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MEASURING BUSINESS RELATED ETHICALITY GLOBALLY: CULTURAL EMIC OR ETIC?

Mary Margaret Rogers, University of New Mexico

Robert A. Peterson, University of Texas, Austin

Gerald Albaum, University of New Mexico

ABSTRACT

When conducting or evaluating cross-cultural/cross-national research studies a critical question must be asked about the measurements: are they culturally an emic or etic? That is, is the research methodology culturally bound or culture free? The research described in this paper shows how etic and emic properties may be explored by using the Ethicality Scale developed by Albaum and Peterson (2006) and demonstrates that it is at best an imposed etic scale. In doing so, this research confirms Adler's (1991) view that similarity across cultures should be proven rather than assumed. It also raises questions about the frequent assumption of implied or imposed etic validity in cross-cultural/cross-national research.

JEL: M14, M16, M30

KEYWORDS: Equivalency, Ethics, Ethicality Scale, Emic vs. Etic, Cross-cultural Research

INTRODUCTION

Cross-cultural/cross national studies are increasing in number and viewed as providing valuable insight for researchers, classroom teaching, and business practice; yet serious concerns about methodology exist that must be overcome if the studies are to make useful contributions (Hult et al., 2008). Watkins (2010) notes that many researchers make assumptions that "the values measured are 'universal,' exhaustive and applicable to every culture" (p. 702) and often assume validity without establishing it. Thus, when interpreting the results of cross-cultural/cross-national research it is necessary to carefully consider if the measurements are emic or etic.

Among the many issues in cross-cultural/cross-national research (Adler, 1983; Chan & Rossiter, 2003; Sekaran, 1983), perhaps the most important is that of data equivalence (J.W. Berry, 1980; Craig & Douglas, 2000; Kumar, 2000; Mullen, 1995; Salzberger, Sinkovics, & Schlegelmilch, 1999). Studies reviewing international business literature, including international studies in general marketing and buyer behavior have determined that many cross cultural studies do not examine equivalence of data (He, Merz, & Alden, 2008; Hult, et al., 2008; Watkins, 2010). Explanations given for the lack of data equivalence measurement were: data not viewed as conducive to data equivalence measurements; analysis not viewed as necessary; and researchers not familiar with the methodology (He, et al., 2008). Despite numerous calls for improved analysis of data equivalence measures, Hult, et al. (2008) show no statistically significant improvement in data equivalence analysis from 1995-2005, and Watkins (2010) reports such tests are not often presented. Of the researchers in the He, et al. sample not reporting data equivalence measures, 72% indicate that the need for such analysis was not mentioned by either reviewers or editors.

The study reported here involves assessing the validity of the Ethicality Scale, a measurement scale of business-related ethicality developed in the United States by Albaum and Peterson (2006), by measuring business ethics-related attitudes of respondents in 13 countries. The purpose of this assessment is to demonstrate how to test for etic and emic properties by using measures of data equivalence. To do so, the analysis extends guidelines suggested by Hult, et al. (2008) for assessing data equivalence. For the sake of simplicity, the terms "culture" and "nation" are used interchangeably to define the domain of concern.

EMBEDDEDNESS: THE NEXUS OF LEARNED NEEDS, CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, AND INFORMAL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR OTHERS

M. Todd Royle, Valdosta State University

ABSTRACT

This research examines the relationship between the dimensions of McClelland's Theory of needs (i.e., needs for power, achievement, and affiliation), conscientiousness, embeddedness, and informal accountability for others. This study's aim is to enhance organizational research by demonstrating the mediating effects of embeddedness, on the relationship between conscientiousness, learned needs, and informal accountability for others. The research tests hypotheses using data collected from 187 working adults in the Southeastern United States. Findings indicated that embeddedness mediates, at least in part, the relationship between conscientiousness, achievement, power and affiliation needs and informal accountability for others. The paper concludes with a discussion of managerial implications, the study's relevant strengths, limitations and directions for future research.

JEL: M12, M14

KEYWORDS: Theory of Needs, Personality, Embeddedness, Informal Accountability for Others

INTRODUCTION

Even a casual viewer of news broadcasts notices that high profile lapses of accountability abound. Most are aware of the things like the global crisis in real estate markets and the massive frauds perpetrated by former NASDAQ chief Bernard Madoff. Even the halls of well-respected academic institutions are not above reproach (e.g., the criminal charges and institutional penalties brought to bear on Penn State for a lack of reporting and accountability in its football program). Both in the public eye and among organizational scholars, there is growing concern about a perceived lack of accountability.

Research indicated that accountability is fundamental to both personal and organizational life (Tetlock, 1985, 1992). As such, it is also instrumental in the sustaining of social systems. Within organizations, lapses in accountability threaten firms' established and legitimate systems of checks and balances. Furthermore it also adversely affects performance (Yarnold, Muesur, & Lyons, 1988; Enzele & Anderson, 1993). Accountability is not necessarily an easily observable formal system or reporting.

Additionally, it sometimes forces individuals to feel pulled in different directions by competing constituencies (Cummings & Anton, 1990). Thus, accountability is both an objective and subjective condition and the level thereof is determined both by individuals and others (IAFO) (Hall, Royle, Brymer, Perrewé, Ferris, & Hochwarter, 2006). A growing body of research (e.g., Royle, Fox, & Hochwarter, 2009; Royle & Fox, 2011; Royle & Hall, 2012) contends that individuals believe they are answerable for the behaviors of others at work, even if they are not formal subordinates. This research seeks to examine further which conditions encourage informal accountability for others. In order to augment the literature, this work proposes a model that extends antecedent variables and mediating circumstances which promote IAFO. The hypothesized model of informal accountability for others in this work addresses these concerns. The model presented here includes McClelland's (1961) socially learned needs variables (i.e., needs for power, achievement, and affiliation), as well as conscientiousness (a personality dimension) as predictors of embeddedness. Previously, Royle and Hall (2012) found that learned needs promoted feelings of individual accountability and subsequently informal accountability for others

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE DETERMINANTS OF SAFETY-NET HOSPITAL FAILURES

Devin Alan Daugherty, University of Phoenix
Ernesto Escobedo, Walden University

ABSTRACT

Several safety-net hospitals have closed in the United States, but the scholarly literature does not adequately explain why. This study examines the relationship between the operational status (open or closed) of safety-net hospitals and unemployment, median household income, gross profit margin, efficiency ratio, operating margin, excess margin, and salary and benefit expenses per full-time equivalent. Study data were collected and analyzed by means of a logistic regression analysis. A significant relationship between hospital operational status and unemployment, operating margin, and salary and benefit expenses per full-time equivalent was indicated in this study. A safety-net hospital closure model was developed that showed that unemployment, operating margin, and salary and benefit expenses per full-time equivalent had a direct impact on hospital closures. Safety-net hospitals that experience upward trends in the unemployment rate in the areas they serve and have a poor operating margin and high salary and benefit expenses that make them more likely to close. This study provides supporting data to hospital administrators so decisions can be made to avoid future safety-net hospital closures. Information from this research can also provide legislators information and data as to why safety-net hospitals close and used as a tool for health care reform.

JEL: I14, I18, I28, I38

KEYWORDS: Charity Care, County Hospitals, Finance Ratios, Indigent, Indigent Health Care, Medically Indigent, Safety-net Hospital, Uncompensated Care, Underinsured, Undocumented Alien Health Care, Unemployment, and Uninsured

INTRODUCTION

There has been an evolution in health care in the United States. Safety-net hospitals have become the primary provider of care to the uninsured population (Hadley & Cunningham, 2004). For a variety of reasons, many safety-net hospitals have shut down and many have experienced challenges in a variety of ways (Cousineau & Tranquada, 2007). Bazzoli, Lindrooth, Kang, and Hasnain-Wynia (2006) stated that safety-net hospitals had a history of providing charity and discounted care to the uninsured population. DeLia (2006) reported that uninsured patients of all ages depend on uncompensated care from safety-net hospitals. As an indicator of uninsured patients, Weissman (2005) reported that hospitals in the United States spent \$25 billion on uncompensated care (care to the uninsured) in 2005. The amount of the uncompensated care represents the commitment safety-net hospitals have for caring for the uninsured and population who lack access to health care. In the process of dealing with socioeconomic changes and a rise in the number of uninsured patients, hospital administrators have made decisions to meet the current demands of their institution. In making these decisions, they were faced with an increased uninsured population and changes in socioeconomic factors.

A review of the scholarly literature reveals there is a gap in the literature and perhaps a lack of understanding among hospital administrators and other decision-makers about the factors that influence the closure of safety-net hospitals. There is a lack of knowledge about which factors are common with safety-net hospital closures. Two gaps exist in the scholarly research of safety-net hospitals. The first gap is the effect of increased uninsured patients on safety-net hospitals. The second gap is the effect of

AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF SUB DIMENSIONS OF HIGH PERFORMANCE WORK SYSTEMS THAT PREDICT ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION

Victor Oladapo, Webster University, USA
Godwin Onyeaso, Shorter University, USA

ABSTRACT

Driven by calls for empirical research, this paper aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the specific sub-dimensions of high performance work systems (HPWS) that drive organizational innovation. To this end, data were gathered from a sample of 240 motel establishments in the USA. In sum, the paper found empirical evidence indicating that only two out of three sub-dimensions of HPWS predicted organizational innovation. Specifically, these two sub-dimensions relate to “Administrative HR” practices and “Merit-Based HR Evaluation” sub-dimensions. Finally, the academic and managerial significance of the study’s outcome are presented.

JEL: MOO, M1, M2

KEYWORD: Hierarchical regression, Organizational innovation, High performance work systems

INTRODUCTION

It is well documented that there is a positive link between a firm’s human resource practices subsumed under the rubrics of high performance work system (HPWS) practices, and various organizational outcomes (Huselid, 1995; Warech & Tracey, 2004) including organizational innovation (Messersmith & Guthrie, 2010; Carldon, Upton & Seaman, 2006; Soutaris, 2002; Hostager et al., 1998), productivity (MacDuffie, 1995; Guthrie, 2001), employee turnover (Way, 2002; Guthrie, 2001; Arthur, 1995), and financial performance (Huselid, 1995; Lee & Miller, 1995).

With specific focus on organizational innovation, evidently managers (Moosa & Panurach, 2008) and academics (Messersmith & Guthrie, 2010) are passionately interested in the predictors of organizational innovation, and that is why research employs various model specification of high performance work systems to predict organizational innovation (Messersmith & Guthrie, 2010; Guthrie, 2001). Evidently, even though previous research has sharpened scholarly understanding of the impact of high performance work system (HPWS) on organizational innovation (OI), research gaps still remain especially in the hospitality industry where scholars attest to serious research gaps on hospitality innovation (Rogers, 2007; Chan et al., 1998). For example, Chang, Gong and Shum (2011: 813) observed that “although there is some support for the importance of HRM in promoting hospitality innovation, as mentioned above, rigorous and systematic investigation is lacking.” In addition, they stated that “...little empirical research has been conducted of the effects of HRM practices on hospitality innovation.” Evidently, this is a critical research void.

However, the present study focuses on yet another specific research gap in the extant literature related to the observation that previous research has assumed that all the sub-dimensions of the HPWS construct can predict organizational outcomes (Martin-Tapia, Aragon-Correa & Guthrie, 2009; Messersmith & Guthrie, 2010). Evidently, because this assumption is questionable (Werner, 2011), it has become a critical research gap to be filled (Werner, 2011); namely: researchers should empirically investigate the

TIME REQUIRED TO BREAK-EVEN FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES: EVIDENCE FROM KENYA

Charles M. Rambo, University of Nairobi, Kenya

ABSTRACT

The past two decades have seen exponential growth in the number of small and medium enterprises in Sub-Saharan Africa; however, about two-thirds of such enterprises often fail to take off, resulting to negative economic impacts at the micro and macro-levels. However, documentation of the subject remains limited, especially in Kenya. This study involved 146 enterprises that had been operational for between 1 and 5 years. Inclusion criteria included availability of consistent financial records as well as willingness to share such information. The findings showed that the duration taken to break-even ranged between 3 and 40 months. The level of training in financial management was the most important covariate, explaining up to 12.1% of variation in the duration taken to break-even. Ever training in financial management accounted for 10.2%, marketing (9.7%); educational attainment (8.6%), capititation-funding level (7.5%) and firm size (6.8%). The study recommends the need for universal entrepreneurship training programs, integration of entrepreneurship training in national plans, a multisectoral approach to entrepreneurship training, linkages between the private sector, academia and development partners as well as support centres at the county level to facilitate the development of such enterprises.

JEL: O16

KEYWORDS: Small and Medium Enterprises, Break-Even Analysis, Break-Even Point, Urban Slums

INTRODUCTION

Starting a new business is a risky undertaking that requires proper preparation to address challenges such as competition, resource constraints, staffing, staff development and management, product development, sales management and most importantly, financial resource management (Deakins, Logan & Steele, 2001; Rogoff, Lee & Suh, 2004; Wanjohi, 2008). Although the success of business ventures can be measured using various indicators, the most important is the achievement of financial stability (Deakins et al., 2001). Break-even analysis is one of the key tools available for planning and managing a firm's financial performance, particularly during the initial years of operation. As noted by LeFever (1998), break-even analysis is a useful tool for planning the success of young business ventures as well as new products and services. It facilitates budgeting and long-range planning of cash inflows and outflows. Break-even analysis is logically appealing and readily applicable to business firms of all sizes. Once constructed, break-even charts provide the management with a convenient guide for judging operational performance, adjusting pricing levels or controlling cost components (Deakins et al., 2001; Rothberg, 2012).

The break-even point is achievable when the total costs of production or services equals the total revenue received from sales. It is a point where a business neither makes profits nor incurs losses (Ndaliman & Bala, 2007; Rothberg, 2012). For new business ventures or new products launched in the market, achieving the break-even point (BEP) is a great milestone towards success. The duration taken to achieve the BEP is an indication of the management's capacity to plan and manage the inflow and outflow of financial resources. It also reflects a firm's success in marketing its products or services, as well as supportiveness of the business environment (Rothberg, 2012).

RELATIONSHIP MARKETING AND DESTINATION LOYALTY: EVIDENCE FROM PENANG, MALAYSIA

Fatemeh Mostafavi Shirazi, Universiti Sains Malaysia
Ahmad Puad Mat Som, Universiti Sains Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Relationship marketing is a strategy to obtain a competitive advantage in tourism destinations. The term is defined as marketing activities for creating and maintaining customer loyalty. Despite the fact that creating customer loyalty is the main objective of relationship marketing, there is little agreement on which antecedents could be used to achieve it. This is particularly true in the competitive market of tourist destinations. This study attempts to examine the level of international tourists' satisfaction with basic elements of destination (attraction, amenities, accessibility, image, price, people working in tourism), as well as the relationship between 'overall satisfaction' and destination loyalty in terms of revisit intention and recommendation. The results support the existing relationships between overall satisfaction and destination loyalty. We find that overall satisfaction is significant for revisit intention and recommendation. Finally, the paper discusses managerial implications as well as potential for further research in light of the findings.

JEL: M30

KEYWORDS: Relationship Marketing, Satisfaction, Basic Elements, Destination Loyalty

INTRODUCTION

Economic and technological changes as well as services sector growth provide a ground for strong and considerable competitive market in the tourism industry. Tourism destinations operate in competitive markets. Customers (tourists) have many choices. Most people like to try a new place. Due to the increased competition between destinations, the major way to grow market share is to build long-term relationships and create loyal tourists. It is argued that "with increasing global competition owing to newly-emerging destinations and tourists becoming more exacting in their choice and desire for a variety of options, relationship marketing arguably offers considerable potential to achieve competitive advantage" (Fyall *et al.* 2003:645). In the words of Flambard-Ruaud (2005), globalization of markets, competitive pressure, brand multiplication and, above all, changing life styles and consumer behaviors have forced companies to develop strategies to keep their clients, create consumer loyalty programs and thus carry out relationship marketing.

Kotler *et al.* (1999) make the point that customer satisfaction is the core issue in relationship marketing and a requisite for loyalty. Several scholars note that tourist satisfaction is a crucial factor to generate destination loyalty (e.g. Oh & Mount, 1998; Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Chi & Qu, 2008; Meng *et al.*, 2008), although a few studies assert that satisfied tourists may not return to the same destination. Therefore, it is imperative to evaluate tourist satisfaction to achieve a definite and significant competitive advantage. The aims of this study are to assess international tourist satisfaction with basic elements in Penang as well as its relationship with loyalty in terms of revisit intention and recommendation. The study also identifies significant factors that contribute to international tourist satisfaction and subsequently destination loyalty.

Penang is located in the northern region of Peninsular Malaysia. It is approximately 1,030 square kilometers, consisting of two separate areas, the Penang Island and Seberang Perai in the mainland with 1,773,442 inhabitants in 2010. On 7 July 2008, George Town, the historic capital of Penang, was

PREDICTORS AND OUTCOMES OF SPORT EVENT EXPERIENTIAL VALUE: INSIGHTS FROM FORMULA ONE PETRONAS MALAYSIA GRAND PRIX

Rosidah Musa, Faculty of Business Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia
Rezian-na Muhammad Kassim, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Value creation for customers in the form of experiences has been gaining attention remarkably. Great customer experiences could fuel surprising “wow” moments of truth, or perhaps magic moment. In fact, customer experience is destined to act as the tool for differentiation strategy. Quality products and services are no longer sufficient for business sustainability, for customers need to bestow upon with satisfactory experiences that they valued. Research stream on experiential value is sparse; hence, this paper aims to fill the void by conducting an empirical investigation on predictors of sport event experiential value and in turn, assessing its impacts on total experience and loyalty. Distribution of the survey instrument at the vicinity of the Formula 1 Sepang International Circuit resulted in 225 usable feedbacks. Structural equation modeling procedure was employed to test the hypothesized linkages in the proposed research model. Evidence established that all the hypothesized linkages were supported. A discussion of the implications for future research directions and sports events organizers were deliberated.

JEL: MO, M3, M30, M31

KEYWORDS: Experiential value, Formula 1, Involvement, Sport Orientation

INTRODUCTION

In today's commoditized economy, marketers realized that products, prices, people and technology are becomingly similar. A potentially significant alternative strategy that could attract consumers' attention must go beyond a product's functional features, benefits and quality and offer instead, a customer experience. It is predicted that customer experience is the next competitive battleground for business success and unsurprisingly, it has been described as the next business tsunami (Colin and Ivens, 2005). Indeed, it has not only emerged as one of the hottest topics amongst top management but is also becoming an uppermost-prioritized research area in accordance with the customer-orientation philosophy (Mascarenhas, Kesavan and Bernacchi, 2006). Although Pine and Gilmore first introduced the concept in 1998, customer experience has eventually played a prime role in determining the winners and losers in years to come. However, identifying factors that drive the experience that customer valued most remains today's key challenging and critical management issues. Colin and Ivens (2005) postulate that customer experience comprises of two elements: physical and emotional aspects and research have unveiled that emotions are the one often being disregarded in the business practices. Recent study has found that these emotions are one of the key differentiators to evoke customers' attention (Mascarenhas et al., 2006).

Regardless of the fact that customers' experience plays a critical role in many contemporary discussions among business practitioners and academics scholar, there has been conspicuously few empirical investigations on this emerging concept with notably exception of the seminal work by Mathwick et al., (2006). Against this backdrop, this paper attempts to fill this void with an empirical examination on the core predictors of Sport Event Experiential Value (hereafter called SEEV) and its impacts on total experience and in turn spectators' loyalty. In order to accomplish this objective, valid and reliable

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Contact Information

Mercedes Jalbert, Executive Editor
The IBFR
P.O. Box 4908
Hilo, HI 96720
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