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# PERCEIVED POWER AS A MEDIATOR OF MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION STYLE AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION: A PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION

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*Differential usage of the five bases of power as conceptualized by French and Raven (1968) were examined to determine which base(s) of power mediated the Management Communication Style (MCS) of a supervisor. In addition, the supervisor's communication of each type of power was examined for relationships with employee satisfaction. Two samples are employed, one a group of 250 public-school teachers and the other a group of 171 managers representing banking, service industries, and a product-based organization. Results indicate that both samples associated the communication of coercive power with a "boss-centered," tell-type MCS and negative job satisfaction. Both samples responded positively to increased use of referent and expert power. Reward power seems to have little positive impact for either sample. Lastly, legitimate power had a negative impact on MCS for the management sample.*

A number of variables operating within the organizational setting have been found to impact employee satisfaction. Variables such as working conditions (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939); job enlargement (Argyris, 1964); job enrichment (Herzberg, 1966); the opportunity to participate in decision making (Daly, McCroskey, & Falcione, 1976); employee self-esteem (Falcione, McCroskey & Daly, 1977); employees' perceptions of their supervisors in terms of homophily, attractiveness, and credibility (Falcione et al., 1977); organizational and individual innovativeness (Hurt & Teigen, 1977); communication apprehension (Falcione et al., 1977); tolerance for disagreement (Richmond &

McCroskey, 1979); and management communication style (Richmond & McCroskey, 1979) all appear to affect the degree to which employees are satisfied.

Of particular importance to the present study is the notion that employees' perceptions of the communication behaviors of their immediate supervisors have a significant impact on their satisfaction. Specifically, research by Falcione et al. (1977) indicated that employees' satisfaction with their supervisors is closely associated with perceptions of listening, understanding, and quality of communication in conjunction with perceptions of their supervisors' credibility, attractiveness, and attitude homophily. In addition, research by Richmond and McCroskey (1979) indicates that management communication style is associated with employee satisfaction. Specifically, Richmond and McCroskey found that employees who perceive their supervisors as using a more "employee-centered" management communication style (consults or joins) are more satisfied than employees who perceive their supervisors as using a more "boss-centered" man-

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agement communication style (tells or sells). Obviously, it appears that a variety of employees' perceptions of their supervisors may significantly predict whether they are satisfied or not. However, one significant variable that has received little if any attention in the literature on employee satisfaction is perceived use of supervisory power. Thus the present study sought to increase our understanding of the importance of the supervisor-subordinate relationship by examining the impact on satisfaction of employees' perceptions of differential use of supervisory power bases. In addition, the present study sought to increase understanding of how the different kinds of power might be perceived as mediators of an employee-centered or a supervisor-centered management communication style.

#### POWER

Power has typically been defined as an individual's *potential* to have an effect on another person's or group of persons' behavior. More specifically, power is defined as the capacity to influence another person to do something he/she would not have done had he/she not been influenced (Cartwright & Zander, 1968; Goldner, 1970; McClelland, 1975; Zaleznik & Kets de Vries, 1975). In short, an individual exhibits some type of change in his/her behavior, attitudes, beliefs, etc. as a result of influence from someone else. However, French and Raven (1968) note that the change in an individual must be a direct result of the influence exerted by another rather than the result of a combination of forces which may have exerted additional influence. From this definition of power, French and Raven (1968) identified five potential bases of power: coercive, reward, legitimate, referent, and expert.

French and Raven (1968) describe coercive power as being based on an individual's expectations that he/she will be punished by another if he/she does not conform to that person's influence attempt. Thus, in terms of the organization, supervisors who are perceived as communicating with coercive power are those supervisors who communicate messages of threat or force in an attempt to influence subordinates. In addition, French and Raven (1968) maintain that the strength of coercive power is contingent upon the probability of punishment for not

complying minus the probability of punishment for complying.

Reward power, on the other hand, is based on an individual's perception of another's ability to mediate rewards for him/her (French & Raven, 1968). This ability involves both the "ability to administer positive valences and to remove or decrease negative valences" (French & Raven, 1968, p. 263). Thus, within the organization, persons who are perceived as communicating with reward power are not only those individuals who can grant pay increases and promotions, but also those individuals who can alleviate menial tasks and other negative aspects of the organizational system. French and Raven (1968) further note that the strength of reward power is contingent upon an individual's perception of the probability that another can mediate a reward.

The most obvious way in which an individual obtains power is through the organization itself, which gives him/her the "right" to direct, evaluate, reward, and punish others within certain, usually well-defined, limits. Such a base for power is referred to as legitimate or assigned power (French & Raven, 1968). In brief, use of legitimate power is based on an individual's perceptions of another's right to influence or prescribe behavior for him/her. Generally, legitimate power is characterized by positions in an organization's formal hierarchy, e.g., manager, supervisor, principal, president.

Identification of an individual with another is the base for referent power (French & Raven, 1968). Essentially, the ability to communicate referent power is based on the personal relationship between two people. Specifically, it is based on the desire of the less powerful to identify with and please the more powerful person. Such identification is based on an individual's attraction toward another; thus, the stronger the attraction and identification, the stronger the referent power (French & Raven, 1968).

The final base of power defined by French and Raven (1968) is expert power. Expert power is based upon an individual's perceptions of another's competence and knowledge in very specific areas. Consequently, the strength of expert power depends on an individual's perception of another's competence in a given area. French and Raven (1968) contend that communication of expert power

results in a change in an individual's cognitive structure and any change in behavior is a secondary result of that influence.

#### MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION STYLE

Research reported by Richmond and McCroskey (1979) has advanced the construct of Management Communication Style (MCS) and demonstrated the relationship between MCS and employee satisfaction. MCS is viewed as a communication tendency of a supervisor produced by a combination of the organization's leadership style and decision-making style, as conceptualized by Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) and the supervisor's own communication style. Potential MCS ranges from an extremely "boss-centered" orientation in which the supervisor simply orders to subordinates, to an extremely "employee-centered" orientation in which the supervisor and subordinates jointly communicate to make decisions. Although MCS is viewed as falling on a continuum, there are four major points identified on the continuum, representing increasing levels of employee interaction with supervisor: tell, sell, consult, and join.

Previous research has indicated that as MCS moves toward the employee-centered (join) end of the continuum, employee satisfaction with both supervision and the work itself increases meaningfully (Richmond & McCroskey, 1979). These findings suggest the construct of MCS needs to be explored to determine the factors which impact or interact with MCS in modifying employee satisfaction.

#### MCS AND USES OF POWER

There is reason to believe that MCS and power are related. Both coercive and legitimate or assigned power appear to imply a "tell" orientation. On the other hand, both referent and expert power would appear to function best in a less "boss-centered" environment. Reward power might be associated with a "sell" orientation. Consequently, the following two hypotheses and one research question were advanced:

H<sub>1</sub>: A supervisor who employs a coercive or legitimate/assigned form of power will be perceived to use a "boss-centered" management communication style.

H<sub>2</sub>: A supervisor who employs a referent or expert form of power will be perceived to use an "employee-centered" management communication style.

Q<sub>1</sub>: To what extent does reward power mediate management communication style?

#### POWER AND SATISFACTION

Although there is a general consensus that organizational effectiveness depends in part on the exercise of power, the nature and the magnitude of the power exercised remains controversial (Thibaut & Riecken, 1955; Cohen, 1959; Katz & Kahn, 1966; Greene, 1975; Reimann & Negandhi, 1975; Bacharach & Lawler, 1976; Kanter, 1976). Moreover, empirical examination of the exercise of power and its impact on variables within the organization climate is noticeably lacking in the literature on organizations. However, from a theoretical as well as an intuitive point of view, the interpersonal relationship and communication between a supervisor and his/her subordinates is likely to be the most important factor in determining his/her power and influence (Fishbein, Landy, & Hatch, 1979; Peabody, 1962). Specifically, research by Pelz (1952) suggests that a combination of good human relations and power is associated with high morale. In addition, research by Thibaut and Riecken (1955) suggests that subordinates are more likely to inhibit aggression and negative attitudes toward a person who communicates legitimate rather than coercive power. Hurwitz, Zander and Hymovitch (1968) further suggest that people who exercise legitimate power tend to be liked more and receive more communication than those persons who exercise coercive power. Moreover, studies in conflict settings have suggested that the mere use of coercive power creates an impression of potency. In essence, persons who carry out threats or adopt exploitive strategies are perceived as more potent than those persons who do not undertake such actions (Horai, Habner, Tedeschi, & Smith, 1970; Lindsfold & Bennett, 1973; Lindsfold & Tedeschi, 1971; Schlenker, Helm, & Tedeschi, 1973). However, Day and Hamblin (1964) found that subordinates' performance and attitudes varied according to the supervisors' use of punishment and closeness of supervision. Moreover, Herzberg (1968) contends that though



punishment or the threat of punishment (coercion) does not motivate employees; and thus does not lead to job satisfaction, rewards or the promise of rewards also do not motivate employees. Briefly, Herzberg (1968) maintains that communication of both coercion and reward only result in short-term movement, not motivation, and thus, little employee satisfaction.

The only previous study which has examined the impact of perceived power (employing the French and Raven conceptualization) in an organization was reported by Student (1968). Student obtained ratings of the extent of use of each of the five bases of power for 39 supervisors from 486 hourly employees in a plant manufacturing major home appliances. These ratings of perceived use of power were correlated with behavioral measures that would appear to be related to satisfaction and independent evaluations of actual work performance. Student's (1968) results indicated that as perceived use of referent and expert power increased, subordinates had fewer excused absences. Other bases of power were not significantly related to number of excused absences. Also, none of the bases of power were found to be significantly related to either unexcused absences or turnover. In terms of actual performance, however, only perceived use of legitimate power was found to be unrelated. Referent power was positively related to high evaluations on indirect cost performance, scrap cost performance, quality of product produced, and number of suggestions submitted for improving the operation of the plant. Expert power was positively related to high evaluations on supply cost performance and quality of produce produced. Reward power was positively associated with supply cost performance but negatively associated with average earnings. Coercive power was negatively associated with both maintenance cost performance and suggestions submitted for improving the operation of the plant.

Previous research and theoretical formulations permit generation of several hypotheses concerning the use of power in an organizational environment and resultant impact on employee satisfaction. Hypotheses relating to each of the five bases of power suggested by French and Raven (1968) will be advanced.

Previous writers have almost universally

suggested that use of coercive power leads to negative consequences. Therefore, the third hypothesis was:

- H<sub>3</sub>: There will be a negative relationship between perceived extent of a supervisor's communication of coercive power and employee satisfaction.

The basic assumption of many writers concerned with organizational communication and behavior is that the judicious use of rewards will modify employee behavior. Herzberg (1968), however, challenges this assumption and argues that use of reward power is simply the reverse side of coercive power; thus reward will show only short-term impact and no meaningful increase in satisfaction. Nevertheless, not even Herzberg suggests that the use of reward power will decrease satisfaction. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis was:

- H<sub>4</sub>: There will be a positive relationship between perceived extent of a supervisor's communication of reward power and employee satisfaction.

The use of legitimate or assigned power has received comparatively little attention from previous writers. Although Thibaut and Riecken (1955) as well as Hurwitz, Zander, and Hymovitch (1968) argue that employees respond more positively to legitimate power than coercive, no one has provided either data or a convincing argument that use of legitimate power, per se, will be positively associated with employee satisfaction. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis was:

- H<sub>5</sub>: There will be a negative relationship between perceived extent of a supervisor's communication of legitimate or assigned power and employee satisfaction.

The theoretical position of French and Raven (1968) as well as other writers concerned with similar constructs suggests that referent and expert power operate in a more indirect than direct manner. Thus the employee is likely to associate either of these with specific attempts to influence his/her behavior, even though he/she may be aware of their presence and extent in general. When such influence modifies the employee's behavior, it is likely that the employee will see

the change as a function of her/his own choice, but with the positive support of the supervisor. Because such perceptions should facilitate satisfaction, the sixth and seventh hypotheses were:

- H<sub>6</sub>: There will be a positive relationship between perceived extent of a supervisor's communication of referent power and employee satisfaction.
- H<sub>7</sub>: There will be a positive relationship between perceived extent of a supervisor's communication of expert power and employee satisfaction.

## METHODS

### Samples

There were two major samples employed in the study. The first sample consisted of 250 public-school, elementary and secondary teachers (190 females, 60 males) representing 39 school districts in Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. Participation was a result of being enrolled in a graduate class (six different courses offered in six different areas, enrollment voluntary) entitled "Communication in the Educational Organization."

The second sample consisted of 171 managers (51 females, 120 males) representing three diverse and distinct organizations. The first subset consisted of supervisors ( $N=45$ ) ranging from first-line supervisors to a plant superintendent. This group of people was from a product-based organization. The products were faucets, tubing, and bathroom and kitchen accessories. Each subject was responsible for no fewer than 11 subordinates, and the plant superintendent was responsible for approximately 1,300 subordinates. The second subset consisted of 23 subjects who were service personnel for the state of Pennsylvania. They were employed by the parks board, the water board, aviation centers, the criminal justice department, state nursing facilities, and mental health facilities. All were supervisors who were responsible for state-funded activities and had several subordinates under them. The last subject included 103 subjects who were bank managers, cashiers and upper management personnel in the federal reserve system in the state of Virginia. There were no tellers or ac-

countants in this sample. Some of the bank managers were responsible for as few as 15 subordinates, whereas some of the bank managers were responsible for as many as 2,000 to 3,000 subordinates. Participation for the three managerial samples was as a result of being voluntarily enrolled in communication workshops directed by one of the authors.

### Measurement

The following instruments were employed to measure the variables included in this investigation:

*Employee Satisfaction.* The multiple factor approach was employed to measure employee satisfaction. The Job Descriptive Index (JDI) developed by Smith, Kendall, and Hulin (1969) was employed. The JDI measures five dimensions of satisfaction: supervision, work, pay, promotion and coworkers. Previous studies have revealed the JDI to be a factorially stable instrument with good reliability (Smith et al., 1969; Falcione, et al., 1977; Hurt & Teigen, 1977; Richmond & McCroskey, 1979). Previously observed internal reliabilities have been satisfactory, e.g., supervision, .92; work, .80; pay, .86; promotions, .80; and coworkers, .85. These reliabilities were obtained by deleting 14 of the 72 items with a lower than .50 item-total correlation and by deleting items that had face-validity problems (i.e. hot) (Richmond & McCroskey, 1979). In the present study, the same scales were used as were employed in the Richmond and McCroskey (1979) study.

*Management Communication Style.* The Management Communication Style instrument (MCS) developed by Richmond and McCroskey (1979) was employed. It is a 19-point continuum ranging from Tell (10), through Sell (16), through Consult (22), to Join (28). Subjects in this study were asked to circle on the continuum the MCS "under which you work." Test-retest reliability for the MCS was .85 in a previous investigation (Richmond & McCroskey, 1979).

*Bases of Power.* Perceived Power Scales (PPS) were developed for this study. In the previous study by Student (1968) a description of each type of power, using the French and Raven (1968) conceptualization (coer-



TABLE 1  
Means and Standard Deviations of All Variables

| Variable    | Manager<br>$\bar{X}$ | Sample<br>SD | Teacher<br>$\bar{X}$ | Sample<br>SD | t      |
|-------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|--------|
| MCS         | 18.31                | 5.26         | 16.75                | 4.42         | 3.28*  |
| Coercion    | 13.03                | 8.35         | 16.59                | 9.48         | 3.98*  |
| Reward      | 17.28                | 8.65         | 16.53                | 8.71         | .88    |
| Legitimate  | 22.38                | 9.02         | 27.17                | 8.12         | 5.70*  |
| Referent    | 18.88                | 8.97         | 21.34                | 9.65         | 2.66*  |
| Expert      | 23.04                | 8.95         | 20.66                | 9.88         | 2.51*  |
| Supervision | 86.04                | 13.73        | 75.91                | 17.32        | 6.41*  |
| Work        | 58.16                | 9.32         | 56.34                | 10.11        | 1.88   |
| Pay         | 28.66                | 8.93         | 22.16                | 9.22         | 7.21*  |
| Promotions  | 34.09                | 9.64         | 23.48                | 8.74         | 11.75* |
| Coworkers   | 8.175                | 13.66        | 80.50                | 15.17        | .87    |

\*Significantly different,  $p < .05$ .

cion, reward, legitimate, referent, and expert), was given and the subjects were asked to estimate the extent to which they comply with their supervisor's wishes because of that type of power. The response option was a single, five-point, Likert-type scale. Because a single-item scale does not enable the researcher to estimate internal reliability of response, the present study employed five items. The subjects were asked to respond to the following statement for each type of power: "My supervisor employs \_\_\_ power." The measure was composed of five seven-point, bipolar scales for each type of power. The scales were as follows: agree-disagree, false-true, incorrect-correct, wrong-right, and yes-no.

#### Data Collection

The teacher sample was asked to complete the JDI scales during the first of six class periods (each class was seven hours in length) before any content had been discussed. All other scales were administered as class exercises. During the third class period the Management Communication Style construct was introduced and the MCS scales were collected. At the beginning of the next class the MCS was collected again for test-retest reliability purposes. The bases of power (PPS) were introduced into the course during the fifth period and, as an exercise, the teachers were asked to complete the power scales on their immediate supervisors.

The management samples were asked to

complete all the instruments (JDI, MCS, PPS) as a take-home project during the communication workshops. The MCS and the PPS were explained on the instruments. The subjects were able to read the descriptions and were also able to ask the workshop instructor any questions.

All subjects' responses were anonymous. To insure anonymity, subjects were assigned random code numbers known only to themselves. They recorded their code numbers on each scale, which permitted merging the data for analysis.

#### Data Analyses

Preliminary data analyses involved computation of means and standard deviations for each variable for each sample and internal reliability estimates for the measures.

The preliminary analyses indicated that the subsamples of managers did not differ on perceived MCS, differed on only one of the power variables (coercion), but differed significantly on all five satisfaction variables. The service personnel perceived their supervisors as exerting more coercive power than the other manager groups. They were also less satisfied on all dimensions than the other manager groups. Nevertheless, because their scores on all other variables were much more similar to the other manager groups than they were to the teacher group, they were retained in the overall manager group for subsequent analyses.

The preliminary analyses also indicated

that, as expected, the teacher group and the manager group differed significantly. The two groups were significantly different on MCS, on four of the five power variables (not reward), and on three of the five satisfaction variables (see Table 1). Because the two groups were so markedly different, all subsequent analyses were conducted for each sample separately, providing an internal replication for this study.

The first two hypotheses were tested by simple correlations between the appropriate power variable scores and MCS scores. The research question concerning reward power was also examined with simple correlations.

Hypotheses three through seven were examined through simple correlations between each power variable and each satisfaction variable. In addition, these hypotheses were examined through canonical correlation analyses between the group of power variables and the group of satisfaction variables.

## RESULTS

Preliminary analyses indicated satisfactory internal reliability on all measures (see Table 2). The only measure with estimated reliability below .86 was the pay dimension of the JDI. The reliability for this measure was .77 for each sample.

### Hypothesis 1

The correlational analyses (see Table 3) indicated support for the hypothesis for both samples. MCS was significantly negatively associated with both coercive ( $r = -.22$ ) and legitimate ( $r = -.19$ ) power for the manager sample and with coercive ( $r = -.45$ ) power for the teacher sample. As these two types of power were perceived to increase, MCS was perceived to be more "boss-centered."

### Hypothesis 2

The correlational analyses (see Table 3) provided support for this hypothesis from the teacher sample but not from the manager sample. Increased referent ( $r = .38$ ) and expert ( $r = .33$ ) power were associated with perceptions of more "employee-centered" MCS by the teacher sample. Although the direction of the correlations for the manager sample was

TABLE 2  
Instrument Reliabilities

| Instrument   | Manager Sample | Teacher Sample |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| Power        |                |                |
| Coercion     | .95            | .99            |
| Reward       | .94            | .98            |
| Legitimate   | .98            | .98            |
| Referent     | .96            | .98            |
| Expert       | .96            | .98            |
| MCS          |                | —*             |
| .87*         |                |                |
| Satisfaction |                |                |
| Supervision  | .90            | .93            |
| Work         | .86            | .90            |
| Pay          | .77            | .77            |
| Promotion    | .87            | .79            |
| Coworkers    | .90            | .92            |

\*No reliability estimate could be computed for the manager sample. The estimate for the teacher sample represents a test-retest correlation. All other estimates are internal estimates based on the Nunnally (1967) procedure.

the same, no significant correlations were observed.

### Question 1

No significant relationship between reward power and MCS was observed for either sample. Power for these tests was above .99 for a medium effect size ( $r = .30$ ) and above .80 for an effect size as small as  $r = .20$  for both samples (Cohen, 1977). The appropriate answer to our research question, therefore, appears to be that use of reward power is not a mediating factor in perceptions of MCS.

### Hypotheses 3-7

The hypothesis ( $H_3$ ) that communication of coercive power would be negatively associated with employee satisfaction was supported on four of the five dimensions of satisfaction for both samples (see Table 3). The negative correlations observed, although not large, were quite consistent across the two samples.

The hypothesis ( $H_4$ ) that communication of reward power would be positively associated with employee satisfaction received little support. Only one significant correlation was observed,  $r = .19$  with supervision for the



TABLE 3  
Correlations of Power with MCS  
and Employee Satisfaction

| Power Type |     | MCS   | Supervision | Work | Pay  | Promotions | Co-workers |
|------------|-----|-------|-------------|------|------|------------|------------|
| Coercion   | M** | -.22* | -.29        | -.16 | -.17 | —          | -.17       |
|            | T** | -.45* | -.27        | -.18 | —    | -.16       | -.13       |
| Reward     | M   | —     | —           | —    | —    | —          | —          |
|            | T   | —     | .19         | —    | —    | —          | —          |
| Legitimate | M   | -.19  | -.20        | —    | —    | —          | —          |
|            | T   | —     | —           | —    | —    | —          | —          |
| Referent   | M   | —     | .19         | —    | —    | —          | —          |
|            | T   | .38   | .43         | .17  | —    | .18        | .14        |
| Expert     | M   | —     | .33         | —    | —    | .16        | —          |
|            | T   | .33   | .46         | —    | .19  | .14        | .20        |

\*Significant,  $p < .05$ . Nonsignificant correlations are not reported.

\*\*M = Manager Sample; T = Teacher Sample.

teacher sample. A supplementary analysis which partialled for the effect of coercive power raised this correlation to .26. A similar supplementary analysis for the manager sample generated a significant partial correlation of .18 for reward power with supervision. Because perceived use of coercive and reward power were significantly correlated for both samples ( $r = .32$  for managers,  $r = .18$  for teachers), it appears that when supervisors employ the "carrot-and-stick" approach, employees respond (negatively) primarily to the "stick" but the "carrot" can help to overcome the negative impact, at least on the supervision dimension of satisfaction.

The results provided only marginal support for the hypothesis ( $H_5$ ) that communication of legitimate power would be negatively associated with employee satisfaction. The only significant correlation was with satisfaction with supervision ( $r = -.20$ ) for the manager sample. Partialling for other effects did not alter this relationship.

The results relating to the last two hypotheses ( $H_6$ ,  $H_7$ ) provided strong support for both with the teacher sample and some support with the manager sample (see Table 3). It appears that referent and expert power are not functioning in the same way for these two groups of employees. The two types of power were not significantly related for the manager group, but were substantially associated ( $r = .53$ ) for the teacher group. However, for both groups both types of power were signifi-

cantly associated with satisfaction with supervision.

The canonical correlation analyses (see Table 4) help to clarify the relationships among types of power and dimensions of satisfaction. The dominant satisfaction element in the analyses for both samples was satisfaction with supervision, as would be expected inasmuch as the power variables relate to the supervisor's communication. The strongest positive contributors to satisfaction for both samples were expert and referent power. The main negative contributor for both samples was coercive power. Some positive contribution was made by reward power for the teacher sample and some negative contribution was made by legitimate power for the manager sample. The canonical analyses, although supportive of the interpretations based on the univariate analyses, indicate a failure to generate a strong multivariate model from the satisfaction dimensions. Clearly, the supervision dimension dominates the variates generated for both samples. Thus, our interpretations must be based on the univariate results.

## CONCLUSIONS

The results relating to our hypotheses discussed above provide some clarification of the relationships among power, MCS, and employee satisfaction. Though additional re-

**TABLE 4**  
**Canonical Correlation Analyses**  
**for Power and Satisfaction: Correlations with Canonical Variates**

|            | PREDICTOR VARIABLES |        |            |          |        |
|------------|---------------------|--------|------------|----------|--------|
|            | Coercion            | Reward | Legitimate | Referent | Expert |
| Managers*  | -.51                | .06    | -.41       | .40      | .66    |
| Teachers** | -.51                | .38    | -.20       | .78      | .84    |

  

|          | CRITERION VARIABLES |      |     |            |           |
|----------|---------------------|------|-----|------------|-----------|
|          | Supervision         | Work | Pay | Promotions | Coworkers |
| Managers | .97                 | .51  | .22 | .38        | .08       |
| Teachers | .97                 | .31  | .31 | .41        | .37       |

\* $R_c = .52$

\*\* $R_c = .55$

search with other subject populations is needed before generalizing to organizations and employees not yet studied, some tentative conclusions are justified.

Our subject populations were clearly different. Not only did they differ in their mean responses to virtually every variable under study, the relationships among these variables, in some cases, differed very sharply. Nevertheless, both samples associated with the communication of coercive power with a "boss-centered," tell-type management communication style and negative job satisfaction. Similarly, they both responded positively to increased use of referent and expert power. Reward power, as suggested by Herzberg (1968), seems to have little positive impact for either group, except as a countervailing element when coercive power is employed.

The differences in relationships between power types and MCS across the samples may be a function of the differential nature of the organizational structures under which the subject populations are employed. The members of the teacher sample predominately are employed in relatively flat structures where the lowest level employees (members of our sample) are allowed considerable freedom in their work and whose supervisors often are doing the same work. Thus, their supervisor often is also their colleague. This may explain the increased importance of referent and expert power in determining both perceived MCS and satisfaction for these employees.

On the other hand, the members of our

manager sample predominately are employed in taller structures and are allowed less flexibility in the performance of their work. In most instances, their supervisors are distinctly in a superior position and are working at substantially different tasks. This situation may enhance the importance of legitimate power and decrease the importance of referent and expert power. Whether these differences are the reason for the observed differences in our results presently is speculation and must be tested with other subject populations before credence can be given to this explanation.

In any event, this preliminary investigation indicates that the association of perceived power use with satisfaction is primarily on the dimension of satisfaction with supervision, as we might expect. Shared variance between power use and satisfaction ranges as high as 21%. On all of the other dimensions of satisfaction, the association is 4% or lower. Future research should focus on the relationship between power and satisfaction with supervision. Other dimensions of satisfaction appear not to be meaningfully related to use of power.

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