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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF HOTEL EMPLOYEE SERVICE ORIENTATION IN RUSSIA AND THE UNITED STATES

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ABSTRACT

Service orientation is the disposition to be helpful, thoughtful, considerate and cooperative at an individual level. Based on service orientation theory, I argue that understanding employee's perceptions of their own service orientation and the service climate of the hotel they work in is important to the success of the establishment. Furthermore, I argue these perceptions have relations to an employee's job satisfaction, commitment to their employer and intention to leave the firm. Past employee level service orientation research has been primarily focused on Western firm service orientation. Russian service orientation is under researched with employee level research in Russia almost non-existent. My research represents a new direction for studying employee service orientation in transitioning economies through extension into the Russian market. I propose collecting survey data from hotel employees in the United States and Russia for use in a comparative analysis of Russian and American hotel employee perceptions of service orientation, employer service climate, job satisfaction, and commitment to their employer. By identifying differences between American and Russian findings, previously unknown insights into the Russian hotel industry may be asserted. Furthermore, results from Russia will establish a starting point for longitudinal research into Russian service orientation and the possible effects of free market integration on Russian hotel employees.

Keywords: *service orientation, organizational climate, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, Russia*

INTRODUCTION

Homberg, Hoyer & Fassnacht's (2002) analysis indicated that service orientation research falls into three perspectives: an employee perspective, an organizational perspective and a business strategy perspective. The employee perspective focuses on the employee attributes of customer service orientation that employees need in order to provide excellent customer service (Hogan, Hogan & Busch, 1984). This research was extended to consider employee perceptions of their own service orientation; with results indicating that an employee's perceptions of their own service orientation was mirrored by their own service orientation actions (McBride, Mendoza & Carraher, 1997). Research performed from the organizational perspective examines the organizational service culture attributes that create a climate that is customer service-oriented. This perspective investigates the extent to which an organization's internal design

creates a service climate (Schneider, Wheeler & Cox, 1992). The business strategy perspective investigates service orientation as a response to market conditions (Homberg et al., 2002).

Service orientation theory research in the Russian Federation hospitality sector is scarce. Most service-orientation research in the Russian Federation investigated expatriates in Russia, Russian entrepreneurship, and the financial services sector. In the few cases where the literature search found Russian service orientation addressing the hospitality sector, it addressed the business strategy perspective of service orientation, but not the employee perspective. A search for this literature proved inconclusive with sparse results. This research intends to fill gaps in service-orientation theory literature by analyzing Russian employee perceptions of service orientation and service climate and the resulting Russian employee perceptions of personal job satisfaction, commitment to his or her employer. This research intends to extend the literature of employee perceptions of service orientation and service climate and their effect on the employee's perceived job quality to a Russian context by surveying employees of American-branded Russian hotels. The research method will stratify the participant populations into selected populations by country. Survey results of each stratum undergo structural equation modeling to test relations between variables. The results of both regions undergo comparative analysis to discover differences between groups and discover aspects of Russian employee service orientation.

This study is important to non-Russian service establishments assessing the performance risks of entering the Russian market. It will be advantageous for human resource personnel to understand Russian employee perceptions of his or her own service orientation, and of his or her employers' service climate and their effects on performance. Investors will benefit from positive effects on firm performance resulting from good service orientation. Investors will also benefit from understanding how these relations affect Russian employee's perceptions of their job satisfaction, commitment to their employer and their intention to quit. This information provides insights to management regarding where to adjust practices to improve employee outputs, reduce employee turnover and to develop service orientation in employees in Russia, resulting in increased hotel performance.

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ETHICS & CULTURAL VARIATIONS BETWEEN CHINESE AND AMERICAN EXPATRIATES

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ABSTRACT

In the current paper we examine variations in ethics and cultural variations between business people in China and the USA. We find that there are large cultural differences between American and Chinese expatriates working throughout Europe. We also found differences in terms of whether assessments are done in rural, suburbs, or urban areas – with larger variations within the countries than between the countries.

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STUDY ABROAD OPPORTUNITIES: PLANNING, GUIDANCE, AND LESSONS LEARNED

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ABSTRACT

A growing number of colleges and universities have begun including, as a strategic initiative, an emphasis on "global engagement," generally through an introduction or expansion of "study abroad" opportunities for their students. Many colleges describe these opportunities in their marketing brochures, and the question of study abroad opportunities is one of the more frequently asked by prospective students and their parents. A recognition of the importance of students gaining a personal understanding of the much larger world beyond the United States has provided the impetus for this movement. While some colleges have offered this component for many years, and some even require their students to engage in some type of global experience, others are just beginning to explore what is meant by their global engagement initiative. This paper was written for those in the latter category, and perhaps even some in the former category, to offer a window into the planning and execution of a successful study abroad experience. This paper provides an outline of considerations during the planning phase, which is critical to conducting a successful trip, in the form of a step-by-step primer. Areas such as purpose, destination, budget (lodging, airfare, food, ground transportation, etc) are addressed, as well as preparing the students. The paper also shares a series of anecdotal incidents which have provided the authors with invaluable lessons they have used in subsequent trips, and ones in which hopefully the reader will benefit (without having to experience the actual incident!). Examples of these "lessons learned" include "Not all students like sleeping in former jail cells.", "Yes you do have to take your meds. And no, you cannot drink the water.", and "Where in the world is (fill in the name of the student)!"

DRAFTING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE AGREEMENT

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ABSTRACT

The international marketplace has become the standard venue for not only multinational corporate transactions, but for long-term business planning for visionary and resourceful entrepreneurs. By definition, international commerce – also referred to as global, foreign, and overseas trade – is the voluntary exchange of goods and/or services across national boundaries. Entering into a nongovernmental trade agreement may prove advantageous for all participants involved; however, crossing national borders does necessitate considerations which do not usually characterize domestic decision-making. As pitfalls are inevitable, fundamental knowledge of terms constituting the international agreement may serve to prevent or mitigate loss of trust, compromised business relationships, and adverse financial investment.

The majority of agreements do not incorporate all necessary terms within the main body of the document; rather, they provide straightforward core information which is then often supplemented by reference to additional terms and conditions. Attention to specificity of provisions may forestall contractual disputes and costly judicial undertakings. Hence, definitional sections are typically provided within the agreement proper to rectify ambiguities and provide clarity of terms to facilitate mutual understanding.

Because of the inherent challenges posed by entering unchartered territories with new business initiatives, all parties negotiating trade agreements must be fully cognizant of the risks involved as well as the topics to be researched and addressed to create a situation of trust, sustained relationship-building, and responsible, long-lasting success. This article provides insight into key provisions, terms, and considerations of which entities entering into an international agreement should be aware.

CULTURE, GENDER AND IDEOLOGY AS PREDICTORS OF ADVERTISING EFFECTS: HOW CHINESE AND U.S. COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE INFLUENCED BY CLIMATE-CHANGE ADS

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ABSTRACT

As the name correctly implies, global warming is a significant issue affecting the entire world. The world's scientific community has largely reached a consensus that (1) global warming is occurring and (2) that human behavior is largely responsible. The most recent evidence is seen in an August 20, 2013, New York Times report of a leaked draft of an upcoming UN Report on climate change (Gillis, 2013). That report, prepared by an international panel of scientists unequivocally indicates that human activity caused more than half of observed increase in the average of global surface temperature in the last half of the 20th century.

While the international scientific community is largely united on the presence and causes of climate change, the political debate is far from resolved. Some political leaders deny the existence of global warming and any human culpability, claiming that we are just in a "weather cycle." With political leaders questioning both the existence and cause of climate change, it is not surprising that there are differing positions by the public on the issue as well.

Although scholars have examined a number of individual factors related to U. S. environmental attitudes, perhaps the two most reliable indicators are gender and political ideology. Since the U.S and China are the world's two largest economies, arguably, they are the two largest contributors to the problem. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the impact of gender and political ideology on the perceived effectiveness of advertisements which advocate actions to reduce climate change by comparing responses of U.S and Chinese college students.

The study employed a total sample of 318 college students, 162 from China and 156 from the U.S. The purpose of this study was to examine the differences in Chinese and U.S. college student responses to ads which advocated action on climate change based on their gender and political ideology. The results indicate that in the U.S, liberals are both more likely to agree with the existence of climate change and indicate a personal intention to do something about it than are conservatives. However, in contrast to previous research, in the U.S. this study failed to find a sex difference in environmental attitudes. In China, the results indicate that males are more likely to agree with the existence of climate change and indicate a personal intention to do

something about it than are females. Ideological differences along the liberal-conservative dimension were not evident in the Chinese sample. These findings have important potential implications in the area of "green" marketing and "green" advertising.

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EXPLORING SOCCER FANS' CONSUMER MOTIVES IN FOUR EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

The current research took place in four countries representing Eastern Europe where the economics of these societies are characterized as in transition to market-driven economies after the fall of communism. The purposes of the present study were to 1) investigate sport consumer motives to attend or watch soccer games across the cultures in four Eastern European countries. ─ Hungary, Moldova, Poland and Romania and, 2) add to the existing sport fans' motivations literature. This study is in response to suggestions by earlier researchers that future research should explore sport fans' motives across different cultures. Study findings suggest entertainment and socializing appeared to be important motives guiding sport fans in this study. Also, that among spectators in Eastern Europe younger fans tended to be more socially interactive while watching or attending soccer matches. However, weaker than expected reliability results suggest that the spectator motivation scale used in the present study, derived from the SII and MSSC that were developed among Western-oriented societies, failed to adequately identify sport fans' motives in Eastern Europe.

INTERNATIONAL TOURISM AND THE OLYMPICS: THE LEGACY EFFECT

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ABSTRACT

This study examines international tourism as a legacy of hosting the Olympics. Prior research has hypothesized that the host city will have sustained increases in international tourism as a result of hosting the Olympics. The increase in tourism is largely attributed to the positive media coverage of the sporting event and the host city. In this research, international air passenger traffic for six Olympics is analyzed. Time series models are used to analyze the effect of the Olympics as an intervention in the series. The magnitude, shape and duration of the intervention are modeled. The results show no sustained increase in international tourism for five of the six host cities. Only half the sites show an increase in international tourism during the Olympics.

CROSS-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN VALUES AND CONFLICT HANDLING STYLE: A COMPARISON OF U.S. AND PUERTO RICAN PROFESSIONALS

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ABSTRACT

Using samples of business professionals from the U.S. and Puerto Rico (P.R.), we examine cross-cultural differences in cultural values and preferred conflict handling styles. We operationalized each of five conflict handling styles using (1) raw score ratings, and (2) dichotomous coding indicating if a given style was preferred (highest overall score) or not preferred by participants. These measures yielded substantially different results. Although the U.S. and P.R. groups did not differ in their raw score ratings across the five conflict handling styles, the U.S. sample was significantly more likely to prefer the accommodating style. Correlations between nine cultural values and the raw score ratings were all non-significant. However, using the preferred conflict handling style measures, long-term orientation emerged as the predominant cultural value that related all conflict handling styles except for compromising. The cultural values uncertainty avoidance and universalism were significantly related to preferences for accommodating and collaborative styles, respectively.