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**THE BEHAVIOR OF MANAGERS IN AUSTRIA,  
THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND POLAND; AN INTERCULTURAL  
COMPARISON BASED ON THE VROOM/YETTON MODEL  
OF LEADERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Cross-cultural research in general delivers some evidence that basic values are quite stable. Empirical studies of cross-cultural differences in leadership are rare and follow two major conceptions. The majority of studies employ a "far from action" approach with an emphasis on differences in "basic values" across cultures. The ongoing GLOBE-Project (House *et al.* 1997) or Hofstede's (1980) classical study, which triggered subsequent comparative research mainly on the Power Distance dimension, illustrates this approach. In contrast, a "close to action" approach involves the investigation of actual leadership behavior across cultures and includes basic values as well as situational factors (Szabo *et al.* 2001). In this study we use a "close to action" methodology to compare the leadership behavior of Austrian, Czech, and Polish managers, employing the Vroom/Yetton situational leadership model.

**2. THE VROOM/YETTON MODEL**

The Vroom/Yetton model (Vroom, Yetton 1973) comprises three elements which are interconnected in the logic of the contingency theory: There is (1) no leadership strategy (style) which is successful in all situations, (2) therefore the situations have to be diagnosed and (3) rules have to be

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found which explain which strategy matches which situation best. The Vroom/Yetton model has been tested in a number of studies and is perhaps the best supported of the situational leadership theories. In this section we give a brief introduction for better understanding the results of this study.

1. **Leadership strategies:** According to the model, a leader can choose from five levels of participation when making a decision (AI, AII, CI, CII, GII). These strategies range from an autocratic decision (AI) to a total group decision (GII). AI represents 0% and GII 100% participation. The assignment of different participation scores for the strategies between the extremes of the scale is based on empirical studies in which managers rated the distances on a 1 to 10 scale. As a result, AII represents 10%, CI 50% and CII 80% participation. A stands for autocratic, C for consultative and G for group decision. I stands for the concentration on one person (AI = leader alone, CI = one-on-one consultation with all subordinates who could be affected by the decision), and II stands for the inclusion of two or more persons at the same time.

2. **Situational Attributes:** The leadership decision situation is characterized by seven attributes, which correspond to seven diagnostic questions: (A) Does the problem possess a quality requirement? (B) Does the leader have sufficient information to make a high quality decision? (C) Is the problem structured? (D) Is acceptance of decision by subordinates important for effective implementation? (E) Will an autocratic decision made by the leader be accepted by subordinates? (F) Do subordinates share the organizational goals to be attained in solving this problem? (G) Is conflict among subordinates over preferred solutions likely? The seven questions rely on the assumption that leadership effectiveness is based on mastering two main variables:  $LE = f(Q \times A)$  where Q stands for "quality" and A for "Acceptance". Quality refers to a leader's professional competence, with emphasis on knowledge, to meet the "technical" and task-oriented requirements of an organizational goal. Acceptance refers to the subordinate's commitment to execute the organizational goals. A commitment of this kind is endangered when subordinates are in conflict with the leader's aspirations, the company's goals, or when they do not find adequate consensus among themselves on how to tackle the task at hand. The leader needs "social competence" to diagnose these commitment problems.

3. **Decision Rules:** The model provides seven decision rules (Leader Information Rule, Goal Congruence Rule, Unstructured Problem Rule, Acceptance Rule, Conflict Rule, Fairness Rule, Acceptance Priority Rule), each one of them excluding certain decision strategies in specific situations. The Leader Information Rule, for example, eliminates strategy AI (autocratic decision making) from being feasible in a situation, where the quality of the decision is important (diagnostic question A = "yes") and the leader does

not have enough information or expertise to solve the problem alone (diagnostic question B = "no"). The result of applying all the seven rules to a decision situation is a set of strategies (feasible set) for that situation. When the feasible set contains more than one strategy, there are two additional criteria to focus on just one strategy – time and subordinate development. According to "Model A" the most time saving (least participative) feasible strategy is always selected from the feasible set. "Model B" replaces the goal of time efficiency with a goal of subordinate development and selects the most participative feasible strategy which provides greater involvement of subordinates in decision making and more opportunities to develop their own managerial, technical and team skills.

### 3. CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON OF AUSTRIAN, CZECH, AND POLISH MANAGERS

#### 3.1 Method and Data Collection

The applied method and data collection is dominated by clear action orientation. No questionnaire was used and all data are collected by administering a "problem set" in the form of thirty decision making situations. The thirty cases were selected and rewritten from actual descriptions of real decisions provided to the authors (Vroom, Yetton, Jago 1976) by hundreds of real managers and were validated with the assistance of trained managers. If eight out of ten of those trained managers detected the same problem attributes within the same case, a sufficient validation is assumed. This test, applied for the English problem set (Jago, Vroom 1978) was repeated in a German version (Böhnisch 1991). For the Czech and Polish studies, a translation of the thirty cases by native speakers was used; the semantic "corrections" were not tested systematically. However, in discussions with the Czech managers during their training program, one of the authors in charge of the feedback session got the impression of a "face validity" of the translations as the author found that the same problem attributes were mentioned. The reliability of the Polish version of the problem set was tested for half of the cases (15). Based on a sample of 121 Polish managers this test lead to sufficient results (Maczynski *et al.* 1997).

The problem set was administered to managers who, at the time of data collection, were unfamiliar with the Vroom/Yetton model. In addition to the cases, they only received the definition of the five strategies and were asked to select one for each case. An average time of two hours is needed to read the cases and to make the thirty decisions.

The results of the decision process mirror intended behavior. Validation studies done by A. G. Jago and V. H. Vroom (1978) for the US and replicated by W. Böhnisch *et al.* (1988) for Austria came to the conclusion that the intended behavior as a reaction to the problem set is equivalent to the real behavior of the involved managers.

The Czech and Austrian data were collected prior to leadership training programs. In such a training program, the respondents do not provide a "favor" for a research program since their main concern is the improvement of their own leadership behavior. All of the participants receive feedback, in which their first reactions to the problem set are compared with a description of the model. Training is provided to assist the participants in using the diagnostic questions and the decision rules for upcoming leadership decisions in their home organizational environment.

The Polish data stem from two prior studies. The data were collected in 1988 from 146 managers (Maczynski *et al.* 1994) and from 253 managers in 1993–1994 (Jago, Maczynski, Reber 1996). In this case, the data collection was not completed within the framework of a training program.

The data collection in Austria began in 1984 and in the Czech Republic in 1991 with the most recent data collected in Prague in Spring of 2002. The total numbers were standardized based on a matching process. Matching was performed on organizational and demographic variables – provided by the respondents – known to affect leadership style: gender, hierarchical level, managerial function, age, as well as organization type, number of subordinates, and tenure with the company.

### 3.2. Results

**Participativeness:** The most straightforward of problem set statistics are the simple "frequencies with which managers choose each of the five strategies". The top portion of Tab. 1 contains the means from the three cultures. The comparison confirms the finding that Austrian managers are least inclined to employ autocratic strategies (AI and AII) while they most frequently use group processes (CII and GII) for decision making. Polish and Czech managers do not differ significantly from each other in the use of autocratic strategies and consultative group processes (CII); managers in the Czech Republic are only different from their colleagues in Poland in that they use the GII strategy less frequently. As far as the CI strategy is concerned no differences were found; all three countries show this strategy with the second lowest frequency. The CI-Strategy is the only strategy in

which managers in all three countries showed no significant difference; it seemed to be "universal" for all three groups. There is a common "need" for this strategy, however it does not reveal for what purpose, a consultative private conversation between the manager and subordinate takes place in the three countries.

Based on the participation score of the chosen strategies, a "mean level of participation (MLP)" can be computed. In our study it is not computed on the individual level (which reveals a personality factor), but rather as an average on the national level. In addition, the **standard deviation (SD)** around the average is computed again on the national level. The SD demonstrates flexibility: the higher the score – the maximum on the participation scale being between AI (0) and GII (10) is 5.0 – the higher the variance of strategies.

Table 1

## Participativeness

Variable	A (9146)	CZ (146)	PL (146)	F-value	A vs CZ	A vs PL	Cz vs PL
Percent Use of Strategies:							
AI – autocratic	17,5	25,8	25,7	24,69**	**	**	–
All – autocratic	14,9	19,6	18,1	10,65**	**	**	–
CI – consultative	15,4	17,0	17,0	7,72	–	–	–
CII – consultative	30,9	23,3	22,4	27,82**	**	**	–
Gill – group Deci- sion	21,2	14,3	16,8	18,24**	**	**	**
Mean Level of Parti- cipation	5,52	4,34	4,50	48,67**	**	**	–
Standard Deviation	3,57	3,69	3,75	5,96**	**	**	–

\*  $p < 0,05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0,01$ .

The value of the MLP score and the standard deviation are found at the bottom of Tab. 1. The table shows that the Czech Republic and Poland are united in a significantly lower MLP. It is interesting to note that in both countries the SD is higher than in Austria. This confirms the assumption (based on the GLOBE data) that Polish and Czech managers possess a high degree of flexibility as a whole, which can be interpreted – as already mentioned – as a sign of readiness for change processes.

**Agreement with normative model.** Tab. 2 reports the mean frequencies with which Austrian, Czech, and Polish responses fell within the feasible set across the thirty cases. Austrian managers outperform both their colleagues

in Poland and the Czech Republic with a very high F-value; Austrian and Czech managers show the same degree of agreement with model A (time efficiency) but a big difference with the use of model B (subordinate development) whereas this is not the case for Polish and Czech managers.

Each time a respondent's choice is outside the "feasible set", that choice has violated one or more of the seven decision rules underlying the normative model. Rates of rule violations are also reported in Tab. 2. These data isolate the sources of disagreement between managers and model behavior. For six of the seven rules, Austrian respondents display a lower rate of violation than Czech and Polish respondents; the Czech and Polish managers are congruent in five of the seven rules. Rule 2 – which excludes the GII strategy in a situation in which quality is at stake and the subordinates do not share the organizational goals – is among the strategy with the lowest frequency of violations and is the only strategy to show no significant differences between the three countries.

As previously stated, rules 1–3 are designed to protect decision quality whereas rules 4–7 are designed to protect decision acceptance. Rates of quality rule violations (appropriately adjusted for the frequency of rule applicability) and rates of acceptance rule violations are also included in Tab. 2.

Table 2

## Agreement with the Vroom/Yetton Model

Variable	A (9146)	CZ (146)	PL (146)	F-value	A vs CZ	A vs PL	Cz vs PL
Percent Agreement with:							
– feasible set	73,6	65,7	64,1	68,08**	**	**	–
– model A choice	37,9	36,0	32,2	12,50**	–	**	**
– model B choice	30,8	20,3	21,3	51,84**	**	**	–
Percent rule violations:							
– rule 1 – leader Info	8,6	13,0	17,4	22,55**	**	**	–
– rule 2 – goal congruence	12,0	9,4	11,7	2,16	–	–	–
– rule 3 – unstructured	33,9	48,4	50,8	24,36**	**	**	–
– rule 4 – acceptance	15,1	28,9	32,1	49,17**	**	**	–
– rule 5 – conflict	31,5	51,5	56,4	54,62**	**	**	–
– rule 6 – fairness	23,9	56,9	48,3	18,47**	**	**	**
– rule 7 – accept, priority	58,4	73,3	75,7	23,01**	**	**	–
– quality rules (1–3)	15,0	18,7	21,8	28,84**	**	**	**
– acceptance rules (4–7)	28,9	45,4	42,7	77,80**	**	**	–

\*  $p < 0,05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0,01$ .

The first conclusion to be drawn from aggregating rule violations is that regardless of culture, departures from the model's prescriptions are more likely to be attributed to violations of acceptance rules rather than of the quality rules. This is consistent with the evidence in all studies completed within the framework of the Vroom/Yetton model (Vroom, Yetton 1973; Vroom, Jago 1988; Reber, Jago, Böhnisch 1993; Maczynski *et al.* 1994; Reber *et al.* 2000) and seems to have specific signals for the education process concerning future managers. The deficits are significantly higher in the area of social rather than in the area of "professional" (in the tradition of a narrow "task" oriented orientation, respectively technical qualities of decisions).

Nonetheless significant differences among the three countries exist. Poland displays the highest rate of quality rule violations. Austria displays significantly lower rates of acceptance violation for which the Polish and Czech managers do not show significant differences.

**Attribute main effects.** Based on the diagnostic questions "main effects" are reported in Tab. 3. The main effects show behavioral differences that take place when the attribute is absent versus present. A positive main effect indicates a behavioral tendency to be more participative when the attribute is present (i.e. when the answer to the diagnostic question is "Yes"), a negative main effect indicates the reverse. The results portray a relatively complicated picture. At a first glance into the dimensions of the quality requirement, Austrian and Czech managers are more participative when the problem at hand contains a quality component and is, from the organization's perspective, nontrivial. On the other hand, they display greater autocracy on the organizationally trivial issues. Polish managers, however, display a significantly opposite tendency. That is, they are more participative on the trivial issues, more autocratic on the substantial issues.

Table 3

Attribute Main Effects

Variable	A (146)	CZ (146)	PL (146)	F-value	A vs CZ	A vs PL	Cz vs PL
Situational main effects:							
- quality requirement	0,49	0,86	-0,39	19,70**	-	**	**
- leader requirement	-0,32	-0,73	-1,10	11,89**	**	**	**
- problem structure	-2,00	-1,57	-0,86	14,08**	**	**	**
- acceptance requirement	0,79	0,85	0,32	7,09**	-	**	**
- prior Prob. acceptance	-2,80	-2,33	-1,98	9,30**	**	**	-
- goal congruence	0,55	0,73	0,47	1,43	-	-	-
- subordinate conflict	0,16	-0,11	-0,40	7,31**	-	**	-

\*  $p < 0,05$ ; \*\*  $p < 0,01$ .

In situations in which leaders do not have sufficient (technical, professional) information, a significant inclination to become less participative is increasingly apparent among Austrian managers (-0.32) to Czech (-0.73) and Polish (-1.10). If the situation is unstructured, there is a significant tendency for autocratic reactions to decrease in the same sequence: Austria, Czech Republic, Poland. In situations where acceptance of the subordinates is important, the Czech Republic tends to use participativeness to a higher degree than managers in the other two countries. The scores are only significant in comparison to Polish managers. In situations where leaders and subordinates are in conflict, Austrian managers become significantly more participative than their colleagues in the other two countries. If the conflict is between subordinates, Polish managers – in close convergence with their Czech colleagues – consider it appropriate to become more autocratic than the Austrian managers.

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The study substantiates four conjectures and empirical findings of earlier studies mentioned above.

1. Austrian managers show a very high profile of participativeness in their leadership behavior.

2. The Polish and Czech managers are divergent from their Austrian colleagues with higher preferences for autocratic leadership styles, higher disagreement with the prescription of Vroom/Yetton models and in most of the main effects.

3. The Czech and Polish managers are relatively similar in most of the measured dimensions within the Vroom/Yetton framework.

4. National culture is a “domineering” factor for the conception and execution of leadership styles.

How can these results be explained in Poland and the Czech Republic, which politically brought about a revolution and a reorganization of their economies from central state planning and state ownership to a market system with a privatization campaign and an opening for international competition? Did more drastic changes remain on the national level and somehow manage not to penetrate the organizational and individual level? The latter seems to be the reality, in spite of the fact that individual leaders show a high readiness for flexibility with high scores in their standard deviation. Does it look as though a “configurational” view is (the best approach) to explain stability within a change process? In a simplified picture we could argue that a model of three main levels would bring us



closer to an explanation of this seemingly paradox situation of stability within a flux of change. The change took place on the **societal/political level**; the population worked and fought for the right to vote, to exercise the right of government participation, to express more individuality, and to support private ownership. At the **individual level**, these are indicators that similar values and flexibility exist but do not have a place on the **organizational level** of private enterprises and it does mean that this potential can be tapped. Perhaps a change at this organizational level can only be brought about when the opportunity is administered congruently, and the "whole" and its "parts" can find an optimal (ideal) "Gestalt". The existing "values" need the appropriate situational conditions in order to be transformed into "actions".

The situation in **Austria** after World War II may provide an example: It can be speculated that before the end of the war, culturally and individually preferred leadership styles did not "score high" on the scale between AI and GII. The state was in the hand of one party and the economy was state-controlled to divide the most available goods among the majority leaving the least for private consumption. When the war was over and democracy was restored in the Austrian economy, the social/economic partnership model was created within the framework of the distribution of political and economic power between the social democrats and the conservatives. This occurred under the leadership of the old political elite from the First Republic (after World War I) who saw no future for the extremes of capitalism and communism. To deal with decision-making and conflict resolution, a system was constructed in which all stakeholders had a "voice" rather than an "exit" and consensus (GII) was the preferred strategy of decision making and actions (S z a b o *et al.* 2002). Ideas of partnership did not only govern on the highest political/economic level, but transcended into the daily experience of managers at the organizational level. Laws requiring co-determination – as in West Germany – forced them, as well as their subordinates and their union representatives, to negotiate and agree on norms of cooperation and participation which endorsed new patterns of leadership behavior. As this process was not achieved in Austria overnight, it took its toll on development in the form of "over consensualism" with delayed adaptation to fast environmental changes in the EU and the world. Just recently, the erosion of the "two party" political power structure became manifest in the election for the present parliament. This development is based on value changes in the population in favor of more individualism by younger generations born after the two World Wars with no experience of a civil war, poverty and a need for solidarity.

In the **Czech Republic** this organizational level could be the bottleneck. It seems crucial that the results of the "de-governmental" process with its

key elements of privatization and the governance structure in the new "private" companies were insufficient. Of all the ambitious economic plans launched since 1989, voucher privatization (Kost 1994; Fogel ed. 1994) must rank among one of the most ambitious. In contrast to other post communist countries, the majority of state property has been, at least formally, transferred to private hands. However, the economic system is often not transparent and enterprise "owners" are often not real owners but rather managerial cliques having gained their power through connections cultivated in the old regime. Voucher privatization has led to a paradox: Share ownership has been transferred to investment funds which are private only in their legal form, actually these funds are mostly controlled or owned by banks in which the state has a large or even majority stake. The state banks are owned by the National Property Fund (NPF). Banks own the investment funds which in turn own the majority of companies. The companies are indebted to the same banks, which artificially keep the companies alive because otherwise they would be forced to admit that a large part of their loans are unrecoverable.

In a situation like this, the market system does not bare its teeth in fierce competition against inefficient companies. The managers in protected industries can continue in their former functions and mind set. These managers are characterized by a lack of entrepreneurial spirit and a strong aversion towards taking responsibility. The typical Czech talent for passive resistance leads to delays in necessary restructuring measures. Managers remain order-takers, conservative, risk averse, operations focused, "inside" people with low mobility and relying on personal contacts. Proficiency in foreign languages other than Russian is relatively low. Older managers in particular are technically oriented with a propensity to stick to a plan as a rule. They are flexible but their flexibility has a completely different aim: A typical attribute of central command planning was shortage. This includes shortages of raw materials, energy, semi-finished products, transport capacities, skilled/unskilled labor force, and investment capital, etc. These predicaments called for competence to improvise and be flexible on the input side of business activities. The market system's accent is on the output side towards consumer and market orientation.

A market reform alone does not change the governance structure within companies. The Czech government did not initiate legislation based on the experience with co-determination gained in Germany and Austria; the ideals were closer to economic systems along the Anglo-Saxon models, the United States in particular. Perhaps consensus-seeking systems were too close to collective characteristics. It seems that concepts such as freedom, individualism and competition are more appealing to victims of a centralized command system than to politicians who were deceived by their first democratic

system and hurt by its complete failure. The unchanged inner hierarchical governance structure of the many directly or indirectly state-owned companies does not force managers to change their habits. In the leadership seminars managers stated repeatedly: "I would like to include my subordinates in the decision-making process, but they expect me to make the decisions alone. That way if the decision is wrong, I alone take the blame". Perhaps a communication problem exists (who tells whom first, what is expected in reality) or the leader forgets his/her responsibility as "model" and has to be the front runner when it comes to admitting he/she does not have all of the information and therefore needs help and advice and depends on the commitment of subordinates to get the job done effectively.

However not all companies and industries are parts of the privatized but nevertheless state owned conglomerates. Real "private" companies do exist and they struggle against financial contingencies in a system which makes it nearly impossible for newer, smaller businesses to obtain loans. New loans normally have to be repaid within four years. Additional opportunities can be seen within old industries through new international alliances. For example, the cooperation between Volkswagen (VW) and Skoda (Skoda-VW Auto Company) practices a very successful model and partnership (Dorow, von Kibed 1997; Groenewald, Leblanc 1996; Kunz 1995). In this situation, a so-called Tandem System was installed: For a transition period of several years a manager from Germany and a manager from the Czech Republic shared the same job. A decision was only authorized when both managers signed a document. This procedure can be seen as a bilateral consensus seeking program within one company; namely a structure with some elements of the partnership system on the national level in Austria and on a company level in Germany. The Skoda/VW company is not only successful within the Czech Republic, but also internationally despite their internal competition against products manufactured in countries such as Germany, Spain, Mexico and marketed world-wide.

In contrast to the development in large market-driven companies, two other sources of change seem to be effective: First of all, the charismatic leaders as owners who find acceptance in the form of identification by the sub-leaders in their institutions and take the responsibility for their enterprise under difficult conditions. The second stimulus may come from a new breed of young, new managers who are professionally oriented, some with an MBA education, and capable of speaking western languages such as English, German and French. These young, new managers are not only entrepreneurial, active, flexible, and open-minded. As a typical Czech trait they also possess a specific talent for improvising and "surviving". They rely on market signals and are risk-takers with strategic planning and vision. These characteristics are optimistic conjectures; we hope that they can become reality and be documented in the future.

In Poland a similar development was found based on a number of action-oriented comparative studies also employing the Vroom/Yetton model. J. Maczynski *et al.* (1994; p. 313) stated:

The combination of a centralized directive, an enormous bureaucracy, and passive subordinates produced managers who behaved in the same way they themselves were being treated – that is, in a highly autocratic fashion. [...] The current situation in Poland is vastly different from the situation that prevailed at the time our data was collected. Control is no longer exerted so exclusively from the top. There is no longer such a strong emphasis on coercion as a means for achieving managerial control. Employees now have much more power and a concomitant expectation that their views will be solicited and considered. Simply stated, managers can no longer function effectively by applying the traditional mechanisms of unilateral control and command. Today's Poland demands more participative management practices consistent with a "human resources" conception of what participation means. Of course, evidence of how Poland's enterprises and their managers respond to the enormous changes associated with decentralized control must await future research.

This "future research" emerged in a follow up study in which the styles of those 1988 Polish managers were compared with the styles of managers in 1993 and 1994. 1994 was also the year in which the statements quoted were written and published, reflecting perhaps some optimism and hopes of short-term change. The results of this study were summarized as follows:

The results suggest that, although political change may be swift, cultural change is very slow. And this includes changes in the "leadership culture" that may exist in organizations. A radical political transformation between 1988 and 1994 produced few differences in managerial styles. If the political changes can be labeled a discontinuous leap, the management change must be labeled incremental. [...] The few differences that did emerge in the current study are of interest. Privatization has significantly reduced the use of the most autocratic behavioral alternative and has increased the use of subordinate consultation. This may represent the first step in a gradual change toward more participative practices. Government managers, however, remain highly autocratic; this sector may be the slowest to manifest a behavioral change despite its dramatic political transformation (Jago, Maczynski, Reber 1996, p. 314).

E. Szabo *et al.* (1997) also demonstrated some stability and resilience; nevertheless the tendency towards incremental new orientations seems to be under way. The GLOBE results demonstrate this as follows:

Concerning autocratic behavior, the GLOBE results support the assumptions that the prototypical Polish manager is expected to be more autocratic than the Austrian counterpart [...] Individual items results show that Polish subordinates tend not to question their superior (means > 4.5 at the "as is" and the "should be" level) and are expected to go along with their decisions (mean > 4.0 at the "should be" level) [...] It looks as if there is a trend in Polish management's power basis to shift from formal authority toward expert and information

power [...] Based upon the GLOBE research results, it follows that whatever the (new) power base might be, once a person is accepted as a leader, subordinates still seem to expect an autocratic leadership style [...] The large standard deviation shows that Polish managers can be characterized by cognitive concepts which would basically allow them to behave in a flexible way. It seems, however, that the conditions that actually make use of this flexibility are not yet in place. In particular, subordinates seem to expect leaders to continue to behave autocratically" (Szabo *et al.* 1997; 286, 288–289).

The results of P. B. Smith's (1997, p. 382) event management study also suggest that "[...] Poles emphasized reliance on their superior". Regarding organizational practices of effective Polish firms, K. Obloj and H. Thomas (1996, p. 475) reported based on a number of case studies the existence of a "[...] cultural gap between the top management and the rest of the employees. Top management is clearly in charge, controls the information flows and makes the decisions. They do not engage with employees in mission building exercises; teams are a rarity, consultants are sued sparsely and for particular purposes". J. Maczynski (2002, p. 213) concludes that cultural changes may succeed if changes in institutional structures have been initiated and are accompanied and facilitated by adequate training programs: "In order to effectively introduce changes into Polish culture, not only do autocratic structures need to be transformed into more participative structures, but Polish leaders and managers need to be effectively trained in participative modes of behavior as well".

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**ZACHOWANIE MENEDŻERÓW W AUSTRII, REPUBLICIE CZECH I POLSCE  
INTERKULTUROWE PORÓWNANIE OPARTE NA MODELU PRZYWÓDZTWA  
I PODEJMOWANIA DECYZJI WROOM/YETTON**

W niniejszym opracowaniu porównano zachowania przywódcze menedżerów w Austrii, Republice Czech i Polsce stosując model przywództwa sytuacyjnego Vroom/Yetton. Model ten wykorzystuje metodologię, która jest „bliska działaniu” w odróżnieniu od zbioru danych empirycznych opartych na kwestionariuszach mających na celu ujawnienie podstawowych wartości jako determinantów różnic interkulturowych („dalekich od działania”), takich jak badania Hofstede oraz GLOBE-Project. Wyniki pokazują, że zachowania przywódcze w Czechach oraz Polsce pozostają autokratyczne pomimo dramatycznych zmian w środowisku społecznym i politycznym w tych krajach.