design and/or technique might yield supporting data for the hypotheses?

5. What might be the effects on this study of blocking variables such as race, income, single parent homes, and level of education?

6. What different instruments might be designed to measure the specific impact of written messages from the administrator on parent attitude?

7. Is language interaction, both written and spoken, a crucial factor in resolving the conflict between the institution and the individual's need-disposition?

AN EXAMINATION OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN AC-
QUISITION OF BASIC SPEECH COMPETENCIES AND
SUPERVISORY LEVEL, SALARY, SELF-PERCEIVED JOB
PERFORMANCE AND SELF-PERCEIVED JOB SATISFAC-
TION IN EMPLOYMENT   Order No. 7927529

HOPSON, Carol Stein, Ph.D. The Louisiana State University
and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1979. 141pp.
Supervisor: Professor John H. Pennybacker

Most people are aware of the importance of oral commu-
nication skills for those business people who are asked to give
oral reports or to speak at special gatherings. However, the
oral communication skills needed in employment are often not
recognized, even by the individuals who are involved.

This researcher found that while the business community
is aware of the importance of oral communication, little has
been done by business people or educators to promote the teach-
ing of oral communication skills to the labor force in positions
not requiring college education;

The purpose of this study was to survey vocational tech-
nical educators, employers and employees to determine their
perceptions of the oral communication skills needed for men
and women in vocational technical employment.

A series of questionnaires and interviews were used to
gather substantive data to test the null hypothesis: There is
no relationship between the achievement of selected oral com-
munication competencies and the supervisory level, salary,
self-perceived job performance, and self-perceived job sat-
isfaction among individuals with vocational technical training.

The questionnaire sent to educators and employers con-
tained seventeen competency-based oral communication skills
which are job-related. These were drawn from oral commu-
nication competencies found in many competency-based edu-
cational programs and presented as behaviorally-stated ob-
jectives.

The recipients were asked to rank each statement as to its
importance in employment. Six statements were regarded as
necessary for employment by over seventy percent of the edu-
cators and employers who responded. These are: (1) listens
to others, understands directions given by others, (2) asks
questions when in doubt without hesitation, (3) communicates
directions clearly, (4) responds to questions asked by others,
(5) articulates and pronounces words clearly so others can un-
derstand, and (6) communicates ideas to co-workers.

The educators and employers agreed that of the seventeen
competencies given, the ability to "talk before a group or in a
one-to-one setting and present information clearly, accurately,
and interestingly" was the least needed skill.

A review of existing vocational-technical programs in this
area revealed that little or no emphasis is placed on providing
vocational-technical trainees with needed skills in oral com-
munication.

A third questionnaire was sent to recent graduates of vo-
cational-technical programs in the New Orleans metropolitan
area to determine the extent to which these individuals had
gained oral communication competencies and the effect of
their speaking skills on their employment.

The respondents were employed in sixteen vocational or
technical occupations with the largest percentage being in weld-
ing and office occupations. Over seventy-nine percent of the
respondents were between the ages of twenty and thirty-five.
Fifty-six percent of the respondents were women.

Only eight percent of the respondents were not native Amer-
icans. Forty-six percent were white and forty-six percent
were black.

The responses of these employees as to the amount of train-
ing acquired in the six communication skills and the need for
these skills in their jobs were analyzed. It was determined
that a positive correlation does exist between the acquisition
of selected oral communication competencies and supervisory
level, salary, self-perceived job performance and self-per-
ceived job satisfaction.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFEC-
TIVENESS IN MANAGING RELATIONS WITH CRITICAL
PUBLICS: A COMPARISON ACROSS PROFIT/NONPROFIT
LINES   Order No. 7917665

JACOBS, George William, Ph.D. Georgia State University –
College of Business Administration, 1979. 212pp. Chairman:
Dr. Leslie W. Rue

The central aims of this descriptive study were to deter-
mine (a) how the chief administrators of commercial banks and
public libraries in six southeastern states view their various
publics, (b) how they manage their organizations' relations
with those of their publics which they regard as critical to
their success, and (c) whether banks and libraries differ sig-
nificantly in their respective views and approaches. A mail
questionnaire was utilized for data collection.

The study sample of 505 respondents includes 200 banks
and 305 libraries. There are five categories of response data
for analysis: (1) Organizational background, (2) Managerial
approach to performance evaluation, (3) Managerial assess-
ment of critical publics, (4) Description of relationships with
critical publics, and (5) Management of relations with critical
publics.

Tests of ten sets of hypotheses were performed, using stan-
dard statistical tests for rank-ordered data. The study find-
ings are summarized below:

(1) Bankers and librarians generally do not regard the satis-
faction of critical publics as sufficient evidence of overall
successful performance, nor do they generally regard pe-
riodic internal evaluation of overall organizational perfor-
mance on a systematic basis as absolutely essential.

(2) Bankers and librarians generally do not agree, either within
or between their industry groups, on the relative critical-
ness of their respective publics to the overall success of
their organizations. Criticalness was found to be related
to both perceived relative power and perceived threat.

(3) For both banks and libraries, three measures of organiza-
tional practices and three measures of managerial plans
and controls were found to be generally inconsistent with
six managerial assessments with respect to the five most
critical publics.

(4) Based on specific measures, banks and libraries were found
to be relatively consistent internally in their approaches to
the management of relations with critical publics, generally
inconsistent among themselves within industry group, and
generally consistent between groups. Banks and libraries
are about equally consistent within their respective indus-
try groups.

Pertinent conclusions drawn from the study and findings in-
clude the following:

(1) There is a high level of interest among bankers and librar-
ians in this relatively new, unexplored subject.

(2) Strategic planning in practice, within the scope of this study
topic, remains a largely undeveloped concept, even at the
earliest stages of the process, at least partly because of
a perceived lack of critical importance.

(3) There is evidence of significant and widespread inconsis-
tency in organizations between the views expressed by chief
administrators and the actions taken by their organizations
concerning their relations with their various publics.

(4) Profit and nonprofit organizations, represented in this study
by banks and libraries, are perhaps more alike than differ-
ent at the present time in their views of their publics and
in their approaches to the management of environmental
relations.

(5) Finally, a major opportunity exists across a broad spec-
trum of organizational life to achieve better management
and greater organizational effectiveness through improve-
ments in strategic planning in the management of relations
with critical publics.

COMMUNICATION NETWORKS AND INFLUENCE PATTERNS IN INDUSTRIAL BUYING BEHAVIOR   Order No. 7924689

JOHNSTON, Wesley James, Ph.D. University of Pittsburgh, 1979. 366pp.

This study defined and operationalized four dimensions of the popular "buying center" concept (members of the buying organization who interact during the buying decision process). The four dimensions were: (1) vertical involvement--how many various levels of the organizational hierarchy exert influence in the buying decision process; (2) lateral involvement--how many different departments and divisions exerting influence in the purchase decision; (3) integrative complexity--the amount of interconnection between the members of the buying center; and (4) differentiation--the total number of individuals involved in the buying decision process. The centrality of the purchasing manager in the buying center communication process was also examined using sociometric techniques. This provided an objective measure of the purchasing manager's influence in the communication network.

The prediction variables were concerned with structural aspects of the firm and purchase situation attributes. The structural aspects of the firm examined size, formalization, centralization of authority, and complexity. The purchase situation attributes measured the importance, novelty, and complexity of the purchase decision to the buying firm.

The sample consisted of thirty-one firms in which the purchase of an item of capital equipment and an industrial service were examined in "snowball" sampling. In all, two hundred forty-one interviews were conducted. Using these interviews, the communication network for each purchase situation was constructed. The tasks each individual was involved in were also determined.

The results of the dissertation are reported in five sections. First, sample statistics concerning the sixty-two purchase situations and thirty-one firms as well as some descriptive correlations are reported. The next two sections contain a factor analysis of the independent variables, in an attempt to provide support for the theoretical concepts of the model, and a regression analysis of the dimensions of the buying center against the structural variables of the firm, the purchase situation attributes and the characteristics of the purchasing managers involved in each purchase decision. The fourth section aggregates the communication networks for each product class. This aggregation presents a unique and valuable manner in which to examine industrial buying behavior. The diagonal cells of the aggregate communication matrix depicts participation on a percentage basis while the off diagonal cells indicated dyad formation between the various participants (who communicates with whom). The final section provides a qualitative description of the flow of the industrial buying decision process. The past literature has offered numerous models depicting the process as a straight forward chronological flow of easily identifiable steps or phases. The results of this dissertation tend to refute this and indicate that while certain tasks tend to be required in most purchase decisions, the process is more iterative and tends to have no clearly identifiable sequence. A task involvement matrix depicts the extent to which the various functions become involved in the different tasks of the buying process.

The findings also indicate that although there are differences in buying center composition for purchases of capital equipment and industrial services, the differences are subtle and generalizations may be inappropriate. Structural variables of the firm and purchase situation attributes were found to affect buying center dimensions in consistent ways.

Implications of the results suggest industrial buying behavior can benefit from a more appropriate social level of analysis. The dyadic-systems approach adopted in this study presents the first significant findings concerning buying center composition.

DETERMINANTS OF SHARED DECISION PROCESSES IN EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS   Order No. 7927411

NATHANSON, Leslie, Ph.D. Northwestern University, 1979. 201pp. Adviser: Anthony M. Cresswell

This dissertation examines a theoretical model of decision-making behavior in organizations. The model was built on extant theory and research which suggest that organizational decision-making is bureaucratic, collegial or political, contingent on the needs of the decisionmaker and the desires and power of groups affected by the decision (e.g., March and Simon 1958, Baldridge 1971, Pfeffer 1974, Lawrence and Lorsch 1967). The results of the study generally support the Vroom and Yetton (1973) contingency model of decisionmaking which suggests that power is retained by an administrator who can assess the decision situation in order to choose a decision strategy. The study also supports the Pfeffer (1977) political model in that organization decisionmaking is not found to be consistent with organizational rationality, but with personal rationality. The process is found to be controlled by administrators who are clearly those with power and influence.

Specifically, decision uncertainty, decision importance and group or subunit ability to influence are expected to be related to the degree of shared authority for the decision. The study sheds light on the contextual factors that serve as sources of influence to subunits and clarifies subunits' influence ability with respect to decision related factors (i.e., consensus, routineness, legal and formal support), organization related factors (i.e., centralization, leadership style), and environment related factors (economic and political).

In order to examine the model, the research design utilizes the decision as the unit of analysis in a cross sectional study which investigates decisionmaking behavior in school districts. Information relating to ten decisions in each of twelve districts provide 120 observations of decisions. Decisions were selected to vary on dimensions of importance and routineness. School districts were selected to insure variance of demographic and political characteristics.

Overall, the regression model which examines the relative and separate contributions of fifteen independent variables explains 57.1 percent of variance in the shared decision process measure.

Findings show that the degree to which decisionmaking is shared is primarily a function of the needs and choices of the administrator irrespective of the desires and power of those who are affected by the decision. Specifically, results show that decisions are made in a more autocratic process when the decision is uncertain and important to administrators. Decisions are made in a less autocratic and in a more shared process when the decision is important to certain subunits (community groups) when the decision is not routine and when there are distinct rules and regulations which mandate teacher involvement in a decision. Findings also show that administrators are not taking risks in decision situations, but that they are sharing decisions primarily when information, subunit wishes and possible outcomes are already known.

TOWARD A COMMUNICATION THEORY OF ORGANIZATION
Order No. 7917267

PACANOWSKY, Michael Eugene, Ph.D. Stanford University, 1979. 160pp.

Characteristic of current theories of organizational communication are three models: 1) the individual as a psychological or sociological "machine," 2) communication as a process of information transfer, and 3) the organization as a self-regulating entity. In the present dissertation, these models are critiqued and rejected, and an alternate theoretical perspective is proposed. This alternate perspective is based on models of 1) the individual as meaning-maker, 2) communication as a convergent process whereby meaning is co-constructed by communicators, and 3) the organization as nothing other than networks of coactors who, by communicating, attempt to construct common definitions of situations and act within the framework of the common meanings they have established.

These models present a coherent framework from which an understanding of organizational communication can be developed. Eight variables related to the processes of meaning management and organizational functioning are identified: time, task demands, problematicness, expectations, relevance, communication activity, communication effectiveness, and task performance. These are related in six hypotheses that serve as the basis for a test of the adequacy of the alternate theoretical perspective.

1. Problematicness is a function of previous levels of problematicness, expectations, relevance, communication effectiveness, task performance, and task demands.

2. Expectations are a function of previous levels of expectations, problematicness, task performance, communication effectiveness, and task demands.

3. Relevance is a function of previous levels of relevance, time, and task demands.

4. Communication activity is a function of previous levels of communication activity, problematicness, and relevance.

5. Communication effectiveness is a function of previous levels of communication effectiveness, problematicness, and communication activity.

6. Task performance is a function of previous levels of task performance, problematicness, communication effectiveness, and task demands.

A time-series experiment was designed to test these hypotheses. Data were gathered using three simulated organizations in which initial communication networks were fixed. Experimental treatments involving changes in task demands were administered to two of the three organizations. A questionnaire was administered to research participants every six minutes during a two-hour experimental session.

Graphs of each of the variables are presented as functions of time. These graphs visually demonstrate that the processes of organizational functioning are generally regular and time-dependent. Correlations among the variables are also presented. Sixteen of eighteen hypothesized bivariate relationships are statistically significantly different from zero, indicating a substantial degree of interrelatedness among the variables of interest. The six hypotheses are reformulated as regression equations with dummy variables controlling for experimental treatment and unique effects of experimental session on each organization. Data are pooled across the three organizations and analyzed using Nerlove's method of Generalized Least Squares. Multiple R's range from .31 for the equation predicting task performance to .75 for the equation predicting relevance. In all equations, the multiple R's are significantly different from zero ($p \le .005$).

These findings are interpreted as evidence for the potential usefulness of the perspective of organizational communication developed in this dissertation. Recommendations for future research and implications for organizational communication practitioners are included.

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR OF SUPERVISORS: PARTICIPATIVENESS, UNCERTAINTY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLEXITY
Order No. 7926433

SORENSON, Ritchie Lee, Ph.D. Purdue University, 1979. 202pp. Major Professor: W. Charles Redding

This investigation was an experiment examining the relationships among participative leadership, uncertainty, informational complexity, and communication. The purpose of the study was to obtain a better understanding of differences in the ways which managers interact with their environments. A basic premise of the study was that the organizational environment may be described in terms of information and interaction with the environment in terms of uncertainty.

Based upon a literature review, it appeared that a correlation might exist between participative leadership and managerial uncertainty. Two alternative explanations were hypothesized to account for differences in the communication behavior of participative and nonparticipative leaders. The first explanation asserted that managers differ in their perceptions of the environment. The second explanation claimed that managers do not differ perceptually, but do differ in their reactions to perceptions.

Students at a midwestern university were asked to participate in the study based upon their scores on a small group participative leadership measure. Students scoring either one standard deviation above or below the mean were asked to participate in the study and were assigned to either the high or low participative leadership condition. Subjects were asked to supervise a three member group (consisting entirely of confederates) in solving the stimulus problem. The stimulus task was designed to vary informational complexity by combining either ambiguous or nonambiguous information with few or many informational components resulting in four conditions varying from low to high complexity. Subjects supervised problem-solving for ten minutes. Afterwards, a questionnaire was administered to subjects. Videotaped communication behavior was coded and rated by judges following the experimental manipulation.

Tests of hypotheses did not support the "perception" explanation of participative behavior. Partial support was suggested, however, for the notion that nonparticipative leaders respond differently to informational environments compared to participative leaders. Specifically, nonparticipative leaders demonstrated more anxiety and asked for more suggestions than participative leaders in many-component informational conditions. Participative leaders asked for more information than nonparticipative leaders in few-component conditions. Both types of leaders asked more total questions in ambiguous than in nonambiguous conditions.

Additional significant results were obtained which were not hypothesized. Both participative and nonparticipative supervisors: desired more information in many than in few-component informational conditions; were less certain about how democratic they should have been in ambiguous as compared with nonambiguous environments; asked for opinions more in few than in many-component conditions; and demonstrated a more intense communicator style in ambiguous than nonambiguous conditions.

In addition, nonparticipative leaders asked for information in all conditions more often than did participative leaders. Participative leaders were more uncertain about how democratic they should have been than nonparticipative leaders. Participative leaders generated more subjective response uncertainty than nonparticipative leaders in one of the moderately complex conditions, while nonparticipative leaders generated more subjective response uncertainty than participative leaders in high and low complexity conditions.

Overall, results of the study indicated there were some differences in the way that participative and nonparticipative leaders interacted with their environments. The final portion of the dissertation was devoted to a discussion of significant results from an information-processing perspective. A conceptual model was proposed which suggests that participative (nonanxious) leaders are highly adaptive to their environments during information processing, while nonparticipative (anxious) leaders are more dependent upon prior conceptualizations during information processing. The implications of the two proposed styles of information processing are discussed as they relate to various levels of environmental complexity.

A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMU-
NICATION EFFECTIVENESS BETWEEN USER-MANAGERS
AND INFORMATION SERVICE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL
Order No. 7917324

SPENCE, Jimmy Wayne, D.B.A. Texas Tech University, 1978.
220pp. Chairman: Dr. Norman Lyons

PURPOSE: This study investigated a substitute measure-
ment for management involvement both before and after a man-
agement information system was implemented and its relation-
ship to management satisfaction. In addition, the possibility
of utilizing perceived communication success as a surrogate
for management satisfaction was investigated. Finally, the
feasibility of creating a model of perceived communication suc-
cess of the interaction between managers and Information Ser-
vices Department personnel was examined.
   PROCEDURE: This investigation was segmented into two
phases--a pilot study and a post study. In the pilot study, data
were collected from 51 respondents representing management
and Information Services Department personnel of five com-
panies. The data were utilized for the refinement of question-
naires and for the creation and tuning of the models of perceived
communication success. (The data indicated a management

model and a separate, but similar, model for Information Ser-
vices Department personnel.)
   The post study employed the case methodology. Data were
collected from both management and Information Services De-
partment personnel of three companies (cases). The post study
analysis was based on 128 questionnaires. (The management
group of one company was eliminated because of a low return
rate.) The response rate was 61.8 percent for managers and
68 percent for Information Services Department personnel.
   FINDINGS: Three null hypotheses and one proposition were
evaluated in the investigation, with a .05 level of significance
needed for rejection. Each hypothesis was subjected to chi
square analysis, and the proposition was examined using the
Mann-Whitney "U" test. Hypothesis I: There is no relation-
ship between the manager's level of satisfaction with a manage-
ment information system and the manager's level of pre-im-
plementation involvement in the development of the system.
It was accepted.

Hypothesis II: There is no relationship between the manager's
level of satisfaction with a management information system and
the manager's level of post-implementation involvement with
an existing system. It was accepted.

Hypothesis III: There is no relationship between the manager's
level of satisfaction with a management information system and
the perceived effectiveness of his communication with Informa-
tion Services Department personnel. It was accepted.

Proposition I: There is no model of perceived communication
success representing the interaction between managers and
Information Services Department personnel. It was accepted.

   CONCLUSIONS: The research established that management
satisfaction with a management information system is not related
to their level of involvement with the system when mea-
sured on an activity dimension. Previous research has estab-
lished a relationship between these two variables when involve-
ment was measured on the basis of numbers of contacts between
managers and Information Services Department personnel. In
addition, while prior research has established that effective
communication is related to improved job performance, the
respondents' perception of communication success was not re-
lated to improved performance as measured by satisfaction.
   The research further determined that due to situational fac-
tors, there exists no single model of perceived communication
effectiveness. Such models, if they exist, must be developed
on a case-by-case basis.

ORGANIZATIONAL STORIES AS AN EXPRESSION OF MAN-
AGEMENT PHILOSOPHY: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL CON-
TROL IN ORGANIZATIONS'   Order No. 7917290

WILKINS, Alan Lee, Ph.D. Stanford University, 1979. 211pp.

   This study focuses on stories told by participants in orga-
nizations which are about the company and its representatives.
As an extension of the work of Clark (1970), it is hypothesized
that in specified kinds of organizations, the historical develop-
ment of the organization may be seen as a fulfillment of the
strong purpose of a top manager or of a management group.
The "saga", or story of unique accomplishment, of the company
may be the means of passing on the values (the construction of
reality) of management to participants in the organization.
   The form of social control which results when participants
share an interpretation of organizational history is contrasted
with a more bureaucratic form of control. The latter, more
explicit, form of control, is obtained by making rules and super-
vising to insure conformity. A more implicit form of control
results when people become committed to shared values and
practices. Stories about the organization which are interpreted
in terms of the management philosophy and which are the basis
for a claim of organizational uniqueness were predicted to be
positively associated with commitment to the organization of
those who tell and believe them. Further, when participants
tell the same stories to illustrate management philosophy, they
are more likely to take the same meaning from the philosophy
and to apply it in the same way.
   Two organizations were selected from the 22 1975 Fortune
1000 electronics and components companies such that company
A represents a bureaucratic form of control and company Z
represents a more implicit form of control characteristic of
clans (Ouchi and Johnson, 1978). At company Z, there is a
greater emphasis on the management philosophy and there are
more common socializing experiences. Company Z partici-
pants were thus expected to tell more stories about the history
of the company, to interpret proportionately more of their
stories by referring to the management philosophy, and to use
stories to legitimate a claim of company uniqueness. They
were further expected to tell more stories told by others. It
was predicted that in both organizations, commitment to the
company would be positively associated with the number of
favorable stories, and with the number of stories associated
with management philosophy, and with the number of stories
claiming company uniqueness.
   Data were collected through tape-recorded interviews and
by means of a survey administered to each participant. Stories
were bracketed and coded for content. The mean inter-coder
reliability for the bracketing of stories and content categories
was .82.
   In each company, a stratified random sample was employed
to select 20 participants from a staff division and 20 from an
operating division such that rank (two levels--high and low)
would be crossed with tenure (two levels--long and short).
   The hypotheses were largely confirmed. Story telling situ-
ations were also very different between the two companies.
Company Z participants more often learned stories from
others in the company while company A participants told stor-
ies about their own experience. Company Z participants told
a significantly greater proportion of their stories to outsiders
and a much greater proportion of these "outsider" stories were
favorable and associated with the management philosophy.
   This study suggests that stories not only symbolize the
values of story tellers but they are also frequently used to
teach these values to others. The study represents an advance
in the understanding of implicit control mechanisms in organi-
zations and a contrast with the more rational/structural focus
of much organizational research in the past 15 to 20 years.

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