

Perceptions of Leadership Excellence in ASEAN Nations

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Abstract Behavioral statements about leadership excellence were evaluated for their importance by 289 managers from five founding ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Factor analysis revealed four factors: (1) Consideration for Others; (2) Progressive Stability; (3) Strategic Thinking; and (4) Trust in Others. Using the behaviors, a leadership excellence scale was created for each factor. Multivariate comparisons across nations showed Indonesia to have the highest and Singapore the lowest importance scores on 'Consideration for Others'. The Philippines had the highest importance scores on 'Progressive Stability', 'Strategic Thinking', and 'Trust in Others'. Multivariate regressions revealed 'Consideration for Others' to be the principal predictor of variables related to leaders' personal qualities and managerial behavior, while 'Strategic Thinking' was the main predictor of leadership variables related to organizational demand and environmental influences. Results are discussed in terms of eastern (Confucian) and western (strategic) influences on the cultures studied.

Keywords ASEAN nations; Asia; Chinese; cross-cultural; leadership excellence; strategic management

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to ascertain whether there were common conceptions of 'leadership excellence' in the perceptions of managers in Southeast Asia. In this region, the most prominent economic grouping is the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Therefore, leadership perceptions were examined in the five founding ASEAN nations: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

The term 'excellence' is used here in its standard definition of surpassing others in accomplishment or achievement. In this article, excellence is examined in terms of the *behaviors* used by someone in a leadership position, rather than in terms of personal traits or characteristics. This perspective allows both theorists and practitioners to identify behaviors that allow a leader to achieve excellent performance

(without excluding the possibility that one might possess an excellent character). Even theorists who maintain that the essence of leadership excellence is based in a person's moral character also point out that character influences the way a leader behaves (see Sankar, 2003). Thus, in the final analysis, it is the way a leader behaves that determines his or her success. A focus on behaviors, which can be adopted by someone in a leadership position (rather than a focus on personality traits, which are difficult to adopt), allows any leader to achieve excellence, whether he or she uses a charismatic, transactional, transformational, or any other leadership style.

Leadership has been studied extensively in the western world, but empirical studies of leadership perceptions in eastern cultures, especially those in Southeast Asia, are comparatively few. Throughout this article, culture is defined as the attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a particular group of people (see Adler, 1986; Smircich, 1983). This definition integrates the previously diverse conceptions of culture into a construct that allows culture to be examined at various levels, including at the organizational, ethnic, and societal group levels. This definition is also useful because it includes values: those principles, standards, or qualities considered to be important or desirable in any culture. Therefore, this concept of culture is particularly relevant to the study of leadership behaviors because values and behaviors are essential components of the definition of culture.

The relative scarcity of research on leadership behavior in Asia that has been published in English raises the question of what perceptions of leadership are like in Asian cultures. Dorfman (1995) argued that the study of leadership across cultures is important for theoretical (and for practical) reasons, and that an understanding of cultures other than that of the West (where most studies are published) is important in order 'to develop leadership theories that transcend cultures' (p. 269). The objective of this study is therefore exploratory, rather than to find support for any particular existing theory. It is intended to fill a research gap concerning what is understood about leadership behavior in Asia.

Southeast Asia is of special interest for theoretical reasons because the study of leadership in this part of Asia may help to determine: (1) whether existing (western) models can explain leadership perceptions in Southeast Asia; (2) whether concepts of leadership in this (eastern) region are unique from – or somehow different than – those portrayed in existing models; or (3) whether leadership in this region can be explained best by a mixture of *both* unique local (eastern) conceptions and previously found (western) concepts.

Origin of western leadership theory

Leadership is an elusive concept that has been argued about and extensively debated in western literature for millennia, at least since Plato (ca. 428–347 BC) wrote about it in his *Republic* (1993). Plato suggested that leadership is an inborn characteristic but that people born with this characteristic had to be trained in the behaviors needed to utilize this ability effectively. Takala (1998) has argued that Plato's concepts of leadership have long been the basis of western thought on this topic, noting that the study of leadership has maintained its roots in the works of Plato, even though the research focus may have evolved from: (a) personal factors; through (b) behavioral styles; (c) contextual approaches; and, currently, to (d) what Takala calls

‘syncretism’, a research approach that tries to examine a combination of elements from the previous three areas. While the study of leadership may have evolved to use other paradigms, the search for leadership traits continues (see House & Aditya, 1997; Yukl, 1989).

Although Plato is probably the most noteworthy single individual to have exerted an influence on western conceptions of leadership, there have been many contributors to this topic. Some of these can be found in Grint’s (1997) collection of classical, contemporary, and critical approaches to leadership. More recent approaches include charismatic (Conger & Kanungo, 1987), transactional and transformational (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987), and servant (Spears, 1998) leadership.

Concepts of leadership in Asia

The concept of leadership in Asia, by contrast to that in the West, seems to have had a more unadulterated evolution, i.e. one that was unilaterally conceived and has gone virtually unchallenged for nearly 2500 years. The origins of this concept can be traced to China, where Confucius (551–479 BC) codified what a leader should be in his *Analecks* (see Waley, 1989), which described the behaviors of ‘the superior man’, who was supposed to be a gentlemanly ruler/leader.

Specifically, Confucius elaborated five hierarchical relationships that described appropriate codes of conduct. The first was ‘righteousness between ruler and subject’, meaning that fealty and service was to be given to the ruler/leader by the subject/follower and was to be returned by the more powerful ruler with protection and sustenance for the less powerful subject. This portrays a paternalistic rulership in which the sovereign behaves with benevolence and the subjects with respect and obedience. The other four relationships (i.e. between father and son, husband and wife, older brother and younger brother, and among friends) were prescribed to follow the same hierarchical, power-differentiating model of sustenance and support as that between ruler and subject. In describing these relationships, what Confucius composed was a code of moral social behavior.

Confucius’s ideas spread throughout China during his life, and even further some 200 years after his death, when any of his disciples who opposed the alternate behavioral statutes of the Qin Dynasty (221–207 BC) were exiled to regions bordering China, including Southeast Asia. The end of the Qin Dynasty marked a turning point as the Confucian codes of social behavior were readily adopted by the Chinese emperors of the Han Dynasty (206 BC–AD 9). The codes were adopted because they prescribed a strict hierarchy of power throughout society, which served the emperors well (Berling, 1982), but these cultural values and social behaviors should not be confused with Confucianism as a religion (involving rituals that were added later and are not widely known). Rather, the Confucian social codes worked so well that they were embraced by every subsequent emperor since the Han Dynasty, thus influencing generations of Chinese people over the last 2000 years.

With regard to leadership, the idea of compliant obedience to authority is taken as a ‘given’ for the vast majority of people in Chinese society. Confirmation that Confucian values are still viable in present-day Chinese society can be found in studies such as that by Hofstede and Bond (1988), who asked Chinese social scientists to compile a list of basic values. When these were used to create a

questionnaire, they led to the discovery of a culturally distinct dimension that Hofstede and Bond called 'Confucian dynamism'.

The importance of power differentials is evident in China's scores on Hofstede's (1980) Power-Distance Index (the PDI). Although Hofstede did not measure mainland China (the PRC), a subsequent study by Huo and Randall (1991) with a sample from the PRC obtained a score of 77 on the PDI. This score was higher than that of any other nation populated principally by people of Chinese ethnicity (tested separately by Hofstede, 1991), including Singapore (which ranked highest of such nations on the PDI).

Cross-cultural differences in leadership perceptions

All of the foregoing leads to the obvious supposition that Asian perceptions of leadership may have a different basis than do western perceptions. This idea was argued many years ago by Hofstede (1980), who examined work-related values in the national cultures of 40 countries. And this idea has persisted. A decade later, Bolman and Deal (1991) noted that cultural differences in leadership effectiveness could still be expected.

More recently, Dorfman and colleagues (1997) conducted a comparison of effective leadership practices in western and Asian countries and noted several differences based on culture. Most relevant is their finding that Taiwan, a Confucian Chinese society, was the only nation of those tested in which directive leadership had a significant positive influence on satisfaction with supervision. This finding suggests that subordinates in Taiwan expect their managers to express power in the form of being directive leaders, and the results coincide with the Confucian idea of hierarchical power differentials throughout society.

Other research on leadership in Asian cultures tended to use surveys composed of various versions of Stogdill and Coons's (1957) Ohio State leadership questionnaire, which had two dimensions, namely, *Initiating Structure* (focus on the task) and *Consideration* (focus on people). Several leadership studies in Asia have specifically searched for these two factors, and strong confirmation of them has been found in Japan (Misumi, 1984), where the factors were called *Performance* (dealing with the task) and *Maintenance* (keeping favorable personal relationships in the organization). Similar results were obtained in India (Sinha, 1980), where the factors were called *Task* and *Nurturance*.

In China, Xu et al. (1985) and Ling (1989) adapted Misumi's (1984) questionnaire and found the same two dimensions. These findings support an observation made in a review by House and Aditya (1997: 461), who suggested that these two factors may be 'universal' functions that all organizations are specifically *required to perform*, i.e. that leaders must deal with both an organization's tasks and its employees. It may be noted that the Chinese studies found an additional dimension that was named 'moral character'.

The morality factor in China might reflect a previously unexplored area related to the Confucian social codes of conduct (mentioned earlier). Further supporting this idea, Tsui and colleagues (2004) recently suggested four forces that influence leadership behavior in China, with the foremost being traditional Confucian values, stating that: 'They [Confucian values] have influenced the behaviors of the Chinese people

for the past three millennia' (p. 6). Using leader behaviors for their research, Tsui and colleagues also identified six Chinese leadership dimensions, which they called:

1. Being Creative and Risk-Taking;
2. Relating and Communicating;
3. Articulating Vision;
4. Showing Benevolence;
5. Monitoring Operations;
6. Being Authoritative.

Differences and similarities of leadership in Asian culture

Beyond the consideration that leadership perceptions are likely to differ across eastern and western cultures, it may be supposed that similarities and differences in perceptions of leadership may also exist within a given culture. In Asia, for example, Swierczek (1991) suggested that management styles tend to differ in three Asian regions. In East Asia (China, Japan, and Korea), a directive (*autocratic*) style is used when difficult tasks need to be undertaken, and a participative (*democratic*) style is used for easy tasks. In South Asia (India, Nepal, and Pakistan), leadership tends to be both directive, with little delegation of authority to subordinates, and paternalistic, with leaders involving themselves in the private lives of subordinates. In Southeast Asia (including all the ASEAN countries), the predominant leadership style is authoritarian, with a preference for conformity and orderliness.

Swierczek's (1991) analysis implies that there is a regional culture in Southeast Asia that is shared by the ASEAN nations. While this may seem unusual because of the vast geographical expanse over which these nations are spread, the governments of these nations assert that they have a common cultural base. This claim has been stated explicitly by the ASEAN Secretariat: 'Underneath all the layers of religion and cultural influences, a common Southeast Asian culture survives to this day, unobtrusive but real' (Flores & Abad, 1998: 24). The existence of a shared regional culture in Southeast Asia means that the ASEAN nations can be studied as individual nations and/or as an aggregate. For reference purposes, the ethnic compositions of the five original ASEAN nations are shown in Table 1.

In a study that investigated leadership in the five founding ASEAN nations, Selvarajah et al. (1995) identified four general categories in which leaders could demonstrate excellence. The four categories were:

1. Personal Qualities;
2. Managerial Behavior;
3. Organizational Demands;
4. Environmental Influences.

The four areas were not based on any single theory, but rather were based on ideas from multiple sources, such as literature reviews (House & Baetz, 1979; Stogdill, 1974). These four conceptual categories provided the research framework for their study.

Table 1 Ethnic composition (in percentages) and the total population (estimated in millions) of the five founding ASEAN nations (total N = 289)

Indonesia	Malaysia		Philippines		Singapore		Thailand		
(N = 104)	(N = 54)		(N = 79)		(N = 22)		(N = 30)		
Javanese	45.00	Malay	58.00	Malay	95.50	Chinese	76.70	Thai	75.00
Sundanese	14.00	Chinese	24.00	Chinese	1.50	Malay	14.00	Chinese	14.00
Madurese	7.50	Indian	8.00	Other	3.00	Indian	7.90	Other	11.00
Malay	7.50	Other	10.00	–	–	Other	1.40	–	–
Other*	26.00	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Population	238	–	23	–	86	–	4	–	64

* The Chinese are included in this category, and have been estimated to make up about 4 per cent of the total population of Indonesia (Tan, 2001).

Source (for both the composition and estimated population): CIA (2002).

Selvarajah et al. (1995) also gathered 94 phrases or statements about leadership from many sources (for example, Bennis, 1989; Hunt & Larson, 1979; Peters & Waterman, 1983) and asked managers in the five ASEAN nations to rank all 94 items (using a nine-point Q-sort technique) on their 'importance' for leadership in each of the four preconceived conceptual categories. The authors did not factor analyse those data, and did not create any 'scales' for their conceptual areas. While their study did not distinguish differences across nations, it did find some common agreements among managers from the five ASEAN nations. Based on the averaged rankings, those managers seemed to agree that among the most important behaviors of an excellent leader on each of the four conceptual categories were: 'Be honest' on (1) Personal Qualities; 'Motivate employees' on (2) Managerial Behavior; 'Sell the corporate image' on (3) Organizational Demands; and 'Be socially and environmentally responsible' on (4) Environmental Influences.

Following from the above study, and from the need to assess whether concepts from existing models of leadership theory extend to Southeast Asia, this study compares perceptions of what constitutes leadership excellence among the five founding ASEAN nations of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

As there is very limited research on these particular nations, there might be little basis for suspecting similarities among the five nations. There are, however, two possible exceptions to this supposition. One is the 'Chinese diaspora,' which refers to the emigration and/or diffusion of a race of people (in this case, the Chinese people), and with them their social values, to other nations and regions of the world. As mentioned earlier, Chinese people with Confucian social values and behaviors were compelled to leave China for political reasons some 2000 years ago. Dealing mainly with 'modern Chinese migration' (1842–1949), McKeown (1999) explained how the Chinese have emigrated to many parts of the world over many decades for economic or political reasons, and, more importantly how they maintained their Chinese identity and preserved their cultural values and behaviors despite generations of intermarriage in their new countries. Such intermarriages accompanied by the perpetuation of Chinese (Confucian) social values over generations imply that there might be some influence of Confucian values on the five ASEAN nations. The

percentages in Table 1 reveal that people of Chinese ethnicity compose a significant proportion of the population in this region. On this basis, it could be surmised that similar perceptions of leadership might emerge.

The other exception is Hofstede's (1991) comparative study of national cultures. That study examined a total of 50 countries, including all five of the founding ASEAN nations, on four cultural dimensions. These are:

1. the Power-Distance Index (PDI);
2. the Uncertainty-Avoidance Index (UAI);
3. the Individualism-Collectivism Index (IDV);
4. the Masculinity-Femininity Index (MAS).

It should be noted that Hofstede (1998) acknowledges that other researchers consider this last index to be inaccurately named. The label is a contradiction because gender is genetically determined whereas cultural values are learned. A close look at the items that compose this index reveals that it is not gender-based. Instead, it more appropriately identifies behaviors and values that are either *cooperative*, i.e. 'caring for others', 'the needy should be helped', 'warm relationships are important', or *competitive*, i.e. 'fight back when attacked', 'be assertive, ambitious, and tough', 'failing is a disaster' (all of the descriptors are verbatim from Hofstede (1991)). Therefore, the term 'Cooperative-Competitive' is used in this article for this dimension.

Comparing the scores for these nations on the four cultural dimensions reveals some similarity. First, the PDI scores for these five nations ranged from 64 to 104, all above this dimension's median value (of 60), revealing them to be high power-distance cultures. Second, these countries' scores on the UAI ranged from 8 to 64, all below this dimension's median (of 68), indicating they are all low uncertainty-avoidance cultures. Third, the IDV scores for these nations ranged from 14 to 32, all below the median (of 38), making them all collectivist societies. Finally, on the Cooperative-Competitive index, the scores for Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand ranged from 34 to 50, either at or slightly below the median (of 50), leaning toward the cooperative side. Only the score for the Philippines, at 64, was notably higher than the median, and on the competitive side of this dimension.

This comparison suggests that these nations do share some cultural similarities and, perhaps, that they have one dissimilarity. The similarities on the first three dimensions provide no basis for predicting differences among them. Alternately, the high score found on the Cooperative-Competitive index for the Philippines (relative to the other ASEAN nations) suggests that its culture is more competitive, and this may be a basis for expecting possible differences among these nations on any factors that may be uncovered in this study.

Method

Respondents

The respondents were 289 (201 male, 88 female) managers from the five founding ASEAN nations. The intended number of respondents in each nation was decided

based on the relative populations of those nations. The return rates (with number of questionnaires sent out and the number returned in parentheses) by nation were: 52 per cent (104 of 200) for Indonesia; 54 per cent (54 of 100) for Malaysia; 53 per cent (79 of 150) for the Philippines; 44 per cent (22 of 50) for Singapore; and 20 per cent (30 of 150) for Thailand. Although the return from Thailand might be considered somewhat low, the overall return rate of 44.46 per cent (289 out of 650) for all five nations was within the average return rates found in the literature (see Baruch, 1999).

Of the respondents, 64.70 per cent were less than 35 years old, 14.90 per cent were aged 35–40 years, 8.30 per cent were aged 41–45 years, 9.00 per cent were aged 46–50 years, and 3.10 per cent were aged above 50 years. With regard to marriage, 152 (52.60 per cent) were single, and 137 (47.40 per cent) were married. The respondents were employed in private business (64 per cent) and government (36 per cent) organizations. In terms of managerial experience, 56.60 per cent had less than five years, 21.20 per cent had 6–10 years, 12.80 per cent had 11–15 years; 5.60 per cent had 16–20 years, 3.10 per cent had 21–25 years, and 0.70 per cent had 26–30 years.

Measures

Leadership behaviors

The main research instrument used in this study was the 94 ‘excellence in leadership’ behavior statements from the Selvarajah et al. (1995) study described previously. The items were in the form of short phrases, such as ‘deal calmly in tense situations’, ‘listen to the advice of others’, and ‘share power’. The respondents were asked to evaluate each statement in terms of its importance for excellence in leadership using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not at all Important) to 5 (Extremely Important).

The evaluations were obtained from the same respondents as in the Selvarajah et al. study, but the present data were separate from the Q-sort exercise. Selvarajah and colleagues only reported rankings of the statements for importance under each of their four preconceived headings, but did not factor analyse or create any measurement scales from those data.

Language of the questionnaire

While the primary language in most of the nations studied was a language other than English, the phrases were translated by bilingual translators from English into the local languages in Indonesia (Bahasa Indonesia), Malaysia (Malay), the Philippines (Tagalog), Singapore (Chinese), and Thailand (Thai). The phrases were then back-translated into English by professionals who were fluent in both English and the relevant local language. These back-translated items were then examined by another native English speaker and considered to be equivalent to the original English version. To further ensure understanding of the phrases, the statements were written in both English and the local language of each nation because English is widely used throughout the ASEAN nations.

Demographics

Demographic data were gathered on age, gender, marital status, nationality, religion, years of managerial experience, and industry in which employed. Ethnic background

was not collected, however, because this was considered to be a politically sensitive question in some nations. Likewise, where managers in these nations considered level of education to be a sensitive issue, these data also were not requested. Therefore, since the respondents were sensitive to questions about personal information, the demographic variables that were investigated used grouped response categories in order to increase the number of responses (details are provided in the Respondents' paragraph, above).

Procedure

In each ASEAN country, research associates (including university instructors and professional management trainers) were selected from local universities and management institutes (for example the Asian Institute of Management) to gather the data. The professional institutes run training programs for managers in public and private organizations throughout the ASEAN region, and were helpful in obtaining appropriate organizational directories. The sampling technique, used in all the ASEAN countries, was through random selection from the local directories by the research associates in each nation.

Executives from the selected organizations were contacted by the research associates to request their permission for the questionnaires to be distributed to managers in their organizations. In a cross-cultural study such as this, the local research associates were deemed important intermediaries to assist with communication and to allay concerns by the organizations and the respondents about providing information. This was accomplished by assuring the respondents that their anonymity and the confidentiality of their answers would be maintained.

Results

Factor analysis

The large number of items evaluated by the respondents required the data to be factor analysed. All 94 items were subjected to a principal components analysis with varimax rotation. This yielded 25 factors, but 14 items did not reach a loading of .40 on any factor, and 5 factors had to be dropped because they contained only one item loading $\geq .40$ (i.e. single items cannot compose a scale as reliability values cannot be computed for them). When the items on each of the 20 remaining factors were combined to create scales for those factors, and reliabilities were computed for those scales, only 8 attained Cronbach alpha values of $\geq .70$ (recommended by Nunnally, 1978). Thus, the scales for the 17 factors (containing 31 items) that did not achieve an acceptable alpha were dropped. Therefore, on the first factor analysis, 50 items were deleted (14 non-loading, 5 single-loading on separate factors, and 31 from the remaining factors that did not achieve acceptable alpha values).

This process was repeated a second time on the remaining 44 items, which required 13 more items to be dropped. This left 31 items on 8 factors with scale alphas $\geq .70$. The third iteration on the remaining 31 items required 7 more items to be deleted. This left 24 items on 4 factors with scale alphas above .70. The fourth (and

final) iteration was run on the remaining 24 items to confirm the results of the last analysis. The final result (which explained 54.59 per cent of the variance) yielded 4 factors containing the same items as on the previous analysis, and all the scales attained alpha reliability values greater than .70.

The names of the factors (with their scales' Cronbach alpha reliabilities in parentheses) were: Factor 1 = Consideration for Others (.85); Factor 2 = Progressive Stability (.77); Factor 3 = Strategic Thinking (.75); and Factor 4 = Trust in Others (.74). The items, their factor loadings, factor Eigenvalues, and item-to-total correlations are shown in Table 2.

Correlations

Intercorrelations were computed for all four leadership scales and demographics. The pattern of correlations demonstrates the conceptual integration of the four leadership factors (i.e. the scales were all significantly interrelated), as compared to

Table 2 Factor analysis of the ASEAN leadership data, with the item-to-total correlations*

Item	Factors (and Eigenvalues)				r ^a
	F1 (8.21)	F2 (2.35)	F3 (1.90)	F4 (1.81)	
1. Be objective when dealing with work conflicts	.56	.35	-.01	.00	.49
2. Consider suggestions made by employees	.64	.21	.22	.13	.58
3. Listen to and understand the problems of others	.74	.11	.19	.02	.66
4. Listen to the advice of others	.80	.03	.08	.11	.68
5. Listen when employees want to say something	.79	.06	.07	.21	.72
6. Promote staff welfare and development	.59	.06	.23	.28	.61
7. Respect the self-esteem of others	.60	.07	.09	.24	.59
8. Be consistent in dealing with people	.19	.70	-.08	.07	.53
9. Be consistent in making decisions	.10	.71	.04	.04	.51
10. Deal calmly with tense situations	.36	.57	.22	.07	.49
11. Adapt to changing working conditions	.16	.60	.25	.05	.54
12. Be an initiator – not a follower	-.07	.65	.24	.02	.48
13. Be knowledgeable about the work of the industry	.01	.53	.32	.16	.52
14. Constantly evaluate emerging technologies	.20	.30	.43	.03	.46
15. Develop strategies to gain a competitive edge	.03	.16	.79	.01	.59
16. Focus on maximizing productivity	.12	.05	.60	.11	.50
17. Have a strategic vision for the organization	.19	.19	.70	.08	.52
18. Keep to work deadlines	.16	.07	.55	.10	.39
19. Respond to the expectations of consumers	.04	.33	.46	.26	.49
20. Allow subordinates authority and autonomy	.17	.29	.03	.54	.41
21. Share power	.22	-.06	.31	.58	.53
22. Support decisions made jointly with others	.38	.10	.35	.49	.53
23. Treat people as if they were trustworthy	.02	-.01	.09	.81	.53
24. Trust those to whom work is delegated	.26	.17	-.01	.64	.52

* All factors had Eigenvalues greater than 1.80 ($N = 289$).

F1 = Consideration for Others.

F2 = Progressive Stability.

F3 = Strategic Thinking.

F4 = Trust in Others.

r^a = This column gives the item-to-total correlations.

the demographic variables, of which only one variable was significantly related to any of the leadership factors. These results are presented in Table 3. (When the correlations were computed separately for each nation, the patterns were nearly identical across nations, but are not shown to save space.)

Multivariate analyses of variance

In order to determine whether any of the ASEAN nations differed on any of the scales for the leadership factors, mean scores (and standard deviations) were computed for each nation on each scale. Using nation as the independent variable and the leadership scores as the dependent measures, the data were subjected to a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). These results, using Wilkes's Lambda = 0.83, $F(16, 859.11) = 3.29$ ($p = .001$), indicated highly significant differences among the five nations' mean scores.

Univariate F -tests (ANOVAs, using the Bonferroni method of confidence interval adjustment for *post hoc* multiple comparisons) were also conducted to determine which of the four leadership scores differed across the five nations. For Factor 1 (Consideration for Others), the analysis showed a significant difference, $F(4,284) = 3.66$, $p \geq .01$, with the Singapore mean being significantly lower than the Indonesia mean.

For Factor 2 (Progressive Stability), there was a slightly significant difference, $F(4,284) = 2.97$, $p < .05$, with the Philippines mean being significantly higher than the Thailand mean. For Factor 3 (Strategic Thinking), there was a highly significant difference, $F(4,284) = 5.42$, $p < .001$, with the Philippines mean being significantly higher than the Malaysia mean and the Thailand mean. For Factor 4 (Trust in Others), there was also a significant difference, $F(4,284) = 3.90$, $p < .005$, with the Philippines mean being significantly higher than the Malaysia mean. All the mean scores, standard deviations, and significant differences among the countries for all the analyses are shown in Table 4.

Table 3 Means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities of the variables for the combined data from the five founding ASEAN nations (N = 289)

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Consideration for Others	4.29	0.55	(.85)							
2. Progressive Stability	4.46	0.51	.40****	(.77)						
3. Strategic Thinking	4.32	0.54	.43****	.50****	(.75)					
4. Trust in Others	3.90	0.63	.48****	.30****	.44****	(.74)				
5. Age ^a	1.73	1.21	.09	-.05	.01	.06	(-)			
6. Gender ^b	1.30	0.46	-.04	-.08	-.04	-.04	-.09	(-)		
7. Marital status ^c	1.47	0.50	.01	-.05	-.01	.02	.47****	-.18****	(-)	
8. Years experience ^d	1.80	1.13	-.06	-.13*	-.03	-.04	.64****	.00	.31****	(-)

Note: Cronbach alpha reliabilities are on the diagonal (in parentheses).

^a Age groupings were: 1 = less than 35 years; 2 = 35–40 years; 3 = 41–45 years; 4 = 46–50 years; 5 = 51–55 years; 6 = 56–60 years; 7 = more than 60 years.

^b Gender: 1 = Male; 2 = Female.

^c Marital Status: 1 = Single; 2 = Married.

^d Years of experience: 1 = 5 years or less; 2 = 6–10 years; 3 = 11–15 years; 4 = 16–20 years; 5 = 21–25 years; 6 = 26–30 years.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .005$. **** $p < .001$.

Table 4 Mean importance scores (standard deviations in parentheses) showing differences on the four leadership factors for Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand (total N = 289)

Leadership factor	Mean Importance Scores				
	Indonesia (N = 104)	Malaysia (N = 54)	Philippines (N = 79)	Singapore (N = 22)	Thailand (N = 30)
Consideration for Others (Standard deviation)	4.40 ^a (0.51)	4.26 (0.52)	4.29 (0.57)	3.92 ^b (0.67)	4.23 (0.54)
Progressive Stability (Standard deviation)	4.51 (0.47)	4.35 (0.48)	4.55 ^a (0.54)	4.45 (0.37)	4.24 ^b (0.58)
Strategic Thinking (Standard deviation)	4.33 (0.53)	4.21 ^a (0.54)	4.50 ^b (0.45)	4.20 (0.49)	4.05 ^a (0.66)
Trust in Others (Standard deviation)	3.95 (0.54)	3.68 ^a (0.73)	4.06 ^b (0.63)	3.71 (0.63)	3.84 (0.62)

Note: Scale range = 1 (not at all important) to 5 (extremely important).

^{a, b} Within any row, means having different superscripts differ at $p < .05$ or better.

Leadership scores and cultural values

To test whether there were any relationships between the leadership scores and Hofstede's (1991) cultural value dimensions for these five nations, bivariate correlations among the two types of variables were computed. In other words, the five nations' leadership scores for each leadership factor were compared to the four cultural value scores for each nation. The only significant correlation found was that between the Cooperative-Competitive Index score and Strategic Thinking (Factor 3), $r = .91$, $p < .05$, with the Philippines highest on both variables. No other correlations approached significance. The mean scores for each nation on the four leadership factors and their scores on the four cultural values are shown in Table 5(A), and the results of the correlations between those scores are shown in Table 5(B).

Regression analyses

Four stepwise multivariate regressions were run to determine if the scales of the four leadership factors could predict certain leadership behaviors previously evaluated as important by Selvarajah et al. (1995). One highest-ranking item from that study was used to represent each of their conceptual categories, namely:

1. Personal Qualities;
2. Managerial Behavior;
3. Organizational Demands;
4. Environmental Influences.

The items also appeared on the questionnaire that was used in the present study and thus were measured on the same five-point scale (but did not load on any of the four leadership factors).

Table 5(A) Scores of the five ASEAN nations on the four leadership scores, with Hofstede's (1991)* four cultural value dimensions for each nation (total N = 289)

Variable	Indonesia (N = 104)	Malaysia (N = 54)	Philippines (N = 79)	Singapore (N = 22)	Thailand (N = 30)
Consideration for Others	4.40	4.26	4.29	3.92	4.23
Progressive Stability	4.51	4.35	4.55	4.45	4.24
Strategic Thinking	4.33	4.21	4.50	4.20	4.05
Trust in Others	3.95	3.68	4.06	3.71	3.84
PDI*	78	104	94	74	64
UAI*	48	36	44	8	64
IND*	14	26	32	20	20
Cooperative-Competitive*	46	50	64	48	34

* These scores are from Hofstede (1991); the Cooperative-Competitive index has been renamed.

Table 5(B) Correlations among Hofstede's (1991) four cultural value indexes and the four leadership excellence factors for all five ASEAN nations (N = 5)

Scale	PDI	UAI	IND	Cooperative-Competitive
1. Consideration for Others (F1)	.28	.77	.00	.09
2. Progressive Stability (F2)	.33	-.36	.17	.79
3. Strategic Thinking (F3)	.54	-.10	.48	.91*
4. Trust in Others (F4)	-.03	.50	.21	.43

* $p < .05$.

The potential predictors in these regressions were the four leadership scores, the demographics that had meaningful increasing functions, as well as marital status and gender (coded as dummy variables). In each analysis, the data for all nations were combined in order to obtain effects based on ASEAN (as opposed to separate, national) perceptions.

For the category of Personal Qualities, the criterion variable was 'Be honest'. The regression found three variables that explained 15 per cent of the total variance, $F(3,284) = 17.16$, $p < .001$. Most of this variance was explained by Consideration for Others. The second predictor was Progressive Stability, and the third predictor was Trust in Others.

For Managerial Behavior, the criterion variable was 'Motivate employees'. This regression yielded four variables that explained 38 per cent of the variance, $F(4,279) = 43.59$, $p < .001$. The strongest predictor was, again, Consideration for Others, followed by Strategic Thinking, Years of Managerial Experience, and Gender.

For Organizational Demands, the criterion was 'Sell the corporate image'. This regression found two variables that explained 20 per cent of the variance, $F(2,280) = 34.14$, $p < .001$. In this equation, the strongest predictor was Strategic Thinking, followed by Trust in Others.

For Environmental Influences, the criterion was 'Be socially and environmentally responsible'. This final regression yielded two predictor variables that explained 23 per cent of the variance, $F(2,283) = 42.44$, $p < .001$. The first predictor was

Strategic Thinking, followed by Consideration for Others. The results of all these regressions are shown in Table 6.

Autocorrelations

The multicollinearity of the data was assessed by a test of the 'tolerance' ($1 - R^2$) for each independent variable. According to Hair and colleagues (1998: 193), each

Table 6 Stepwise multiple regression analyses on the importance of representative items from the four leadership categories^a of (1) personal qualities; (2) managerial behavior; (3) organizational demand; and (4) environmental influences (N = 289)

Variables	Beta	t	ΔR^2	R ²	F	df ^b
(1) Be Honest				.15	17.16****	3,284
Consideration for Others	.23	3.58****	.12			
Progressive Stability	.14	2.27*	.02			
Strategic Thinking	-.00	-0.04				
Trust in Others	.13	2.02*	.01			
Age	.02	0.41				
Gender	.06	1.17				
Marital status	-.02	-0.41				
Years of managerial experience	-.00	-0.08				
(2) Motivate Employees				.38	43.59****	4,279
Consideration for Others	.38	7.37****	.27			
Progressive Stability	.07	1.15				
Strategic Thinking	.29	5.50****	.07			
Trust in Others	.02	0.40				
Age	-.03	-0.54				
Gender	-.11	-2.28*	.01			
Marital status	.03	0.54				
Years of managerial experience	-.17	-3.70****	.03			
(3) Sell the Corporate Image				.20	34.14****	2,280
Consideration for Others	.10	.64				
Progressive Stability	.03	0.51				
Strategic Thinking	.31	5.15****	.16			
Trust in Others	.21	3.55****	.04			
Age	-.05	-0.89				
Gender	.03	0.64				
Marital status	-.07	-1.43				
Years of managerial experience	-.08	-1.50				
(4) Be Socially and Environmentally Responsible				.23	42.44****	2,283
Consideration for Others	.26	4.48****	.05			
Progressive Stability	.09	1.48				
Strategic Thinking	.31	5.32****	.18			
Trust in Others	.08	1.25				
Age	.01	0.23				
Gender	.00	0.05				
Marital status	.04	0.71				
Years of managerial experience	.01	0.13				

^a From Selvarajah et al. (1995).

^b The total df do not always add to 288 (N - 1) due to listwise deletion of cases with missing data.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .005$; **** $p < .001$.

independent variable is to be regressed onto all the others, such that a tolerance value of less than .10 for any variable would be problematic. The tolerance values for all eight (four demographics and four leadership) variables ranged from .50 to .95. All the values were well above .10, indicating that multicollinearity was not a problem.

Discussion

The leadership factors

The results revealed that ASEAN managers' perceptions of leadership excellence are determined by *both* eastern and western concepts, as discovered in the four leadership factors derived from the data. The first is 'Consideration for Others', which refers to being respectful and considerate, remaining objective while listening to and taking the advice of others, and promoting the employees' welfare. From a theoretical perspective, this is very reminiscent of the 'consideration' dimension found in the early Ohio State leadership studies (Stogdill & Coons, 1957), which identified concern for subordinates as a major management style that includes being friendly, supportive, and concerned for the employees' well-being.

One possible reason for finding this factor among the ASEAN managers' perceptions of leadership could be that consideration for others is a 'universal' (House & Aditya, 1997) requirement of leadership in any organization. This is strongly suggested by findings of the same or similar factors from locations outside the United States, and as distant as China (see Xu et al., 1985), India (Sinha, 1980), and Japan (Misumi, 1984). Consequently, finding the consideration factor in the ASEAN data further supports the theoretical contention that this is a universal factor, especially because it was not specifically sought in this study since the extensive number of items in the questionnaire (94 statements) covered a wide variety of behaviors from many different theories.

Another reason that Consideration for Others could be so important is the cultural value of collectivism common to all the ASEAN nations tested. Consideration for others is a people-oriented factor that reflects a profound aspect of Asian culture. Allowing that the culture of greater Asia has been extensively influenced by Chinese culture over the past few millennia, that Confucian morality has been an integral part of this culture for more than 2000 years, and that Chinese migrants are well known for carrying their ethical values with them wherever they go (Redding, 1990), it is not difficult to see how certain Confucian values can influence perceptions of leadership even in Southeast Asian nations.

In particular, the fundamental Confucian notion is that everyone exists in relationships with other people and that consequences to them must be considered before one engages in any social behavior (King & Bond, 1985). Also, the behavioral factor of Consideration for Others seems to coincide with certain traits found in studies of implicit leadership theory. For example, Epitropaki and Martin (2004) isolated a factor they identified as 'Sensitivity'. Some of the adjectives that compose this factor included 'sensitive', 'understanding', and 'helpful', which closely match the behaviors in the Consideration for Others factor, namely, 'listen when employees want to say something', 'listen to and understand the problems of others', and 'promote staff

welfare and development'. The Consideration for Others factor also coincides with a behavioral dimension found in another very recent study by Tsui et al. (2004), namely, 'Relating and Communicating'. Although the items for that factor are descriptive, such as 'getting along with employees very well,' the items in the Consideration for Others factor tend to be somewhat more explicit, such as 'listen to the advice of others', and 'respect the self-esteem of others'.

The idea that everyone, including leaders, exists in social relationships is in agreement with one of the four Chinese leadership factors described by Ling et al. (1992), namely, 'Interpersonal Competence', which was also found in a more recent study of Chinese implicit leadership theory that also used adjectival traits (Ling et al., 2000). All these apparently related factors (whether measured as traits or behaviors) also coincide with a participative management style, and together lend support to Von Glinow and colleagues' (1999) proposition regarding the greater likelihood of leaders in collectivist cultures using a participative style. Thus, this ancient and deeply ingrained Confucian precept – that everyone should behave in consideration of how that behavior will affect others – has apparently manifested itself in this first factor of 'Consideration for Others'.

The second factor was 'Progressive Stability'. The items on this factor may appear to be contradictory terms, namely, being consistent and yet adaptable, and remaining calm while being an active initiator. Although stability and progressiveness, considered individually, are each highly valued aspects of leadership, having them appear together within a single factor may seem contradictory because stability indicates a lack of motion while progressiveness specifically designates forward motion. Quinn (1991) has argued that such concepts are 'paradoxes' because managers typically regard them as competing for their time (see pp. 49–50). Quinn observes that most managers take an 'either/or' view, but stresses that a leader must be able to resolve the paradox even though this is achieved only very rarely.

The conceptual distinction between these two modes of behavior does not mean that they cannot appear together as part of a leader's repertoire, but there is no theory of leadership specifying that they combine into a singular concept (and, until now, there has been no empirical evidence indicating that they should). When viewed from a Confucian perspective, however, these two behavioral modes of being stable and progressive existing as a single construct may reflect an underlying feature of the thinking of Southeast Asian managers that is more tolerant of what would ordinarily seem to be a conceptual duality. Such conceptual tolerance is symbolized in the eastern idea of *yin* and *yang* (two apparently opposite qualities that actually interact to create a united whole).

Stability, which relates to remaining calm and consistent in dealing with people and while making decisions, is a quality that allows subordinates to feel secure. This is precisely in line with the principle of maintaining social harmony, which is the primary objective of the Confucian principles (see Berling, 1982). At the same time, progressiveness, which relates to taking initiative while adapting to new situations, is required of leaders because leaders are expected to make progress by creating opportunities and starting new endeavors at the forefront of work and society.

The East–West cultural difference on this factor may be noticed in practice. For example, leaders in the West expect their businesses to incur risk and therefore accept

risk as part of their daily operations, without being overly concerned about the security of their employees (such as when they move their production operations overseas). Leaders in the East, however, must be continuously mindful of – and somehow ensure – their subordinates' security even while taking risks, such as those involved in new ventures. Thus, ASEAN managers seem to *expect* the two behavior modes of stability and progressiveness to coexist as a unified construct in their conception of an excellent leader.

The third factor was 'Strategic Thinking'. The constituent items address evaluating new technologies, developing a strategic vision and competitive strategies, meeting deadlines, focusing on productivity, and responding to customers. As these relate to specific aspects of running a corporation, they are also reminiscent of the Ohio State theory. That is, meeting deadlines and focusing on production are related to Initiating Structure, i.e. the task-oriented part of the model; and it also resembles Misumi's (1984) Performance aspect in Japan.

The Strategic Thinking behaviors also seem to relate to some adjectives that compose one of the trait factors identified by Ling et al. (2000): 'Goal Effectiveness'. Specifically, the Strategic Thinking behaviors of 'developing strategies to gain a competitive edge' and 'having a strategic vision' correspond to the trait adjective of 'visionary and far-sighted'. The Strategic Thinking behavior of 'constantly evaluate emerging technologies' would fit the Ling et al. (2000) trait adjective of 'scientific'. And the behavior of 'focus on maximizing productivity' could be related to the trait adjective of 'deliberate'. The Strategic Thinking factor also has a counterpart in Tsui et al.'s (2004) 'Articulating Vision' dimension (e.g. 'clearly communicating his/her vision about the future of the company'). As with Consideration for Others, the Strategic Thinking dimension was not intentionally sought, but was found nonetheless, which supports the Ohio State theory that Initiating Structure is an important factor and furthers the idea that it may be another universal aspect of leadership.

The fourth factor was 'Trust in Others'. The items that compose this factor refer to treating people as if they were trustworthy, sharing power, supporting decisions made jointly with others, trusting people to whom work is delegated, and allowing subordinates authority and autonomy. It is interesting that there is no item in this factor referring to the idea that the leader must be trustworthy, even though such items appeared in the original list, including 'Be dependable and trustworthy', which had a mean value of 4.71 (SD = 0.60) on the five-point scale. Rather, the items on this factor stress that the leader should place trust in others.

The concept of trust certainly exists in western culture, although it is often discussed from the perspective that leaders should be trustworthy so that they can be 'entrusted with leadership'. But there is also western research (also found in the Ohio State studies) supporting the notion that leaders must be considerate of people, including the idea that they should trust their employees. This concept also appears in McGregor's (1960) Theory Y-type leader, who believes that people can be trusted, and in more recent studies which indicate that employees want to be trusted (Lundin & Lundin, 1993).

From a Confucian value perspective, leaders trusting subordinates is also important. Specifically, Confucius delineated the types of hierarchical relationships that should exist in society and prescribed appropriate behaviors for each in order to

achieve social harmony. These include the prescription that leaders must be courteous, friendly, helpful, and sincere in dealing with subordinates, and that subordinates must be loyal to their leaders (see Bond, 1991; especially Chapter 6). The Chinese are socialized from birth to learn these relationships and behave accordingly, so there is an implicit understanding of them such that, in any given relationship, one member can expect the other to behave in the prescribed way. Consequently, from the Trust in Others factor, it again appears that the Southeast Asian managers may have been influenced by the Confucian prescription that leaders should trust their subordinates.

The national comparisons

While the cultural similarities could be traced to a common element in the cultural heritage of these nations, the multivariate analyses revealed some differences among the nations' mean leadership scores. On Consideration for Others (Factor 1), the only significant difference was between Indonesia (the highest mean) and Singapore (the lowest mean). While the means for Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand were all well above 4 on the five-point scale, the Singapore mean was the only score below 4. This difference may validate this factor as it might reflect the strict rules, regulations, fines, and penalties for which Singapore is so well known (see Chandler, 1999; Hogan, 1999).

On Progressive Stability (Factor 2), the Philippines had the highest mean score and Thailand had the lowest. The high Philippine score suggests that managers there may be doubly sensitized to the elements that compose this factor. In other words, the two facets of this factor (i.e. progress and stability) are valued in both eastern and western cultures; valued in an integrated way in eastern culture, and as separate components in western culture. Thus, since the Philippines have both an Asian heritage and a long exposure to a strong western (i.e. American) culture, the influences coming from both sources could have reinforced the items on this factor, making them seem especially important to the Philippine managers.

On Strategic Thinking (Factor 3), the Philippines had the highest mean score, with the Malaysia mean significantly lower, and the Thailand mean the lowest. The items for this factor are textbook strategic concepts dealing with concerns that relate to both internal (Items 15, 16, and 18) and external (Items 14, 17, and 19) aspects of an organization's strategic management. The idea that strategic thinking may be a western influence suggests that the mean differences between the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand might be traced to the relationships that each of these nations had with western powers over the last 100 years.

The Philippines (ceded to the United States by Spain in 1899) was the only nation to have experienced both a strong western presence, with a democratic administration (the Jones Law of 1916 provided for an elected Philippine legislature), and an independence that was offered relatively early (4 July 1946) compared to the more autocratic administration that the European colonial powers used to govern their territories. Therefore, the Philippines have had the most exposure to and participation in western strategic thought, which may have revealed itself in this nation's high score on this factor. This is confirmed by the correlations between the five nations' scores on the Strategic Thinking scale and their scores on the

Cooperative-Competitive index, on both of which the Philippines achieved the highest scores.

Alternately, Malaysia had been a Portuguese, Dutch, and British colony for 450 years before gaining its complete independence (including the territories of Sarawak and Sabah) in 1963. The centuries-long treatment by the European powers of Malaysia as a colony (rather than as a strategic partner, as with the United States and the Philippines) may have created in the Malaysians a reluctance to accept the type of western strategic thinking that they were exposed to under European colonial rule. Thailand, by contrast, has probably experienced the least exposure to western strategic thought because it is the only Southeast Asian nation to have never been colonized by a western power (Pheng & Chuvesiriporn, 1997). In addition, the Thai culture has been said to view planning as having little intrinsic value (Mosel, 1966), which would make strategic thinking of little importance to the Thai lifestyle. Singapore is something of an anomaly because its mean score was between those of Malaysia and Thailand, but not significantly different than that of the Philippines. Its low score is surprising because it was a British colony for a hundred years, suggesting that western strategic thinking should have entered Singapore business practices. In recent decades, however, Singapore has had a national campaign of rejecting western influences (see Tan, 1989).

On Trust in Others (Factor 4), the Philippines again had the highest mean score and Malaysia had the lowest. This is interesting if trust is considered to be more of a Confucian value than a western one. However, the many years during which the Philippines interacted with western (especially American) managers may have given Philippine managers considerable experience in sharing power, making joint decisions, being delegated responsibility for work, and being allocated large amounts of authority and autonomy. This first-hand experience with increased responsibility could have resulted in a greater sensitivity to these aspects of trust.

The regressions

The regressions tested representative items from four conceptual areas of leadership (created by Selvarajah et al., 1995), namely:

1. Personal Qualities;
2. Managerial Behavior;
3. Organizational Demands;
4. Environmental Influences.

Consideration for Others (Factor 1) was the best predictor of 'Be honest' (from Personal Qualities), which further confirms the validity of the scale for this factor. Progressive Stability, the second predictor, suggests that being calm and consistent in dealing with people may be perceived in ASEAN countries as an indicator of honesty in their leaders. Trust in Others, the third predictor, may indicate a perception that leaders who are trusting may themselves be trusted.

Consideration for Others was also the strongest predictor of 'Motivate employees' (from Managerial Behavior), supporting the idea that this factor is an important component of management for leaders worldwide, including in the ASEAN nations.

Strategic Thinking was the second most powerful predictor of this variable, which suggests that motivating employees has a strong strategic underpinning in the perceptions of these ASEAN managers.

With regard to the predictors for the item related to the external strategic environment, i.e. 'Sell the corporate image' (from Organizational Demands), Strategic Thinking was the strongest predictor. This reflects the importance of evaluating new technologies, being productive, developing strategies, and being responsive to consumers, in order to make a positive impression on them. Trust in Others, the other predictor of selling the corporate image, further supports the idea that trust is an important factor for ASEAN managers for interacting and/or negotiating with customers.

Along this line, the main predictor of 'Be socially and environmentally responsible' (from Environmental Influences) was Strategic Thinking, which suggests the importance of strategic concerns in interacting with the environment. Additionally, Consideration for Others was the other significant predictor, which both affirms the validity of this factor's scale and confirms the important role this factor plays for ASEAN managers.

General summary

Overall, some remarkable similarities in the perceptions of leadership excellence among the five ASEAN nations were found. Also, the four factors that evolved from the data lent empirical support to the theoretical universality of the two factors in the Ohio State model. That is, Consideration for Others and Strategic Thinking in the present study closely resemble Consideration and Initiating Structure, respectively, in the Ohio State model. This is significant because this study was not a test of that model.

Of special interest is that the items in this research that were obtained from western management theory yielded three factors (out of the four) with distinct ties to Confucian values. It is also of interest that these same factors place a greater stress on the human (rather than on the production) side of classical, western leadership theory. This human orientation coincides with traditional Confucian values. Although one might expect that influences of non-Chinese majorities in most of the nations examined (Singapore being the exception) would outweigh the Chinese influence in the factors as a consequence of the iterative nature of the statistical analyses, three factors nonetheless appear to confirm the Confucian values. This finding might reflect the Chinese diaspora (McKeown, 1999).

A comparison of the importance scores for the four leadership measures across the ASEAN nations revealed Indonesia to have the highest and Singapore the lowest importance score on Consideration for Others. The Philippines gave the highest importance ratings to Progressive Stability, Strategic Thinking, and Trust in Others. The regressions indicated that Consideration for Others, a distinguishing foundation of certain Asian cultures with ancient roots in the principles of Confucius, played a significant role in the ASEAN managers' views of excellent leader behavior. In addition, the significance of Strategic Thinking in evaluations of organizational and environmental concerns indicates that strategic thought is not a western concept only, but that it also plays an important role in leadership in Southeast Asia.

The discovery of the Progressive Stability factor (Factor 2) can provide some insights into managerial excellence. Two benefits can be derived from this discovery. The first is a better understanding of the way to combine ideas that are typically conceived as separate entities, that is to say, making progress while, at the same time, maintaining calmness and consistency for the sake of social harmony and stability. The second benefit is that it provides useful insight into answering Quinn's (1991) concern regarding how to be an ideal leader, namely, by merging these two aspects into one's repertoire of leadership behaviors by being calm and consistent while taking the initiative and being adaptable in new situations.

As Strategic Thinking (Factor 3) was not a new factor, no new insights are identified. Trust in Others (Factor 4), however, does provide some hints for how to interact with managers and leaders in Asia in general. The components of this factor suggest that managers are expected to treat people as if they were trustworthy and to trust those subordinates to whom work is delegated. In other words, by keeping in mind the welfare of their subordinates, leaders in Asia will be more likely to gain the trust and loyalty of those subordinates.

Conclusion and future research

The examination of the perceptions of leadership excellence among managers in this study has added several facets to our understanding of the leadership concept. First, actual behaviors that are considered to signify excellence in leadership have been identified. Since most studies of leadership have focused on leadership *traits*, the identification of *behaviors* that delineate leadership excellence has added another component to our understanding of the leadership concept. More importantly, these behaviors compose a list of specific actions that can be adopted by anyone in a position of authority who wishes to become an excellent leader. Second, this study has helped to fill a research gap regarding the perceptions of leadership across five nations in a region of the world where such data are rarely obtained, and thereby adds information about how leadership excellence is perceived there. Third, the results, which identified four dimensions of excellent leadership behaviors, show noteworthy similarities with both the western dimensions of the classical Ohio State Leadership model and behaviors that can be traced to Confucian (Chinese) cultural values.

With regard to future research, the increasing number of Asians receiving management training in the West raises a question regarding the extent to which they are influenced by western strategic management theory. At the same time, the results strongly suggested an indigenous cultural basis for the Consideration factor. Future research could therefore address the comparative strengths of eastern (Confucian) and western (strategic) thinking to try to discern their relative influences on leadership perceptions in Asia. This could be done in two parts. One is to design a study that directly determines the extent to which Confucian values independently influence leadership behaviors in Asian nations. The other is to do the same with regard to the effects of western principles of strategic management on leadership behaviors. Once these differences are determined, a more discerning comparison could be made of the similarities and differences in leadership among nations in eastern and western cultures.

The two factors of Progressive Stability and Trust in Others discovered in this

study also raise an important theoretical concern for future research. The question is to what extent these two factors have counterparts in leadership perceptions in non-Asian cultures and, if found, what implications such findings would have for leadership theory.

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