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THE LEGITIMACY OF ORGANIZATIONAL INFLUENCE:
A COMPARISON OF THE ATTITUDES OF TWO GENERATIONS
OF MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

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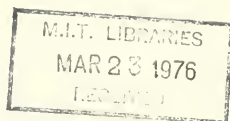
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- "The dynamic of legitimacy is perhaps the
most important single element in the total
social system."
- Kenneth E. Boulding (1969)

- "To many, management authority is legitimate
authority."   - Kenneth O. Alexander (1975)

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The student movements characteristic of the middle and late sixties focused

public attention on a question that has long been the concern of organizational

theorists: to what extent can an organization legitimately influence the

behavior and attitudes of its members?

The roots of the problem can be traced to two basic, but conflicting,

American traditions (Alexander, 1975). First is the belief that the best

in any field move to the top, thus forming a functionally superior elite

who possess the right to direct the behavior of their subordinates. On the

other hand, the resultant submergence of others in an authoritarian work

hierarchy is at odds with an equally strong respect for the individual.

What is needed is a careful balance between the authority needed to insure

organizational functioning, and the independence needed to insure individualism.

One way of balancing these is by restricting   organizational influence to

those areas considered as legitimate infringements upon individual rights as

perceived by those being influenced. Such restraint can be important not

only for the sake of individual freedom but it also can help determine an

organization's success. Katz and Kahn (1966) warn that if organizational

tasks are to be achieved there exists "a superordinate requirement ... the

necessity of accepting the influence attempts of one's superiors."

The classic picture of what happens to the individual when an organization

intrudes too far into his life is seen in Whyte's organization man: an individual who has been pressured by excessive conformity into allowing the organization to influence virtually all aspects of his life, both inside and outside the organization, until he ceases to have any identity as an individual.

This organization man was the frequent target of student activism, he and the bureaucratic "establishment" that created him, be it the government, the military-industrial complex, big business, or the universities. At the extreme, rejection of all authority was urged as the only safeguard of individual freedom. Today, the grand causes and extreme remedies appear to have been abandoned and students are back working within the system. Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine that the dynamic social forces of the last decade left these students untouched. It is doubtful they have the same attitudes and beliefs as did their counterparts of a generation ago, particularly regarding the legitimacy of organizational influence.

This study was undertaken to explore whether such changes occurred, and if so, to what extent and in what ways attitudes toward the legitimacy of influence have changed. The attitude of two groups of graduate management students toward organizational influence are compared. The first group were students in the late fifties and early sixties, the second were students in 1974. Each group completed a questionnaire designed to measure the perceived legitimacy of organizational influence. The results show a significant and real decrease in the level of sanctioned organizational influence among students in the recent group when compared to those of a generation ago. It is also found that women sanction less influence than do men, a finding of significance in light of the increased role of women in management. For

the most part, the decrease in legitimacy affected all measured attitudes and behavior areas equally, although variations from this trend exist. There is a greater than average drop in the legitimacy of items relating to individual life styles (e.g., appearances, sexual conduct) and an increase in the legitimacy of organizational involvement in interpersonal conduct, and potentially dangerous personal behavior (e.g., smoking and drinking). Despite the individual variations, the overall level of perceived legitimacy dropped, and the number of items considered legitimate decreased. The relative legitimacy of the items proved to be highly stable, in fact, of the 55 items on the questionnaire, less than one-third of the items changed their relative position by more than four places.

In the following sections the findings are analyzed in detail, preceded by a review of related research findings and followed by a discussion of the implications of the various findings.

RELATED RESEARCH: LEGITIMACY IN THE SIXTIES

In the early sixties there were a number of studies concerned with the issue of authority. Perhaps the most famous were done by Milgram (1965) who found that individuals demonstrate a remarkable tendency to willingly obey those in authority, even in following instructions that resulted in harmful actions, or that violated ones own convictions. Orne (1962) and Pepitone and Wallace (Lamson, 1968) found similar patterns of obedient and compliant behavior by their subjects in performing dull or distastful ex-perimental tasks. One key element that was identified as the basis for such compliance was perceived legitimacy. The subjects fulfilled the expectations of those in authority (i.e., the experimenter) only as long as they felt that those in authority had the right to such expectations. In general,

when they considered his position as one of legitimate authority, they granted wide leeway as to what particular expectations were considered legitimate.

Studies in the latter part of the decade indicated things were changing. Wrightsman (et al, 1969), gave attitude tests to 7 incoming classes of college students between 1962 and 1968 and found a trend toward decreased trust and an increasing view that the pressures of society made it difficult to maintain the independence of one's convictions. Hochriech and Rotter (1970) tested 4,605 introductory psychology students over a 6 year period (1964-1969) and found significant and real decreases in trust in a wide variety of social institutions.

As student protests grew, researchers looked at student activist groups to determine what their activism really represented. One such study indicates that one cause of anti-social behavior in groups occurs when supposedly legitimate authority acts in ways contrary to what individuals consider legitimate. (Worchel, et al., 1974).

Flacks (1969) examines the possibility that the defiance and resistence of young people against established authority (as evidenced in both scientific studies as well as the more news-worthy riots and protests) represents a trend leading to the erosion of the legitimacy of authority as we know it. He feels that the resisters are a vanguard of an emerging social order, in which individual dignity and collective participation will replace the blind obedience exhibited by Milgram's subjects.

Although the more radical of Flacks' conclusions and predictions may be overdrawn (particularly from the perspective of the quiet seventies, see also Etzioni, 1969), the declining legitimacy of authority among the students of that era cannot be denied. Boulding(1969) sees this changing "dynamic of legitimacy" as one of the most crucial elements in the future of our social system. While rejecting Flack's revolutionary predictions, he does

forsee subtle changes in the ideology of legitimacy as younger leaders with
different life experiences take over from older leaders.

LEGITIMACY IN THE WORK ORGANIZATION

While the studies mentioned in the preceding section deal with society
as a whole, there is a research tradition concerning perceived legitimacy
within work organizations. Schein and Ott (1962) developed the Influence
Questionnaire (used in the present study) to map the relative legitimacy
of different types of organizational influence attempts. They analyze
differences in the degree of legitimacy of specific items, both in general
and as perceived by different work groups. This theme was continued by
Schein and Lippitt(1966) who compared the relative degree of perceived
legitimacy among different levels of managers and among managers in dif-
ferent types of organizations. While these studies do not in themselves
indicate whether a level of perceived legitimacy is good or bad,   too
high or too low, they do provide a means for comparing perceived legitimacy
levels in different types of organizational environments, and more important-
ly provide a bench mark for purposes of comparing differences over time.

One group Schein looked at in his initial study (1962) was composed of
graduate management students. Their attitudes serve as a reference point
in analyzing the attitudes of contempory management students toward organ-
izational legitimacy.

MEASURING THE LEGITIMACY OF INFLUENCE

The key issue under study is not whether an organization can or should influence its members(it must to some degree), neither is it to determine how such influence should be exerted (be it autocratic rules or participative consensus). What is important is the extent to which an organization may legitimately influence its employees. A convenient way to conceptualize this is to refer to an area of legitimacy (Schein & Ott).

The Influence Questionnaire[1] is used to measure perceived legitimacy and provides a means for estimating an item's area of legitimacy as well as the areas of legitimacy for individuals and groups of individuals. The Influence Questionnaire contains 55 items representing different attidues and behavior areas, and respondents are asked whether they consider it legitimate for a manager to influence his subordinates in each area. The respondents indicate "yes" (or "no") for those items for which they are sure the influence attempts are appropriate (or inappropriate). If the respondent is not sure, or feels it depends on the situation, the item is left blank, and is scored a "no answer", (NA).[2]

Three indexes are constructed from the questionnaire responses. They are all constructed in a similar fashion on the assumption that in a given situation the extent of legitimacy of an item is based on a combination of those who feel an item is legitimate in all situations (the Yes responses),

plus some proportion of those who feel it depends on the situation (the blank responses).

For each respondent an individual index is computed from the total of the number of items with yes responses plus 40% of those left blank $\left[\overline{(YES + 0.4 \ NA)} \ (100/55)\right].^3$ It reflects the general tendency of an individual to sanction organizational influence (his individual area of legitimacy). For each item an item index is computed from the total number of respondents giving yes responses plus 40% of those who left the item blank $\left[(YES + 0.4NA)(\#of \ respondents/100)\right]$. It reflects the degree of agreement among all respondents concerning a given item (the item's area of legitimacy). Finally, a group influence index is computed by taking the mean of either the individual or the item index in a given group, a measure of a group's area of legitimacy. All of the indexes take on values ranging from "0" (NO on all items and /or by all respondents) to "100" (YES on all items and/or by all respondents).

SAMPLE SELECTION

The Influence Questionnaire was administered early in the first term to first-year graduate students attending the Sloan School of Management (MIT), in 1959, 1960, and 1974. There are 161 questionnaire results from the initial group[4] and 87 from the 1974 group. As far as can be determined, the two groups are comparable in age, percentage of foreign students, selection and questionnaire administration. They are not perfectly matched since differences exist with respect to sex and department major. There are 15 female students in the 1974 group (17% of the total group), and none in the initial group.[5] There are 31 cross-registered graduate students from other MIT departments in the 1974 group, none in the initial group in which all were Industrial Management majors. The effect of these differences will be examined when analyzing the results.

Composition of the 1974 group (on which there is more detailed back-
ground information available) is given in Table 1.

It should be pointed out that the group of students in the study
were, for the most part, undergraduates in the late sixties, during the
period of changing attitudes towards legitimacy, trust, and conformity
in society in general. They are of particular interest not only for their
past and the experiences shared by their generation, but also for their
future. Most will be graduating and entering public and private organiza-
tions as tomorrow's management leaders. If Boulding's predictions about
the influence of this generation are accurate, we may be able to see the
first signs of change as we follow this group.

RESULTS: GROUP INFLUENCE INDEX SCORES

The overall group index value for the 1974 student sample was 32,
with individual index values ranging from 7 to 58. Before comparing these
students to the earlier ones, we will first examine whether the previously
cited differences in sample composition affect the results.

There is no significant difference between the management and non-
management majors. (Table 2). This makes sense in light of conversations
with the non-Sloan students. Most said they were taking courses at Sloan
because they intended to be involved in managerial activities upon graduating
from other departments at MIT, thus their general orientation can be ex-
pected to be similar to the management majors.

This is not the case, however, with sex. There is a large and sig-
nificant difference between the male and female respondents, with the women
having smaller areas of legitimacy. This is due in part to the fact that
the women are all U.S. citizens, whose scores are lower than those
from other countries. When the women are compared to U.S. men (whose

TABLE 1

Composition of the 1974 Student Group

Age:	Range		21-47
	Average		26
Sex:	Male		72
	Female		15
Nationality:	U.S:		60
		Foreign	27
Department Major:			
	Sloan (management)		56
	other		31

TABLE 2

Group Influence Index Scores - 1974 Students

SUBGROUP	NUMBER	INDEX MEAN	STD DEV
Total	168	31	10
Department: Sloan (management)	56	31	10
Other	31	31	10
difference not significant			
Sex: Male	72	32	9.9
Female	15	26	8.6
difference = 6 (p<.05)			
Nationality: United States	60	29	9.9
Foreign	27	34	9.2
difference= 5 (p<.05)			
Age: 21-23	26	32	10.6
24-25	28	29	9.5
over 25	31	31	9.7
difference not significant			

group index value was 30), although the difference between them is smaller (only 4 points), and the statistical significance drops (from 0.02 to 0.09), differences between the sexes still remain. Despite this difference, further analyses will include the female responses in the totals, for both group and item comparisons; the increasing involvement of women in management (and graduate management programs) is one of the realities of the last 15 years. Differences in the attitudes of the present management student population stemming from this changing sexual composition are just as important and real as differences resulting from changes in a particular groups' attitudes. To help keep the two effects seperate, breakouts will be given for male and female respondents whenever comparisons are made between groups.

Looking now at the other sub-groups, we see that there is no difference based on age (the product moment correlation between age and group index value was -0.10, p=>.15). Considering that 87% of the sample were in their twenties, this is not surprising. And, as mentioned before, there are differences between groups based on nationality, with students from the United States having smaller areas of legitimacy.[6]

An item by item comparison showed that differences between sexes and nationalities are not the result of major differences in a few items, but reflect instead a general tendency by U.S. students and women to have lower individual scores across all items. Item index scores for each item were compared by sex and nationality and only a handful of items were found with statistically significant differences. Most of the items had small, statistically insignificant differences, that when combined led to larger differences in the group index. This is similar to patterns found by Schein and Ott and Schein and Lippitt. They too found that when differences existed between groups the difference was reflected in

almost all items, not just a few.

Differences in U.S. and foreign responses were statistically signifi-

cant on six items (Table 3). These provide insight into the differing

management orientations here and abroad. Four of the items relate to the

actions of the employee off the job in activities directly relating to

the company, being critical (no. 36), taking work home (no. 42), partici-

pation in company socials (no. 48), and participation in company athletics

(no. 55). On all four, the item's area of legitimacy is much smaller

among U.S. students, reflecting perhaps a wider perception of what consti-

tutes the work setting on the part of foreign students. On one item the

U.S. area of legitimacy is larger. Influence attempts regarding how you

treat your secretary are considered less legitimate by foreign students,

although the index values are relatively high for both goups.

There were nine items for which the differences between sexes were

statistically significant, but six of these reflected only minor real

differences. In these cases, all the female responses were zero, and the

male responses very low (values of 4 to 10). The three other items were

no. 4 (wearing a beard or moustache), no. 24 (leisure time spent with sub-

ordinates) , and no. 47 (drinking at home). These do not appear to relate

to any underlying conceptual orientations that differentiates sexes.[7]

CHANGES IN THE INFLUENCE INDEX

With the issue of sample comparability out of the way, we can return

to the primary focus of the study and examine the differences between the

student group tested in the early sixties and those tested in 1974. This

will be done in two parts. First, the overall group Influence Index scores

will be compared, then a closer look at changes in specific items.

TABLE 3

Item Index Differences Between Nationalities

Item	United States		Foreign	
	Mean	Std Error	Mean	Std Error
32. His attitude towards money.	7**	1.9	24	6.3
36. How critical he is of the company in public.	65*	5.4	86	6.0
37. How he supervises his secretary.	74*	4.5	53	8.3
42. The amount of company work he takes home with him.	43*	5.3	66	8.9
48. The amount of leisure time he spends at company social functions.	16*	3.6	33	7.2
55. Whether he participates on the company athletic team.	16***	3.9	54	9.0

* $p < .05$
** $p < .001$
*** $p < .00001$

The summary scores for both groups are listed in Table 4. As expected, there is a significant decrease in the group influence index score from 1959 to 1974 (from 38 to 31). This is due in part to the differences between the sexes which is almost as great as between year groups. However, the differences between the two groups is large and significant even when the responses from the women are excluded. Since only 17% of the total in 1974 was female, they do not greatly alter the total influence index score.

Looking at the means tells only part of the story, viz, that the area of legitimacy is smaller as perceived by students now as compared to 1960. It does not tell us the nature of the change, to determine that we turn to the influence index scores for each item.

It may be helpful in our analysis of the 55 separate items if they are broken into more manageable groups based on the extent to which there is agreement regarding their area of legitimacy. Those items with low influence index scores (0-25) can be considered as falling outside the groups perceived area of legitimacy, in a "restricted area".

The remaining items are, to one degree or another, within the area of legitimacy. Those with high index values (76-100) can be considered to compose a core area, which contains those items for which there is relatively strong agreement that they are the legitimate target of influence. The remaining items (with values of 26-75) will be considered as being in a conditional area of legitimacy. These items have either a split between the yes and no responses, indicating a lack of general consensus concerning their legitimacy; or, have a large number of blank, or "it depends" responses. Unlike the core or restricted areas, one cannot say with any certitude whether in a given situation the item will be perceived as legitimate, it depends on the conditions in which you find yourself.

TABLE 4

Comparison of 1959/1960 and 1974 Responses

Group	(N)	Average Number of Responses			Influence Index	
		YES	NO	NA	Mean	s.d
1959/1960 Students	(168)	16.8	27.7	10.5	38	12.9
1974 Students:						
Total	(87)	12.9	32.0	10.1	31**	9.9
Male	(72)	13.4	31.3	10.2	32*	9.9
Female	(15)	10.5	35.3	9.2	26**	8.6

Significance levels are for differences between index values of
initial group and 1974 groups. * p .005
** p .0005

Further insight is gained concerning the decreasing area of legitimacy by comparing the sizes of these three areas (based on the percentage of items in each).   Figure 1 shows   how the core area of legitimacy has shrunk in the last decade, for our samples. Less than half the number of items generally accepted as legitimate in 1960 are today considered as such. The number of conditional items has remained about the same, with an increase in the items in the restricted area.

Interestingly enough, when viewed in this way the differences found among the 1974 groups largely disappear . Despite the tendency for female and American students to have lower influence index scores, the number of specific items considered as being in the core area is very similar (Table 5). Only two differences exist   in   what each group generally regards as legitimate. Item 25 (the amount of education he receives in job related areas) has a high index value for females (64), but is not high enough to be in the core area, as it is for the men. Item 36 (how critical he is of the company in public) has a relatively high index value for Americans (65), but is not high enough to be in the core area, as it is for foreign students.

CHANGES IN THE ITEM INDEX

The next level of analysis brings us to the items themselves. The Item Index values are given in Table 6. The items are ranked according to the index value of the 1974 group, with the most legitimate item ranked first. Despite the overall drop in the legitimacy index, and the number of items considered legitimate, the relative legitimacy ranking of each item is remarkably similar. The rank order correlations between groups are strong

FIGURE 1

The Decreasing Area of Legitimacy

CORE AREA: General agreement
that an item can legitimately
be influenced by managers in
an organization. (item
    item index 76-100

CONDITIONAL AREA: No general
agreement whether an item
can legitimately be influenced;
legitimacy depends on the
situation and/or individual.
    item index 26-75

RESTRICTED AREA: General
agreement that an item can
not be legitimately the
subject of influence by
managers in an organization.
    item index 0-25

13 items

6 items

15 items

17 items

27 items

32 items

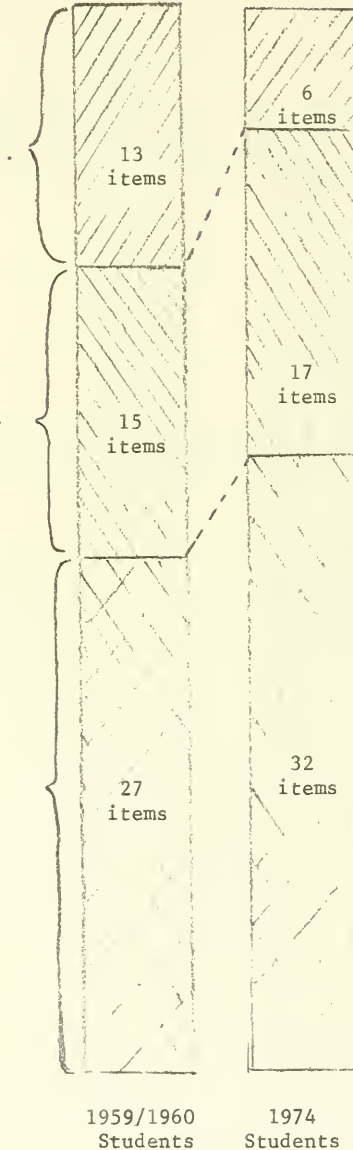1959/1960 Students

1974 Students

TABLE 5

Number of Items Within the Area of Legitimacy

Group	Core Area (Index= 76-100)	Conditional Area (Index= 26-75)	Rrestricted Area (Index= 0-25)
1959/1960 Students	13	15	27
1974 Students:			
Total	6	17	32
Male	6	17	32
Female	5	17	33
Foreign	7	18	30

TABLE 6

Item Influence Index Scores

Item	1974 Rank	Index	1959/1960 Rank	Index
CORE AREA:				
7. How much alcohol, if any, he consumes during the work day.	1	89	2	91
34. The kind of temperment he exhibits on the job(i.e. how excitable or phlegmatic or aggressive or passive, etc he is).	2	87	4	86
27. His working hours.	3	85	1	92
1. How much importance he attaches to getting along with other people.	4	80	12	76
25. The amount of additional education he receives in job-related areas.	5	78	6	86
10. The amount of time he spends talking to his wife and children on the phone while at work.	6	76	3	88
CONDITIONAL AREA:				
36. How critical he is of the company in public.	7	72	7	84
45. How he divides up his working day amongst his various duties	8	71	13	75
6. Whether he uses profane language at work.	9	70	5	86
52. How many drinks, if any, he has at lunch time.	10	69	15	71
37. How he supervises his own secretary.	11	67	11	77
19. The amount of time he spends doing job-related reading while at work.	12	64	9	82
26. The location of his next job (assuming the company rotates its people to different geographical regions of the country	13	63	10	78
44. The tidiness of his offic-.	14	59	8	82
38. The form of address he uses in talking to his colleagues.	15	54	17	62
16. The type of clothing he wears at work.	16	51	14	73
42. The amount of company work he takes home with him.	17	50	21	49
13. How active he is in recruiting others to join the company.	18	47	18	62
14. How he competes with his peers for promotion.	19	45	20	53
39. The degree of formality of his clothing.	20	43	16	63
11. His willingness to play politics to get ahead.	21	38	23	39
5. His attitude towards unions.	22	32	19	59
55. Whether he participates on a company athletic team(assuming he has the talent and is needed).	23	28	24	36
RESTRICTED AREA:				
48. The amount of leisure time he spends at company social functions.	24	21	25	35
33. His attitude toward smoking.	25	21	41	10
24. How much leisure time he spends with his subordinates.	26	20	27	19
47. How much he drinks at home.	27	18	34	15

TABLE 6 (cont)

Item	1974 Rank	1974 Index	1959/1960 Rank	1959/1960 Index
40. Whether he uses the company product himself (i.e. drives the kind of car the company makes or whatever the product is)	28	17	22	40
3. How much leisure time he spends with his superiors.	29	13	29	24
28. How much leisure time he spends with his peers.	30	12	34	15
32. His attitudes towards money.	31	12	31	14
4. Whether he wears a beard or moustache.	32	12	33	26
43. His attitudes towards saving money.	33	11	41	10
51. Whether he has close friends in a rival company.	34	11	32	18
20. How much he buys on credit.	34	11	36	15
53. His degree of participation in non-company public activities (i.e. working for local political parties, organizations, etc.)	36	10	28	26
18. Who his friends are.	37	10	40	11
41. The amount of life insurance he carries.	38	8	43	9
46. How faithful he is to his wife.	39	7	39	12
49. How much he entertains.	39	7	38	14
35. His attitudes towards sexual morality.	41	7	30	22
30. What organizations or clubs he belongs to.	42	6	33	10
2. The amount of money he gives to charity (assuming contributions are made at work).	43	5	47	5
54. Whether his wife works or not.	44	5	44	8
23. The kind of house or apartment he lives in.	45	5	44	8
12. Where he lives.	46	4	37	14
17. The kind of woman he marries.	46	4	47	5
31. Where he sends his children to school.	48	4	51	4
22. Where he spends his vacations	50	4	54	2
21. How many children he has.	50	4	53	3
8. Whether he owns his own house or not.	50	3	49	4
50. Where he maintains charge accounts for personal shopping.	52	3	52	3
15. What political party he belongs to.	53	2	49	5
29. The church he attends.	54	2	55	2
9. The kind of car he drives.	55	1	46	8

and significant (Table 7). In fact, in comparing the rankings of the items
in the two groups, almost half are within 2 places of each other, with the
average change in rank   only 3 1/2 places.[8] This supports Schein and
Ott's hypothesis that there are fairly well developed attitudes concerning
the relative legitimacy and non-legitimacy of the different items subject
to influence. The present data indicate that these attitudes are not only
widely shared and consistent among different groups (as Schein and Ott
found), but also stable over time.

Inspection of the index values shows that the decrease in the area
of legitimacy was due to an across the board shift in legitimacy for most
items rather than a dramatic decline in some subset of items. There were
some items, however, that did show distinctive changes and these will
be looked at more closely. There are eight items that bucked the downward
trend by either holding their own or even increasing slightly;[9] and ten
items that had major drops in their index values of 16 or more points.
In examining these items, a number of themes suggest themselves.

Several of those items showing large declines have to do with the
individuals' personal life style; whether he wears a beard or moustache
(no. 4) or uses profanity (no. 61) the formality and style of his clothing
(no. 16 and no. 39); and his attitudes toward sexual morality (no. 35).
The decline in these items may reflect the general trend in society toward
relaxation of rigid standards of dress and conduct. The legitimate in-
fluence of these items were probably justified on the grounds of main-
taining a company's image a generation ago. Today, maintaining an image
may be just as legitimate   an organizational objective, but these par-
ticular items may not be the yardstick by which image is established, and
thus not legitimate targets of influence.

TABLE   7

		Correlation (r_s) *
1959/1960 Students with :	1974 (total)	.95
	1974 (male)	.95
	1974 (female)	.87
1974 Male with 1974 Female		.91

Rank Order Correlations

Group

* all correlations   significant at $p < .001$

A second theme concerns the degree of control the individual has over his work within the organization. In the earlier groups studied, items relating to the conduct of work were generally considered as legitimate areas of influence. In the present group, the following work related items not only showed large declines but shifted out of the core area of legitimacy into the conditional area: job related reading (no. 19), the location of his next job (no. 26), and the tidiness of his desk (no. 44). Two other items reflecting this theme had smaller index value changes, but still resulted in the items shifting out of the core area: how he divides his work day (no. 45), and how he supervises his secretary (no. 37).

While the involvement by organizations in affairs concerned with image and work accomplishment may be declining, their role in other areas seems to be increasing. There seems to be the emergence of an organizational role as the protector of individuals from acts harmful to themselves or to others. Concern with alchohol consumption on the job (item 7), at lunch (item 52) and at home (item 47), all remained relatively stable or showed slight increases in the level of legitimacy. Concern for smoking (item 33), showed the only dramatic increase (+10), reflecting perhaps both growing awareness of the danger to the individual as well as concern for the possible irritation to non-smokers. Other increasing items relate to interpersonal relations, both directly (item 1, how much importance he attaches to getting along with other people), and indirectly (item 11, his willingness to play politics to get ahead).

The item concerning the amount of work taken home (no. 42) poses a problem of interpretation. In light of the finding concerning the decreasing legitimacy of items relating to the conduct of work, we should expect it to have decreased in its area of legitimacy, however, it remained stable. This item differs from others relating to work in that it was already in the conditional area in the earlier ranking. We might

then expect the other items to stabilize in that area, rather than continuing
to decline until they drop into the restricted area.

The last item showing distinctive change was item no. 5;   attitudes
towards unions. It had the largest decline of any item (27 points), in-
dicating a major shift toward support of unions within work organ-
izations. Considering the educational background and probable future
careers for this student sample as managers in private and public insti-
tutions, it could reflect an interest by them in the growing unionization
movements in these groups. It suggests the further growth in unionization
in white collar, professional and civil service jobs, occupations virtually
untouched by the labor movement a generation ago.

RELATION TO OTHER ATTITUDES

The students in the 1974 group completed two additional questionnaires
dealing with managerial attitudes. Comparison of the results from these
provides further insight into the nature of legitimate influence.

One of these additional questionnaires measures the extent to which
the respondents' assumptions about people in organizations are congruent with
Theory Y assumptions (Appendix A). It contains ten pairs of statements, one
of which paraphrase a Theory Y assumption, and the other a Theory X assump-
tion. The respondent indicates the relative strength of his belief in each
and his responses are used to compute a Theory Y index.

The other questionnaire is drawn from the Personal Opinion Questionnaire
III (Schein, 1967) (Appendix B). It contains 55 statements about managerial
issues in organizations, and for each item, the respondent indicates on
a four point scale the extent of agreement or disagreement with the statement.
Responses are used to construct managerial attitude indexes. Twelve such

indexes were computed from the responses of the 1974 group. Of these, three were highly correlated with the legitimacy index and together with the Theory Y index, will be examined in greater detail (See Table 8).

One of the scales on the POQ III is conceptually similar to the influence index: belief that workers should have privacy. As could be expected, there is some correlation between these two measures.

The strongest relationship, however, is with the belief in Theory Y assumptions about people. The more a person believes that men are basically good, hard-working, trustworthy, motivated, and self-disciplined, the less likely is he to legitimize organizational influence over its members. A similar conclusion is indicated by the POQ scale concerning faith in a worker's ability and willingness to work.

The last scale refers to the perceived level of conformity pressures within an organization. Those who perceive that such pressures are low tend to feel that more items can be legitimately influenced. A likely interpretation of this is that there is a strong relationship between perceived conformity pressures and their sanctioning. Perhaps a key factor in wanting to limit an organizaton's area of legitimacy is an existing perception that the present level of influence is excessive. This leads to a parodoxical situation that as long as an organization refrains from influencing certain behaviors it will be considered legitimate to do so, but once it starts exercising that legitimate authority, the support for such influence will decrease. Such a tendency, if it indeed exists, is probably not operative in terms of an organization's influence efforts over a single item or group of items, but probably relates to the overall level of influence. Once an organization "goes too far" conformity pressures overall are perceived as "too high" and there develops a backlash to limit the scope of the organization's influence.

TABLE 8

The Influence Index and Other Attitude Measures

Attitude Scales	Pearson's r
Belief in Theory Y (vs Theory X) assumptions about people in organizations.	− .35**
Belief that employees should have rights to privacy.	− .29**
Faith in workers' ability and willingness to work.	− .23**
Cynicism about the extent to which conformity is demanded in the organization.	− .21*

The first item is based on the Managerial Style questionnaire (Appendix A) and the rest are scales from the Personal Opinion Questionnaire III (Appendix B). Correlations are between these scales and the influence index.

* $p < .05$
** $p < .001$

In conclusion, it appears that there may be two separate, although perhaps related, attitudinal bases for the decreases observed in perceived legitimacy of organizational influence: positive perceptions about the nature of individuals and negative perceptions about the nature of organizations. For there to be a decrease in an organization's perceived area of legitimacy, it   is perhaps not sufficient   just to distrust or resent the "establishment" but there must be a feeling that people can (and are worthy to) handle their own affairs. This may help explain the increase in the areas of legitimacy for the items about smoking, drinking, and interpersonal relations. Individuals have shown that they cannot be trusted in these areas, they become alchoholics, die of lung cancer, hurt their fellow employees by playing politics, and in the press to meet objectives lose their temper and ignore feelings of others.

THE FUTURE

It appears that there have been some real and substantial changes in graduate management students' perception of legitimate organizational influence. Though there is an increased tendency to allow organizations to be involved with some interpersonal and personal problems of their members, overall, there is a sharp reduction in what an organization can legitimately influence. Today's management students (particularly the contemporary female students) would restrict influence considerably more then their counterparts a generation ago. What does this mean for the future, both for our organizations, and also for these students?

First, a closer look at the women. It is difficult to rely too heavily on findings based on the responses from only 15 women. Further research is needed to determine if these differences are limited to the student group measured, or in fact reflect differences existing throughout society, and if so, why they exist. Yet it does seem logical to believe that women do have a lower area of legitimacy than

men. In light of the sex bias many women entering management feel exist within the business world, we could expect that their level of trust in such organizations would be lower than that of males, and thus the degree to which they are willing to let organizations influence their activities would indeed be lower. If this is so, then we might expect that as women become assimilated into the mainstream of management, their level of trust would increase, and in turn the differences in perceived legitimacy between the sexes would diminish. If not, then the foundation exists for considerable misunderstanding and tension between men and women in areas relating to the legitimate scope of influence. Such tensions, if not properly understood and dealt with, could reinforce the woman manager's mistrust and lead to further isolation of women in management.

The issue still remains, however, as to how these students, male or female, will affect and be affected by the organizations they are to join. What is the extent to which the other groups in organizations have changed during this same time period, and how stable will the students' attitudes be after entering a work climate rather than an academic one? Again, further research is needed to determine the extent to which the student's attitudes reflect those held by society as a whole. If the other groups have undergone similar shifts, then one can expect the organizations' "area of legitimacy" to decrease, and the organization man to be a memory of the past. If other groups have not changed, and the students' attitudes do not change, then we can perhaps look forward to increased tension between those newly entering an organization and those now in it. If this latter prediction is accurate, then organizations may only now be able to appreciate the full significance of the student activism of the late sixties, as they welcome into its ranks those whose attitudes developed during that era.

<center>Footnotes</center>

1. The items used on the questionnaire are listed in Table 6. The instruc-
tions printed on the questionnaire are as follows:
    " In this questionnaire we are trying to find out in what areas you consider
it to be legitimate for a manager (for example, the plant manager, superinten-
dent, foreman, etc.) to attempt to influence his own subordinates. Some of
them will strike you as legitimate areas for a manager to be concerned about.
On some of them you will feel that it depends entirely upon the specific
situation whether attempts to influence in that area are legitimate or not.
We are trying to locate those items about which you feel quite sure, regard-
less of the specific situation.
    Please put the letter Y for "Yes" next to those items where you feel
sure that influence attempts are legitimate (i.e. where the manager has
the right to attempt influence).
    Please put the letter N for "No" next to those items where you feel
sure that influence attempts would not be legitimate, regardless of the
situation or the specific job (i.e. where the manager does not have the
right to attempt influence).
    Please leave blank those items where you are not sure or you feel that
it depends on the particular situation or the particular kind of work.
    "It is legitimate for a manager to attempt to influence his subordin-
ates in terms of: "

2. In discussing the results of the Influence Questionnaire with students
who took it, a number of them were concerned over the coding of the no
responses. They felt that rather than representing some doubt about the le-
gitimacy of the item, the no response may just reflect confusion about the
meaning of the item. The large number of "NA" responses (averaging almost 20%)
was pointed to as evidence that more than just doubt of an item's legitimacy
was the cause for leaving it blank.
    First, many of the items with a high number of "NA" responses in the
present sample did not have them in the initial sample; and similarly, many
high "NA" items in the initial sample no longer have them. If an item is
ambiguous, it should be so for both groups, and few items were. Second,
the high "NA" response rate for the 1974 group is not unusually high, but
is similar to that of the earlier student group, and for both faculty and
managers attending educational programs at MIT (Schein, 1962). Other groups,
not in college, either as students or faculty, generally had much lower
rates - as low as 4% for union leaders (Schein & Ott, 1962). Again, if
high "NA" response items were unclear, this should show up across samples.
What appears more likely is that as Schein and Ott (1962) suggest, those in
educational institutions are pressured to continually question and re-examine
values, and therefore can be expected to be truly in doubt over the legi-
timacy of many items.

3. The individual and item indexes were used in slightly different form in
previous studies of the legitimacy of organizational influence. The indi-
vidual index was used by Schein & Lippit (1966) to compare managers in dif-
ferent companies and at different levels within the companies. It was computed
by subtracting No's and 0.2 of the number of items left blank from the
number of Yes's and adding 55 to make all scores positive. The index varied
from zero to +110.

The item index was used by Schein & Ott (1962) to examine the relative perceived legitimacy of the individual questionnaire items. It was computed by subtracting the No's and 0.2 of the number of blank items from the number of Yes's, dividing by the total number of respondents in the group and multiplying the total by 100. The index from -100 to +100.

Charges were made in the construction of the two indices to simplify their computation, standardize the range of each from 0 to 100, and permit computation of a single composite group index. Further, since the index is meant to reflect degree of perceived legitimacy, it seemed conceptually sounder to exclude the No responses, and to use just the Yes responses and some arbitrary percentage of the blank responses. This latter was done since a blank response indicates that there are some situations in which an individual feels the item is the legitimate subject of influence, and some recognition of this should be made in the index. Since there is no way to determine the percentage of the time one of these blank items would be considered legitimate, the choice is largely arbitrary. The 40% figure was chosen for two reasons. First, it corresponds to the arbitrary weighting used by Schein & Ott in the initial index and thus permits conversion from the old to the new indices. Beyond this practical consideration there is some conceptual support for the use of 40%. If the " true percent" was close to either zero or 100, it is likely the respondent would say Yes or No, and thus the unknown percent is probably in the middle. An even 50-50 break seems high, however, in light of the overall tendency by the groups measured to lean toward the No responses. The 40% choice provides a conservative mid point reflecting this general tendency.

The index provides an approximation of the probable legitimacy of an item in a particular situation. This approximation assumes that all those who have indicated "Yes", plus 40% of those indicating "don't know", will consider the item legitimate.

To convert the old individual index into the new divide the old by 1.1. To convert the old item index to the new add 100 to the old and divide by 2. The mathematics for each are summarized below:

Old indiv index = Yes - No - .2NA + 55

New indiv index = $(\text{Yes} + .4\text{NA}) \frac{100}{55}$ = old index/1.1

Old item index = $(\text{Yes} - \text{No} - .2\text{NA}) \frac{100}{\text{respondents}}$

New item index = $(\text{Yes} + .4\text{NA}) \frac{100}{\text{no. of respondents}}$ = (old index + 100)/2

Whenever index values from previously published studies are quoted in this paper, they have been converted to the new scale.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of Professor Lotte Bailyn whose assistance was instrumental in developing the new scales.

4. The 1959-1960 data used for comparison appear in Schein & Ott aggregated with data from undergraduate students from the University of Fla. Since I had access to the unaggregated summary data for just the MIT groups I chose to use it to maximize the comparability of the two groups.

5. The inclusion of female respondents resulted in some concern over the wording of the questionnaire. The issue of sexual bias in the questions was raised by a number of female students who completed it. They felt it is possible that questions refering to the wife (no. 10, no. 17, no.46, no. 54) or children (no. 21, 31) or the secretary (no. 37) may result in biased responses from women. However, comparison of the response patterns for the above items shows that the responses are similar (on the average, 17% of the women and 18% of the men answered "yes", and 70% of the women and 68% of the men answered "no" to those 7 items).

6. Data is not available to indicate whether such differences existed between U.S. and foreign students in the earlier sample. It will be assumed that there were, and since both groups had approximately the same proportion of foreign students, no adjustments will be made to the current data.

7. In one respect the three items do relate to a common theme: separation of individual and work related activities. But, if this was a basic difference between the sexes, it should show up in other items concerning an individual's private life, or personal appearance. Many other such items are on the questionnaire and they show no significant differences between sexes. The differences in the three cited items probably reflect isolated variations, rather than some basic conceptual difference.

8. A complete breakout of the changes in rank follows. In the case of two or more items having the same index value, the items were assigned the median rank, thus some change values are in fractions.

Changes in rank	no. of items	cumulative %
0	6	11
.5-1	11	31
1.5-2	9	47
2.5-3	7	60
3.5-4	4	67
4.5-8	12	89
8.5-16.5	6	100

9. There are a few items with small positive or negative changes in index value which are not included on Table 8. These are items in the bottom portion of the restricted area in which it was not possible to have large negative changes. Their stability was interpreted as a function of the instrument and they were excluded from further analysis.

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APPENDIX A

MANAGERIAL STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Statements below, arranged in pairs, represent assumptions about people. Assign a weight from 0 to 10 to each statement to show the relative strength of your belief in the statements in each pair. The points assigned for each pair must in each case total 10.

1. -It's only human nature for people to do as little work as they can
    get away with.   _____

   -When people avoid work, it's usually because their work has been de- _____
    prived of its meaning.   10

2. -If employees have access to any information they want, they tend to _____
    have better attitudes and behave more responsibly.

   -If employees have access to more information than they need to do _____
    their immediate tasks, they will usually misuse it.   10

3. -One problem in asking for the ideas of employees is that their per- _____
    spective is too limited for their suggestions to be of much practi-
    cal value.

   -Asking employees for their ideas broadens their perspective and re- _____
    sults in the development of useful suggestions.   10

4. -If people don't use much imagination and ingenuity on the job, it's _____
    probably because relatively few people have much of either.

   -Most people are imaginative and creative by may not show it because _____
    of limitations imposed by supervision and the job.   10

5. -People tend to raise their standards if they are accountable for _____
    their own behavior and for correcting their own mistakes.

   -People tend to lower their standards if they are not punished for _____
    their misbehavior and mistakes.   10

6. -It's better to give people both good and bad news because most em- _____
    ployees want the whole story, no matter how painful it is.

   -It's better to withhold unfavorable news about business because _____
    most employees really want to hear only the good news.   10

Managerial Style Questionnaire

7. -Because a supervisor is entitled to more respect than those below   _____
   him in the organization, it weakens his prestige to admit that a
   subordinate was right and he was wrong.
  -Because people at all levels are entitled to equal respect, a   _____
   supervisor's prestige is increased when he supports this princi-   10
   ple by admitting that a subordinate was right and he was wrong.

8. -If you give people enough money, they are less likely to be con-   _____
   cerned with such intangibles as responsibility and recognition.
  -If you give people interesting and challenging work, they are.less   _____
   likely to complain about such things as pay and supplemental bene-   10
   fits.

9. -If people are allowed to set their own goals and standards of per-   _____
   formance, they tend to set them higher than the boss would.
  -If people are allowed to set their own goals and standards of per-   _____
   formance, they tend to set them lower than the boss would.   10

10. -The more knowledge and freedom a person has regarding his job, the   _____
   more controls are needed to keep him in line.
  -The more knowledge and freedom a person has regarding his job, the   _____
   fewer controls are needed to insure satisfactory job performance.   10

APPENDIX B

Personal Opinion Questionnaire III

The POQ III contains 92 statements about which respondents indicate their
agreement or disagreement on a four point scale. The responses are used
to construct 19 attitude scales. A complete list of questions and scales
for the similar POQ II is given in Schein, 1967. A subset of 55 items were
selected from the POQ III for completeion by the 1974 students, and from
these twelve scales were computed. Three scales are significantly correlated
with the Legitimacy Index scores and were used in the present analysis.
The   3 scales, and the questions used in their construction are listed below.

Right to Privacy

43. * A young man entering industry should be careful in selecting a
       wife to make sure she will fit into his career plans.
54. * Nowadays when industry hires a new manager his whole family
       should be screened as an indication of his potential for
       advancement.
60. * The private life of an employee is properly a matter of direct
       concern to his company, for the two can never be completely
       segregated.
78. * A wife's social grace and attractiveness play a significant role
       in her husband's rate of advancement.
16,   The private life of an employee should be of no direct concern to
       his company.

Faith in Workers

5.   Most workers in industry can be trusted enough to be allowed
       to set their own production goals.
20.   The average worker in industry is capable of exercising self-
       control.
84.   Leadership skills can be acquired by most people, regardless
       of their particular inborn traits or abilities.
44. * The average worker in industry prefers to avoid responsibility,
       has little ambition, and wants security above all.
87. * The average worker in industry has an inherent dislike of work
       and will avoid it if he can.

Cynicism About Conformity Pressures

42. * Industry's basic idea is to drive you as hard as it can and
       give you as little as possible.
64. * Most large corporations are placing more stress on the "cor-
       poration loyalty" of the employee than on his individual
       growth.
80. * A large corporation tends to suppress individual creativity.
31.   The best kind of emotional relationship between a superior and
       a subordinate is an open one in which each party feels it can
       "level" completely with the other.

* indicates reversed scoring