The Motivation Level of Japanese Hotel Managers 
and 
the Effects of Variables 
on Their Levels of Managerial Motivation 

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I. INTRODUCTION 

The term motivation can be defined as the willingness to exert high levels of effort toward organizational goals, conditioned by the effort’s ability to satisfy some individual need (Robbins, 1993). 

In the workplace, motivation goes hand-in-hand with productivity. Highly motivated people usually work hard and do superior work (Miller, Porter, & Drummond, 1992). Motivation to manage or the will to manage as Marvin Bower of McKinsey & Company has called it (Bower, 1966), is a major ingredient in managerial performance: without it, managers will not succeed in any business. 

Unfortunately, there has been evidence of a reduction in productivity rate increases and competitiveness in the United States during the 1980s and a sharp decline in managerial motivation among potential managers as early as the late 1960s (Miner, 1974). This decline has continued and now, exerts a substantial impact on current managers. It is hypothesized that managerial motivation should be at a lower level in the United States than in other countries of the world which have higher productivity levels (Miner, Ebrahimi, & Wachtel, 1989). 

The hotel business is people-intensive, with long and unusual work hours. These factors have a negative impact on managerial motivation (Lundberg, 1984). A high level of motivation to perform effectively is, therefore, desirable not only from an organizational standpoint but also desirable because of the direct visual impact on the clients and their perception of quality service (Brymer, 1984).
Motivation in Japan

In Tokyo, the capital, which has become one of the world’s biggest metropolitan areas, and in other major Japanese cities, there are many huge (thousand-room capacity), luxurious, and highly sophisticated hotels. Mainly because of their hospitality, hotels in Japan are highly valued even by guests visiting from Western countries. For example, one of Japan’s leading hotels, the Hotel Okura Tokyo, received the second prize in the world in 1981 and 1983 according to the “Institutional Investor” (published in the United States. Ranking: World’s Best Hotels). Where does this Japanese hospitality come from? How is Japanese motivation affected by Japanese culture? In this study, the researcher has attempted to investigate the motivation levels of Japanese hotel managers working in Japan. The researcher has also attempted to examine the underlying cultural definition of managerial motivation.

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A theory which aids in the identification of effective and successful managers is John B. Miner’s hierarchic role-motivation theory, which is a limited domain content theory of motivation. The theory has been operationalized in the Miner Sentence Completion Scale (Form-H). This theory can provide the managerial selection assistance necessary to avoid the effects of a severe managerial talent shortage, including the hotel industry.

Miner’s theory suggests that there are role prescriptions which are requirements that “appear again and again in association with a great variety of managerial positions in organizations” (Miner, 1978, p.740). These role prescriptions are general and apply across organizations. A person’s feelings regarding these role prescriptions (or role requirements) depend on the emotional experiences they anticipate with regard to the requirements. Whether they anticipate negative or positive emotional experiences will influence managerial behavior.
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If the anticipated experiences are positive, they will be more likely to fulfill the roles expected of effective managers and should be successful performers according to organizational performance criteria in hierarchic organizations (Miner, 1965b). Miner defines six role requirements for success in bureaucratic organizations along with six motives an effective and successful manager should have (Miner, 1965a).

According to Miner, Ebrahimi, and Wachtel (1989), requirements become motives which successful managers will possess. These motives include:

1. A favorable attitude toward authority
2. A desire to compete
3. A desire to exercise power
4. A desire to assert oneself
5. A desire to stand out and be different
6. A desire to carry out routine administrative tasks

The Miner Sentence Completion Scale (MSCS) is a projective instrument developed by Miner in 1957 and used extensively for nearly five decades of theoretical research. Wayne F. Cascio commented in 1978 on MSCS research results: In three independent predictive studies involving no possibility of criterion contamination, Miner’s hypotheses were supported (Miner, 1965a).

Cross-Cultural Research

The most widely cited work on culture developed for the study of organizations is that of Geert Hofstede (1980a, 1980b, 1984). The data he used for the empirical part of the research were extracted from an existing bank of paper-and-pencil survey results. The survey was collected within subsidiaries of one large multinational business organization in 40 countries and covered among others many questions about values. The survey was held twice, around 1968 and around 1972, producing a total of more than 116,000 questionnaires. Hofstede found significant differences in the behavior of culturally diverse employees working within the same multinational firm.
The present study assumes that hierarchic organizations are similar across cultures and therefore the applications of the MSCS in other cultures are within the domain of Miner's hierarchic role-motivation theory. The researcher also presumes differences in levels of managerial motivation and therefore in managerial behavior across cultures, and assumes that culture will explain the largest part of variance in levels of managerial motivation. Therefore, the study is in accordance with the findings of Geert Hofstede and Andre Laurent (1981, 1983, 1986).

**Cross-Cultural Research and Role-Motivation Theory**

Although research on Miner's role-motivation theory has been conducted in the United States for years, it has not been effectively researched in the cross-cultural context. Ebrahimi (1984) set the stage for appropriate studies when he measured the effects of cultural, demographic, and construct variables on motivation of managers from several countries.

This study sought to extend the cross-cultural research regarding Miner's hierarchic role-motivation theory by following Ebrahimi's suggestions for further research. The present study therefore sought to measure specifically the managerial motivation of hotel managers in their own culture, Japan. It also applied a refined version of Ebrahimi's cultural model, which was based on the results of his study.

**Literature Regarding Japan**

As mentioned earlier, a comprehensive analysis of cultural diversity has been done by Geert Hofstede, who refers extensively to Japanese culture. In this section his four dimensions of national culture are introduced first; Japanese cultural characteristics are then described. Hofstede found that managers and employees vary on four dimensions of national culture: (1) individualism versus collectivism; (2) power distance; (3) uncertainty avoidance; and (4) masculinity versus femininity.

**Individualism versus collectivism.** Individualism refers to the loosely knit social framework in which people are supposed to focus primarily on their own
interests and those of their immediate families. Its opposite is collectivism, which is characterized by a tight social framework in which people expect others in groups to which they belong (such as an organization) to look after them and protect them when they are in trouble.

Hofstede found that the degree of individualism in a country is closely related to that country’s wealth. Interestingly, while Japan is regarded as a rich country, Hofstede found it to be collectivist.

**Power Distance.** Hofstede used the term “power distance” as a measure of the extent to which a society accepts the fact that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally. A high-power-distance society accepts wide differences in power in organizations. Employees show a great deal of respect for those in authority. Titles, rank, and status carry considerable weight. When negotiating in high-power-distance countries, companies find it helpful to send representatives whose titles are at least as important as those with whom they are bargaining.

Hofstede found Japan to be moderate or slightly above average. As a matter of fact, a person’s rank and position in his or her company is very important in Japan. The exchange of business cards, which always state a person’s current title, is a widely followed custom with unique importance in Japanese business culture.

**Uncertainty Avoidance.** We live in a world of uncertainty. Societies respond to this uncertainty in different ways. People in some societies are more or less comfortable with risks. Hofstede describes such societies as having low uncertainty avoidance—that is, people feel relatively secure.

A society high in uncertainty avoidance is characterized by a high level of anxiety, which manifests itself in nervousness, stress, and aggressiveness. Japan is included in this category. Not surprisingly, in organizations in countries with high uncertainty avoidance, employees demonstrate relatively low job mobility and lifetime employment is a widely practiced policy (Robbins, 1993). In fact, in Japanese daily life, being different from others is not widely accepted.

**Masculinity versus Femininity.** The duality of the sexes is a fundamental
fact with which different societies cope in different ways; the issue is whether the biological differences between the sexes should or should not have implications for their roles in social activities. The predominant socialization pattern is for men to be more assertive and for women to be more nurturing.

Countries with higher MAS values also show greater differences in values between men and women in the same jobs. The list of countries in order of Masculinity Index shows Japan at the top (Hofstede, 1984).

Hofstede focuses more on Japanese culture. The core of the Japanese enterprise is the permanent worker group: workers who, for all practical purposes, are tenured and aspire to lifelong employment. According to Hofstede, the American-type manager is absent in Japan.

Hofstede goes on to say that American theories of leadership are ill-suited to the Japanese group-controlled situation. During the past three decades, the Japanese have developed the "PM" theory of leadership; P stands for performance, M for maintenance. The latter is less a concern for individual employees than for maintaining social stability (Hofstede, 1993).

III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Research Questions and Statement of Null-Hypotheses

This study sought to determine the levels of motivation to manage in Japanese hotel managers. The following questions were addressed:

(1) With reference to motivation to manage, are Japanese hotel managers working in Japan significantly highly motivated?

(2) Are there certain demographic and cultural background factors related to motivation to manage as measured by the MSCS for Japanese?

To restate these questions in scientific terms for statistical treatments, the following hypotheses were formulated:

(H1) The level of managerial motivation of Japanese hotel managers working in Japan is not significantly high, as measured by the
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MSCS Form-H.

(H2) There is no difference between those who have high levels of motivation to manage and those with low levels of motivation to manage with respect to demographic and cultural factors, as measured by the MSCS Form-H and CCBQ II.

SAMPLES

The focal population in the study was Japanese hotel managers working in Japan. A stratified random sample of hotels from Japan was obtained in the metropolitan area of Tokyo. The selected sample hotels are all large and well-known. Several hotel managers in each hotel were selected as respondents for the study’s purposes. The targeted number of hotel managers’ samples was one hundred. In all, one hundred Japanese managers responded.

MEASUREMENT METHOD

The data for this study were collected by two questionnaires, which were administered to each subject. The questionnaires used for this study were the Miner Sentence Completion Scale Form-H (MSCS) and the Cross-Cultural Background Questionnaire II (CCBQ II).

The Miner Sentence Completion Scale (MSCS)

The Miner Sentence Completion Scale (MSCS) Form-H was used to measure the criterion variable of the study: the level of managerial motivation. High levels of managerial motivation theory as operationalized in the MSCS have consistently shown both predictive and concurrent validity to managerial performance (Miner, 1985).

The MSCS Form-H is a projective instrument in which the respondent completes 40 items. Each response is scored as positive, negative, or neutral, according to the Scoring Guide (Miner, 1964).

Seven subscales of the instrument are designed to measure the component
variables of the hierarchic role-motivation theory of managerial effectiveness. The subscales correspond to role requirements of the managerial job and measure a person’s level of motivation to meet them:

1. Authority Figures (AF)
2. Competitive Games (CG)
3. Competitive Situations (CS)
4. Assertive Role (AR)
5. Imposing Wishes (IW)
6. Standing Out from Group (SO)
7. Routine Administrative Functions (RAF)

Each subscale is measured by five items (five dummies in the questionnaire). A subscale score is derived by subtracting the number of negative responses from the number of positive responses (neutral responses are scored zero); thus, each subscale can vary from +5 to -5.

The seven subscale scores are then combined into a total score, which can vary from +35 to -35. This total score represents the type of motivation that has been referred to as “motivation to manage” or “managerial motivation.”

Cross-Cultural Background Questionnaire II (CCBQ II)

The questions on the CCBQ II are the independent variables of the study which pertain to H2. This set of questions deals with demographic and nine interacting cultural factors: religion, education, economics, politics, family, class structure, language, history, and natural resources/geography. Furthermore, ten questions related to Hofstede’s cultural differences followed the nine interacting cultural factors. Hofstede’s four dimensions applied to the questions in CCBQ II.
IV. RESULTS

Differences in Managerial Motivation

Details of the focal population in the study, Japanese hotel managers working in Japan, are in Table 1. The results of the MSCS test are given in Table 2. According to Miner, Ebrahimi, and Wachtel (1989), MSCS Scores have been found to average .24 to 3.38 in various countries. Japanese managers in this study scored 8.68 which is significantly above the scores reported by Miner, Ebrahimi, and Wachtel (1989). (see Table 3) Based on the evidence, H1 was rejected and it is clear that Japanese managers have significantly high levels of motivation.

Cultural Variables

The second hypothesis (H2) dealt with differences in managerial motivation due to cultural variables. This hypothesis was separated into three elements: demographic factors, nine interacting cultural factors, and Hofstede’s variables.

The statistical tests used to analyze the data were SPSS Multiple Regression of Continuous Variables and Analysis of Variance of Categorical Variables.

Demographic Factors. The common demographic data collected by Japanese hotel managers were age, gender, and length of time as a hotelier. Statistical analysis showed that the demographic variables had little effect on managerial motivation.

Nine Interacting Cultural Factors. The nine interacting cultural factors were religion, education, economics, politics, family, class structure, language, history, and natural resources/geography. These variables had little effect on managerial motivation too.

Hofstede’s Cultural Variables. Hofstede’s four dimensions were individualism versus collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity versus femininity.

Table 4 shows one cultural variable which entered the SPSS Stepwise
Multiple Regression regarding managerial motivation. The question measuring the level of “Individualism” (I like personal freedom) was negatively related to MSCS Total Score in the Japanese sample.

V. CONCLUSION

The results of the above analyses suggest that it is possible to conclude that there are significant differences between the levels of managerial motivation of Japanese hotel managers. The motivation of Japanese hotel managers is significantly high.

In CCBQ II, the question measuring the level of “Individualism” (I like personal freedom) was negatively related to MSCS Total Score in regard to having managerial motivation. In other words, the manager who does not like personal freedom tends to be highly motivated. This may indicate that working in hotel requires high level of teamwork which demands collectivistic activity. A great number of Japanese hotels take as their mottos harmony. This important element is frequently viewed as being incompatible with personal freedom. It could be said that the results of this study recognizes the importance of harmony in Japanese hotel industry.

REFERENCES
Hofstede, G. (1980a). *Culture’s consequences: International differences in*
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Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Characteristics*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Total N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mean Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. % Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Length of Time as a hotelier (years)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* obtained using SPSS FREQUENCIES command.

Table 2

Mean Total and Subscale MSCS Scores and ONEWAY Analysis of Variance Results for Japanese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSCS Subscales and Total Score</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority Figures</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive Games</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive Situations</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive Roles</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imposing Wishes</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing Out from Group</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine Administrative Functions</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>1.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td>8.68</td>
<td>6.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

$t$ test for Paired Samples*:
Japanese versus other countries in MSCS Total Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>$t$ Value</th>
<th>2-tail prob.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSCS of other countries</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>-14.93</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese Sample</td>
<td>8.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $t$ test computed using SPSS.

Table 4

Multiple Regression Equation by Cultural Variables
and Standardized Beta Coefficients: Japanese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables Entered</th>
<th>Variables Selected</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Lev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCBQ II</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>10.11</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$Y = 19.88 - 2.66 \times$ (Individualism)

Standardized Beta Coefficients:

| Individualism | -.306 |