



Worldwide Research Project:

„Cultural Values and Assessment Center Practices in the Americas, Europe, and Asian Countries“

Diana E. Krause & George C. Thornton III

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychology
Industrial and Organizational Psychology
Fort Collins, CO 80 523

32nd International Congress on Assessment Center Method, Las Vegas, October 4-8, 2004

© Diana E. Krause & George C. Thornton III



Initial Point

From past AC research the following aspects are unclear:

- (1) The specific differences in the use of AC in specific countries all over the world
- (2) How are differences between organizational culture and national cultural values reflected in the current AC practices
- (3) How these differences in organizational culture and national cultural values contribute to explaining the different efforts in these countries aimed at quality control of ACs



Objectives of the Current Study

1. Description of the AC use in the Americas, Europe, and Asian Countries



2. Appraisal if the quality standards and variables which influence the validity are taken into consideration



Objectives



3. Explanation of the differences in the AC use between the countries by organizational culture



4. Explanation of the differences in the AC use between the countries by national cultural values



Theoretical Background

(a) Research on Predictive and Construct Validity of ACs

Examples of variables which influence the **predictive validity** of ACs:

- rise in the number and diversity of the exercises used (Thornton et al, 1992),
- use of psychologists as assessors (Thornton et al., 1992),
- use of peer ratings (Thornton et al., 1992),
- job requirements that are not transparent for the assessees (Kleinmann, 1997)

Examples of variables which influence the **construct validity** of ACs:

- decreasing number (Gaugler & Thornton, 1989) of highly differentiable job requirements (Kleinmann et al., 1995; Sagie & Magnezy, 1997)
- job requirements decreases and when job requirements and observed behaviors are highly transparent to the assessees (Kleinmann, 1993).
- use of behavioral checklists and realistic behavioral descriptions as a system of observation (Reilly et al., 1990),
- the evaluation of the assessors through the use of peer-ratings (Shore et al., 1992),
- and the use of psychologists as assessors (Sagie & Magnezy, 1997).



Theoretical Background

(b) Research on Organizational Culture

(Short version with 40 items of the Organizational Culture Profile by Cable & Judge, 1997 with modified response categories)

(1) Competitiveness
($\alpha = .75$)

(2) Social responsibility
($\alpha = .74$)

(6) Performance orientation
($\alpha = .74$)

(3) Supportiveness
($\alpha = .87$)

**7 Factor Structure
of the OCP
(reliabilities)**

(5) Innovation
($\alpha = .80$)

(4) Emphasis on rewards
($\alpha = .80$)

(7) Stability
($\alpha = .66$)



Theoretical Background

(c) Research on National Cultural Values

(e.g., Hofstede, 1991; Trompenaars, 1993; House et al., 2002)

Our selected dimensions are:

(1) Large or Small Power Distance

Item example: “In our country most people believe that some members of society should exercise authority over others.”

(2) Strong or Weak Uncertainty Avoidance

Item example: “In our country most people prefer leading highly structured lives with few unexpected events.”

(3) Individualism vs. Collectivism

Item example: In our country most people believe that the interests of individuals prevail over those of the group.

(3) External vs. Internal Control

Item example: In our country most people think they have the ability to determine their outcome in life and how their life will turn out.



Method of the Current Study

Subject	Sources	AC Expert	HR Expert (same organization)	Indices by Hofstede
AC Procedure		+		
Organizational Culture a) Semantic Differential b) Standardized Questionnaire			+	
National Cultural Values Standardized Questionnaire		+	+	+

If you like to take part in this study, please fill out our questionnaire.

Version for AC Expert <http://psy.psych.colostate.edu/AC/Green.asp>

Version for HR Expert <http://psy.psych.colostate.edu/AC/Blue.asp>

Additionally we have hard copies of the questionnaire.



Expected Relationships Between the National Cultural Dimensions and AC Procedures

National Cultural Dimension

Example for AC Procedures which could be connected to the dimension

Large or Small Power Distance

Basis to select the candidates to participate in the AC

Constitution of the observer pool (e. g. line managers)

Strong or Weak Uncertainty Avoidance

Detailed job analysis with a lot of methodological input

Use of multiple exercises

Observer training

Individualism vs. Collectivism

Use of Self- and Peer-Ratings

Kind of Feedback

Evaluation of participant's reaction

External vs. Internal Control

Need-oriented personnel planning prior to implementing the AC



Discussion

It would be great to explore with you the relationship between the specific AC techniques and national cultural values.

Thanks for participation and attention.