

Culture and Employees' Voice : Does Culture Matter?

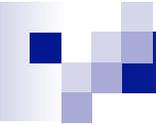
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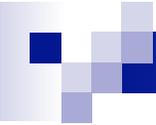
Michigan State University

June 18, 2010



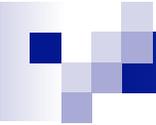
Research Purpose

- To examine the impact of cultural differences on employees' voice behavior as a response to dissatisfactory situation at work.
- If culture makes a difference in the application of existing voice related model in the non-western cultural setting to elaborate the characteristics of employees' response to their dissatisfactory situation at work?



Background

- How employees respond to their dissatisfaction at work?
- Employee voice literature since Hirschman (1980)'s exit-voice model
- Very little studies in voice literature examining how culture affects employees' responses to dissatisfaction
- Lee and Jablin (1992), Price, et. al. (2001), and Botero and Van Dyne (2009)
- Limitations
 - Lack of theoretical rationale
 - Student samples
 - Simply relying on Hofstede's culture dimension score



Boundary Conditions

- Only with some culture example: Confucianism, especially in Korea
- Natives grown and working in their original culture
- Focused on country-level culture: not organizational or industrial level culture
- Voice as response to dissatisfactory situation at work: not voice as a type of OCB

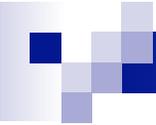
Theoretical Framework

- Kozan (1997)'s the three culture models of conflict management
- Why from Conflict MGT?

	Conflict MGT	Response to dissatisfaction
Topic	About how people cognate and behave at work : Especially to what unfavorable or negative situation that they want to improve or change	
Features	Sharing three inherent characteristics of voice behaviors (Liu et. al, 2010) : discretionary, challenge-oriented, and potential risky	
Target	Toward individual, group, or org	
In reality	Can be overlapped in real work situation : ex) supervisor's unfair treatment	
Subject	By individual, group, or org	By individual

■ Kozan (1997)'s three models

	Harmony model	Confrontational model	Regulative model
Values	Interdependence and harmony	Fair play, mutual concessions, problem-solving approach	Universalistic principles and rules with bureaucratic arrangement
Emotions	Suppression of negative emotions	Expression of negative emotions	Expression of negative emotions
Behaviors	Avoidance and accommodation	Confrontation and compromise	Avoidance or forcing
Outcome criteria	Face-saving concern	Due process concerns	Due process concerns
Third parties	Frequent, intrusive, informal	Infrequent, planned, non-intrusive	Formal appeal systems, adjective
Third-party emphasis	Harmony, shame	Reason, fairness (equity)	Reason, general principles (equality)
Example	Asian countries	Individualistic, English-speaking countries	Continental European countries



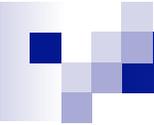
Theoretical Framework

■ Confucianism

- : Originally a philosophy of human nature that regards "proper" human relationships as the basis of society
- : Urges to adapt the collectivity, to control their own emotions, to avoid confusion, competition and conflict, and to maintain inner harmony (Kirkbride et. al., 1991)

■ Which values in Confucian culture?

- : Transformed into work place setting (Kirkbride et. al., 1991, Friedman et. al., 2006, Moore, 1967, Tse, et. al., 1988)
- : **Harmony and collectivism, Conflict-avoiding, Face-saving**



Harmony Model

Suppression of
negative emotions
Avoidance and
accommodation
Face-saving
Harmony, shame



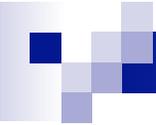
Confucianism

Harmony
Collectivism
Conflict-avoiding
Face-saving



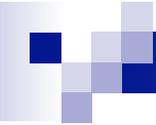
Employees response to dissatisfaction at work

Exit
Voice
Neglect
Loyalty



Propositions

- Proposition 1: As a response to dissatisfaction at work, employees in the Confucian culture will be more likely to show harmony style of response, which is characterized as **high value of harmony, suppression of negative emotions, conflict avoiding and accommodating behaviors, emphasizing face-saving concern.**
- Proposition 2: In the Confucian culture, some predictors of employees' response to dissatisfaction will not have as significant relationship with their choice, was supported in the previous empirical study with the sample of the Western, mostly U.S. sample: for instance, despite of high job dissatisfaction will not lead high voice behaviors that are supported in the previous empirical study with the sample of the Western.



Propositions

- Proposition 3: As far as voice behavior is concerned, employees in the Confucian culture will have different likelihood of certain type of voice behaviors to that in the U.S.: for instance, compared to the U.S. employees, Korean employees will be less likely to voice directly to supervisors which was shown most likely in the U.S. sample.