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Management and communication practices in Singapore: lessons from a model economy

Abstract

With its 5.8 million inhabitants, retaining its unique version of democracy, and remaining a traditional yet progressive city, Singapore stands as a model economy for other Asian and middle eastern economies. From 1819 to 1963, Malaysia and Singapore – as one country – were a British colony. In 1963, when British rule ended and Malaysia gained her independence, Singapore remained a part of Malaysia. However, the racial tension between Malay, the ethnic Chinese, and other non-Malay groups escalated and turned violent. In 1965, Singapore cut her ties with Malaysia and became a sovereign, independent state. While retaining its collectivistic culture, Singapore has gained a competitive edge as a high-end shopping centre in the region. During the past 60 years, the Singaporean economy and businesses have shifted their focus from the manufacturing of electronic components, computer hard drives, small appliances, and garments to financial services, banking, insurance services, and asset management. Relying on data collected through interviews, observations, and a brief questionnaire, this case study of Singaporean businesses presents a description of the management styles and communication strategies of 78 business managers in Singapore, representing the service, retail, and manufacturing sectors. The data reveal that Human Resources Approach to management is the most common style of management. Analysis of communication content, style, and flow demonstrates that cultural customs such as respect for the elderly, caring for and mentoring the younger generation, loyalty to one's family, and conformity to family traditions are the driving forces of the businesses in Singapore. The analysis suggests that it is the dominant culture of a society that shapes the business practices and business values in any given society.

Key words: Organizational communication, organizational management, communication in the workplace, flow of communication, communication and democracy

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1. Introduction

Singapore gained her independence from British rule and then from Malaysia in 1965. In this regard, it is a young country. However, some of the businesses from the days of colonial times are still in operation. This reflects both economic stability and the continuity of cultural traditions.

From the classical and conservative theories advocated by Frederick Taylor, Max Weber, and Henri Fayol to the contemporary and creative thinking about management and communication in the west,[2] literature has focused on a variety of factors to improve the organizational performance and the well-being of employees. The last 40 years have seen a surge in interest in studying the management styles and success of Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, China, and Singapore.[3]

Theory and research have become increasingly complex and detailed with the realization that culture and globalization, in their various manifestations, directly and deeply impact how organizations relate to their members and how they communicate with them. One issue that has motivated considerable research is the need to better understand how cultures influence management and communication. While the literature on Singaporean organizational culture, management style, and communication highlights the unique characteristics of organizations in this nation, there is little direct analysis of these topics focusing on Singapore.

This study provides a descriptive analysis of the following issues:
– Management styles
– Communication content
– Flow of communication
– Preference for communication channels
– Preference for communication styles

The research reported here focuses on the management and communication behavior observed in and reported, by 78 organizations in Singapore. The research was conducted to better understand the distinctive cultural features of organizational management and communication to understand the issues associated with the cross-cultural business. As Firat, (2017); points out, Singapore is not only "*a market-centered culture*" but like Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong, it is one of the important business centers in Asia. Singapore, however, is unique as it is a

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[2] See Drucker (1954; 1999), Peters & Waterman (1982), Deal & Kennedy (1982), Naisbitt (1982; 1994; 2010).

[3] See McGregor (2005), Ouchi (1981), Hofstede (2205), Rabl et al. (2014), Chan & Tong (2014), Chen, Wu & Bian (2014), Hallinger et al. (2015) and Ng et al. (2015).

consciously and deliberately blended culture of Chinese, Indian, and Malaysian populations which are equally grounded in the country's development, commerce, and governance. Why people choose to be individualistic or group-oriented also appears to be a function of culture; so are the notions of acceptance of authority, respect for the more experienced people, face-saving, and the sense of loyalty. People accept and respond to authority based on their cultural traditions and upbringing. The data in the present study lend support to the notion that it is a culture that shapes the business environment and not the businesses that shape a culture.

2. Literature Review

The literature on organizational culture is a long-standing and well-developed area of inquiry. A summary of that work is well beyond the scope of this paper, however, it can be said that one prerequisite for superior performance is the presence of a well-entrenched set of core managerial values (Peters &Waterman 1892; Tichy 1983; Deal & Kennedy 2000). Barney (Barney, 1986) notes that it is precisely these core values (how to treat employees, customers, suppliers, and others) that set the stage for the innovativeness and creativity that foster success.

The impact of national culture on organizations has also received considerable attention. Hofstede's five dimensions of culture[4]. (power distance (PDI), individualism (IDV), masculinity (MAS), uncertainty avoidance (UAI), and long-term orientation (LTO) have provided a system for scoring and comparing various national cultures with each other (Hofstede 1980; 2001; 2005).

Singapore's ratings (Hofstede, 1967–2003), for example, place it above the Asian norm on the power distance dimension (PDI score is 74), somewhat higher on the individualism dimension (IDV score is 20),

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[4] Comparison across cultures is possible on five dimensions. Country scores are offered for comparison.

– **Power Distance Index (PDI)**. Score: Singapore 74, USA 40, China 80, Malaysia 104, India 77.
– **Individualism (IDV)**. Score: Singapore 20, USA 91, China 20, Malaysia 26, India 56.
– **Masculinity Dimension (MAS)**. Scores: Singapore 48, USA 62, China 66, Malaysia 50, India 56.
– **Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)**. Scores Singapore 8, USA 46, China 30, Malaysia 36, India 40.
– **Long-Term Orientation (LTO)**. Scores: Singapore 48, USA 29, China 118, Malaysia no score reported, India 61.

higher on the masculinity dimension (MAS score is 48), much lower on the uncertainty avoidance dimension (UAI score is 8), and lower on the long term orientation dimension (LTO score is 48).

The PDI scores suggest that Singaporeans perceive that power is distributed unequally in ways like China, Malaysia, and India but dissimilar to the USA. The IDV score can be interpreted to suggest that Americans are considerably more individualistic than their Singaporean counterparts, who are more collectivistic. MAS scores are relatively closely aligned in all four countries. The UAI scores suggest that Singaporeans are less willing to accept uncertainty than any other culture in the above group. Finally, LTO scores are very high for China and lower for Singapore. This suggests a shorter-term orientation implying, among other things, maintaining time-honored traditions and norms, a concern for face-saving, and being suspicious of societal changes.

These differences (in scores) suggest that multinational organizations conducting business internationally may face challenges due to the differences across the five dimensions. Hofstede is quick, however, to point out the difference between national and organizational culture. Cultures are constructions unique to organizations and are based on rituals, symbols, heroes, values, attitudes, etc. Thus, comparisons are possible across national cultures but the distinctions among organizational cultures within national cultures are difficult because of the unique characteristics that emerge within organizations.

Like Hofstede, Trompenaars (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1998; 2004; Trompenaars & Williams 2004) aligns national cultures primarily across five dimensions (universalism versus particularism, communitarianism versus individualism, neutral versus emotional, diffuse versus specific, and achievement versus ascription. He also, like Hofstede, sees the difference between national and corporate cultures and advances a four-category system of organizational cultures (incubator, the guided missile, family, and Eiffel tower) distributed spatially across two dimensions egalitarian versus hierarchical and person versus task.

Triandis (Triandis 1972; 1988; 1993) divides culture primarily along a collectivistic versus individualistic dimension based on Hofstede's work. He argues that particular cultures are oriented collectively by seeing themselves as parts of one or more groupings, motivated by group norms, willing to give priority to these norms, and emphasize connectedness to those groups (Triandis 1995). Concerning individualism, he argues that this orientation emphasizes individual independence with a focus on personal needs and rights (Triandis 1995). This body of work

has given rise to some research on Singapore. Ang and Kuo (Ang & Kuo, 2002/2003), for example, specifically consider Singaporeans concerning the connection between individualism and collectivism, gender, and refusals. Their findings suggest an interaction between gender and individualism/collectivism. Of interest here, the author suggests, is that the patterns of behavior regarding gender and individualism/collectivism are culture-specific limiting the ability to generalize beyond the immediate cultural environment. Rabl et al. (2014) conducted a meta-analysis of research on effectiveness and performance in 29 countries and concluded that managerial discretions and national cultures contribute to performance. Chan and Tong (2014) explain that the success of the Singaporeans doing business in China is due to cultural similarities; Hyvärinen (2019) offered pointers for a Finnish company wanting to enter Singapore market; Ng et al. (2015) found both Classical and Human Resources approaches as commonly practices leadership styles in Singapore.

From the 1980s to the mid-1990s, after Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, and the United States, Singapore was the fifth largest investor (US$ 8.6 billion) in China. Chan & Tong (2014) assert that the ethnic sameness between Singapore and China, i.e., the *guanxi* [5] relations plays an important role in the success of Singaporean businesses when dealing with the local businesspersons in China.

Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, and Gelfand (Singelis, Triandis, et al. 1995) added to the individualism/collectivism continuum by suggesting a vertical/horizontal dimension. This notion adds a consideration of equality, i.e., the extent to which individuals perceive themselves to be equal to those in their group. Soh and Leong (Soh & Leong 2002) seek to validate these dimensions by including and comparing 184 Chinese Singaporean students with 180 white American students. The important findings for this paper are that the factor-structure remained intact but with significant differences between the two cultural groups.

The net effect of this tradition of cross-cultural psychological research is to suggest that cultural differences can be identified in both national and organizational cultures. These differences are not insignificant and a clearer understanding of these can add to our understanding of the potential difficulties that may be encountered where individuals attempt to conduct business across these divisions. The present research points to significant differences in both the managerial approach and communication behavior.

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[5] *Guanxi* (关系) refers to having personal trust and a strong relationship with someone and can involve moral obligations and exchanging favors. It is a core part of doing business in China.

2.1. Management Styles

The discussion of management styles begins with the earliest writings on management roles and responsibilities. What is often referred to as the classical school draws from the work of Frederick Taylor (Taylor 1911), Henri Fayol (Fayol 1984), and Max Weber (Weber 1947) although many others have also contributed to this tradition. The classical tradition emphasizes scientific analysis of work, rewards analysis, managerial control, decision-making, and bureaucracy. What emerges is a managerial vision where decisions are made by a highly trained and professional-managerial class who then communicates these decisions and the required information to those who need to know. The communicative implications reflect a primary concern for downward communication, clarity, and work instructions and it largely ignores the need for the employee class to communicate their experiences except regarding work and only through defined lines of authority.

The Human Relations approach, most often attributed to Elton Mayo (Mayo 1933; 1945), begins with the centrality of the scientific analysis of work but evolves into a concern for the impact of the group and its norms on work efficiency and productivity. Mayo's work, and that of his colleagues, points to the impact of person-oriented issues as the focus of managerial concern. Communicatively, managers would focus on the individual as a living breathing human motivated by various concerns who live and work within a group that through its interaction produces a set of understandings about work which, in turn, affects the very nature of the work enterprise itself. Hence, the focus of management changes from a control, analysis, and decision-making orientation of the classical school to the management of humans as individuals and their understandings and needs.

The Human Resources tradition (Likert 1961; Blake & Mouton 1964; Likert 1967; McGregor 2005) marks an emerging awareness of the value-added nature of human knowledge and skill (human capital). It sees organizational members as valuable assets capable of adding, through their knowledge and experience, to the overall success of the enterprise. Management's portfolio changes from control, analysis, and decision-making to the human motivation and understanding of a facilitation model. In this tradition, the role of management is the facilitation of human assets and attributes so that those characteristics can be leveraged on behalf of organizational goal attainment. From a communication perspective, managers become leaders and facilitators who make sure that organizational members are educated and trained and that this

knowledge and experience becomes available to enhance organizational effectiveness.

The systems tradition (Katz & Kahn 1966; Bertalanffy 1968) sees organizations as organic totalities that interact dynamically with their relevant environments to maintain their status as open systems. Management's role in this vision becomes one of scanning various relevant environments to detect threats and opportunities. In doing so communication becomes a distinguishing feature of a *detect-and-respond* posture designed to produce the effective environmental adaptation.

The collective impact of these traditional managerial orientations and styles is to give rise to a veritable onslaught of contemporary definitions, categories, and prescriptions for both research and applied needs that extend past the original formulations. Senge (Senge 1990), for example, follows in the Human Resources model to highlight the role of human skills and knowledge. Building on the systems tradition Wheatley (Wheatley 1992) integrates chaos as a normal, valuable, and energizing organizational process that has its roots in traditional discussions of entropy.

2.2. Singapore, Management, and Communication

It has been noted (Eisenberg, Goodall & Trethewey 2013; Miller 2014) that organizations favoring the classical style of management employ a top-to-bottom (vertical) flow of communication, where the messages are task-related and are usually conveyed in written form either through letters or email. The tone of the style in these messages is formal. In the Human Relations management style, communication not only flows from management to workers but also among the workers. Hence, there is downwards and horizontal communication. The content includes task-related issues and social interactions, Messages are transmitted in writing as well as in face-to-face interaction, and the style is informal. In the Human Resources style of management, the content includes task, social, and innovative input from the workforce. The communication flows in all directions, using all channels of communication in an informal style.

Several studies have provided fragmented details about managerial and communication behavior in Singapore but there is little that bears directly on either. For example, a comparative study of Australian and Singaporean health managers (Braithwaite, Westbrook et al. 2007) found that Singaporeans reported greater pressure from their superiors regard-

ing people, customer, process, and quality management than Australian managers. The authors report that both samples experienced similar pressures regarding financial, organizational, data, planning, and external relations management. Finally, Singaporean respondents indicated more pressure from their co-workers in all categories.

Bjerke (Bjerke 1999) offers a comprehensive review of the literature on Chinese management. He summarizes that Chinese management can be understood along nine dimensions: (1) philosophy, strategy, and future, (2) autocracy and tradition, (3) power and materialism, (4) sales and quick return, (5) familism, (6) Guan-xi, (7) face and prestige, (8) superstition and daring, and (9) localism. His general conclusions are that the Chinese belong to an old civilization that preserves many core traditions, they preserve a sense of optimism where they operate, they are accustomed to difficult and challenging times, they are good negotiators, they are good at networking, they have a strong sense of identity, and they are philosophical. These are, of course, broad generalization given the complex cultural makeup of Chinese people living in both the People's Republic and Singapore.

3. Methodology and Data

Eighty-seven 4th-year students in Business Administration enrolled in an upper-level Organizational Communication course in Singapore were assigned to spend a day at a local organization of their choice. Each student was required to interview one person from the top management and one person from the workforce. The students were to observe/study the organization's management style and the process of communication at work. Data were gathered from 87 organizations. Nine organizations were dropped from the study due to insufficient information or incomplete data. The data reported here were gathered through interviews, observations, and responses on a self-reporting instrument.

Organizations were classified based on three criteria: (1) sector, i.e., the nature of an organizations' business, (2) size of organizations, and (3) age of organizations. Businesses were divided into three sectors: service, retail, and manufacturing. The service sector included organizations such as banks, insurance agencies, software development companies, hospitals, hotels and restaurants, airlines, and health and fitness gyms, etc. Retail outlets and department stores were treated as the retail sector. Construction companies and organizations that produced physical goods were clustered as the manufacturing sector. Fifty (64%) of the organizations were in the service sector; 12 (15.4%) were in the retail business,

and the remaining 16 (20.5%) were in the manufacturing sector. Table 1 presents the sector breakdown of the organizations.

Table 1. Business Sectors Represented in the Sample
Tabela 1. Sektory reprezentowane w próbie

Sector	Frequency & Percentage
Service	50 (64.1%)
Retail	12 (15.4 %)
Manufacturing	16 (20.5 %)
Total	78

Source: Author's data for this and all subsequent tables.

Based on the size of the workforce, the organizations were categorized as small or large. Since the focus of this study was management, the author opted to use the "number of people" as an indicator of size rather than sales volume or profitability. Among the 78 companies, the median was 30 employees, thus, the businesses with 30 or fewer employees were treated as "small"; companies with more than 30 people were classified as "large". Forty organizations (51.3%) employed 30 or fewer people; 38 companies (48.7%) had more than 30 employees.

Although the median size for the sample is 30 employees, a closer look at the data shows that two-thirds of the businesses in this study have a workforce of fewer than 50 people. Many of these businesses are family-owned and operated concerns where family members from two, sometimes three, generations are working together. The older workers have the managerial and decision-making positions and the younger employees receive training for more responsible roles in the future. Unlike large companies, the organizational cultures of the smaller companies better represent Singapore's culture of collectivism and tradition. It is safe to say that small businesses are what is typical of Singapore. Table 2 shows the size breakdown for the 78 organizations.

Table 2. Organizational Size
Tabela 2. Rozmiary organizacji

Size of Organization	Frequency and percentage
Small (1 – 30 people)	40 (51.28%)
Large (More than 30 employees)	38 (48.72%)
Total	78

Organizations in the study were also divided into two groups based on their age, i.e., the number of years in operation. The median age for the 78 organizations was 24 years. Organizations that had been in operation for fewer than 24 years were classified as "young" organizations. Thirty-seven of the organizations (47.7%) in the study belonged in the "young" group. The remaining 41 (52.6%) companies had been in business for more than 24 years. These were classified as "mature" organizations. Table 3 presents the age breakdown for the 78 companies.

Table 3. Age of Organizations
Tabela 3. Wiek organizacji

Age of Business in Years	Frequency and Percentage
Young organizations (24 years or less)	37 (47.4%)
Mature Organizations (24 years or longer)	41 (52.6%)
Total	78

From the above data, it is apparent that nearly two-thirds of the businesses in Singapore are in the service sector; only one-fifth (20.5%) are in the manufacturing sector. -Nearly half of the businesses are small in size (30 or fewer employees), and More than half of the businesses in Singapore have been around for about 24 years; three-fourth of the businesses have been in operation for over 10 years. Evident from these observations are (1) Singapore's shift from manufacturing to service, (2), small operations where many of the family members may work together, (3) businesses started by one generation are continued by the next. The latter two also attest to the collectivistic and traditional nature of the Singaporean society.

When the managers/supervisors/owners were asked to describe their management style, nearly all identified one of three familiar approaches – Classical, Human Relations, Human Resources (Eisenberg, Goodall & Trethewey 2013; Shockley-Zalabak 2014; Miller 2014). Table 4 presents the distribution of management styles identified by respondents.

Table 4. *Management Style*
Tabela 4. Styl zarządzania

Management Style	Frequency and Percentage
Classical	22 (28.2%)
Human Relations	23 (29.5%)
Human Resources	33 (42.3%)
Total	78

4. Organizational Communication in Singapore

To understand the nature and content of the communication, four dimensions of communication were studied: content, direction, channel, and style. Data for these came from the responses during the interviews with the workers and the managers. In classical management, the content of the communication is mostly related to duties, work, and tasks. Further, classical managerial orientations involve a concern for control of key processes with management seen as the source of leadership and innovation. In the Human Relations approach communication content is concerned with social interactions as well as tasks with some organizations emphasizing personal relationships as a mechanism for producing motivation and hence increased performance. The Human Resources approach to management also encourages initiatives and innovations from the workers. It tends to view organizational members as assets whose knowledge and skills (human capital) can and must be leveraged to power organizational attainment (Miller 2014). Hence, the communication content can be a mixture of tasks, social interactions, and innovations. Table 5 presents the content of communication in the organizations in Singapore

Table 5. Communication Content

Tabela 5. Treści komunikatów

Communication Content	Frequency and Percentage
Task	23 (29.5 %)
Task & Social	32 (41 %)
Task, Social, & Innovation	23 (29.5 %)
Total	78

Within the organizations using the classical style of management, the flow of communication is usually from the management to the workers, i.e., from top to bottom – or vertical. In the Human Relations style of management, communication not only flows from top to bottom but also horizontally among the workers. In the Human Resources style of management, the communication flows from top to bottom as well as from bottom to the top. In other words, the vertical flow is both upward and downward. Additionally, communication also flows horizontally [lateral communication]. Table 6 presents the flow of communication as described by the managers of the organization included in the present study.

Table 6. Flow of Communication

Tabela 6. Przepływ komunikatów

Flow of Communication	Frequency and Percentage
Downward	19 (24.4 %)
Vertical and Horizontal	28 (35.9 %)
Multi-directional (Hybrid)	31 (39.7 %)
Total	78

Different management styles employ different channels of communication. Managers in the Classical tradition prefer written instruction, memos, and email. Managers in Human Relations and Human Resources styles rely on face-to-face communication or a combination of written and face-to-face communication. Table 7 presents the different channels of communication used by different organizations.

Table 7. Channels of Communication

Tabela 7. Kanały komunikacji

Channels of Communication	Frequency and Percentage
Face-to-face	25 (32 %)
Written	9 (11.5 %)
Multi-channel (Hybrid)	44 (56.4 %)
Total	78

Style of communication can vary from extremely formal where people address each other by their family names to informal where members of management and the workforce are all on first-name bases. Some organizations may maintain a formal structure between the management and the workforce, and an informal style among the similar ranks. Table 8 presents the styles of communication in organizations in Singapore.

Table 8. Style of Communication

Tabela 8. Style komunikacji

Style of Communication	Frequency and Percentage
Formal	16 (20.5 %)
Informal	34 (43.6 %)
Hybrid	28 (35.9 %)
Total	78

The age of a business does not seem to have any statistically significant differences in the choice of management style or communication content, process, or nature. Scrutiny of the data revealed some differences based on the size of a company, i.e., the number of employees.

There appear to be subtle differences in how the business within the manufacturing and services sectors operate. Businesses within the service sector seem to prefer the Human Resources approach of management while the manufacturing sector prefers the classical approach to management. More often than not, the content of communication messages within the manufacturing sector is "task" related; within the service sector, the messages combine task and social aspects. In manufacturing businesses, the information flows vertically, i.e., downwards. In the service sector, there seems to be a greater reliance on multi-directional communication.

5. Size Matters

Although there are hundreds of businesses in Singapore that employ thousands of people each, DBS Bank, Singtel, Singapore Airlines, Wilmar International food production company, and Flex Electronics to name a few, the catalytic player for the economy is the "small business" – operations with 30 or fewer people. Some interesting and revealing differences come to surface when comparing small and large businesses in Singapore, both in management styles and in communication practices. The three tables below present the statistically significant differences regarding management style, communication content, and communication channels.

Table 9. Company Size and Management Style
Tabela 9. Rozmiar firmy i styl zarządzania

Company Size	Management Style			
	Classical	**Human Relations**	**Human Resources**	
Small	7	16	17	40
Large	15	7	16	38
	22	23	33	78

Chi-square statistics is 6.4141, the *p*-value is .04048. The result is significant at *p* <.05.

While small businesses rely more on Human Relations and Human Resources styles of management, the larger organizations lean toward

the classical approach. Differences are also noticeable in the content of communication in small and large organizations. The smaller businesses use communication that includes both task-related issues as well as social issues. The communication messages of the larger concerns concentrate more on task.

Table 10. Company Size and Communication Content
Tabela 10. Rozmiar firmy i treść komunikatów

Company Size	Communication Content			
	Task	**Task + Social**	**Task + Social + Innovations**	
Small	8	22	10	40
Large	15	10	13	38
	23	32	23	78

Chi-square statistics is 6.975, the p-value is .03058. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

Smaller companies tend to rely more on face-to-face communication than written communication. Both types of organizations also use a combination of channels for internal communication. Written communication as a channel was combined with "multi-channel" for this calculation.

Table 11. Company Size and Communication Channels
Tabela 11. Rozmiar firmy i kanały komunikacji

Company Size	Communication Channels		
	Face-to-Face	**Multi-Channel**	
Small	23	25	48
Large	5	25	30
	28	50	78

Chi-square statistics is 7.8348, the p-value is .00513. The result is significant at $p < .05$.

6. Results and Discussion

During the past 60 years, while Singapore's neighboring nations like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand have remained focused on the manufacture of electrical appliances, electronics, and garments; Singapore shifted her focus from manufacturing to financial services, banking, and retail services and has come to be recognized as a major up-scale shipping center, healthcare, higher education, hospitality, and air travel ser-

vices. Singapore Airlines and Tiger Airlines an aggressive discounter with a state-of-art terminal at Changi International Airport have repeatedly been recognized as the standards in the aviation industry. According to a *Forbes* report, among the 10 biggest business in Singapore, eight are service industries (4 banks, 2 asset management companies, 1 telecommunications provider, and 1 airline. It is not surprising that two-thirds of the businesses included in the present survey fell within the service category.

The Human Resources style of management emphasizes maximum creative input from all employees. The present data (Table 4) reveal that the business environment in Singapore mirrors the philosophy of "working together.". Forty-one percent of the responding businesses employ this style of management. A closer analysis of these 41 companies shows that 65% were in the service sector, 21% in the retail sector, and the remaining 14% are in the manufacturing sector. It was also noted that 54% of the Human Resources management style companies were small – with fewer than 30 employees.

It is not surprising to find that 42% of the businesses in this study reported "task" and "social" as the content of their communication (Table 5), and 40% said that the flow of communication (as presented in Table 6) was multi-directional (vertical and horizontal). The use of channels of communication is predominantly hybrid (57%); 32% reported face-to-face and 11% reported written messages as the main channel of communication in their organizations (Table 7). The style of communication is informal in 45% of the organizations. Another 30% report a combination of formal and informal styles of communication in their workplaces while only 19% of the organizations rely on the strictly formal style of communication (Table 8).

The findings in this study, despite its small sample, align with the theoretical assumptions about the age and size of organization with their management and communication practices. For instance, among the organizations that claimed their content of communication to be task-related, 9 were manufacturing and construction companies with workforces of 100 employees or more. Similarly, within the retail sector, it was noted that all 12 companies used the Human Resources style of management; nearly all used face-to-face, or email and face-to-face as channels of communication.

There is a significant difference in an organization's size and management style. The larger companies prefer the Classical approach to management. However, the Human Resources style of management is the prevalent style of management in Singapore and most of the busi-

nesses are within the service sector; most of the businesses are small-size operations, and most have been around for 20 years or longer. These observations are indicative of two things: one, working together, respect for others, and family cohesion are important cultural driving forces, and two, these attest to continuous economic stability in Singapore.

As the previous studies mentioned in this work have suggested, the present data also indicates that if a foreign business were to begin operation in Singapore, the service sector is the most popular and rewarding. One should be prepared to embrace the Human Resources style of management, plan with a long-term orientation, and create a culture of respect for the elderly and a mentoring stance for the workers of the younger generation. One should employ informal, transparent, and face-to-face communication inviting ideas and input from all members of the workforce. In other words – be prepared to run the business as a family.

The author realizes that there are thousands of big and small businesses in Singapore and the sample size of the study discourages any broad generalizations. It is, thus, suggested that similar studies with larger samples, and of other traditional and modern cultures are needed to help bridge the gaps in the understanding of similarities and differences in the management styles in organizations in different cultures and the communication therein.

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Praktyki zarządzania i komunikacji w Singapurze: nauki z modelowej ekonomii

Streszczenie

W roku 2020 Singapur z 5,8 mln mieszkańców, szczególną wersją jednopartyjnej demokracji i hołdującym tradycji, choć jednocześnie postępowym społeczeństwem stał się modelową gospodarką dla innych krajów azjatyckich. Od 1819 do 1963 r. obszar Malezji i Singapuru stanowił kolonię brytyjską. W roku 1963, gdy panowanie Brytyjczyków dobiegło końca, Malezja odzyskała niepodległość, a Singapur stał się jej częścią. Taki stan nie trwał jednak długo – w efekcie narastających napięć rasowych pomiędzy Malajami, etnicznymi Chińczykami i innymi grupami w 1965 r. Singapur odciął się od Malezji i utworzył niezależne państwo. Pozostawiając swą kolektywistyczną kulturę, Singapur zyskał przewagę konkurencyjną jako ekskluzywne centrum handlowe w regionie. Przez ostatnie 60 lat singapurscy przedsiębiorcy przesunęli swoje zainteresowanie z wytwarzania komponentów sprzętu elektronicznego, twardych dysków komputerów, niewielkich urządzeń czy odzieży w kierunku usług finansowych, bankowych, ubezpieczeniowych i zarządzania aktywami. Bazujące na wywiadach, obserwacjach i krótkim kwestionariuszu niniejsze stadium przypadku singapurskiego biznesu dostarcza opisu stylów zarządzania i strategii komunikacyjnych 78 menedżerów reprezentujących usługi,

handel detaliczny oraz przemysł. Dane ukazują, że najpowszechniejszym stylem zarządzania jest podejście oparte na zasobach ludzkich. Analiza treści, stylu i przepływu komunikacji świadczy z kolei o tym, że w Singapurze zwyczaje kulturowe, takie jak szacunek dla starszych, wychowywanie i dbanie o młodsze pokolenia, lojalność wobec rodziny i życie zgodnie z tradycjami rodzinnymi są siłami napędowymi przedsiębiorstw. Z analizy jasno wynika, że to dominująca w społeczeństwie kultura kształtuje praktyki i wartości, którym hołduje się w biznesie.

Słowa kluczowe: komunikacja w organizacji, zarządzanie organizacyjne, komunikacja w miejscu pracy, przepływ komunikacji, komunikacja i demokracja