

MANAGERIAL EFFECTIVENESS IN SAUDI ARABIA

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Introduction. "Managerial effectiveness" is a critical component of any organization, regardless of its national, cultural, ethnic or linguistic makeup (Drucker, 2001; Lund & Barker, 2007). This study explores the perceptions of "managerial effectiveness" amongst a group of Saudi and western expatriate senior managers working in Saudi Arabia. Twelve expatriate and twelve Saudi managers were interviewed and asked to define what "managerial effectiveness" means for them. The managers were also asked to describe a typical "effective" and "ineffective" manager in the context of working in Saudi Arabia. The managers were then asked to explain the factors which they perceive to influence "effectiveness" in the context of working in Saudi Arabia. This qualitative study aims to build upon the lack of information available about the concept of managerial effectiveness in Saudi Arabia. By further understanding the factors which influence managerial effectiveness, the study can be used to help Saudi and expatriate managers better understand and apply effective managerial concepts in the Saudi context. Theoretical and practical implications of the study are discussed in relation to the managerial effectiveness literature.

Method/Methodology. This theory-building study (Eisenhardt, 1989) utilizes the data-collection method of semi-structured interviews, which allow the interviewer to flexibly tailor questions for each interviewee while at the same time providing sufficient structure to keep the interview within the scope of the study (Denzin, 2001). The data is then interpreted using the methodological approach of symbolic interpretive interactionism, which is a theoretical approach for interacting with, receiving and interpreting interview data (Denzin, 2001).

Findings/Discussion. The study found the Saudi managers' perceptions of organizational effectiveness to be dominated by relationship-oriented cultural aspects of tribalism, community expectations, and nepotism, with a lesser emphasis on specific task accomplishment. The expatriate managers' perceptions of organizational effectiveness focused on task accomplishment and the limitations that the local culture posed to the accomplishing of such tasks.

Conclusion/Future Research Practical and theoretical implications of this study build upon the existing organizational effectiveness literature to include the context of Saudi Arabia. Future studies are needed to explore perceptions of organizational effectiveness in other countries, such as Kazakhstan.

References.

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