

〔論 説〕

Perception of Managerial Ability across Cultures Japanese and American Managers' Comparative View of Thai Managers

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Abstract

This paper explores perception of managerial ability across cultures. The focus is on how Japanese managers at Japanese subsidiaries and American managers at American subsidiaries in Thailand compare Thai employees with expatriates from their respective countries. This comparison is part of the results of a study of the work-related values, attitudes, beliefs, expectations and behavior of Thai and Japanese managers at Japanese subsidiaries as well as from the same study replicated at a later date at American subsidiaries in Thailand.

The comparison is divided into five categories: the "hard side of management," the soft side of management," "work-related attitudes," "human relations," and "loyalty." Japanese managers tend to view Japanese more capable than Thai managers in the areas of the "hard side of management," the soft side of management," and "work-related attitudes." However, the trend is reversed for a number of items in the "human relations" category. The same pattern is apparent in the responses from American managers. Nevertheless, Japanese tend to give Japanese expatriates higher ratings than Americans give to American expatriates in comparison with Thai employees.

In the case of the category "loyalty," the results were mixed. For the item "loyalty towards the company," the Japanese perceived themselves as being significantly more loyal than the Thais. The Americans expressed a level of loyalty that is just slightly stronger for Americans than Thai. However, the results for the other item in the category, "loyalty towards the boss," are strongly in favor of the Thais in the case of American responses, and somewhat favoring the Thais in the case of Japanese employees. This result is in line with the perceived importance of human relations in the workplace among the Thais as seen in the results for the items in the "human relations" category.

Research Methods:

The gathering of the data for this research was carried out in July 2002 for the Japanese firms and May 2003 for the American firms in Thailand. For the Japanese firms, one questionnaire was in Japanese for Japanese managers and consisted of 88 questions. Another

questionnaire was in Thai for Thai managers and consisted of 84 questions. In the case of the American firms the same questionnaires were used, however, the questionnaire for expatriates was in English rather than Japanese.

For the Japanese firms, responses were received from 95 subsidiaries yielding a response rate of 19%. A total of 136 responses were received from Japanese managers and a total of 175 responses from Thai managers. For the American firms, responses were received from 26 firms yielding a response rate of 17%. A total of 27 responses were received from American managers and a total of 22 responses from Thai managers. Though the sample sizes for the Japanese and American firms in Thailand are quite different in size, a comparison of the responses still may yield some interesting insights. This is especially true when there are large differences in the results.

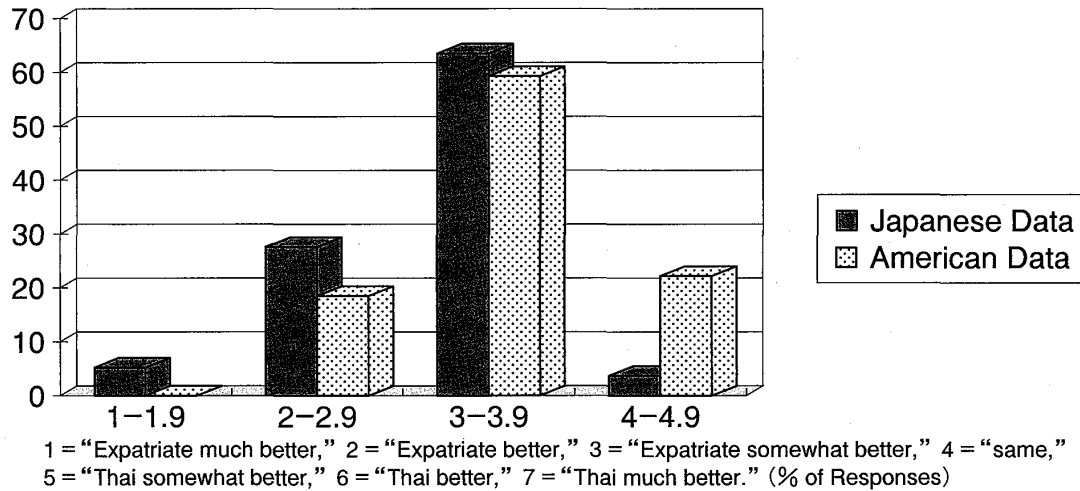
Management Scale and Overall Management Skills

There were a total of 24 items for which the Japanese and American managers compared their fellow expatriates with Thai managers. In the Japanese questionnaire the Japanese respondents were asked to indicate who was better; Japanese employees or Thai employees. The Americans were asked to compare Americans and Thais in the same fashion. The instructions ask the expatriate managers to rate each item in terms of which group tends to be better and the scale is: 1 = expatriate much better, 2 = expatriate better, 3 = expatriate somewhat better, 4 = same, 5 = Thai somewhat better, 6 = Thai better, and 7 = Thai much better.

The 24 items in the scale are: (1) overall management skills, (2) problem solving ability, (3) analytical ability, (4) creativity in solving problems, (5) overall command of situations, (6) innovativeness, (7) ability to plan and manage tasks and projects, (8) meet deadlines, (9) judgment, (10) leadership, (11) ability to adapt to changes, (12) the concern of a boss towards subordinate's needs, (13) ability to communicate with people from different cultures, (14) ability to maintain harmony in the work environment, (15) ability to promote good customer relations, (16) interpersonal skills, (17) ability to motivate subordinates, (18) trustworthiness, (19) willingness to work hard, (20) effort made in doing their work well, (21) sense of responsibility, (22) loyalty towards the company, (23) loyalty towards their boss, and (24) ability to use computers in the work environment (this item is not considered in any of the separate five

categories but is included in the scale below). The results for all 24 items are summarized as a scale and given below in Graph/Table 1.

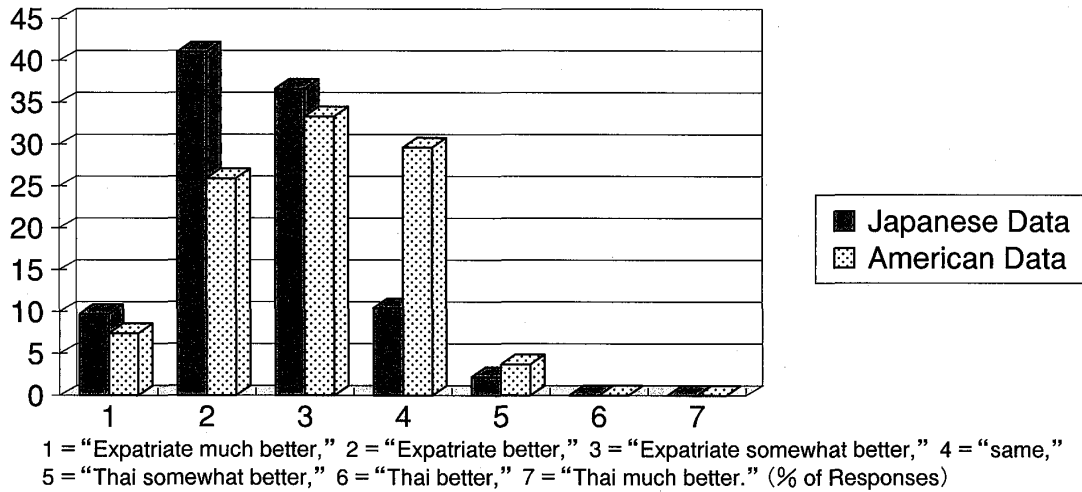
Graph/Table 1: Expatriate-Thai Manager Comparison Scale (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3.9 or below	%5 or above
American	3.5216	.1058	.5497	27	77.8%	0%
Japanese	3.08	5.419 E 02	.6273	134	96.3%	0%

The results for the scale indicate that both Japanese and Americans view their fellow expatriates as more capable in management than their Thai employees. However, it is also apparent the Japanese responses are more towards the expatriate-side of the scale than the American responses are. This trend is even more pronounced for the comparison of the individual item, "Overall Managerial Ability," given below in Graph/Table 2.

Graph/Table 2: Overall Managerial Ability (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	2.96	.20	1.02	27	66.7%	3.4%
Japanese	2.54	7.68 E-02	.89	134	87.3%	2.2%

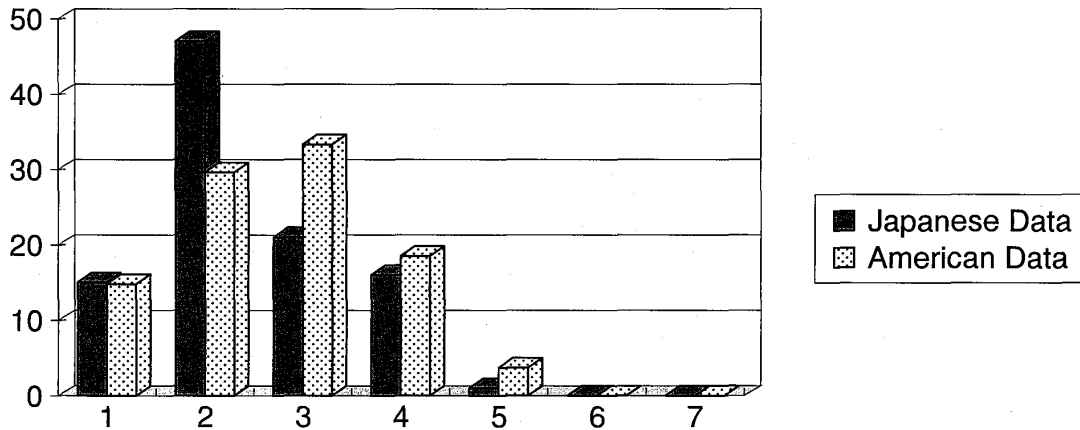
As can be seen, almost all the responses are either "Japanese somewhat better" or "Japanese better." In the case of the American responses almost 30% are "same" but only about 10% of the Japanese responses fall in this category. Less than 5% of both Japanese and American scale means are "Thai somewhat better."

Hard Side of Management

There are seven items in the category of hard side of management, namely: "problem solving ability," "analytical ability," "creativity in solving problems," "overall command of situations," "innovativeness," "ability to plan and manage tasks and projects" and "meet deadlines." Each of the items is examined separately below.

The results for the first item, "problem solving ability" are displayed below in Graph/Table 3. More than two-thirds of both the Japanese and American responses are below 4, indicating a tendency to believe that Thai employees are not as capable in solving problems as they and their fellow expatriates are. The percentages of responses indicating Thais are "somewhat better" are minimal.

Graph/Table 3: Problem Solving Ability (JP and AM Data)



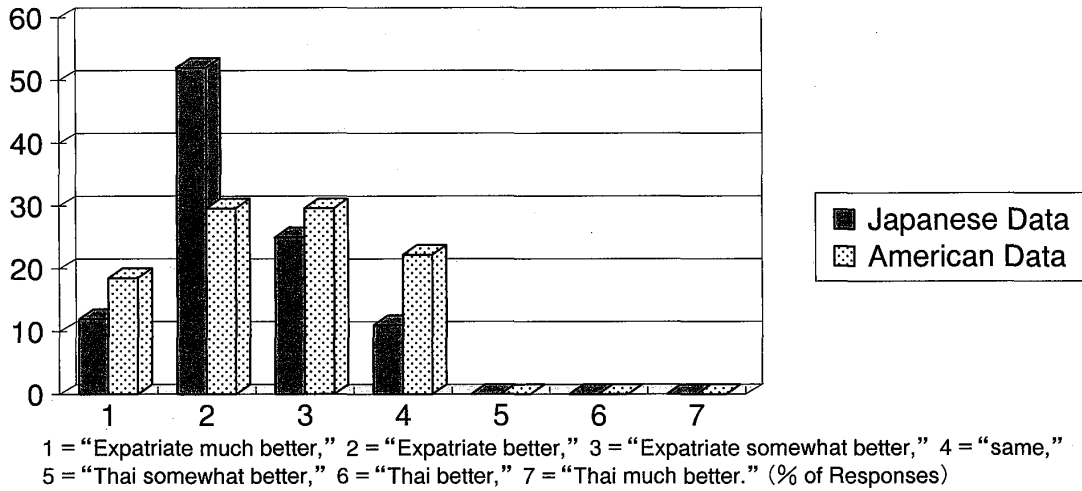
1 = "Expatriate much better," 2 = "Expatriate better," 3 = "Expatriate somewhat better," 4 = "same," 5 = "Thai somewhat better," 6 = "Thai better," 7 = "Thai much better." (% of Responses)

	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	2.67	.21	1.07	27	77.8%	3.7%
Japanese	2.41	8.29 E 02	.96	134	82.8%	0.7%

Similar results are seen for the item "analytical ability" (Graph/Table 4), however, none of the Japanese and American respondents indicated that Thais were even "somewhat better" in analytical ability. This item typifies the hard side of management and, as is demonstrated later, contrasts slightly with some of the soft side of management items.

Holmes and Tangtongtavy (1997:86-7) stated that many Westerners have observed among the Thais a lack of experience in western-style analytical thought. They claim that this is the result of Thais being brought up in a hierarchical social system in which they are discouraged from asking the questions "why" and "why not." In addition, the Thai educational system has traditionally stressed copying and there is little encouragement of independent inquiry or initiative. However, Thais do practice analytical thinking especially in the area of human relations. In this area they may be far more advanced than other cultures. As will be seen later, Thais receive higher ratings in comparison to the expatriates in their ability to manage human relations.

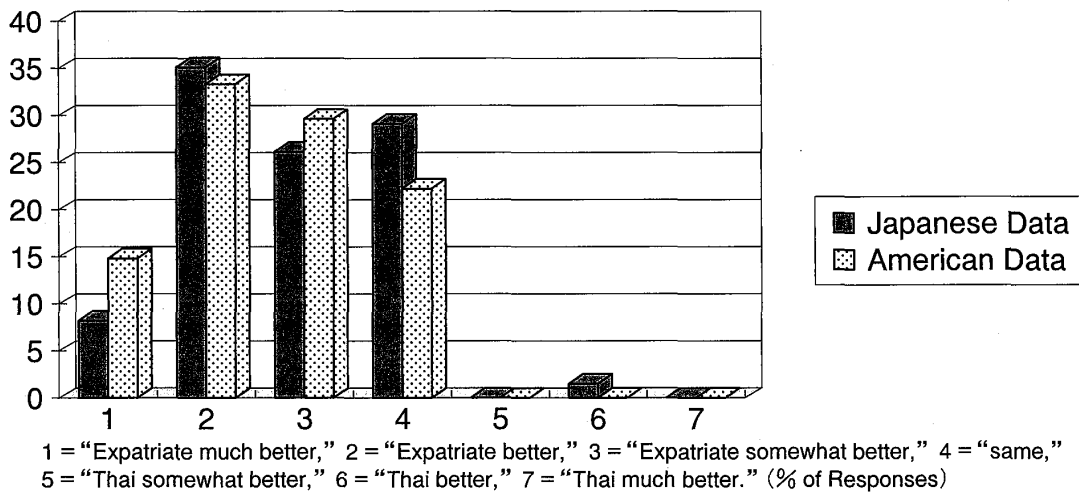
Graph/Table 4: Analytical Ability (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	2.56	.20	1.05	27	77.8%	0%
Japanese	2.36	7.22 E 02	.84	134	88.8%	0%

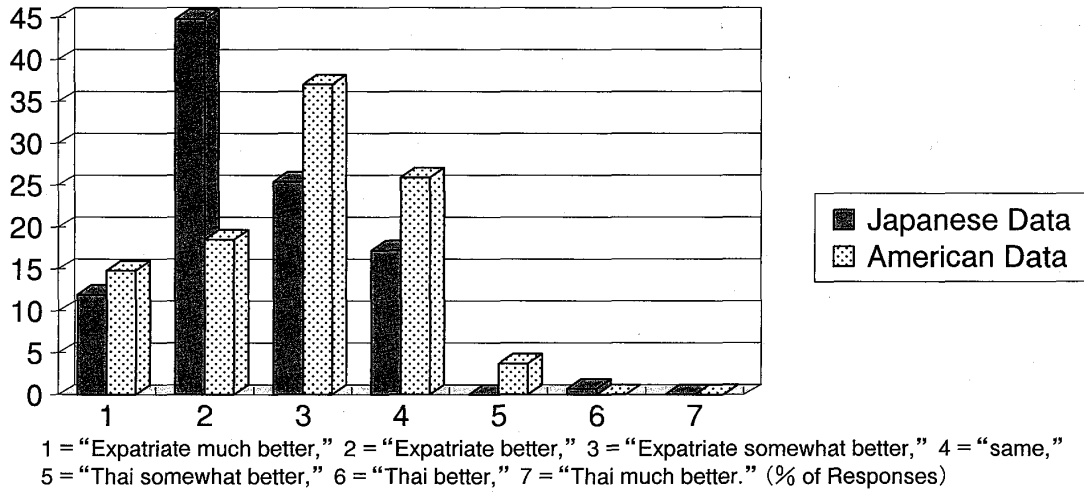
For the item "creativity in solving problems" (Graph/Table 5) there are also similar responses indicating that expatriates are seen to be superior to Thais for both the Japanese and the American data. These results coincide with the observation concerning copying made above. The same pattern is seen for the item "overall command of situations" (Graph/Table 6).

Graph/Table 5: Creativity in Solving Problems (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	2.78	.23	1.22	27	77.8%	0%
Japanese	2.82	8.98 E-02	1.04	134	69.4%	1.5%

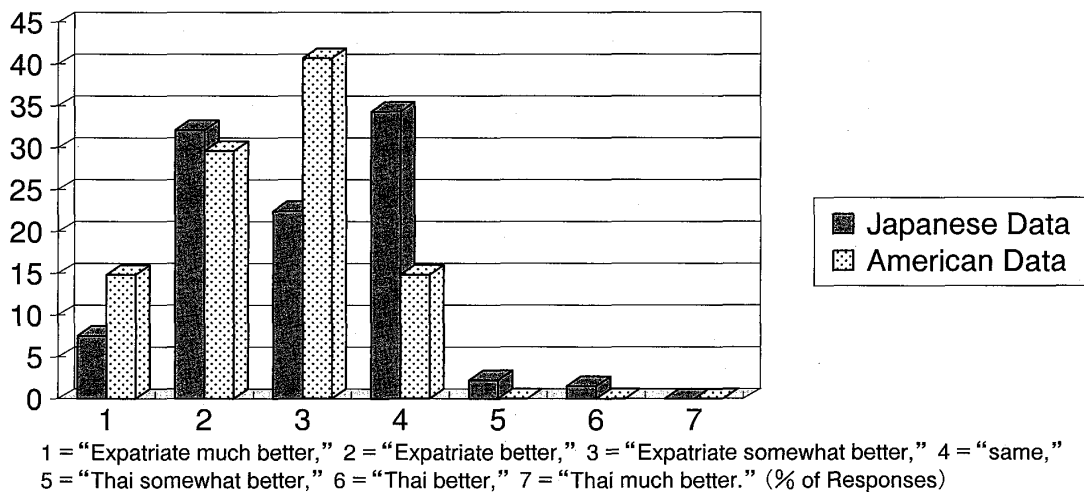
Graph/Table 6: Overall Command of Situations (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	2.85	.21	1.10	27	70.4%	3.7%
Japanese	2.51	8.32 E-02	.96	134	82.1%	0.7%

For the item "innovativeness" (Graph/Table 7), the mean is still below 3 for both the Japanese and American data. Again, this may be a result of the up-bringing and educational system in Thailand that stresses copying, especially when what has been done in the past seems to be appropriate for problems confronted in the present and future. The mean for the American data (2.56) is lower than the mean for the Japanese data (2.96).

Graph/Table 7: Innovativeness (JP and AM Data)

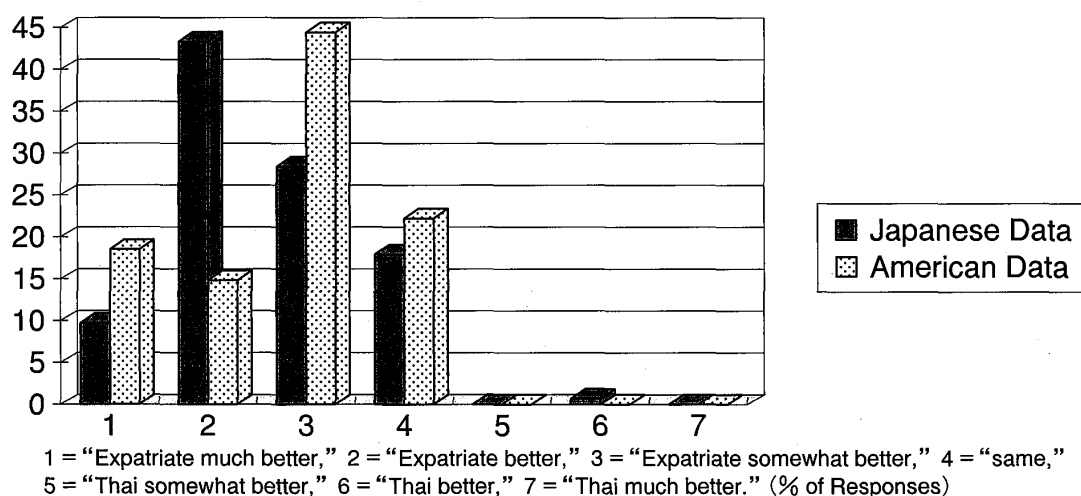


	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	2.56	.19	1.01	27	85.2%	0%
Japanese	2.96	9.44 E-02	1.09	134	61.9%	3.7%

Thus, it also appears that the Americans have a slightly stronger feeling of being innovative in comparison with the Thais than the Japanese do. Japanese have much higher uncertainty avoidance than Americans (Hofstede, 1980), which may lead to less innovativeness. Japanese tend to avoid breaking from the past and/or doing something that is different from the group to which they belong. Being innovative often requires taking on the risk of independent decision making, and this is not a common characteristic of Japanese culture (see van Wolferen, 1992).

The item “ability to plan and manage tasks and projects” (Graph/Table 8) indicates the same pattern of expatriate superiority in both data sets. While the Japanese and Americans have a strong penchant for planning, Thais may be seen at the other end of the scale. The Thai attitude seems to be that planning represents a lack of action if too much effort is put in the planning process. Furthermore, Swierczek and Onishi (2003) state that Thai subordinates dislike the Japanese practices of developing long-term plans since Thais do not have a future orientation.

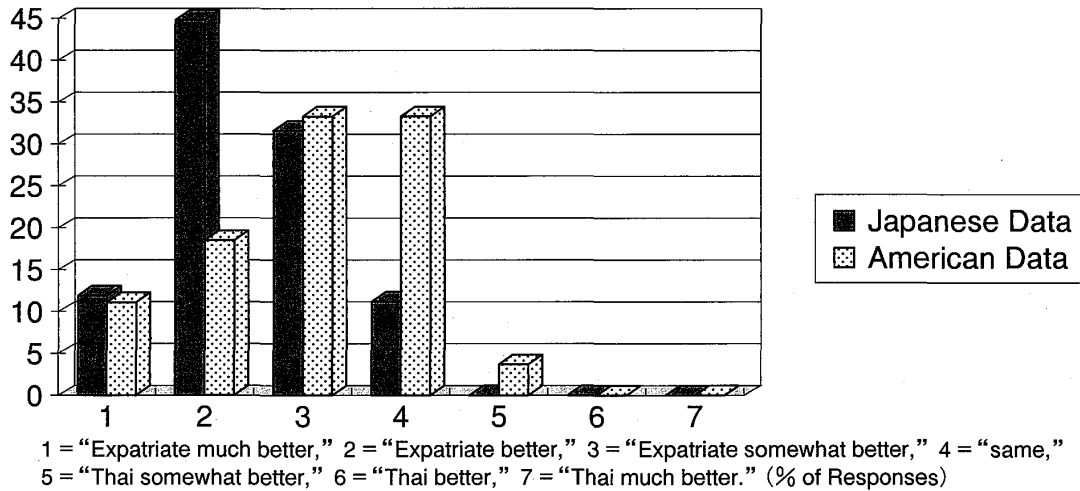
Table 8: Ability to Plan and Manage Tasks and Projects (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	2.70	.20	1.03	27	77.8%	0%
Japanese	2.57	8.16 E-02	.94	134	81.3%	0.7%

In the final item in the hard management category, “meeting deadlines,” the data shows that both the Japanese and American managers believe that Thai managers are not as likely to meet deadlines. However, there is more than a one point difference between the means of the Japanese and American data.

Graph/Table 9: Meeting Deadlines (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	3.67	.17	.88	27	63%	3.7%
Japanese	2.43	7.29 E-02	.84	134	88.8%	0%

Concerning the Japanese data, the results would appear to be due to factors concerning the differences between Japanese and Thai national culture in relation to time and uncertainty avoidance. In the eyes of the Thais, the Japanese managers may be setting deadlines earlier than they need be. Thus, the Thais would feel that they have met the real implicit deadline even when they miss the explicit deadline. There is a significant difference in Thai employees' and Japanese managers' perception of whether or not Thais meet deadlines (data from the same study; see Keeley, 2005). Thais had a much more positive view of their meeting deadlines than Japanese did.

In addition, Holmes and Tangtongtavy (1997: 77-8) comment that there is a major difference in how Thais and Westerners approach deadlines and the feeling of urgency:

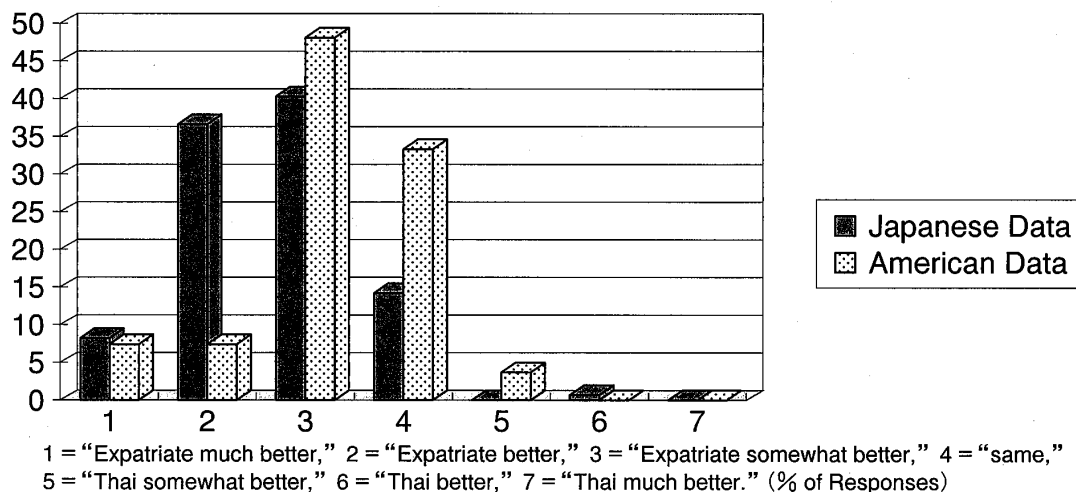
Work is treated in the West as a continuous series of interrelated activities; one segment leads to the next step, and so forth. The preferred work pattern is steady, even relentless. There's a great concern for planning, to assure this developmental building process and achieve goals a year or five years hence. The future is seen, to some extent, as being predictable, even controllable ... many Thais do not always perceive the same connection as Europeans do between certain individual tasks. Nor is the future so reliable. This partly explains a certain lack of enthusiasm for making projections and monitoring goals along a schedule ... projects are often completed in a flurry of last minute effort. And afterward it

makes sense to relax a bit between jobs.

Soft Side of Management

There are three items in the category of soft side of management, namely: judgment, leadership, and ability to adapt to changes. The results for the first item, “judgment,” are given below in Graph/Table 10. The mean of the Japanese responses is still below 3 as in the case of all the items in the hard side of management. However, the mean for the American responses is 3.19.

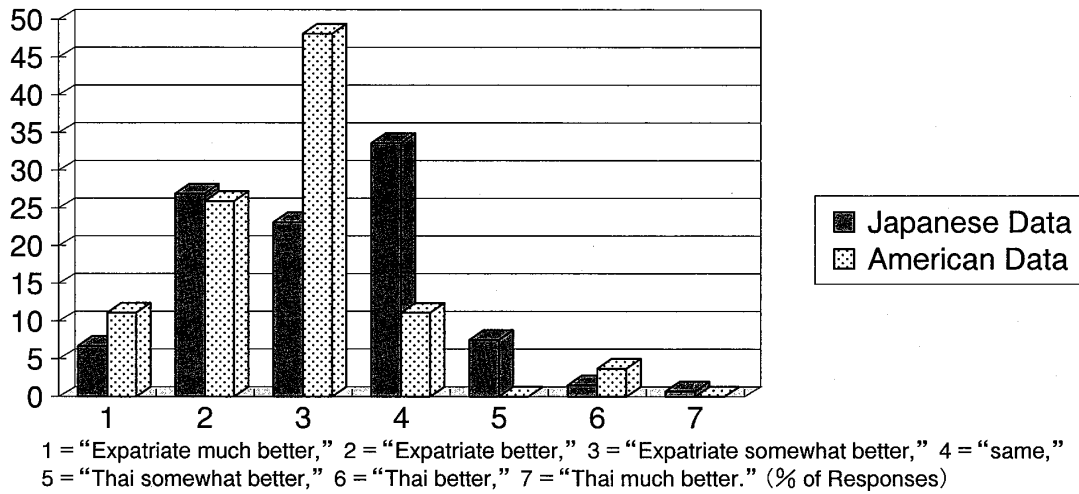
Graph/Table 10: Judgment (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	3.19	.18	.92	27	63.0%	3.7%
Japanese	2.63	7.61 E-02	.88	134	85.1%	0.7%

For the next item, “leadership,” (Graph/Table 11) the trend of the responses is a slightly reversed. The mean for the Japanese data is 3.16 while that for the American data is 2.74. This item could just as well be included in the category of human relations, a category in which the Thais receive higher evaluations from both the Japanese and American managers.

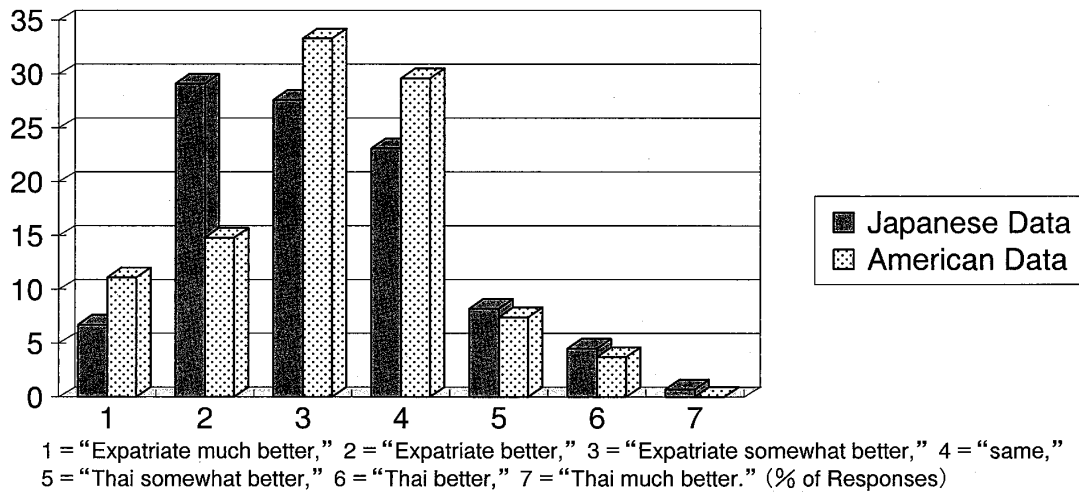
Graph/Table 11: Leadership Ability (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	2.74	.20	1.06	27	85.2%	3.7%
Japanese	3.16	.10	1.19	134	56.7%	9.7%

The last item in this category is "ability to adapt to change" (Graph/Table 12).

Table 12: Ability to Adapt to Change (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	3.19	.24	1.24	27	59.3%	11.1%
Japanese	3.13	.11	1.28	134	63.4%	13.4%

For this item both the Japanese and Americans have a more positive perception of Thai employees. However, the means are still below 4.

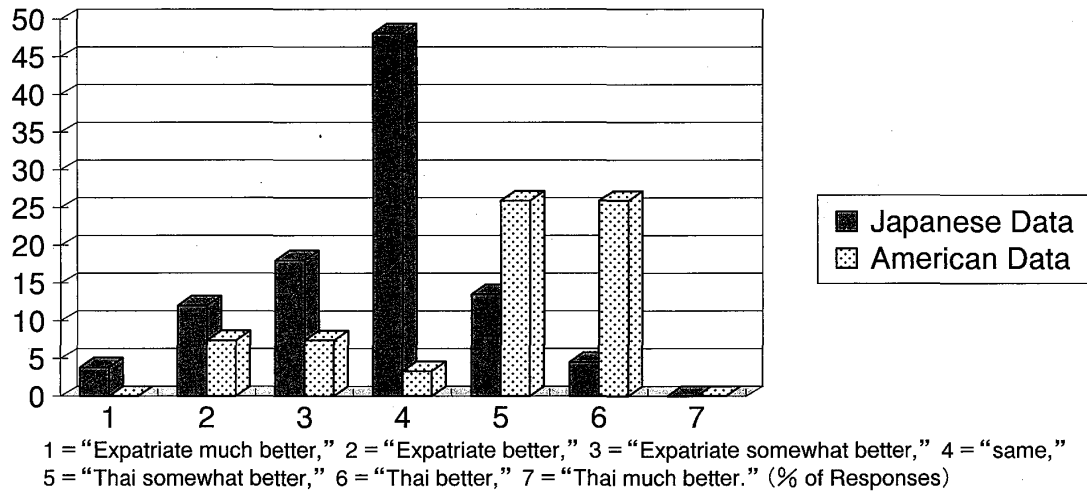
Human Relations

There are seven items in the category of human relations, namely: “concern of a boss towards subordinate’s needs,” “ability to communicate with people from different cultures,” “ability to maintain harmony in the work environment,” “ability to promote good customer relations,” “interpersonal skills,” “ability to motivate subordinates,” and “trustworthiness.” This is the category in which the data for both the Japanese and American managers tends to shift in favor of the Thai managers. It appears that the strengths of Thai managers are mainly associated with their abilities in social interaction.

In Thai society, there is naturally a high value placed on maintaining smooth interpersonal relationships. Komin (1991) offers a list of other-directed social interaction values known as social smoothing values. In rank order of their importance they are: (1) caring and considerate, (2) kind and helpful, (3) responsive to situations and opportunities, (4) self-controlled, tolerant, and restrained, (5) polite and humble, (6) calm and cautious, (7) contented, and (8) social relations. Komin reported that the first two values in this list have never slipped from the high value group. In addition, the whole group of social-smoothing values has consistently shown to have very few variations across social groups over time. Almost no significant differences were found when considering different demographic factors such as gender, education, occupation, income, and political and religious orientations. Thus, it may be concluded that these values are deeply internalized and are functional in the everyday life of Thai people. Obviously, these values will strongly affect Thai organizational behavior.

The first item in this category is “concern of the boss towards subordinate needs” (Graph/Table 13).

Graph/Table 13: Concern of Boss towards Subordinate Needs (JP and AM Data)

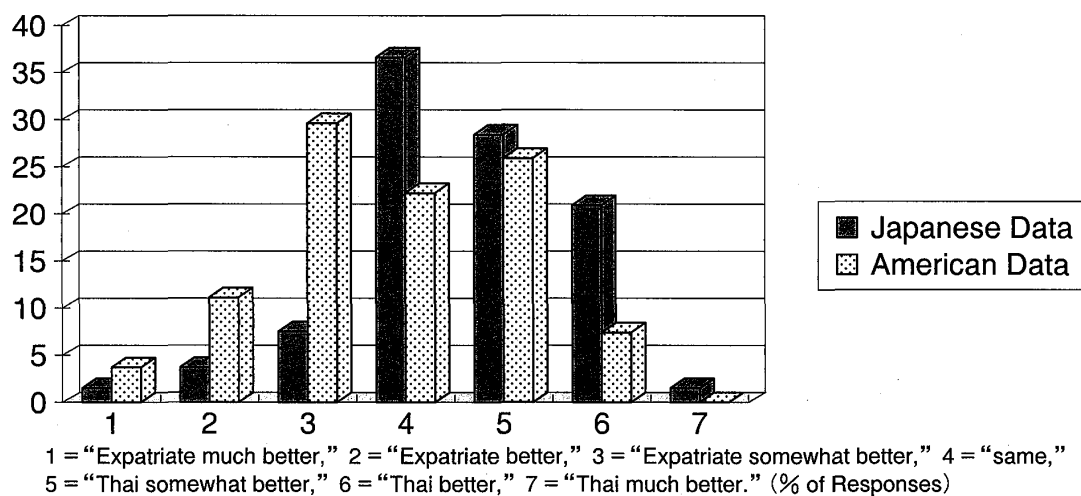


	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	4.56	.23	1.19	27	14.8%	51.9%
Japanese	3.69	9.62 E-02	1.11	133	33.8%	18.0%

The American perception is that Thais tend to be slightly better (mean 4.56) at showing concern towards subordinate needs. Though the Japanese responses are still in favor of Japanese, the mean is close to 4 (3.69) with 18% of the Japanese managers indicating that Thais are "somewhat better" or "better." According to Leppert (1996: 68-9), although the relationship between superior and subordinate in Thai management practice is formal and authoritarian, the boss is expected to be benevolent and paternalistic. In contrast the American system is usually egalitarian with little benevolence. On the other hand, Japanese management is paternalistic (Inohara, 1990).

For the next item, "ability to communicate with people from different cultures," (Graph/Table 14) Japanese on average (mean 4.55) give Thais a higher rating than they give themselves. However, the mean for the American data is slightly under 4 (3.78). It has almost become a cliché to talk about Japanese insularity, but it is a factor that certainly does affect Japanese ability to communicate with people for different cultures.

Graph/Table 14: Ability to communicate with people from different cultures (JP and AM Data)



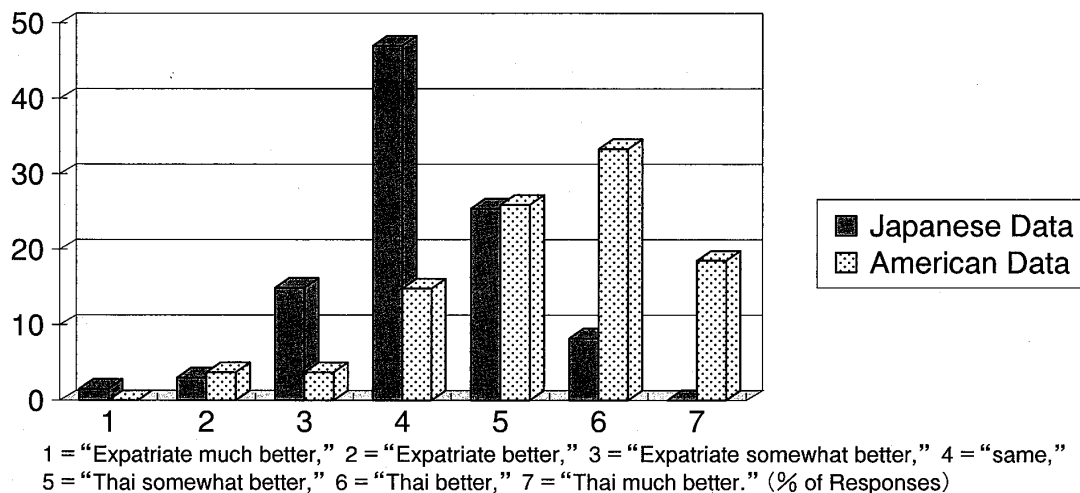
	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	3.78	.25	1.28	27	44.4%	33.3%
Japanese	4.55	9.91 E-02	1.15	134	12.7%	50.7%

Furthermore, there is also the factor of strong group associations in Japan affecting communication with non-group members. Nakane (1972) claims that Japanese groups are mainly formed on the basis of frame and that such groups provide no scope for fostering sociability and produce a large number of people who go through life without experiencing the excitement or tension of coming to grips with people outside their circle of acquaintances. Certainly things have changed over the past 30 years or so since Nakane made this observation, nevertheless it is still quite applicable to modern-day Japan.

Graph/Table 15 below presents the data for the item "ability to maintain harmony in the workplace." As might be expected the Americans view the Thais as being significantly better (mean 5.37). This finding is not surprising given that harmony in the workplace is not so highly valued in American organizations and a degree of conflict and open disagreement is viewed as being healthy and needed to foster creativity and avoid groupthink.

The mean for Japanese responses for this item is 4.16 and the distribution clearly shows a slight indication of Thais being more capable at maintaining harmony than the Japanese.

Graph/Table 15: Ability to Maintain Harmony in the Workplace (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	5.37	.25	1.28	27	7.4%	77.8%
Japanese	4.16	8.49 E-02	.98	134	19.4%	33.6%

The management systems of most Southeast Asian countries stress harmony, conformity, hierarchy and the avoidance of direct conflict (Putti, 1991). This is also a shared characteristic with the Japanese. Thome and McAuley (1992: 180) claim that there is a natural cultural affinity between Japan and Thailand:

Both nations are Buddhist (Japan more in name than in practice, whilst Thais practice their religion as a natural part of their daily life). Both are relatively homogenous ethnically, and there is a high regard for ritualized politeness, etiquette and maintaining face and harmony.

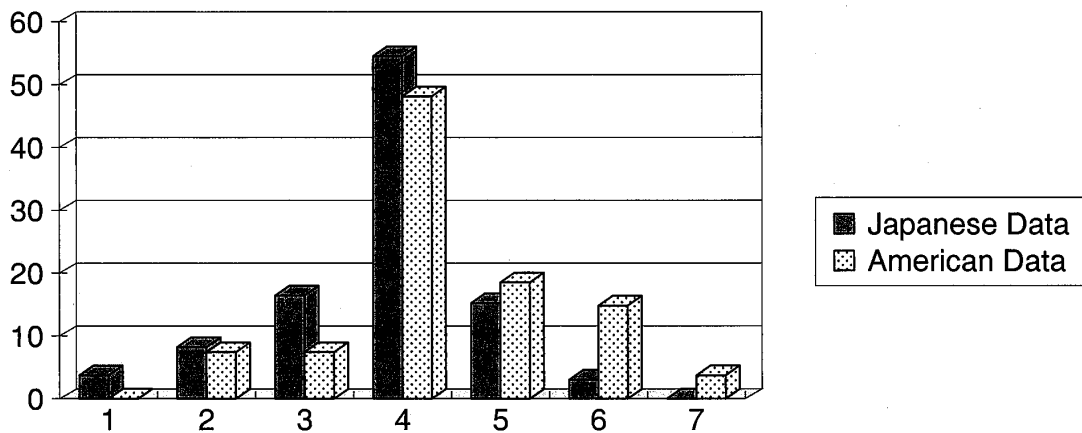
The data for this item appears to coincide with observations of other scholars. With the ego or face being so important, Thai people have developed avoidance mechanisms to fend off unnecessary clashes. These mechanisms tend to be observed by all the parties involved in a given social interaction. These mechanisms usually involve indirect ways of expressing displeasure or negative feelings. Direct expression of negative feelings in public may provoke emotional outbursts. The values of maintaining harmony and avoiding direct conflict are very important to Thais; perhaps even more so than they are to the Japanese. Manusphibool (1994) stated, "Ours is the society where people from early childhood learn to suppress their resentment and openly say 'mai ben rai' or 'it doesn't matter' while, in fact it does."

The results for the item, "ability to promote good customer relations" is given below in

Graph/Table 16. In the case of the Americans respondents Thais are slightly favored (mean = 4.37), while in the case of the Japanese respondents the Japanese are slightly favored (3.76). Nevertheless, Thais rank much higher in this important managerial skill then they do for items in the hard side of management category.

Promoting and maintaining good customer relations is also a very highly valued managerial characteristic in Japan. Obviously it is also and important trait for American managers to have. However, it is a question of degree and in Asian cultures the human relations aspect of doing business tends to be more important than it is in American culture. In negotiations between Asian companies, the relationship with the customer, if there is a long-term relationship, will likely be just as important or sometimes more important than the substantive outcome of the negotiations. Americans, on the other hand, tend to be more contractual oriented and the balance between the human relations aspect and substantive aspect of negotiation is often more weighted towards the substantive aspect.

Graph/Table 16: Ability to Promote Good Customer Relations (JP and AM Data)

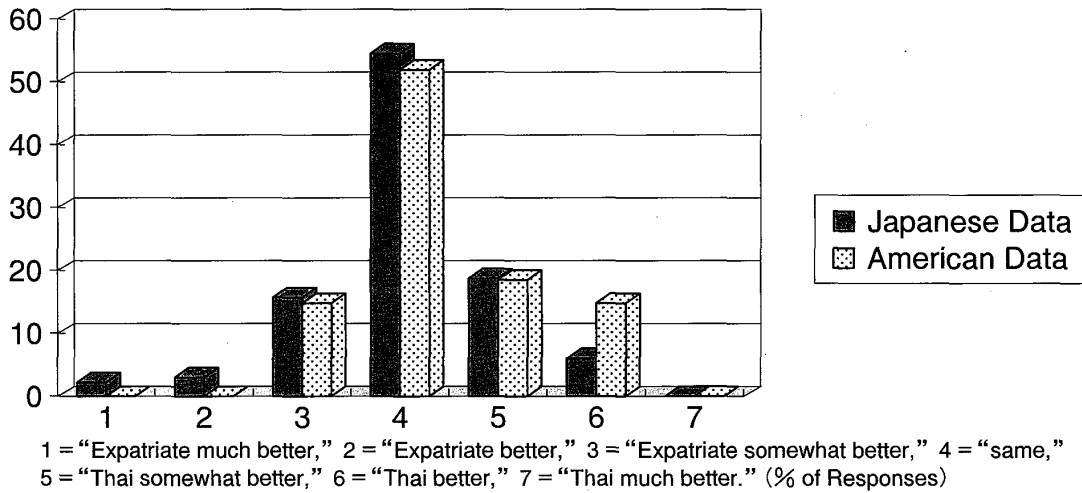


1 = "Expatriate much better," 2 = "Expatriate better," 3 = "Expatriate somewhat better," 4 = "same," 5 = "Thai somewhat better," 6 = "Thai better," 7 = "Thai much better." (% of Responses)

	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	4.37	.23	1.18	27	14.8%	37.0%
Japanese	3.76	8.81 E-02	1.02	134	28.4%	17.2%

The same trend continues with the item, "interpersonal skills" as seen in Graph/Table 17 below.

Graph/Table 17: Interpersonal Skills (JP and AM Data)

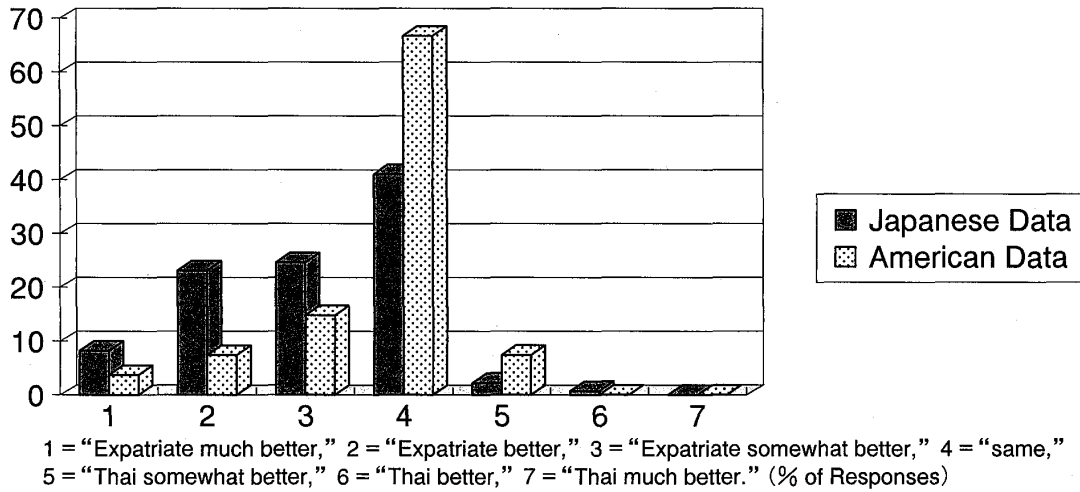


	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	4.33	.18	.92	27	14.8%	33.3%
Japanese	4.02	8.24 E-02	.95	134	20.9%	24.6%

The split in ability is almost even between expatriates and Thais with a mean of 4.33 for the American data and 4.02 for the Japanese data. Nevertheless, the overall distribution for both data sets favors the Thais and confirms that the management category of human relations is the Thai strong point.

However, for the next item, "ability to motivate subordinates," the comparatively positive evaluation of Thai managers falls slightly (Graph/Table 18).

Graph/Table 18: Ability to Motivate Subordinates (JP and AM Data)

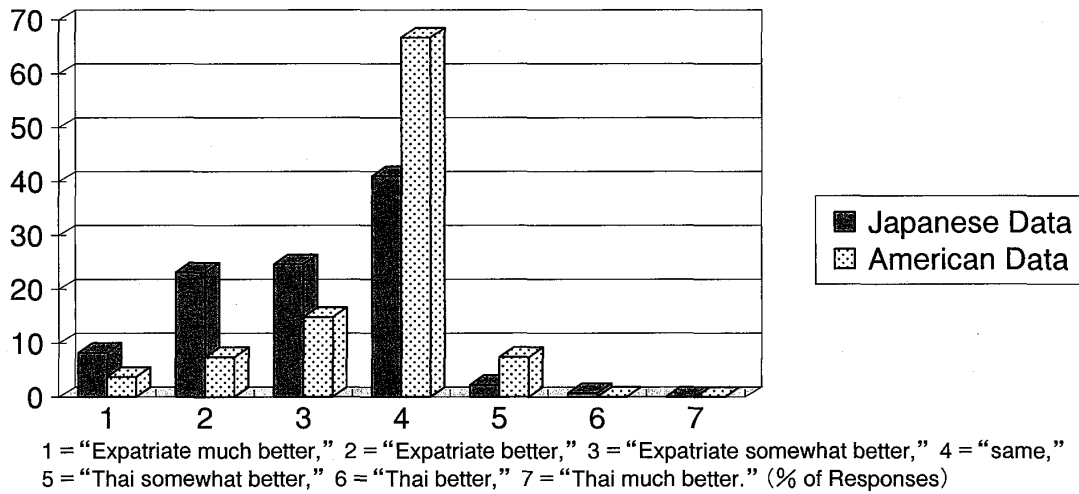


	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	3.78	.23	1.22	27	37%	25.9%
Japanese	3.28	9.03 E-02	1.04	134	53.0%	9.7%

Though the mode is 4 (the same ability) for both data sets, the distributions slightly favor the Americans and more strongly favor the Japanese. Leppert (1996) claims that since a Thai person's place in life has already been determined by his or her karma it is difficult for a manager to instill a spirit of ambition or competitiveness. Thais will work hard when the benefit is obvious and immediate but will seldom work extra hard for deferred rewards. Perhaps the Japanese and American managers do not understand well the process of motivation between the Thai bosses and their subordinates.

The next item is "trustworthiness" (Graph/Table 19). This is an item in which cross-cultural evaluation would be expected to favor members of one's own culture. It is much easier to feel trust towards persons with which there are greater similarities, as well as shared national values and norms. This phenomenon is often seen when compatriots meet in a foreign country in which they feel estranged. As may be predicted the results favor the Americans and Japanese. Interestingly, the data hints that Americans may find Thais more trustworthy than Japanese do even though Thais and Japanese are both from Asian cultures.

Graph/Table 19: Trustworthiness (JP and AM Data)



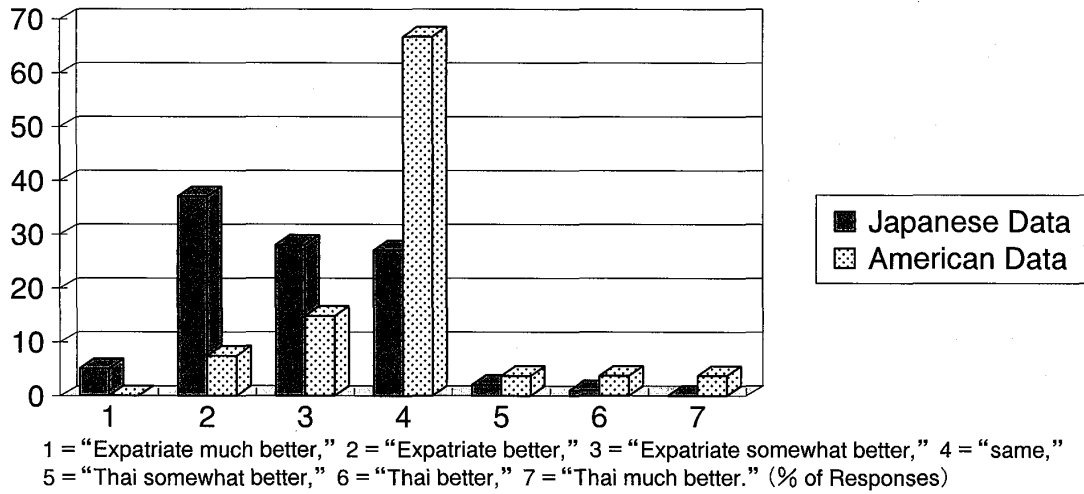
	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	3.67	.17	.88	27	25.9%	7.4%
Japanese	3.08	9.18 E-02	1.06	134	56.0%	3.0%

Work-Related Attitudes

There are three items in this category: "willingness to work hard," "effort made in doing their work well," and "sense of responsibility." The results for the first item are given below in Graph/Table 20. There difference between the mean for the American data (3.92) and the Japanese data (2.83) is slightly over one point. The distribution shows that American and Thais are perceived to be more or less the same in terms of their willingness to work hard. In contrast, most of the Japanese managers (72.9%) perceive the Japanese as more willing to work hard.

One explanation may be differences in expectations. Japanese often display what may be considered irrational behavior in the eyes of Americans and Thais just in order to demonstrate a hard-working and committed attitude. Such behavior includes staying at work late even when has nothing to do because one's superior is working late.

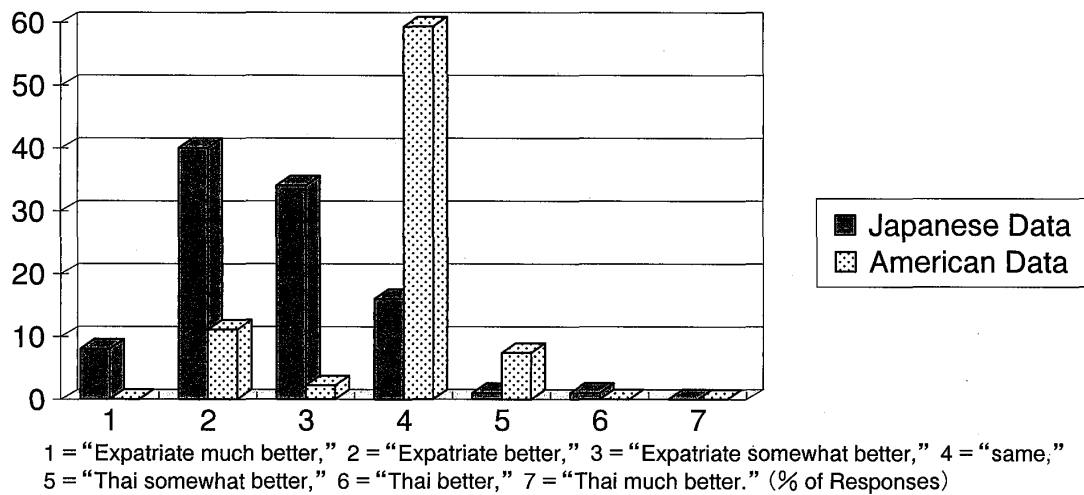
Graph/Table 20: Willingness to Work Hard (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	3.93	.19	1.00	27	22.2%	11.1%
Japanese	2.83	8.51 E-02	.98	133	72.9%	3.0%

The same difference between the American and Japanese managers' view of Thai employees is also evident in the next item, "effort made in doing their work well" (Graph/Table 21).

Graph/Table 21: Effort Made in Doing Their Work Well (JP and AM Data)



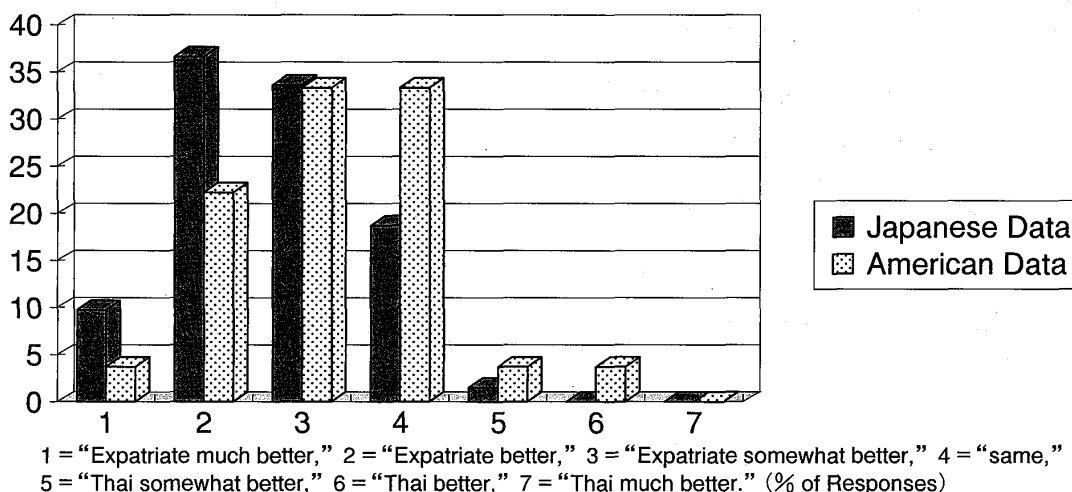
	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	3.63	.15	.79	27	33.3%	7.4%
Japanese	2.63	8.02 E-02	.86	133	82.7%	1.5%

Thais expect work to be fun and expect time off to run errands and socialize (Leppert, 1996). These expectations, if true of Thais working at American and Japanese subsidiaries, are different from the common expectations of both American and Japanese workers, but even more so in the

case of Japanese workers.

The results of the final item in this category, "sense of responsibility," are given below in Graph/Table 22. Both the Japanese and the Americans view the Thais as having a lesser sense of responsibility. Almost 80% of the Japanese and 60% of the American responses are three or below. Compared to the Americans and the Japanese, the Thais tend to put more emphasis on their private lives and it is their private lives that are the center of their identity (Leppert, 1996). Japanese, in particular, tend to make their working life, and the organization to which they belong, the center of their identity. This difference may account for the difference of perception in sense of responsibility. Another factor may be differences in expectations. In Thailand the boss is expected to assume responsibility to a degree that may be greater than the expectations of Japanese who tend to think in terms of group efforts and shared responsibility.

Table 10: Sense of Responsibility (JP and AM Data)

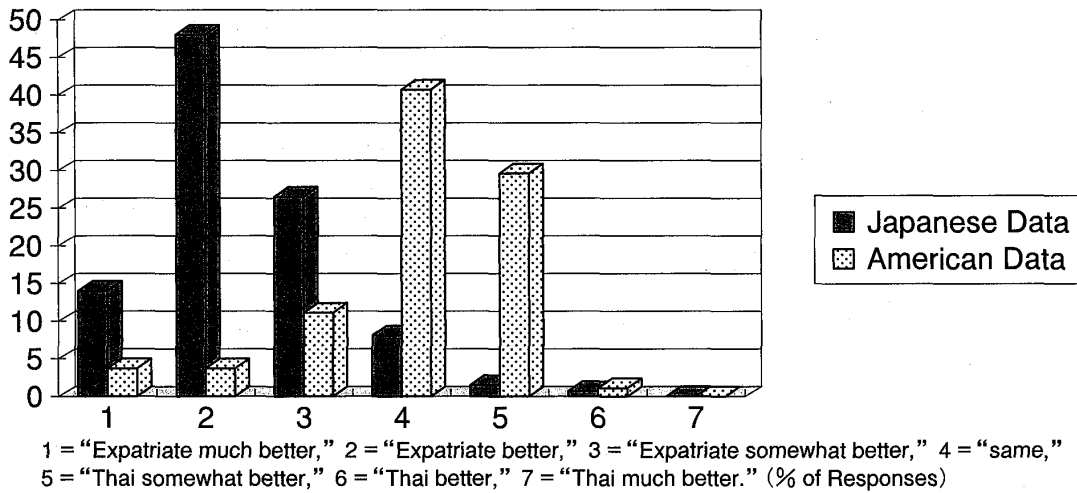


	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3 or below	%5 or above
American	3.22	.21	1.09	27	59.3%	7.4%
Japanese	2.66	8.14 E-02	.94	134	79.9%	1.5%

Loyalty

The last category has two items; "loyalty towards company" and "loyalty towards the boss." The results for the first item are given below in Graph/Table 23.

Graph/Table 23: Loyalty towards the Company (JP and AM Data)

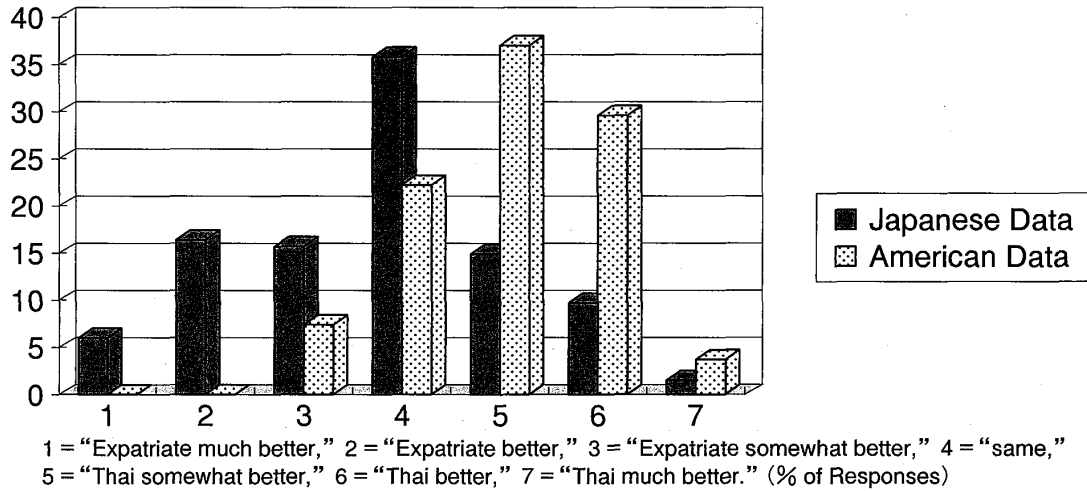


	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3.9 or below	%5 or above
American	4.22	.22	1.15	27	18.5%	40.7%
Japanese	2.37	8.04 E-02	.93	134	89.6%	2.2%

For this item there is a big difference between the perceptions of the Japanese (mean = 2.37) and the Americans (mean = 4.22). Interestingly, when loyalty is expressed in terms of loyalty towards the boss (Graph/Table 24), the Japanese perception changes significantly towards a more positive view of Thai loyalty (mean = 3.72 compared to 2.37). Likewise, the American perception shifts in the same direction (mean = 5.00 compared to 4.22).

In Thailand the senior manager is expected to provide direction, control, protection, as well as emotional support, looking after the needs of his colleagues and staff, much like a prosperous father might do (Holmes, H. and Tangtongtavy, 1997). Japanese organizations are also paternalistic; however, the paternalism is expected of the organization as a whole rather than of an individual boss. In Thailand the relationship is centered on the person much more than on the organization. If a Thai boss leaves a company, his/her Thai subordinates are likely to follow the boss.

Graph/Table 24: Loyalty towards the Boss (JP and AM Data)



	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Deviation	N	%3.9 or below	%5 or above
American	5.00	.19	1.00	27	7.4%	70.4%
Japanese	3.72	.12	1.40	134	38.1%	26.1%

Conclusions

The main finding of this study is that the strength of Thai managers, as perceived by both Japanese and American expatriates in Thailand, is in the category of human relations. The Thais are perceived to be the weakest in comparison with the American and Japanese managers in the categories of "the hard side of management." It also appears that social relations in the work place are very important in Thai society and that work is not an impersonal concept. Loyalty tends to be towards individuals in the organization rather than the organization itself.

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