SUMMARY OF THE LEADER OBSERVATION SYSTEM (LOS) PROJECT

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Summary of the Leader Observation System (LOS) Project

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Summary of the Leader Observation System (LOS) Project

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Leadership

This final report contains a summary listing of the 19 technical reports that were issued from the Leader Observation System (LOS) Project.
1. To develop a predictable and replicable system for leader observation and training.

2. To develop effective and efficient leader training methods to train leaders and have them perform their roles more effectively.

3. To develop effective human performance in organizations.

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SUMMARY LIST OF TECHNICAL REPORTS FOR LEADER OBSERVATION SYSTEM (LOS) RESEARCH PROGRAM, FRED LUTHANS, PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

   Abstract: After first examining the underlying “sameness” assumption of the dominant nomothetic (group-centered) research perspective, an alternative interactive theoretic assumption is proposed for organizational behavior. This calls for idiographic (individual-centered) research. Intensive single-case experimental designs and direct measures from the idiographic approach are presented and analyzed.

   Abstract: This paper first identifies the differing assumptions and perspectives of management practitioners, qualitative researchers, and quantitative researchers. Special attention is given to the question of “research for what?” and “what should the output of research be?” Next, the major differences between qualitative and quantitative approaches are highlighted and some mutually beneficial designs, perspectives and philosophies for these differences to be resolved and integrated are suggested. Finally, a specific example is used to show that an integrated approach can be effective.
   Status: Revised and under review at the Journal of Management.

   Abstract: This study makes a reliability assessment of 88 trained participant observers who measured the behavior of 120 target leaders in 5 diverse organizational settings. Eight trained outside observers were used as agreement checks. Drawing from three methods of calculation, the interrater agreement was quite impressive. Other analysis techniques employed in the study support the value of the training given to the observers. The overall conclusion of the study is that, especially in light of the current dissatisfaction, observation may be an effective measurement alternative.
   Status: Revised and given at National AIDS meeting (American Institute for Decision Sciences), 1982 and currently under review at the Academy of Management Journal.
Abstract: Utilizing several diverse samples (N=534), psychometric properties of the organizational commitment questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Porter and his colleagues were assessed. Means and standard deviations, internal consistency reliability, discriminant validity, and social desirability bias were given specific attention. The results replicate the generally positive psychometric properties of the OCQ found in earlier studies. The analysis of social desirability, which has not been assessed in previous studies, does indicate that this bias may be present in the OCQ.  

Abstract: Role conflict and role ambiguity scales (RCA) developed by Rizzo, House and Lirtzman were analyzed according to the factor structures, means and standard deviations, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity and were found to generally agree with earlier studies reporting positive results. However, the analysis of social desirability bias, which was not specifically assessed in previous studies, was found to be present in the role ambiguity (RA) responses, but absent from the role conflict (RC) responses.  
Status: Revised and accepted for publication in Educational and Psychological Measurement (in press).

Abstract: A canonical correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between 3 organizational reward criterion variables and 12 leadership behavior categories using the newly developing Leadership Observation System of measurement. Managers (N=49) from a large financial institution served as subjects in the study. One canonical root was extracted for interpretation which inversely related the behaviors of exchanging routine information and socializing/politicking with salary & promotion rewards. Implications of results for the study of leadership are discussed.  
Status: Revised and given at the Western Academy of Management, 1982.

Abstract: Three conceptual and statistical models are developed for the effects of social desirability (SD) response bias on organizational behavior research results. It is demonstrated with illustrative empirical examples how SD can act as a) an unmeasured variable which produces spurious correlations between study variables, b) a suppressor variable which hides relationships, or c) a moderator variable which conditions the relationship between 2 other variables. It is recommended that SD effects be assessed, particularly in tests of hypotheses using self-inventories or ones involving the operation of implicit theories.


Abstract: Although there are a number of existing approaches to socialization they lack clear theoretical basis for understanding & application. This paper proposes social learning theoretical framework. Particular attention given to relevancy that modeling & self-control can have for organizational socialization. Specific examples of how these concepts & techniques can help facilitate successful socialization of new & existing employees are included throughout.


Abstract: A new perspective of control in organizations is presented. Based on a social learning theoretical foundation, the paper argues that self-control is at the core of the organizational control process. Various levels and sources of control are discussed.

Status: Revised and accepted for presentation at the National Academy of Management, 1983 and under review at Journal of Behavior.


Abstract: This is a major report from the project. The development of the leadership observation system (LOS) is first described in the report. After trained observers had logged 440 hours of free observation of 44 managers, (10 hours each over a two week period) a Delphi approach was used to derive 12 categories and accompanying behavioral descriptors. Trained
participant (N = 88) and outside (N = 8) observers simultaneously, but independently, directly recorded the behavior of the target leaders on the LOS instrument every hour over a two week period. The target leaders also filled out a self estimate of time usage questionnaire that contained the same 12 categories as the LOS instrument. In addition, the target leaders, their superiors (N = 118), peers (N = 210) and subordinates (N = 362) completed the widely used LBDQ-XII and the new MBS (Yukl & Nemeroff, 1979) questionnaires. There was high interrater agreement reliability between the participant and outside observers. To go beyond this relatively simple reliability assessment, a multitrait-multimethod (MTMM) analysis was conducted. The results gave some support to the validity (both convergent and discriminant) of the LOS when multiple rater sources (participant and outside observers) were treated as more than one method. In contrast, neither of the leadership questionnaire measures (LBDQ-XII or MBS) was demonstrated to have any support for construct validity when multiple rater sources (self, superior, peers and subordinates) were treated as multiple methods. When the standardized questionnaires and leadership observation system were treated as multiple methods, the validity analysis was not very encouraging. Part of the problem, however, was that there were not directly comparable behavioral categories across these methods. When directly comparable categories from the self estimate of time usage questionnaire were compared to the LOS, the MTMM analysis yielded more support for validity.

A version of this was given at the Seventh Leadership Symposium on Managerial Behavior and Leadership Research, July 13, 1982, University of Oxford, Oxford, U.K. This symposium was sponsored by N.A.T.O. The paper will be published in Hunt, J.G., & Schriesheim, C. (Eds.), Managerial behavior and leadership research. London: Pergamon, 1983 (in press).


Abstract: This paper first discusses the definitional problem of leadership. A case is made for leadership as a behavioral construct. An idiographic perspective for research is proposed and the results of a single case experimental design are presented.


Abstract: This study compares the average leadership style (ALS) with the vertical dyad linkage (VDL) model by partitioning the
subordinate perceptions of leadership style into between groups and within-group sources of variance. The results indicate that ALS and VDL models account for similar proportions of variance in subordinate role perceptions, satisfaction, and organizational commitment.


Abstract: General contingency theory (GCT) is offered as an alternative to open systems theory (OST) as the foundation for improved organizational performance. It is argued that GCT can provide more precise conceptual variables and an integrative framework for relating environmental and organizational variables in order to provide functional predictions.
Status: Revised and under review at Human Systems Management.

Abstract: After first identifying some of the major issues and limitations of traditional organizational behavior research, an emic (an insider's or subject's view of reality) perspective and ethnoscience methods are proposed. Specific techniques such as domain, taxonic and componential analyses are given detailed attention. Examples of the application of these anthropological perspectives and techniques to organizational behavior research are included throughout and the limitations are carefully pointed out.
Status: Revised and accepted for publication in Academy of Management Review, (in press).

Abstract: Two studies are reported which indicate a strong positive relationship between organizational commitment and perceived organizational effectiveness. Autonomy was found to be the only significant moderator in the first study and, although it failed to reach significance in the second study, it was in the desired direction and had a significant main effect on perceived organizational flexibility.

Abstract: Trained participant observers recorded the monitoring and controlling behaviors of 78 target managers. These managers' subordinates completed a number of questionnaires relating to
perceived effectiveness, satisfaction, autonomy, commitment, and their leader's behavior. The results of the statistical analysis indicated enough support (from both the directly observed leader behavior and the questionnaire descriptions) to conclude that subordinates' behavior/situation does seem to influence leader behavior.

   **Abstract:** This study investigated whether the leader's locus of control moderated the relationship between perceived leader influence behaviors such as persuasiveness and influence on superiors and effectiveness and subordinates' perception on their units' effectiveness and their satisfaction with supervision. It was found that locus of control significantly moderated the effect of supervisor influence on productivity and subordinate satisfaction with supervision.

   **Abstract:** A major report from the project. Trained participant observers using the Leadership Observation System (LOS) recorded the behaviors of 52 managers in 3 diverse organizations. These behaviors were then related to a manager success index consisting of level over tenure. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis found two of the behavioral categories on the LOS were significantly related to the successful managers: interacting with outsiders and socializing/politicking.

**Status of Reports 15-18:**
Since these have just been completed, they are just now being sent out to meetings and prepared for submission to academic journals. They are all data-based papers directly from the project. No. 18 has already been accepted for presentation at the upcoming National Academy of Management meeting in August, 1983.
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