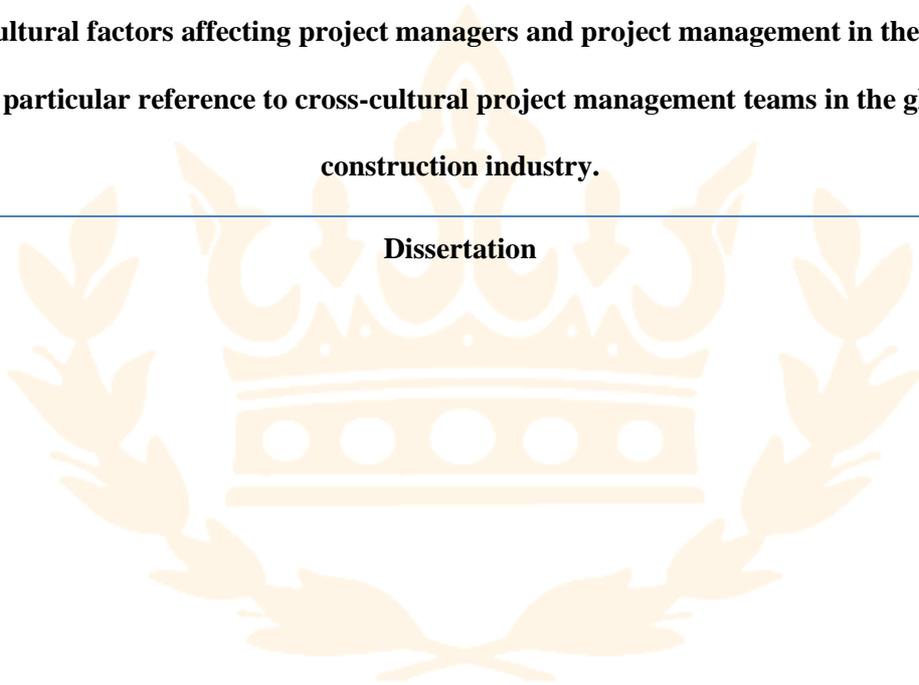


**The cultural factors affecting project managers and project management in the UAE,
with particular reference to cross-cultural project management teams in the global
construction industry.**

Dissertation



ABSTRACT

This study has investigated the acts of 10 senior venture administrators chipping away at development ventures in the UAE with culturally diverse groups. Specific accentuation has been laid on the effect of society on undertaking administration, positive and negative effects of culturally diverse groups on task administration, with exceptional reference to time and expense requirements of ventures. The aim of this study is to investigate cultural factors affecting project managers and project management in the UAE, with particular reference to cross-cultural teams in the global construction industry. The discoveries recommend that time and expense imperatives are normal for all ventures crosswise over societies, and the undertaking administrator's part is foremost for the successful execution of any task. It was further obvious that the way one conveys is diverse in multifaceted groups with some offering assurance to the composed and talked word while others to the implicit variables like outward appearances. Contrasts are all the more effortlessly determined in mono-social groups. Contrasting societies have changing standards, social behavior and task administration strategies that are obvious while overseeing activities with multifaceted groups.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

“The construction industry is international with many of its major corporations operating globally. Cultural differences can affect the conduct of daily business and, besides many general practical books, little has been published on how differing cultural backgrounds affect the operating environment in an industry.” (Karolina Lorenz and Marton Marosszeky, 2004, Page 1). The UAE is of particular interest as it is a rich nation with a large percentage of its GDP coming from Oil Export Revenues. Disposable income is high with a low or no tax regime. Migrants, especially from South Asia live and work here in the Services and other sectors and earn high incomes. Many of the industries, for example, the Tyre industry have regional headquarters in this country. As a result, construction has been booming and not only that but the global construction industry here employs cross-cultural teams. Therefore, it is interesting and also of research significance to study the interplay of cultural factors that affect the project management of construction projects in the UAE.

1.2 Background of the Study

Organizations rely on project managers to plan, organize, motivate, and control resources, procedures, and protocols to achieve specific goals that are necessary for the success of a particular project. Being the leader of the project, project managers have considerable influence on project quality, project success and project team performance (Ammeter & Dukerich, 2002; Henderson, 2008). Typologies of project team manager behaviours emphasize coordinating activities and tasks, updating and persuading stakeholders, maintaining an open communication environment (e.g., Sommerville et al., 2010). In addition, project managers within matrix organizations are said to coordinate across functional and organizational environments, though sometimes lacking formal authority (Cleland, 1995), and lead teams consisting of members from different disciplines, requiring

technical and managerial skills (Ammeter and Dukerich, 2002) which make inter-project communication a necessary success factor of the project.

1.3 Structure of the study

Project teams are readily used across almost all industries and organizational structures for the occasional task or product (Thamhain, 2004). Bröchner and Björk (2008) reported that the GLOBE project ("Global Leadership & Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE): is a research program focusing on culture and leadership in 61 nations."; House, Javidan, Hanges and Dorfman (2002), Page 1), not only successfully identified the research instruments and dimensions for the culture description but also highlighted the cultural differences in terms of the behaviours of leaders towards the subordinates and impact of these behaviours on performance. Many organisational leaders working between cultures can describe circumstances where established customs in certain settings were at odds with accepted practices in another society. There are few empirical studies that have assessed the cross-cultural differences in behaviour. Some investigations linked to the GLOBE study noted that the attributes possessed by the leaders in one culture might be disdained in one but esteemed in another culture. The study by GLOBE focused more on the undesirable attributes such as egocentrism, malevolence and non-cooperativeness as compared to counterproductive behaviours such as firing subordinates with which the manager has conflicting views. Chan and Tse (2003) highlighted that the cultural background influences the engagement and observation of individuals and can be termed as unethical based on cultural trends. For example, behaviours such as passing the blame or taking credit for the work of others was considered more severe in individualistic cultures, such as the United States, than in collectivist cultures, such as Jordan. In much the same way, managers from low uncertainty avoidance cultures such as India were more comfortable with giving gifts in order to gain favour of stakeholders than were those in the UK. These indications that societal culture relates to the sensitivity of managers to ethical issues command further investigations as to how perceptions of what is considered culturally acceptable differ between national settings.

The results of the study by Chen and Partington (2004) were useful in that they investigated the relationship between culture and perceptions of specific culturally acceptable behaviours. However, it seems the researchers approached the study with preconceived ideas about which behaviours should be considered unethical. They then proceeded to explore cultural differences in their perceived severity.

1.4 Statement of Purpose

Klein, France Waxin and Radnell (2009) reported that the projects that are carried out in the engineering construction industry are of different nature, and these are typical in terms of specifications. Thus, it is important for the project managers and project engineers to determine the constraints of the project planning organisational models. Project management in this aspect has been addressed extensively in the existing literature. Yazici (2009) reported that in the project management context, the two possible aspects of project constraints are the criteria that include the measures that restrict the success of the project and factors that restrict in contributing to the project success. This includes the fact that project managers sometimes do not make right choices with respect to project planning techniques about their management style, their organisational culture and the country's culture. It, therefore, becomes paramount that all factors, including cultural, are taken into account when planning for a project such that they contribute to the project's success. It is these cultural factors, as present in cross-cultural teams of global construction projects that this study needs to address, thereby facilitating understanding of the interplay of these factors and contributing to project success.

1.5 Research Aim

The aim of this study is to investigate cultural factors affecting project managers and project management in the UAE, with particular reference to cross-cultural teams in the global construction industry. The study strives to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identify the key cultural factors affecting Project Managers and Project Management in construction projects in UAE
2. Identify cross-cultural differences in multicultural project teams in the construction industry and how they affect project management
3. Identify project management strategies that could be followed to eliminate negative repercussions of cross-cultural differences thereby ensuring project success

1.6 Research Questions:

1. What are the key cultural factors?
2. How the cultural factors influence the Project Managers and Project Management teams engaged in the construction industry of UAE?
3. How the identified cross-cultural differences in multicultural project teams of construction industry impact the performance and team behaviour?
4. What strategic recommendations might be implemented to mitigate the negative effects of cross-cultural differences in project management teams?

1.7 Dissertation Structure

Due to lack of sufficient research on cross-cultural factors on projects and teams in the UAE, it was thought prudent to collect data from primary sources for this research, as opposed to secondary sources which were used instead to build a framework for study as elaborated in the Chapter on Literature Review.

As the nature of research is such that project manager's talk about their experiences managing multi-cultural teams, the data collected is qualitative as opposed to quantitative, which is justified as the author does not start from various assumptions about the answers of the project managers about cultural influence on their projects and teams.

The questions asked are open-ended, and project managers describe their experiences managing multi-cultural teams. Therefore, the research model considered is descriptive as opposed to exploratory and explanatory.

Further elaboration of these choices and advantages thereof including research philosophies and methods are discussed in detail in Chapter 3, Research Methodology.

While considering random and purposive sampling, it was decided to use purposive sampling and ten project managers were interviewed based on the following criteria:

1. At least five years of work experience as a project manager.
2. At least one project involving management of multicultural teams and stakeholders.

The questionnaire consisted of open-ended questions to meet the objectives of the research.

1.8 Rationale & Significance

Thus, it is clear that projects require completion within time and cost constraints at the very least, and this means that all risks affecting the completion of these projects within the constraints must be mitigated. This includes risks arising out of having multi-cultural teams working on the projects and the interplay of their respective cultures.

The study of cultures' and multi-cultures' effects on project management will help reduce the risks associated with these projects and specially in the construction industry where many projects are typically large and scope and involve many different stakeholders.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

We are studying the effect of culture on project management, and both these terms have been defined first and foremost. These definitions limit and define the scope of the study attempted. Project Management is then studied further to define its components viz. Activities that makeup project management as a whole. Project management also comprises a set of processes that are delineated further in the study. The importance of communication in projects which binds the constituent activities and processes is dwelt upon. It is further emphasised that culture and the interplay of cross cultures be imbibed into the project at the very first phase of project management i.e. project planning. The importance of the project planning phase as the most important phase of all of the activities of a project cannot be ignored. But, projects are managed by project managers, and the study is not complete without a list of prescriptive skills that are essential to effective project management. The study aims to show that effective management of cross-cultural differences should also be incorporated as a requisite skill of successful project managers. There is no one way of managing a project, and effective management flows in many different styles but there are ways in which project management can be made more effective in a particular style and management of cross-cultural differences should essentially be inculcated in each and every style of managing multi-cultural projects. That this is essential is apparent in the next section that deals with the influence of culture on project management. To fully grasp this influence culture is examined through various frameworks like that of the GLOBE project, Halls' Culture Model, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner Culture Model and finally Hofstede's Four Cultural dimensions. Among all of these Hofstede's four (later five) dimensions are

used to compare differences between the UAE and UK. Based on the above literature a conceptual framework is espoused and built up to meet the final objective of successful management of projects through effective management of cross-cultural differences.

The definition and meaning of Project Management

A project is defined as "a project is a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result." (Project Management Institute, 2008) To explain further the nuances, an assignment may be defined as: "A distinctive set of synchronised activities, with specific opening and finishing points, undertaken by a person or a firm to assemble definite goals within a period of defined time, performance parameters and price" (Di Marco et al. 2010). In addition to it, we would add that the assignment is only finished when the planned produce or deliverable has been handed over pleasingly to the consumers. This description implies that an assignment includes both a firm and the procedure. This is very much distinctive from the "produce" that is the end product. In a similar vein, the word "project" is frequently misrepresented to refer to "the result", i.e. "the produce". It is also worth noticing that the procedure is a "journey through time" and the goals, spoken in terms of excellence, range, price and time decide the "boundaries" or restrictions obligatory on this expedition. The measure of "consumer contentment", as applied to projects, is the success of the project as reflected in the approval of the end product. The management of projects can be explained as: "The application of facts, expertise, and methodology and to plan activities to meet the needs of the project".

Project administration or project management, then, is the administration of the procedure or journey just explained. However, it also has an underlying conception. Possibly this tip was best confirmed more than two thousand five years ago by the famous philosopher belonging to China, Confucius, when he said, "In all belongings, accomplishment based upon prior arrangements - and without arrangements there is in no doubt to be failure" (Kirkman et al. 2009). In modern phraseology, this basic study is being translated into an easy 2-step series:

"arrangement before doing". This elementary conception is the basis of the life of the project cycle in which the assignment requires to be supervised. It can be rightly said; on the first step you must plan your project, and then achieve what you planned. It is also shown in the Demming Quality mantra "PDCA" which means for Plan, Do, Check, Act and explains the quality control management cycle of Demming.

A project is considered as a backbone for any work attempted or endeavoured. It has been expressed that activities have scope of goals from easy to complex, where the former does not oblige extraordinary arrangement of cash or thereabouts numerous individuals and the latter calls for different aptitudes and numerous assets (Shakeel et al. 2011).

The definition and meaning of Culture

The term culture in this study is derived from Geert Hofstede's definition: "The Collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another". (Hofstede, 2009, Page 1). Projects engage individuals in such a way that they collectively work together to attain a common goal, within a specific budget and time limit for the production of final product. All through the last fifty years, the success of a project has been explained by the time criterion, budget and products. All through the span of fifty years, assignments continued to be unsuccessful in their endeavours to accomplish this generally known triangle. The disappointment in not getting success is being supported by continuous investigations and studies efforts that apparently noticed a lower grade ability to constantly accomplish the team objective of the project. Individuals and their traditions are of significance in all projects. And so as far as project failure is concerned, culture has been noticed as the main cause. As every participant tries to bring forward his culture, the supervisor of the project must be known to, and comprehend how cultures put their influence on the project.

Cultures survive subconsciously in our civilisation nowadays. Understanding in running global projects exhibits that, for culture convergence to take place, supervisors of both parties need to recognise the traditions of the other side, and examine the dissimilar patterns that

build up the traditions. VomBrocke and Sinnl (2011) described culture as "a kind of mind's collective programming that differentiates between the members of one human group from another". These descriptions can be summarised as: "Culture is said to be an evolving group of mutual values, beliefs, logical procedures and attitudes that proffer people in a provided societal group with cognitive maps to think, perceive, question, react, interact and act". This description shows that culture evolves with the passage of time instead of being static. Culture is the artefact of communication among human beings who share positive surroundings and who exist in a definite area at a definite period. In other words, human beings who work together within certain historical and geographical limits. The result of communication between these human beings is what we call taste, traditions, art, laws, and literature. Therefore, culture can differentiate between different groups of people. Fundamentally, culture is the sum total of humanity's expertise, arts, values, ethics, traditions, laws, and other lifestyle and abilities adapted by persons as members of a civilisation. Culture encompasses a whole set of social standards and responses that condition people deeds; it is inculcated and acquired, a set of laws and attitude patterns that a person adopts but are not inherited. So, culture may be measured by the lasting norms, behavioural patterns, traditions and ethics accessible to a particular grouping of the populace. Culture refers to a set of standards, shared values and thinking held by the members of a group, as an organisation or a country.

Project Management Activities, Project Management Process, Prescriptive Behavioural Skills of Project Managers and Project Management Styles

Project Management Activities

Project administration is the scheduling, directing, organising and scheming of firm capital for a comparatively short-term goal. Thomas and Peterson (2014) reported that lower levels of insecurity and producing increasingly high levels of output and quality are also the targets of the management of projects. Project administration is a planned or ordered approach for

running a multiplicity of self-determining, inter-reliant activities and incidents that lead towards a general result. These activities and events are listed below:

- Goals, targets, and acceptance thereof are definite.
- A scheme is developed.
- Capital is in hand.
- The task is performed as planned.
- To reach the outcome, all efforts are synchronised.
- Activities and results achieved in-between, are towards the original objective.

- Stakeholders are kept apprised of project performance.
- The initial outcome is still the objective.
- To keep up to date with developments, the plan is attuned.
- The ultimate result is acceptable to all stakeholders.

Project Management Process

A project is divided into the following processes:

- Initiating.
- Scheduling.
- Implementing.
- Scheming.
- Concluding.

Coordinating these processes is communication - candid, accomplished, obvious, jointly understood and controlled. Trkman (2010) also reported that communication is the significant element that provides stakeholders of the project the capability to discuss, schedule, resolve issues, keep everyone well- informed and reached consent. The processes utilise the methodology and rules linked with scope administration, price management, time

management, communications management, quality management individual resource management, contract management and hazard management. Among all phases of project management, the research community shows a common consensus that project planning is the Initial and the most critical phase of the project. As suggested by vim Brocken and Sinn (2011), project planning is the most intrinsic feature of a project and project management. Project planning is the roadmap that is meant to constitute as well as guide the project team members as they work on realising the project goals set for them to achieve within the specified constraints. According to Tears, Kirkman and Steel (2010), project planning serves different purposes for the organisation as well as industry where it is carried out including the purpose of communication and the purpose of providing direction for future tasks. Project planning includes the identification of the actions that will be performed to produce the end product.

According to De Bony (2010), planning involves proper allocation of the activities to achieve the desired goal. Some of the important stages of this phase are the distribution of the vital tasks, allocation of resources as well as a division of time. Risk identification, proper evaluation of the countered measures and analyzation of alternatives are some of the most important requirements of planning. To improve the efficiency and credibility of the project in an effective way, proper planning is the prime requisite. Moreover, a methodical process needs to be followed so as to make the complex project successful in all regards. Thus, proper planning is highly essential for any project management in this age to make it of high quality (Juwaidah and Banu, 2009). This also makes sure that the requirements of the customers, clients, public or stakeholders are met, and delivery of the final product is made on time.

Also, this phase also involves presenting more details of the project to prepare the ground for project management, which defines the strategy for organisations to achieve the objectives. It is, therefore, imperative that the effects of culture and the interplay of cross cultures are taken into account at the planning stage itself. The next stage represents the body of work to be carried out towards the development of the final result of the project which can be a written report, a documented software program, a new algorithm model, a search for information or a

case study. The product represents, in short, the expected outcome of the project planning activities carried out or attempted. These activities bind the project and the workers together. Juwaidah and Banu (2009) found that the commitments and the constraints are brought into proper consideration while planning a project.

The initiation of project planning involves the activities necessary to start work, in particular, the manager to establish a work routine. Typically, it includes the use of various schedules such as Gantt charts to plan and subsequently report the progress of the project. Once the project is organised and implemented, the project manager will have to control its evolution to achieve the desired objectives. The last stage of any project is a completion, which involves writing a report or tests of all programs, and reviewing the documentation associated with them.

Planning and model formation in a project only identifies the basic phases of the project. Thus, the project planning is done on prior to the development. Shuter (2011) reported that decisions are made about the direction and about what to do in this phase of the project. As, planning and success of any project is entirely related with one another in a construction industry.

Shuter (2011) found that project planning is the only way to develop inventive aspects regarding technology and engineering projects. Apart from this, high-end planning can help the members of the project management of construction industry to create a distinct image and demand of the organisation in the market as compared to others. However, without effective planning, any project cannot be successfully accomplished. Since, completion of any project is entirely related to effective scheduling of ideas and facts. Such type of planning can be possible only within an organisation with the uniform culture and thinking power. Contrary to the latter statement, Shuter (2011) mentioned that culture is the prime aspect to make the entire project management process successful in all regards. The prime cause behind this is that culture is the phrase that unites and binds all the members of an organisation in a uniform manner. As a result, the level of coordination and communication within the members engaged within a project management process enhances significantly. Hence, the

entire procedure of project management is dependent on bonding and communication. Thus, it is revealed from the points mentioned above that culture is the recognised as the cornerstone of the success of a project management process or team in this age of extreme dynamism and competitiveness. However, Anantatmula (2008) mentioned that failure to maintain cultural spirit within the members of a project management team can prove detrimental in the long run. Considering these aspects, most of the global organisations operating in diverse parts of the world desired to offer the highest attention towards the concept of culture. So that; the discrepancies aroused due to multi-culture cannot act as a barrier for the organisation dealing with project management.

Prescriptive Behavioural Skills of Successful Project Managers

By almost any admission, project management requires a wide range of skills and training to effectively lead multi-disciplinary projects (Chen, 1997), which are laden with uncertainty, diversity, and information in bulk (Shenhar & Dvir, 1996). The role of a project manager is thought to be a challenging one because he works across functional and organizational environments (Cleland, 1995) and leads personnel from different disciplines (Anantatmula, 2008). Some writings (e.g. Pettersen, 1991) seek to describe the essential qualities of project managers that are associated with efficiency and successful project delivery. Table 1 summarizes the most frequently mentioned characteristics of effective project management. For illustration purposes, the presentation of these characteristics follows Stickney and Johnston's (1980) categorization of human, business, and technical skills.

A project manager's human skills are primarily concerned with general leadership efforts to motivate, inform, and consolidate team efforts. For example, a project manager is expected to motivate personnel, involve members in decision making, support members' personal growth, communicate "effectively through writing, reading, speaking and listening", and build multi-disciplinary teams (Chen, 1997). They are idealized as excellent communicators, those who transfer ideas and information in the context of the project (Meredith et al., 1995). In addition, the ability to resolve conflicts, build a team environment,

motivate and support employees, delegate authority, and exhibit patience and flexibility are presented as important human skills for effective project management (Chen, 1997; Kerzner & Thamhain, 1984; Pettersen, 1991). In a nutshell, project manager's human skills are synonymous with their ability to involve team members in decisions and foster open information sharing environments through effective communication.

Business skills focus on project managers' accomplishing short-term tasks and achieving project goals. Planning, organizing, team supervision are some of the important business skills that a project manager should possess (Kerzner & Thamhain, 1984; Pettersen, 1991). Other skills include making effective decisions, delegating work and authority, tracking project progress and employee performance, estimating costs and risks, reducing changes, and managing contracts (Chen, 1997). Additionally, setting realistic goals, taking a holistic approach to the project, and considering environmental factors while making decisions are set forth as necessary skills for effective project management (Pettersen, 1991).

Table 1. *Skills and Qualifications of Effective Project Managers.*

Human Skills	Business Skills	Technical Skills
Effective communication, both oral and written	Accurate planning and scheduling	Project knowledge and understanding
Motivate and support personnel development	Realistic goal setting	Sound understanding of methods and processes
Mobilize mental and emotional energy of subordinates	Negotiate tasks and operations with other organizations	Ability to integrate business, technology, and human objectives
Exhibit flexibility, patience, and persistence	Approach project holistically considering all aspects	Expertise in the tools and technology used
Delegate authority and empower subordinates	Monitor subordinate performance	Understanding of the market and product applications
Create multi-disciplinary project	Contract management and risk	

teams	analysis	
Maintain harmony among team members	Reduce changes and detect trends and deviations	

An Extrapolated from Chen (1997), El-Sabaa (2001), Kerzner & Thamhain (1984), Meredith et al. (1995), Pettersen (1991), and Rwelamila (1989).

Project Management Styles

With respect to the management of the project, we cannot say that there lies only a single way that is suitable for everyone. Supervisors of different projects adopt different ways of working with different assignments and even run similar ones by adopting different tactics in different places. These variations may arise according to Kwak and Anbari (2009) because of traditional distinctions, accompanied by unequal significance given by the managers of the project and their respective consumers, to the different measures of accomplishment regarding the project. Taking into account the end results, the efficiency and effectiveness of the firm can be assessed by the way the task has been organised or handled and by the interaction of participants against or with each other. The interaction of the participants with one another, with the executives and the society, and in addition to it to their dedication towards their firm, rely on the style of project management as indicated by Browning (2010). The different ways of handling the project will put an impact on individuals and the way they work mutually, which in turn will affect the outcome. For instance, imagine the case of services and supplies needed by the huge city of Beijing for its survival. Food is to be produced, cropped, stocked up and transferred; energy is to be produced and circulated; waste products have to be composed and treated or detached; accommodation is to be constructed; transportation is to be supplied; proper safety is to be provided; cleanliness is to be maintained. All these measures are essential to daily life for millions of populace. Against the latter statement, Anantatmula (2008) pointed that failure to maintain the essential measures of daily life in an effective way can create varied types of problems. As a result of which, the

performance and productivity of the members engaged in project management teams can get declined. The decline in the performance can result in demotivation and lack of devotion towards the assigned tasks. Moreover, the behaviour and relationships of the members of the project management teams can also be hampered to a significant extent leading to the downfall of the entire organisation or group functioning in the segment of project management.

In this modern, developed, scientific and extremely competitive global environment, it is necessary that many experts from different areas of actions, different levels of the social order, and different conditions of surroundings work mutually to achieve successfully huge projects like discovering space, refining installations and constructing huge gatherings (Forbes and Ahmed, 2010). To supply the citizens with their daily requirements, to help them in leading a contented and better life, many of the experts have to work mutually. The conflict in one region can trouble many citizens. As a result, it is serious that citizens co-operate with each other liberally and successfully. In light of the experience, it is clear the huge the project is, the more problematic it is in accomplishing the required level of cooperation and that the huge projects are generally less efficient and effective as compared to the little ones as the workers are less cooperative towards each other. With this example, it is established that large-scale projects require greater cooperation among the stakeholders and those involved in completing the project, and this cannot be possible without understanding the effect that culture has on them and how cross-cultural differences may reduce cooperation. Shepherd, Covin and Kuratko (2009) reported that enhancement in the project management style can increase the efficiency of working and this enhancement will in turn lower capital being utilised by about twenty to thirty percent. The increase that is seen by enhancing the style of management is therefore rather significant, not only from the shareholders' and society's point of view in the form of increasingly high return, but also in the form of satisfaction and contentment that is attained by workers. People work and live together. What is significant in this regard is that the way they cooperate, the way they consider their workplace, the style in which they manage depends on many controllable aspects. Those who work with you, stay

with you, take up work for you will take into account working and living in your company in one respect or other. There is no hesitation in saying that the way they respond depends on the way you treat them including the style in which you manage.

The Influence of Culture on Project Management

Culture plays an important role in affecting project management. There exists an important relationship between culture and management. Success in today's global environment depends on the dynamics and nuances of the culture. Culture is defined as the collective phenomena of people living together and distinguishes the members of one social group from another. It includes the legal systems, family patterns, society's institutions and interactions which define society.

Collyer and Warren (2009) observed that the affectivity of managers managing the organisation is significantly affected by their national origin. They noted that many managers and management scholars believed the convergence hypothesis of management practices. They noted that the argument is that management consists of beliefs applicable universally. De Bony (2010) stated that there is an assumption that an organisation is an open system in most workplaces in the area of comparative or cross-cultural management. Naturally occurring management behaviour will be reflected by the local cultural values. Perceptions of individuals in an organisation are influenced by the culture around them. These perceptions include both internal and external environments of the organisation.

Cross-Cultural heritage heavily influences the reasoning, feeling, behaving and managing of an individual (Trkman, 2010). It was believed before the advent of cross-cultural research that the success of an organisation was determined by technology and job assignment. The study on cross-culture has shown that the culture influences the organisational behaviour at various and mostly all levels, more than technological change or job assignment. This is in accordance with the observation by Blomquist et al. (2010) which states that the behaviour and attitudes of people influence their organisational function and that the organisation's behaviour is highly influenced by the socio-cultural environment of the organisation. On the

contrary, Anantatmula (2008) mentioned that failure to follow the cultural aspects by an individual can offer significant impact on the behaviour and attitude of the individual of project management. Thus, to maintain a consistent behaviour and approach, a uniform culture need to be followed. Only then, it can prove advantageous for the members as well as the organisations of project management in this age of high bargaining rivalry. Thus, it can be analysed from the above points that culture or cultural heritage is the prime requirement of a project management team.

Cultural Frameworks

Trkman (2010) stated that at the core of any culture is values and all the remaining practices are derived from it. The GLOBE project scrutinised the assumption by comparing the practices and cultural values influenced responses by the individuals. Instead of agreement between the two (which would have been expected) they observed strongly diverging relationships between statements of what is and what should never be. This led them to explore and develop nine cultural dimensions that overlap to varying degrees with elements of Hofstede's five dimensions, but that can be used to describe both values and actual practices within a culture. These nine dimensions are the human orientation, performance orientation, future orientation, assertiveness, gender egalitarianism, institutional collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and in-group collectivism. Others than the GLOBE project have assessed the clusters of the societies and cultural regions earlier also. Juwaidah and Banu (2009) gave the example of delineating the clusters based on socioeconomic data, psychological variables, and other attitudes and values. However, the earlier literature was limited to the cultural cluster regions and the classifications of the individual societies. Considering their data on ratings of values and practices, the GLOBE project team also developed ten cultural clusters that also took into account information on common history, Language, religion, and geography. The 10 clusters produced by this method were termed Anglo, Latin Europe, Nordic Europe, Germanic Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America, Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, Southern Asia, and Confucian Asia.

Some of the other models are discussed below:

Halls' Culture Model

According to Brislin et al. (2006), culture is the most considerable aspect that builds attitude and behaviour of an individual. It is also mentioned by Halls' cultural model that culture also acts as a medium of communication and sharing of knowledge among the members of an organisation.

Moreover, the model primarily mentions ten Primary Message Systems (PMS) that can be used to differentiate two diverse cultures. These are different forms of communication those are non-lingual human activity. As mentioned by Longtin et al. (2009) that to realise the culture, PMS of that culture is very essential to understand. As PMS helps to examine the attitude and activities of the humans of that specific culture. Some of the PMS are:

1. Proper interaction with the members of the society.
2. Effective association within the hierarchy of the organisation.
3. Proper and accurate Subsistence in the place of work
4. Bisexuality feature is also equally essential
5. Territoriality is also effective to determine culture
6. Temporality is also a prime essentiality
7. Learning helps to develop inventive products

As per the views of Anantatmula (2008), Hall's cultural model is not effective in analysing the influence of culture on the members working in a project management team. Since, it mainly highlights the aspects PMS rather than others, and so it is not effective in examining the cultural influence. On the contrary, Hofstede's cultural model helps to analyse the performance and efficiency of the employees of a nation based on various cultural dimensions. The cultural dimensions can be effective in analysing the impact of multi-culture over the profitability and team behaviour of an organisation of project management.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner Culture Model

Other than Halls cultural model, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner Culture Model is also essential for determination of the impact of diverse customs. It comprises of several dimensions. Prabhu (2010) mentioned that the models highlight three layers such as explicit culture, value and norms and beliefs and rituals. With the help of all these aspects, the culture and behaviour of an individual can be easily denoted and it can be differentiated from others as well Brislin et al. (2006) as:

1. Universalism – proper differentiation of the things by an individual within a society. On that basis, the culture and norms of that individual can be identified and evaluated.
2. Individualism – communitarianism: Analysis of the culture on the basis of the personal actions of an individual.
3. Neutral – emotional: the culture and behaviour of the individual of a group can be examined with the help of the emotional activities.
4. Specific – diffuse: relationship also acts to determine the cultural background of the individual.
5. Achievement – ascription: experiences and achievement can be used to judge the culture of the individual.

Hofstede's Four Cultural Dimensions

An approach is developed by Geert Hofstede, which is useful in determining the various dimensions and in measuring cultural differences. The four dimensions are:

- Power distance indicates the distance between individuals because of different educational levels, social hierarchies and occupations. Power distance describes the degree of polarisation in the distribution of power between a superior and a subordinate.

- The extent to which people tend to feel threatened by uncertain, ambiguous future is measured by avoidance of uncertainty (Hofstede, 2011); Uncertainty avoidance pertains to the level of acceptance of ambiguity and openness to change.
- Individualism is referred as the developed trend of people to look after them which is in direct contrast with the trend of people to belong to groups, known as collectivism; Individualism involves the emphasis placed on personal goals in contrast with those of the group.
- Masculinity tends to assertiveness, materialism and less concern for others, whereas femininity shows concern for others and relationships (Hofstede, 2011). Masculinity describes the extent to which a society values traditionally masculine characteristics such as competitiveness and control, as against supposedly feminine qualities such as relationship building.

These four dimensions are discussed separately. Later, a fifth dimension, long-term orientation, was added which relates to the value society places on sacrificing in the present for future benefit. In countries where a centralised structure exists, people display high power distance; employees respect their manager's formal position in the hierarchy and work according to what the manager wants. In countries where power distance is low, superiors and subordinates are regarded as equal in power and they find it easy to cooperate with each other. Taras, Kirkman and Steel (2010) said that initially, United Arab Emirates (UAE) had many traditional influences and centralism prevailed. Even the Parliament that established the law should obey the suprema's order. The civilians seldom had rights to voice their needs or opinions about social institutions. In this case, we can find that the phenomena occurred earlier because of factors that have been important historically in UAE, such as traditional thoughts under traditional education, inequality and authority of different classes. Hence, low-power classes accepted the supremacy of the dominant class's high power and class-consciousness. By contrast, in UK people have more liberty of speech.

As we have explained above, countries with a high level of uncertainty avoidance have clear rules and regulations. Jobs provide more security and stability. On the contrary, low level of uncertainty avoidance leads to lower anxiety and stress from jobs. Companies are less formal and some managers take more risks. Japanese, for instance, may change their decisions after business contracts have been signed and prefer to keep necessary silence during business meetings, while people in the UK are convinced that contracts should be a stable element in the changing international environment. When referring to individualism, Hofstede (2011) suggested that countries that are advanced economically generally put greater emphasis on individualism as compared to countries that are poor. For example, in Australia, Great Britain and the United States, individual achievement is highly valued and competition exists. In countries such as Panama and Pakistan, people have a strong belief in group decisions. Contrary to the latter statement, in UAE, all the members try to follow the orders and rules implemented by the supreme authority of the organisation or team. The individual engaged in the construction industry in UAE also believe in group performance rather than individualism. Regarding this, the members try to follow the regulations and rules introduced by the hierarchy of the organisation so as to accomplish the desired objectives.

Hofstede's definitions stated that gender roles are defined more rigidly in masculine societies as compared to feminine societies. Managers, in the business community, should know how to behave towards different genders under various cultural influences. In today's world, men have taken up most of the senior management positions because of masculine values. According to the belief of an experienced manager, it is preferred that men work with women because women sometimes are more sensitive. Hence, to maximise the team power, it is worth considering by managers to balance the masculinity/femininity from different cultures and backgrounds.

In sum, Hofstede's model can assist international project managers identify and describe the culture of a country and affect organisational processes. His research findings can be applied to specific situations and needs. Chakrabarti, Gupta-Mukherjee and Jayaraman (2009) found that to understand conceptions of people in an organisation, the devices that are considered

suitable for controlling and coordinating the activities, this framework is especially useful. Meanwhile, there are some limitations to Hofstede's model like the limits of culture and working within a single industry (i.e., the computer industry) and in a single multinational company.

UAE Culture in Light of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has one of the largest and most appealing markets across the Globe. Foreign partners are keen to enter it with global collaborations. To clarify the differences between GCC and the West, Hofstede's four cultural dimensions were referred to by Obeidat et al. (2012). Unlike many researchers that have given their definitions of culture, Hofstede has presented his definition as a pragmatic problem-solving approach and has related culture with management. His definition defines culture as a 'collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes the members of one category of people from another' (Hofstede, 2011). His four cultural dimensions are power distance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/femininity and uncertainty avoidance. These four dimensions are used to compare some Western countries with GCC. Western countries are lower in power distance (USA 40, Canada 39, UK 35, Germany 35 and France 68) compared with (GCC, 80). Then in terms of individualism, Western countries are higher (US 91, Canada 80, UK 89, Germany 67 and France 71) than (GCC, 20). Western countries had short-term orientation while GCC had a long-term orientation. In this regard, the members of the western countries like GCC try to follow a strict culture and regulation to accomplish the assigned tasks in an effective way. Moreover, proper following of the rules and codes of conduct might prove effective in accomplishing the long-term goals of the organisations as well as the employees.

According to Hofstede (1980), countries with masculine cultures value material success and assertiveness rather than caring and nurturing in feminine cultures (Klein, France Waxin and Radnell, 2009). The United States has a more masculine culture than GCC. Hofstede ranked United States at 15th and GCC at 33rd. This study showed that due to cultural differences,

people in GCC tend to value life quality, relationships and services more like compared to people in the United States who value performance, success and assertiveness more. Hofstede's study showed that people in a feminine society are more likely to be concerned about environmental issues. Environmental preservation has more value in countries having lower masculine cultures. Thus, such types of aspects are highlighted mainly with the help of Hofstede model rather than others. So, the preference of this model is extremely high as compared to GLOBE model in analysing the cultural perspective of the organisations or economies rather than UAE.

Hofstede presented his study on individuals in respect of high uncertainty avoidance. Individuals in high uncertainty avoidance cultures are more likely to adhere to rules and guidelines consistently and follow a set of ethical norms than those in low uncertainty avoidance countries. However, individuals in a high uncertainty avoidance society are more likely to practice their will in the absence of a rule as compared to those individuals in low uncertainty avoidance cultures who believed that breaking a rule will best serve the interests of the society. Davis, Bernardi and Bosco (2012) studied that people in high uncertainty avoidance cultures are less likely to perceive ethical problems and are more likely to perceive any negative consequences and more likely to consider professional formal codes of ethics compared with individuals in low uncertainty avoidance cultures.

The study showed UAE's uncertainty avoidance index value to be 69, while of the UK to be 46. People in a high uncertainty avoidance culture are more likely to view unethical business practices done legally as less unethical than those living in low uncertainty avoidance culture. People in UAE reflected a high uncertainty avoidance culture in which they are likely to focus on legality and ethicality of their practices than the UK. Juwaidah and Banu (2009) reported that the UK among the Western countries is frequently investigated because of its economic power and the variety of its cultural representatives. The UK to a certain extent is considered to be representing the Western culture. Therefore, studying the comparison between the UK and the UAE seemed to help clarify the cross-cultural differences and cultural challenges between the West and the GCC. The UAE and UK differ in their

economic structures, political systems, social value systems and laws greatly. Firstly, the power distance in UAE is twice than that in the UK, which shows that UAE is centralised. Secondly, UAE is low in individualism while the UK is 1st in individualism. Thirdly, UK has higher masculinity than UAE. Fourthly, UAE is relatively risk avoiding and the UK is comparatively a risk taker culture. At last, UAE has a long-term orientation while the UK has a short-term orientation.

Strategic recommendations used to improve the performance of project management teams

To improve the performance and profit margin of the teams of project management in UAE, a consistent culture needs to be implemented. Along with this, the positive and negative aspects of such a culture need to be discussed among the members of the teammates of project management. This can be done only through effective communication within the members of the project management team. Doing so can prove advantageous for the organisation to maintain a homogeneous standard within the organisation to enhance the efficacy and proficiency of the members of project management. Contrary to latter paragraph Anantamula (2008) cited that improper maintenance of consistent culture can prove problematic for the project management organisations.

Apart from this, proper ethics and hierarchical structure also need to be maintained by the members of the organisation. This can increase the communication and relationship among the members resulting in amplification of the prosperity and team recital. Failure to maintain accurate team behaviour and bonding can create discrepancies within the organisation.

Conceptual Framework

Managing cultural differences and cross-cultural conflicts is the most common challenge to multi-cultural teams (Elron, 1997). Cultural issues among team individuals can cause conflict,

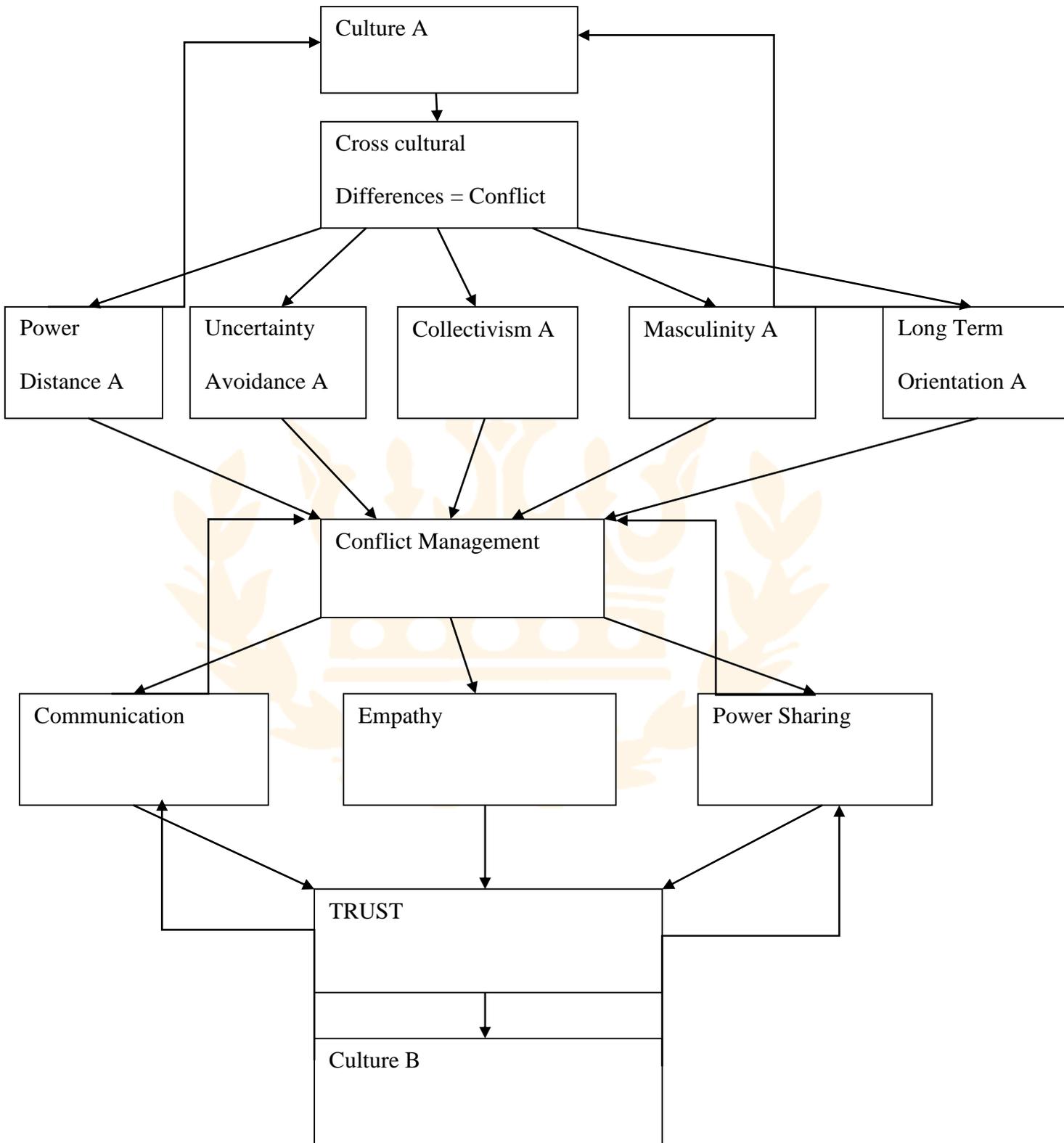
misunderstanding and poor performance (Shenkar and Zeira, 1992). Elron (1997) asserted that cohesive teams respond faster to changes and challenges and are more efficient. Individuals in multicultural project teams have different perceptions of the environment, motives and behaviour intentions. Shaw (1981) argued that the effects of such differences could be visible in lower team performance due to impeded social cohesion. Further research by Evans and Dion (1991) on team cohesion and team performance showed a positive correlation between these two variables.

"Conflict is an integral part of the human interaction between people, groups, cultures, sects, firms, and countries. Conflict can, if guided, be healthy and productive. However, if ignored may lead to disastrous consequences and the deterioration of long-term relationships. In the international marketplace, the potential for conflict is extremely high as cultural beliefs and customs collide with regularity. Therefore, cross-cultural leadership must attend to the inevitability of conflict with guidance, knowledge, patience, and a celebration of diversity. Part of cross-cultural leadership intelligence is the ability to manage conflict. A strong leader will avoid avoiding conflict, and will imbue this attitude in his/her followers." (Thomas Grisham, Page 5) Thomas Grisham has developed a model for cross-cultural leadership known as the XLQ model that is in the form of a wheel. "The hub of the steering wheel is Trust, without it, leadership cannot function. The spokes of the wheel are Transformation, Communication, Power, and Empathy. The wheel itself is culture for without the effective use and coordination of the other aspects, the wheel would in fact not be a wheel, and would be ineffective. The lubricant for the wheel is Conflict Management. Conflict can be used to stimulate creativity, but if not managed can cause enough friction so that the wheel cannot turn." (Thomas Grisham, Page 6).

The current study utilises some aspects of this model to build its conceptual framework. When two cultures (hypothetically Culture A and Culture B) interact in a project team, there is bound to be a conflict due to cross-cultural differences. These differences can be defined based upon the five dimensions enumerated by Hofstede viz. Power Distance, Uncertainty

Avoidance, Individualism-Collectivism, Masculinity-Feminity and Long-Term Orientation. An effective Project Manager manages this conflict through effective Communication, Empathy towards the members of the project team and sharing of Power with them. This resolves the conflict to build mutual trust and both Culture A team members and Culture B team members can work in cohesion and harmony for effective implementation of the project.





Thus, the culture B is entirely related culture A as it also comprises of the aspects such as communication, empathy, power shaving as well as trust. If the all these aspects are followed by the members of a project management team then it can mitigate the problems aroused due to cross-culture.



CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The research aims to assess the impact that the presence of more than one culture in a project team has on project management with particular reference to construction projects. Literature does seem to suggest that cross-cultural differences could negatively impact project management. It is obvious that if differences exist in the project team, time and cost overruns could result. It also aims to explore methods of assuaging these differences based on a conceptual framework (explained above).

Rationale for Research Approach

Research Philosophy

According to Hallebone and Priest (2009), the belief that sets the overall research guidelines for a study is research philosophy. This belief also allows the researcher to set a specific direction of the study. Three types of research philosophies are interpretivism, positivism and realism. The type of research paradigm is chosen on the basis of the requirements and nature of the study. Positivism refers to the research philosophy that considers reality as stable which can be explained from an objective perspective. Positivism research philosophy has a strong association with natural and physical sciences. Apart from positivism, interpretivism and realism are also other two philosophies. These are used to analyse any research study trying to develop any fresh theory or model. However, to analyse the objective of the current research, positivism is the most effective one as it helped to examine the impact of culture on members of a project management team of UAE.

Research Approach

Ary et al. (2013) explained two types of research approaches: Deductive reasoning is the one in which the researcher starts from general data and ends with specific results that show that it is a top-down research approach. On the other hand, inductive reasoning is where the

researcher starts from specific data/ observation to broader theories and concepts that show that it is a bottom-up research approach. However, neither of these methods were found suitable to the research at hand. A third method is used, namely abductive reasoning. "Abduction is the logic used to construct descriptions and explanations that are grounded in the everyday activities of, as well as in the language and meanings used by, social actors. Abduction refers to the process of moving from the way social actors describe their way of life to technical, social scientific descriptions of that social life. It has two stages: (a) describing these activities and meanings and (b) deriving categories and concepts that can form the basis of understanding or an explanation of the problem at hand. Abduction is associated with interpretivism.." (S., Michael et al., 2004).

Research Methodology

The research method used in this study is qualitative as the purpose is to assess the influence of culture on construction project management. The benefit of using a qualitative study in such behavioural assessment is that it provides the perspective of the researcher and focuses on the value and quality of the data as identified by Cooper & Schindler (2006). Also, according to Adèr et al. (2008), another major advantage of using the qualitative method is that it takes into account multiple contexts such as cultural, interpersonal and social. Against the latter statement, Ary *et al.* (2013) mentioned that use of the quantitative method cannot highlight the behavioural aspects of the members of the construction industry of project management. Hence, the response cannot be used for evaluation of the impact of culture on the team performance of project management related to construction. Due to this regard, the researcher tried to utilise qualitative method to examine the influence of culture on the profitability and essence of the members of project management.

Research Design

Belk (2006) has identified three designs for a qualitative study viz. the ethnographic study, case study and grounded theory. "The concepts out of which the theory is constructed are derived from data collected during the research process and not chosen prior to beginning the

research." (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). In case of ethnographic research, the researcher shares the observations with a group of participants. Last is the case study in which one single unit is studied comprehensively and extensively. This research design enables the researcher to explore a particular aspect of the problem in depth within a limited duration of time. Contrary to the above-mentioned paragraph, Ary *et al.* (2013) argued that case study can be effective only if a specific organisation related to project management of UAE is concerned. However, as any such organisation is not specified in the current study, so case study method is not at all effective. Thus, this study has adopted the grounded theory research design that allows exploring the cultural influence on project management when teams from different nationalities work in a project.

Research Model

A research process needs a research model that guides the whole study afterwards. In this regard, Adèr *et al.* (2008) claims that there are three models upon which the social research projects can be based. These are descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. The study can also have multiple research models incorporated into it. The present study uses the descriptive research, model. The descriptive research model, according to Belk (2006), is one in which people or situations are described. This type of research model has more than one research question that need to be answered and the study following the descriptive research model is driven by an unstructured research format as it does not include any hypotheses. This type of model is used for this particular study as the purpose here is to describe the influence of culture on project management of construction projects. Thus, the situation and behaviour of managers is to be assessed in the study that can be done successfully through a descriptive approach.

Research Techniques

For the collection of data, there were two choices: primary vs. secondary research. For this study, primary research was chosen. Primary research was selected as the research method because this helped in assessing the ground realities about cross-cultural project management.

A deeper insight into the issue could be gained through primary sources. Another reason is that not enough secondary data is available on this subject.

Research Sample & Data Sources

There are two most common methods of sampling as identified by Creswell (2013). These are random and purposive sampling. When participants are selected in non-random and a deliberative manner, it is called purposive sampling. In such case, participants are selected on specific considerations. However, in case of random sampling, the participants have an equal chance of selection and no specific criteria are defined for selecting participants. Ten project managers were selected based on certain criteria to assess the cultural influence on the management of projects.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical consideration is one of the prime necessity of any research study, As it helps to conduct the research in an accurate and authentic way, thereby, reducing the scope of biases in results.

All the ethical issues were considered by the researcher in the study. The confidentiality of the participants was also maintained. Moreover, the informed consent of the participants was obtained. Informed consent helped in informing the participants regarding the aim and objectives of the study. This helped in clear communication to avoid any misunderstandings or unethical issues.

Data Collection Methods

A total of 10 managers were interviewed for this research study such that they had at least five years professional experience as a project manager and at least one managed project which included direct contact with multi-cultural project stakeholders (contractors, consultants, or other project parties). The researcher collected the data by taking interviews of these participants. The notes related either directly or indirectly to the responses or observations made during the interview. Each interview lasted no longer than 30 minutes to

prevent fatigue on the part of the participants, as well as to maintain focus in the interviews. Asking open-ended questions of each of the participants allowed the participants to provide as much information as they desired about their opinions.

Data Analysis Methods

For the purpose of achieving the study aim and objectives, the responses by the respondents were categorised so that the answers reflected certain behaviours of managers about cross-cultural project management. From interview responses, the major underlying themes were identified such that responses that suggested similar meaning were put in the same category. To obtain it, grounded theory is used rather than thematic or content evaluation technique as it can attain accurate and authentic results. With the help of grounded theory, the behavioural aspects and attitude of the members of the project management teams of construction industry can be examined effectively. However, failure to utilise these methods cannot prove effective in analysing the responses obtained from the managers of the construction industry.

Summary

The study is based on interpretivism as a research philosophy using abductive reasoning to arrive at some basic conclusions. The research is based on qualitative data for various reasons (explained above). The study aims to arrive at a theory for cross-cultural project management and thus uses the grounded theory framework. To allow project managers to share their first-hand experiences, the study uses a descriptive approach and relies on primary data collection through project manager interviews.

Using purposive sampling, data was collected from 10 project managers, managing cross-cultural construction management teams. Data was collected using open-ended questions

So that project managers open up and describe their experiences and views, some basic information about them and the cross-cultural project they had managed was elicited first.

Using the theoretical framework explained in Chapter 2, the 30-minute questionnaire was administered to 10 participants. The interview being conducted in English resulted in a bit of

resistance from the respondents in presenting their viewpoints. The responses were categorised and led to the findings in the next chapter.



CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Refer Appendix A for Interview Questionnaire

Questions 1 to 5: These were warm-up questions used to introduce the interviewee and lead to the main questions of the interview. Among the nationalities/culture that were involved in the projects under consideration were Chinese, Indian, UAE, British, Austrian, German, Australian, Kenyan, etc.

Similarities in monocultural and cross-cultural team projects: (Cross-cultural for the purpose of this study means a team made up of stakeholders (project team, contractors, etc.) from different nationalities). The dominant theme that emerged in this question was that a project by definition has to be completed within time and cost constraints and this criterion remains constant throughout projects whether they involve mono-cultural teams or cross-cultural teams. Also mentioned was the fact that the project manager is the pivot around which the project revolves, and his/her role is paramount. It is also mentioned by Collyer and Warren (2009) that culture is recognised as a collective event that helps in determining a specific custom and traditions within a group. Specific custom and regulation helps the members of a group to work uniformly resulting in the accomplishment of an objective (as mentioned in section 3). Contrary to the statement, Anantamula (2008) described that failure to maintain or develop a uniform culture within a group can prove detrimental to the organisation of construction industry. Hence, the profitability and brand image of the organisations of construction can get declined significantly as compared to others.

Differences in monocultural and cross-cultural team projects: Most of the participants agreed that the way one communicates differs with nationality/culture. While in some cultures the written or spoken word is important and taken at face value, in some western cultures, it is important to have the physical presence and the unspoken word can assume importance. Also the fact that in cross-cultural team projects more meetings may be required to convey goals of the project and to get everybody on the same plane. In a monocultural project team, differing views are more easily resolved than in cross-cultural teams.

The impact of culture on Project Management: For example in western cultures like the UK, team meetings are more important than emails or telephonic conversations. Some Chinese and Indian Cultures consider the project manager's decision as final and are more conforming while to question authority is the norm in Western cultures like the UK. While it is important to deliver projects to the specifics of the client in China and Kenya for example, in Australia and the UK, the effort is to go beyond the client's expectations. While, in Western cultures, it is important to hold face to face meeting throughout the project cycle, fewer meetings at the beginning can suffice in China, for example. Also in Chinese cultures, maintaining a personal rapport with team members is very important but in Australia, for example, people are more individualistic and task oriented.

Positive and negative impact of cross-cultural teams on Project Management: Almost all participants agreed that cross-cultural teams can have both positive and negative effects and only 2 participants disagreed, feeling that cross-cultural teams have mostly negative effects.

Positive impact of cross-cultural teams on Project Management: Among the positive effects was the predominant fact that cross-cultural teams bring varied experiences to the table and suggest innovative ideas to tackle problems. An interesting fact also emerged that cross-cultural teams may facilitate the emergence of a new project culture that is specific to that project and team. This may increase cohesiveness in the team. It is also denoted by Trkman (2010) in section 4 of chapter 2 that cross culture helps to implement varied types of experiences and knowledge within the group. As a result of this, the performance and productivity of the group related to project management of construction industry enhances significantly. Moreover, varied types of challenges can also be resolved by the members of the team comprising of cross-culture. Thus, cross-culture offers a positive impact on the performance and efficiency level of the employees of project management.

The negative impact of cross-cultural teams on Project Management: Almost everybody agreed that in cross-cultural teams, more meetings and channels of communication are needed. Also it emerged that in cross-cultural teams, it is more common to work remotely which has its set of problems. Also agreed was the fact that the project manager's role is more

complex and time-consuming in cross-cultural teams. The project manager has to be more experienced and with higher levels of communication and managerial skills in cross-cultural teams. Managing personal issues of team members assumes prime importance in cross-cultural teams.

Positive impact of cross-cultural teams on cost and time constraints of the project:

Almost everybody agreed that cross-cultural teams have no positive impacts on time and cost of the project except the fact that innovation may sometimes lead to cost and time savings in cross-cultural teams but this cannot be generalised, mentioned by 1 participant.

The negative impact of cross-cultural teams on cost and time constraints of the project:

As project management is more complex in a cross-cultural team, it usually has a negative impact on time and cost. More meetings result in more time required. Also working remotely means that team meetings (face to face) are more costly. If the teams are not remote, members have increased travel to home countries resulting in both time and cost enhancement. Also, conflicts resolution and personal issues will consume more time in cross-cultural teams. Also, a more experienced and skilled project manager for cross-cultural teams is more expensive. Of course time usually overruns mean cost overruns too.

Other effects of cross-cultural teams on project management: Other effects include the fact that the project manager is under greater pressure managing cross-cultural teams, especially off-site teams and has to bring to bear a more experienced and diverse skill set (soft skills) to the project. Also, cross-cultural teams may lead to lower trust among team members as it is more difficult to trust someone who is "different".

The Role of Effective Communication in managing negative impact of cross-cultural teams in Project Management: (Communication for this study means the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium). Everybody agreed that effective communication is the most important factor in the dissipating conflict in project management. Also stressed by some was the fact that problems need to be communicated to all and solved collectively for effective resolution and to prevent recurrence. Many agreed that meetings and workshops are effective tools for effective

communication, especially major conflicts. "Just talking about it with everybody" and concluding together seemed to dissipate differences. 6 participants agreed that highlighting the objectives of the project, and common goals lead to communication being effective. 5 participants mentioned that if, at the planning stage itself, clear lines of responsibility and clear communication lines are established, communication is smoother and effective. Also mentioned was the fact that communication is a two-way process and listening and being understood is an integral part of effective communication. It is denoted by Obeidat *et al.* (2012) that assigned objectives of the members of the project management of construction industry can become fulfil only through effective communication and coordination. Since, communication is the prime essence of developing an accurate relationship. Proper development of the relationship is the key parameter of the members of project management to increase the performance and prosperity in the market among other rival players (as shown in **section 5.3.1**). Contrary to the prior statement, Hofstede (2011) mentioned that failure to maintain an accurate relationship with the members cannot prove effective for the project management organisations in the future (as mentioned in section 5.3.1).

Role of Empathy in managing negative impact of cross-cultural teams in Project

Management: (Empathy for this study is the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within the other person's frame of reference, i.e., the capacity to place oneself in another's shoes). It was agreed by 6 participants that stepping into the shoes of the team member who has problems can lead to better understanding and more effective leadership of the project manager. They also agreed that it was important to be non-judgmental when dealing with cross-cultural issues. It was also mentioned that having worked with a particular culture before steepens the learning curve of the project manager. Empathy can improve with gift giving, knowledge of social etiquette and the language of a particular culture. If the project team members have a particular project leadership style preference, the project manager should respect this and conform accordingly. It also emerged that solving personal issues of team members is an effective source of empathy and can improve team

collectivism and cohesiveness. While dealing with team members, the team project manager has to be fair and just so that trust is built. This is true for both reprimand and reward.

Role of Power Sharing in managing negative impact of cross-cultural teams in Project

Management: (Power sharing for this study means a policy agreed between two parties or a team to share responsibility for decision-making and action). It emerged that power sharing can lead to building of trust in team members. Where there is cross-cultural and thus offsite teams, effective delegation of powers can lead to effective team management and thus project management. This also helps in sharing both success and failures of many milestone events in the project calendar. It is also mentioned by Hofstede (2011) that sharing of ideas and information helps to accomplish any desired tasks. Along with this, it also helps to improve the knowledge base and efficiency of the employees of the project management team in an efficient way (as shown in section 5.3.1 of chapter 2).

While it is true that a project manager plays a pivotal role in a project, effective delegation can lead to more team involvement, cohesion and collectivism. Collectivism is always preferred over individualism in a project team as the interest of the project team, and thus the interest of the project prevails over the interest of the individual. It is also mentioned by Hofstede (2011) that collectivism is the driving force of the teammates of the project management of construction industry as it helps to accomplish any task in a uniform manner. Joint effort of all the members of the team helps to enhance the prosperity and productivity of the organisation in this complex scenario. So, collectivism is quiet essential for the organisations operating in the markets of UAE rather than others (as mentioned in section 5.3.1).

Other ways to manage cross-cultural differences in a project team: It emerged that the experience of a project manager is important and if he has managed cross-cultural team projects before or has worked previously with a particular culture, the chances of success of the project are improved. It also emerged that individualism especially that of sub-contractors must be curbed to ensure harmony and adherence to project standards.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study has explored the practices of 10 senior project managers working on construction projects in the UAE with cross-cultural teams. Particular emphasis has been laid on the impact of culture on project management, positive and negative impacts of cross-cultural teams on project management, with special reference to time and cost constraints of projects. A hypothetical conceptual framework has been proposed which proposes that conflict is prevalent in cross-cultural teams in projects, more than that in mono-cultural teams and this conflict can be effectively managed based upon three pillars viz. Effective communication, empathy and power sharing. This would in turn lead to building of trust in the project team, and this would lead to a more cohesive and effective team and thus reduce cost and time overruns in a project and lead to better and more successful project management. Hence, it can be revealed that culture plays a very important role within an organization of project management operating under the umbrella of the construction industry.

The findings suggest that time and cost constraints are common for all projects across cultures, and the project manager's role is paramount for the effective implementation of any project. It was further evident that the way one communicates is different in cross-cultural teams with some giving credence to the written and spoken word while others to the unspoken variables like facial expressions. Differences are more easily resolved in mono-cultural teams. Differing cultures have varying norms, social etiquette and project management techniques that are apparent while managing projects with cross-cultural teams. While it is largely conceded that cross-cultural teams have both positive and negative impacts, positive impacts are fewer and relate to mainly the use of varied experiences and innovation in project management. Among the negative impacts are that communication and management are more complex, and remote teams add to the problem. Personal issues may

also come to the fore. It was predominantly agreed that cross-cultural teams have almost no positive effect on the cost and time constraints of a project. It was largely agreed that time and cost enhancement may occur

In teams with cross-cultural team members due to various reasons. Also, project managers of cross-cultural teams require enhanced soft skills and may lead to lower trust among members. Communication emerged as the most important factor in managing any team, especially cross-cultural teams. Establishing clear communication lines at the planning stage itself would lead to more effective communication and thus more effective project management. It emerged that stepping into the shoes of a team member to solve his or her problems can be an effective conflict and problem dissipating tool. If a team member adopts the leadership style demanded by his/her team members, it leads to empathy and more effective leadership. Sharing responsibility for team decision making and action is another important tool to positively enhance the project management experience and can lead to team involvement, cohesion and collectivism, all indispensable to build trust and improve team performance. Also apparent is the fact that the team manager's role is paramount, and his/her skill-set and experience can lead to better team performance and successful project implementation in cross-cultural teams. However, all is not lost due to cross-cultural teams in project management. There is a glimmer of hope that cross-cultural teams may bring fresh ideas and new approaches to project implementation. Hence, cross culture offers a significant impact on the behavior and knowledge base of the members of the organization. Doing so, helps to increase the productivity and efficiency of the teammates resulting in improvement of varied types of ideas and facts. All such inventive ideas might enhance the success of the organization involved in the industry of construction.

Recommendations

While the study focuses on ten project managers of construction projects in the UAE, a larger sample would have been more representative of the population. Also, the study is constrained by being confined to UAE construction projects. There is a possibility that the findings may not be true in other nations/cultures and may have to be modified for smaller projects or less experienced project managers. However, at the same time it is true that cross cultural teams are more likely to be found today for large engineering construction projects only and also that cross cultural teams are more likely to be assigned to experienced project managers only. This may not be true in times to come as globalization is increasing by the day through international business and recreational travel, not to mention the stupendous popularity of the internet. Remote teams are likely to be the norm in the future. It is in this context that, that this study assumes more importance. It is increasingly apparent that ignorance of cultural differences can lead to negative outcomes for the project manager and the project. Therefore, it is important to be aware of these issues, and then management or the nucleus of a project team can take measures to overcome any hindrances. While there is enough literature on the effect of culture on project teams and leadership in project management there appears to be a gap in the research on how cross-cultural teams behave when in a project and what measure can be taken to enhance the performance of cross-cultural teams in projects, especially construction projects. There is thus a need that there be more research on the enhancing the effectiveness of cross-cultural teams in projects and awareness of the subtle differences between nations and their respective cultures. This is extremely important for improving relationships and cohesiveness in project teams leading to the building of trust and thus more effective project management. There is also a need for training project managers on cross-cultural issues so that they become more effective project managers. While there is no shortage of cultural or leadership theories there needs to be the inclusion of this theory in training for project managers. Involvement of the members of the team with diverse culture and norms is essential so as to increase the efficiency and expertise of the individual. This

may enhance the portfolio and reputation of the organizations of project management of construction industry effectively as compared to many other contending players.



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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Names and basic pleasantries were exchanged. The researcher introduced himself as a student of project management mentioning the name of his institute. The two selection criteria viz. The experience of 5 years and the project manager having worked on at least one project with multi-cultural stakeholders was confirmed. The fact of the student attempting this dissertation as part of the curriculum was also mentioned. Consent of the interviewee towards the research was taken after assuring him/her that the data would not be misused, and confidentiality would be maintained.

Interview Questionnaire

Background/Warm-up Questions

1. What is the size of projects in terms of value that you usually work on?
2. Which was your largest project to date?
3. Did it have stakeholders (project team, contractors, etc.) from different cultures/nationalities?
If yes, go to 5., if no, go to 4.
4. Which of your projects had stakeholders (project team, contractors, etc.) from different cultures/nationalities?
5. Which were the national cultures involved in the project?

Main Questions

6. In the projects you manage, what similarities do you observe with projects involving teams of the same nationality/culture and projects involving teams of multiple nationalities/cultures?
7. In the projects you manage, what differences do you observe with projects involving teams of the same nationality/culture and projects involving teams of multiple nationalities/cultures?
8. What have you seen or experienced that may be an effect of culture on project management? What impact did it have and why? Please give some examples.

9. Do you feel that cross-cultural teams can have both positive and negative impacts on project management?

10. What positive impact did cross-cultures in a team have on project management? Please enumerate.

11. What negative impact did cross-cultures in a team have on project management? Please enumerate.

12. What positive impact did cross-cultures in a team have on time and cost of the project and why?

13. What negative impact did cross-cultures in a team have on time and cost of the project and why?

14. What are the other effects (that you may have seen or experienced) that cross-cultural teams have on project management?

15. Do you feel effective communication can help resolve the negative impacts of cross-cultural teams on project management? If yes, how?

16. Do you feel empathy can help resolve the negative impacts of cross-cultural teams on project management? If yes, how?

17. Do you feel power sharing can help resolve the negative impacts of cross-cultural teams on project management? If yes, how?

18. How else can a project manager manage the negative impacts of cross-cultural teams on project management?

Thank the interviewee for his/her time and end the interview.