AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: An Examination of the Relationship Between Perceptions of Similarity and Self-Monitoring Styles on Industrial Workers

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Impression management involves the behaviors people exert in order to create specific impressions. Numerous studies have identified self-monitoring as an impression management tactic. Individuals who engage in this adaptive behavior form a dichotomy that places either a high dependence on social cues or a low reliance on external moderators. Individuals who display high self-monitoring characteristics possess a strong concern for social appropriateness and continually modify their actions according to the situational context. On the other hand, low self-monitors are less attentive to social cues and tend to gauge their behavioral actions upon stable, internal attributes.

Perceptions of similarity among individuals have also received much attention. Those who learn they share a similarity with another individual tend to rate him/her in a more favorable direction. These positive ratings often increase impressions and improve relational interactions between the two parties involved.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role self-monitoring plays in the way organizational members perceive others with whom they share similarities. It was hypothesized that employees who perceived similarities with a co-worker would rate him/her more favorably than employees who did not perceive the similarity variable. Further, low self-monitors were expected to rate

individuals with whom they shared similarities more favorably than high self-monitors.

Seventy-eight participants completed an informed consent document, a demographic profile, a favorability scale, and Snyder and Gangestad's (1986) self-monitoring scale. An analysis of variance was computed to determine the relationship between self-monitoring and similarity perceptions. No significant differences arnong groups were found. Limitations of the study as well as directions for future research were discussed.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN

PERCEPTIONS OF SIMILARITY AND SELF-MONITORING STYLES

ON INDUSTRIAL WORKERS

A Thesis

Presented to

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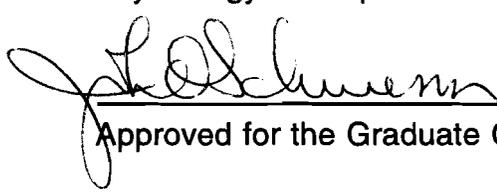of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Impression management involves the behaviors people exert in order to create specific impressions. Although this general area has received increased attention in the psychological literature, its relation to similarity perceptions and favorable ratings among co-workers has been overlooked (Finch & Cialdini, 1989; Gudykunst, 1985; Jamieson, Lydon, & Zanna, 1987).

Self-monitoring (SM) is one aspect of impression management which has begun to receive attention. Snyder (1987) describes SM as "public appearances created by a person's words and deeds as the result of deliberate attempts to create images appropriate to particular circumstances in an attempt to be the right person in the right place at the right time" (p. 4). Individuals who engage in this adaptive behavior form a dichotomy which places either a high dependence on social cues (e.g., nonverbal gestures, tone inflections) or a low reliance on external moderators (e.g., environmental settings, verbal cues). Individuals who display high SM characteristics possess a strong concern for social appropriateness and continually modify their actions according to the situational context. On the other hand, low self-monitors are less attentive to social cues and tend to gauge their behavioral actions upon stable, internal attributes.

Another venue of research which is of particular interest to organizational development involves perceptions of similarity among individuals. Those who learn they share a similarity with other individuals tend to rate them in a more favorable direction (Wayne & Liden, 1986). These positive ratings often increase impressions and improve relational interactions between the two

parties involved. Although this concept has been proven in various settings from academia to football recruiting, it has been disregarded with respect to co-workers in an organizational setting (Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 1986; Glovich, 1981).

Therefore, the current research investigated the role SM plays in the way organizational members perceive others with whom they share similarities. It was hypothesized that employees who perceived similarities with a co-worker would rate the co-worker more favorably than employees who did not perceive the similarity variable. Further, it was expected low self-monitors, those who prefer homogeneous settings, would rate individuals with whom they share similarities more favorably than high self-monitors. Because low self-monitors tend to prefer social contexts that are encompassed by individuals with comparable beliefs, it was expected they would view a similar co-worker as a benefit to this homogeneous setting. It was also hypothesized high self-monitors, those who prefer heterogeneous contexts where they can assess the environment, would rate individuals with whom they share similarities less favorably than low self-monitors.

This research will assist organizations in understanding the processes involved in group dynamics within the workplace. The diversity of the working environment is rapidly increasing as employees of various age, race, and gender are entering the organizational setting. It is estimated by the year 2005, 47% of the work force will be women, 15% will be over age 55, and 65% of the growth rate will be among non-white individuals (Sherman, Bohlander, & Snell, 1996). This study will aid organizations in increasing the overall cohesiveness of a work team by actively searching for similarities between workers and

stressing resemblances. If workers realize they share common ties, their impression of one another may improve which in turn should prove beneficial to overall company morale. Further, because high self-monitors tend to excel in the workplace through increased promotions, better performance, and overt leadership characteristics, the identification of these individuals will aid organizations in classifying these employees into productive dyads (Kilduff & Day, 1994; Snyder, 1974). From the conclusions made in previous research, it appears production based on team effort would greatly benefit from a mixture of high and low self-monitors within the group. Individuals possessing high SM characteristics would help the team advance by adapting to various demands and environments, whereas the low SM individuals would help maintain balance in the group by stressing the importance of commitment, consistency, and morale (Day, Schleicher, & Unckless, 1996; Kilduff & Day, 1994; Snyder, 1974).

High and low self-monitors also posses specific traits needed for certain occupations. The general business realm (e.g., real estate) tends to attract individuals high on the SM scale, whereas the helping venue (e.g., counseling) proves more interesting for low self-monitors (Brown, White, & Gersten, 1989). Because of this difference, employers might be able to utilize the SM scale as a selection tool in determining if a potential applicant's personality characteristics match those deemed important for the job.

Further, because high and low self-monitors value different characteristics and contexts, employers could maintain an active total of employees who are in each category. If high and low self-monitors differ in the way they perceive similar co-workers, then training programs that emphasize

interpersonal relationships may benefit the overall company morale. By stressing the importance of similarities in the dynamics of the work force, low self-monitors will realize the homogeneity of the work setting and thereby become more committed to the organization (Snyder & Gangestad, 1982). High self-monitors, on the other hand, would benefit from a training module that highlighted the characteristics and behaviors the company deems important. Because individuals with this high SM trait tend to adjust their attitudes and beliefs to their environment, they will be more inclined to adapt to an employer's request (Burkhardt, 1994). Further, because high self-monitors prefer to live in social contexts which are surrounded by a heterogeneous group of people, this training module could emphasize individual differences and concentrate on the benefits of a diverse work force (Jamieson et al., 1987).

Impression Management

"All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances, And one man in his time plays many parts" (Shakespeare, 1623/1977).

As Shakespeare observed so many years ago, individuals vary their behaviors based on specific situations and external contexts. This general area of managing impressions has received attention not only in the classic literature, but in the psychological and business world as well. Wayne and Liden (1995) define these managing techniques as "those behaviors individuals employ to protect their self images, [and] influence the way they are perceived by others" (p. 232).

These impression management tactics are often evident in the workplace as employees are acutely aware of being judged on their appearance and

actions. In the analogy of Shakespeare's stage, employees find the epitome of the perfect role and adapt their characteristics to fit the specific part. Attributes such as race, sex, and educational background strongly dictate which role is chosen (Gardner, 1992).

Character sketches and portrayals must be carried out with delicacy as, according to William James (1890), "a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind" (p. 294). This belief still holds true today as individuals have numerous selves that emerge, and they must monitor and manage each self in order to present a positive image (Snyder, 1987). When an individual takes on a role and begins to adopt specific attributes, he/she, according to Goffman (1959):

> implicitly requests his/her observers to take seriously the impression that is fostered before them. They are asked to believe that the character they see actually possesses the attributes he/she appears to possess, that the task he/she performs will have the consequences that are implicitly claimed for it, and that, in general, matters are where they appear to be. (p. 17)

As with acting, the tone of the audience is an important aspect of a portrayal. When individuals are purporting a self-presentation style, they adopt the general attitudes and characteristics of the audience in order to receive a certain consequence. Therefore, the environment sets the stage for the actor to perform. Once the contextual cues are taken into account, individuals need to alter their verbal and nonverbal actions in order to control the overall impression they produce.

Employees often assess their working environment and try, through a variety of impression management styles, to present themselves in a positive tone. They exert these positive characteristics in order to improve supervisors and managers overall conceptions of their character and work behavior (Baumeister, 1982; Gardner, 1992; Gardner & Martinko, 1988).

Self-Monitoring

Self-monitoring is a form of impression management in which individuals gauge their situation and adjust their behaviors accordingly. Snyder (1974) coined this term and defines the SM individual as one who, "out of concern for social appropriateness, is particularly sensitive to the expression and self-presentation of others in social situations and uses those cues as guidelines for monitoring his/her own self-presentation" (p. 528). The degree to which individuals observe and express their behavior can vary. General goals of executing SM tactics include communicating an emotion which may not be representative of an actual internal cognitive process, covering up emotions which are inappropriate, and appearing to experience a specific emotion which is relevant to a particular circumstance (Snyder, 1974).

SM is a class variable which can be divided into two categories: high and low. High self-monitors tend to base their behaviors around the general question, "Who does this situation want me to be and how can I be that person?", whereas low self-monitors abide by the question of "Who am I and how can I be me in this situation?" (Snyder, 1987, p. 189). High self-monitors tailor their actions to fit situations whereas low self-monitors tend to prefer homogeneous settings in which they are surrounded by individuals similar to them (Riordan, Gross, & Maloney, 1994; Snyder, Gangestad, & Simpson, 1983).

Although distinct differences exist between the two styles, one style is not superior to the other style as positive and negative aspects can be associated with each approach.

High Self-Monitors. High self-monitors (HSM) are persuasive individuals who depend on signals sent by the environment to guide and dictate their behavioral actions (Athay & Darley, 1981). These individuals also utilize various impression management tactics in order to adjust to a specific context or situation (Gardner & Martinko, 1988). Such strategies include altering their self-descriptions, tone of voice, and non-verbal gestures to custom fit each situation they encounter (Leone & Corte, 1994).

HSM possess the necessary characteristics that enable them to grasp the actions and techniques they should employ in order to relay indications of competence (Fandt & Ferris, 1990). Behaviors are also tailor made for each situation so HSM appear as a slightly different person in each context.

Regardless of the context, HSM are dependent upon behavioral cues to guide their responses and actions. Elliott (1979) found that when HSM participated in a study dealing with how people form impressions, they had a higher tendency to demand information about their partner before they proceeded with a conversation about legalizing drugs. He had participants complete Snyder's (1974) SM scale as well as a scale which measured participants' attitudes on various controversial issues. Participants were then told they would be trying to convey a certain impression to a partner concerning the legalization of marijuana. During the discussion, participants were given the opportunity to buy specific information regarding their partner's biography, attitude, and/or general personality. Individuals high on the SM scale

purchased a greater amount of information than those lower on the SM characteristic. Additionally, Snyder (1974) found HSM had a tendency to look at a sheet of paper which listed the standard means of performance before engaging in a behavioral activity.

Because HSM adapt to different environments, numerous studies have also reported evidence of excellence in the workplace. Kilduff and Day (1994) found HSM to be more likely to receive promotions and make geographical moves than low self-monitors. They also concluded that these individuals show indications of increased contextual abilities such as adapting to others and cooperating. Similar studies have also shown HSM to excel in jobs where extrinsic values are displayed and organizational requirements demand sensitivity to various social cues (Brown et al., 1989; Kilduff & Day, 1994). Such occupations, according to Holland's Vocational Preference Inventory (Holland, 1973), include characteristics of an enterprising person. Individuals who exhibit the enterprising personality exert a strong need for achievement, seek pleasure, and view their verbal and persuasive tactics as their main strength. Occupations like real estate salespersons, business executives, and buyers are typical of the ambitious and successful high self-monitor.

Because of their ability to act like social chameleons, HSM are more likely to adapt to a company image and position themselves according to their own professional goals (Kilduff & Day, 1994; Snyder, 1974). The working environment can also benefit from HSM because they are associated with high performance and leadership traits (Day et al., 1996; Snyder, 1987). This exceptional performance and dominant behavior often produce feelings of

confidence and increased self-esteem within the employee (Riordan et al., 1994). Along with these positive qualities, HSM also display traits associated with career success, as a moderate correlation has been found between SM style and job level ($\underline{r} = .46$) and communicative abilities ($\underline{r} = .38$) (Sypher & Sypher, 1983).

Although HSM possess the ability to adapt to their environment, they often exhibit inconsistencies in their behavior (Gardner & Martinko, 1988). Because they are continually trying to assess contextual cues and adjust their behaviors to the setting, their actions and attitude are often unpredictable. This inconsistency tends to produce high levels of role stress as HSM constantly struggle with different forms of identity (Day et al., 1996). Role stress is also evident within the workplace as individuals with high SM characteristics tend to express low levels of vocational maturity and organizational commitment (Blustein, 1987; Day et al., 1996).

Low Self-Monitors. Low self-monitors (LSM) exhibit actions that reflect their personal attitudes, feelings and beliefs by exerting various behaviors dependent upon emotional cues and internal processes (Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 1995). They view themselves as consistent individuals who abide by the notion of acting as they believe. Therefore LSM tend to engage in interactions where their true feelings can guide their actions (Jamieson et al., 1987; Snyder, 1981). Further, LSM prefer to live and socialize in a "relatively homogeneous and undifferentiated social world that [is] populated with people who are similar to them in their attitudes, traits, and dispositions" (Snyder et al., 1983, p. 1063). Individuals who display these characteristics shouldn't be looked upon as lacking adaptive behavior, rather they should be viewed as

individuals who take an active approach in the presentation of true feelings and accurate perceptions (Snyder, 1987). LSM gauge their behaviors upon emotional feelings and are less attentive to social cues and environmental norms (Rosenfeld et al., 1995). They strive to maintain consistency in their actions and tend to feel better about themselves when this consistency is maintained. Riordan et al. (1994) reiterate this point as they found male low self-monitors' self-esteem actually increased when they failed to convince an audience of a contrived aggressive performance. Participants were instructed to read four scenarios which each described an ethnical dilemma. In each case participants were asked to solve the scenarios as if they were "cynical, realistic, ambitious, down-to-earth, out for number one, self-centered" individuals (Riordan et al., 1994, p. 719). Furthermore, because LSM depend upon internal cues to guide them, they do not require supplemental information about people they encounter and are therefore more inclined toward natural expression of authentic emotion (Elliott, 1979).

Organizations can also greatly benefit from this invaluable resource. Because LSM prefer contexts in which they can express their own attributes and beliefs, they tend to be more committed to an organization where these attitudes are represented (Snyder & Gangestad, 1982; Snyder, 1987). They value company goals and express a high level of vocational maturity (Blustein, 1987). Additionally, because of their reliance on internal attributes, LSM do not require supplemental information about others with whom they work (Elliott, 1979). Instead, they base their judgments on their personal belief structure. Further, LSM have been found to report high ratings on the social scale of Holland's Vocational Preference Inventory, which includes traits such as

idealistic, capable of forming close relationships, and religious (Brown et al., 1989; Holland, 1973). Accordingly, occupations like minister, counselor, and teacher correspond with these social descriptors.

When presented with the option of adapting to new work role requirements, LSM would prefer to slightly adjust their current work habits than completely alter their routine to comply with company standards (Burkhardt, 1994). Because of this stance, LSM may have difficulties succeeding in certain professional roles. Jobs that require individuals to express dominant, impulsive personalities may not be appropriate for LSM. Further, because studies have found HSM to excel in leadership traits, LSM may have difficulty with jobs that mandate strong leadership skills (Day et al., 1996).

Perceptions of Similarity

Finch and Cialdini (1989) coined the concept of cognitive boosting, "the tendency of individuals exposed to an accidental connection between themselves and another, to render the other's traits more favorable in their own minds" (p. 224). This concept is directly applicable to organizational settings as most individuals want to be liked by their co-workers (Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 1986). Therefore, because individuals who learn of a similarity with others tend to favor those with whom they share an association, observable variables such as sex, race, and ethnicity provide a means of connection (Cialdini & DeNicholas, 1989; Tedeschi, 1981).

Positive perceptions of similarity have been evident in various settings with different dyads of people involved. Cialdini and DeNicholas (1989) found introductory psychology students rated an individual with whom they shared a birthday higher on characteristics such as friendliness, personality, intelligence,

and stature than students who did not receive the birthday manipulation. Similar results have also been found within the interviewing process as overall impressions increase when similarities are perceived between interviewer and applicant (Graves & Powell, 1988). When a potential employee presents information that is similar to the interviewer's perspective (e.g., overt stimulus characteristics, propinquity, need for affiliation), the candidate is assigned higher ratings and is perceived as more intelligent than other candidates (Rand & Wexley, 1975). This effect also exists within the supervisor-subordinate relationship as supervisors who thought they shared a similarity with a dependent were more likely to report favorable ratings of the subordinates than those with whom they shared no common ties (Wayne & Liden, 1995).

Increases in favorability have also occurred within academic and athletic settings. Finch and Cialdini (1989) provided subjects with a scenario outlining behaviors and actions of Rasputin, the mad monk of Russia. The authors found that individuals who shared a birthday with Rasputin rated him more favorably than those who did not share the yearly celebration. Similar results were demonstrated with potential football recruits. Participants given descriptions of college football players coming from the same home town rated the athletes higher than individuals who grew up in a different vicinity (Glovich, 1981).

In addition to birthdays and hometowns, researchers have also demonstrated cultural and attitudinal influences on interpersonal attraction (Gudykunst & Nishida, 1984). Bochner and Orr (1979) found a strong association between race similarity and friendship formation as participants had a tendency to form relationships with members of the same cultural background.

Attitude similarities of this type were found to affect LSM perceptions of others, whereas activity similarities tended to influence individuals high on the SM scale (Jarnieson et al., 1987).

Conclusion

Mirroring the words of William Shakespeare, life is truly a stage, as workers in organizational settings view the job site as another stage on which to act. Individuals strive to make positive impressions on those around them in order to succeed in the organizational environment. These behaviors are monitored and adjusted according to internal and external cues which individuals encounter (Snyder, 1974).

Although ratings of perceived similarity have been studied, research has failed to investigate this perception with respect to SM in an organizational setting. Therefore, this study purported to take these variables into an industrial environment to determine how co-workers would rate one another on specific similarity dimensions. Based on these predictions, the following hypotheses were proposed:

> Hypothesis 1: Employees in an industrial setting who were exposed to similarities with a co-worker would perceive them significantly more favorably than employees who did not perceive the variable of similarity.
>
> Hypothesis 2a: LSM would produce significantly higher ratings of favorability on the rating scale when similarities were perceived than HSM.

Hypothesis 2b: HSM would produce significantly lower ratings of favorability on the rating scale when similarities were perceived than LSM.

Because studies have shown HSM to be promoted quickly and to produce successful results within a business environment, this information could be valuable for managers. HSM emerge as leaders and have more influence on group dynamics than LSM and therefore could be targeted by managers (Dobbins, Long, Dedrick, & Clemons, 1990). If managers knew which individuals tended to monitor their impressions, they might have a better idea of how to group individuals together in teams to form more productive work units.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

The sample for this study included 78 assembly-line workers (74% women and 26% men) from a manufacturing corporation in the Midwest who had a mean age of 34.14 years. Sixty-five percent of the population was Caucasian and 35% included individuals from Asian, African-American, Hispanic, and Native American backgrounds. Seven percent of participants had less than a high school education, 77% held a high school or GED degree, 11% had obtained a technical diploma, and 5% had either an associates or bachelor's degree.

Design

The two between-subjects independent variables in this study both had two levels, classified as similarity (similarity or no similarity) and self-monitoring (high or low). The dependent variable was the score obtained on the favorability rating scale.

A 2 x 2 analysis of variance (ANOVA) was the statistical design utilized for this study. ANOVA works well with designs that employ random assignment of participants and investigate one dependent variable. Because these conditions were met in the current study, this method of assessment was deemed appropriate. All computations were completed on the Windows version of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences computer program.

Instrumentation

Three primary instruments were used in this study. A similarity profile which described an employee in neutral terms was utilized as well as a favorability rating and self-monitoring scale.

Employee Profile. In perusing the literature, no similarity profiles were found that related to the organizational setting, hence, one was constructed for this study based upon the work of Finch and Cialdini (1989). This profile contained artificial information on an employee who worked for the fictitious Shea company. The paper employee was characterized by a specific race, sex, age, and educational background which tailor fit the attributes of each individual rater. Further, this employee was portrayed in a neutral tone as an equal number of positive and negative descriptors existed. The employee was described in non-judgmental terms in order to accurately assess the favorability ratings. In other words, by presenting the employee in a neutral light, any differences in ratings between the treatment and control groups were most likely attributable to the similarity variable and not the positive (or negative) overtone of the scenario.

To check the validity of the instrument, it was given to 34 students in a social psychology class. Each student was asked to rate "Jamie's" effectiveness as an employee. Based on a 7-point Likert scale, the mean rating of effectiveness for the profile was 4.24 with a standard deviation of .96. These results indicated the profile was perceived in neutral terms with some variability among raters.

Favorability Rating Scale. Because no published rating scale could be found that met the criteria of this study, the researcher constructed one based

on the semantic differential theory of Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum (1957). This instrument consisted of five 5-point scales that were anchored by bipolar adjectives. Each set of adjectives was evaluative in nature and provided an accurate means of assessing participant's opinions. Participants' ratings were summed according to the numerical value of the responses.

Self-Monitoring Scale. Self-monitoring (SM) was measured by Snyder and Gangestad's (1986) revised, 18-item SM scale. The scale asked participants to answer a series of true/false questions regarding their tendency to monitor their self-presentation style. Scale scores ranged from 0 to 18 as one point was given for each response which paralleled the published answer key. The statements in the questionnaire dealt with the ability to control expressive behavior, the capability of entertaining others in social situations, and the ability to base behavior upon social cues. Because the SM characteristic is a class variable, higher scores on the scale were representative of high self-monitors whereas lower scores were characteristic of low self-monitors. Based on this conclusion, a median split procedure was conducted in which participants with SM scores above the median were deemed HSM and those with scores below the median were assigned to the LSM condition.

The SM scale has been found to validly measure social behavior and the defined SM construct (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986). Further, the scale has been psychometrically evaluated and yields internal consistency (coefficient alpha) of .70.

Procedures

After gaining permission from the Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects (See Appendix A) and the director of Human

Resources (HR) at the manufacturing company, data collection began. The HR director agreed to allow the entire assembly-line to participate in the study.

The data collection process was a two-part phase that was conducted over a two day interval. During the first phase, participants were each given an informed consent document and a demographic profile sheet (See Appendixes B and C). The demographic sheet asked for general information including name, sex, age, and educational background of each participant. Each participant was also asked to draw a "1" or a "2" out of an envelope. This process provided for randomization of groups as all individuals who drew a "1" were placed in the treatment group and those who draw a "2" were in the control group. After the demographic sheet was completed, the participants were thanked for their participation and asked to return the next day.

Upon entering the room on the second day, all participants were directed toward a table where a set of sealed manila envelopes was arranged alphabetically. They were instructed to pick up their envelope, return to their seat, read the profile, and complete the two scales. The packet contained a profile sheet of an employee described in neutral terms (see Appendix D), a favorability rating scale (see Appendix E) and Snyder and Gangestad's (1986) self-monitoring scale (see Appendix F). All participants received the questionnaires in the same order. The employee profile sheet was read first, the favorability rating scale was completed second, and the SM scale was completed last. Those in the treatment group received a profile scenario in which the employee's sex, race, educational level, and main area of interest (hobby) matched the rater. Individuals in the control group received a profile sheet with no blatant identifiers regarding the employee's demographic

information. Because each participant received a personalized envelope with very similar contents, participants did not realize they had been classified as "treatment" or "control."

After the participants read the profile and filled out both the rating and SM scales, they were instructed to peel the name label from the envelope. By removing the name label, confidentiality was ensured. Once the labels were removed, the participants were given a statement regarding the nature of the study (see Appendix G) and were free to leave. The researcher was available to answer any questions.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between perceptions of similarity and self-monitoring (SM) styles among industrial workers. Specifically, employees in a manufacturing plant were studied to determine if their self-monitoring style affected the way they perceived a co-worker with whom they shared similarities. It was hypothesized that employees in a manufacturing organization who were exposed to similarities with a co-worker would rate them significantly more favorably than employees who did not perceive the similarity variable. Additionally, low self-monitors were expected to produce significantly higher ratings of favorability when similarities were perceived and high self-monitors were hypothesized to produce significantly lower ratings of favorability. The independent variables in this study were bi-level as similarity perceptions (similar or not similar) and SM styles (high or low) were assessed. Ratings obtained on a favorability rating scale served as the dependent variable. A 2 x 2 between-subject analysis of variance (ANOVA) provided the necessary analyses to compute this relationship.

Favorability ratings were computed using the two independent groups of similarity and SM. The similarity perception discussed in Hypothesis 1 did not reveal statistical significance among employees, F (1, 74) = 2.01, $p < .16$ (see Table 1). Contrived similarity associations which have shown to influence overall impressions in the past did not seem to affect the perceptions of favorability in this study. SM styles outlined in Hypotheses 2a and 2b also produced a non-significant result among employees, F (1, 74) = .35, $p < .56$.

Table 1

Analysis of Variance on Favorability Scores by Self-Monitoring Styles and Similarity Perceptions

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p
Similarity (S)	1	21.92	21.92	2.01	.16
Self-Monitoring (SM)	1	3.82	3.82	.35	.56
SM x S	1	.59	.59	.05	.82
Error	74	805.68	10.88		

Behavioral actions and leadership characteristics which are often associated with high and low SM styles did not impact ratings of favorability. The interaction between similarity and SM styles was also assessed. Neither variable was statistically significantly different, F (1, 74) = .05, p < .82. These results indicate neither independent variable had an effect on employee's overall ratings of favorability.

The means and standard deviations of rating are presented in Table 2. Mean ratings provided a range from 15.38 to 16.89 with standard deviations from 2.74 to 3.90.

Further analysis into demographic data provided no apparent indicators of differences between groups (see Table 3). Although the sample was dominated by women, both the treatment and control groups contained a similar male/female ratio. Education levels were comparable as 83% of the treatment group and 72% of the control group held either a high school or GED degree and 5% of each group had obtained an associate's or bachelor's degree. Ethnic backgrounds also revealed similar numbers as Caucasian participants clearly dominated both groups.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations of Favorability Rating Scores by Similarity

Perceptions and Self-Monitoring Styles

Condition	$\underline{n}$	$\underline{M}$	$\underline{SD}$
Similar Perception			
High Self-Monitor	18	16.89	2.74
Low Self-Monitor	21	16.62	3.06
Total	39	33.51	5.80
Not Similar Perception			
High Self-Monitor	18	16.00	3.90
Low Self-Monitor	21	15.38	3.41
Total	39	31.38	7.31

Table 3

Comparison of Demographic Information by Similarity Perceptions

Variable	Percentages	
	Similar	Not Similar
Sex		
Female	68%	79%
Male	32%	21%
Race		
African-American	5%	2%
Caucasian	71%	61%
Hispanic	15%	26%
Native American	9%	9%
Other	0%	2%
Education		
Less than HS	0%	14%
High School/GED	83%	72%
Technical	12%	9%
Associates/Bachelors	5%	5%
Self-Monitoring Style		
High Self-Monitor	46%	54%
Low Self-Monitor	46%	54%

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

This study examined the relationship between perceptions of similarity and self-monitoring (SM) styles among industrial workers. Previous research on the effects of impression management demonstrated individuals' general opinions of others are directly influenced by basic similarity traits (Cialdini & DeNicholas, 1989; Wayne & Ferris, 1990). Therefore, individuals who realize they share race, education, and gender commonalities with another person tend to view him/her more favorably (Bochner & Orr, 1979; Gudykunst & Nishida, 1984). SM styles have also been shown to affect the contextual environments individuals encounter. High self-monitors (HSM) are often referred to as social chameleons as they alter their behavioral patterns based on external cues. These individuals prefer diverse social situations, which are accompanied by a heterogeneous population (Jamieson et al., 1987). Low self-monitors (LSM), however, exert behavioral actions based on internal traits rather than external cues (Snyder, 1974). These individuals favor homogeneous settings where they are surrounded by individuals who share similar characteristics.

Similarity Perceptions

Results indicated no significant difference in terms of perceptions of similarity. Employees who perceived similarities with a co-worker produced equivalent scores on the favorability scale as employees who did not perceive demographic resemblances. These results are inconsistent with conclusions drawn from previous research. Although the differences between groups were minimal and nonsignificant, it is noteworthy to look at the population sampled.

Because all participants were selected from an environment highly dependent upon teamwork, they may have rated "Jamie" the co-worker strictly on work patterns. Rather than relying on demographic similarities, these participants could have been looking at the global picture of fitting "Jamie" into their current working paradigm. It appears they used "Jamie's" average performance as their sole basis for ratings on the favorability scale.

Further, manufacturing organizations tend to employ factory workers who possess comparable characteristics. Therefore, a homogeneous environment is often created through organizational selection and through employees' expectations of working with individuals who share similar backgrounds (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). This homogeneous working environment was apparent within the sampled population as Caucasian women with a high school or GED degree dominated the participant group. Therefore, even though demographic similarities were not established within the control group, employees may have assumed "Jamie's" characteristics to be similar to their own.

Self-Monitoring Styles

LSM, individuals who display actions based on emotional cues and internal processes, were expected to rate the similar co-worker more favorably than high self-monitors. Because high self-monitors adapt to different environments and prefer diverse contexts, they were expected to downplay the similarity manipulation. Results of the study, however, were inconsistent with previous findings as no significant differences were found between high and low self-monitors' exposure to the similarity variable. This conclusion indicates

all individuals, regardless of their impression management tactics, viewed "Jamie" in comparable terms.

Limitations

The education and literacy level of the participants may have affected the outcome of the study. Although the majority of the employees had obtained a high school diploma, the literacy level of these individuals could not be determined. Many of the participants may have had difficulties reading and comprehending the various components of the questionnaire. Additionally, because 35% of the employees surveyed were from ethnically diverse backgrounds, their limited understanding of the English language may have produced a confound.

As with all field research, the dynamics of the working environment could have limited the conclusions drawn from the study. Although strict measures were taken to ensure confidentiality and voluntary participation, some of the employees may have felt their answers would somehow affect their job status. Because of this belief, participants may have answered the questionnaire based on socially accepted answers rather than their actual opinions. Therefore, individuals in the similarity group who actually felt "Jamie" was an outstanding employee may have been hesitant to rate him/her on the extreme ends of the Likert scale.

Future Research

Further research needs to be conducted in the area of similarity perceptions and SM styles. The sample in this study was derived from assembly line workers in a medium-sized manufacturing company in the Midwest. Additional data needs to be collected in other geographic regions and

with employees in more diverse working environments. Specifically, the dynamics in a supervisor-subordinate dyad should be investigated with respect to SM styles. Numerous studies have produced findings indicative of the positive influence perceived similarities have on leader-member exchanges (Liden, Wayne, & Stilwell, 1993; Phillips & Bedeian, 1994). It would therefore be interesting to study similarity perceptions and SM characteristics to determine if personality traits influence such perceptions.

In addition to measuring basic demographic variables, tapping attitudinal similarities between supervisors and subordinates would produce interesting implications. Because LSM tend to prefer homogeneous environments, they might be more attracted to individuals with whom they share attitudinal similarities rather than just external characteristics. Snyder's (1981) conclusion parallels this prediction as LSM have been found to participate in social settings where they are allowed to produce behaviors consistent with their belief structure. Therefore, manipulating opinions and attitudes on current topics may elicit a significant difference between the perceptions of high and low self-monitors.

Interpersonal relationships between high and low self-monitors should also be researched. Although certain leadership traits and vocational preferences have been associated with each style, it would be interesting to examine the cohesiveness between the two. With the renewed interest in teamwork and group dynamics, employers are taking active means to manage diversity and accommodate the needs of women and minority groups. Within each of these diverse settings lie individuals high on the SM scale as well as employees who exemplify characteristics of low self-monitors. Because each

type of self-monitor prefers specific environmental contexts and tends to excel in certain areas, the productiveness of such a work unit should be studied.

The implications of further research could benefit organizational environments in many ways. Because the demographic make-up of today's labor market is rapidly changing, organizations are striving to promote group cohesiveness within the working environment. By emphasizing similarities that exist between supervisors and subordinates as well as between departmental employees, active measures could be taken to improve group relations and company morale.

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APPENDIX A

Approval Letter from Institutional Review Board

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

1200 COMMERCIAL EMPORIA, KANSAS 66801-5087 316/ 341-5351   RESEARCH AND GRANTS CENTER - BOX 4003
Fax 316/341-5909

January 21, 1997

Stephanie Winters
2220 Prairie, Apt. 5C
Emporia, KS 66801

Dear Ms. Winters:

The Institutional Review Board for Treatment of Human Subjects has evaluated your application for approval of human subject research entitled, "An Examination of the Relationship Between Perceptions of Similarity and Self-Monitoring Styles on Industrial Workers.." The review board approved your application which will allow you to begin your research with subjects as outlined in your application materials.

Best of luck in your proposed research project. If the review board can help you in any other way, don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

John O. Schwenn, Dean
Graduate Studies and Research

pf

cc: Brian Schrader

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Document

STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

Emporia State University supports the practice of protection for human participants in research and related activities. The following information is provided so that you can decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you do agree to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time, and that if you do withdraw from the study, you will not be subjected to reprimand.

You are invited to participate in a study investigating the perceptions of employees in an industrial setting. If you wish to participate in this study, you will be asked to fill out a brief questionnaire. This should take you one or two minutes. Next week you will be asked to read a profile of an employee and fill out two short questionnaires. This should take about ten minutes.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your name will not be associated with the research findings and will in no way affect your job status.

If you have any questions about this study, feel free to ask. I can be reached at 341-5803.

Thank-you,

Stephanie Winters

I, _____, have read the above information and decided to
     (please print name)
participate.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time.

_____	_____
(signature of participant)	(date)

APPENDIX C

Demographic Profile Sheet

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Please provide the following information about yourself.

1. Name: _____

                       (Please Print)

2. Sex: Male [   ]   Female [   ]

3. Race: Asian [   ]   African-American [   ]   Caucasian [   ]   Hispanic [   ]

             Native American [   ]   Other _____ [   ]

4. Age: _____

5. Date of Birth: _____

6. Education: Less than High School [   ]   High School [   ]   GED [   ]

                  Technical [   ]   Associates [   ]   Bachelors [   ]

                  Graduate [   ]   Post-Graduate [   ]

7. Favorite Hobby/Area of Interest: _____

8. Marital Status: Single [   ]   Married [   ]   Divorced [   ]   Separated [   ]

9. Favorite Television Show: _____

10. Favorite Color: _____

APPENDIX D

Employee Profile

EMPLOYEE PROFILE SHEET

Please read the following description of an employee at another company. When you have finished, turn this piece of paper over, and complete the two questionnaires.

The Shea Company, a manufacturing organization, recently hired Jamie, a <race, sex, age> who has been on the job for a few brief months. Jamie often comes to work fifteen to twenty minutes late and often fails to dress in the appropriate company uniform.

However, Jamie displays a positive attitude toward the job and looks forward to <his/her> daily tasks. When extra jobs need to be done, <he/she> is the first one to volunteer to help. Further, Jamie often stays after hours to complete projects and finish certain duties.

Jamie's production rate is below company standards. Whereas most of <his/her> co-workers produce 10 units per day, <he/she> usually averages 8 or 9. This failure to meet standard bothers Jamie and <he/she> is trying to improve <his/her> work habits.

Through Jamie's actions, it has become obvious that <he/she> cares a lot about the job. However, because <he/she> is often involved <hobby scenario>, Jamie fails to show up to work sometimes.

The Shea Company is wondering if Jamie's behavior is affecting <his/her> co-workers. <His/Her> <educational background> indicates that <he/she> is qualified for the job, but management isn't sure what to do. If you worked with Jamie, how would you feel?

APPENDIX E

Favorability Rating Scale

RATING SCALE

Please rate the employee, as described in the profile you just read, in terms of where you think they should be placed on the following scales. Circle the number that matches your opinion.

	BAD				GOOD
	1	2	3	4	5

	WORTHLESS				VALUABLE
	1	2	3	4	5

	HARMFUL				BENEFICIAL
	1	2	3	4	5

	UNPLEASANT				PLEASANT
	1	2	3	4	5

	AWFUL				NICE
	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX F

Self-Monitoring Scale

SELF-MONITORING QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete the following questionnaire by putting a "T" in the space if the item is true for you, or an "F" if the item does not apply to you.

_____   1. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people.

_____   2. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like.

_____   3. I can only argue for ideas which I already believe.

_____   4. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information.

_____   5. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain others.

_____   6. I would probably make a good actor.

_____   7. In a group of people I'm rarely the center of attention.

_____   8. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons.

_____   9. I am not particularly good at making other people like me.

_____   10. I'm not always the person I appear to be.

_____   11. I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please someone or win their favor.

_____   12. I have never considered being an entertainer.

_____   13. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting.

_____   14. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.

_____   15. At a party I let others keep the jokes and stories going.

_____   16. I feel a bit awkward in public and do not show up quite as well as I should.

_____   17. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for a right end).

_____   18. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them.

APPENDIX G

Debriefing Document

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study you just participated in was to see if workers will view another person more positively when they think they share a similarity. The study also wanted to see if workers behavior in a social setting affects the way they view others.

Thank you for participating in this study. If you have any further questions about the study, don't hesitate to ask.

Because a number of your co-workers are participating in this research, please do not discuss this with anyone else until research is complete.

I, <u>Stephanie S. Winters</u>, hereby submit this thesis to Ernporia State University as partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree. I agree that the Library of the University may make it available for use in accordance with its regulations governing materials of this type. I further agree that quoting, photocopying, or other reproduction of this document is allowed for private study, scholarship (including teaching) and research purposes of a nonprofit nature. No copying which involves potential financial gain will be allowed without written permission of the author.

Stephanie S. Winters
Signature of Author

May 07, 1997
Date

An Examination of the Relationship between
Perceptions of Similarity and Self-Monitoring Styles
on Industrial Workers
Title of Thesis

Lacy Cogee
Signature of Graduate Office Staff Member

_5-7-97_
Date Received