Cross-cultural Differences in Perceived Effectiveness of Influence Tactics for Initiating or Resisting Change

Gary Yukl*

State University of New York at Albany, USA

Ping Ping Fu

Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

Robert McDonald

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, USA

Deux recherches exploratoires ont été initiées pour étudier les différences interculturelles dans l'efficacité perçue de diverses stratégies destinées à obtenir de la part d'un supérieur l'approbation d'un changement qui lui est soumis, ou à résister à un changement envisagé par un patron. La première étude a comparé des managers des Etats-Unis, de Suisse et de Chine continentale, et la deuxiéme a remplacé la Suisse par Hong Kong. On a retrouvé dans la seconde étude l'essentiel des résultats de la première (91%) concernant les cadres américains et chinois. Les différences interculturelles dans l'évaluation de l'efficacité des stratégies étaient en phase avec les traditions et les valeurs culturelles. Les managers occidentaux jugeaient plus efficaces que les Chinois les stratégies directes, orientées vers la tâche, et moins efficaces celles mettant en jeu les relations personnelles, l'évitement ou une approche informelle.

Two exploratory studies were conducted to investigate cross-cultural differences in the perceived effectiveness of various influence tactics for gaining approval from a boss for a proposed change, or for resisting a change initiated by a boss. The first study compared managers in the United States, Switzerland, and mainland China. The second study compared managers in the United States, Hong Kong, and mainland China. Most results (91%) for the American and Chinese managers in Study 1 were replicated in Study 2. The cross-cultural differences in rated effectiveness of tactics were consistent with cultural values and traditions. Direct, task-oriented tactics were rated more effective by western managers than by Chinese managers, whereas tactics involving personal relations, avoidance, or an informal approach were rated less effective.

* Address for correspondence: Management Department, State University of New York at Albany, School of Business, Albany, NY 12222, USA. Email: gy755@csc.albany.edu

INTRODUCTION

Managers need to exercise influence effectively to manage change in organisations (Cohen & Bradford, 1991; Greiner & Schein, 1988; Yukl, 2002). The difficulties of exercising influence are increased when dealing with people from different cultures. Interest in comparing managers from different countries with respect to their attitudes and behavior has been growing as business across borders increases (e.g. Dorfman, Howell, Hibino, Lee, Tate, & Bautista, 1997; Smith, Peterson, & Wang, 1996). However, only a few studies have examined cross-cultural differences in the way managers exercise influence. To our knowledge, no study has examined cross-cultural differences in the tactics used to influence or resist change.

It is likely that the influence behavior of managers reflects cultural values and traditions. Cross-cultural research has shown that compared to Americans and the Swiss, the Chinese value collectivism and power distance more and assertiveness less (Fu & Taber, 1998; Hofstede, 1980, 1993; Ralston, Gustafson, Cheung, & Terpstra, 1993). These differences in values suggest that American and Swiss managers may be more inclined to use direct confrontation to resolve problems and conflicts. In contrast, Chinese managers may prefer indirect forms of influence that rely on personal relationships and avoid loss of face (for both agent and the target).

With their unique mix of Chinese and British cultural values, Chinese managers in Hong Kong probably fall somewhere in between managers from the United States and mainland China with regard to perceptions and use of influence tactics. As a former British colony, Hong Kong's economic, educational, and legal systems grew out of English tradition and are similar to those of the US (Bond & King, 1985). At the same time, approximately 98 per cent of its population are Cantonese-speaking natives who follow traditional Chinese cultural patterns (Wong, 1986).

RESEARCH ON INFLUENCE TACTICS

Most of the empirical research on influence tactics has been conducted in western nations. The influence behavior of managers has been studied with a variety of research methods, including survey questionnaires, scenarios, experimental simulations, and analysis of influence incidents obtained with interviews or open-ended questionnaires. A number of distinct influence tactics have been identified in this research. Proactive influence tactics found in the early research include rational persuasion, exchange, ingratiation, pressure, coalition, and upward appeals (e.g. Erez, Rim, & Keider, 1986; Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilkinson, 1980; Schriesheim & Hinkin, 1990). Yukl and his colleagues subsequently identified several additional tactics, including inspirational appeals, consultation, personal appeals, legitimating,

collaboration, and apprising (e.g. Yukl, 2002; Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl, Falbe, & Youn, 1993; Yukl & Tracey, 1992).

Only a small number of studies have examined the relative effectiveness of the different influence tactics (e.g. Barry & Shapiro, 1992; Yukl & Tracey, 1992; Yukl, Kim, & Falbe, 1996), and there is even less research on the way tactics are used to influence change in organisations (e.g. Bennebroek Gravenhorst & Boonstra, 1998; Greiner & Schein, 1988; Howell & Higgins, 1990). Most research on dyadic influence processes has examined proactive tactics rather than resistance tactics. We know little about the way people resist influence attempts made by others, and as yet there is only a rudimentary conceptualisation of resistance tactics (O'Hair, Cody, & O'Hair, 1991; Tepper, Eisenback, Kirby, & Potter, 1998; Tepper, Nehring, Nelson, & Taylor, 1997).

Research on cross-cultural differences in influence behavior is also quite rare. A few studies provide evidence that influence behavior may be affected by national culture (Hirokawa & Miyahara, 1986; Krone, Chen, & Xia, 1997; Rao, Hashimoto, & Rao, 1997; Schermerhorn & Bond, 1991; Schmidt & Yeh, 1992), but these researchers did not directly examine cross-cultural differences in tactics used to initiate or resist change.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this exploratory research was to determine if cross-cultural differences in values and traditions are reflected in the perceived effectiveness of different influence tactics for initiating or resisting change in organisations. Although we did not formulate specific hypotheses, it was possible to deduce some likely cross-cultural differences for the nations included in our research.

In the United States and other western nations, managers will have a more favorable perception of tactics that involve direct confrontation of issues, including rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, and collaboration (offering to help implement the change). For resisting a change proposed by the boss, western managers seem more likely to favor tactics such as pointing out weaknesses in the proposed change ("objections"), or suggesting an alternative approach ("substitution"). In China and other eastern nations, it is reasonable to expect managers to have a more favorable perception of personal appeals, use of an informal approach, and tactics that involve assistance from third parties, such as coalitions and upward appeals (see Fu & Yukl, 1999). For resisting change, Chinese managers are likely to have a more favorable perception of passive tactics like avoidance and procrastination.

STUDY 1

The first study investigated cross-cultural differences among American, Chinese, and Swiss managers regarding the perceived effectiveness of different influence tactics for initiating or resisting change in organisations.

Method

Samples of middle and lower-level managers were obtained in the United States, Switzerland, and mainland China. These were convenience samples, but most of the managers were from manufacturing companies to ensure that type of organisation was not confounded with national sample. The sample in the United States included 83 middle and lower-level managers in five manufacturing companies (two large multinational companies and three small local companies). The Chinese sample included 88 managers in seven manufacturing companies, including six state-owned companies and one facility of a foreign-owned multinational. The Swiss sample included 43 managers from several Swiss manufacturing companies who were attending short management courses taught by the first author in Zurich.

A fixed-response scenario questionnaire was used to measure preferences about different tactics. The questionnaire contained several scenarios, but only two of them were directly concerned with organisational change. Each scenario described an influence situation that a manager could reasonably expect to encounter, and the influence objective was explicitly stated. The agent and target described in a scenario were always males to reflect the predominately male composition of our samples and to hold constant any possible effect of agent/target gender on the responses. The first scenario described an attempt to initiate change and the second scenario described an attempt to resist change.

Scenario 1
The production manager has an innovative idea to restructure the production line in a way that will greatly reduce costs and increase profits, but implementation of the idea would involve a big investment in new equipment, as well as hiring and training new technical personnel. To make the change requires the approval of the facility manager, who is a longtime friend. The production manager knows that the facility manager is reluctant to make risky decisions. How effective would each tactic be for influencing the facility manager to approve the proposed change?

Scenario 2
The production manager was asked by the facility manager (who is his boss) to make some changes in the work procedures. The production manager believes that the requested changes would have a negative impact on production, but he is not sure about the best way to respond to the facility manager. How effective would each tactic be if used by the production manager to respond to the facility manager?

Attached to each scenario was a set of influence tactics. Most of these tactics were described in terms of specific behavior tailored to the scenario,

not as definitions of abstract tactic categories. The selection of tactics was guided by prior research on the types of tactics most likely to be used in a particular situation (e.g. Bennebroek Gravenhorst & Boonstra, 1998; Erez et al., 1986; Kipnis et al., 1980; Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995). Tactics were also based on the results of preliminary interviews with focus groups and individual managers. For these two scenarios we did not include tactics that are difficult to use effectively in an upward direction (e.g. pressure, exchange, legitimating).

In the fixed-response scenarios used for the actual study, respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of each tactic for influencing the target person to accomplish the objective described in the scenario. The 5-point rating scale had anchors for each response choice (1 = Completely ineffective, 2 = Somewhat ineffective, 3 = Slightly effective, 4 = Moderately effective, 5 = Very effective). In addition to the specific tactics attached to each scenario, there was also an open-ended question that allowed the respondent to add another effective tactic.

The scenarios used in Switzerland were in English, because the respondents were fluent in that language. The scenarios used in China were translated from English into Chinese by two bilingual persons who were familiar with the behavioral literature. The Chinese version was back-translated into English by a Chinese American. Another bilingual person checked the back-translated English against the original English to ensure that the translation was accurate. Finally, panels of students familiar with the definition of the proactive tactics coded each item into one of the tactic categories. This coding procedure was used for both the English-language version and the Chinese-language version. We retained only the items that were coded correctly by at least 70 per cent of the students on each panel.

Preliminary Analysis of Tactics

A preliminary analysis was conducted to determine whether the tactics were relatively independent with regard to ratings of tactic effectiveness. Correlations among the tactic ratings were computed within each cultural sample and for the overall sample of managers. For the three subsamples few correlations (7%) exceeded 0.40, which supports our interpretation that these tactics are distinct types of influence behavior. For the overall sample of managers, the largest correlations for proactive tactics were between rational persuasion and inspirational appeals ($r = 0.34$). The largest correlation for resistance tactics was between upward appeal and informal setting ($r = 0.36$).

Results for Cross-cultural Comparisons

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted separately for each scenario. When the overall analysis indicated significant differences,

TABLE 1
Results of MANOVA for the Initiating Change Scenario in Study 1

Influence tactic (abbreviated)	USA	SWIT	CHI	F (2, 206)	Eta^2
● Explain how the costs would be offset by improved efficiency. (Rat. persuasion)	4.5$_a$	4.3$_a$	3.2$_b$	53.1**	0.34
● Appeal to his values about innovation and staying competitive. (Insp. appeal)	3.7$_a$	3.8$_a$	3.0$_b$	19.7**	0.16
● Seek the aid of colleagues to persuade him to approve the proposal. (Coalition)	2.5$_a$	2.7$_a$	1.8$_b$	20.2**	0.16
● Ask a higher authority to help influence the target. (Upward appeal)	2.7$_b$	2.5$_b$	3.3$_a$	8.9**	0.08
● Go to his home to informally explain the benefits of the new idea. (Informal)	1.8$_b$	2.8$_a$	3.0$_a$	26.3**	0.20
● Explain how the change will enhance his reputation in the firm. (Apprising)	3.0	3.1	3.0	0.4	

Note: Different row subscripts indicate a significant pairwise difference ($P < 0.05$) using a Bonferroni multiple comparison test. Significance levels for univariate F-tests reflect a modified Bonferroni adjustment. Eta square values are shown only for significant F values. * $P < 0.05$ for F; ** $P < 0.01$ for F.

univariate F-tests were computed for each tactic. If the F-test was significant with a modified Bonferroni test, then pairwise comparisons were conducted with a Bonferroni multiple comparison test (Jaccard, Becker, & Wood, 1984).

Table 1 shows the results for the scenario on the attempt to influence the boss to support a proposed change. Compared to the Chinese managers, the American and Swiss managers gave significantly higher effectiveness ratings to rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, and use of a coalition. The Chinese managers gave significantly higher effectiveness ratings to upward appeals. The Chinese and Swiss managers gave higher effectiveness ratings than American managers to use of an informal approach. There was no significant difference for apprising (explaining how the change will personally benefit the target).

Table 2 shows results for the scenario on resisting a change proposed by the boss. For this analysis, the number of American respondents was smaller, because the resistance scenario was not used for some of them. Compared to the Chinese managers, the American and Swiss managers gave significantly higher ratings to oral objections and substitutions. The Chinese managers gave significantly higher ratings to upward appeals, procrastination, and use of an informal approach. The Swiss managers rated written objections significantly lower than did the Chinese managers, and the Swiss managers rated an informal approach significantly higher than the American managers. Finally, Swiss managers rated coalition tactics higher than Chinese managers.

TABLE 2
Results of MANOVA for the Resisting Change Scenario in Study 1

Influence tactic (abbreviated)	USA	SWIT	CHI	F (2, 166)	Eta²
● Tell him about the negative impact the change will cause. (Oral objection)	4.1ₐ	4.1ₐ	3.2_b	16.6**	0.17
● Write a memo stating why the change will be detrimental. (Written objection)	3.4_ab	2.9_b	3.8ₐ	10.2**	0.11
● Suggest a way to achieve the same effect without a negative impact. (Substitution)	4.5ₐ	4.8ₐ	4.1_b	11.5**	0.12
● Ask colleagues to help persuade him to rescind or modify the change. (Coalition)	2.7_ab	2.9ₐ	2.4_b	3.6*	0.04
● Ask a higher authority to influence him to rescind the change. (Upward appeal)	1.9_b	2.1_b	2.9ₐ	16.1**	0.16
● Delay making the change in the hope he will change his mind. (Procrastination)	1.4_b	1.5_b	2.0ₐ	10.4**	0.11
● Go to his home and present your objections informally. (Informal)	1.2_c	1.8_b	3.0ₐ	56.1**	0.40

Note: Different row subscripts indicate a significant pairwise difference ($P < 0.05$) using a Bonferroni multiple comparison test. Significance levels for univariate F-tests reflect a modified Bonferroni adjustment. Eta square values are shown only for significant F values. *$P < 0.05$ for F; **$P < 0.01$ for F.

Supplementary analyses were conducted to determine if the result would hold up when data were adjusted for cultural differences in rating bias. The MANOVA was repeated after first standardising the item ratings for each sample based on the overall item mean and standard deviation for that sample. With regard to the univariate F-tests, all of the cross-cultural differences remained significant, even though the eta square values were sometimes a little lower.

Most respondents did not answer the open-ended questions. When written answers were provided, they usually involved either a different example of a tactic already represented in the scenario, or a combination of two or more tactics from the scenario. Examination of the written comments did not yield any further insights.

Summary

As expected, the American and Swiss managers usually gave higher ratings than Chinese managers to task-oriented tactics that involved direct confrontation to resolve a disagreement (e.g. rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, objections, substitution). Reflecting their concern to avoid overt conflict and possible loss of face, the Chinese managers usually gave higher ratings to tactics involving the use of personal relationships or indirect approaches to resolve

a disagreement (e.g. upward appeals, use of an informal context). The results for use of a coalition were contrary to our expectations. We expected this tactic to be rated more effective by Chinese managers than by western managers for introducing change, but the difference was in the opposite direction.

STUDY 2

The purpose of the second study was to find out if the findings in Study 1 for American and Chinese managers could be replicated in different samples with a revised version of the scenarios. This study compared managers in the United States, Hong Kong, and mainland China.

Method

The respondents were middle and lower-level managers from several different organisations who were attending management courses or workshops. The samples included 135 American managers, 170 mainland Chinese managers, and 157 Hong Kong Chinese managers. We used convenience samples again, but compared to Study 1, we sampled a wider variety of organisations.

The scenarios were similar to the ones used in Study 1, but some changes in wording were made to clarify the situation better for respondents. In Scenario 1 the authority relationship between the agent and target was made more explicit to avoid any misunderstanding, and we deleted the term "friendship" from the description of the relationship to ensure that the results were not biased by this aspect of the relationship. In the second scenario, the term "resisting the request" was substituted for "responding to the request" to clarify that the objective is to prevent the proposed change. The two scenarios were as follows:

> *Scenario 1*
> The Production Manager has an innovative idea to restructure the production line in a way that will greatly reduce costs and increase profits, but implementation of the idea would involve a big investment in new equipment, as well as hiring and training new technical personnel. To make the change requires the approval of his immediate boss, the Production Vice President, who is reluctant to make risky decisions. How effective would each of the following tactics be for influencing the Production VP to approve the proposed change?

> *Scenario 2*
> The Plant Manager is in charge of one of the company's manufacturing facilities. Recently, the Production Vice President (the manager's boss) asked for some major changes in the production procedures. The Plant Manager feels that the requested changes would have a negative impact on production. How effective would each tactic be if used for resisting the Production VP's request?

Most of the tactics were similar to the ones used in Study 1. Once again a 5-point response format was used for the tactic items, but only the end points had anchors (1 = not effective; 5 = very effective). We used fewer anchors to reduce the possibility that non-equivalent translation of anchors would affect the results. The open-ended item was not included in the scenarios used for this study.

The English-language version was used in the United States and Hong Kong; the Chinese-language version was used in mainland China and for approximately half of the Hong Kong managers. Once again the scenarios were translated into Chinese, back-translated into English by a Chinese American, and checked against the original English by another bilingual person to ensure that the translation was accurate. As in Study 1, panels of students coded the tactic items to verify that they adequately represented the tactic categories, and we only used items coded into the designated tactic category by at least 70 per cent of the members on each panel.

Preliminary Analysis of Tactics

As in Study 1, correlations among the tactic ratings were computed within each cultural sample and for the overall sample of managers. For the three subsamples few correlations (6%) exceeded 0.40, which supports our interpretation that the tactics are distinct types of influence behavior. For the overall sample, the largest correlation for proactive tactics was between inspirational appeals and collaboration ($r = 0.32$). The largest correlation for resistance tactics was between procrastination and personal appeals ($r = 0.42$).

Results for Cross-cultural Comparisons

The analysis of cross-cultural differences in ratings of tactic effectiveness was carried out in the same way as in Study 1. The results of the MANOVA for the proactive influence scenario are shown in Table 3. Most of the cross-cultural differences found for American versus Chinese managers in Study 1 were replicated in Study 2. Compared to mainland Chinese managers, American managers gave significantly higher effectiveness ratings to rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, collaboration, and coalition. The mainland Chinese managers gave significantly higher ratings to personal appeals and upward appeals. The Hong Kong managers were similar to American managers in their ratings of rational persuasion, coalition, upward appeals, and personal appeals, but they were similar to mainland Chinese managers in their ratings of inspirational appeals. The Hong Kong managers were in between the Americans and Chinese in their ratings of collaboration. As in Study 1, there was no significant cross-cultural difference for apprising.

TABLE 3
Results of MANOVA for the Initiating Change Scenario in Study 2

Influence tactic (abbreviated)	USA	HK	CHI	F (2, 460)	Eta^2
● Explain why the benefits of the change are greater than the costs. (Rat. persuasion)	4.5$_a$	4.2$_a$	3.8$_b$	29.0**	0.11
● Appeal to his values about innovation and staying competitive. (Insp. appeal)	3.7$_a$	3.3$_b$	3.2$_b$	8.8**	0.04
● Offer to help him implement the change if he will approve it. (Collaboration)	3.7$_a$	3.3$_b$	2.8$_c$	31.6**	0.12
● Ask other department managers to help influence him. (Coalition)	3.1$_a$	3.0$_a$	2.4$_b$	20.2**	0.08
● Ask someone with higher authority to help influence him. (Upward appeal)	3.4$_b$	3.4$_b$	4.0$_a$	16.4**	0.07
● Ask him to approve the proposed change as a personal favor. (Personal appeal)	1.5$_b$	1.5$_b$	2.2$_a$	27.9**	0.11
● Explain how the proposed change will enhance his reputation. (Apprising)	3.5	3.4	3.7	1.5	

Note: Different row subscripts indicate a significant pairwise difference ($P < 0.05$) using a Bonferroni multiple comparison test. Significance levels for univariate F-tests reflect a modified Bonferroni adjustment. Eta square values are shown only for significant F values. * $P < 0.05$ for F; ** $P < 0.01$ for F.

Results for the resistance scenario are shown in Table 4. Some of the managers were not given this scenario, so the sample size is smaller. Compared to mainland Chinese managers, the Americans gave significantly higher effectiveness ratings to oral objections and substitution. The mainland Chinese managers gave significantly higher ratings to personal appeals, procrastination, and upward appeals. The Hong Kong managers were similar to the American managers in their ratings of substitution, personal appeals, and procrastination, and they were in between the Americans and the mainland Chinese in their ratings of oral objections. The Hong Kong managers gave lower ratings to written objections and upward appeals than did either the American or mainland Chinese managers. As in Study 1, no significant cross-cultural differences were found for coalition as a resistance tactic.

Once again, we standardised the ratings for each sample and repeated the multivariate analyses of variance. As in Study 1, all of the cross-cultural differences remained significant, even though the eta square values were sometimes different.

DISCUSSION

Most of the results for comparison of American and Chinese managers in Study 1 were replicated in Study 2. Similar results were found in 91 per cent of the comparisons involving tactics that were included in both studies. The

TABLE 4
Results of MANOVA for the Resisting Change Scenario in Study 2

Influence tactic (abbreviated)	USA	HK	CHI	F (2, 334)	Eta^2
● Explain why the change will negatively affect production. (Oral objection)	4.2$_a$	3.5$_b$	2.6$_c$	94.9**	0.37
● Write a memo stating why the change will be detrimental. (Written objection)	3.8$_a$	3.2$_b$	3.5$_a$	13.0**	0.11
● Suggest another way to achieve the same objective. (Substitution)	3.9$_a$	3.9$_a$	3.3$_b$	9.8**	0.05
● Ask one of the engineers to help influence the target to rescind the change. (Coalition)	2.8	2.8	2.6	1.2	
● Ask a higher authority to influence him to rescind the change. (Upward appeal)	3.2$_a$	2.9$_b$	3.3$_a$	5.8**	0.03
● Delay making the change in the hope he will change his mind. (Procrastination)	2.0$_b$	2.0$_b$	2.4$_a$	6.4**	0.03
● Ask him to postpone the change as a personal favor. (Personal appeal)	2.0$_b$	1.8$_b$	2.6$_a$	20.3**	0.10

Note: Different row subscripts indicate a significant pairwise difference ($P < 0.05$) using a Bonferroni multiple comparison test. Significance levels for univariate F-tests reflect a modified Bonferroni adjustment. Eta square values are shown only for significant F values. *$P < 0.05$ for F; **$P < 0.01$ for F.

only exception was the failure to replicate results for upward appeal as a resistance tactic. Possible explanations for this discrepancy include changes in the wording of the scenario, changes in the rating anchors, and differences in the sample.

Most of the significant cross-cultural differences in perception of tactic effectiveness appear to be consistent with differences in cultural values and traditions. The Swiss and American managers had similar ratings on most of the tactics for which there were significant cross-cultural differences. In general, the western managers had a higher evaluation of direct, task-oriented tactics, whereas the Chinese managers had a higher evaluation of tactics involving personal relations, an informal approach, and avoidance of confrontation.

We expected the Hong Kong Chinese managers to be in between the American and mainland Chinese managers, consistent with the mix of eastern and western values found in the Hong Kong business culture. Instead, the Hong Kong managers were closer to the American managers on 75 per cent of the influence tactics for which there were significant cross-cultural differences. This pattern of results appears to support the convergence proposition (England & Lee, 1974), which holds that managers in industrialised nations will embrace the attitudes and behaviors common to managers in other industrialised nations despite cultural differences.

The most surprising finding in both studies was that coalition tactics were rated more effective by American than by Chinese managers for influencing a boss to implement change. This difference seems inconsistent with the finding by Fu and Yukl (1999) that, compared to American managers, Chinese managers consider coalition tactics more effective for influencing subordinates and peers. The discrepant results suggest the possibility of a culture by direction interaction for coalition tactics. Additional research is needed to confirm this interaction and discover the reasons for it.

One contribution of our research is to suggest the possibility of a single taxonomy of influence tactics that are relevant for both initiating and resisting change. The different labels used for proactive and resistance tactics tend to obscure underlying similarities. For example, objections can be viewed as just another form of rational persuasion, because both tactics involve the use of logic and evidence about the likely outcomes of a proposed change. Rational persuasion emphasises the opportunities and likely benefits, whereas objections emphasise the constraints and high costs. Likewise, substitution can be viewed as just another form of collaboration, because both tactics involve efforts to find a "win-win" solution. With collaboration the agent anticipates likely target concerns and proposes a way to deal with them, whereas with substitution the target proposes an alternative (or a problem solving process) that will satisfy the concerns of both parties. It seems likely that most proactive tactics can be used to resist change as well as to promote it. Our results showed that the tactics considered effective for initiating change were also considered relatively effective for resisting change. However, additional research is needed to confirm that specific tactics are equally effective when used for both purposes.

One strength of our research was the careful development of scenarios to ensure that they were equivalent. Another strength was the use of a replication study with an independent sample. Other strengths include checking for possible contamination from cultural response biases, and assessing the practical significance of cross-cultural differences (the effect size) in addition to statistical significance. Nevertheless, our research was not without limitations. We used convenience samples that were not matched on demographics, and the samples were quite small for assessing national differences. Follow-up research should be conducted with better samples and a larger number of scenarios.

Another limitation is that the scenarios only assessed the perceived effectiveness of each tactic in a specified situation. A manager's choice of tactics is affected by many things (Yukl, 1998), and the perceived effectiveness of a tactic may not correspond closely to actual use of it. To determine if the results can be generalised to influence behavior, follow-up research is needed with methods that directly measure use of the tactics (e.g. observation, diary, interviews). Moreover, the research should determine if culture

is a moderator of the relationship between behavior and outcomes (Brett, Tinsley, Janssens, Barsness, & Lytle, 1997).

Although this was only an exploratory study, it has important practical applications. The ability to understand cultural differences and exercise influence in cross-cultural relationships is now an essential competency of the "global" manager (Smith & Peterson, 1988). The results from this type of cross-cultural research on influence tactics could be used to help prepare managers for overseas assignments or leadership of teams with multinational membership. Training programs for improving cultural awareness and understanding could include open-ended and fixed-response scenarios like the ones we use in our research. These scenarios appear useful for assessing training needs, enriching the training process, and developing greater understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.

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