Ethical preferences for influencing superiors: A 41-society study

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Abstract
With a 41-society sample of 9990 managers and professionals, we used hierarchical linear modeling to investigate the impact of both macro-level and micro-level predictors on subordinate influence ethics. While we found that both macro-level and micro-level predictors contributed to the model definition, we also found global agreement for a subordinate influence ethics hierarchy. Thus our findings provide evidence that developing a global model of subordinate ethics is possible, and should be based upon multiple criteria and multilevel variables.
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INTRODUCTION
The rapid globalization of business in the new millennium has made working effectively with individuals from different cultures

increasingly important (Shenkar, 2001; Tung, 2008). One important part of working effectively is developing trust among the individuals involved (Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis, 2007). In the workplace, as in one's personal life, ethical standards greatly influence one's ability to develop a trust with a specific other, such as a superior. Very simply, it is difficult for people to work well together when they do not trust one another owing to congruent ethical standards (Ferres, Connell, & Travaglione, 2004). Further, there are a multitude of superior–subordinate work relationships in every organization where the level of trust in interpersonal relationships affects individual work effectiveness as well as overall organizational productivity. The proliferation of global business has made developing a cross-cultural awareness of the ethical behavior of managers in international contexts more crucial than ever before (Cullen, Parboteeah, & Hoegl, 2004). Thus we investigate the cross-national influences on one very relevant component of the superior–subordinate relationship – the tactics that subordinates perceive to be ethical to use to influence superiors. Specifically, the focus of our study is the cross-cultural assessment of subordinate influence ethics.

"Ethics is the discipline that examines one's moral standards or the moral standards of a society (Velasquez, 2002). If something is ethical, this means it is of an acceptable standard in terms of one's personal and social welfare" (Alas, 2006: 238). Thus ethics are the standards of acceptable conduct by which individuals choose to live their lives, and are deeply interwoven in all cultures (Loe, Ferrell, & Mansfield, 2000). To the extent that there are deep cultural differences in ethical standards (Cullen et al., 2004; Robertson, 2002), differences in expected conduct can harm superior–subordinate work relationships (Ferres et al., 2004). Despite growing concerns regarding business corruption and unethical business practices by managers operating in international environments (Jackson, 2001; Thorne & Saunders, 2002), global studies of unethical business practices and ethical sensitivity have been far less prevalent (Collins, 2000) than multi-country studies of cross-cultural differences in values (Hofstede, 2001; Inglehart, 1997; Kelley, MacNab, & Worthley, 2006; Ralston, Pounder, Lo, Wong, Egri, & Stauffer, 2006a; Schwartz, 1997; Smith, Dugan, & Trompenaars, 1996).

However, recent literature has begun to study the relativism of ethical standards across societies. Most notable are three macro-level studies of economic indicators, cultural values, and perceived corruption (Davis & Ruhe, 2003; Getz & Volkema, 2001; Husted, 1999) and a recent multilevel study of cultural and institutional influences on firm-level bribery (Martin, Cullen, Johnson, & Parboteeah, 2007). While helpful in understanding societal and corporate antecedents of business corruption, these studies do not address cross-cultural differences in individual-level ethical behaviors that involve the working relationship of subordinates with their superiors. In this regard, subordinate influence ethics is an important aspect of the superior–subordinate relationship because of its centrality in developing trusting and productive relationships between these individuals.

Our study of cross-cultural perspectives on ethical and unethical subordinate influence ethics contributes to the existing literature in two significant ways. First, the inclusion of a much broader array of societies in this study than found in previous influence research enables us to develop a more global understanding of the perceived ethics of influence behavior in organizations. Second, because of this broad array of diverse societies, we are able to simultaneously investigate both societal (macro-level) and individual (micro-level) antecedents of the perceived ethicality of subordinate influence behaviors (Shenkar, 2004). This multilevel approach provides a much more encompassing understanding of organizational phenomena (Ralston, 2008). Nonetheless, multilevel studies are relatively few, as noted by Martin et al. (2007) in their study of firm-level bribery. Similarly, we posit that it is important to understand the subordinate influence ethics process from the perspective of the influencer, that is, the subordinate.

In sum, the overarching goal of this research is to advance the development of a global model of subordinate influence ethics that incorporates relevant macro- and micro-level antecedents of these perspectives. Consequently, this study should be of interest to both cross-cultural researchers and international managers. We begin our discussion with a review of the subordinate/upward influence ethics literature. Following this discussion, we present a set of two predictor models (macro-level and micro-level) and hypotheses regarding antecedents of subordinate influence ethics.

A REVIEW OF THE SUBORDINATE INFLUENCE ETHICS LITERATURE

The subordinate influence ethics typology used in this study has its roots in the upward influence

literature of the past several decades. Initially, the upward influence literature focused on specific tactics of influence (e.g., reason, friendliness, bargaining). While exclusively US-based, the work of Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson (1980) provided the first step in the identification of influence tactics. Subsequent US studies by Schreisheim and Hinkin (1990) and Yukl and Falbe (1990) also contributed to the influence tactics literature. The next phase of theoretical development was led by Schmidt and Kipnis (1984),who identified three "meta-categories" of influence behavior: hard, soft, and rational. Although based solely on US data, this typology provided initial insights into the possibility of a "soft" to "hard" hierarchy of influence that moved beyond the limits of the tactics approach. Since then, this meta-category conceptualization of influence has received substantial support (Egri, Ralston, Murray, & Nicholson, 2000; Falbe & Yukl, 1992; Farmer, Maslyn, Fedor, & Goodman, 1997; Ralston & Pearson, 2003).

More recently, the multiculturally conceived and developed strategies of upward influence (SUI) measure provides a three-point hierarchy of subordinate influence ethics (Ralston & Pearson, 2003). Based on their 30-society study, Ralston and Pearson (2003) empirically identified a "soft" to "hard" dimensional structure, as had others (Farmer et al., 1997; Schmidt & Kipnis, 1984). However, there is an important difference between the US-based Kipnis and Schmidt (1988) influence tactic categories and the cross-culturally developed SUI dimensions (Ralston & Pearson, 2003). Development of the SUI revealed that the "hard" category developed by Schmidt and Kipnis was relatively neutral (e.g., use of coalitions) when compared with truly "hard" influence practices (e.g., espionage, blackmail, and bribery). Although this prior research provided an in-depth understanding of the use of ethically acceptable or neutral influence strategies in organizations, it did not provide insight into the use of unethical and/or illegal influence strategies (Buchanan & Badham, 1999; Ralston, Giacalone, & Terpstra, 1994), which are particularly pertinent for understanding cross-cultural differences in ethical influence behaviors (Collins, 2000).

The contribution of the SUI typology is that it includes a destructive behavior dimension that incorporates the "truly hard" unethical types of influence behavior (e.g., use of sexual favors) not found in Kipnis and Schmidt's (1988) typology. Thus this destructive behavior dimension completes the influence continuum anchored at the other end by "soft" organizationally beneficial behaviors, which are similar to the "soft" dimension of Schmidt and Kipnis (1984). The SUI also has an intermediate self-indulgent behavior dimension that includes self-serving behaviors, similar to those in Schmidt and Kipnis's (1984) "hard" dimension. Previous cross-cultural studies have found that organizationally beneficial ethics behavior is regarded as the most ethical, self-indulgent as relatively less ethical, and destructive ethics behavior as decidedly the least ethical (Ralston, Terpstra-Tong, Maignan, Napier, & Nguyen, 2006b). Consequently, in terms of relative ethicality, we expect the clearest delineation to be between organizationally beneficial and destructive behaviors. While explicit self-serving interest differentiates self-indulgent from organizationally beneficial behavior, the illegal and corrupt nature of destructive behavior provides an ethical demarcation between self-indulgent and destructive behavior. Thus we use the more-inclusive SUI typology in this multicultural study.

HYPOTHESES FOR MACRO-LEVEL AND MICRO-LEVEL PREDICTORS

The Macro-Level Predictors
The convergence–divergence–crossvergence debate on values formation provides a theoretical foundation for how sociocultural factors and business ideology influence judgments of ethicality (Ralston, 2008). The divergence perspective argues that a values system is the product of sociocultural influences (Inkeles, 1997; Ricks, Toyne, & Martinez, 1990), and that the values learned during childhood socialization endure throughout one's lifetime, regardless of the business ideology influences (economic, political, and technological) experienced by the members of a society (Ralston et al., 2006a). In direct contrast, the convergence perspective argues that a societal values system is determined by technological development (Dunphy, 1987), a primary component of the business ideology influences (Ralston, 2008). However, as Ralston et al. (2006a) noted, while technology is an important business ideology factor, economic development (Ralston, Holt, Terpstra, & Yu, 1997) and political systems (Ralston, Nguyen, & Napier, 1999) appear to also have a substantial impact on the workplace values of societies. Further, Ralston et al. (1997, 1999, 2006a) observed that the interrelatedness of economic development, technological

sophistication, and political systems forms an integrated set of forces that constitute the "business ideology" paradigm of workplace values.

In sum, divergence theory contends that sociocultural influence is the driving force in values formation/evolution, while convergence theory contends that the adoption of a universal business ideology is the driving force. Thus, in the remainder of this paper, we propose macro-level hypotheses for subordinate influence ethics behavior that investigate the contributions of both the business ideology model and the sociocultural model of values development to understand societal perspectives on influence ethics.

A Business Ideology Model of Subordinate Influence Ethics

The importance of business ideology forces has only recently come to the forefront of the international business empirical research, even though Negandhi (1983) had identified these as important a quarter-century ago. As previously identified, the three interrelated aspects of the business ideology are economic development, technological sophistication, and political systems. Together, they identify the present-day environmental forces that play a role in the shaping of values (Ralston, 2008). Thus a preliminary goal of our study was to identify relevant and reliable societal-level measures for each of the three aspects of the business ideology model. Owing to significant inter-correlation among several of these variables, our selection of societal-level measures of business ideology needed to identify variables that captured the essence of the society, while also being statistically independent from one another. We discuss the selection process in more detail in subsequent sections of the paper.

Economic development. Economic development is an important predictor for many societal trends and behaviors, such as individual growth opportunities, as well as ethical business practices (Davis & Ruhe, 2003; Friedman, 2005). Although technological sophistication is another important predictor, measures of technological sophistication and economic development are very highly correlated. While these findings confirm the cross-cultural convergence argument that technological development and industrialization (economic development) level are closely related, they also indicate very minimal conceptual and empirical independence of these two societal predictors. Thus

we conceptually combined economic development and technological sophistication when selecting predictor variables.

For economic development, we identified potential predictor measures from various sources for 2003, the modal year of our data collection (*CIA World Factbook*, 2004; International Labour Organization, 2004; United Nations Statistics Division, 2004). These measures included: gross national income per capita (GNI); gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate (average 1993–2003); the Gini index of social inequality of family income distribution, unemployment rate, and industrialization level measured as the agriculture sector percentage of GDP; percentage of workforce in the agriculture sector; and government consumption, as a percentage of GDP. While the government consumption measure also relates to the nature of a political system, its emphasis on GDP relates directly to the structure of a country's economic system.

In selecting predictor measures, we tried to identify the most conceptually appropriate, while also paying close attention to the empirical requirement of statistical independence. Hence we selected two measures from these various indices of economic development: GNI per capita for 2003, and GDP growth rate (average 1993–2003). GNI per capita might be viewed as the most inclusive measure since it is significantly correlated with 11 of the other 15 measures, including the two technological sophistication measures of the World Economics Forum's Technology Index and R&D expenditure as a percentage of GDP (see Appendix). GDP growth rate is not significantly correlated with GNI per capita, but is significantly correlated with the Gini index, which GNI per capita is not. Thus GNI per capita and GDP growth rate, when taken together, represent a broad spectrum of economic development and technological sophistication predictors relating to a society's business ideology.

GNI per capita presents economic development as a function of the average individual's income or economic wealth. While there is a paucity of cross-cultural research that has investigated the impact of macro-level factors (e.g., economic development) on micro-level behaviors (e.g., influence), macro-level research has shown that economic development level is related to ethical business conduct. Specifically, the prevalence of unethical and corrupt business practices has been found to be negatively related to economic development level (Collins, 2000; Davis & Ruhe, 2003; Getz &

Volkema, 2001; Husted, 1999; Mauro, 1995; Treisman, 2007). One explanation can be found in institutional anomie theory, which identifies the ends vs means issue faced by individuals in developing or have-not societies (Merton, 1968). The achievement of materialistic goals, particularly in have-not societies, can be in substantial conflict with the ethicality of the means used to attain these economic ends. Later, Laczniak (1993) showed that in less economically developed countries there are greater pressures to achieve results rather than base decisions on ethical considerations. Thus one implication is that in low economic development environments there is a stronger desire to "catch up" with those in more economically developed environments. This competition to be one of those who "have" may result in people being more likely to resort to less ethical means to satisfy individual needs (self-indulgent behavior), even to the point of disregard for the consequences of their actions (destructive behavior). Thus we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1a: Societal economic development level is positively related to the perceived ethicality of organizationally beneficial subordinate influence ethics behavior.

Hypothesis 1b: Societal economic development level is negatively related to the perceived ethicality of self-indulgent subordinate influence ethics behavior.

Hypothesis 1c: Societal economic development level is negatively related to the perceived ethicality of destructive subordinate influence ethics behavior.

Economic growth (GDP growth rate) focuses on the impact of change in a society's economic system. The economic growth rate in a society relates to current changes in the degree of competitiveness in work environments, whereas economic development level relates to the long-term level of competitiveness of work environments. Thus development level is an indicator of economic well-being, which might be described in terms of whether the society is a "have" or "have-not" economy, whereas economic growth rate is an indicator of the speed at which a society is currently changing its economic status classification.

Previous research has shown that low economic growth rate is associated with unethical business practices (Mauro, 1995), such as destructive behavior, and to a lesser degree self-indulgent behavior. As proposed by Zak and Knack (2001), economic growth is impeded in low-trust societies because resources that would otherwise be available for production-related activities are needed for increased diligence to guard against others' unethical actions. Given that organizationally beneficial ethics behavior is embraced in high trust environments, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 2a: Economic growth rate is positively related to the perceived ethicality of organizationally beneficial subordinate influence ethics behavior.

Hypothesis 2b: Economic growth rate is negatively related to the perceived ethicality of self-indulgent subordinate influence ethics behavior.

Hypothesis 2c: Economic growth rate is negatively related to the perceived ethicality of destructive subordinate influence ethics behavior.

In sum, while the logic for economic growth rate is conceptually parallel to that for economic development level, these two predictor variables measure different macro-level phenomena and are not significantly correlated (see Appendix). There may be high or low economic growth rates either in high economic development level societies or in low economic development level societies. Thus, together, economic development level and economic growth rate paint a reasonably complete picture of a society's economic status and technological sophistication.

Political systems. We identified a number of potential political measures, including: the Polity IV measure (Marshall, Jaggers, & Gurr, 2005); the democracy rating by Freedom House (2003); legal system categorization (*CIA World Factbook*, 2004); the Corruption Perception Index (Transparency International, 2003); the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, rule of law measure, and Corporate Governance Composite Index (http://www.worldbank.org). As with the economic measures, we needed to balance conceptual rigor with the empirical requirements of statistical independence. The result was that the Polity IV measure of political systems was selected as the final predictor variables for the business ideology model. As indicated in the Appendix, polity is correlated with the three World Bank

governance measures (worldwide governance indicators, rule of law, and corporate governance), and is a more fine-grained measure than the dichotomized legal system categorized provided by the *CIA World Factbook*. Thus polity represents a society's level of democratization as well as level of national governance.

Polity, the form of government that exists within a society, may be viewed as a continuum between democracy and autocracy (Marshall et al., 2005). Inglehart and Welzel (2005) contend that democratization of a society is associated with autonomous individual choice and greater opportunity to improve one's situation within the system, even if one is not part of the political in-group. Democracy provides opportunity by creating checks on governmental abuse of power, including the control of governments by powerful elites, such as corporate interests (Glaeser, La Porta, Lopez-de-Silanes, & Shleifer, 2004; Treisman, 2007). Thus organizationally beneficial behavior – working within the system – should be positively related with a democratic form of government. This will be especially true if its impact spills over to influence the corporate cultures of companies within the society. Conversely, an autocratic system consisting of powerful elite in-group "haves" and masses of outgroup "have-nots" requires more subversive and revolutionary means for societal influence and control. Analogously, at the individual level, destructive influence behavior, while risky, may be the best option available in an autocratic environment. Predicting the impact of polity on self-indulgent subordinate influence ethics is more challenging. However, one can theoretically argue that self-indulgent behavior is contrary to the democratic principles of fair play, egalitarianism, and respect for civil rights (Kaufmann, Kraay, & Mastruzzi, 2005). Therefore we hypothesize:

> **Hypothesis 3a**: Societal democratization level is positively related to the perceived ethicality of organizationally beneficial subordinate influence ethics behavior.

> **Hypothesis 3b**: Societal democratization level is negatively related to the perceived ethicality of self-indulgent subordinate influence ethics behavior.

> **Hypothesis 3c**: Societal democratization level is negatively related to the perceived ethicality of destructive subordinate influence ethics behavior.

A Sociocultural Model of Subordinate Influence Ethics

Societal culture has long been used to classify the shared and socially desired norms and goals that shape individual behaviors across cultures (Smith & Schwartz, 1997). We selected Hofstede's (2001) individualism–collectivism dimension as our sociocultural predictor. We made this decision for the following reasons. First, the individualism and collectivism dimensions have been used consistently in previous cross-cultural research on ethical decision-making and business corruption (Cherry, Lee, & Chien, 2003; Davis & Ruhe, 2003; Getz & Volkema, 2001; Thorne & Saunders, 2002; Volkema, 2004). Second, there is substantial consensus that individualism is the most pervasive and reliable sociocultural dimension (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). Third, this approach allows us to make a direct comparison with our individual-level data.

The individualism–collectivism continuum is concerned with individual vs group obligations and relationships. High individualism means placing personal self-interests over those of the group, whereas high collectivism means placing higher value on the needs of in-group member interests and societal traditions than on one's personal wants (Triandis, 1995).

In terms of the SUI dimensions, the relationship orientation underlying collectivism indicates that organizationally beneficial ethics would be more highly valued in collectivistic societies than in individualistic societies. However, previous cross-cultural research findings have been mixed. Some research has shown that managers' rated effectiveness of relationship-oriented subordinate influence tactics is higher in collectivistic cultures (Fu et al., 2004; Fu & Yukl, 2000), whereas other research has shown that "soft," relationship-oriented subordinate influences are more acceptable in individualistic cultures (Kennedy, Fu, & Yukl, 2003; Ralston, Vollmer, Srinvasan, Nicholson, Tang, & Wan, 2001). Further, while unethical behavior and corruption are relatively less prevalent in individualistic cultures, the underlying explanation may be that political institutions in these countries have implemented more highly developed systems of formal laws needed to guard against highly individualistic actions that harm societal and organizational interests (Davis & Ruhe, 2003). Therefore, given the mixed empirical evidence regarding whether organizationally beneficial ethics is more closely associated with collectivism

or with individualism, our hypothesis is based on the theory underlying these two types of culture. Thus we propose that organizationally beneficial ethics behavior should be seen as more ethical in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures.

Conversely, the self-orientation underlying individualism suggests that self-indulgent influence behavior would be perceived as more ethical in individualistic societies, but would be inconsistent with the relationship orientation underlying collectivism. Given supporting empirical evidence (Fu et al., 2004; Lu, Rose, & Blodgett, 1999), we propose that self-indulgent ethics should be perceived as more ethical in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures.

Theoretically, destructive ethics behavior could be thought of as an out-group phenomenon. That is, it may be behavior that is more likely to be used with those outside one's close social in-group (e.g., a *guanxi* relationship in the Chinese context). Triandis (1995) has indicated that the in-group vs out-group dichotomy is a more pronounced distinction in collectivistic societies. Thus it may be that destructive ethics behavior is associated more strongly with collectivism. Another possibility is that destructive ethics behavior might be viewed as the ultimate unethical self-serving behavior. Research has consistently shown that managers in collectivistic cultures view destructive ethics behavior as more ethical than do managers in individualistic cultures (Egri et al., 2000; Ralston et al., 2001, 2006b; Ralston, Gustafson, Mainiero, & Umstot, 1993; Ralston, Hallinger, Egri, & Naothinsuhk, 2005). One explanation is that the lack of effective controls for unethical actions in the less formalized political-legal systems is typical of collectivistic cultures (e.g., Davis & Ruhe, 2003; Husted, 1999). Consequently, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 4a: Societal-level individualism is negatively related to the perceived ethicality of organizationally beneficial subordinate influence ethics behavior.

Hypothesis 4b: Societal-level individualism is positively related to the perceived ethicality of self-indulgent subordinate influence ethics behavior.

Hypothesis 4c: Societal-level individualism is negatively related to the perceived ethicality of destructive subordinate influence ethics behavior.

The Micro-Level Predictor
Au and Cheung (2004) argued that cross-cultural research that uses only societal-level means neglects important intra-cultural variation that would more fully explain relationships between constructs. Therefore we assessed the relative influence of individualism–collectivism values at the individual level in addition to the societal level. A distinction between the macro-level and micro-level individualism–collectivism predictors is that the macro-level data are summarized and analyzed at the society level, whereas the micro-level data we collected and analyzed at the individual level. Thus the latter is an individual, across-all-societies measure, not a societal measure of individualism–collectivism. The logic for both micro-level and macro-level individualism–collectivism is comparable (Triandis, 1995). Therefore we propose the same relationships for our micro-level hypotheses as we did for our macro-level hypotheses. Thus we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 5a: Individual-level individualism is negatively related to the perceived ethicality of organizationally beneficial subordinate influence ethics behavior.

Hypothesis 5b: Individual-level individualism is positively related to the perceived ethicality of self-indulgent subordinate influence ethics behavior.

Hypothesis 5c: Individual-level individualism is negatively related to the perceived ethicality of destructive subordinate influence ethics behavior.

While Hofstede (2001) proposed that individualism and collectivism are polar points on a continuum, other conceptual (McSweeney, 2002; Oyserman et al., 2002; Triandis, 1995) and empirical research (Ralston et al., 1997) has shown that individualism and collectivism are better viewed as independent dimensions. Hence our discussion of the micro-level individualism–collectivism results will also include a deconstruction of the individualism–collectivism continuum to assess the unique contributions of the individualism dimension and the collectivism dimension.

METHOD

Sample
Our primary goal in selecting societies was to include at least two societies from each of the

major socio-political and geographical cultural regions identified in the values literature (Inglehart, 1997; Schwartz, 1997). Our 41-society sample ($N=9990$) not only met this goal, but is also economically diverse. Specifically, our sample includes six major economies (US, UK, Canada, France, Germany, Japan), a number of transitioning/emerging economies (e.g., Brazil, China, Czech Republic, Hungary, India, Russia, and Thailand), and an array of other diverse cultures (e.g., Egypt, Israel, South Africa, Turkey, and the UAE).

Data were collected using a mail survey to managers/professionals in a cross-section of organizations and industries during 2002–2004. The average response rate was 23%, with all societies exceeding a 15% rate and 43% being the highest rate. The demographics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Dependent Variables

The SUI instrument was used to measure respondents' views on the ethicality of influence behaviors. The SUI consists of three dimensions: organizationally beneficial, self-indulgent, and destructive subordinate influence ethics behavior. The organizationally beneficial ethics dimension of the SUI identifies standard prescribed and sanctioned behaviors for employees that include demonstrating ability to get the job done, and working overtime, if necessary. These influence behaviors conform to organizational codes of conduct in support of collective interests (Paine, Deshpande, Margolis, & Bettcher, 2005). Conversely, the destructive ethics dimension identifies extreme self-interested and coercive behaviors that are directly hurtful to others and often to the organization, for example, industrial espionage and offering sexual favors to a superior. In most industrialized and industrializing societies these behaviors are considered unethical, and may also be illegal. Between these two extremes is the self-indulgent ethics dimension, which shows self-interest taking precedence over the interests of the organization and organizational members. Self-indulgent behaviors include blaming others for mistakes and taking credit for others' work. These self-serving influence behaviors are opportunistic actions that may or may not be detrimental to the organization or others in the organization. In that these behaviors may prove to be beneficial or not harmful to the organization and its members, the self-indulgent dimension identifies the "gray area" of ethical behavior.

The SUI instrument consists of 38 short scenario items that are scored on an eight-point Likert-type scale. These items are used to form the three SUI dimensions based on Ralston and Pearson's (2003) 30-society, cross-cultural validation study of the SUI instrument. For each of the scenario items, respondents are asked to "indicate how acceptable [ethical] you think that your co-workers would consider each strategy as a means of influencing superiors". As found in previous studies that have dealt with sensitive information, such as attempts to influence superiors, this other-report orientation reduces the possibility of participants "faking" desirable responses, as can occur when participants are asked to self-report on activities in which they personally engage (Anastasi, 1982). Also, participants were provided anonymity, and were instructed that there were no right or wrong answers.

The SUI was translated from English into each of the native languages of the societies in the study. Using standard translation–back-translation procedures, one individual translated the questionnaire from English to the other language, and a second individual back-translated the questionnaire into English. The two translators resolved any translation differences and, when necessary, employed a third party to assist.

The internal reliability (Cronbach alpha) of the three SUI dimensions for the sample was 0.72 for organizationally beneficial behavior (6 items), 0.85 for self-indulgent behavior (6 items), and 0.80 for destructive behavior (5 items). The Cronbachs for the individual societies are presented in Table 2. These scale reliabilities are comparable to those obtained in other cross-cultural studies of influence tactics (Fu & Yukl, 2000; Ralston, Terpstra, Cunniff, & Gustafson, 1995). Participants' scores for the three influence dimension scales were calculated by averaging the relevant items. Within-subject standardized scores for these scales were used to address the issue of cultural differences in response patterns to questionnaire scales (Fischer, 2004). The resulting standardized scores represent the relative ethicality of a subordinate influence behavior.

Independent Variables

Business ideology model. Data regarding societal economic development level and economic growth rate were obtained from the United Nations Statistical Yearbook 2002–2004 (United Nations Statistical Division, 2005) and the CIA World Factbook (Central Intelligence Agency, 2004).

Table 1 Sample demographic data and individualism–collectivism value score[a]

Society	N	Age (mean)	Gender (% male)	Position level (mean)	Company size (mean)	Industry (% man/res)[b]	Individualism–collectivism (mean)
Argentina	87	44.3	69	2.3	2.0	27	−0.48
Australia	253	28.3	66	1.8	1.9	15	0.31
Brazil	500	37.4	57	2.0	2.4	18	−0.18
Bulgaria	183	37.4	51	1.9	1.3	14	0.20
Canada	261	39.7	54	2.1	2.0	8	0.02
China	438	33.0	70	2.0	2.1	32	0.08
Colombia	134	37.4	58	3.1	2.5	75	−0.29
Croatia	287	38.3	46	2.0	1.7	23	−0.06
Czech Rep	308	38.9	44	1.8	1.6	46	−0.01
Egypt	125	36.4	82	3.1	2.3	64	−0.79
Finland	132	47.8	72	3.2	1.8	36	−0.40
France	346	38.9	67	3.2	2.2	55	0.22
Germany	212	38.4	63	1.9	1.9	23	0.06
Hong Kong	243	34.1	47	2.1	1.6	14	−0.24
Hungary	129	38.3	58	2.2	1.6	27	−0.02
India	131	34.9	84	2.8	2.4	33	−0.35
Indonesia	132	37.0	76	2.0	2.2	38	−0.43
Israel	135	33.0	64	2.0	2.4	15	0.12
Italy	297	43.3	77	2.4	2.2	26	−0.66
Japan	102	32.0	74	1.3	2.7	26	0.10
Lithuania	318	43.7	56	2.8	1.2	32	0.01
Malaysia	329	34.6	61	2.1	3.0	100	−0.38
Mexico	313	31.7	65	2.3	2.1	41	−0.50
Netherlands	150	36.5	75	2.7	2.1	50	0.29
Pakistan	339	32.4	87	2.5	2.2	36	−0.13
Portugal	582	34.3	54	2.2	2.0	19	−0.24
Russia	218	36.7	62	2.5	2.2	50	0.15
Singapore	318	31.4	48	1.5	1.8	17	−0.31
Slovakia	79	40.2	45	1.7	2.0	4	−0.66
Slovenia	300	28.5	29	1.3	1.4	32	0.28
South Africa	206	40.7	59	2.2	2.5	17	−0.28
South Korea	282	39.5	81	1.9	2.3	26	0.01
Spain	79	40.0	84	2.6	1.3	26	−0.54
Switzerland	365	40.9	76	2.8	1.9	27	0.08
Taiwan	300	41.3	70	2.2	2.2	32	−0.15
Thailand	280	37.1	43	2.2	1.9	19	−0.74
Turkey	124	40.9	77	3.1	1.9	56	−0.27
UAE	104	33.8	71	2.1	1.9	8	−0.34
UK	268	41.6	52	2.9	2.2	17	0.28
US	378	35.4	52	1.7	2.0	12	−0.08
Vietnam	223	38.6	70	2.3	1.9	11	−0.42
Total	9990	37.0	61	2.3	2.1	30	−0.13

[a]Coding for categorical variables is as follows. Position level: 1=professional; 2=first-level management; 3=middle-level management; 4=upper-level management. Company size: 1=less than 100 employees; 2=100–1000 employees; 3=more than 1000 employees.
[b]Manufacturing and natural resource-based industries.

Economic development level was measured using 2003 GNI per capita purchasing power parity (in international dollars). Economic growth rate was measured using the average growth in GDP per capita from 1993 to 2003. Our measure of political institutions was the Polity IV ratings, which range from −10 for highly autocratic institutions to +10 for highly democratic institutions (Marshall et al., 2005). No Polity IV score is provided for Hong Kong: therefore this society was excluded from the business ideology analyses.

Table 2 Standardized means, standard deviations, and scale reliabilities for the three dimensions of the strategies of upward influence measure

	Organizationally beneficial			Self-indulgent			Destructive		
	Mean	s.d.	α	Mean	s.d.	α	Mean	s.d.	α
Argentina	0.92	(0.54)	0.79	−0.65	(0.43)	0.94	−0.86	(0.42)	0.95
Australia	0.79	(0.46)	0.79	−0.53	(0.40)	0.86	−0.97	(0.53)	0.86
Brazil	1.00	(0.30)	0.60	−0.66	(0.30)	0.89	−0.96	(0.26)	0.71
Bulgaria	0.60	(0.41)	0.54	−0.32	(0.49)	0.88	−0.74	(0.42)	0.86
Canada	1.02	(0.26)	0.76	−0.69	(0.34)	0.91	−1.05	(0.20)	0.75
China	0.90	(0.26)	0.53	−0.61	(0.30)	0.82	−1.05	(0.29)	0.72
Colombia	1.02	(0.31)	0.67	−0.76	(0.25)	0.83	−0.89	(0.26)	0.79
Croatia	0.71	(0.47)	0.68	−0.36	(0.46)	0.88	−0.84	(0.47)	0.82
Czech Republic	0.97	(0.38)	0.66	−0.58	(0.40)	0.90	−0.98	(0.25)	0.71
Egypt	0.89	(0.17)	0.53	−0.49	(0.21)	0.45	−0.92	(0.20)	0.44
Finland	1.02	(0.20)	0.64	−0.72	(0.19)	0.73	−0.96	(0.17)	0.43
France	0.99	(0.40)	0.78	−0.62	(0.35)	0.80	−0.86	(0.41)	0.84
Germany	0.85	(0.43)	0.79	−0.55	(0.40)	0.88	−0.99	(0.39)	0.86
Hong Kong	0.93	(0.29)	0.78	−0.45	(0.31)	0.80	−1.11	(0.31)	0.86
Hungary	0.88	(0.34)	0.70	−0.46	(0.39)	0.87	−1.07	(0.25)	0.69
India	0.80	(0.41)	0.59	−0.38	(0.48)	0.90	−1.01	(0.43)	0.79
Indonesia	0.88	(0.26)	0.61	−0.59	(0.27)	0.63	−0.92	(0.30)	0.79
Israel	0.91	(0.27)	0.75	−0.71	(0.34)	0.86	−1.07	(0.25)	0.83
Italy	0.99	(0.31)	0.70	−0.48	(0.39)	0.88	−1.06	(0.23)	0.59
Japan	0.94	(0.21)	0.61	−0.68	(0.18)	0.77	−1.03	(0.22)	0.83
Lithuania	0.88	(0.28)	0.53	−0.62	(0.35)	0.84	−0.92	(0.25)	0.65
Malaysia	0.86	(0.32)	0.70	−0.53	(0.33)	0.79	−0.97	(0.38)	0.86
Mexico	0.98	(0.31)	0.73	−0.75	(0.25)	0.76	−0.85	(0.26)	0.61
Netherlands	1.02	(0.17)	0.62	−0.85	(0.12)	0.75	−1.02	(0.16)	0.49
Pakistan	0.61	(0.49)	0.69	−0.31	(0.48)	0.85	−0.74	(0.54)	0.79
Portugal	0.97	(0.28)	0.67	−0.66	(0.34)	0.90	−1.04	(0.22)	0.71
Russia	0.80	(0.48)	0.72	−0.43	(0.34)	0.65	−0.82	(0.43)	0.82
Singapore	0.88	(0.38)	0.81	−0.58	(0.37)	0.57	−0.99	(0.42)	0.62
Slovakia	0.96	(0.30)	0.55	−0.54	(0.30)	0.81	−0.95	(0.23)	0.81
Slovenia	0.85	(0.41)	0.79	−0.48	(0.38)	0.91	−0.94	(0.36)	0.91
South Africa	0.87	(0.51)	0.76	−0.25	(0.53)	0.90	−0.36	(1.03)	0.91
South Korea	0.98	(0.27)	0.69	−0.77	(0.21)	0.88	−0.89	(0.26)	0.85
Spain	1.01	(0.30)	0.79	−0.70	(0.25)	0.81	−0.85	(0.34)	0.72
Switzerland	1.02	(0.21)	0.65	−0.78	(0.22)	0.79	−1.00	(0.19)	0.65
Taiwan	0.90	(0.26)	0.68	−0.62	(0.31)	0.82	−1.00	(0.32)	0.72
Thailand	1.02	(0.22)	0.57	−0.68	(0.24)	0.73	−1.05	(0.22)	0.64
Turkey	1.10	(0.22)	0.51	−0.53	(0.44)	0.72	−0.95	(0.21)	0.65
UAE	0.81	(0.27)	0.45	−0.60	(0.29)	0.69	−1.01	(0.21)	0.45
UK	0.97	(0.33)	0.67	−0.77	(0.21)	0.88	−1.15	(0.22)	0.82
US	0.99	(0.29)	0.72	−0.57	(0.38)	0.87	−0.99	(0.25)	0.83
Vietnam	0.97	(0.26)	0.64	−0.76	(0.29)	0.72	−0.94	(0.26)	0.69
Total	0.92	(0.36)	0.72	−0.60	(0.37)	0.85	−0.97	(0.34)	0.80

Sociocultural model. We used Hofstede's (2001) culture values scores for our societal individualism–collectivism cultural values measure. Hofstede country values scores are not provided for one society in our study – Lithuania. However, we did find Hofstede data for Lithuania in the study by Mockaitis (2002).

Individual-level model. To measure the influence of personal values orientation at the individual level, we used the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS), which has been found to be appropriate for cross-cultural studies of personal values orientations (Schwartz, 1994; Smith & Schwartz, 1997). The SVS consists of 56 items that respondents rate in terms of their

importance as a guiding principle in their lives using a nine-point Likert-type scale. From this instrument, 32 SVS items that have been found to have cross-culturally equivalent meaning in 44 countries (Schwartz, 1994) were used to construct our individualism–collectivism measure. The scale reliability (Cronbach alphas) of the total sample for individualism was 0.77 (range of 0.60 to 0.90; 18 items) and for collectivism was 0.79 (range of 0.68 to 0.89; 14 items). The individualism–collectivism continuum was constructed by subtracting the collectivism score from the individualism score for each individual (Ralston, Yu, Wang, Terpstra, & He, 1996).

Demographic and organizational characteristics. Respondents were asked to provide their age, gender, and organizational position level. With respect to the organizations in which they worked, respondents were asked to indicate company size and industry sector, as presented in Table 1.

Procedures
Multilevel modeling has been identified as appropriate for investigations involving individual and societal level data (e.g., Fu et al., 2004; Hui, Au, & Fock, 2004; Parboteeah & Cullen, 2003). Hence we used hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) to test our hypotheses (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). HLM simultaneously analyzes data at the individual level (Level 1) and at the societal level (Level 2). The Level 1 model estimates the relationships between individual-level variables (individual individualism–collectivism, age, gender, position, company size, and industry) and the dependent variables (organizationally beneficial, self-indulgent, and destructive subordinate influence ethics). The Level 2 models estimate the relationships for business ideology (economic development level, economic growth rate, and polity) and for cultural values (societal individualism–collectivism). Further, to maintain consistency between the analyses of the business ideology model and the sociocultural model, we included individual-level individualism for both analyses.

Prior to conducting the HLM analyses, we examined the correlation analysis results at the individual and societal levels to identify potential multicollinearity problems in the Level 2 models. As shown in Table 3, the individual-level correlation analysis showed that participant position level was significantly correlated with age and gender (respectively $r=0.39$ and $r=-0.23$, both

at the $p < 0.001$ level). The societal-level correlation results (see Table 3) showed that societal individualism was significantly correlated with economic development level and polity (respectively $r=0.57$, $r=0.51$, both at the $p < 0.001$ level). To determine whether these correlations would bias the coefficients of the independent variables, we conducted collinearity diagnostic tests in hierarchical regression analyses for data at the individual level and at the societal level (cf. Husted, 1999). One measure of collinearity among independent variables is the variance inflation factor (VIF), with large VIF values (5.0 or above) and a condition index above 15.0 indicating high collinearity (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1992). Another indicator of high collinearity is the instability of regression coefficients when variables are entered successively into the regression model.

For the individual-level regressions, the subordinate influence ethics behavior dimensions were the dependent variables, and participant age, gender, position, company size, and industry were the independent variables. For the independent variables in these regressions, the largest VIF statistic was 1.25, the condition index was 11.92 for the full model, and the coefficients were stable for each variable. Consequently, all individual-level demographic and organizational characteristic variables were retained in the HLM analyses. For the societal-level regressions the largest VIF statistic for the independent variables (individualism–collectivism, economic development level, economic growth rate, and polity) was 2.29, and the condition index was 16.31 for the full model. Examination of the stability of the coefficients in successive models showed that the inclusion of individualism with economic development level and polity in the same model changed the signs and significance levels of these variables. Given the collinearity between these pairs of Level 2 variables, these results indicate that separate sets of HLM analyses should be conducted to test hypotheses regarding the influence of the business ideology variables (maximum VIF=1.31, condition index=5.91) and the sociocultural variable (maximum VIF=1.09, condition index=10.95).

For the HLM analyses, our first step was to estimate the null models with the three subordinate influence ethics dimensions as the dependent variables to assess within-group variance (ρ) and between-group variance (τ) in these measures (cf. Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). Although our primary

Table 3 Means, standard deviations, and correlations of individual and societal-level variables

				Variables							
Individual level[a]	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1. Organizationally beneficial behavior	0.92	0.36									
2. Self-indulgent behavior	−0.60	0.37	−0.61								
3. Destructive behavior	−0.97	0.34	−0.37	0.06							
4. Individualism (SVS)	−0.13	1.02	−0.11	0.04	−0.03						
5. Age	36.98	10.72	0.08	−0.02	0.04	−0.23					
6. Gender	0.39	0.48	−0.00	0.03	−0.06	−0.07	−0.15				
7. Position level	2.28	1.06	0.07	−0.02	0.01	0.02	0.39	−0.23			
8. Company size	2.07	0.81	0.02	0.00	−0.04	−0.01	0.03	−0.08	0.01		
9. Industry	0.30	0.45	0.00	0.01	0.02	−0.00	0.04	−0.12	0.11	0.14	

Societal level[b]	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1. Organizationally beneficial behavior	0.92	0.10							
2. Self-indulgent behavior	−0.60	0.13	−0.81						
3. Destructive behavior	−0.96	0.09	−0.45	0.23					
4. Economic development level	12,952	11,739	0.32	−0.38	−0.43				
5. Economic growth rate	2.49	1.74	−0.14	0.14	−0.13	−0.14			
6. Polity	6.54	5.52	0.26	−0.18	−0.14	0.32	−0.40		
7. Individualism	45.59	23.81	0.23	−0.12	−0.36	0.57	−0.14	0.51	

[a]Individual-level ($N = 9990$) correlations $r > 0.03$ are significant at the $p < 0.01$ level; correlations $r > 0.04$ significant at the $p < 0.001$ level. Individualism is Schwartz Values Survey scores; categorical variables coded as: gender: 1=female, 0=male; position level: 1=professional/non-supervisor, 2=first-level manager, 3=middle-level manager, 4=top-level manager; company size: 1=less than 100 employees, 2=100–1000 employees, 3=more than 1000 employees; industry: 1=manufacturing/resource-based; 0=services.
[b]Societal-level sample size is $N = 41$ except for Polity $N = 40$; correlations $r > 0.40$ significant at the $p < 0.01$ level; correlations $r \geqslant 0.51$ significant at the $p < 0.001$. Individualism is archival Hofstede data; economic development level is 2003 GNI per capita (international dollars); economic growth rate GDP per capita growth averaged 1993 to 2003; Polity scores range from −10 (highly autocratic political institutions) to +10 (highly democratic political institutions).

interest concerned the main effects of societal context on attitudes towards subordinate influence ethics, we were also interested in potential cross-level interactions between demographic and organizational characteristics (Level 1) and societal contexts (Level 2). Thus we conducted exploratory intercept-as-outcome models and slope-as-outcome models for each type of influence behavior. If there were no significant slope-as-outcome results (that is, cross-level moderating effects), then the HLM analysis was run as an intercept-as-outcome model with Level 1 covariates. If there were significant slope-as-outcome results, these were retained in intercepts-as-outcomes and slope-as-outcomes models. Following procedures identified by Raudenbush and Bryk (2002), individual-level variables were centered at the group means (to address individual-level error and sample size differences across societies), and societal-level variables were centered at their grand means (to attenuate possible variable collinearity).

RESULTS

The society scores for the SUI dimensions are presented in Table 2. Consistent with previous two- to six-country studies (Egri et al., 2000; Ralston et al., 1994, 2001, 2006b), we found across-society agreement that organizationally beneficial subordinate influence ethics behavior was viewed as the most ethical, self-indulgent was viewed as the next most ethical, and destructive was viewed as the least ethical. Table 3 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations for the individual (Level 1) variables and the societal (Level 2) variables.

The results of the null HLM models for between-group variance in the dependent variables were: organizationally beneficial ($\tau_{00}=0.01105$, df=40, $\chi^2=942.46$, $p<0.001$), self-indulgent ($\tau_{00}=0.01739$, df=40, $\chi^2=1384.28$, $p<0.001$), and destructive ($\tau_{00}=0.00846$, df=40, $\chi^2=825.32$, $p<0.001$) influence behaviors. These results indicate that there was sufficient systematic between-group variance in these measures for HLM analysis. The proportion of between-group variance that could potentially be explained by Level 2 predictor variables was 8.5% for organizationally beneficial influence ethics, 12.7% for self-indulgent influence ethics, and 7.2% for destructive influence ethics. The HLM results for the macro (business ideology Level 2 model with Level 1 covariates, and sociocultural Level 2 model with Level 1 covariates) and the

micro (individualism/collectivism) are presented in Table 4.

Impact of the Macro-Level Predictors

Economic development and growth hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 proposed that greater economic development level would be positively related to the ethicality of organizationally beneficial behavior (Hypothesis 1a), and negatively related to the ethicality of self-indulgent (Hypothesis 1b) and destructive (Hypothesis 1c) behaviors. The HLM results showed that economic development level was positively related to organizationally beneficial behavior ($t=2.14$, $p<0.05$) and negatively related to self-indulgent behavior ($t=-3.27$, $p<0.01$) and destructive behavior ($t=-3.02$, $p<0.01$). Thus Hypothesis 1 was fully supported.

Hypothesis 2 proposed that greater economic growth rate would be negatively related to the ethicality of organizationally beneficial behavior (Hypothesis 2a), and positively related to the ethicality of both self-indulgent (Hypothesis 2b) and destructive (Hypothesis 2c) behaviors. The HLM results showed that no significant relationships were found for economic growth rate. Thus Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Political system hypothesis. Hypothesis 3 proposed that greater democratic polity would be positively related to the ethicality of organizationally beneficial behavior (Hypothesis 3a), and negatively related to the ethicality of both self-indulgent (Hypothesis 3b) and destructive (Hypothesis 3c) behaviors. No significant relationships were found for polity. Therefore Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Sociocultural hypothesis. Hypothesis 4 proposed that greater societal individualism would be negatively related to the ethicality of organizationally beneficial behavior (Hypothesis 4a), positively related to the ethicality of self-indulgent behavior (Hypothesis 4b), and negatively related to the ethicality of destructive behavior (Hypothesis 4c). The HLM results showed that societal individualism was not significantly related to organizationally beneficial behavior or to self-indulgent behavior. However, societal individualism was negatively related to destructive behavior ($t=-2.32$, $p<0.05$). Thus only minimal support was found for Hypothesis 4 with respect to the negative relationship between societal individualism and

Table 4 HLM predictors of subordinate influence behaviors[a]

	Organizationally beneficial		Self-indulgent		Destructive	
	Coefficient	s.e.	Coefficient	s.e.	Coefficient	s.e.
Business ideology model						
Intercept (γ00)	0.9154***	0.0159	−0.6004***	0.0189	−0.9599***	0.0128
Individual-level predictors:						
Age (γ10)	−0.0002	0.0006	0.0012	0.0006	0.0021**	0.0006
Gender (γ20)	−0.0040	0.0081	0.0207*	0.0094	−0.0321**	0.0105
Position level (γ30)	0.0191***	0.0044	−0.0060	0.0033	−0.0137*	0.0054
Company size (γ40)	0.0036	0.0063	0.0109	0.0057	−0.0159*	0.0068
Industry (γ50)	0.0004	0.0106	0.0002	0.0097	−0.0095	0.0126
Individualism (γ60)	−0.0358***	0.0044	0.0191***	0.0033	−0.0073	0.0050
Society-level predictors:						
Economic development level (γ01)	0.000003*	0.000001	−0.000005**	0.000001	−0.000003**	0.000001
Economic growth rate (γ02)	−0.00894	0.0075	0.0076	0.0120	−0.0133	0.0067
Polity (γ03)	0.00213	0.0028	0.0005	0.0030	−0.015	0.0020
Sociocultural model						
Intercept (γ00)	0.9125***	0.0158	−0.5925***	0.0199	−0.9662***	0.0137
Individual-level predictors:						
Age (γ10)	−0.0017	0.0006	0.0010	0.0006	0.0020**	0.0006
Gender (γ20)	−0.0042	0.0080	0.0235*	0.0092	−0.0361***	0.0102
Position level (γ30)	0.0204***	0.0044	−0.0062	0.0032	−0.0149**	0.0049
Company size (γ40)	0.0026	0.0064	0.0115	0.0058	−0.0153*	0.0068
Industry (γ50)	0.0045	0.0104	0.0022	0.0099	−0.0094	0.0126
Individualism (γ60)	−0.0357***	0.0044	0.0187***	0.0033	−0.0066	0.0049
Society-level predictors:						
Individualism (γ01)	0.0011	0.0005	−0.0010	0.0008	−0.0013*	0.0005
Cross-level moderators:						
Position × Individualism (γ31)					0.0004**	0.0001

[a]Business ideology model ($N=40$) excludes Hong Kong; Sociocultural model $N=41$; *$p<0.05$, **$p<0.01$, ***$p<0.001$.

the ethicality of destructive influence behavior (Hypothesis 4c).

Impact of the Micro-Level Predictor

Hypothesis 5 proposed that, at the individual level, higher levels of individualism on a continuous measure of individualism–collectivism would be negatively related to the ethicality of organizationally beneficial behavior (Hypothesis 5a), positively related to the ethicality of self-indulgent behavior (Hypothesis 5b), and negatively related to the ethicality of destructive behavior (Hypothesis 5c). The HLM results found that individual-level individualism–collectivism was negatively related to organizationally beneficial ethics ($t=−8.12$, $p<0.001$; Hypothesis 5a supported), positively related to self-indulgent ethics ($t=5.74$, $p<0.001$; Hypothesis 5b supported), and not significantly related to destructive ethics (Hypothesis 5c not supported). Thus substantial support was found for Hypothesis 5.

A review of the societal and individual level measures of individualism–collectivism revealed that individual-level individualism is related to the ethicality of organizational beneficial and self-indulgent influence behavior, while societal-level individualism–collectivism is related to the ethicality of destructive influence behavior. A summary of the findings for the hypotheses is provided in Table 5.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

A Global Model of Subordinate Influence Ethics

The overarching goal of this study was to explore the potential of a global model for subordinate influence ethics, including the identification of antecedents of subordinate influence ethics. This study has facilitated the development of such a model by providing evidence that a consistent pattern of perceptions transcends economic/technological, political, and sociocultural differences.

Table 5   Summary of hypotheses test results

Hypotheses	Subordinate influence ethics dimensions		
	Organizationally beneficial	*Self-indulgent*	*Destructive*
1. Economic development level	Supported	Supported	Supported
2. Economic growth rate	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported
3. Polity (democratization)	Not supported	Not supported	Not supported
4. Individualism–collectivism (societal level)	Not supported	Not supported	Supported
5. Individualism–collectivism (individual level)	Supported	Supported	Not supported

For all 41 societies, organizationally beneficial behavior was viewed as more ethical than self-indulgent behavior, with destructive behavior being viewed as least ethical. These results suggest a relatively high degree of global convergence on the ethicality of the different types/levels of subordinate influence ethics (Egri et al., 2000; Fu et al., 2004; Kennedy et al., 2003; Ralston et al., 1994, 2001).

While we found this commonly agreed upon influence ethics hierarchy, we also found macro-level and micro-level factors contributing significantly to our understanding of the ethicality of organizationally beneficial, self-indulgent and destructive subordinate influence ethics. Thus this study has identified a consistent global trend with embedded macro-level (business ideology and sociocultural) and micro-level differences.

Hypotheses and Predictor Variables
One intriguing implication is the parsimony with which subordinate influence ethics – and, potentially, other cross-national phenomena – can be explained. We began our exploration for macro-level predictors with 16 business ideology variables and five sociocultural variables. Ultimately, our business ideology model consisted of three predictors, and our sociocultural model consisted of one cultural value predictor measured at the societal and individual levels. Looking at the summary of the hypotheses in Table 5, we see that one business ideology predictor (economic development level), one sociocultural predictor (individualism–collectivism) and one micro-level predictor (individualism–collectivism) help explain variance in subordinate influence ethics behavior. An important implication of these findings is that variables at both the macro and micro levels contribute to our overall understanding of subordinate influence ethics, and that a wide array of variables does not appear to be necessary.

Neither economic growth rate nor polity contributed to the understanding of the subordinate influence ethics model. The non-significant finding in this 41-society study for these predictor variables is counter to previous findings that support the significance of these variables (Cullen et al., 2004; Zak & Knack, 2001). With respect to future research, we believe that these findings could be utilized as a starting point for researchers trying to identify relevant predictor variables for the study of cross-cultural ethical issues as well as other behavioral phenomena given the fundamental influence of ethics on behavior.

Our findings for economic development level are straightforward and consistent. Economic development level is a significant predictor for all three subordinate influence ethics behaviors. The individualism–collectivism findings require more consideration. First, the macro-level test found a positive relationship between greater collectivism and acceptance of destructive subordinate influence ethics behavior, whereas the micro-level individualism–collectivism test did not. Conversely, the micro-level test found that greater collectivism was positively related to acceptance of organizationally beneficial ethics and negatively related to self-indulgent ethics, whereas the macro-level measure did not. Thus a combination of the macro and micro levels of the individualism–collectivism continua predicts all three subordinate influence ethics behaviors, but in an unanticipated combination across levels.

However, we also propose that a more in-depth exploration of individualism–collectivism at the micro level is warranted, since we had combined the two SVS dimensions in order to have a measure that was compatible with the Hofstede individualism–collectivism archival data. Thus, following the conceptual work of Triandis (1995) and the empirical findings of Ralston et al. (1997, 1999), Ralston (2007), we conducted independent *post hoc* analyses to assess the unique impact

that micro-level individualism and collectivism had on the three ethics dimensions. In these separate Level 1 HLM analyses, which were group-centered, we treated the SVS-based individualism and collectivism dimensions as discrete, with age, gender, position level, company size, and industry included as covariates. Our findings showed that greater individualism was negatively related to organizationally beneficial subordinate influence ethics ($t=-3.36$, $p<0.001$), positively related to destructive ethics ($t=2.62$, $p<0.05$), but not significantly related to self-indulgent ethics ($t=0.98$), whereas greater collectivism was significantly related to all three subordinate influence ethics behaviors: positively to organizationally beneficial ethics ($t=4.28$, $p<0.001$), negatively to self-indulgent ethics ($t=-3.03$. $p<0.01$) and positively to destructive ethics ($t=3.47$, $p<0.01$). The relationships between both individualism (negative) and collectivism (positive) with organizationally beneficial subordinate influence ethics are consistent with the previous finding. However, individualism is *not* a significant factor in predicting self-indulgent behavior. It is the level of collectivism (negative) that is the predictor of one's self-indulgent ethics. Finally, and not consistent with the previous non-significant results, both individualism and collectivism were significantly and positively related to destructive behavior. The positively related collectivism finding is consistent with our hypothesis, while the positively related individualism finding is not. Further, since both individualism and collectivism were positively related to destructive ethics behavior, combining these two predictors into a single continuum resulted in an averaging-out effect that led to the non-significant finding for Hypothesis 5b. Therefore our results suggest that if individual-level individualism and collectivism are employed as separate predictor dimensions, the true findings of the study are more accurately reflected. These results also suggest that the SVS individualism and collectivism dimensions provide a more encompassing explanation of these overall subordinate influence ethics phenomena than does the Hofstede individual–collectivism perspective.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research
Although this 41-society study is fairly substantial in breadth, additional large-scale research endeavors are needed to confirm our findings regarding the importance of both macro- (sociocultural and business ideology) and micro-level predictors of cross-national differences and similarities in organizational attitudes and behaviors. It should be noted that our study was concerned with perspectives on the relative ethicality of different subordinate influence ethics behavior. While the linkage between attitudes and behaviors has been well established (Ajzen, 1996), further multi-society research is needed regarding the use and outcomes of various subordinate influence ethics behavior (Fu et al., 2004). Additionally, multi-society research is needed regarding the ethicality and use of subordinate influence ethics behaviors within cultures (Elahee, Kirby, & Nasif, 2002; Ralston et al., 2005) to explore the influence of key demographics, for example age, gender, region (Tung, 2008).

One limitation of this study concerned cross-cultural differences in scale response (Fischer, 2004), which necessitated the use of standardized rather than raw scores for influence ethics behavior. While analyses using the raw scores yielded results similar to the standardized scores, we report our results using standardized scores, given the cross-cultural differences in scale response.

Another potential issue is that the respondents were employed in a cross-section of organizations within each society. Although industry and company size did not have a significant influence on preferences for subordinate influence ethics, a potential limitation is that we did not investigate the impact of other organizational (meso-level) characteristics, such as organizational culture (Ashkanasy, Wilderom, & Peterson, 2000; Terpstra-Tong & Ralston, 2002). Organizational culture has not been extensively investigated in cross-cultural research (Deshpandé & Farley, 2004), and specifically not in the influence literature (Terpstra-Tong & Ralston, 2002). Thus one future research direction would be to investigate the intersection between societal culture and organizational culture with ethical behavior norms.

Concluding Comments
We envisioned this research as providing a solid foundation for future research on the ethical orientation of subordinates, as well as providing information that would assist practitioners in developing more effective business relationships with individuals from different cultures or cultural heritages. As reported, there has been minimal cross-cultural research that has investigated the issues causing and resulting from different views on

what constitutes ethical subordinate behavior around the world (Terpstra-Tong & Ralston, 2002). This study provides substantial evidence that there is cross-cultural ethical consensus (Gonzalez, 2003) regarding subordinate influence ethics. Concurrently, our findings show that the perceived ethicality of various subordinate influence ethics is shaped by sociocultural and business ideology macro-level factors and micro-level cultural values. Given the substantial effect of business ideology factors, our study also suggests that influence ethics may be slowly converging or cross-verging across cultures (Ralston, 2008).

In summation, we believe that the most salient findings of this study are that there currently exist consistent influence ethics relationships across societies, and that both macro-level and micro-level variables contribute significantly to explaining this model. This research identified a global model of subordinate influence ethics that pinpointed significant antecedents. As a result, we are encouraged that future research will yield an integrative global model of ethics behavior. A question that these findings raise for future research endeavors is: To what extent do this study's findings of relevant societal antecedents generalize to explain other phenomena in the international workplace such as worker motivation?

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APPENDIX

See Table A1

Table A1 Correlation matrix[a] for the 16 potential predictor variables of the business ideology model[b]

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. GNI per capita															
2. Economic growth rate	−0.14														
3. Gini index (social inequality)	−0.29	−0.35													
4. Unemployment rate	−0.35	−0.21	0.27												
5. Agricultural sector (% GDP)	−0.70	0.12	0.09	0.10											
6. Agricultural workforce (% total)	−0.64	0.16	0.22	0.04	0.86										
7. Govt. consumption (% GDP)	0.35	−0.26	−0.02	0.15	−0.52	−0.44									
8. Polity	0.32	−0.40	−0.06	0.15	−0.51	−0.45	0.62								
9. Political rights/civil liberties	−0.47	0.21	0.29	−0.10	0.62	0.56	−0.56	−0.87							
10. Legal system	0.18	−0.16	0.20	0.03	−0.03	−0.04	0.10	0.06	0.03						
11. Corruption Perceptions Index	0.86	−0.09	−0.22	−0.25	−0.72	−0.65	0.46	0.37	−0.49	0.33					
12. Country governance	0.83	0.01	−0.33	−0.25	−0.82	−0.72	0.47	0.48	−0.67	0.16	0.92				

Table A1 Continued

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
13. Corporate governance	0.74	−0.16	−0.07	−0.13	−0.55	−0.40	0.40	0.35	−0.42	0.45	0.82	0.75			
14. Rule of law	0.86	0.01	−0.41	−0.35	−0.72	−0.62	0.40	0.37	−0.57	0.24	0.93	0.95	0.80		
15. Technology index	0.76	0.02	−0.23	−0.26	−0.77	−0.68	0.39	0.52	−0.61	0.14	0.75	0.81	0.74	0.79	
16. R&D expenditures (%GDP)	0.68	−0.03	−0.36	−0.24	−0.52	−0.47	0.48	0.27	−0.37	0.16	0.64	0.56	0.63	0.64	0.73

[a]Sample size: $N=41$ for correlations except for polity and technology index ($N=40$) and R&D expenditures as %GDP ($N=37$). Correlations >0.35 significant at the $p<0.05$ level; >0.39 significant at the $p<0.01$ level; >0.49 significant at the $p<0.001$ level.

[b]Sources: GNI (gross national income) per capita, 2003 (World Bank, 2003); Economic growth (1993–2003 average GDP annual growth rate) (*United Nations Statistical Yearbook*, 2004; *CIA World Factbook*, 2004); Social inequality (Gini index) (United Nations Development Programme, 2004, http://hdr.undp.org/); Unemployment rate (International Labour Organization, 2004, http://www.ilo.org/); Agricultural sector as percentage of GDP, 2003 (*CIA World Factbook*, 2004); Agricultural workforce as % total workforce, 2003 (*CIA World Factbook*, 2004); Government consumption as % of GDP, 2003 (United Nations Statistics Division, 2004, http://unstats.un.org/unsd/); polity (Marshall et al. (2005) Polity IV project, http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/polity/); legal system: (*CIA World Factbook*, 2004); Corruption Perceptions Index 2003 (Transparency International, 2003, http://ww1.transparency.org/cpi/2003/cpi2003.en. html); Worldwide Governance Indicators: 1996–2006 (World Bank Institute, http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/data.html): average of 2002 and 2004 sum of estimates (−2.5 to +2.5) for six governance and anti-corruption dimensions; Corporate Governance Index (Kaufmann et al., 2005, www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/pubs/gcr2004.html); political rights/civil liberties (Freedom House, 2003, http://www.freedomhouse.org/research/index.htm); rule of law (World Bank Institute, 2005); technology index (*World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report*, 2003–2004 (World Economic Forum, 2004), http://www.weforum.org/); R&D expenditures as % of GDP, 1997–2002 (United Nations Development Program, 2004).

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