ADVANCES IN GLOBAL BUSINESS RESEARCH

Proceedings – 2011
Eighth World Congress Held in Dalian
September 15-17, 2011
Volume – II

Edited by:

| David McArthur Utah Valley University,USA | Zhao Yanzhi Dongbei University of Finance & Economics, China | Tariq Malik Dongbei University of Finance & Economics, China | Zafar U. Ahmed University of Dammam, Saudi Arabia |

Academy for Global Business Advancement (AGBA)

Dongbei University of Finance & Economics (DUFE)

ADVANCES IN GLOBAL BUSINESS RESEARCH
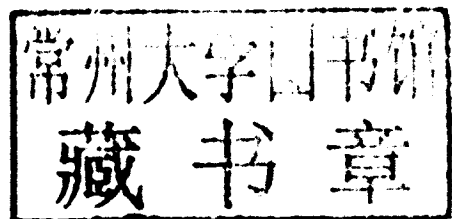
Vol. 8 No. 1
ISSN 1549-9332

Edited By

David McArthur
Utah Valley University, USA

Zhao Yanzhi
Dongbei University of Finance & Economics
Dalian, China

Tariq Malik
Dongbei University of Finance & Economics
Dalian, China

Zafar U. Ahmed
University of Dammam, Saudi Arabia

Advances in Global Business Research

These are the proceedings of the 2011 Academy for Global Business Advancement (AGBA's) 8th World Congress held at the Global Institute of Management and Economics, Dongbei University of Finance and Economics (Dalian, China) on September 15-17, 2011.

These proceedings are edited by David McArthur, Utah Valley University (USA), Zhao Yanzhi, Dongbei University of Finance & Economics (Dalian, China), Tariq Malik (Dongbei University of Finance & Economics (Dalian, China) and Zafar U. Ahmed (University of Dammam, Saudi Arabia).

These proceedings are prepared from material supplied by the authors. Manuscripts that were not sent to the editors on time for production may not appear in the proceedings. In accordance with editorial policy, some tables, graphs, figures, or references may have been edited or omitted. In the case of errors, or omissions, please contact the respective author(s) directly.

Every effort has been made by the editors, publishers and printers of these proceedings to see that no inaccurate data, opinion, or statement appears in the proceedings, and the data and opinions appearing in the articles herein are the responsibility of the author(s). Accordingly, the publishers, printers, editors, and AGBA officials accept no liability whatsoever for the consequences of such inaccurate or misleading data, opinion or statement.

AGBA Journals Are Published by

Inderscience Publishing Co. of Switzerland and UK

Journal for Global Business Advancement is the official organ of the Academy for Global Business Advancement and is published two times in a year by the Inderscience Publishing Company of Switzerland and UK.

The aim of JGBA is the advancement of contemporary research in the field of global business from the standpoint of both western and emerging countries vigorously participating in the globalized world. JGBA is an international refereed journal dedicated to the advancement of the theory and practice of global business with an emphasis on developing countries attempting to assert themselves on the global stage.

Firms, institutions, governments, organizations, agencies, and individuals are participating in the globalization of world economy through a variety of forms, shapes, and styles, necessitating the initiation of an innovative dialogue between them with the goal of resolving conflicts, promoting world peace and harmonizing relations. JGBA wishes to act as a global platform for the pursuance of dialogue between different countries at dissimilar stages of economic development.

JGBA aims to inspire both new and expert researchers to submit their empirical, conceptual and applied papers and case studies for publication. Preference will be given to papers examining conflicts between western firms and developing countries' institutions, communities and firms, papers examining struggles confronted by new multinational firms emanating from developing countries and new scholars from emerging countries, as reflected by the accreditation of business programs across the world by the AACSB–International.

Appropriate topics for manuscripts include challenges being encountered by western firms in newly emerging countries, firms from developing countries trying to penetrate world markets and attempting to build their own brands, non-western scholars attempting to examine the applicability of western models in eastern, socialist and southern hemisphere countries.

Collaborative manuscripts between scholars and entrepreneurs, between western and non-western scholars, and between scholars and professionals, are particularly favored.

JGBA invites and welcomes research papers encompassing all areas of global business studies, such as marketing, management, organizational behavior, finance, accounting, MIS, economics, and cultural anthropology. JGBA also welcomes research papers that transcend single countries, and single discipline. Accordingly, it has a special interest in the publication of multidisciplinary and multinational research emanating from innovative scholars and business schools accredited by the AACSB around the world.

INDERSCIENCE PUBLISHERS
www.inderscience.com

Journal for International Business and Entrepreneurship Development is sponsored by the Academy for Global Business Advancement and is published two times in a year by the Inderscience Publishing Company of Switzerland and UK.

The JIBED addresses the advancement of contemporary research in the field of international business and international entrepreneurship. JIBED is an internationally-competitive, peer-reviewed journal dedicated to the advancement of practice and theory of international business, international entrepreneurship and international franchising with an emphasis on developing countries attempting to assert themselves on the global stage.

Firms, institutions, governments, organizations, agencies and individuals are participating in the globalization of world economy through variety of forms, shapes, and styles, necessitating the initiation of new dialogue between them with the goal of resolving conflicts, promoting world peace and harmonizing relations. As a result, JIBED wishes to act as a

global platform for the pursuance of dialogue between different countries at dissimilar stages of international development, entrepreneurship development, and franchising development.

JIBED aims to inspire the full range of scholars to submit their empirical, conceptual and applied papers and case studies for publication. Preference will be given to papers examining conflicts between western firms and host countries and between western institutions and host communities and firms, challenges being confronted by firms emanating from developing countries and penetrating other developing countries and by new scholars from newly emerging countries as reflected by the accreditation of business programs across the world by AACSB–International.

Appropriate topics for manuscripts include challenges being encountered by international entrepreneurs in newly emerging countries, international entrepreneurs from developing countries trying to penetrate world markets and attempting to build their own brands, non-western scholars attempting to examine the applicability of western models of entrepreneurship across Asian, African, East European, Middle Eastern, and South American countries. Collaborative manuscripts between scholars and entrepreneurs, between western and non-western scholars, and between scholars and professionals are particularly encouraged.

JIBED invites and welcomes research papers encompassing different areas of international business studies, such as marketing, management, organizational behavior, finance, accounting, MIS, economics, and different dimensions of international entrepreneurship, such as venture capital formation, franchising, small business management, family business management, and technopreneurship. JIBED particularly welcomes research papers that transcend single countries and single disciplines. JIBED also has a special interest in research emanating from business schools accredited by the AACSB across the world.

Submit your manuscript to:
Editor-in-Chief
IEL Editorial Office
PO Box 735
Olney, Bucks MK46 5WB
UK
E-mail: jibed@inderscience.com

"Business and Entrepreneurship Development in the Context of
Globalization and the Rise of China"

Volume 2
Proceedings
AGBA 8th World Congress

Dalian, Peoples Republic of China
September 15-17, 2011
Dufe, Dalian, China

Competitive Papers

Hadyn Bennett, University of Ulster, UK
Norman S. Wright, Utah Valley University, USA

The Moderating Influences of National Culture on Student Team Member Participation: An Anglo – Indian Comparison

ABSTRACT

Recent years have seen a marked increase in the number of international students studying in the United Kingdom. At the same time, the use of student teams for both assessed project work and as study groups has been increasing, and against this background multi-cultural learning teams are becoming more common. The benefits of team learning have been much discussed in the literature, and include the development of interpersonal skills such as communication, conflict management, negotiation, problem-solving and critical thinking skills. However, the realisation of these outcomes is dependent on effective team functioning and full member participation in the team process. This paper reports the findings of a cross cultural study into student team member participation in a higher education context. Two groups are compared – UK and Indian nationals. Drawing on research into national cultural differences, the results indicate Indian students (who in terms of national culture score significantly higher for collectivism) to be significantly less likely to participate fully in the team process, and more likely to engage in behaviours which preserve a veneer of team harmony at the expense of self-expression. The implications of these finding for team management, the delivery of the benefits of team learning, and individual student learning are examined.

Keywords: student teamwork; national culture; individualism – collectivism; team learning; voice and participation.

INTRODUCTION

Various authors have highlighted the recent growth in numbers of international students studying in UK universities. For example, Valiente (2008) refers to "the rapid internationalization of the universities in countries like the UK" (p. 73). At the same time, De Vita (2000) while recognising significant growth in research into quality teaching and learning practices, has noted a much lower degree of attention to have "been devoted to exploring issues pertaining to the challenges of the added dimension of cultural diversity that now, more than ever, characterizes the cohorts of British business schools, which like those in Australia and the USA, have become increasingly multicultural in their student populations", (pp. 168–9, citing Scott, 1998, in support).

Also well established in the literature is the reality that issues of national culture can have a significant impact on the student's learning experience. As noted by Valiente (2008), "the context in which individuals learn, work and live has an important influence on creating and modifying the individual's expectations and learning, management strategies and styles" (p. 74).

Much attention in the education literature has been focussed on differences in learning styles across cultures, for instance in relation to critical thinking and memory skills. This paper takes as the focus of its attention one aspect of the higher education learning experience which has become increasingly common in recent years – the use of group and team centred learning, and examines differences in team participation across two different cultural regions. This is an area which has received little attention in the education literature, with Scott-Ladd and Chan (2008), for example, noting that "giving students practical skills for building team cohesion and managing team processes has received little attention in the tertiary education literature" (p. 234). Further, they note that "if we are to better assist our students to diagnose, evaluate and plan chang es to their team processes, we need to better understand how students monitor and shape their progress and we need to recognize the individual differences and strengths that contribute to learning outcomes" (p. 234). The present paper addresses some of these issues. Using student samples from the United Kingdom and India, results are presented which show that Indian students perceive significantly higher levels of conflict and argument in team activities, and (possibly in consequence) are significantly more likely to hide their true opinions and ideas, or change these to preserve team harmony. The implications of these findings for the use cf student teams as a learning instrument are discussed.

Growth Of International Students In The Uk

Vickers and Bekhradnia (2007) note there to have been a steady upward trend in the number of overseas students studying in the UK during the second half of the last century and the first part of this. In 1992 there were some 95,900 full time international students in UK higher education institutions. By 2004 – 05 this had increased steadily to 240,390 or 318,400 when part-time students are included. Of these, Vickers and Bekhradnia note 100,005 to have been from other EU countries, while the remaining 218,395 were from outside the EU. Further, they note the UK as being second only to the USA in terms of global market share for international students.

Recent years have seen a marked increase in the numbers of Indian students accepting places at UK higher education institutions. MacLeod (2007) reports that by academic year 2005 – 06 the number of Indian students had increased to 19,000, second only to China as the main source of international students. By 2006 – 07 the total had risen to 23,835, an increase of 24 percent (Gill, 2008).

The growth in the numbers of international students presents challenges to established teaching and learning methodologies, which increasingly have to cope with classes consisting of various nationalities, and students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Simultaneous to this growth of the multi-cultural classroom has been a steady increase in the use of student teams as a means of delivering learning outcomes. It is therefore appropriate that research be carried out into cultural characteristics as moderators of student team performance (including the delivery of learning outcomes).

Team Work in Higher Education

Billet (2004) notes that tertiary educators have increasingly turned to the use of student teams and teamwork both to improve the learning experience and deliver learning outcomes, and to prepare students for professional life. Impetus for this development has come from the si benefits – both in terms of skill development and enhanced learning outcomes – believed to

be associated with teamwork. As long ago as 1994, Cohen noted that "cooperative learning has gained increasing acceptance in classrooms here [USA] and abroad as a strategy for producing learning gains, the development of higher order thinking, pro-social behaviour, interracial acceptance, and as a way to manage academic heterogeneity in classrooms with a wide range of achievement in basic skills" (p.1). There is evidence to suggest that such benefits may hold across student age-groups, subject areas, and in relation to a wide range of tasks – including the development of both intellectual and problem-solving skills (see, for example, Bossert, 1988)

In terms of enhanced learning outcomes, the literature is awash with reported benefits associated with student teamwork, including, for example, the exploration of different perspectives (drawing on members' experiences and knowledge) (Mutch, 1998), the opportunity to learn from other team members (Towns et al, 2000), and the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills. In addition, students are encouraged or required to take responsibility for their own learning (Towns et al, 2000), leading, in theory, to the development of useful life and professional skills. These may include the acquisition of interpersonal and relationship skills; communication skills; negotiation and conflict management skills; and collaborative and cooperation skills (for examples, see Yazici, 2005; Mutch, 1998).

However, against all these advantages are an array of potential problems, which can be described as barriers to the delivery of the desired learning outcomes and skills development. While these can be categorised under a number of headings, Towns et al (2000) have proposed that barriers fall into three categories – team process (how the team functions as a unit), member expectations and characteristics (including, for example, differences in perceptions as to assessment requirements, and propensity to engage in activities such as social loafing, which can in turn lead to conflict and demotivation – see Guerin, 2003), and practical coordination problems (such as finding suitable times and locations for meetings). Clearly, there are significant relationships between the first two, and indeed it is impossible to analyse team processes without due cognisance being given to the characteristics of team members. When it is assumed that 'team process' incorporates and reflects team member characteristics, it is reasonable to argue team process to be the most significant barrier to effective performance. Further, it can be argued that an effective team process will contribute to the resolution of the latter two sets of problems (an effectively functioning team will be able to overcome issues of perception, and should be able to develop workable solutions to practical problems such as when and where to meet).

A central issue in team process is team member engagement with that process. Both the academic benefits and learning outcome delivery benefits associated with teamwork, and the development of professional, or life, skills, cannot be delivered if the team process is dysfunctional. As discussed in the following section, effective team functioning depends on the full participation and active involvement of everyone in the team.

Voice and participation

Drawing on the management literature, team member voice and participation have been shown to be significant determinants of team process effectiveness. Several studies have indicated that in teams characterised by a high level of discussion positive team outcomes were more likely than in those teams in which discussion levels were low (Harper and Askling, 1980; Bunderson and Sutcliffe, 2002). In these studies, information sharing,

participation by multiple team members, and overall time spent in discussion of a wide range of alternatives all related to higher levels of performance. Similar results were also found in situations in which a team makes multiple, sequential decisions (Cooper and Kagel, 2005) as teams can discuss previous processes and outcomes and learn from those experiences. Achieving a diversity of ideas by drawing on the experiences of all group members is essential if the espoused benefits of teamwork in higher education as defined by Towns et al (2000) - the opportunity to learn from others, the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills, and the acquisition of interpersonal and relationship skills, communication skills, negotiation and conflict management skills, and collaborative and cooperation skills, as discussed above – are to be realised.

Beyond making better decisions, high team member participation and voice are also correlated with easier and more effective implementation of team decisions (Vroom and Yetton, 1973) – in other words, with more effective team processes. Pearce and Ravlin (1987) found open communication between team members leads to higher goal commitment and more flexible working practices during idea implementation. Witt et al (2000) and Scott-Ladd et al (2006) also found higher levels of participation in group decisions to lead to greater commitment to the team itself – an important outcome in terms of ongoing student learning.

Given the benefits associated with voice and participation in terms of effective team performance, and against the background of an increasingly heterogeneous classroom, it is appropriate that attention be paid to cultural differences in voice and participation on the part of students.

National culture and team-member voice and participation:
individualism versus collectivism

As shown above, it is well established in the literature that team-member voice and participation has a significant influence on team process and performance. In the context of the multi-cultural classroom it is important to understand how team members from diverse cultural backgrounds view participation and voice. This is of central importance to the use of multi-cultural teams in the classroom. Drawing on management literature, it has been shown that there are significant variations in management practices and team member participation across cultures (House et al, 2004). The seminal study in this field (Hofstede, 1980) identifies one aspect of culture, individualism – collectivism, which has been particularly robust in the study of individual and team behaviour.

Individualism versus collectivism basically pits concern for self against concern for the wider group. More specifically, various authors have studied the construct. Ramamoorthy and Flood (2004) distinguish between individualism – collectivism in the following terms: "individualism can be conceptualized as an orientation toward the self as an autonomous individual bounded by one's own skin. Collectivism, by contrast, can be conceptualized as an individual embedded in a broader society and hence, a social entity" (p. 349). Further, they note one of the key defining characteristics of individualism-collectivism as being the emphasis which individuals place on individual goals versus collective goals. Sosik and Jung (2002) note collectivism to be associated with attributes such as high value placed on social community (Durkheim, 1933), shared goals and harmony (Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck, 1961) and self-concept grounded in the social group (Hofstede, 1991). In collectivist cultures, the self-concept is defined in terms of group membership, in which common values and norms, and group-centred relationships are of primary importance.

In short, then, the self concept in collectivist cultures is defined in terms of group membership, in which common values and norms and group-centred relationships are of primary importance. In individualist cultures, the self-concept is derived from autonomy and freedom, and self-interest is given precedence over group interest (Earley and Gibson, 1998). In such contexts, individuals prefer personal responsibility and goals and tasks (Earley and Gibson, 1998).

Wright and Bennett (2008) note that "collectivism is typically manifested in the form of close and enduring commitment to the 'member' group, however defined" (p. 234), and in such cultures "loyalty to the 'group' is the principal concern in any social situation, taking precedence over most other social rules" (p. 234). In individualist cultures, on the other hand, "people tend to remain emotionally independent from the group, with self-interest acting as the dominant motivation" (p. 234).

A consequential outcome of these cross-cultural differences is that collectivists tend to be more sensitive to team conflict as it is seen as destroying group harmony. In potential conflict situations, and more generally in situations of uncertainty such as commonly found in student team assignment projects, collectivists may expend significant effort in trying to help others save face and to ensure that the team operates in harmony (Doucet and Jehn, 1997). Indeed, collectivist team members may even go so far as to either not voice their true opinion, or to change their view in an effort to avoid conflict emerging between team members (Wright and Bennett, 2008; Wright and Bennett, 2009).

Individualism – collectivism and team performance

Much of the research regarding the influence of individualism - collectivism on team performance has been carried out in workplace settings. Such literature is nevertheless directly relevant to teamwork in any context, and can be useful in developing knowledge and understanding of teamwork in the tertiary education sector.

That individualist and collectivist cultural values influence work-group membership, processes and outcomes is well-established in the literature (see, for example, Cox et al, 1991; Earley and Gibson, 1998; Watson et al, 1993). Cox et al (1991) found that collectivists are more likely to engage in cooperative behaviours than individualists, and to be less accepting of anti-group behaviours (Wright and Drewery, 2006). Earley (1989) found collectivists to display a higher preference for teamwork.

Much early research seems to suggest that individuals from collectivist cultures are more preferring of teamwork, and that teamwork per se is better suited to such individuals. For example, Ng (2001) suggests that collectivism encompasses recognition of interdependence among individuals, leading to a high level of concern to fit in with others in a group, and that as a result those from collectivist cultures may be more willing to listen to each other, seek each others' views and work in a group environment. Ng also suggests that a desire on the part of collectivists to be identified with the group leads to greater willingness to internalise the group's goals, and the consequent exertion of extra-role effort for the group, citing Earley (1993) and O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) in support. Indeed, Wagner (1995) in a factor analysis of different scales used to measure collectivism, identified five different facets associated with the term, the third of which is an inclination to work in teams.

Gundlach et al (2006) note that "a primary challenge that organizations must address when implementing teams is how to increase the chance that employees who are high in individualism, defined as those who place personal interests over shared group goals (Wagner, 1995), will be able to work effectively with others in team-based settings. Research shows that people who are high in individualism, or 'individualistic', often face challenges when placed in team-based structures, thereby making it difficult for organizations to reap the benefits offered by such structures (e.g. Earley, 1994; Earley and Gibson, 1998; Kirkman and Shapiro, 1997, 2001; Kirkman et al, 2001; Stone-Romero and Stone, 2002; Wagner, 1995). This body of research has shown that, even when other team-related variables are taken into consideration, individualism-collectivism has a significant and unique influence on team performance, and that individualistic team members negatively influence team performance" (p. 1604). Further, they note that "numerous empirical studies have examined the relationship between individualism-collectivism and team performance and have demonstrated the negative impact of individualistic team members on team performance" (p.1604).

A number of other writers have also reported differences between individualists and collectivists in team settings. Cox et al (1991) report collectivists to place greater emphasis on harmony and the avoidance of conflict (see also Takahashi et al, 2002). Ohbucci et al (1999) also reported collectivists to be more likely to pursue avoidance strategies, while individualists are more likely to behave in an assertive manner, being primarily concerned about individual rights. Moorman and Blakely (1995) report collectivists as being more likely to engage in organisational citizenship (behaviours which promote team harmony), while Kirkman and Shapiro (2001) reported collectivists as showing higher commitment to the team and preferring teamwork.

The notion that individuals with collectivist values produce higher performing teams has, however, been disputed in the literature. Sosik and Jung (2002), for example, in a comparative study of 83 work groups comparing those with collectivist members and those with individualistic, found the individualistic teams to outperform the collectivist. Reasons advanced for this finding include the possibility that individualists may pay more attention to identifying differences between members in terms of skills and abilities (as opposed to collectivists who may focus on commonalities - Triandis, 1994). Further, Sosik and Jung argue that heterogeneity may encourage individualists to learn from each other, to focus on the task in hand rather than on social and interpersonal relations, and in this way to build the confidence required for effective performance. In contrast, they argue, collectivism might encourage members to focus their efforts on building social and interpersonal relations, and as a consequence the team may require more time to achieve effective performance (an effect which is heightened by a tendency on the part of collectivists to view group interaction from a long-term perspective). Finally, Sosik and Jung also note collectivists to be more prone to groupthink, arising from an overemphasis on maintaining social relations at the expense of task performance.

HYPOTHESES

As has been shown, participation by all team members in the team process has consistently been shown to be a crucial factor for team success. Against the back-drop on increasing participation in western universities by students from India, and the increasing use of teamwork as a method of learning in those institutions, it is important to understand how both these groups (Anglos and Indians) view participation and voice within a team setting.

Hofstede (1980) collected data relating to individualism – collectivism from both the UK and India. Marked differences in scores can be observed, with the UK scoring high for individualism, and India low (89 / 100, compared with 48 / 100 – Hofstede, 1980). Higher scores for collectivism on the part of Indians as compared to Anglos was also confirmed by the Globe team (House et al, 2004).

Given this difference between the individualist Anglos and the collectivist Indians, what should a tutor expect with regards to voice and participation within classroom based teams? Based on the preceding discussions, it can be hypothesised that as collectivists, Indians will display greater sensitivity to conflict within the team than their more individualistic Anglo counterparts (Cox et al, 1991; Ohbucci et al, 1999; Sosik and Jung, 2002). Conflict as a generic concept can manifest itself it many ways, and so it is further proposed that Indians (with their greater concern for team harmony) will also report higher incidence of arguing within the team. This leads to the following hypotheses:

> Hypothesis 1a: Indian students will report a higher incidence of conflict in team settings than Anglo students.

> Hypothesis 1b: Indians students will report a higher incidence of arguing in team settings than Anglos.

These two hypotheses both relate to observed behaviour in the team context. Beyond this, it is also to be expected that the more collectivist Indians will expend greater effort in ensuring that team harmony is maintained, even to the extent of hiding or changing their views to ensure that a veneer of harmony is maintained. This leads to the following hypotheses:

> Hypothesis 2a: Indian students are more likely to change their views to accommodate the team than are Anglos.

> Hypothesis 2b: Indian students are more likely to not voice disagreement with a team decision than are Anglos.

METHODOLOGY

Convenience samples of two groups of business studies students were collected from the University of Ulster (UK) and the Institute of Management Technology's Dubai campus. The former is a state-run university with the UK's higher education sector, and the latter a multi campus Indian postgraduate business school. From surveys distributed in classrooms, an Anglo sample of 92 was collected, and an Indian sample of 77.

Instrument

Individuals were asked to rate their experiences in culturally homogenous project teams on each of four dimensions. Teams were engaged in the completion of assignment-based research projects. Homogenous teams (i.e. members drawn from only one culture) were used to ensure that findings reflected cultural differences in a 'pure' sense – in other words, to control for cross-cultural effects. In this way, difficulties identified by Devita (2000) as being associated with research into cross-cultural (heterogeneous) teams – such as language difficulties and stereotyping - were removed from the study.