
LEADERSHIP: DOES CULTURE MATTER? COMPARATIVE PRACTICES BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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ABSTRACT

The topic of leadership in the global marketplace has received a high degree of attention among scholars and practitioners over the past few years. Leadership of organizations and employees has definitely become more important as managing across borders and the advent of the virtual team has become increasingly prevalent. Paper explores impact of culture on leadership practices in two countries from culturally and economically different regions: Argentina and the United States of America. It uses the visionary approach to leadership developed by Kouzes and Posner (1987) which identified five leadership practices (actions or behaviors) employed by effective leaders: Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, Modeling the Way, and Encouraging the Heart. Using the Kouzes and Posner LPI-Self (Leadership Practices Inventory, 1993) instrument for data collection, the authors compared the results between MBA respondents in the two countries. The results of the study indicate that a number of significant differences do exist among respondents in the two cultures, with Argentine respondents consistently scoring higher than United States counterparts. The information may be of value in understanding perceptions concerning leadership patterns between the two countries and useful in managing human resources in the respective countries.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant business trends of the new millennium is the emergence of the stateless corporation and increasing interdependencies among the world's economies. Until recently leaders were able to operate in the relative isolation of domestic markets but today leaders are constantly exposed to different cultures with different lifestyles. This has resulted in the recognition of different management and leadership practices and a growing need to understand the importance of cross-cultural leadership.

The understanding of comparative leadership practices among cultures is paramount to successfully managing global business activities. An era of high change characterized by outsourcing, restructuring, technological advances, and economic, social and political transitions

require managers who are cognizant of the differing perceptions that exist across countries concerning leadership. Certainly an understanding of leadership and differences in leadership practices among cultures leads to increased efficiency and effectiveness in organizational performance.

The focus of much leadership research has been on the determinants of leadership effectiveness (Yukl, 1998). Among these approaches are the trait approach (Stogdill, 1948, 1974; Bryman, 1992), the style approach (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Kotter, 1982), the situational approach (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977, 1982, 1988; Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1958), the contingency approach (Fiedler, 1964, 1967), the path-goal approach (Evans 1970; House, 1971), the leader-member exchange approach (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), and transformational leadership approach (Bass, 1985; Tichy & DeVanna, 1990). In recent years neocharismatic theories like visionary leadership theory (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Sashkin, 1988; Kouzes & Posner, 1993) have also gained acceptance with both scholars and practitioners. In addition, of course, the concept of leadership in groups and teams has become a rapidly growing area of leadership interest. There is also mounting evidence that cultures vary on the extent they employ and value certain leadership behaviors (Den Hartog, House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, & Dorfman, 1999; Hofstede, 2001; Peterson & Hunt, 1997). House & Iditya (1997) have noted that these theories are all of a common genre and have several common characteristics.

This study is cross-cultural in nature, not merely because of the interest in international comparison per se, but because it is believed that such comparison is essential to a better understanding of comparative leadership practices between the United States and Argentina. This study should help both educational institutions and global business organizations more effectively teach students and/or manage corporate human resources around the globe. In particular, this study provides the management of United States/Argentina - based organizations with valuable information which may be helpful in selecting people to fill key leadership positions.

RESEARCH METHOD AND DATA

This study uses the neocharismatic, visionary approach to leadership developed by Kouzes and Posner (1993; 1995). The *Leadership Practices Inventory-Self* (LPI-Self) instrument (Kouzes & Posner, 1993) was used for data collection. Kouzes & Posner have identified five leadership practices (actions and/or behaviors) employed by effective leaders:

Challenging the Process - Leaders search out challenging opportunities and experiment.

Inspiring a Shared Vision - Leaders envision a future and enlist others to pursue that future.

Enabling Others to Act - Leaders foster collaboration and empower others.

Modeling the Way - Leaders set the example and achieve small wins that build commitment.

Encouraging the Heart - Leaders recognize individual contributions and celebrate accomplishments regularly.

The LPI-Self instrument measures each of the five dimensions of leadership with 6 statements cast on a five-point Likert scale. The higher value on the five-point scale represents greater use of the measured leadership behavior. Each leadership practice could be scored in the range of 6 to 30 points. Extensive testing by Kouzes and Posner (1993) revealed that the instrument exhibits sound psychometric properties.

The instrument was administered to 110 MBA students in the United States (Southeast Missouri State University and Southern Illinois University-Carbondale) and 160 MBA students in Argentina (Universidad de Palermo). In the United States sample there were 57 males and 53 females responding to the questionnaire. In Argentina there were 107 females and 53 males responding to the questionnaire. The respondents represented a number of different types of employment including manufacturing, financial services, commerce, and not-for-profit. The questionnaires were administered during classes at each venue.

RESULTS

Results are analyzed between the two countries (Argentina and United States) and within each country. Between the countries results are presented as: Aggregate Perceptions of MBA Students in the two countries (without a gender distinction); Comparison Between all Male MBA Students and all Female MBA Students (without a country distinction); Comparison Between United States Female MBA Students and Argentina Female MBA Students; Comparison Between United States Male MBA Students and Argentina Male MBA Students; Comparison Between United States Male MBA Students and Argentina Female MBA Students; and, Comparisons Between Argentina Male MBA Students and United States Female MBA Students.

The results of the perception of MBA students within each country are also compared and contrasted: Comparison Between Male and Female Students in United States; Comparison Between Male and Female Students in Argentina.

Comparison Between United States and Argentina

Comparison Between United States MBA Students and Argentina MBA Students.

The LPI-Self scores of MBA students in the United States versus MBA students in Argentina definitely varied in the aggregate (See Table 1 - 5). Significant statistical differences existed on four

of the five LPI dimensions: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, and modeling the way; with Argentina respondents rating themselves higher than United States respondents in all dimensions. There was no significant difference between United States and Argentina respondents in Encouraging the Heart.

TABLE 1: Challenging the Process - Aggregate		
	Argentina	United States
Mean	10.33014937	21.95454545
Variance	10.33014937	11.78690575
Observations	160	110
Pooled Variance	10.92263611	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	268	
t Stat	5.622899154	
P(T<=t) one-tail	2.3562E-08	
t Critical one tail	1.65056008	
P(T<=t) two-tail	4.7124E-08	
t Critical two-tail	1.968855941	

TABLE 2: Inspiring a Shared Vision - Aggregate		
	Argentina	United States
Mean	23.525	20.54545455
Variance	12.80440252	17.68140117
Observations	160	110
Pooled Variance	14.78795794	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	268	
t Stat	6.255620061	
P(T<=t) one-tail	7.79451E-10	
t Critical one tail	1.65056008	
P(T<=t) two-tail	1.5589E-09	
t Critical two-tail	1.968855941	

TABLE 3: Enabling Others to Act - Aggregate

	Argentina	United States
Mean	25.20625	23.56363636
Variance	7.787382075	7.881234362
Observations	160	110
Pooled Variance	7.825553341	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	268	
t Stat	4.740807789	
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.7304E-06	
t Critical one tail	1.65056008	
P(T<=t) two-tail	3.4608E-06	
t Critical two-tail	1.968855941	

TABLE 4: Modeling the Way – Aggregate

	Argentina	United States
Mean	24.28125	23.02727273
Variance	10.53046384	45.43961635
Observations	160	110
Pooled Variance	24.7285893	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	268	
t Stat	2.035937522	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.021369997	
t Critical one tail	1.65056008	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.042739994	
t Critical two-tail	1.968855941	

	Argentina	United States
Mean	24.1125	23.43636364
Variance	10.84261006	15.23903253
Observations	160	110
Pooled Variance	12.63070726	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	268	
t Stat	1.536013068	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.062857449	
t Critical one tail	1.65056008	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.125714899	
t Critical two-tail	1.968855941	

The rank-order for the LPI-self scores also differed between the United States and Argentina (See Table 6). Enabling Others to Act was rated highest in both countries. Modeling the Way was ranked second by Argentina respondents while Encouraging the Heart was ranked second by United States respondents. Both United States and Argentina respondents had Inspiring a Shared Vision ranked last.

Leadership Practice	United States		Argentina	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Challenging the Process	21.95	4	24.26	3
Inspiring a Shared Vision	20.54	5	23.52	5
Enabling Others to Act	23.56	1	25.21	1
Modeling the Way	23.03	3	24.28	2
Encouraging the Heart	23.44	2	24.11	4

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Recent events in Argentina's history (e.g., economic crisis, lack of political leadership, labor strife, controversy concerning globalization, free market reforms, devaluation of currency, social

demonstrations, etc.) may have created a sense of pride and hope in the nation. Argentines, without clear leadership in the nation, may be determined to exhibit individual leadership patterns and, as a result, rank themselves higher on the LPI practices.

The history of Argentina definitely influences leadership perceptions. Argentina has lived through three periods of political pluralism: the constitutional period from 1853; the popular opening of the society from 1916 and the return to democracy from 1983.

Intolerance and confrontation predominated at all other times (Massuh, in Loizaga, 1995). This history of discord and rivalries is currently being scrutinized, but *personalize* still exists (Sartori, 1989). Sartori believes that in Latin American democracies, people tend to identify with an individual and not a program. Trust is deposited in a prominent individual who can channel popular will. Throughout the history of the country, the emergence of protagonists such as Moreno, San Martin, Rivadavia, Rosas, Urquiza, Alberdi, Sarmiento, Roca, Yrigoyen, Peron, Alfonsín and Menem may be explained by fractional confrontations which often ended in the death or exile of the contenders.

Goldman and Salvatore (1998) also indicate that during independence struggles a military career was often the shortest road to leadership stature. Provincial *caudillos* gained pre-eminence. They defended the territories they ruled firmly and did not submit to the rule of law. This has changed, of course, but the current Argentine presidential democracy still retains unique characteristics of an earlier era--the concept of control and balance between the branches of government does not exist. Rulers see themselves as accountable only to party with no institutional accountability towards Congress or the Judiciary. In other words, the President may disregard the Legislature, pay little attention to judicial decisions deemed inconvenient, feel free to antagonize through use of the media, and use troops to maintain social peace.

Cacique and *caudillo* are terms that distinctly express the overruling leadership mode: the *cacique* leads his people; a *caudillo* takes over in times of war. To govern and to *acaudillar*—to rule as a *caudillo* (i.e., strong man politics)—are never far apart. The leader manipulates and his vision fascinates the followers. Graumann (1986) also talks about “images that connote directive leadership.”

In Argentina, the relationship between the leader the community results in a direct and informal content. This may explain why even the most self-contained and austere politicians tend to adopt populist tactics and why such a pattern may even extend to the private sphere where the image of the *patron*—lord of the manor—subsists.

Leadership charisma is also important in Argentina (Leaman, 1999) and executive domination in the political sphere has been common. An emphasis on charismatic and powerful executive leadership rather than on representative institutions may transfer to perceived leadership practices in respondents. In other words, a feeling that strong leadership practices must be exhibited may be a characteristic of the populace.

This may also be related to the concept that being humble is an important leadership characteristic in the United States (Fineman (1999). Individuals in the United States are often taught to be humble in approach and respectful of others. This may translate into placing a lesser self-rating on the LPI dimensions.

Argentina is politically and economically a centralized nation. Even the literature holds that the leader manipulates through charisma. Denevi quotes Marañón, a Spanish thinker, as saying that “a good politician should combine lack of scruples, an exaltation of ideas, coolness, obduracy and malice” (Denevi, in Loizaga, 1995). As a result, confrontations tend to persist in Argentina and it detracts from objectivity, balance, and tolerance.

Augusto Lopez Carlos, Chief Economist of World Economic Forum, said “Argentina is a mystery.” (La Nación, 2004). Why is Argentina a mystery? The potential of the country is large—abundant natural resources and sophisticated human capital. The country is unique in Latin America with Nobel Prize award winners in science and peace. The high educational levels have made Argentines cosmopolitan and progressive. Argentines have outstanding opera houses, active theatre and entertainment, and demonstrate pride in their cultural tradition. The infrastructure is modern and computer and communications technologies are extensively applied. Argentines often say they “descend from the ships” which illustrates that the primary population is composed of Western Europeans. Contrarily, however, the country is listed 78th in Competitiveness-- 34 positions below the level achieved in 2001. (La Nacion, 2004). The Gallup Survey (1996) found that 60% of respondents think an honest person is not able to be successful in Argentina. Marcos Aguinis (1995) pointed out the fact that there is a tendency among Argentines not to think as a nation—everybody thinks and defends that segment or portion of society to which they belong. He feels the main obstacle to progress is the people themselves. There is high resistance to public discipline and social altruism. Smartness (*viveza*) is the mental ability to manage the effects of a problem without solving it—since the majority of the population follows this pattern, the managers and leaders also behave in this way. There is a tendency to live with illusions.

Isuani (1998) states that Argentines are rule breakers. Nino (1992) analyzed the link between inefficiency and underdevelopment in countries and concluded that “there is a recurring trend in Argentine society to anomie in general and to illegality in particular.” In other words, there is a tendency towards the breaking of judicial, moral, and social rules. He considered Argentina to be “a country outside the law” so far as “the anomic factor generates reduced levels of efficiency and productivity.”

It is often stated that the Argentine constitution has never reached the level of being supreme law that drives the behavior of its citizens. The constitution can be challenged and modified according to individual desires. As mentioned above, Isuani (1998) concluded that “The Argentine challenges the rules.” To create rule changes is a characteristic of both public and private institutions. In fact, some believe there is a new management paradigm that increases inequality and makes a functioning win-lose social order. According to Gantman (1994), the new type of

individualism that has emerged is very close to “narcissus.” The ability to manage on the edge of the rules and take advantage of privileged information is highly prevalent. Personal interest is placed above national performance and success.

Carmelo Barturen (2002), UN representative in Argentina, sustains that the concept of nation is a daily referendum. Every moment, each person is making sure he is willing to live with others according to certain terms. “I wouldn’t divide patriots from non patriots, but people who respect the law from the ones that do not. That’s a good dividing line for a country based on the Constitution, human rights and duties. Argentina is always under construction, and it’s not a mandate from the past but a task.”

An analysis of the Hofstede dimensions: power distance (PDI), uncertainty avoidance (UAI), individualism (IDV), and masculinity (MAS); also demonstrates that the United States and Argentina differ significantly (See Table 7). This may also explain the higher scores recorded by Argentina respondents versus respondents from the United States.

Country	PDI	IDV	MAS	UAI
United States	40*	91	62	46
Argentina	49*	46	56	86

*Near the line that divides the two extremes of LG and SM

Argentina, for example, has a high Uncertainty Avoidance Index (i.e., a low level of tolerance for uncertainty). This coupled with the population being predominantly Catholic leads to a belief that there is an absolute truth and the individual possesses that truth. This may result in a higher self-rating of success in the leadership practices. Contrarily, in the United States there is much greater tolerance for uncertainty, diversity in religion, and a lesser belief in absolute truth.

Argentina also ranks slightly higher on the power distance index than does the United States. Being more tolerant of power distance may result in greater glory and respect being placed on executive leadership. Since the respondents were primarily MBA students, this elevation in the self-ranking of leadership practices may result from respondents feelings of being better educated and more likely to be future leaders. In larger power distance cultures, employees also tend to expect more authoritative leadership. Argentina respondents may rate themselves higher than United States counterparts because it is *expected* that they have a positive image and project stronger performance ratings in the leadership practices.

Leadership in Argentina is often understood as supremacy; hegemony is claimed by many that hold public positions and usually is upheld in confrontational settings. This leads, of course,

to authoritarian behaviors. Growth crises, which may be considered to be nothing more than a stage of development in many countries, causes great distress in Argentina. Argentines find it difficult to establish an ongoing team and cohesive society. Alternatives or the creation of options are difficult to institute in Argentina and normally occur only after repeated upheavals.

Power distance is definitely tolerated to a greater degree in Argentina than in the United States. Upper status people in Argentina expect to deal only with individuals of their own standing. Decision making is predominantly top-down, spontaneous, impulsive, and with an emphasis on concepts. Lower status people are always cautious and tend not to put forward ideas (especially conflicting ideas) because support from the superior may change rapidly if challenged. Often times, in fact, superiors are not questioned even though it is known they are wrong.

As mentioned above, being a traditional Catholic country may also contribute to a tolerance for power distance. Catholic countries do not separate the personal and social spheres of experience. When Catholicism arrived in Latin America, native peoples were associated with demonic forces—priests and conquistadors came to redeem them. The priests and conquistadors were viewed as mythical heroes sent to chastise and conquer barbarism. Centuries of Spanish domination left its traces. Spain, for example, transferred its institutional systems and people considered themselves part of the mother country, not colonizers. In Latin America, status was attained by adapting such standards of behavior. Economy was based on the manorial lifestyle, where status and privilege were connected to birth and bloodlines. Profit was based on annuities and loyalty was owed to individuals rather than to laws of the land. Argentines are ethnocentric—proud of their own country more than of the geographical region. Argentines are also emotionally sensitive. Words and actions may be interpreted as offenses to a person's inner worth. Argentines often use euphemisms and *double entendres*. There is a tendency to read between the lines and the conclusions drawn are often extreme. It is common to exhibit an external locus of control—that decisions and performance are determined by parties beyond one's immediate control. There is a feeling that things happen! The influence of special interests on decision making is expected and condoned.

Argentina is also more collectivist than the United States. Being more collectivist, Argentina has closer ties between individuals than in the United States. A strong emphasis is placed on personal associations. Networks serve as safety nets and facilitate mobility. When a person needs something done, there is a preference to rely on someone who is known. Relationships take precedence over formal contact with institutions, laws, or regulations. Due process is often regarded with suspicion because it could override understandings in the group. The concept of time is viewed in the abstract—as a resource that helps build relationships. Time is not considered as a defining event in terms of hours and/or minutes consumed.

Argentines tend to be gregarious. Visitors are greeted warmly. Personal relationships are established with ease. People maintain eye-to-eye contact and even men embrace with physical demonstrations of affection. Relationships, based on reciprocity, tend to be informal and stable over time. This may not carry-over to the business sphere, however.

Participation is vibrant in most discussions, especially those concerning soccer and politics. Expressiveness and emotion in verbal communication are tied to the Argentine concept of individualism. Argentines will often interrupt as an illustration of eagerness to share opinions. Argumentation is enjoyed and may dilute efforts to reach concrete goals. The Argentine is strong in the art of eloquence, wit, and charm and normally feels that no task is above him.

The fact that about one-third of the population lives in and around Buenos Aires also provides a very homogenous group. This may lead to a higher perceived performance on the various leadership practices.

There are some universal leadership similarities regardless of country or culture. Most leaders, for example, desire to be more proactive and tend to desire loose authority structures and greater autonomy in making decisions (Rodrigues, 2001). In most cases, however, the rational boundaries one finds do result in differences in leadership patterns.

Differences in perceived ratings among the respondents in the United States and Argentina may also be the result of the United States being a low context culture and Argentina being a high context culture. In high-context cultures participants are likely to establish social trust first, value personal relations and goodwill, make agreements on the basis of general trust, and like to conduct slower and more ritualistic business negotiations (Rodrigues, 2001). By contrast, in low-contact cultures participants get down to business quickly, value expertise and performance, like agreements by legalistic contract, and like to conduct business negotiations as efficiently as possible (Rodrigues, 2001). It may be that high-context cultures have a tendency to develop better individual perceptions concerning the practice of exemplary leadership.

Trompenaars (1994) also reported that the United States and Argentina differ on Universalism (belief that ideas and practices can be applied without modification around the world) versus Particularism (belief that circumstances determine how ideas and practices can be applied and, as a result, practices cannot be conducted the same everywhere). The United States is high on universalism while Argentina tends toward the particularism end of the continuum. Graciela Romer (2003) thinks that the importance of particularism is one of the differences between developed and underdeveloped countries. The priority given to family and blood relationship is not positive in terms of objectivity and universalism. It tends to stress personal loyalty over normative loyalty. This is not good if one desires to build a democratic system on the bases of law and tolerance.

Trompenaars shows a similar result between the United States and Argentina on the Specific (individuals have a large public space they share with others and a private space they only share with close acquaintances) versus Diffuse (both public and private are guarded because entry into public space also permits entry into private space). According to Trompenaars, the United States is a specific culture while Argentina tends to be a diffuse culture. In the United States people may rate themselves lower on the LPI dimensions since this correlates with openness, extroversion, and a strong separation of work and private life. A lower LPI score may be expected. In contrast, a

diffuse culture finds individuals to be more indirect, introverted, and work and private life are closely linked. A higher LPI score may be expected.

The Argentine citizen does not identify with the state and the United States citizen does identify with the state. This may be another factor contributing to differences in perceived leadership perceptions. To the Argentine, the state is an unconceivable abstraction—the Argentine is an individual and not a citizen. That the state represents the reality of a moral idea might sound like a sinister joke to the Argentina citizen. To the Argentine, the state is impersonal. The Argentine perceives only personal relations! That’s why stealing public money, for example, is often viewed as not being a crime. Carlos Artschul (1992) states that in resource rich countries distant from primary world traffic, persons develop individualist behaviors and attitudes, which results in funneling resources into short term projects. “Argentineans are part of the most individualistic tradition. For the Argentinian individual, the other is always conceived as an annoyance; hence it becomes an enemy, blocking negotiation access.” Therefore, negotiation becomes an imposition exclusively for the Argentineans own benefit. Thus, he develops skills to work creatively in chaos, but has difficulties in working as part of a team or in long term associations.

Comparison Between All Male MBA Students and All Female MBA Students

The LPI-self scores of female students was significantly higher than male students on the dimensions of Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling others to Act, and Encouraging the Heart. There was no statistically significant difference between males and females on the dimensions of Challenging the Process or Modeling the Way (although women respondents did score higher than men on these practices). See Tables 8 through 12.

TABLE 8: Challenging the Process – Male vs. Female		
	Female	Male
Mean	23.56875	22.95454545
Variance	13.08958333	10.70433695
Observations	160	110
Pooled Variance	12.11946447	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	268	
t Stat	1.424445256	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.077740495	

TABLE 8: Challenging the Process – Male vs. Female		
	Female	Male
t Critical one tail	1.65056008	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.155480991	
t Critical two-tail	0.155480991	

TABLE 9: Inspiring a Shared Vision – Male vs. Female		
	Female	Male
Mean	22.76875	21.64545455
Variance	16.09084119	17.44195163
Observations	160	110
Pooled Variance	16.64035999	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	268	
t Stat	2.223243824	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.013516753	
t Critical one tail	1.65056008	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.027033506	
t Critical two-tail	1.968855941	

TABLE 10: Enabling Others to Act – Male vs. Female		
	Female	Male
Mean	24.86875	24.05454545
Variance	8.10216195	8.639199333
Observations	160	110
Pooled Variance	8.32058387	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	268	

TABLE 10: Enabling Others to Act – Male vs. Female		
	Female	Male
t Stat	2.27893046	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.011728972	
t Critical one tail	1.65056008	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.023457944	
t Critical two-tail	1.968855941	

TABLE 11: Modeling the Way – Male vs. Female		
	Female	Male
Mean	24.19375	23.15454545
Variance	35.69178459	9.030942452
Observations	160	110
Pooled Variance	24.84838238	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	268	
t Stat	1.68316398	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.046753919	
t Critical one tail	1.65056008	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.093507839	
t Critical two-tail	1.968855941	

TABLE 12: Encouraging the Heart – Male vs. Female		
	Female	Male
Mean	24.35625	23.08181818
Variance	12.58297956	12.00241868
Observations	160	110
Pooled Variance	12.34685592	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	268	
t Stat	2.928281795	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.001850664	
t Critical one tail	1.65056008	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.003701329	
t Critical two-tail	1.968855941	

This result is in line with previous findings (primarily United States based research) which states that females use more democratic leadership styles, encourage greater degrees of participation, and are more willing to share power and enhance the self-worth of others (Early & Johnson, 1990). Kouzes & Posner (1993) also found significant differences between men and women for the practice of Encouraging the Heart. Enabling Others to Act was not significant, although in the right direction with women scoring higher than men. Kouzes and Posner also found differences in the practice of Modeling the Way, with women scoring significantly higher than men.

Business Week (November 20, 2000) also reported that women executives are judged as being more effective than their male counterparts in motivating others, fostering communication, producing high-quality work, and listening to others. All of these practices are strongly related to Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, and Encouraging the Heart.

Comparison Between United States Female MBA Students and Argentina Female MBA Students.

The LPI-self scores of female MBA students in the United States and female MBA students in Argentina illustrate that scores of women students from Argentina were significantly higher on the dimensions of Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, and Enabling others to Act. There was not a significant difference in the practice of Modeling the Way. United States female

students scored higher than Argentina females on Encouraging the Heart (although the difference was not statistically significant). See Tables 13 through 17 for analysis.

	Argentina	United States
Mean	24.35514019	21.98113208
Variance	11.7972139	12.13425254
Observations	107	53
Pooled Variance	11.90813801	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	158	
t Stat	4.095718514	
P(T<=t) one-tail	3.35154E-05	
t Critical one tail	1.654555035	
P(T<=t) two-tail	6.70309E-05	
t Critical two-tail		

	Argentina	United States
Mean	23.61682243	21.05660377
Variance	13.76688415	16.66981132
Observations	107	53
Pooled Variance	14.7222779	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	158	
t Stat	3.972458644	
P(T<=t) one-tail	5.39248E-05	
t Critical one tail	1.654555035	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.00010785	
t Critical two-tail	1.975090527	

TABLE 15: Enabling Others to Act – Female		
	Argentina	United States
Mean	25.20560748	21.05660377
Variance	8.542232411	16.66981132
Observations	107	53
Pooled Variance	11.2171318	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	158	
t Stat	7.375182023	
P(T<=t) one-tail	4.35428E-12	
t Critical one tail	1.654555035	
P(T<=t) two-tail	8.70857E-12	
t Critical two-tail	1.975090527	

TABLE 16: Modeling the Way – Female		
	Argentina	United States
Mean	24.27102804	24.03773585
Variance	12.2560395	84.11393324
Observations	107	53
Pooled Variance	35.90547288	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	158	
t Stat	0.231787336	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.40850156	
t Critical one tail	1.654555035	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.817003119	
t Critical two-tail	1.975090527	

TABLE 17: Encouraging the Heart – Female		
	Argentina	United States
Mean	24.14953271	24.77358491
Variance	10.99629695	15.79390421
Observations	107	53
Pooled Variance	12.5752563	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	158	
t Stat	-1.047688857	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.148191007	
t Critical one tail	1.654555035	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.296382013	
t Critical two-tail	1.975090527	

The reasons for Argentina women scoring themselves higher than United States women on all dimensions except Encouraging the Heart may be explained by the differences in national culture which were discussed under section 1.1.1.

Comparison Between United States Male MBA Students and Argentina Male MBA Students.

The LPI-Self scores of Male MBA students in Argentina were significantly higher than male MBA students in the United States on all dimensions: Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, Modeling the Way and Encouraging the Heart. See Tables 18 through 22 for an illustration of the differences.

TABLE 18: Challenging the Process - Male		
	Argentina	United States
Mean	24.05660377	21.92982456
Variance	7.477503628	11.6735589
Observations	53	57
Pooled Variance	9.65323599	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	

TABLE 18: Challenging the Process - Male		
	Argentina	United States
df	108	
t Stat	3.58727743	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000251812	
t Critical one tail	1.659086593	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000503625	
t Critical two-tail	1.982170943	

TABLE 19: Inspiring a Shared Vision - Male		
	Argentina	United States
Mean	23.33962264	20.07017544
Variance	11.03628447	18.45927318
Observations	53	57
Pooled Variance	14.88524158	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	
t Stat	4.440945105	
P(T<=t) one-tail	1.08624E-05	
t Critical one tail	1.659086593	
P(T<=t) two-tail	2.17248E-05	
t Critical two-tail	1.982170943	

TABLE 20: Enabling Others to Act - Male		
	Argentina	United States
Mean	25.20754717	22.98245614
Variance	6.398403483	8.446115288
Observations	53	57
Pooled Variance	7.460179975	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	

TABLE 20: Enabling Others to Act - Male		
	Argentina	United States
t Stat	4.269255538	
P(T<=t) one-tail	2.11477E-05	
t Critical one tail	1.659086593	
P(T<=t) two-tail	4.22954E-05	
t Critical two-tail	1.982170943	

TABLE 21: Modeling the Way – Male		
	Argentina	United States
Mean	24.30188679	22.0877193
Variance	7.214804064	8.474310777
Observations	53	57
Pooled Variance	7.867881619	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	
t Stat	4.136762447	
P(T<=t) one-tail	3.49665E-05	
t Critical one tail	1.659086593	
P(T<=t) two-tail	6.9933E-05	
t Critical two-tail	1.982170943	

TABLE 22: Encouraging the Heart - Male		
	Argentina	United States
Mean	24.03773585	22.19298246
Variance	10.72931785	11.72994987
Observations	53	57
Pooled Variance	11.24816409	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	

	Argentina	United States
t Stat	2.88254779	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.002380304	
t Critical one tail	1.659086593	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.004760609	
t Critical two-tail	1.982170943	

The higher scores on all leadership practice dimensions was a surprise to the authors (especially the degree of difference in the rankings). Reasons which may account for Argentina male students consistently scoring higher on this dimension were previously discussed under section 1.1.1.

Comparison Between United States Male MBA Students and Argentina Female MBA Students.

It is interesting to note that Argentina females also scored significantly higher on all LPI-self dimensions than United States males. The absolute mean differences were approximately the same as evidenced between Argentina males and United States males. See Table 23 for a comparison and ranking of the leadership practice differentials between United States males and Argentina females.

Leadership Practice	United States - M		Argentina - F	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Challenging the Process	21.93	4	24.35	2
Inspiring a Shared Vision	20.07	5	23.62	5
Enabling Others to Act	22.98	1	25.20	1
Modeling the Way	22.09	3	24.27	3
Encouraging the Heart	22.19	2	24.15	4

Although the mean scores between United States Males and Argentina Females were wide and significant, the rankings of the dimensions was similar with both genders scoring highest on Enabling Others to Act and lowest on Inspiring a Shared Vision. Argentina female respondents

definitely perceive themselves as performing on all leadership practices. Perhaps Argentine women view themselves (especially in this sample) as being more educated, more ambitious, and possessing greater leadership potential than others in the study.

Maria Jose Lubertino (2000) stated that although Argentine women produce 60 percent of the goods and services, they only receive 40 percent of the remuneration. Men, on average, are paid 30 percent more than women. It also reported, however, that in 1994 the National Constitution guaranteed equality between men and women and that Argentina has institutionalized policies to achieve gender equity. In the Argentina Chamber of Deputies, women hold approximately 27 percent of the seats. There are, however, only two women among the 72 senators. Women do make up 30% of all those running for office in recent elections. Perhaps the Argentine women of this new century see a change coming and this is reflected in their leadership practices scores.

Comparisons Between Argentina Male MBA Students and United States Female MBA Students.

Argentina males scored significantly higher than United States women on the dimensions of Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, and Enabling Others to Act (See Tables 24, 25 and 26). They also scored higher than United States Females on Modeling the Way, although the difference was not statistically significant (See Table 27). American women scored higher than Argentina males on the Encouraging the Heart Dimension, but, once again, the difference was not statistically significant (See Table 28).

Challenging the Process		
	U.S. Females	Argentina Males
Mean	21.98113208	24.05660377
Variance	12.13425254	7.477503628
Observations	53	53
Pooled Variance	9.805878084	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	104	
t Stat	-3.411901681	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000460011	
t Critical one tail	1.659636837	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000920022	
t Critical two-tail	1.983034963	

TABLE 25: Comparison of Argentina Males to United States Females		
Inspiring a Shared Vision		
	U.S. Females	Argentina Males
Mean	21.05660377	23.33962264
Variance	16.66981132	11.03628447
Observations	53	53
Pooled Variance	13.8530479	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	104	
t Stat	-3.157619314	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.001040995	
t Critical one tail	1.659636837	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.002081991	
t Critical two-tail	1.983034963	

TABLE 26: Comparison of Argentina Males to United States Females		
Enabling Others to Act		
	U.S. Females	Argentina Males
Mean	24.18867925	25.20754717
Variance	6.656023222	6.398403483
Observations	53	53
Pooled Variance	6.527213353	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	104	
t Stat	-2.052943149	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.021294161	
t Critical one tail	1.659636837	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.042588322	
t Critical two-tail	1.983034963	

TABLE 27: Comparison of Argentina Males to United States Females		
Modeling the Way		
	U.S. Females	Argentina Males
Mean	24.03773585	24.30188679
Variance	84.11393324	7.214804064
Observations	53	53
Pooled Variance	45.66436865	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	104	
t Stat	-0.201227056	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.420457037	
t Critical one tail	1.659636837	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.840914075	
t Critical two-tail	1.983034963	

TABLE 28: Comparison of Argentina Males to United States Females		
Encouraging the Heart		
	U.S. Females	Argentina Males
Mean	24.77358491	24.03773585
Variance	15.79390421	10.72931785
Observations	53	53
Pooled Variance	13.26161103	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	104	
t Stat	1.040192053	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.150331446	
t Critical one tail	1.659636837	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.300662891	
t Critical two-tail	1.983034963	

Women seem to universally score higher than males on the leadership practice of Encouraging the Heart. This may be attributed to the female tendency to value quality of life values, relationships, and nurturing behavior more than men. Another reason may stem from women's traditional roles as mother and homemaker where encouraging children and fostering relationship-behavior is very important.

Higher scores from male Argentina respondents on the remainder of the dimensions were not unexpected and may be explained by the reasons enumerated in section 1.1.1 of this paper.

Comparison Within the United States and Argentina

Comparison Within the United States Between Male and Female MBA Students.

The LPI-Self scores between United States males and United States females revealed two statistically significant differences (See Tables 29 through 33). Women respondents reported engaging in the dimensions of Enabling Others to Act and Encouraging the Heart behavior more significantly than did their male counterparts. Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, and Modeling the Way were not significantly different for males and females.

	U.S. Females	U.S. Males
Mean	21.98113208	21.92982456
Variance	12.13425254	11.6735589
Observations	53	57
Pooled Variance	11.89537435	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	
t Stat	0.077959839	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.469002127	
t Critical one tail	1.659086593	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.938004253	
t Critical two-tail		

TABLE 30: Inspiring a Shared Vision – United States

	U.S. Females	U.S. Males
Mean	21.05660377	20.07017544
Variance	16.66981132	18.45927318
Observations	53	57
Pooled Variance	17.59768043	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	
t Stat	1.232301126	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.110256328	
t Critical one tail	1.659086593	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.220512655	
t Critical two-tail	1.982170943	

TABLE 31: Enabling Others to Act – United States

	U.S. Females	U.S. Males
Mean	24.18867925	22.98245614
Variance	6.656023222	8.446115288
Observations	53	57
Pooled Variance	7.584219108	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	
t Stat	2.295362211	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.011822128	
t Critical one tail	1.659086593	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.023644256	
t Critical two-tail	1.982170943	

TABLE 32: Modeling the Way – United States		
	U.S. Females	U.S. Males
Mean	24.03773585	22.0877193
Variance	84.11393324	8.474310777
Observations	53	57
Pooled Variance	44.89338826	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	
t Stat	1.525197643	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.065066473	
t Critical one tail	1.659086593	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.130132946	
t Critical two-tail	1.982170943	

TABLE 33: Encouraging the Heart – United States		
	U.S. Females	U.S. Males
Mean	24.77358491	22.19298246
Variance	15.79390421	11.72994987
Observations	53	57
Pooled Variance	13.68666863	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	108	
t Stat	3.655537546	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000199054	
t Critical one tail	1.659086593	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000398107	
t Critical two-tail	1.982170943	

These differences would be supported, for example, by the Griggs (1989) study which states (among other things) that women tend to view power in relational terms and as something to be shared and do spend more time than men in building supportive work environments.

Comparison Within Argentina Between Male and Female MBA Students.

No significant differences existed between Argentina Males and Females concerning perceived behavior on any of the leadership practices. In fact, the recorded scores were almost identical on each of the dimensions (See Table 34). It is interesting to note that both genders self-ranked their best practice as Enabling Others to Act and their worst practice as Inspiring a Shared Vision. The remainder of the scores are so close that a ranking is not really relevant.

The authors were slightly surprised by the equality of LPI scores by gender. As mentioned previously, gender equality may be viewed as a reality in Argentina. Gender discrimination has been discouraged and promoting women equality has been institutionalized. This phenomenon, however, may be more prevalent in Buenos Aires than in the provinces where specific plans to incorporate the concept of gender in public policy are practiced to a lesser degree (Lubertino, 2000).

Leadership Practice	Male		Female	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Challenging the Process	24.06	3	24.35	2
Inspiring a Shared Vision	23.34	5	23.62	5
Enabling Others to Act	25.21	1	25.21	1
Modeling the Way	24.30	2	24.27	3
Encouraging the Heart	24.04	4	24.15	4

CONCLUSIONS

In a rapidly changing and volatile world, leadership plays a major role in our work place, our schools, and in many other areas of our lives. All research which helps people enhance their understanding of leadership, whether it be an individual situation or a global situation, is beneficial. In brief, some of the major conclusions of this study are the following:

1. In the aggregate, the LPI-Self scores of MBA students in the United States versus Argentina varied significantly with Argentina respondents rating themselves higher than United States

respondents on four of the five dimensions: Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, and Modeling the Way.

The authors conducted this comparative study with a major presumption that there may be significant differences between the MBA respondents of the two countries. The five dimensions of the behavior of effective leaders as defined by Kouzes and Posner can be better understood within the whole range of values indigenous to a given culture. Cultural values shape and mold the workers as well as the leaders' perceptual framework. In addition, Hofstede (1984) asserts that people *carry mental programs* which are developed in the family and in early childhood and reinforced in schools and organizations, and that these mental programs contain components of *national culture*. The authors were surprised by the size and range of differences between Argentina and United States respondents in this study. Although this study did not examine the impact of various leadership practices on performance, one can make the statement that leaders from culturally different countries use many leadership practices in similar ways and with similar frequency. This at least suggests that all view these practices as effective. The perceptions of the extent to which one engages in these practices, however, can vary significantly from culture to culture. Some of the proposed reasons for differences in perceptions between United States and Argentina respondents were addressed in Section 1.1.1.

2. In the aggregate, LPI-Self scores of male MBA students versus Female MBA students showed females scoring higher than males on three of the five dimensions: Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, and Encouraging the Heart.
3. LPI-Self scores of women MBA students from Argentine was significantly higher than those of United States women on the dimensions of Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, and Enabling Others to Act. United States women scored higher on Encouraging the Heart (although the difference was not statistically significant).
4. LPI-Self scores of male MBA students in Argentina were significantly higher than male MBA students in the United States on all dimensions.
5. LPI-Self scores of female MBA students in Argentina were significantly higher than male MBA students in the United States on all dimensions.
6. LPI-Self scores of male MBA students in Argentina were significantly higher than female MBA students in the United States on the dimensions of Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, and Enabling Others to Act. United States women scored higher than

Argentine males on Encouraging the Heart (although the difference was not statistically significant).

7. Women MBA students in the United States scored significantly higher on the leadership practices of Enabling Others to Act and Encouraging the Heart than did men MBA students in the United States.
8. No significant differences existed between Argentina Males and Females concerning perceived behavior on any of the leadership practices.

One basic limitation of the study is that only self-reported and self-perceived behavior in reference to each leadership practice was measured, not actual performance in the workplace. There definitely could be a difference between reported and actual leadership practiced (a social desirability bias). If this bias varies across cultures, it can have a direct influence on the results of the study.

Cultural and institutional frameworks differ considerably among the two countries of the United States and Argentina. Some of these leadership practices may be culturally contingent and not universally practiced. Lastly, additional research needs to be concluded with a broader-based population of respondents, representing different age groups, different educational backgrounds, different organizational types, and different regions of the respective countries.

MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Leadership behavior can be changed and is a learnable behavior. The study of leadership practices is valuable to all organizations and all cultures. Education and training concerning the similarities and dissimilarities in leadership practices is valuable for all countries engaged in global business. Differences in leadership practices may dictate the amount of time, energy, and cost commitments necessary for educational training and development programs.

There are numerous management implications that flow from this comparative leadership study. Among these implications are the following:

1. An analysis of leadership feedback presents an opportunity to engage in conversation with groups (both within organizations and across cultures) concerning the importance of being *different* and practicing diversity. It should provide a preliminary indication of what leadership practices need to be *improved* within each individual, work unit and organization.

2. Leadership feedback creates a cross-cultural discussion concerning the nature of different leadership practices and improves understanding of the leadership *quotient* in organizational success.
3. Developing an awareness of international leadership differences is an excellent place to begin an analysis of leadership strengths and weaknesses within organizations and across country clusters. An understanding of cross-cultural leadership differences should help in discussions concerning motivational approaches used with employees; the level of organizational performance attained; the use of expatriates, country locals, or third-country personnel in the host country; as well as global controls and the type of structure necessary for global governance.
4. Perceived differences in leadership practices between men and women are important in implementing efficient and effective work units (both within organizations and across cultures). The question: *Does gender matter?* It is important to all students of leadership.

Elisa Carrio (2003) recently stated that Argentina is “a country that realizes about the present when it is past.” In other words, the country does not see “different things when they are happening but when they have happened.” The gap between reality and consciousness is equivalent to admitting that one lives in the past. By being reactive, Argentina has been unable to be creative and drive actions toward the future. To change the paradigm, it will be necessary to be proactive in order to think in terms of a future vision and mission.

According to a recent survey, Romer Graciela (2003) identified several values which Argentines said needed improvement if the country was to significantly change (See Table 35).

This survey definitely illustrates the struggle between individual and common values. In Argentina there is a tension between objectivity and subjectivity, and, even nowadays, over the issue of reality. In this survey, the values of honesty, education, patriotism or national feeling, work-effort-sacrifice, management capacity and leadership, and solidarity are deemed most needed. Interestingly, the values of first-world countries tend to be respect for moral, social and legal order, responsibility and tolerance, and the entrepreneurial spirit. These are of lesser importance on the Argentine list!

Currently, after twenty-years of democracy with the government committed to low inflation and a free economy characterized by open trade, Argentina does show change. In the cities, people are in a hurry and remain active throughout long hours of the day. However, a feeling of loss of privacy and control of their personal destiny prevails. After the radical free marketers introduced their normative structures, the income gap has widened. A percentage of Argentines definitely benefited. Cities have been modernized and tourism has grown, but the middle class is definitely pauperized as the expected trickle-down effects of free-market economics has not occurred. Civilian

governments have not found an equitable balance between democracy and efficiency. Organizations have become more rigid rather than more flexible. Courts have been ineffective and corrupt and street violence has increased. The inability to develop a competitive strategy has produced stagnation and frustration with a large segment of the populace. Unfortunately, pessimism has ensued and many immigrate: they “return to the ships.”

Item	Percent Naming Item
Honesty	56%
Education	34%
Patriotism	21%
Labor – Effort – Sacrifice	21%
Leadership & Management Capacity	19%
Solidarity	15%
Respect of Law & Social Rules	14%
Responsibility	7%
Change Disposition	5%
Tolerance	4%
Entrepreneurship Spirit	2%

Source: Romer Graciela & Asociados. Buenos Aires. October 2003.

Another recent survey conducted by Austral University (2004) identified that while 62% of the students believe they will improve their position in five years time, only 38% think the country will do so. This means that future leaders, professionals and scientists of Argentina conceive their future separate from that of their country. This conclusion defines the history of the Argentinean identity -- a society whose individuals are bound to save themselves alone, with no solidarity skills, just personal deliverance. The result of this investigation reveals that somehow the Argentinian context may encourage a greater development of personal and individual leadership than the USA. This does not imply, however, that the Argentinean experience leads to identity in a collective or social context.

Will the perceived usage of the leadership practices of challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart have a positive influence on Argentina organizations and institutions over a future planning horizon?

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