



How multicultural teams affect project management implementation.

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Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Contextual Background	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.1.1 <i>Project Management</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.1.2 <i>Globalisation and Multicultural teams</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.1.3 <i>Cultural values in multicultural teams</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.2. Research Problem	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.2.1 <i>Advantages and disadvantages of multicultural teams</i> ..	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.3. Research Aim and Objectives ...	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.4. Rationale of the Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.5. Significance of the Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.6. Structure of the Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ..	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1. Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.1 <i>Framework for different type of projects</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.2. Culture	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3. Cultural Relativism	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.4. Ecological Fallacy	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.5. Significance of Culture in Modern World	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6. Cultural Dimensions in Organisations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6.1. Perception of Inequality of Power or Power Distance Index:	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6.2. Individualism or Collectivism ..	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6.3. Uncertainty Avoidance	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6.4. Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation ..	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6.5. Cultural Difference	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.7. Global Projects	Error! Bookmark not defined.

2.8. <i>Cultural Distance between Countries</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.9. <i>Referential Framework</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.10. <i>Culture and Project Management</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.11. <i>Cultural and Social Environment</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.12. <i>Virtual Teams</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.13. <i>Virtual Teams Project</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.13.1. International and Political Environment:....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.13.2. Physical Environment	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.14. <i>Importance of Culture in Multicultural Team Projects</i> .	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.15. <i>Team Structure and Project Management</i> ...	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.15.1. Cognition.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.16. <i>Approaches to Multicultural Project Management</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.17. <i>Summary</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.1. <i>Introduction</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2. <i>Epistemological Considerations</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.3. <i>Research Approach</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.4. <i>Research Design</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.5. <i>Data Collection Methods</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.5.1. Semi-Structured Interviews	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.5.2. Data Analysis Technique	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.6. <i>Ethical Considerations</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.7. <i>Limitations</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
CHAPTER 4: Results and Discussion	51
Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations	67
References	75
Appendix A	83
Appendix B	84

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. *Contextual Background*

1.1.1 *Project Management*

Project Management is an organised venture for managing projects. It involves scientific application of modern tools and techniques in planning, financing, implementing, monitoring, controlling and coordinating unique activities or tasks to produce desirable outputs in accordance with the pre-determined objectives within the constraints of time and cost (Nagarajan.K, 2004). Each organisations project management varies depending on their industry, project size, complexity and the methodology they follow for their projects. Project managers choose the best methodology depending on the project category.

1.1.2 *Globalisation and Multicultural teams*

According to Distefano and Maznevski (2000), today's economy increasingly requires people to collaborate in teams cross culturally and geographically. Sometimes team members are all located in the same physical setting. More and more frequently, however, they are scattered across a city, a country, or the globe. These teams can create significant competitive advantage by bringing together different ideas, pools of knowledge, and approaches to work. Diversity in a team adds challenges as well, in planning, execution and completion of projects. Team management must include new dimensions in individual cultural, racial

and ethnic backgrounds in their daily activities. Today's competitive businesses bring more challenges and complex project requirements. Multicultural project teams have a great advantage when compared to monoculture teams. Diversity in a team provides multiple dimensions in judgement, analysis, efficiency, etc., depending upon individual cultural values. It is the essential requirement for the project managers to negotiate and convince them on the available terms. The work of project managers has been strongly affected by globalization of the world's economy, as they need to make rapid interactions with unknown customers. They face a challenging task of synchronizing with international customers, manufacturers, and suppliers (Ochieng and Price, 2009). . The common efforts of project leaders in conducting international, diverse projects have increased the value of managing personnel of different categories. A multi-talented labor force possesses contrasting concepts regarding virtue, interaction, and rewards (Ochieng and Price, 2009).

1.1.3 Cultural values in multicultural teams

Culture is always passed on from ancestors to new generations and continues further. Whether it is firm culture or individual belief, the category of wrong and right remains the same and opinions that fall into them also share a common interest. According to various studies, human correspondence can only take place in a socialized environment that is strict in regulations like an organisation (Halverson and Tirmizi, 2008). The way in which a person evolves by regulations is also a key component of

culture. Cultures advance according to social requirements and practices of the people.

Culture has significant impact on organisations; for example, economic activities and accounting standards differ from one territory to another and many of these differences are cultural (Ang and Van Dyne, 2015).

Studies indicate the importance of everyday diversity management for all projects with multicultural people. Although project managers can provide all standards and procedures for effective communication and cooperation, there is a need for them to understand the impact of their cultural background on various aspects, such as work motivation. This way they can maximise productivity of individual team members and maximise the success of projects. Understanding cultural differences is, therefore, essential to analyse the relationships between people within organisations (Ajmal, Helo and Kekäle, 2010).

1.2. Research Problem

The problem in this research is to determine how multicultural teams affect project management implementation. In today's global environment, the phenomenon of increasing workforce diversity, expatriate employment, the international business environment, manifest in global infrastructure project management teams comprising multicultural teams. These teams may positively affect project implementation due to the presence of multiple opinions and skills within a group as compared to culturally homogenous teams. However, the inability to respond to

important variables and changes in an environment, such as cultural factors, could cost project management teams a lot of time in terms of their implementations of projects (Ochieng and Price, 2009). While there may be various benefits of multicultural teams, there may also be certain drawbacks that must also be addressed at the same time.

1.2.1 Advantages and disadvantages of multicultural teams

Advantages:

- Different perspective from different regions
- Effective execution
- Adaptability according to regional needs
- Range and variety of skills

Disadvantages:

- Communication issues
- Resistance to global changes.
- Decision making process

Both the positive and negative effects of need to be considered by project managers to design, manage, and designate effective teams for various tasks in successful project implementation.

1.3. Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of this research is to investigate how multicultural teams affect project management implementation. For this purpose, the following objectives are formulated:

- To Critically Analyse and Evaluate Multicultural issues that affect project management implementation.
- To Assess and Evaluate on how project management at F5 Networks may be affected by multicultural issues.
- To make recommendations to management on changes that can be made to improve project management implementation

1.4. Rationale of the Study

F5 Networks is a global leader in application delivery controllers in the technology market. Founded in 1996, it has more than 4000 employees across the globe. F5 is the only company that offers open architectural framework for IT organisations to deliver their services with great business value. It provides software, hardware and hybrid system depending on the needs of its customers. The key departments are:

- Product Development
- Global Support
- Training
- Sales and Solution Providers

Each team has a global presence with key centres in the US, the UK, Poland, Singapore, China, New Zealand and Japan. Each centre has employees from different countries. Here we examine the global support team, which provides customer support and consultancy services to customers. There are multiple functions in Global Support, which require the employees to work in groups to analyse, evaluate, test, implement and follow up on major changes. Depending on the nature of the work, project

teams are formed. Each support centre has a project lead along with the project team members. They report to the project managers. A project team in each region consists of 5 to 10 members. With seven regional support centres, the number of total project teams varies from 35 to 70. The project flow is defined in the below flow chart.



The involvement at the individual level happens at the work delegation where their tasks are assigned. In this study we will look into the issue from the work delegation to project completion.

This research aims to investigate and suggest solutions with respect to the effects of multicultural teams on project management implementations. Often, cultural factors are not given primary importance in management of projects, although these factors affect certain key variables and functions in project teams, such as communication and coordination (Ochieng and Price, 2009). Hence, communication is one of the issues arising among multicultural teams. Effective communication strategies are solutions to that issue. Likewise, there are certain benefits

of diverse teams in terms of performance, judgment, and decision making, as more information and diverse skills can be engaged.. These and other factors are examined in this study to extract important insights about effective project management theory and practice. The justification of this study rests on its effort to examine how multicultural teams play a role and affect project performance and implementation. This will highlight factors that managers should address in order to develop effective planning, strategies, and practices in managing diverse project teams across regions.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study has a number of implications for a variety of employees at F5 Networks. First, this study provides qualitative evidence on the impact of multicultural teams. The evidence reflects the view of project managers working to implement projects with global support. Next, this study presents recommendations on ways to deal with issues that emerge from cultural diversity in project teams. This can help project managers to review their own practices when managing diverse teams and help them make decisions based on recommendations in this study. In addition, managers can validate their existing management views and strategies and improve their strategies through updated evidence-based practices in project management.

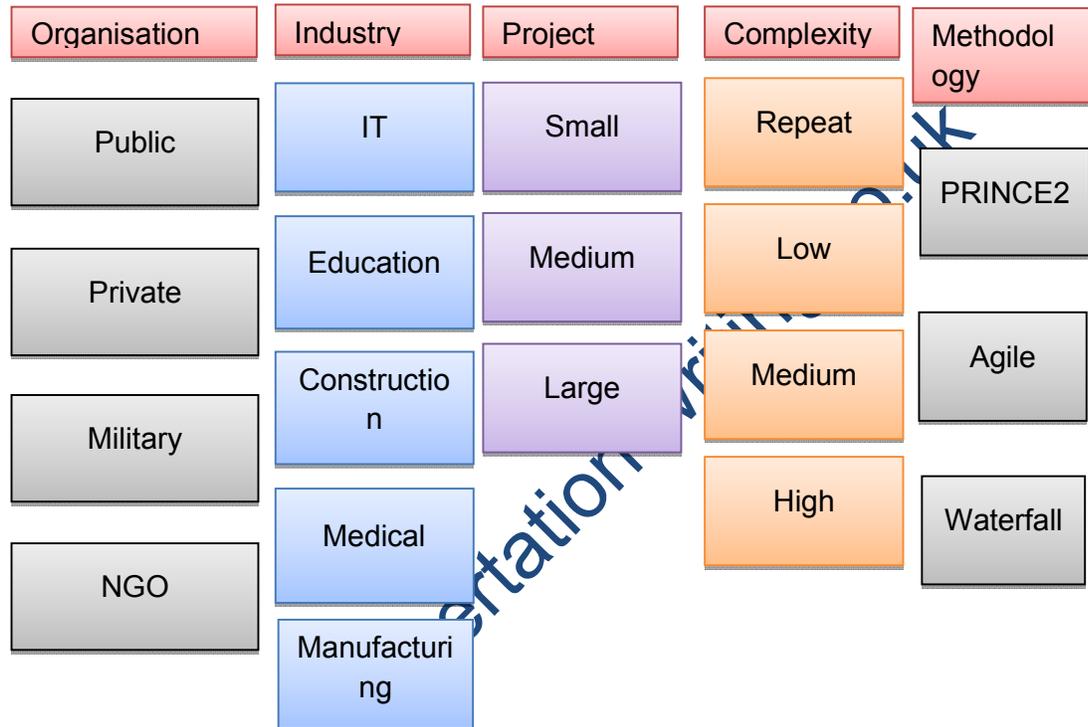
1.6. Structure of the Study

Chapter One of the study presents the contextual background of the research, followed by identification of the research problem. It further presents the research aims and objectives, research rationale and significance of the study. A review of the literature based on secondary research follows in Chapter Two. The aim of this review is to give readers an understanding of the existing knowledge on multicultural teams in project management. The third chapter presents methodological aspects like the philosophical paradigms, research approach, research strategy, data collection methods, data analysis technique, and the relevant methodological choices made in this study, along with their justifications. Chapter Four presents the results and interpretation of the results. The results and findings of the primary research are discussed within the context of the literature review. Finally, Chapter Five presents conclusions drawn in this study along with recommendations and research limitations.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

2.1.1 Framework for different type of projects



The figure above shows classification of project based on various characteristics of a project. Projects differ from each other in complexity, scale and scope, and other issues. The first classification is based on type of organisation running the project such as military projects, private business, etc. Similarly projects also differ regarding industry for example medical projects are different from manufacturing projects and educational projects. One type of project may differ from other in terms of complexity, project management methodology, and therefore there are different implementation issues. For example an educational project may have high

level of cultural issues as people from diverse culture are likely to involve and the learners usually have diverse cultural backgrounds. However, a community-focused project by an NGO may have relatively less cultural issues as it is focused on a single community. Some projects will have a pre-defined scope and there are no changes to it, but some will have constant changes which increase the complex nature of the project.

One of the most important aspects of project management is team management, which requires project managers to manage different people or teams working on each component of a project. Part of setting a project culture is to be very observant and conscious of others; however, there are numerous hidden and unconscious values that affect the actions and thinking of team members, dictated by the personal and cultural backgrounds of the members (Ochieng, and Price, 2009, p. 527). For instance, team members may have differences in attitudes towards authority, the ability and inclination to carry out activities (such as a single activity at a time versus multi-tasking), focus on efficiency, patterns of communication, and individual learning styles. Cultural values are inherited from previous generations. There is no single 'right' culture and no culture is 'wrong'. However, Ochieng and Price (2010, p. 449) illustrated that there is a common set of values in an organisation or a project that is shared by all team members that indicates what is right or wrong, what is logical or illogical, what is fair or unfair, etc. All these norms and shared values affect various aspects of a project, for example, communication among team members.

A number of influential studies such as Hall (1960s), Hofstede (1970s and 1980s), and Trompenaars (1990s) illustrate how people interact with each other and how cultural values differ and influence interactions. Culture is a phenomenon develops in a social environment and not in isolation. There are several formal and informal values that govern the culture and determine its rules, norms, codes of conduct, policies, laws and regulations. According to Brett, Behfar, and Kern, (2009, p. 233) an organisation is a social environment where people interact with each other and similarly, projects are the same, but they have a shorter lifetime as compared to business entities. The cultural values of individuals working together, contribute to the development of culture in the organisation. According to Hofstede (1991) the materialisation and evolution of culture are credited to social cravings among people in a society (project) to get answers to their common problems. To ensure the survival and smooth functioning of a project, it is important for members to find solutions to their common problems (Brett, Behfar, and Kern, 2009, p. 237).

2.2. Culture

Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov (1991) define culture as the set of elements of material or spiritual nature, organised logically and coherently, which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, and customs, and all the habits and skills acquired by humans in their capacity as members of society. Hofstede (2006) introduced the concept of culture as an analogy to the way computers are programmed. Each individual receives a mental

programming in which the person has a pattern of thoughts, feelings and ways of doing things that were learned through his life. Many of these patterns were acquired in childhood, because at that time a person is more likely to learn and assimilate (Huang and Trauth, 2007, p. 36). The authors call these patterns "software of the mind", and suggested that people act like computers because the mental programs determine the behaviour of a person.

Culture is always a collective phenomenon; it is at least partially shared with people who live or lived in the same social environment. Based on this scheme, the authors define culture as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one human group from another. As soon as these patterns of thoughts, feelings, and attitudes have been established in the mind of a person, the individual must unlearn before it is able to learn something different, and unlearning is more difficult than simply learning (Sunindijo, Hadikusumo, and Ogunlana, 2007, p. 166).

2.3. Cultural Relativism

Hofstede (2006) opined that a culture has no absolute criteria for judging the activities of another culture as "negative" or "positive", however every culture can and must apply such judgment to their own activities and that its members are both actors and observers. Therefore, **Hofstede (2006) states that there are no scientific standards to consider ways of thinking, feeling, and behaviour of a group making it inherently superior or inferior to another. Studies focusing on differences of**

culture of groups and societies presume that there should be a neutral point of reference, a position of cultural relativism.

2.4. *Ecological Fallacy*

Casey and Richardson (2006, p. 33) argued that the structure of national cultures differs from the structure of individual personalities. A mistake that psychologists sometimes make when studying a culture is to treat it as a kind of common personality. They forget the fact that cultures are formed by the iteration of different personalities, both contradicting and complementary, and form a whole that is more than the sum of its parts. The culture of a country or any other category of people is not a combination of the properties of the average citizen, or the modal personality. It is, among other things, a set of possible reactions of people who have a common mental programming. A person can react in a situation differently as compared to another. The phenomenon of confusing the individual level with the societal level in the social sciences is known as the ecological fallacy (Müller, Spang, and Ozcan, 2009, p. 70).

2.5. *Significance of Culture in Modern World*

Connaughton and Shuffler (2007, p. 387) argued that culture is shared by members of a group, organisation or society and the values and attitudes that shape individual and collective behaviour are acquired through it, whereas behaviour is learned through education and experience. It is transmitted from one generation to another, so that it

perpetuates through generations. Moreover, cultures also undergo changes as people adapt to new environments. In the majority of countries, the culture of the 1990s is not the same as that of the 1960s. In order to gain success in a multinational business project, one must understand the cultures of other countries and learn to adapt to them. In a way, all humans are oriented to their homeland; the challenge of international business is learning to expand one's personal perspective and not make decisions based on misconceptions. This behaviour is observed both in individuals and in organisations and societies. In the case of organisations, a multinational company may attempt to apply the same strategies in their country of origin to the other countries. This can result in situations where a product fails to adapt to the needs of a particular market, or people are placed in management who are not experienced in the new country. To avoid problems, it is necessary to know the culture in which they will work; and this is achieved by studying the elements of culture, especially when working on international or global projects (Baiden and Price, 2011, p. 129).

2.6. *Cultural Dimensions in Organisations*

The Dutch researcher Geert Hofstede published in 1980 the results of his research on work-related values and management styles at IBM. At that time, IBM had branches in 40 countries. Damian, (2007, p. 21) while studying Hofstede's research, explained that this study was performed two times between 1968 and 1972, resulting in the identification of four cultural dimensions. Subsequently, the author conducted additional

international studies with a survey instrument developed with a group of Chinese managers and employees, resulting in the emergence of a fifth dimension, *long term orientation*. Hofstede's proposal, like many other cultural models, has arguments both in favour and against. Hofstede (2006) further suggested the following definitions for each cultural dimension (Behfar, Kern, and Brett, 2006, p. 85).

2.6.1. Perception of Inequality of Power or Power Distance Index:

This refers to how the less powerful members of organisations and institutions within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. This represents a difference (more versus less), but is defined from below and not from above. **Hofstede (2006) suggests that at a social level, inequality is approved by the leaders rather than the followers and therefore, power and inequality are extremely fundamental factors of each society;** anyone with some international experience will agree that all societies are unequal, although some are more unequal than others. For example, in societies with a perception of high inequality superiors and subordinates are considered existentially different (Galloway, 2007, p. 46). The organisations concentrate as much power as possible in a few, depending on their jobs, positions and roles in the organisation. Wage levels show wide differences between high and low levels of the organisation, especially when workers have relatively little education, and manual labour has a much lower status than office work. Superiors have great privileges and contacts between superiors and subordinates are initiated only by superiors (Von Glinow, 2005, p. 45).

On the other hand, in societies with a low perception of inequality, superiors and subordinates are considered existentially equal. The hierarchical structure is only different in terms of roles, established for convenience where roles can be changed and one's subordinate today may be one's boss tomorrow. The salary ranges between high level workers and low level workers are relatively small (Klitmøller and Lauring, 2013, p. 398). The privileges for those above basically are non-existent and all must use the same parking lots, restrooms, and cafeteria. Superiors must be accessible to subordinates and the ideal boss is a clever (and thus respected) democrat. The subordinate expects to be consulted before a decision affecting his work is made, but accepts that the boss is the one who finally decides. Other authors such as Halverson and Tirmizi (2008, p. 32) refer to this dimension as hierarchy focused versus equality-focused cultures.

2.6.2. Individualism or Collectivism

Collectivist societies appreciate individuals that try to integrate into groups. On one side are individualistic societies in which the ties between individuals are loose. Individuals are responsible for themselves and their immediate family (Chatenier, *et al.*, 2010, p. 271). On the collectivist side are societies in which people, from the moment of birth, are integrated into strong cohesive groups that are often expanded in families with uncles, nephews, and grandparents who are protected in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. The word collectivism in this sense has no political meaning as it refers to the group and not to the state. Again, the focus of

this dimension is extremely important for all societies in the world (Ang and Van Dyne, 2015, p. 32).

For example, it is expected that employees of an individualistic culture act according to their own interests, and work is organised so that their own interests and those of the employer match. Family relationships at work are unwanted and are associated with conflicts of interest. In some companies, if an employee marries another employee, one of them must leave the company (Casey, 2010, p. 83). On the other hand, in a collectivist culture, the individual must act according to the group's interests and this does not always coincide with the interests of the individual. In a collectivist culture, the process of hiring an individual always takes into account the views of the group and it is common to see that some contracts are made through personal referrals from family members. Other authors such as Trompenaars and Hampden (1998) call this dimension 'communitarianism' (Ajmal, Helo, and Kekäle, 2010, p. 156).

Masculinity and Femininity: This refers to the distribution of roles between the genders, which can be another fundamental problem for any society. The IBM studies revealed that the values of men and women in societies. On the other hand, the values of men in one country may differ from the values of women. Women in many countries have rather nurturing and emotional values, but in the masculine countries they can be somewhat aggressive and competitive, but not to the same degree as men. It is important to note here that this dimension has no connection with the sexual behaviour of individuals (Jones and George, 2015, p. 65).

A society is called masculine when emotional roles between men and women are clearly different and it is assumed that men should be more aggressive, tough, and focused on material success. On the contrary, in this society, it is assumed that women should be humble, tender-hearted, and interested in quality of life. In a feminine society, emotional and gender roles match, both men and women are supposed to be humble, tender, and concerned about the quality of life (Guest and MacQueen, 2007, p. 54).

2.6.3. *Uncertainty Avoidance*

Uncertainty and avoidance are associated with the tolerance of the members of a society for uncertainty and ambiguity; in short the search for truth. This indicates the point that members of a culture feel either comfortable or uncomfortable in unstructured situations. Unstructured situations are novel, unknown, surprising, and different from the usual. Cultures that reject uncertainty try to minimise those situations by imposing strict laws and rules, health and safety measures and promoting the philosophical and religious fields with a belief in absolute truth (Layman et al., 2006, p. 781). People from countries with uncertainty avoidance are also more emotional and are motivated by inner fears. On the opposite side, cultures that accept uncertainty are more tolerant of different opinions and try to have as few laws as possible; people in philosophical and religious field are relativists. According to Prabhakar(2005, p. 53), people of these cultures are more phlegmatic and thoughtful and do not expect their environment to express their emotions.

For example, companies with low tolerance for uncertainty have more formal laws and informal rules controlling the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees. In these cases, they also have more regulations to control internal work processes. Uncertainty tolerant countries show the opposite. **People there think that rules should be established only in cases of absolute necessity, such as to determine if traffic travels on the right or left. They believe that many problems can be solved without formal rules.** Other authors, such as Trompenaars and Hampden (2008), call this "fuzzy" versus "specific" dimension.

2.6.4. Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation

This dimension was found by an analysis conducted in 23 countries around the world using a questionnaire. The values associated with long-term orientations are economy and perseverance; the values associated with short-term orientation are respect for tradition, filling social obligations, and protecting one's image (Sinkhovich, 2009, p. 383). Both values on the positive side and the negative of this dimension are found in the teachings of Confucius, the most influential Chinese philosopher who lived about 500 years before Christ; however, this dimension is also applicable to countries without Confucian heritage. In a short-term oriented culture, efforts should generate profits quickly (what matters are earnings this year). On the other

hand, a long-term oriented culture expects benefits to come later (Shokef and Erez, 2008, p. 177).

A good example of this approach is corporate training, in which individuals with a long-term orientation see training as an opportunity to develop skills that will allow them to contribute to the development of the organisation and help them build a more productive professional future. On the other hand, individuals with a short-term orientation see training as an opportunity to leave the office routine (Pinto, Slevin, and English, 2009, p. 638). Other authors, such as Trompenaars and Hampden (2008) define this dimension as the "time horizon".

2.6.5. *Cultural Difference*

Organisations cannot use the same method across multiple countries. If they attempt to do that, results will not be as expected. Morschett explains the cultural perspective and how cultures are interrelated with one another as follows: **"The elements of culture that are most likely to matter in international management are: language, social structure, religion, values and attitudes."** Understanding cultural behaviour helps organisations determine how to approach employees to get valid feedback and better understand their expectations. Vavra discussed these points, in detail, on how culture can influence employee work ethics and efforts. Cultural difference can arise from "different expectations, different ways of evaluating performance, different use of response scale formats, being influenced differently by the number of response positions in any question scale". A customer from one country approaches work differently than a

customer from another country. Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions framework provides more details on how each country is profiled in different dimensions. **Barbara Mueller discussed the four dimensions developed by Hofstede to classify different countries. The dimensions are “individualism, a society's preference for a group or individual orientation; power distance, societal desire for hierarchy or egalitarianism; masculinity versus femininity, a sex-role dimension; and uncertainty avoidance, a culture's tolerance for uncertainty.”** Further research added *pragmatism* and *indulgence* to **reflect a country's status.** There are multiple debates among scholars for using this method in the 21st Century. Mueller uses the individualism and collectivism dimension to understand country profiles using Hofstede's cultural framework. According to Mueller, if a country has a high individualism ranking, then this indicates the country's individuality and that individual rights are high within the society. Oppositely, with a low ranking for individualism, the culture tends to be collectivistic. Here the social ties are much tighter and loyalty plays a key role in the decision process. **This table provides details for understanding cultural differences across sample countries. Scores for the seven countries are taken from the cultural dimensions discussed by Minkov.**

Country	Power Distance	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty Avoidance	Long Term Orientation	Indulgence
China	80	20	66	30	87	24
Singapore	74	20	48	8	72	46
New Zealand	22	79	58	49	33	75
Japan	54	46	95	92	88	42
Poland	68	60	64	93	38	29
United Kingdom	35	89	66	35	51	69
US	40	91	62	46	26	68

Table 1: Cultural dimensions for selected countries: (Minkov, 2010)

2.7. Global Projects

Projects, according to their general definition are temporary endeavours that are carried out for specific aims and objectives, such as development of product and services. The main feature is the temporality, which implies that there is a beginning and an ending to every project. In addition, the products or services of each project are different (Ochieng and Price, 2010, p. 450). Before the surge in globalisation, domestic projects were handled locally and by people belonging to single or common cultures, but in the case of global projects today, various teams work at the same time in different countries with different and sometimes contradicting cultural values. **Global projects can also be defined as temporary organisation-like structures that are designed to deliver particular aims and objectives and are dissolved at the end of the project term. Global projects involve multiple entities, locations, organisations, and business units (Thomas and Mengel, 2008, p. 304).**

Cleland and Gareis (2006) explained that global projects are also distinguished from domestic projects by the location of stakeholders and, in such projects, various stakeholders belong to different countries. For global projects, teams are formed with members from different countries, therefore, “global teams” emerge in such situations (Huettner, Brown and James-Tanny, 2010, p. 77). These team members with different nationalities, different working conditions, different organisational cultures are assembled together for a period of time and require effective coordination to complete the project. **Ochieng, and Price (2009, p. 529) identified that the interaction and coordination between team members belonging to different cultures increase a number of complexities; for example, conflict management approaches may be different in different societies.** It is important to understand how these complexities affect the success of the project.

2.8. Cultural Distance between Countries

The notion of cultural distance is grounded in psychic distance. Psychic difference, as explained by Johanson and Vahlne (2003), is the aggregate effect of various factors including differences in languages, legal environments, education, and business practices. The flow of information between multicultural teams is influenced by the factors mentioned above and may vary depending on the nature of the work. Typically, organisations tend to reach out to project members from countries that have less psychic difference to minimise the impact of difference of culture among the project members (Pinto, 2007, p. 25).

Using the work of Hofstede, with respect to differences in cultures, McGoldrick, Preto, and Carter (2015, p. 56) developed an index of cultural distance. This index can be used to evaluate the difference between two cultures. It is appreciated as an innovative framework because the authors designed an index that translates cultural features and leads to a numeric value for the difference, which can be used by organisations to find the nearest country in terms of cultural differences. The authors based the index on the difference between various cultural dimensions provided by the Hofstede Model and classified countries according to those dimensions. It is important to note that McGoldrick, Preto, and Carter,(2015, p. 100) focused on cultural distance only. On the other hand, the notion of psychic distance is more comprehensive and encompasses other dimensions besides cultural dimensions. Henderson (2005, p. 86) explained that such factors may also include political differences, geographical distance, and economic differences.

The psychic differences between team members of a project affect the execution and overall success of the project in a number of ways. For example, effective communication a critical aspect of project success, but, due to differences in language and other dimensions such as attitude towards authority, conflicts among team members may arise, leading to inefficient communications and even in project failure. Thus, it is important to understand how difference in cultures affects the management and performance of projects with multi-cultural teams (Binder, 2007, p. 87).

2.9. Referential Framework

Multicultural teams and geographically dispersed projects have grown with the increasing number of transnational companies opening offices in different countries looking to gain a competitive edge in the market. The reasons for global expansion range from gaining geographical proximity to customers, to reducing labour costs with cheaper labour. This phenomenon is changing the way organisations work, especially in areas related to human resources. **Today, companies and therefore projects are being globalised. But a firm cannot handle multinational projects in the same way as local projects (Stahl, et al., 2010, p. 690). This is because the former has a geographically dispersed personnel staff with the potential for significant cultural differences.** One cannot deny that information technologies have helped make global communication much easier, flexible and prompt. Starting with the simplest innovations such as the telephone, along with email, chat tools and video conferencing, these technologies help geographically dispersed teams feel less distant, and distance is no longer a barrier (Elena 2010, p. 657).

Members of the most experienced teams now have the ability to lead projects without having to constantly travel, thereby reducing travel costs. **Thomsett (2009, p. 43) identified an additional advantage within the project of multicultural and scattered teams, in that projects can utilise the expertise, experience, and talent of people around the world who can contribute valid, reliable, and innovative ideas to a**

project to make it more successful. Unfortunately, multicultural teams also bring negative elements, which, if not handled correctly, can significantly affect projects. First, is the language barrier. For project success, proper communication is vital and language is a basic element in this regard. Due to different languages, effective communication can be difficult and conflict resolution will not be as agile, among other aspects that may be affected adversely (Marchewka, 2014, p. 50).

On the other hand, there are also factors (usually invisible in the project plans and much more difficult to identify) that may generate discrepancies and demotivate team members due to cultural differences. Due to differences in cultures, individual characteristics can cause conflict such as differences in religion, politics, and attitudes toward different races, sexes and genders. These affect the overall efficiency of a project.

2.10. Culture and Project Management

The Project Management Institute (PMI), as a recognized institution in the field of project management, mentioned in the conceptual framework of the Guide to the Directorate PMI Project (Cheng, *et al.*, 2012) the importance of understanding a project environment and noted that almost all projects are planned and implemented in a social, economic and environmental context with positive and negative impacts that may be desired or unwanted. **The project team should consider a project in the context of the cultural, social, international, political and physical environment (Rockstuhl and Ng, 2008, p. 206).**

2.11. Cultural and Social Environment

The team needs to understand how a project affects people and how people affect the project. This may require an understanding of the economic, demographic, educational, ethical, ethnic, religious, and other characteristics of the people involved in the project or who may have an interest in it (Rockstuhland Ng, 2008, p. 210). The project manager should also examine the organisational culture and determine whether project management plays a valued role and has authority to manage the project. Similarly, **the PMI indicates that most organisations have developed unique cultures. These cultures are reflected in numerous factors, including (Cheng, et al., 2012):**

- **Values, norms, beliefs and shared expectations**
- **Policies and procedures**
- **Perception of authority relations**
- **Work ethic and work hours**

Thus, it is evident that the Project Management Institute (PMI) places an importance on cultural aspects as part of the elements to take into account in project management.

2.12. Virtual Teams

Simkhovych(2009) define a virtual team as a group of people who work interdependently with a common purpose across space, time, and organisational boundaries using technology. Pinto, Slevin, and English (2009, p. 648) defined a virtual team in the same way as

Simkhovych(2009, p. 390) did, indicating factors of distance, time, organisational boundaries, and the use of technology in communications.

Table 1 compares a traditional project team and a virtual project team, based on these authors' work.

Traditional Project Team	Virtual Project Team
Team members are of the same organisation	Team members may be of different organisations, including competitors, customers and suppliers
Team members are trained and often certified according to the standards of the organisation	Team members are selected based on their demonstrated competencies
The roles and team members are recognized	It is expected that team members perform and contribute to the project using their qualities
There is little trust between team members and the project manager	A permanent trust among team members, the project manager and project stakeholders is required.
Processes to work in the organisation are rigid and defined	Work processes are flexible and accepted by the team.
The position and authority of the project manager is considered important to the success of the project.	The knowledge and ability of the manager and the project team are more important.
The project manager must persuade others through the use of power	The project manager must persuade others through knowledge and influence.
The project manager and team members assert their point of view even at the expense of others.	A comparative perspective is maintained with negotiation to reach agreements.
The work environment is stable and is not expected to change.	The work environment is constantly changing.
There is little formal communication between team members and others involved	The environment consists of continuous communications, both structured and unstructured and open presentations
Team members physically work nearby.	Team members work remotely and face to face never known. The work can be done anywhere.
There is the presence of a hierarchical and political environment.	The emphasis is on a network structure at all levels with a strong emphasis on reducing power and hierarchy.

Table 1: Difference between a traditional project team and a virtual project team

Source: Author: adapted from Simkhovych (2009) and Pinto, Slevin, and English (2009)

2.13. Virtual Teams Project

Similarly, as Layman et al. (2006, p. 794) gave importance to understanding the cultural environment of a project, they also emphasized the importance of understanding the international and political environment as well as the physical environment of the project.

2.13.1. International and Political Environment:

Some team members must be familiar with the laws and customs applicable at the international, national, regional and local level, as well as the political climate that could affect the project. Other international factors to consider are the differences in time zones, national and regional holidays, travel requirements for face to face meetings and teleconference logistics (Jones and George, 2016, p. 77).

2.13.2. Physical Environment

If the project will affect their physical realm, some team members should be familiar with the local ecology and physical geography that could either affect the project or be affected by the project (Casey, 2010, p. 86).

2.14. Importance of Culture in Multicultural Team Projects

The majority of the difficulties in global projects are not caused by a lack of technical expertise, hard work, or good intentions, but rather

caused by a lack of personal skills to successfully interact with counterparts from other countries and cultures. The number of people involved in international business has increased dramatically over the past decade, and today, with the advent of virtual teams, global personal skills have become a daily necessity for many professionals around the world. Trompenaars and Hampden (2008) argued that in an environment of multinational projects, culture is a key variable. The project manager can face serious problems related to cost, time, quality, and human resources if he/she is unable to recognize and deal with important cultural elements or lacks understanding about cultural differences between project participants. **The different cultural dimensions raised by researchers in the field, are helpful to measure relations with other cultures. An appreciation of these critical dimensions of the differences in cultures can assist project managers in understanding the dynamics of culture and its effect on the behaviour of the team (Chatenier, et al., 2010, p. 273).**

2.15. Team Structure and Project Management

Team structure affects the performance level of the whole project. In tasks requiring diverse perspectives, multicultural teams are more effective, compared to teams that perform routine actions. On the other hand, Shokef and Erez (2008, p. 191) argued that when uncertainty is high and the collectivism index is low, team members struggle to share information and carry out their work effectively because they usually work independently. But when they know exactly what to do, they work more

interdependently and the results are more effective. It is interesting to note here that the choice of the cultural origin of the members may be a relevant variable to achieving team effectiveness, as certain cultural combinations may be more effective in certain situations due to fewer conflicts (Klitmøller and Luring, 2013, p. 406).

If the composition of teams is analysed, the literature has found that while professional diversity increases disagreements related to a task to be performed (considered "positive" disagreement because it improves the results), when the diversity is in race and culture, conflicts are personal and emotional, making tasks difficult for a team. An important element to be considered when talking about multicultural teams is the organisational context in which they operate. Prabhakar (2005, p. 56) argued that according to the position in which the organisation is in along the continuous monolithic-multicultural parameter, the perception of differences between members within work teams varies. That is, the organisational framework affects the performance of multicultural teams (Galloway, 2007).

Relations between team members also evolve over time. During the early stages, stronger and closer interpersonal relationships exist between the members that have similar cultures, but this effect dissipates as time progresses. If there is a greater understanding between people of similar cultures, it can be expected that these relationships have an influence on group behaviour. **Some studies have found that the taking certain roles among members of multicultural teams is influenced by the cultures of its members (Guest and MacQueen, 2007, p. 90).**

Some members are more likely to take on roles with greater power or influence over members belonging to other cultures. However, the results have not been entirely straightforward. At times it seems that technical competence assumes a major role in this regard, while the cultural background also has its share of influence (Damian, 2007, p. 27).

2.15.1. *Cognition*

Difficulties in communication processes and interaction are sometimes created by the different cultures of team members. This may lead to "delays" in reaching agreements and cause delay in the overall project completion. A fit between the coordinated actions of members of the teams is important. While this may be generated from a shared history of interactions that generate a collective learning, it is difficult to observe without the development of the maturity of the team (Huang and Trauth, 2007, p. 37).

In an interesting study, Thomsett (2009, p. 49) argues that people of different national origins have radically varying conceptions of teamwork. The author uses metaphors to show the mental model of existing teams in each culture. The different metaphors affect performance expectations and acceptable working relationships in the team. These metaphors, according to the author, are strongly related to cultural dimensions presented by Hofstede. The important thing to note here is that different mental models entail certain expectations about how a team should be managed and how it evolves. If

a team has members with different expectations, the potential for conflict increases and the ability to set shared working standards and norms becomes more difficult. Perhaps most importantly, the development of a collective mindset (or mental model), is very difficult. When multicultural teams must make decisions, standards and cultural patterns influence the behaviour of individuals. For example, collectivist cultures tend to take more cooperative behaviours in group decision making, while individualist cultures choose more competitive behaviours (Ajmal, Helo, and Kekäle, 2010, p. 168).

2.16. Approaches to Multicultural Project Management

The following discussion presents some theoretical approaches developed to address work in multicultural teams.

- Approach 1: This considers the conditions needed for an effective multicultural team. i.e., structural and design factors.
- Approach 2: This discusses how to develop a team to achieve better results, i.e., a focus on the processes (Ang and Van Dyne, 2015, p. 56).
- Approach 3: This is the views of both (hybrid) called the mixed approach.

Stahl, et.al (2010, p. 701), argues that for multicultural teams to be effective, you have to generate certain (personal and organisational) conditions for enhancing the work effectiveness. They are:

- To facilitate interaction among the team members
- To have policies to facilitate and encourage both teamwork and diversity.
- To have institutional environment to support them to achieve good performance.
- To reduce the obstacles of cultural and political resistance

The hypothesis that arises is that the benefits of multicultural teams outweigh the costs in cases where the hybrid approach is followed. The clear structural factors and the process will help them achieve better results.

Other authors suggest it is necessary for multi-cultural teams, once formed, to carry out certain measures to facilitate their ability to work together, that is, to help them through the process so they can become as a team. Brown, Huettner, and James-Tanny (2010, p. 94), for example, have identified three different types of multicultural teams:

- Destroyers: those teams that fail to adapt to the cultures of the various members and generate a climate of distrust and jealousy in the transfer of information.
- Equalizers: intercultural teams where the integration of the members is satisfactory and meet the objectives, but that fail to generate a synergy that generates greater added value resulting in a culturally homogenous team. This type of team works more efficiently, but does not justify costs involved in relation to the added value generates.

- Creators: teams that can generate significant added value from the combination and use of the different perspectives and visions of its members.

The question is: what are the factors that lead to determining that a multicultural team will acquire each of these characteristics? These authors suggest that in order to generate added value from these teams, three essential steps are necessary (Ochieng and Price, 2010).

- 1) Mapping the characteristics of each of the members and see how each can impact team performance.
- 2) Build bridges for communication and an explanation of the differences to be taken into account.
- 3) Integrating these differences through careful monitoring of the participation of the members, agreements and making decisions.

Finally, other authors combine the perspective of the structure and process to identify success factors in multicultural teams. Brett, Behfarand Kern (2009, p. 261) state that for a team to function properly, its members should manage their specific language solvency, i.e. the technical skills that justify its differential input to a computer; a generic language that implies a basic knowledge of codes that handles its counterpart for a common basis to communicate; with an integrator or translator to facilitate relations between members.

As individuals construct their identities from identification with their group, relationships within multicultural teams occur among people more

"close" culturally, generating certain factors of influence on the group and desired behaviours (Von Glinow, 2005, p. 49). Despite these hypotheses, the authors conclude that the national cultures of the members do not generate significant difference in the performance of multicultural teams, but that the formal positions of members, their individual orientations and centrality are the most influential factors. That is, differences in themselves do not cause problems, but the team context and guidance of team members through a local culture channels these differences (Ochieng, and Price, 2009, p. 531).

It is important to note that the discussion above indicates that communication and interpersonal skills of managers and team members are critical in all situations. Furthermore, the experience of working in multicultural teams also helps members to proactively understand and avoid certain barriers that create hurdles in effective communication among the team members. All of the approaches describes above pointed that respecting differences in cultural background is crucial for dealing with multicultural team. People from different social backgrounds have different ways to interact and some may be offended unintentionally. Therefore knowledge and understanding about different cultures potentially help to avoid such situations. Furthermore, a sound and effective framework for conflict resolution is required for every multicultural team. This is because conflicts are bound to emerge during the execution of project no matter how effective team management and communication policies are. Thus multicultural project team manager must use an effective conflict

management methodology to ensure high level of effectiveness and efficiency is achieved in the project.

2.17. Summary

Considering the debate presented above, this study concludes that;

- Project manager must have the ability to identify the cultural orientation of each individual and take advantage of them to achieve the ultimate goals of the project.
- Project manager must be able to identify problems that are generated by cultural situations, versus problems caused by performance, attitude, or capacity of the team members.
- Cultural dimensions are a guide to leading the project team; they show trends and widespread behaviour based on surveys. However, the cultural study is not an exact science.
- Cultural dimensions must be used with care and objectivity; they should not be used to categorise team members within a certain stereotype by the nationality.
- Virtual project teams need a higher level of commitment by members to achieve goals because, the members face additional problems that not present in a traditional arrangement.
- Multicultural team members should be very careful with way they treat their colleagues; culture and customs of the other members may generate differences and misunderstandings.

- Language is one aspect that is more easily identified as a cultural problem, however simply mastering a second language does not ensure that intercultural communication will be effective. When a national culture is very strong, this affects the organisational culture.
- Virtual teams have the advantage of being impacted to a lesser extent by human relationships because their main point of communication is through technology.
- Virtual team meetings are more effective in the use of time because members are limited to only discussing the project topics. There is little time for discussion of a social nature optimizing the team's meeting.
- Performance evaluations of virtual teams are more objective, since they are based on results and not on human relationships.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The methodology of a study is the blueprint of the study that shows the sequential step by step process to be executed by the researcher to achieve the aims and objectives of the study. This chapter presents the methodological choices made in this study, as well as justifications for those choices. The chapter begins with philosophical assumptions undertaken in this study, followed by a discussion of the research approach, research design, data collection method, data analysis techniques, ethical considerations, limitations, and validity and reliability of this study. Analysing the research objective requires a well-defined methodology to enable achieving right conclusions. Saunders et al. (2003) suggest that the research design should be divided into consecutive phases; researchers should define how they are going to tackle these phases and determine their approaches of each phase before embarking on answering their research objectives. Saunders et al. (2003) propose the research process onion framework to depict these phases. The research onion can be utilized to outline the key assumptions of the research philosophy, distinguish between the inductive and deductive approaches, identify the research strategy, examine the time horizons and determine the data collection methods.

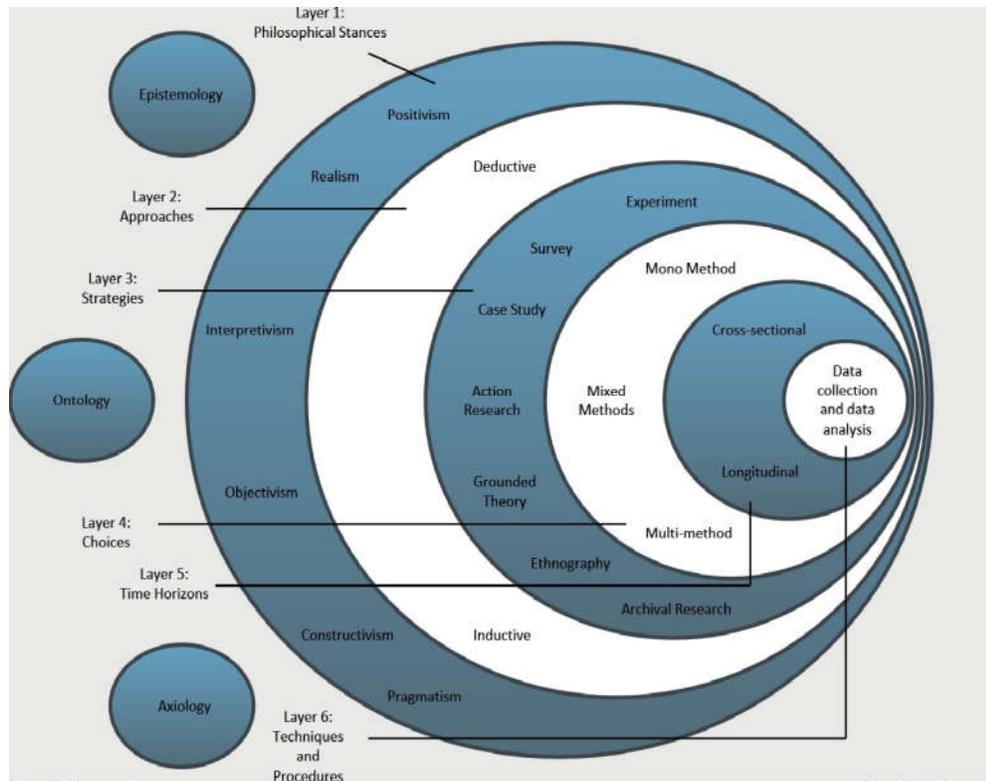


Figure 1: Research Onion

Source: Saunders et.al (2007)

3.2. *Ontological Considerations*

Another philosophical aspect of a study is its ontological considerations. Ontological considerations address the relationship between social phenomena and related social actors and reflect how a researcher views the world. There are two opposing ontological positions. First, there is objectivism in which researcher assumes that social phenomena are independent of social actors. The actions and behaviour of social actors do not affect social phenomena and the latter are beyond the reach of the former. On the contrary, the constructionism school of ontology asserts that there is a significant relationship between social

actors and social phenomena and the latter is not independent from the former. Constructionists argue that social phenomena develop and are in a constant state of change due to actions and behaviours of related social actors (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

In this study, the social phenomenon is multicultural teams and the related social actors are the project managers and the team members. It is fairly obvious to assume that there is a significant relationship between multicultural team dynamics as well as their impact on project management with the actions and behaviour of team members and project managers. Multicultural team and their impact do not develop due to the actions and behaviour of team members and managers, but also face a state of constant change. Therefore, the ontological position in this study is constructionism.

3.3. Research Approach

Research approaches can be categorised into two categories. The first is deductive reasoning or a 'top-down' approach. With this approach, the study begins by collecting general observations, identifying patterns of generalities, and then drawing specific conclusions. Typically, deductive reasoning is used to test existing theories. On the contrary, the second approach is inductive reasoning or a 'bottoms-up' approach begins by collecting specific observations and then continues to draw general conclusions. Typically, inductive reasoning is used to develop new theories based on observations and conclusions drawn from the study (Creswell, 2013).

Considering the aims and objectives of this study, it begins by gathering specific observations, i.e. experiences and opinions of project managers (social actors) to study the impact of multicultural teams (social phenomenon). After gathering specific observations, this study identified patterns and generalities and then drew general observations. Thus, this study follows inductive reasoning approach. The justification of selecting inductive approach is that majority of the time, the findings of the research are inductive in nature which means that it works better when the research information is incomplete. In other words, inductive approach assists the researcher in drawing meaningful conclusion in a limited time.

3.4. Type of Investigation

There are three classifications of a research study based on the purpose of the study. First, explanatory research, in which the purpose is to test existing theories to add new dimensions to existing knowledge. The second type is a descriptive study, whose purpose is to study a phenomenon and describe it. This is primarily aimed to describe social phenomena. Third, is exploratory study in which the purpose is to explain how and why a social phenomenon exists and related aspects (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

This study uses inductive reasoning to test existing theories regarding the impact of multicultural teams on project management that are presented in the previous chapter. Furthermore, this study has been conducted to add new insights and recommendations regarding the

impact of multicultural teams on project management. Thus, this is an explanatory study.

3.5. Research Design

Research design refers to the choices made by the researcher with respect to sources and types of data used in the study to derive results and conclusions. There are three types of research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed. Qualitative research design involves collecting qualitative data and using relevant techniques to achieve the aims and objectives of the study. Quantitative, on the other hand, is based on collecting only quantitative data and using relevant techniques to achieve the aims and objectives of the study. The mixed research design is a hybrid of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2008).

This researcher chose to conduct a qualitative study in which data is collected through semi-structured interviews, and is analysed using NIVIO software. This choice has been made in accordance with the research philosophy, research approach, and type of investigation. The epistemological assumption of this study, i.e. interpretivism, confirms that the methods of natural sciences are not applicable and since quantitative data is not required, this study is conducted using qualitative data. In addition, according to the approach the study must begin with making specific observations. Thus interviews were used to gather observations from project managers and then the researcher continued to draw general results. Finally, this is an explanatory study, where opinions and

experiences are valuable..A qualitative study assists the researcher in having an in-depth and extensive investigation of the research problem and research phenomena, which is not possible in quantitative approach. Moreover, in qualitative approach, the researcher can manipulate the data (questions) in order to find the most effective and meaningful answers from the respondents thus having a positive impact on the overall validity of the research.

3.6. Data Collection Methods

There are various types and techniques for data collection for research. However, they are broadly categorised into two categories on the basis of their sources: primary and secondary.

In this study both primary and secondary research has been conducted. The secondary sources typically consist of academic books, newspaper articles, academic journals articles or peer-reviewed studies, industry reports, government reports, reports and researches from international bodies, among others. (Levy and Lemeshow, 2013). This study uses academic books, peer reviewed articles, and industry reports to conduct secondary research. The results of the secondary research were presented in Chapter 2.

In the case of primary research, this study conducted semi-structured interviews to gather qualitative data. The main justification of choosing primary data in this research is because it would allow the researcher to collect large amount of data, which can be manipulated in

accordance to the research questions and research problem of the study. The details of the primary data collected are as follows:

3.6.1. Semi-Structured Interviews

There are several methods of qualitative data collection, of which the most popular are focus groups and interviews. Focus groups are relatively time efficient because a large amount of data can be collected in relatively less time as compared to interviews, however, interviews are relatively easier to conduct as there is only one participant involved. The interviewer can manage the focus of discussion and record data accurately as compared to focus groups. Furthermore, interviews allow researchers to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, which is one of the ethical concerns of this study (Myers, 2013).

Thus, this researcher chose to conduct individual interviews. Individual interviews are classified into three categories, structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. In structured interviews, researchers have a set of pre-determined questions. They are very time efficient and interviewees cannot deviate from the focus of research. However, they lack flexibility and do not allow the interviewer to ask follow up questions. Unstructured interviews, on the other hand, have significant flexibility and no pre-determined set of questions. The interview begins with an open ended question and respondents have freedom to express their feelings and experiences without limiting their focus. Semi-structured interviews are in the middle between the two. They use a pre-determined set of themes which the interviewer uses to ask questions and maintain the focus of

discussion within the scope of research. There is also a sufficient degree of flexibility in the semi-structured interview method, allowing for the interviewer to ask follow up questions (Ng and Coakes, 2013).

Semi-structured interviews therefore allow the researcher to obtain specific and relevant information on the research question so as to achieve the research objectives clearly and accurately. It is important to ensure that the data collected answers the research question with relevant information and does not deviate into general impressions of the participants, which would make it difficult to meet the objectives of the research and conclude with meaningful, practical, and specific findings. Semi-structured interviews help the researcher to align with this goal. Moreover, the purpose of these interviews is to find out the perceptions of the participants about working in multicultural teams; their preferences, benefits, problem and challenges in this regard, and how they see the role of culture in multicultural teams.

The researcher chose semi-structured interviews based on the pros and cons mentioned above. A set of themes were prepared using the literature review conducted in this study. A number of open ended questions were asked to interviewees in order to gather data for this study. These questions were based on the research objectives where the researcher aims to analysis the multicultural issues in project management and challenges in this regard particularly in F5. As discussed earlier, these objectives align with various aspects investigated in the interviews.

Furthermore, the researcher has conducted one-on-one interviews because of various benefits this approach provides. It allows the researcher to directly engage the participants to extract the required information, which they may not otherwise provide in an impersonal survey link or in a focus group interview due to the influence of other participants.

3.6.2. *Data Analysis Technique*

There are several methods and techniques to analyse qualitative data, which include grounded theory, and content analysis. However, the most commonly used qualitative data analysis technique is Thematic analysis (TA). It enables the analyst to pinpoint, examine, and record generalities and patterns in text(s) under consideration, which are called 'themes'. There are six phases that constitute complete thematic analysis (see appendix A). Using these themes, TA, accesses the text and identifies patterns that are important in describing the phenomenon under consideration. The process consists of six phases (Peters, *et al.*, 2013).

3.7. *Sampling Methods and Sample*

Sampling refers to identifying research participants from target population to gather data for the research. Sampling is conducted because researcher cannot gather data from all the members of target population. There are several methods of sampling which are broadly categorised into probability and non-probability sampling. In the former, every member of the population has equal chances to be recruited in the sample but in later

the probability of being selected in the sample for all members is not equal (Pickard, 2013).

The target population for this study is project managers that have been involved in managing multicultural teams. Since the population is large, diverse, and not wholly accessible, therefore this study adopted nonprobability method. There are also several techniques in non-probability sampling such as convenience sampling. This technique is based on convenience of researcher in terms of proximity and accessibility to members of target population.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in social science research refer to the set of morally outlined principles and values with respect to integrity of researcher towards research participants and research community. Researchers adhere to these moral principles and values throughout the research process (Reason & Bradbury, 2013).

In this study, in order to show integrity with fellow researchers, the author of this study used Harvard referencing style to give citations and a reference list. Using this author ensured proper credit is given to the work of fellow researchers. On the other hand, references and citations helped the researcher to prevent plagiarism which is a serious academic offense and compromises integrity of the study. This is particularly important in secondary research.

With respect to research participants, this study firstly obtained consent of participants. A signed consent form as well as verbal consent

was obtained to conduct interviews explaining that their participation was on their own free will and they could leave research at any point of time without any obligations. In addition, confidentiality and anonymity is important in social research which requires researcher to keep the identity of the participants hidden from readers. This study does not provide any personal information such as email addresses about the participants that could lead the readers to trace the identity of participants.

3.9. Limitations

The primary limitations in this study are credited to the inherent limitation in the research design chosen for this study i.e. qualitative research. Qualitative research is criticised based on the fact that there is higher degree of bias. The reliability and validity as discussed in next section is limited as compared to quantitative design and mixed design. The foremost limitation of this study is that it lacks quantitative evidence. Furthermore, the sample size of this study is relatively smaller and more interviews would have increased the credibility of results and conclusions. In addition, this study recruits managers from F5 Networks only and therefore the results i.e. multicultural issues in implementation of project management) drawn in this study are also limited to the opinions and experiences of managers in F5 Networks. A broader sample from other companies would have increased the reliability and validity of results. Furthermore, the secondary research is based on studies published in English language only and ignores any studies that are published in other languages.

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4. CHAPTER 4: Results and Discussion

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents results of primary research conducted in this study. As explained earlier, primary research is based on interviews of managers working in multicultural teams in IT industry. The results are presented in various themes identified in the transcripts using Nivio software. The chapter begins with presenting each variable with explanations that are supported by quotes from interviewees. The chapter then continues to present a discussion that highlights how these issues affect implementation of a project. Finally, the chapter ends with summary of results and discussion.

4.2. Multicultural Issues

4.2.1. Communication Issues

The most common issue when studying issues of multicultural teams is communication issues. The communication issues are not confined to difference in language, but cultural differences also cause miscommunication. The results of the interviews showed that lack of English skills is not major issue but miscommunication can also be caused due to differences in attitude and perceptions. The main impact as identified by majority of the respondent was that miscommunication causes misunderstandings which in turn affects time efficiency and understanding of the task. Miscommunication has been highlighted by many of the respondents as the strongest factor which produces adverse effect on team performance. Mostly the respondents opined that time is wasted due to misunderstandings created by miscommunication. For example one of the respondents opined:

“One cannot foresee how communications between people from different culture can be affected negatively during a discussion. It is possible that what you say in accordance with your own culture means quite differently in context of another culture. So when misunderstanding emerges subsequent explanations consume a lot of time.”

The results also show that if such differences are not promptly addressed then communication between team members becomes more and more difficult. Lack of understanding about the culture and difference the way people communicate has made it increasingly difficult for members to understand each other and miscommunications are magnified. If there is a lack of understanding of the intended meaning for example then both sender and receiver of message lose their confidence in each other. One of the respondents highlighted the impact of words used during conversation. He stated:

“Communication was an issue. I learned to select my words more carefully”

This statement shows that he faced communication issues and then attempted to solve them by being careful about the words he uses in conversations.

Careful selection of words can be related to another aspect of miscommunication. This is the use of humour and sarcasm and how people in different cultures react to them. One of the respondents opined that while dealing with member of a different nation project managers must always be very precise about the task and activities to be carried out. In his words:

“You must have an idea about sense of humour of that nation and how they take sarcasm. Sometimes it can be very demotivating or even offending”

It is also possible that team members are aware of different dimensions of culture of other members based on their previous communication experiences. But lack

of understanding of cultural standards and norms such as sense of humour and sarcasm may have significant impact on team performance. A team member could get demotivated and lose will to perform better just because project manager offended him/her either intentionally or unintentionally. One of the managers opined that in his experience Japanese people hesitate to precisely say yes or no to a particular strategy and therefore he always had to find other ways to understand whether they agree or not. He showed that it was pretty frustrating in the beginning but later as he gained understanding of their attitude he got used to it.

These opinions imply can be related to effectiveness of team. The literature review showed that participation and motivation of team members is essential and miscommunication due to lack of understanding of cultural difference could directly affect the level of motivation and participation. Due to lack of participation of team members the team integrity is also compromised. Low integrity of team also affects team performance. The review of literature showed, there are different cultural dimensions which affect the attitude and behaviour of managers towards their subordinates. For example in individualists countries people may not be willing to share their ideas as much as people in collectivist cultures do. So if a manager from individualist culture is managing people belonging to collectivist culture then it is essential for him to go against his own culture and share ideas with subordinates otherwise members would not deliver maximum performance.

The results also show that decision making processes are also affected by miscommunications caused by difference in culture. One of the respondent stated: *“The main disadvantage of miscommunication is that in one of his my project it was so difficult to get all the members on board that I had to take most of the*

decisions on my own. It was too difficult to explain everything and gain unanimous agreement.”

This indicates that miscommunication may often create so much frustration that managers may stop communicating at all simply because it is too difficult and inefficient for them to develop and communicate effective messages with the target audience while addressing cultural issues. This is highly likely in cases of short period projects where project managers just does not have the time to get to know his/her subordinates that have different cultural background.

4.2.2. Language Issues

One on every three of the respondents identified lack of language skills as major factor that causes miscommunication which becomes a weakness to teamwork. Many of the managers had frequent experiences of language barriers. One of the respondents opined that people may not believe that English is a problem for people in IT because most of the books and educational systems have English as one of the compulsory subjects. However, the respondent share his experiences with programmers who lacked adequate English language skills, due which it was difficult for him to explain what he wanted from them. Although different respondents clearly identified countries who they believe lack adequate language skills, but this study does not highlight names of countries. This study concludes that there are different levels of English proficiency among people of different nations. For example the English proficiency of Chinese and Japanese is different from English proficiency of Germans and Swiss.

Although English is international language and is most commonly used to communicate with people from different languages cultures, yet there are cognitive strains involved in using a foreign language as medium of

communication. This means that people have to put extra effort to develop a message in second language as compared to native language and same strain occurs in understanding messages in second language. One of the persons highlighted the importance of language by stating:

“English language proficiency is a must for my team selection criteria. I would rather work with a person having less technical skills in developing a software than a person who is highly skilled but can't understand me readily.”

The statement shows that language skills are a part of competencies of a person. The higher the level of language skill the more competent other the member is seen. Another interviewee share one of his experiences where one of his subordinates repeatedly made mistakes because he could not understand him properly due to lack of English skills. He didn't want to appear incompetent in front of members so he did not ask questions during discussions. Another interviewee opined that one of the major advantages of multicultural teams is that managers could get diversity of ideas but due to low language skills some team members cannot often express their ideas properly.

4.2.3. Parochialism

Many of the respondents opined that one of the main problems in differing cultures is how people work and what is right and what is wrong. Managers often think that the only way to see the world is how they see it and the only right attitude towards work is their style and attitude. So if manager of a team belongs to an individualistic society and does not prefer to involve subordinates in decision making then it is highly likely that team members (from collectivist society) would not commend him/her as a good leader.

According to Adler (2008) there is certain degree of parochialism in all humans, however, it becomes particularly a problem when people lack the will to compromise. Adler also attempted to explain why Americans are perceived to be highly parochial because they have a history of parochialism. In past there was a tendency in Americans that they did not needed to learn other languages simply because English was universal language and it is also their native language. However, lately they have realised that learning languages of other cultures facilitate understanding of the culture which in turn increases efficiency of managers. One of the interviewees stated:

“If you want to understand a culture then start learning their language”

4.2.4. Ethnocentrism

One of the similar issues is that sometimes people are too ethnocentric and this affects team performance. They think that they are superior to others. Due to such attitude, team members may get demotivated and demoralised and even feel insulted. In some cultures self-confidence may even be interpreted as arrogance just because of lack of understanding of cultural background. For example one of the interviewees said that it is important to avoid comments and words that can offend team members. For example, it is not appropriate to refer to a person's country of origin as a third world country as it may lead to development of an inferiority complex in them against other members.

Another respondent stressed that multicultural teams are highly sensitive to jocks that can be potentially offending and may be perceived as ethnocentric and parochial attitude. Any such behaviour has significant impact on team performance. Managers must realise that due to difference in culture, the

perceptions of culturally diverse members also differ. Due to these differences different members of the team may have diverse and unique needs. It is the job of manager to understand differing needs and to cater them. One of the respondents highlighted:

“I often found that some members are more motivated by monetary incentives and others are more interested in non-monetary rewards, and I firmly believe that this is because of their different culture. So when I motivate my team I offer them rewards based on their cultural background.”

4.2.5. Discrimination

One of the most sensitive things that managers identified is the discrimination among team members based on differences in culture. There are several factors that may potentially cause discriminative attitude in a culturally diverse team. For example religion which is a significant part of culture is often the basis of discriminative attitude. There are also other factors such as gender, sexual orientation, etc. Managers opined that it is extremely important that managers know sensitive and important information about different cultures. Culture of a person dictates how he/she behaves, acts and reacts to certain situations. One of the interviewees opined:

“Culture is virtually the lifestyle of a person and you cannot just simply ask a person to change his/her lifestyle. It is important for us to develop an environment where individuality is respected and discrimination is discouraged.”

All of the interviewees agreed that it is important to respect different religions and ensure that each team member is free to practice his/her religion. It is also important to develop and encourage a team environment that discourages people

to offend others. Discrimination must always be prevented and discouraged at all costs. One of the managers clearly stated that any discrimination based on religion, race, gender, or any other factor has immediate impact on team integrity. *“Discrimination causes insecurity and inferiority in team members and their productivity is affected negatively. It is my foremost ethical principle that there is no discrimination in my team. None at all”*

4.2.6. Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution is probably the most significant and the most researched area of team management. Conflict resolution is particularly important when it comes to culturally diverse teams. Due to differences in culture the ethical and moral values of people such as what is fair and unfair, what is respect and disrespect, what is appropriate and inappropriate, etc. differ. Due to these differences it becomes difficult for managers to resolve conflicts among team members. People from some cultures are more tolerant to contrasting opinions while some are less tolerant. It is important for managers to understand how team members react to conflicting situations and how they can deal appropriately with those team members that react to conflicting situations differently. One of the managers stressed:

“Different people have different sense of fair and unfair, and they distinguish right from wrong based on their own values. Their own organisational culture has a significant impact on how they behave in a multinational project. When some members seek out for you to resolve conflict you have to meet their expectation by understanding their cultural values.”

Since conflicts can have significant impact on overall team performance and ultimately on project performance, therefore, it is crucial for managers to make efforts regarding conflict management proactively. One of the managers stated:

“The best strategy to resolve conflicts is to prevent them. If you understand cultural differences then you are able to foresee conflicts arising out of those cultural conflicts otherwise you just have to face them when they appear which is rather frustrating then challenging.”

4.2.7. Motivation Strategies

Several participants mentioned that motivating people is a crucial factor for project success. Cultural background also affects the factors that motivate people. One of the managers opined that merely involving team members in decision making and planning get them motivated to perform better. However, sometimes managers have to offer monetary rewards to motivate members to perform better. One of the managers stated:

“In case of a team with culturally diverse members, managers must realise that there can be no single team management strategy. Hiring culturally diverse people implies diverse management strategy, particularly getting them to give their best. There is no single rule.”

Thus the difference in cultural background also impacts how team members are motivated. Rewarding performance is extremely important for project managers and motivating team members to maximise performance and meet the aims and objectives of the project is critical to the project success. Some members simply want monetary rewards while others are more motivated by non-monetary rewards. Project managers especially those who are running culturally diverse

team must gain knowledge about cultural backgrounds of their team members. They should gain knowledge about factors that motivate team members as well as factors that indicate how they should be rewarded for their performance.

4.2.8. Behavioural Differences towards Authority and Hierarchy

One of the issues that managers highlighted is attitude and behaviour of people from differing cultures towards authority and hierarchy. One of the respondents opined that teams are by default flat in structure and therefore it becomes an inherent problem in its design. In some cultures, people are treated differently based on various factors such as age, designation, etc. These factors assign different statuses to each person. Flat structure in a team is not favourable to people from such cultures. If team members belong to a hierarchical culture the norm in such a team is to defer to higher status members. If a member does not comply with this norm and questions the judgement or authority of a fellow member then his/her credibility and stature is damaged. He/she even might face humiliation because of noncompliance to group norms. This is most probably related to egalitarian culture.

Conflicts may also arise due to non-compliance to group norms. One of the project managers shared his experience and concluded that due to difference in cultural norms the behaviour of some team members towards other members was taken as an offense and disrespectful. Consequently, conflicts and power struggle emerged and ultimately the team disintegrated and the whole project blew up. Another manager highlighted that hierarchy is extremely important and sensitive issue in Korean culture and if somebody bypasses hierarchy it is considered to be an offense to the whole organisation. In contrast, US culture is not too interested

to hierarchy and bosses are accessible to all team members. One of the respondents stated (the respondent mentioned a certain culture but for the sake of confidentiality and anonymity the name of culture is omitted:

“When you are dealing with [...] you must know when and with whom to complain to get your problem resolved otherwise you will only worsen the situation.”

4.2.9. Difference in Decision Making

There are enormous differences in decision making in different cultures. Especially, the time taken in decision making process varies from one culture to another. One of the respondents opined that typically people from USA are interested to make quick decisions. They do not tend to conduct lengthy analysis before making their choices. This is opposite to Korean culture where rigorous analysis are undertaken to support decision making process, and their decision making process also takes more time as compared to their American counterparts. Another manager stated

“For a team to work effectively, particularly in long term projects, it is important that managers clearly communicate decision making process with the team members in the beginning. This will help in resolving conflicts also.”

4.3. Discussion

Existing trends in modern business world have increasingly been oriented to contribute to globalisation. These trends are reflected by the increase in international corporations conducting cross border transactions and operating in multiple countries while having headquarters in country of origin. Going global

and having operations in different countries require organisations to hire local people who have different culture, business norms, and social values (Stahl, et al., 2010). Due to these differences the business environment has become complex day by day. On the other hand competition has been increasing forcing organisations to seek competitive advantages continuously. Having a culturally diverse workforce requires managers to implement adequate management strategies so that there is strategic alignment between human resource and organisational aims and objectives (Pieterse, Van Knippenberg, & Van Dierendonck, 2013).

Cultural backgrounds have significant impact on behaviour and lifestyle of people. In case of a project that involves people from different cultures, difference in behaviour and lifestyles affect the performance of its members which in turn affects the team performance, and ultimately the performance of the project is affected (Groves & Feyerherm, 2011). Major issues that may arise in a culturally diverse team during implementation of a project include: lack of communication or inefficient communication among team members; behavioural problems such as ethnocentrism, discrimination; and conflict resolution problems, among others. All of any of such problems has direct and indirect impact on team performance (Kottak, 2011).

In order to optimise project performance, project manager must be capable to understand cultural differences among various team members and to handle problems that they might produce. For example the most significant problem in culturally diverse teams is communication problems. These communication problems are not limited to language deficiency but also comprise of behavioural

problems that may create tensions among team members or demotivate team members which ultimately affect project performance (Crisp & Turner, 2011).

Implementation of project refers to execution of the project, and to optimise project implementation project managers must be ready to deal with various issues that may hinder smooth implementation or compromise efficiency of the project. In a project, the team is an important stakeholder and therefore the satisfaction of the team is also important for project managers (Nielsen & Nielsen, 2013). Various issues highlighted in the results section have potential to hinder project implementation at all stages. In the beginning ineffective communication may lead to misunderstanding about goals and scope of the project. Conflicts due to difference in cultures may cause low level of individual and team performance, and may lead to failure to meet deadline of the project (Nielsen & Nielsen, 2011). There are several methods and techniques provided by academic literature to resolve issues of culturally diverse teams. However, the scope of this study does not include detailed study of such methods. However, this study highlights the fact that in order to resolve problems caused by cultural differences it is important for managers to understand different cultures first. Experience of working in culturally diverse teams also helps managers to foresee and deal with issues effectively (Joshi & Roh, 2009). On the other hand, it is equally important for team members to understand the impact of cultural diversity on team performance and play their part to address such issues. Managers and managerial interventions alone cannot sufficiently maximise team and project performance until supported by team cooperation (Kearney, Gebert, & Voelpel, 2009).

4.4. Chapter Summary

The results and discussion presented above shows that presently the most common problem faced by the participants in culturally diverse teams is communication issue. Various communication issues occur due language barriers, lack of cultural understanding, and poor knowledge of lifestyle which leads to miscommunication. The results showed that lack of English skills does not necessarily lead to miscommunication but it can also be a result of differences in perceptions and attitude. Miscommunication produces misunderstandings, which are hazardous for the successful implementation of project. These misunderstandings demand time and efforts from manager to resolve them, which compromises time efficiency and task performance. Language barriers have also been identified by one out of every three respondents as a significant factor for creating miscommunications among team.

The results also highlight that there is certain degree of parochialism in everybody and it creates communication problems within a team and compromises cohesiveness and integrity of the team. Due to parochialism team members may get demotivated and their productivity is compromised. Another similar issue that compromises project implementation is ethnocentrism among team members. Ethnocentric people believe that they are superior to other team members. Such attitude and perception leads to discriminative attitude which is highly unproductive for the team. Typically team members may feel insulted and demoralised by discrimination. Discrimination has also been identified as one of the most sensitive issue which is based on cultural differences. A number of factors have potential to encourage discriminative behaviour which include difference in religion, gender differences, sexual orientation, among others. Collectively all participants highlighted the need for project managers to gain

understanding about such differences and ensure that discriminative attitude is prevented in the team.

Probably the most researched issue of team management is conflict resolution, and it is equally important in culturally diverse teams as it is important in monoculture team. The cultural differences in team members implies that there are also differences in moral and ethical values of members, for example their perception about what is fair and unfair, about respectful attitude and disrespect, etc. Due to these differences team members may not be satisfied with decisions of managers regarding a conflict between two or more members. Conflict resolution is complex and difficult, and thus affects team performance and project performance adversely. Moreover, there is a significant impact of conflicts on individual and team performance and then it ultimately affect project performance. This warrants that managers must be able resolve conflicts while ensuring satisfaction of team members to keep them motivated and productive. Motivation of team members is also important to ensure high level of productivity of individuals, team, and the overall project. Due to difference in cultural background people have different types of motivating factors. This implies that project managers particularly those managing culturally diverse teams should have adequate knowledge to identify important motivating factors of team members within the context of their cultural background.

Cultural differences also develop the attitude and behaviour of people towards authority and hierarchy. Different cultures have different behaviours towards hierarchy and authority and due to differences in cultural norms the behaviour of some team members with seniors may be taken as an offense and disrespectful. As a result, conflicts and power struggle may develop among team members. In

order to manage a culturally diverse workforce, managers are required to implement a variety of management strategies so that they can tackle issues due to cultural differences. Cultural backgrounds shape the lifestyle and behaviour of people and these behaviours affect the performance of team they form. Managers can optimise project performance by gaining understanding cultural differences among team members and understand how they can handle them effectively. It is also important to note that managers and managerial interventions alone are not sufficient enough to maximise team performance and project performance. The team members also need to understand cultural differences and assist managers to prevent problems due to cultural difference that may compromise their own individual performance or the performance of the entire project.

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5. Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents conclusions and recommendations derived after the analysis of the collected data. The chapter begins with summary of results and conclusions drawn based on these results. Then recommendations with respect to subject are provided to effectively manage multi-cultural teams for successful implementation of projects. Finally the chapter ends with a brief discussion of limitations of the study, and aspects future researches should focus on.

5.2. Major Conclusions

This study focused on exploring issues in multicultural teams that affect project implementation. The study conducted qualitative research to identify such issues within the perspective of project managers. It has been concluded that cultural differences have significant impact on project implementation because they can affect individual performance of team members as well as the performance of whole team. This study concludes that the most common problem faced by managers of culturally diverse teams is effective communication. It has been identified that communication issues primarily emerges due to absence of common language. The study concludes that perception and attitudes of the team members are also associated with communication issue, and not all blame can be put on absence of common language. As a result of poor communication, misunderstanding develops among team. Resolving misunderstanding is a time consuming effort, and normally produce negative effect on project performance. Language barriers have also been identified by one out of every three respondents as a significant factor creating miscommunications among team. The project

implementation is hindered by adverse impacts of issue created by cultural differences provided that managers fail to address them properly and effectively.

The study also concludes that there is certain degree of parochialism in all team members due to which certain communication issues may emerge which can hinder implementation of project. The by product of parochialism is demotivation, and teams cannot perform properly without proper motivation. Due to demotivation productivity of team deteriorates. Ethnocentrism is a similar and significant factor which also compromises project implementation by adversely affecting performance of team members. Ethnocentric people have preconceive belief about their have superiority over other team members. This attitude and perception may encourage discriminative behaviour which in turn produces significant adverse impacts on productivity of discriminated team members. Most common effects of discrimination are that team members may feel insulted and get demoralised. Discrimination is known to be associated with difference in culture and is considered to be a serious and sensitive issue. Typically, the factors that provide basis for discriminative attitude are difference in religion, gender differences, sexual orientation, among others. The study concluded that project managers must have understanding of factors that may cause discriminative attitude. It is important to prevent discriminative behaviour in its all forms at all times.

The study also highlighted that there is an overwhelming amount of literature focusing conflict resolution in team management. Conflict management is equally important in both culturally diverse teams as well as monoculture teams. The study concluded that due to differences in cultural background there are differences in the moral and ethical values of team members. When team

members seek the help of manager to resolve a conflict between them, the decision of project manager may not satisfy their individual ethical and moral standards. Therefore, it is important that project manager can understand and appreciate the differences among team while keeping them focused towards goals. Dissatisfaction of team members affects their productivity and motivation. This makes conflict resolution complex and difficult thereby compromising performance of project manager which ultimately affect project implementation. Therefore, managers should develop the capability of resolving conflict in multicultural team. This way productivity of team members can be ensured, without affecting project performance. The study also stresses that motivation level of team is critical for the overall success of project and smooth project implementation. This is because motivation is associated with high level of productivity of individuals, team, and the overall project. The cultural background of a person also affects the factors that motivate them. Thus this study concludes that it is important for project managers of culturally diverse teams that they understand cultural backgrounds, and culturally motivating factors of their team members so that they can keep their motivation level high.

Cultural factors also shape behaviour of a person towards authority and hierarchy. People belonging to different cultures respond differently towards hierarchy and authority and therefore in case of a culturally diverse team cultural factor can become a cause of conflict. Consequently, team members instead of focusing on project goals and objectives may engage in a struggle to secure power. In order to manage a culturally diverse workforce managers are required to implement a variety of management strategies so that they can tackle issues related to cultural differences. Cultural backgrounds form the lifestyle and attitude of people and

these behaviours affect the performance of team they are part of. Managers can optimise project performance by gaining understanding regarding the cultural differences among team members and how they can handle them effectively. It is also important to note that managers and managerial interventions alone are not sufficient enough to maximise team performance and project performance. The team members also need to understand cultural differences and assist managers to prevent problems due to cultural difference that may compromise their own individual performance or the performance of the whole project.

5.3.Recommendations

The conclusions above show that cultural differences have significant influences on team performance and on project performance. For project managers leading a culturally diverse team, this study makes following recommendations:

- It is the foremost step to gain understanding of cultural differences of the team members of the project. Without adequate knowledge it is not possible for team managers to deal with the issues effectively. This study recommends that project managers should gain cultural knowledge before undertaking every project.
- Project managers should proactively foresee potential communication problems, conflicts of interest, behaviour and attitude towards authority and hierarchy, and others. They can develop preventive measures so that issues can be prevented before they can impact project implementation. Addressing cultural values proactively is better approach than dealing with the problems they create.

- With respect to communication issues and language barrier, it is important that managers identify weaknesses in communication methods and systems and remove them. The methods of communication among team members and project managers should be based on a common language which is understood by all members. Typically in international context English is regarded as a common language, however, in case of regional level projects local language can also be used as communication between team members.
- Project manager should develop a code of ethics and communicate it with all members officially and ensure their feedback to deal with parochialism and discrimination. It is important to note that parochialism and discrimination may not be absolutely eliminated and therefore there must also be rules and regulations to consolidate a team member who may be a victim of discrimination. It is important to note that prevention is always better than cure and protection of vulnerable team members is better than consolidation.
- In order to deal with ethnocentrism, managers should become a role model for others and promote equality and respect to cultural diversity through attitude and behaviour so that other members are inspired by the manager. Managers should promote equality and cultural diversity by showing positive behaviour towards cultural diversity and by protecting vulnerable team members who are potential victims for discrimination.
- For conflict resolution this study recommends that managers should choose and adopt a formal conflict resolution framework such as the one presented by Thomas (1976) (see figure below). There are several conflict

management approaches and frameworks and project managers can choose any model they deem fits the best within the context of team and project. It is also possible that managers use different models to deal with different conflicts. This study recommends that project managers must develop excellent communication and negotiation skills and gain a deep understanding of conflict resolution methods so that they can use them in accordance with the problem.

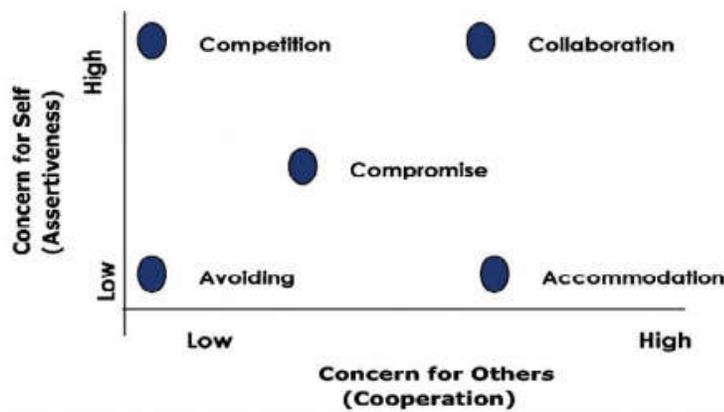


Figure 2. Thomas (1976)

- For issues related to motivation strategies, this study recommends that managers should identify the relevant factors while forming the team and recruiting team members. This should be a part of team formulation so that it does not affect project implementation.
- With respect to cultural differences causing variety in attitude towards hierarchy and authority this study recommends that project managers of multicultural teams should gain theoretical knowledge about how people from different cultural background behave towards project managers and compare them with his/her own culture. In case there are significant differences than it is important for managers to show flexibility and adaptability. This implies that this study recommends that managers

should deal team members according to their cultural background and change own behaviour in accordance with the differences in culture instead of trying to change the whole team. It is important to note that professional experience i.e. previous projects in which team members were involved also affect how people behave with seniors and managers. therefore, this is rather a subjective matter and personal judgement, communication skills, and negotiations skills of project managers are more important than those of team members in this matter.

5.4.Limitations and Future Research Opportunities

There are certain limitations in this study with respect to methodology adopted and the scope of this study. With respect to methodology, this study lacks quantitative evidence. This study is based on qualitative method of research. Furthermore, the interviews conducted in this study included managers of multicultural teams only. It can be inferred that opinions and experiences of team members are also important as those of managers and therefore this is also considered to be a limitation in the sample of this study. The scope of this study also has limitations. First of all, the study primarily focuses on issues that may emerge due to cultural differences and does not explore strategies and tactics to deal with those issues. Although this study presents recommendations to deal with cultural issues but these recommendations lack support for primary study. The limitations in this study present most significant future research opportunities. For example, future researchers could conduct large scale quantitative studies. Future researchers could also conduct similar studies with similar aims and objectives focusing on experiences and opinions of team members in addition to managers.

In addition, future researchers could also conduct studies to identify most effective strategies and tactics to deal with issues created by cultural issues.

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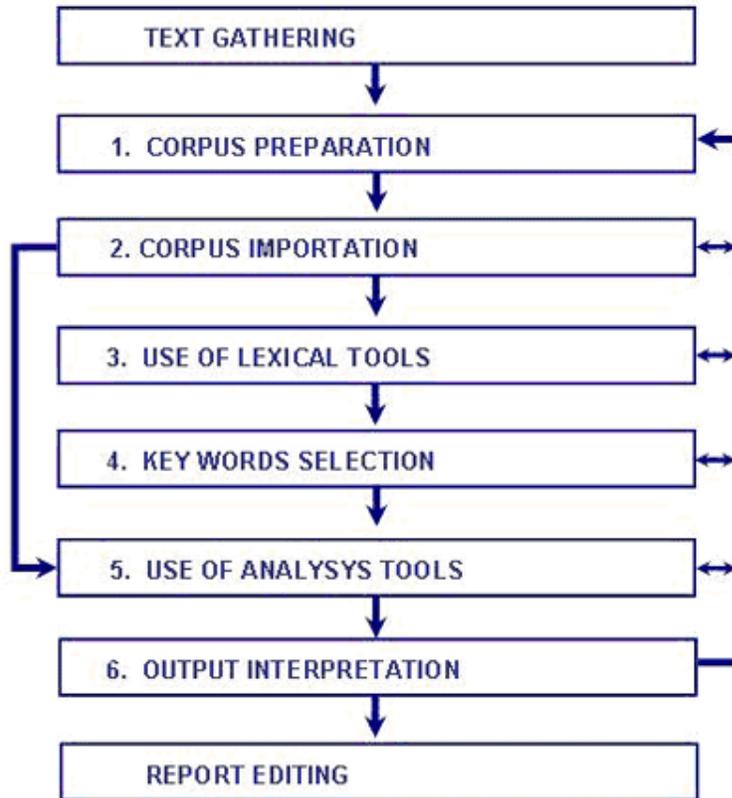
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Appendix A

Six Phases of Thematic Analysis



Appendix B

Questionnaire

Demographics:

Gender

- a. Male
- b. Female

Age

- a. 18-25
- b. 26-30
- c. 31-36
- d. Above 36

Number of years in Management

- a. 0-2 years
- b. 2-5 years
- c. 5-10 years
- d. Above 10 years

Experience with multicultural teams

1. How many projects had multinational team members?

Answer:

2. Type of project (Product development, Change implementation)?

Answer:

3. Are the team members from same office or different demographic location?

Answer:

4. Have you had any training to work within a multicultural team (Training sessions, team development session, etc.)? If yes, in what way?

Answer:

Thoughts about multicultural teams

5. Do you have any preference working with the team in same location or in different location? And why?

Answer:

6. What are the key advantage of working with multicultural team? And why?

Answer:

7. What are the key benefits you have experienced as a project manager from working in multicultural teams?

Answer:

Challenges of multicultural team:

8. What are the key disadvantage of working with multicultural team? And why? Answer:

9. What are the challenges you have experienced as a project manager from working in multicultural teams?

Answer:

10. If you notice a problem appear in the team, is it because of the cultural difference or does it has other reasons?

Answer:

Handling Multicultural team members:

14. What are the key difference in interacting between the team from different nationalities compared to the team from same nationality?

Answer:

15. Does their individual culture had any influence on the work of the group? How? Answer:

Do you have any additional comments on the topic of multicultural team?
Answer:

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