Plan Overview

A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline

Title: Executive Decision-Making across Cultures: A Cognitivist Study of Sensemaking in High and Low Context Organisations

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Template: The University of Sheffield Taught Masters DMP: Identifiable personal data

Project abstract:

As globalisation continues to complicate the business environment, organisations must navigate increasingly complex cross-cultural dynamics that impact strategic decisions. This study investigates how leaders from different cultural contexts engage in sensemaking and decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on the cognitive processes involved. High context cultures rely on implicit communication and shared experiences (e.g. Japan, Zambia, China), whereas low context cultures favour direct and explicit communication (e.g. UK, USA, Germany). This research is grounded in two cognitive psychology theories (socially situated cognition and schema theory), which act as theoretical foundations to explore how cultural membership shapes the mental frameworks that determine decisions. Schema theory argues that we organise knowledge through mental templates, with socially situated cognition arguing the influence of external factors (i.e. culture) on cognition, rather than suggesting decision-making is always rational.

A mixed methods approach will be employed. This study will involve approximately 10 semi-structured interviews in total. From these interviews, transcription and qualitative analysis will be conducted in NVivo, from which cognitive maps will be developed and analysed quantitatively. This allows for the systematic comparison of executive reasoning processes, which aims to provide organisations with evidence-based insights for leaders operating in unfamiliar environments.

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Copyright information:

Executive Decision-Making across Cultures: A Cognitivist Study of Sensemaking in High and Low Context Organisations

Describing your data

- **What digital/physical data will you collect or create during the project?**
- **What type(s) of identifiable personal data are you collecting?**
- **How will the data be collected or created, and over what time period?**
- **What format(s) will your digital data be in (e.g. .docx, .mp3) and how much will be generated?**
- **Will you use pre-existing datasets? Give details, including conditions of use if possible.**

The primary data will be collected digitally from remote interviews. Identifiable personal data includes contact details (to arrange interviews) and names. Interviews will commence on the 11th July 2025, with data collection expected to be completed within a 2 week time frame. A recording of each interview will be made (approx. 10 in total), with transcriptions being generated after discussions. Therefore digital data will be in the form of .docx (transcriptions) and .mp3 (audio recordings). No pre-existing datasets will be used.

Looking after data during your research

- **Where will you store digital data securely during the project?**
- **How will you name and organise your data files?**
- **If you collect or create physical data, where will you store these securely?**
- **How will you make data easier to understand and use?**
- **Will you use extra security precautions for any of your digital or physical data?**

Digital data will be secured on password-protected devices, with physical storage being kept in secure, access-controlled locations. Participant names will be coded as planets of the solar system (or something similar) in the write-up to ensure anonymity. Data will be made easier to understand by conducting thematic analysis, and then turning these into cognitive maps which provide visual representations. Extra security precautions involve restricting access to personal data to those involved in the research, where permission from me is needed to access it. Cloud storage will also be avoided.

Storing and sharing data after your research

- **What data will be retained after the project?**
- **Where and for how long will the data be stored?**
- **Will you make any data available to others after the project?**
- **How will you ensure data is shared in an ethical and responsible way?**

No identifiable personal data will be retained after the dissertation has been submitted. Participant names will be destroyed earliest. Interview recordings, once transcribed, will be deleted, with the transcripts themselves being deleted after submission. Consent forms will be destroyed after submission and will not be attached to the appendices (as per GDPR). Overall, data will only be retained for as long as necessary, and all data is intended to be deleted after the dissertation has been submitted. The planned uses of the data are covered in the materials given to participants, namely the information sheet and consent forms. Data will be used ethically by adhering to the University's ethical guidelines and GDPR.

Putting your plan into practice

- **Who is responsible for making sure your data management plan is followed?**

As the primary researcher, I am responsible for making sure this plan is followed. That said, my supervisor will also provide oversight to ensure full compliance.