

## **Differences in Strategies of Upward Influence: A Comparative Study of Managers from China, Macao and Portugal**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research investigates the impact that working together has on Eastern and Western culture managers regarding their strategies of upward influence. Specifically, we will investigate the degree to which foreign culture behavioral tactics are adopted by expatriates, and the impact of a long-term foreign sovereign on home-country managers' behavior. Macao provides a unique environment to investigate these issues. Thus, our subjects include Portuguese expatriates working in Macao and Macanese Chinese working in Macao, as well as Chinese working in China, and Portuguese working in Portugal. The latter two groups serve as our baseline groups. The findings indicate that there are cross-cultural differences in upward influence strategies that indicate tendencies for divergent and/or crossvergent behavior, with no indication of convergence.

*JEL: M10*

*Keywords: Upward influence; Cross-cultural; China; Macao Portugal*

## I. INTRODUCTION

As borders become more and more seamless and transparent, business is becoming increasingly global. With this steady growth in the number of multinational corporations, the nature of business in today's global marketplace requires people of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds to work together. Management styles are clearly affected as traditional behavior and beliefs are challenged. Because value differences may result in misunderstandings and inaccurate perceptions when the work situation is culturally diverse, it is increasingly important to distinguish among the values held and the behaviors exhibited in various cultures (Kelly, Whatley and Worthley 1987; Ralston, Gustafson, Cheung and Terpstra 1993).

An important area that until recently has received little attention is the effect of Eastern and Western values on the strategies and techniques used to gain influence in an organization (Smith and Peterson 1988, Ralston, Gustafson, Mainiero and Umstot 1993, Ralston, Terpstra, Cunniff and Gustafson 1995). These strategies, important as they may be to organizational effectiveness, gain additional significance for multinational corporations to the extent that acceptable influence strategies may differ significantly among cultures. How individuals attempt to gain influence over others is an important part of their behavior and crucial to their success in their organizations. Often the most critical challenge is to use influence behaviors with those in an organization who are in a superior position (Ansari and Kapoor 1987, Porter, Allen and Angle 1981). To be effective, managers must use influence strategies that are acceptable to their superiors. Those who use strategies that are incongruent with the culture of their superiors risk losing rather than gaining the influence they seek.

One particular group of managers for whom the understanding of behavior patterns of individuals from different cultures is particularly acute is expatriate managers. To be effective in a foreign culture, expatriate managers must understand both the origin of their own behavior and the congruence of their behavior with that of individuals who are from the foreign culture (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou 1991). While the success or failure of expatriate managers is a complex issue, the degree to which their home-culture values dominate their behaviors is likely to be a factor of some importance. The other side of this issue is the degree to which the expatriate sovereigns significantly influenced the local Macanese managers. To fully explore this latter issue, we wanted to identify a work environment that consisted of expatriates who were primarily from one culture, where their culture has also had a long-term impact on the local economy.

Our challenge was to find an environment (location) where the dominant expatriate culture has been stable over the past century. This allowed us to substantially remove the concern of expatriate cultural variance from our study. Macao, the Portuguese enclave until December 1999, provided us with a location that addressed this need for a culturally consistent expatriate sample, as well as for the Macanese, local Chinese sample. We will also compare our Macanese groups with their groups from their home-cultures: Mainland China and Portugal.

Therefore, the objective of our study is to examine cross-cultural behavior by comparing the upward influence strategies used by managers in Portugal, China and Macao—both Portuguese expatriates and local Macanese Chinese. The two research questions that we pose are: Have Portuguese expatriates working five or more years in Macao modified their upward influence strategies to accommodate the cultural norms of the predominantly Chinese Macao businesses? And, have Macanese Chinese managers in Macao modified their upward influence strategies to reflect the norms of the Portuguese, their sovereign?

Macao, Portugal and China present interesting and useful contrasts in terms of both business environments and cultures (Zepp 1991). China's business environment reflects its current status as a country in transition. While markets are replacing state planning for determining production and pricing and the private enterprise sector is growing rapidly, remnants of central planning and collective ownership are still quite common. In contrast, Portugal and Macao have capitalistic systems that reflect Western business environments. Furthermore, Portugal's culture has been described as quite different from that of China. It is moderately collectivist with a low power distance and, like most Latin countries, places less value on solidarity and group harmony (Tixier 1994). Conflict among individuals is also tolerated (Tixier 1994). In comparison, China's culture is highly collectivist, a unique blend of socialism and Confucianism (Ralston, Gustafson, Cheung and Terpstra 1993). It has a high degree of respect for hierarchy and places the utmost importance on group harmony (Ralston, Stewart, Terpstra, Egri and Yu 1999).

The cultural norms of Macao are of special interest because of the unique position of Macao as the oldest, continuously operated international trading entre-pot of its kind in the world (Cremer 1991). According to historical accounts, the Emperor of China rewarded Portugal for its efforts in fighting off pirates in the area by allowing the settlement of Macao at the Pearl River Delta in 1587 (Kammerer 1944). It has been under Portuguese administration since then and remained so until December 20, 1999 when it became a Special Administrative Region [SAR] of China. Though its accomplishments are not as well known as those of the so-called "four dragons" of East Asia (Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong), Macao's economy also represents a classic case of export-led growth. The residents today enjoy higher living standards, as measured by per capita GDP, than do residents of Taiwan and South Korea. Macao's population of around 450,000 is mostly Chinese but the influence of over 400 years of Portuguese administration has had an obvious impact on the enclave's laws and languages. Less obvious has been the influence of Christian missionaries who founded the Diocese of Macao in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and bestowed the title of "Rome of the Far East" (Teixeira 1991). While the influence of the church has diminished significantly in the last two centuries, it has been suggested that it may have helped to make the Macao of today a society where different ideas are tolerant of one another (Baolin 1997).

Given Macao's history, it provides a useful setting to examine the extent to which Portuguese expatriates in Macao have influenced the local Macanese values and

behaviors over the past centuries, and the extent to which the local Macanese culture has influenced the present Portuguese expatriates.

## II. THE UPWARD INFLUENCE LITERATURE

The upward influence literature can be categorized according to its cultural context as Western, Eastern, or Cross-cultural. The preponderance of this research has been in the form of single-country, Western studies, with notably less from the Eastern cultures, or on cross-cultural comparisons.

### A. Western Studies

A number of studies have examined the type of influence strategies or tactics used by subordinates (Yukl and Tracey 1992, Giacalone and Rosenfeld 1991, Yukl and Falbe 1990, Chacko 1990, Schreisheim and Hinkin 1990, Kipnis and Schmidt 1988, Kipnis, Schmidt and Wilkinson 1980, Ralston 1985, Schilit and Locke 1982.). These studies, while not identifying a universally accepted list of influence tactics, do report a substantial degree of similarity of influence tactics. For example, Schilit and Locke (1982) identify the influence methods of rational persuasion, informal exchange, formal exchange, adherence to rules, upward appeal, manipulation, formation of coalitions, and assertiveness, while Yukl and Tracy (1992) identify rational persuasion, inspirational appeal, consultation, integration, exchange, personal appeal, coalition, legitimating, and pressure.

### B. Eastern Studies

In contrast to the research on upward influence strategies in Western cultures, there have been few studies that have examined such processes in the Eastern context. In one study, Lufty (1988) reported that the changing values of younger Japanese managers are resulting in increased employee pressure on companies to provide better opportunities for advancement and respect for employees' desires to have a fulfilling personal life. Another study on the upward influence strategies used in China identified, in descending order of popularity, the following strategies: rationality, coalition, assertiveness, upward appeal, exchange of benefits, ingratiation and blocking (Chow 1989).

### C. Cross-Cultural Studies

Several studies have examined upward influence strategies in a cross-cultural context. Suzuki and Narapareddy's (1988) study of American and Japanese female executives found that the American subjects put more emphasis upon having a mentor and using the formal evaluation system as a means to attain influence than did their Japanese counterparts. Schermerhorn and Bond (1991) compared the upward influence tactics of American and Hong Kong subjects. Using a single scenario, they asked respondents to

rate their preference for each of the tactics identified by these researchers. The results showed that the American subjects were more likely to use ingratiation or rationality (i.e. facts) to influence their superiors than were the Hong Kong subjects, while the Hong Kong Chinese subjects were more likely to select assertiveness as an influence tactics.

Ralston, Giacalone and Terpstra (1994) compared American and Chinese manager's ethical perceptions of influence tactics. Using the Strategies of Upward Influence taxonomy, they found that, while both groups of managers had a similar order of preference for the various influence tactics (Good Soldier > Rational Persuasion > Image Management > Personal Networking > Information Control > Strong-arm Coercion), there were significant differences in the degree of acceptability for all but the Personal Networking tactics. Specifically, American managers perceived a higher acceptability for the tactics of Good Soldier, Rational Persuasion, and Impression Management. In contrast, the Hong Kong managers viewed Information Control and Strong-arm Coercion as more acceptable than did the American managers. With two exceptions, these findings were confirmed in a study that compared upward influence preferences of Americans working in the U.S., expatriate Americans working in Hong Kong, and Hong Kong Chinese working in Hong Kong (Ralston, Terpstra, Cunniff and Gustafson 1995). American managers preferred Personal Networking more than the Chinese managers did, and no significant difference in the preference for Impression Management was found. In addition, there were no significant differences in the preferences for influence tactics between the two American groups; however, most of the Americans in the expatriate group had had a relatively short tenure.

### III. ESTIMATING A CHINA – PORTUGAL BASELINE

As noted, this study was designed to investigate cross-cultural influences on upward influence strategies for two interrelated work relationships frequently faced by managers in the global workplace: one, the affect of a foreign work environment on an expatriate manager's perception of acceptable tactics; and two, the influence of the long-term presence of a foreign sovereignty on home-culture values. In the former case, we will look at the impact of the Macanese - predominately Chinese - culture on the Portuguese expatriates living and working in Macao. In the latter case we will examine the impact of the 450-year Portuguese rule in Macao on the behavior of the indigenous Chinese (Macanese) managers in Macao.

To be in a position to try to develop directional hypotheses for our two research questions, we really should have a China–Portugal baseline from which to work. However, we were not able to identify any influence research on either Portugal or Macao and, as noted, only very limited influence research on China. Therefore, we felt that it was imperative to approximate empirically a China–Portugal baseline from our own data before developing the hypotheses for our two research questions. Since the development of this baseline is best described as exploratory and since we will later use this China and Portugal data in the statistical tests of our two research questions, at this

stage, we will simply use the mean differences to define the baseline tactics preferences and subsequently to predict direction of the hypotheses.

As will be shown in Table 2, the Portugal Portuguese scored higher than the Mainland Chinese on the tactics of *Good Soldier* and *Rational Persuasion*. Conversely, the Chinese scored higher than the Portuguese on the tactics of *Image Management*, *Personal Networking*, *Information Control*, and *Strong-Arm Coercion*. While not identical to the Ralston et al. (1994) findings for U.S. and Hong Kong managers, the East-West tactics preferences identified in both of these studies are similar, which suggests some degree of data validity. Therefore, at this point, we will propose that it is reasonable to assume that Portuguese have a preference for the two former tactics, while Mainland Chinese have a preference for the latter four tactics.

#### IV. TEST OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Having identified a China–Portugal baseline of influence tactics preferences, we are better positioned to investigate our two research questions. We will explore these questions within the context of the convergence-divergence-crossvergence [CDC] framework. Thus, restating our first questions in this context, we might ask: do the influence behaviors of the Portuguese expatriate managers better reflect the values of their home culture, or the values of their present work environment, or as a third alternative, has some synergistic effect resulted in unique influence-style behaviors for these expatriate managers? That is, respectively, were the Portuguese expatriates exhibiting divergent, convergent or crossvergent influence behavior? We should note that the purist view of convergence states that change will flow only from the more technologically sophisticated society to the less technologically sophisticated society. From this pure perspective, convergence would not theoretically be a possibility for the Portuguese expatriates. However, we will remain open-minded and let the results from the data help us to understand the relational flows.

In terms of our second question, we might ask: do the influence behaviors of the indigenous Macanese Chinese managers better reflect those of the ethnically similar managers in the Mainland, or the Portuguese who had ruled for over four centuries, or has some synergistic effect resulted in unique influence-style behaviors for these Macanese managers? That is, respectively, were the Macanese exhibiting divergent, convergent or crossvergent influence behavior? Ralston and colleagues (1993 1997 1999) have recently reported that crossvergence and divergence appear to be the most likely outcomes for cross-cultural behavioral comparisons, especially related to the Chinese culture.

Therefore, based on their findings, as well as those from our China–Portugal comparison, we have developed the following hypotheses that are stated as divergent outcomes. Using this approach, we can simply state and analyze both questions simultaneously. Divergence argues that culture is the primary driving force behind our behavior. Thus, a divergence perspective would suggest that the two Portuguese groups will not be significantly different from one another and that the two Chinese culture groups will not be significantly different from one another, but that the Chinese and

Portuguese groups will be significantly different from one another. Conversely, convergence has argued that the less developed economy will moved substantially in the direction of the more developed culture following prolonged exposure. From the purist perspective, that implies that the Portuguese expatriate managers will be not significantly different from their counterparts in Portugal and that the local Macanese Chinese will be not significantly different from the two Portuguese groups, while all three of these groups will be significantly different from the Mainland Chinese group. Crossvergence is potentially the most difficult possibility to fully describe. Crossvergence could be, in its most simple form, the Mainland Chinese and Portugal Portuguese being significantly different and the polar extremes and the two Macao groups (Macanese and Expatriates) being not significantly different and holding views that were somewhere between the polar extremes of Portugal and China. However, as discussed in Ralston et al. (1997), there may be unique synergistic outcome from crossvergence that can result in behaviors occurring beyond the polar points of the baseline. In sum, we will hypothesize divergence in this exploratory study for the sake of the parsimony and because divergence has received more support in the literature than has convergence.

*Hypothesis 1: on the **Good Soldier** dimension, Portuguese (Portugal and Expatriate) managers will score significantly higher than Chinese (Mainland and Macanese) managers.*

*Hypothesis 2: on the **Rational Persuasion** dimension, Portuguese (Portugal and Expatriate) managers will score significantly higher than Chinese (Mainland and Macanese) managers.*

*Hypothesis 3: on the **Image Management** dimension, Chinese (Mainland and Macanese) managers will score significantly higher than Portuguese (Portugal and Expatriate) managers.*

*Hypothesis 4: on the **Personal Networking** dimension, Chinese (Mainland and Macanese) managers will score significantly higher than Portuguese (Portugal and Expatriate) managers.*

*Hypothesis 5: on the **Information Control** dimension, Chinese (Mainland and Macanese) managers will score significantly higher than Portuguese (Portugal and Expatriate) managers.*

*Hypothesis 6: on the **Strong-Arm Coercion** dimension, Chinese (Mainland and Macanese) managers will score significantly higher than Portuguese (Portugal and Expatriate) managers.*

## **A. Method**

### **1. Description of Subjects**

The sample (n=412) consisted of four groups: Mainland Chinese (n=132), Macanese Chinese (n=125), Portuguese expatriates working in Macao (n=55) and Portuguese living in Portugal (n=101). As can be seen in Table 1, the demographics of our group samples are reasonably similar. However, there were sufficient differences that we felt it was prudent to include relevant demographic variables as covariates in our analyses to control for any possible differences in the composition of the groups.

The Chinese data were collected in Guangzhou. Letters introducing the survey were sent to a wide variety of companies and government departments, requesting the highest ranked person or department directors to help us conduct the survey within their organization. The person who was designated to assist with the survey was then contacted and provided with questionnaires. Completed questionnaires were returned by mail directly to the local researchers. Of the 250 surveys distributed, 132 were returned for a response rate of 53%.

The Macao data was collected by sending letters introducing the survey to a wide variety of companies and government departments in Macao, requesting the CEOs or department directors to help us conduct the survey within their organization. The person who was placed in charge of the survey was then contacted and provided with questionnaires. Completed questionnaires were returned by mail directly to the local researchers. A total of 600 surveys were distributed. Of these, 180 usable responses were received, 125 identified as Macao Chinese and 55 identified as Portuguese expatriates, for a response rate of 30%.

The Portugal data were collected from full-time managers and professionals. MBA students collected the data in Lisbon, Coimbra and Vizeu. The questionnaires were distributed to firms where the students were employed. Responses were returned directly to the local researcher. Additionally, to ensure the cultural representativeness, subjects were removed if Portugal was not their place of birth.

### **2. Survey Instrument**

The subjects' views on influence tactics were assessed using the Strategies of Upward Influence [SUI] instrument. The SUI consists of 38 short scenario items that are measured on an 8-point Likert scale. To ascertain attitudes towards influence tactics, subjects were asked to evaluate co-worker acceptability of the 38 items of the instrument (see Appendix). The value 8 indicated that an item was extremely acceptable for co-workers to use as a means of influencing a superior, while the value 1 indicated that an item was extremely unacceptable. These 38 items are then used to develop the six dimensions of the Job Tactics Taxonomy: Good Soldier, Rational Persuasion, Image Management, Personal Networking, Information Control, and Strong-Arm Coercion.

**Table 1**  
Demographic data for the four groups of managers (n=412)

	Portuguese [Portugal] (n=101)	Expatriate Portuguese [Macao] (n=55)	Macanese Chinese [Macao] (n=125)	Mainland Chinese [China] (n=132)
<b>AGE</b>				
Mean years (Std. De.)	34.6 (9.01)	38.9 (8.76)	36.3 (8.80)	35.9 (9.93)
<b>GENDER</b>				
% Male	100%	67.3%	59.2%	61.5%
<b>YEARS WORKED</b>				
Mean Years (Std. De.)	11.7 (9.79)	13.4 (9.67)	13.9 (9.05)	14.7 (10.6)
<b>CURRENT POSITION</b>				
Non-Supervisory	72.8%	37.7%	14.2%	10.8%
First-level Manager	6.4	7.5	35.4	36.2
Middle-level Manager	17.7	37.7	31.9	40.8
Upper-level Manager	3.1	17.1	18.5	12.3
<b>SIZE OF COMPANY</b>				
< 100 employees	17.2%	36.5%	11.3%	47.7%
100-1000 employees	13.3	57.7	75.8	33.3
> 1000 employees	69.5	5.8	12.9	18.9

### 3. Procedure

An English language version of the questionnaire was translated and back-translated into both Portuguese and Chinese. The translator, back-translator and a third person fluent in the languages reconciled differences between the translation and the back-translation. The Macanese subjects were given a choice of responding in either Portuguese or Chinese. Their choice of response language, in conjunction the respondents' birthplace and parents' birthplace assisted us in determining which of our

Macao subjects qualified for the two categories: Portuguese expatriates and Macanese. Only those respondents who were born in Macao were included in the Macanese sample and only those respondents who were born in Portugal, had at least one ancestor born in Portugal, and had worked in Macao for at least five years were included in the Portuguese expatriate sample.

#### **4. Design and Analysis**

We utilized a three-step procedure that incorporated both of the research questions into a single set of analyses. The first step of the analysis was to perform a one-way multivariate analyses of covariance [MANCOVA] with the six Job Tactics dimensions as the dependent measures, the Portugal, China and two Macao sample (expatriate Portuguese managers and Macanese Chinese managers) as the four independent measures, and the demographic factors (age, gender, position in the organization, number of years worked, and company size) as covariates. If this MANCOVA was significant, the second step was to run univariate analyses of covariance [ANCOVAs] for the SUI dimensions using as covariates only the demographics that were found to be significant in the MANCOVA. Likewise, if no covariate made a significant contribution the univariate analyses would be run as ANOVAs. For the univariate analyses found to be significant, the third and final step was to run Duncan multiple comparison tests to identify where the significant differences among the managers from the four subject groups occurred.

### **B. Results**

#### **1. Internal consistency of the SUI**

The Cronbach's alpha measure of internal consistency was used to assess the validity of the six dimensions in each of the four group used as our independent measure. In each of the 24 tests—six dimensions for each of the four groups—the Cronbach alpha exceeded .62, a reasonable level in cross-cultural analyses.

#### **2. Test of the hypotheses**

The findings for the MANCOVA indicated that there was a significant Wilks' lambda effect ( $\lambda=.353$ ,  $df=3, 5, 411$ ,  $p<.001$ ) that explains approximately 65% of the variance, with gender and position being significant as covariates. Since this effect was significant, univariate ANCOVAs, using gender and position as covariates, were calculated to determine the significance level of each of the six Job Tactics dimensions of the SUI. As shown in Table 2, no significant differences were found for Good Soldier or Rational Persuasion. The other four tactics were significantly different at the .05 level or greater. The means, standard deviations, and F-test results of these ANCOVAs are reported in Table 2. The Duncan multiple comparison tests run for each of the four significant Job Tactics dimensions indicated significant differences for all

dimensions, as reported in Table 3. The specific findings for the Duncan tests are elaborated upon in the subsequent Discussion section.

**Table 2**  
Means, standard deviations, and f-test results  
for the four groups of the study on the six job tactics dimensions

Dimensions	Group	Mean	SD	F
Good Soldier	Expatriates	6.72	1.14	2.15
	Macanese	6.63	0.75	
	Portuguese	6.61	0.91	
	Chinese	6.58	0.79	
Rational Persuasion	Chinese	6.72	0.92	1.87
	Portuguese	6.53	0.88	
	Macanese	6.43	0.94	
	Expatriates	6.30	1.06	
Image Management	Macanese	4.86	0.88	3.48**
	Chinese	4.77	1.19	
	Expatriates	4.53	0.90	
	Portuguese	4.46	1.03	
Personal Networking	Chinese	5.22	0.87	2.42*
	Macanese	4.92	0.97	
	Portuguese	4.82	0.83	
	Expatriates	4.81	1.01	
Information Control	Chinese	2.75	1.18	4.20***
	Macanese	2.73	1.08	
	Portuguese	2.34	0.83	
	Expatriates	2.24	1.24	
Strong-Arm Coercion	Chinese	1.77	0.87	2.24*
	Expatriates	1.70	1.20	
	Macanese	1.64	0.95	
	Portuguese	1.49	0.59	

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Table 3**  
Duncan multiple comparison results for the four groups of the study on the job tactics dimensions found to be significant with the analysis of variance tests

Dimensions	Mean	Groups
Image Management	4.46	Portuguese
	4.53	Expatriates
	4.77	Chinese *
	4.86	Macanese *
		Portuguese Expatriates Chinese Macanese
Personal Networking	4.81	Expatriates
	4.82	Portuguese
	4.92	Macanese
	5.22	Chinese * *
		Expatriates Portuguese Macanese Chinese
Information Control	2.24	Expatriates
	2.34	Portuguese
	2.73	Macanese * *
	2.75	Chinese * *
		Expatriates Portuguese Macanese Chinese
Strong-Arm Coercion	1.49	Portuguese
	1.64	Macanese
	1.70	Expatriates
	1.77	Chinese *
		Portuguese Macanese Expatriates Chinese

\* indicates comparisons are significant at the  $p < .05$  level, controlling for experiment-wise error rate.

## V. DISCUSSION

The results of this study allow us to draw some general conclusions about the data. The Wilk's lambda indicates that our taxonomy of the tactics dimensions explains a sizable portion of the variance. Also, a comparison of the means indicates that the mean differences are a contrast in intensity or emphasis, rather than being polar-different responses across the groups. However, in the business world, the *degree of emphasis* for the various tactics can be crucial to the superior-subordinate appreciation and understanding of one another. While a number of significant differences were found across four of the dimensions, none supported convergence of value in Macao. Conversely, we did find varying degrees of support for both divergence and crossvergence, implying no universal support for either. Worthy of note is that these findings, which indicate degrees of crossvergence and divergence, are consistent with previous research on cross-cultural values at both the conceptual and the empirical levels. Conceptual work on Individualism by Triandis and colleagues identified the multidimensionality of this construct, and the need to view the components separately (Triandis et al. 1988). Consequently, Schwartz (1992) developed, within the Schwartz Value Survey [SVS], a measure of the Individualism dimension that is comprised of subdimensions. In a study that used the SVS, Ralston et al. (1997) note that not studying this dimension at the subdimensional level results in the loss of relevant information. Thus, as discussed in the next section on the hypotheses, we will look not only at the differences in tactics preferences across our four groups, but we will also try to draw some dimension-level implications about these tactics in the context of the Convergence-Divergence-Crossvergence framework.

### A. Hypotheses

#### 1. Good Soldier and Rational Persuasion

Since no differences were found for either Good Soldier or Rational Persuasion with the ANCOVA analyses, there was no need to run multiple comparison tests. Additionally, since no differences were found between the Mainland Chinese and the Portugal Portuguese, it might be assumed that these cultures are not significantly different on these dimensions. Therefore, the issue of change (convergence-divergence-crossvergence) becomes a moot one for these dimensions.

#### 2. Information Control

For Information Control, the Mainland Chinese and the Macanese Chinese, who are not significantly different from one another, are significantly different from the Portugal and Expatriate Portuguese, who in turn are not significantly different from one another. Thus, since the two Portuguese groups are different from the two Chinese groups, the Information Control dimension presents a clear-cut case of divergence, because culture, rather than association, determines the outcome.

### **3. Image Management and Personal Networking**

These two dimensions, while slightly different from one another, illustrate the case of divergence with an apparently emerging tendency toward crossvergence. For the Image Management dimension, we see that the two Chinese groups and the Portugal Portuguese managers are significantly different from one another, while the Expatriate group is between and not significantly different from either the Chinese groups or the Portugal Portuguese managers. For the Personal Networking dimension, we see a similar, but slightly different phenomenon. Here, the two Portuguese groups and the Mainland Chinese managers are significantly different from one another, while the Macanese score is between and not significantly different from either the Portuguese groups or the Mainland Chinese managers. In the former case, it is the Expatriate group that appears to be in the process of adapting or crossverging, while in the latter case, it is the Macanese Chinese who are being the more adaptive.

### **4. Strong-Arm Coercion**

In contrast to the Information Control finding, the Strong-Arm Coercion dimension identifies the strongest case for crossvergence. Here, the Mainland Chinese and the Portugal Portuguese are significantly different from one another with both the Macanese Chinese and the Portuguese Expatriates scoring between the Mainland-Portugal extremes, but not significantly different from either. Crossvergence epitomizes the “melting pot” effect by suggesting that the groups under potential influence, in this case the two Macao group, were not significantly different from one another but that each of these groups of managers were less extreme than their own home culture group. The most definitive crossvergence case would have occurred if the two Macao groups had also been significantly different from their home culture groups. In essence, Strong-Arm Coercion, as well as Image Management and Personal Networking, show divergent tendencies with varying degrees of movement toward crossvergence.

Every cross-cultural research endeavor must address the relevance of both its measure and the data (Riordan & Vandenberg 1994). However, when there are “mixed” results, as is the case in this study, these issues are ones that might be worthy of some discussion. Additionally, with a study that deals with respondent-sensitive information about individual influence tactics, there is the added concern of subjects possibly “faking” desirable responses (Anastasi 1982). To address these issues, the SUI items are short scenario items that were cross-culturally developed based on input from U.S., Hong Kong, German, and French managers and professionals (see Ralston et al. 1994; Ralston, Terpstra, Cunniff and Gustafson 1995). The structure of the SUI’s Job Tactics taxonomy was based on dimensions used in previous influence research, with items assigned to the dimensions based on content analysis procedures (unadjusted inter-coder agreement was 92%). Furthermore, the SUI minimizes the threat of socially desirable response bias by asking respondents to describe coworker behaviors rather than their own, to disassociate the respondents from the use of the tactics (Ajzen 1991). Additionally, as previously noted, all twenty-four Cronbach’s alpha scores exceeded

the .62 level. Thus, while no measure is perfect, the development procedure for the SUI and the resultant reliability of its dimensions suggests that it continues to be a reasonable measure to use for the cross-cultural assessment of upward influence tactics preferences. Likewise, the findings show, overall, that the Portuguese-Mainland Chinese upward influence tactics differences of this study are logically consistent with the American-Hong Kong Chinese differences of the Ralston et al. (1994) study, from the perspective of the country cluster framework (Ronen & Shenkar 1985). The reasonable consistency of this study with the Ralston et al. (1994) study provides further support both for the value of the measure used and for the accuracy of our data.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

One of the challenges facing those who work in multicultural settings is the ability to recognize and adjust to the consequence stemming from the absence of a relatively uniform set of values and behaviors. This is particularly important in the context of strategies for gaining upward influence in organizations. Those who fail to recognize the potential for divergent behavior may find the action of their superiors and subordinates who may come from different cultures to be confusing, and perhaps even frightening. The result may be failure—either ineffectiveness in the position, the loss of the position, or both. Therefore, to work effectively in a culturally mixed environment, it is necessary to understand the forces that motivate individuals from other cultures as well as the tactics that they use to attain their goals within the organization.

This study of upward influence has shown that while there are substantial cross-cultural similarities in terms of relative preferences for various upward influence tactics, there are also some significant differences. The rankings of each group in order of acceptability by the six Job Tactics dimensions suggest that the relative acceptability of certain influence tactics may be universal and that managers, in general, seem to prefer rational and soft upward influence tactics over hard or coercive ones. Despite these similarities, there are also some significant differences that allow us to provide more information that contributes to the building of the CDC theoretical foundation. Neither centuries of cultural exposure, on the part of the Macanese, nor years of personal exposure, for the Expatriates, appear to have done much to change the values and behaviors of the managers in Macao from those of the home culture. Convergence is non-existent in this study. Divergence and crossvergence are the two supported theories, with divergence appearing to be the stronger tendency of the two.

What we have found we believe should be an interesting building block for future work. This study helps to confirm what Ralston et al. note. Cross-culturally, influence tactics of managers change to different degrees and/or at different rates of change. This, of course, raises the question: *why?* We have seen similar phenomena occur in the work values research. Thus, it appears that not only values, but also their resultant behaviors—in this case upward influence—change at differing rates of speed and ultimately to differing degrees. We believe that understanding why these differences occur would help to peel away the next layer of ambiguity in understanding the across-culture differences in values and behaviors.

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**APPENDIX**Upward influence tactics instrument items <sup>1</sup>

1. Try to increase their credibility by obtaining a diploma or advanced degree, such as an MBA.
2. Spread rumors about someone or something that stands in the way of their advancement.
3. Volunteer for undesirable tasks to make themselves appreciated by the superiors.
4. Hire a criminal to seriously injure a competitor for a promotion.
5. Try to influence the boss to make a bad decision, if that decision would help them to get ahead.
6. Learn the likes and dislikes of important people in the organization in order to avoid offending these people.
7. Use detrimental information to blackmail a person who is in a position to help them get ahead in the organization.
8. Become well known within the organization by volunteering for high profile projects.
9. Support the views of important people in the organization, even when they do not agree with these views.
10. Use their network of friends to discredit a person competing with them for a possible promotion.
11. Withhold information to make someone else look bad.
12. Identify and work for an influential superior who could help them get advancement.
13. Attempt to act in a manner that they believe will result in others admiring them.
14. Take credit for a good job that was done by their subordinates.
15. Use their technical expertise to make the superior dependent upon them.
16. Demonstrate the ability to get the job done.
17. Threaten to quit the company if their demands are not met.
18. Put a listening device, such as a tape recorder, in the office of a competitor for a promotion to get information about this person.
19. Threaten to give valuable company information to someone outside the organization if their demands are not met.
20. Help subordinates to develop their skills so that the subordinates, in turn, will be in a position to help them attain their objectives.
21. Offer sexual favors to a superior.
22. Blame another for their own mistakes.
23. Dress the way successful business people dress.
24. Try to create a situation where a competitor for a promotion might be caught using illegal drugs or engaging in some other illegal activity.
25. Try to get the answers to a job promotion examination to insure that they would score higher than the others taking the exam.
26. Put false information on a job resume to make themselves look better than they really are.

27. Behave in a manner that is seen as appropriate in the company.
28. Develop an in-depth knowledge of the work assignments.
29. Try to develop contacts who might be able to provide detrimental information about one of their competitors for a promotion.
30. Ask to be given the responsibility for an important project.
31. Make sure that the important people in the organization hear of their accomplishments.
32. Not bypass the superior and go to someone at a higher level in the organizational chain of command for fear of alienating the superior.
33. Steal secret corporate documents and given them to another company in return for a better job at the other company.
34. Maintaining good working relationships with other employees, even if they dislike these other employees.
35. Seek to build a relationship with senior person who could serve as a mentor.
36. Make anonymous, threatening phone calls to psychologically stress a competitor for a promotion.
37. Work overtime, if necessary, to get the job done.
38. Quit the company to take a better job with a new company.

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<sup>1</sup>Each item is rated from 1 (Extremely Unacceptable) to 8 (Extremely Acceptable)