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Wayne, George and Darrel, Percy

National University

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TEAM PERFORMANCE IN A FRACTIOUS CULTURE

George Wayne*

Percy Darrel

* Department of Human Resources, National University.

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ABSTRACT

This research paper is an attempt to study the items which are important in the team performance. Team performance is affected by different variables of cross cultural teams. So the researchers have try to find out that how much team performance rely on the factors of cross cultural teams like Language, Perception, Power and Behavior. The study employs the survey questionnaires in gathering information from the respondents on significant items of cross cultural teams. Simple random sampling technique was applied on the homogenous population and identified sample respondent from larger pool of respondents. Logistic regression (optimal scaling) was applied on the data set. Managerial implication can be that organization should make Team in which members having similar language. Member having positive behavior among themselves in the team; Teams can do wonders. Lastly, delegation of power or authority has significant impact. If teams have significant power to do whatever they want to do and how to do it, then they feel relax and motivated to achieve targets. The result empirically proves that Language, behavior, power and perception all the variables play a significant role in team performance.

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INTRODUCTION

Team is a term which has become particularly common in the late 90's. Reorganizing functional organizations into process organizations has accelerated the interest in teams. Business is becoming more global and changing, with less already established best practices to fall back on. Groups, work groups and teams are to function

cross-functionally as well as cross-culturally. Now day's organizations used cross cultural teams to expand their business across the world. Firstly only high level or multinational companies used to adopt this way of making cross cultural teams for the growth of business. But now even a small company had adopted to make cross cultural teams who belongs from different countries in which they want

to grow and expand their business. The main challenges that these teams can face are language problem because they belong from different nations and may face communication problem. Behavior, Leadership and Perception are also main problems that can affect the performances of cross cultural teams. It is very hard to find a smooth cross cultural team as the members in the team belongs to different culture and different places. Though there are more new ways of communication and easy machines are available to complete the task provided to these teams but even then they faces the problems. Even a single problem can affect the whole team performance and if the team could not work properly so it can be loss for organizations. So mainly, the main variables that needed to be adopted are language, Behavior, leadership and perception. If the members can easily handle these variables so the team can work great for the organizations.

Dependent Variables: The dependent variable in this research is “team Performance” which heavily depends on cross cultural sub variables. It is affected by the independent variables.

Independent Variable: The independent variable in the research is “Cross Cultural” which heavily depends upon the mentioned variables. **Language:** It is the way a member speaks as there are members in the teams possess different languages of their nation or culture. **Behavior:** It is the values and norms that a person follows and behaves and treats others and the natures are different of every member. **Leadership and Power:** some of the members have good leadership skills and they try to lead the team but due to cross cultural teams some members do not follow the leader. **Perception:** it is the state of mind that is different for every. A way of thinking

of a member can differ from each other to attain the goal.

These are the sub variables of cross cultural teams and the effect the team performance and the result that is to be achieve by the cross cultural teams. These sub variables plays an important role in the success of cross cultural teams.

The problem statement of this research is “Team performance is effected by different variables of cross cultural teams” so it has been tried to find out that how much team performance rely on the factors of cross cultural teams.

$$Team\ Performance = \alpha + \beta_1(language) + \beta_2(perception) + \beta_3(leadership) + \beta_4(Behavior) + \zeta$$

The outline of this research is to study the relationship between cross cultural teams and their performance on the basis of their culture, language, behavior and their leadership skills. Our idea was to carry out a research that what is the main reason that can affect the team performance.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Cross cultural management is often regarded as a discipline of international management focusing on cultural encounters between what are perceived as well-defined and homogeneous entities: the organization and the nation-state, and offering tools to handle cultural differences seen as sources of conflict or miscommunication (Jassawalla et al., 2004; S oderberg, & Holden, 2002). In this context, it is important to emphasize the cultural diversity (Iguisi, 2009; Haslberger, 2005). Under the globalized environment of business, management of “international project” becomes a major trend today (Kealey et al., 2006).

The question of running international projects characterized with cross-culture has come to the forefront of management thinking (Evans, 2006; Kauser, & Shaw, 2004).

This diversity in backgrounds and cultural heritage offers a big challenge to project managers as most of these projects are temporary and of short life cycle, giving little time for the project team to iron out the cultural diversity (Zwikael et al., 2005). As a result, conflicts are inevitable if they are not managed properly and speedily (Suen et al., 2007; Zhou et al., 2005). Also it requires knowledge of what motivates team members, e.g. achievement, recognition, advancement and responsibility, the work itself, feelings about other team members, their management, and their situation (Johns, 1995; Kanter, & Corn, 1994).

International projects share no small number of difficulties precisely because they are workplaces where local people and expatriates from different cultures must interact, produce together, and innovate together. Studies reported that as many as 50% of the foreign assignments of international business personnel are considered failures (Nauman, 1993). In recent years, China has entered the mainstream of world business (Wright et al., 2003; Zeng et al., 2009a).

Some large multinational companies have begun transferring their R&D centers to China (Lin, 2004; Zeng et al., 2009b). An estimate focusing on joint ventures in China placed success rates at only 6%, although the authors believe it would probably improve as experience gained (Hu, & Chen, 1996). There is a pressing need to understand the cultural diversity and exercise proper measures to manage it. Hence, foreign project managers dealing with projects in China should be adept in crosscultural

management (Chen, & Tjosvold, 2005; Hong et al., 2007; Selmer, 2005).

“Behavioral characteristics” have obvious impact on the success of international projects (Evans, 2006; Suen et al., 2007). In China, the predominant influence upon Chinese culture is Confucian in origin (Jaw et al., 2007).

Confucianism inculcates a desire for accomplishment and seriousness about tasks, jobs, family and obligations (Ahmed, & Li, 1996). Whilst Confucianism encourages people to be hardworking, responsible, knowledgeable and active in helping others, it accords lower emphasis to the advancement of individual interests (Jacobs et al., 1995). It is important to protect one’s “face” but it is perhaps even more important to give “face” to others (Buttery, & Leung, 1998). To “give face” means to give praise to someone in an organization. To get someone to “lose face” is to denounce his status or reputation. As Yang (1989) indicated, it was very important for Chinese to have harmony maintenance, impression management, face protection, social acceptance and avoidance of punishment, embarrassment, conflict, rejection, ridicule and retaliation in a social situation.

H1: Language plays a significant role in team performance

Western employees may encourage open discussion, and the use of disagreements and conflicts in order to get problems solved quickly (Chen, & Partington, 2004; Hoon-Halbauer, 1999). Hence, managers of international projects are under constant pressure to monitor their employee’s behaviors. In an international project team, imbalance is often caused by individuals not being fully conversant or appreciative of others’ cultural norms. Often this culminates in acrimonious claims against each other. Such misunderstandings can be

diminished through a process of appreciating each other's' aims, needs and expectations. This paves the way for a better and smoother conduct of international projects (Pukthuanthong, & Walker, 2007).

H2: Behavior plays a significant role in team performance

The importance of "social environment" for effective project implementation is becoming well recognized (Bresnen et al., 2003). "Social environment" including the economic, social, and political environment affects the success of a project. The social environment could be encapsulated by the concepts of 'social networks' and 'social capital' (Abereijo et al., 2007; Brookes et al., 2006).

H3: Leadership and Power plays a significant role in team performance

A social network can be defined as a finite set or sets of actors (discrete individual, corporate or collective social units) and the relational links between them (Wasserman, & Faust, 1994; Zeng et al., 2010). "Social capital" can be defined as the sum of actual and potential resources embedded within, available through and derived from the network of relationships possessed by a social unit (Nahapiet, & Ghoshal, 1998; Yang et al., 2010).

H4: Perception plays a significant role in team performance

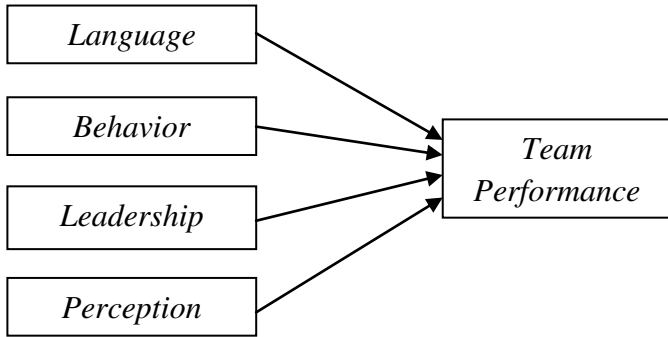
In China, the government, as an indispensable mediator in the social environment of projects, plays an important role in approving projects, allocating resources, and arranging finance (Luo, 2001). One study of Canadian firms operating in China found this to be the biggest single issue: Insufficient understanding of the political, regulatory, and market realities led to a sense of

having a lesser ability than at home to predict and proactively influence the Chinese social environment (Abramson, & Ai, 1999). For multinational corporations, the skills of managing corporate-government relations and communications are essential (Fan, 2007).

APPLIED RESEARCH METHOD

For this research objective data has been collected by self-administrated visit and by conducting interview with varying age group respondents. Authors have mainly used questionnaire as ultimate source of gathering data about the research. Data collection was smooth and no questionnaire was rejected and inclusion of all questionnaires was made possible for data analysis. In order to reduce the fatigue of gathering large set of data for the research. Authors applied Simple random sampling technique on the homogenous population and identified sample respondent from larger pool of respondents. Targeted respondents were randomly asked to fill questionnaire irrespective of gender, qualification, age or even income level. For this research paper limited target respondents were identified and 100 people were considered for inclusion in the research data set. Characteristics of the respondents were not defined. The instrument that we used for the research was "Questionnaire". Self-administrated physical questionnaire instrument was handed over and get them filled by the people to conclude the result of our research. Nature of questions was Closed ended with likert scale of 1 to 5 were used to record the response of the sample. Research instrument was quite easy to fill out and if any difficulty persisted, it was resolved by the researcher themselves on the spot.

Empirical Research Model:



Once data was collected through the instrument, data was analyzed into SPSS 17.0. Looking at the nature of the data and hypothesis Logistic regression (optimal scaling) was applied on the data set. Logistic regression has a single variate composed of estimated coefficients for each independent variable as found in multiple regression. This variate is estimated in a different manner. Logistic regression derives its name from the logit transformation used with the dependent variable, creating several differences in the estimation process. One sample T-Test was also used to analyze the data. Results can be found the corresponding result section.

FINDINGS ON THE BASIS OF EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

Findings and Interpretation of the Results

H₁: Language plays a significant role in team performance

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
LANGUAGE	100	2.27	1.081	.108

Interpretation: Among the sample of 100 respondents of the study, It has been revealed that language plays a very significant role in team performance as one can see in the result table above the mean value is nearer to 2 which shows that there is a significant relationship between language and team performance. Managerial implication can be

that organization should make Team in which members having similar language. As if there is diversity in the team on the basis of language, it will be harder for the members to communicate and discuss on matters, solutions and issues. Language can become an obstacle in the performance of the team, hence language barriers should be removed to ensure performance from the teams

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
LANGUAGE	20.997	99	.000	2.270	2.06	2.48

Interpretation: Further more to confirm the relation among the language and team performance, one sample Test was applied. Results show that the significant value Sig. (2-tailed) is less than .005 which means that there is strong relation between language and team performance so therefore we are 95% confident that our H₁ is accepted and null hypothesis is rejected. This can be interpreted from the results that teams in which members have

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
BEHAVIOR	100	2.17	.933	.093

similarity of language will have greater chance of yielding performance but team performance can not

only rely on similarity of language itself, there could be other variables to consider as well. Authors have taken into consideration some more variables that might affect the team performance.

H₂: Behavior plays a significant role in team performance

Interpretation: Behavior and attitude is the next important thing to consider in teams. How team members behave with each other and their behavior while doing some task. The mean value is nearer to 2 which indicates the relationship between the Behavior of members in teams and it plays a role in team performance. If the member have positive behavior among themselves in the team; Team can do wonders but if team members have bad behavior same team will underperform and hence the objective of the team making cannot be achieved

One-Sample Test

Test Value = 3						
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
BEHAVIOR	23.268	99	.000	2.170	1.98	2.36

Interpretation: The testing criterion was kept at 3 and hence the mean value was closer to 3 that is 2.170. Even the T-statistics further signify the role of behavior in the team performance as the significant value of the test is less than .005 which shows that there is a strong relationship between Behavior and team performance and we are 95% confident that this hypothesis is acceptable whereas null hypothesis is rejected.

H₃: Leadership and Power plays a significant role in team performance

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
LEADER	100	2.57	1.139	.114

Interpretation: The mean value of this result is nearer to 3 which means that there is some relation between leadership and team performance. Leadership skill and leadership role playing is very important in the team performance. There has to be someone among the team members to take the leading position and guide the team members in the achievement of the targeted goal. On most important thing is delegation of power or authority. If teams have significant power to do whatever they want to do and how to do it, then they feel relax and motivated to achieve targets.

One-Sample Test

Test Value = 3						
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
LEADER	22.557	99	.000	2.570	2.34	2.80

Interpretation: The significant value is less than .005 which indicates that there is a some kind of relationship between the leadership skill and team performance and we are 95 % confident that this hypothesis can be stated as correct and acceptable.

H₄: Perception plays a significant role in team performance

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PERCEPTION	100	2.17	1.164	.116

Interpretation: The mean value is nearer to 2 which show a relation between perception and team performance. If team members perceive the target as challenging and if they know that achievement of the target will yield them good reward in terms of growth and development. Then this perception can result into high performance team. But if the perception is negative then team will have no motivation to work to gather and it would not perform to even the minimum criteria.

One-Sample Test

Test Value = 3						
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
PERCEPTION	18.644	99	.000	2.170	1.94	2.40

Interpretation: The significant value is less than .005 which is a strong case and there is strong relationship between perception and team performance and we are 95% confident that this hypothesis can be proved correct

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The topic of our research was “A critical evaluation of cross cultural virtual teams”. This research was conducted and we conclude that the

team performance of cross cultural team depends upon the different variables which are Language, Behavior, Leadership and Perception. These variables play a significant role in team performances. We tested our hypothesis and it is accepted that these variables are a great source of achieving goals and task in cross cultural teams. If these variables are followed and there is a good combination between the members regarding these variables so it will be found that the team work was successful. In short the conclusion can be that team performance of cross cultural teams depend upon various basics variables. The teams always depends on the co-operation of other group members so it is recommended that the members who can cope up with different characteristics can be successful in cross cultural teams and if the members can try to adjust and do hard work so the teams can find success. The advice for the future research is that if this topic is selected for research so the survey should be done on a larger scale and mainly in multinational organizations. It will provide a clearer picture of the research result. And few other and different independent variables can be included to improve the research.

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*Corresponding Author: George Wayne, Email Address: georgewayne82@yahoo.com
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