

## DISSERTATIONS IN PROGRESS

Stefan Deutsch, *Obtaining consensus on corporate planning by means of a sequential interactive communication technique* (Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, Tel Aviv).

The views of approximately 100 senior executives concerning actual and desired corporate postures are being solicited via Q technique in a search for consensus on corporate planning in Israeli electronics firms. The study objectives are threefold: (a) Testing the appropriateness of the Delphi method in conjunction with Q technique as means for achieving consensus in action programs intended to implement desired planning postures, (b) investigating the utility of Q in capturing the typological complexity of the issue, and (c) testing the effect of a number of organizational and personal parameters on planning attitudes of decisionmakers.

The P set distinguishes between executives who are directly involved (e.g., general directors and planners) and those who are functionally involved (e.g., technical, marketing, financial, and personnel areas) across a number of enterprises differentiated in terms of size, technology, type of ownership, and market concentration. The Q sample is structured according to focus (formalization, incrementalization, human development, power structure) and planning (realities, objectives, policies)--e.g.:

Formal strategic planning has reached maturity. It is virtually impossible to find a progressive company not applying one of its versions (formalization, realities).... The strategic skill of the manager lies in his giving his organization a sense of direction, without detailing a specific set of objectives (incrementalism, objectives).... The role of the strategic planner is not to prepare plans for others to execute, but to provide them whatever information, wisdom and imagination are required by them to plan for themselves (human development, policies).... It is convenient to

identify the top management levels with careful and penetrating data analysis. In fact, their principal consideration is the balance of power (power structure, realities).

The Q phase of the study is designed to identify operant attitudinal groups and especially areas of consensus and dissensus with respect to desired planning postures. The Delphi panel will be chosen on the basis of the factors and will eventuate in an agenda for discussion with respect to implementing the indicated planning postures.

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Darcy McDonell, *A Q-technique study of The Accord between the Australian Labour Party and the Australian Congress of Trade Unions* (The Australian National University, Canberra).

Prior to its assumption of power in 1983, the Australian Labour Party (ALP) negotiated an economic policy agreement (known as The Accord) with the peak union organization, the Australian Congress of Trade Unions. The Accord covers an incomes and prices policy, including nonwage incomes, taxation, and government expenditures on social wage items (social security, education, health); and supportive policies in related areas such as industrial development and technological change.

Due in part to Australia's fragmented union history, it is anticipated that there will be divergencies in viewpoint concerning The Accord among the leaderships of the various unions, between leaderships and memberships, and within memberships, and examples from a preliminary collection of statements which have been made about The Accord would appear to bear this out:

The Accord was just an election ploy.... Unions should be working to revolutionise the masses instead of making "deals" with the Government....

The intervention and planning envisaged in The Accord improve the position of labour in relation to capital.... The Accord is a backward step because it upholds the capitalist system.... Redistributing income to the less-well-off is O.K. to a point, but too much of it takes away incentive.... Bargaining is better than any accord.... Things like the prices and incomes policy usually end up benefitting the "tall poppies."

Inasmuch as the success or failure of The Accord is expected to influence the ALP's chances for reelection, some unions have established training sessions in an attempt to educate their members to be supportive of it. McDonnell has selected one such union for study and, utilizing the above and similar statements, is administering Q sorts to a sampling of members prior to their attendance at training sessions, the same sort after, and again a year later, the intent of course being to determine the efficacy of the training sessions; Q sorts will also be obtained from union members not attending the sessions, and from non-union persons.

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Brian Zakem, *An exploratory study using a still photographic project as a clinical assessment tool* (University of Chicago).

The 20 subjects in this study are instructed to imagine that they have been selected by the government to be one of the astronauts to make the first hazardous space trip to the planet Mars. As part of the preparation, each is permitted to compose a set of 12 photographs (provided by the subject) to remind him or her of life on Earth. The task is projective, and each portfolio of pictures provides the sole basis for two judges' Q-sort assessments of the person, who is also assessed by his therapist and by a "significant other" selected by the subject, neither of whom has access to

the pictures. Therefore, the therapist's and significant other's Q sorts are based solely upon their experiences with the subject.

The Q sample consists of 100 statements which refer to 13 dimensions, among them interpersonal relatedness (e.g., "Liked and accepted by others"), emotional comfort ("Calm and relaxed"), behavioral orientation ("Productive, gets things done"), cognitive orientation ("Likes to be objective"), and others. Major comparisons are then made between the therapist's Q-sort description of the person and the descriptions provided by the two judges, although comparisons with the significant other's Q sort will also be made.

The purpose of the study is to demonstrate that a composition of personally meaningful products (the set of Mars trip photos) can be used to describe an individual's stable and transitory dimensions of existence. If successful, the study will broaden the range of clinical assessment tools available within the humanistic, existential-phenomenological school of clinical psychology.

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[Dissertation summaries to be continued]

## NEWS, NOTES & COMMENT

### *More on the Koffka Connection*

As noted in the July issue of *OS* (pp. 130-132), Molly Harrower's *Kurt Koffka* (University Presses of Florida, 1983) made several references to an Oxford psychologist named Stephenson, whom Koffka had met in 1939, but otherwise omitted details of Stephenson's identity. When recently provided with the missing information, Harrower (in a letter to the editor dated August 20, 1984) commented as follows:

The name of "Stephenson" constituted quite a