Cultural Metacognition and Intelligence in Development Projects

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ABSTRACT
This paper explores the challenges of competencies and skills needed to successfully manage global projects. We argue that Cultural Metacognition and Intelligence in conjunction with Emotional Intelligence are vital in fostering relationships building and project success. Such skills with experience provide a framework for understanding cross-cultural project leadership, and are prerequisite for successful development and capacity enhancement initiatives funded by international agencies in south Asian region with reference to development projects, including academic capacity building grants funded by the U.S. Department of State (DoS) in Pakistan.

The paper reviews and highlights intelligence competencies that play significant role in the performance of managers on multicultural projects. The review of literature indicates applications of cultural metacognitive strategies and emotional intelligence skills for dealing with complex cultural interactions during project implementation. Research and our project experience dictate that due to diversity in the work place in global projects, cultural and implementation barriers will be inevitable and consequently result in misunderstandings and conflicting interactions. Project professionals equipped with cultural and emotional intelligence skills, will deliver tangible value resulting in fulfillment of project objectives. We conclude that Pakistani institutions and funding agencies including U.S. institutions in project country must endeavor to understand cultural, ethical and business fundamentals of the milieu of their operations to achieve successful cooperation and fulfill ultimate goals of the funding agencies. In addition to core technical competencies of the project teams, Cultural Metacognition Intelligence (CM&I) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) skills are necessary for the DoS funding projects in Pakistan and therefore, must be included as major component of project team selection process to ensure project success. In view of unethical business practices in academic institutions, extensive screening for core competencies and value-based skills including CMI & EI of project teams is recommended to ensure project success.

Key Words: Cultural Metacognition & Intelligence (CM&I), Emotional Intelligence (EI), Development and Capacity Enhancement Initiatives, Global Operations and Management Competencies, Funding Agency - U.S. Department of State (DoS).

1: INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND
The United States Department of State (DoS) initiatives in the academic arena are transforming the educational landscape in Pakistan. In addition to many other initiatives, the DoS has invested
financial capita and significant efforts to help Pakistani universities collaborate with U.S. universities through cooperative agreements for capacity enhancement in diversified fields of social sciences. The success of such programs require skilled operations management and understanding of cultural diversity of Pakistan with essential hard-and-soft skills and competencies to interact with collaborating institutions for the creation of meaningful professional relationships.

Many consulting firms and funding agencies recognize that multiple intelligences and tailored leadership style are indispensable for international project operations. Several multinational organizations including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), USAID and alike, and many consulting firms conducting successful projects worldwide, have demonstrated that Cultural Metacognition and Intelligence are essential skills for successful interactions and building working relationships. Researcher conjecture that project managers knowledgeable about their own cultures and when appreciates and adepts to culture of project county, will be better tuned and equipped with self behavior and behavior of professionals of project country.

The support of higher education in Pakistan is a compelling need and is one example of the U.S. Government's long-term commitment to the education sector of Pakistan. Since the inception of the program in 2012, the DoS through the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, has funded more than 20 academic cooperative agreements. The implementation of funding is through contracts between the DoS and U.S. institutions to provide capacity enhancement services to Pakistani universities. The long-term strategic objectives and goals of the DoS are well defined with funding for each participating university in Pakistan.

The challenges of working in multicultural and multidisciplinary teams are well documented in management research and practices. Cross-cultural challenges are accentuated by globalization and therefore, professionals with enhanced cultural and emotional intelligence competencies are required to successfully perform in milieu with cultural challenges. Multidisciplinary projects conducted in many developing countries dictate that intercultural development requisite Cultural Metacognition & Intelligence maturity of project teams. Multicultural and multi-scope/task programs demand that the implementing teams especially project leaders/directors, must be equipped with such skills and particularly experience to successfully implement their project objectives.

The purpose of this working paper is to review the significance of Cultural Metacognition and Intelligence (CM&I) in conjunction with Emotional Intelligence (EI) that must be utilized by professionals during the implementation of global projects. The discussion will help develop a better understanding between the U.S. and Pakistani institutions for mutual benefits and will facilitate awareness of intelligence competencies and thereby, enhance project outcomes. The discussion will also encourage relevant collaborative applied research between Pakistani and U.S. institutions.

**Academic industry as business entity - the business of teaching and research**

Academic institutions are business entities and have been changing their role to adept to resources and capital gains to stay competitive in the marketplace especially during the down market. Modern corporations are multinationals – so are the academic institutions. Therefore, they too cannot be judged by a simple measure of profit maximization. While earning their revenues, they must conduct themselves righteously, upholding social, cultural, ethical and legal norms of the
country of their operations and keep in mind the well being of their stakeholders including their student customers in particular.

The international business success requires business acumen than managing a domestic enterprise. The institutions not only deal with traditional business functions and values, but also must understand and work from a global perspective that adds politics, complex cultures, monetary variables, time and distance to the international business equation, and operations of projects in Pakistan is no exception. Global literacy is the new leadership competence required for business success. To be globally literate means seeing, thinking, acting, and mobilizing in culturally mindful ways (Robert Rosen & Patricia Digh, 2001, p. 57). The predictors of success in the global marketplace include leadership across all levels of business and valuing multicultural competencies and experience.

The DoS serving as the funding agency is endeavoring to utilize U.S. businesses and academic institutions as catalysts to achieve its long-term people-to-people relationship building objectives in Pakistan. The human element in the development of relationships during the implementation stages plays a pivotal role in the development of relationships among collaborating institutions. Therefore, soft skills including but not limited to, cultural metacognition, people-to-people interaction, give-and-take oriented conflict resolution, and management are essential for the success of agreements in obtaining meaningful outcome for the DoS funding.

Relationship development is a long, time consuming, costly and a two-way process. It requires flexibility, understanding, and mutual respect to make it work. Unilateral interest and self-serving objectives of individuals for instance, a project manager/director, tend to backfire. There are lessons to be learned from the trenches - based on our experience; there are practical guidelines for those who are in the midst of, or about to undertake such global project initiatives. Conducting successful cross-cultural global projects involve multiple challenges and require high level of trust among the collaborating parties. The role of project leader is crucial and determines the outcome of the project. Cultural differences have inhibited trust development particularly during the early stages of the project – and that level of trust was manifested in the failure of the project as Key Performance Indicators (KPI) were not achieved by the project implementing institution.

2. CULTURAL METACONDITION & INTEIGENCE

The immersion of complex but rewarding results come from cultural and ethnic differences that have lead to practical and creative outcomes resulting in global collaborations in many industries. Metacognition refers to dynamic control over cognition (activities required to resolve issue/s and finding solution/s), a culturally higher directive of thinking operating on cognitive activities including but not limited to planning, organizing, analyzing, monitoring and evaluating, that collectively helps lead to performance and decision making processes. Cultural Intelligence, on the other hand refers to a professionals’ competency to adapt, function and perform naturally and effortlessly in culturally diverse and challenging milieu. Lee & Sukoco (2010) referred to cultural intelligence as the “ability that an expatriate has to adapt across cultures” (p. 963). Thomas (2006) suggested that individuals knowledgeable about their own cultures and learn about cultures of others, will have greater understanding of their own behavior and that of the others.

Chua, R.Y.J. (2011) and his colleagues at Harvard Business School (HBS) argue that factors that facilitate intercultural collaboration possible include an individual’s cultural metacognition (i.e. reflective thinking about intercultural interactions) that is directly linked to success in intercultural
creative collaborations. They further suggest that affect-based trust (but not cognition-based trust) is positively associated with cultural metacognition. The professionals must develop their cultural metacognition for successful intercultural encounters for enhanced understanding among parties. They proposed that managers' awareness of their own and others' cultural assumptions enables them to develop affect-based trust with team members from different cultures, promoting creative collaboration. They found that managers higher in cultural metacognitive intelligence (MC&I) were rated as more effective in intercultural creative collaboration by managers from other cultures, and that managers lower in MC&I reported a deficit of new idea sharing in their intercultural but not intracultural ties. We thus may define cultural intelligence as the "competency of professionals' knowledge that encourage their perception to cultural milieu and consequently adjust their behavior and attitude".

**Business-Project Case for Pakistan**

Within the context of Pakistani culture dominated and influenced by religious beliefs, traditions and practices, knowledge and cognition would relate to professionals’ know-how and understanding of beliefs and practices of Pakistani culture. Language (national & local language/s in different geographic regions) of a project country serves as a fundamental cultural tool for cross-cultural communication facilitating cultural immersion. The significant and direct applications of linguistic competencies (Pushto and Dari, for instance), by government, public and private sector institutions and consulting/management professionals in the region lead to engagement of linguists in diversified roles demonstrating successful outcomes.

**Subcultures & Language Competencies**

Pakistan is a multicultural country of 95% Muslims population about 193 million (2013); consists of four provinces with distinct subcultures. Though Urdu, the national language is spoken and understood throughout the nation, however, each province represents a dominating subculture, Balochi in Baluchistan, Pushto in Khyber Pukhtoon Khawa (KPK), Punjabi in Punjab, and Sindhi in Sindh province. There are other local languages such as Saraiki, Hindko, Chitrali etc. exercised in different provinces. Using Hofstede et. al., (2008) work on cultural dimensions with Value Survey Model-08 or VSM-08, Afzal Shah et. Al., (2011) found that although the national culture remains a true representation of the nation, there is an existence of cultural diversity among different provinces with KPK emerging as the most distinct culture. They also found that Punjab and KPK provinces represent a close similarity with national culture on Power Distance Index (PDI), hence indicating an existence of higher power distance culture compared to other two provinces. Their research also indicated existence of a strong collectivism (contrary to individualism culture in the U.S. and Anglo cluster countries of the Global Leadership & Organizational Behavior Effectiveness- GLOBE project, House & Javidan 2002) culture as they rank low on individualism scale.

Based on our experience in countries in south & southeast Asia, including Pakistan, western Europe and north America, we conclude and strongly believe that a professional manager cannot fully understand and appreciate a culture, and develop cultural competence without understanding the language of project country, and therefore, advocate the relationship between language competency and cultural intelligence. In this context, influence of language/s (Urdu, in addition to local languages including Pushto, Punjabi, Balochi, Chitrali, Sindhi) and knowledge of interaction processes will add to success of professionals’ competency resulting in tribute and acceptance by their counterparts. With regard to business in ethnic/geographic regions, most of the cultural
practices are quite identical throughout Pakistan. However, within the four provincial realms of the country, doing business in Karachi (Sindh province) may not be the same as doing business in Peshawar (KPK province), Quetta (Baluchistan province), or Lahore (Punjab province) each of which reflect subculture, with business norms and work hours (opening and closing of businesses) distinctively differ. The global project managers will thus have to function across and within subcultures.

The role and significant value of CM&I skills and competencies in projects of cooperative nature during implementation stages are axiomatic. Nonetheless, adaptation of Pakistani culture for multi-year programs come with challenges for U.S. and Pakistani professionals alike particularly for those project directors with no prior experience in respective countries with varied business norms, values and operations systems. Pakistan, with its unique cultural differences and contexts (like in other regions of Asia, for instance), interpersonal and communicative attitudes that may appear normal, may lead to unintended consequences and in turn affect trust among the parties. For example, selected through the bidding process, a U.S. university presented the scope of work in its project proposal (submitted to the DoS by the faculty as project director while bypassing its institutions’ governing grants department), never implemented the tasks during a three-year contracted period despite the fact that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by the project directors of the U.S. and Pakistani universities. The MoU comprised of many similar tasks that were presented in the selected proposal. Interestingly, the DoS as the funding agency was not party to the agreement. There were capability issues along with the CM&I and EI skills of the U.S. project director that prevented the implementation of the agreement and essentially did not meet the Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

It is also argued that professionals exposed to only one culture of their own, believe that the norms and values in their culture should be identical for other cultures, will resist adaptation to project country culture. It will indeed be prudent to exercise change in perception in addition to developing cultural knowledge that will result in enhanced cooperation in project interaction and communication.

International businesses as well as researchers suggest that attitude adjustment training is essential to help professionals facilitate adaptability and acquire cultural intelligence. We have observed time and again in many situations, that personal attitude, desired skill-sets, and flexibility are directly proportional to higher cultural intelligence. Taking advantage of the situation for personal monetary gains and control for instance, by the project director/s have been some reasons of failed projects (KPI’s not met as proposed). Business practices and research advocates that attitude and behavior modification training is required for professionals to be culturally intelligent. We argue that professionals equipped with MC&I skills along with Emotional Intelligence (EI) with appreciation and willingness to adapt in project country will deliver tangible value during project implementation resulting in fulfillment of objectives of the funding agencies.

Based on literature review and project experience working with multicultural and multidisciplinary teams in more than 15-countries in Asia, Europe and North America, a general approach or model is presented (Figure 1), to illustrate the interaction of various elements for successful project implementation.
3. **PROJECT- BUSINESS COMPETENCIES**

It is understood that proven subject knowledge, competence and extensive experience are among others, the primary reasons for the selected U.S. institutions to provide services in project country Pakistan and for the global competency equation for academic institutions endeavoring overseas markets. In case of multinational organizations, such competencies render them their edge and competitive advantage and are often embedded in their operations culture, which positively affect their value and bottom line. We may thus argue that culturally intelligent project professionals will establish positive business relationships that will enhance their international performance including in Pakistan.

Academic and professional training in scientific, engineering and other fields develop excellence in technical skills, design, and analysis, reasoning and solving practical problems. The relatively narrow emphasis on technical competence neglects many of the skills that make good managers in project development, client-handling and managerial skills and assume increasing importance throughout their careers. A professional may be a whip-smart scientist or engineer, but is less likely to be a good team player or a competent project director without cultural & intelligence skills. Industry consultants dictate that their most successful managers are not the smartest scientist or engineers or those with the best degrees – they are generally those who have good self-awareness, who can spot risk and understand how to work with their clients. This forces a strategy on how we work as a unified global team, when we are from different cultures and have different technical training. With intelligence skills, the end result would be a cooperative international teamwork, where project directors will understand how they can best contribute and consider the multicultural views of others in their teams.

Within the personal and interpersonal context, often experienced as dithering elements and challenges include communication, mutual respect, trust, and preconceived ideas based on
professionals’ knowledge and predispositions. Alon and Higgins (2005) mentioned that leadership behaviors are moderated by cultural intelligence. Institutions with culturally intelligent project leaders are highly motivated and possess necessary skills and abilities to develop cross-cultural interpersonal relationships. They are also able to adapt to different cultural situations and, therefore, are able to influence behavior of others to perform successfully in culturally diverse environments. We have seen competent professionals (in sciences, engineering and management, for instance) failing projects due to lack of cultural and emotional intelligence skills that required change orders and change in project leadership. In our global project experience, we found that keen interest and cultural immersions in project country was one of the most significant factors of professionals’ success, and therefore, suggest that institutions seeking global revenues ought to develop tailored competencies to maximize their performance and enhance their relationship portfolios.

Business-Project Case for Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is by no means a new concept. Three academia including Howard Gardner, Peter Salovey and John Mayer, conducted groundbreaking work on EI in the 1970s and 1980s. Daniel Goleman pioneered some of the EI concepts. The EI theory recognizes that traditional view of academic intelligence is too narrow to sum up the range of intelligences. Therefore, while cognitive ability is a reasonable predictor of career success, evidence suggests that increasingly high levels of IQ do not correlate with increased success. Instead, the skills, which make up EI have more of an impact on success (Goleman, 2011).

Review of Research & Literature

Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). These set of skills assist in engaging people, influencing across cultures, and building business relations. As a significant component of human capital strategy, EI has been emerging as a critical element for sustaining high performance and successful project implementation. EI is important, since at best, IQ accounts for only 25% of variance in performance (Hunter & Hunter, 1984). When IQ considered in conjunction with EI, a greater proportion of variance can be explained. According to Goleman (2004), the most effective leaders are those who have the traditional leadership competencies coupled with high EI skills. Research has shown that emotional skills account for up to two-thirds of distinctive characteristics of top performers (Mines et. al., 2004), and the most effective decisions are made when both emotional and intellectual aspects are engaged (Brushfield, 2012).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) and its impact on performance and project delivery in general and within the context of Cultural Intelligence (CI) have interested business professionals and academia alike. The objective has been to identify those abilities that account for the difference between star performers and average performers and how to develop those abilities. Elfenbein, H. (2006) found that project teams with members scoring high in EI, measured as emotion recognition in this case, performed better than teams whose members had lower EI. Researchers Joseph, D.L. & Newman, D.A. (2010) found that behavioral skills (e.g., self-control, conscientiousness) are most relevant for performance, versus the emotional skills (e.g., self-awareness, emotion perception).
The business case for EI is further highlighted by Bar-On, R., Handley, R. & Fund, S. (2006) describing the impact of emotional intelligence on performance and linking it with performance. This study reports evidence with many organizations including the United States Air Force (USAF) that high performers had significantly higher emotional intelligence scores than low performers. Prior to this study, the USAF was losing $3 million per year and after one year of using an EI screening tools, the USAF cut financial losses by 92%, or $2.76 million.

Daniel Goleman, Boyatzis, McKee, 2002, demonstrated a strong evidence linking EI to success of leaders within the U.S.. They found that the most critical skills in the U.S. were linked to EI. Their research also found and research of others including The Hay-McBer consulting firm suggest that as much as 79% of leadership success in the U.S. results from high EI. Daniel Goleman laid out a powerful case that factors such as self-awareness, self-discipline, and empathy determine personal and professional success, and drew on the work of numerous leading scientists to define and measure skills of emotional intelligence. EI is a job skill, a necessary ability, though not sufficient, to manifest competence in any of the four domains presented below.

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<tr>
<th>Self (Personal Competencies)</th>
<th>Other (Social Competencies)</th>
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<td><strong>Self-Awareness</strong></td>
<td><strong>Social Awareness</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Emotional self-awareness</td>
<td>• Empathy</td>
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<td>• Accurate self-assessment</td>
<td>• Service orientation</td>
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<td>• Self-confidence</td>
<td>• Organizational awareness</td>
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<td><strong>Self-Management</strong></td>
<td><strong>Relationship Management</strong></td>
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<td>• Emotional self-control</td>
<td>• Developing others</td>
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<td>• Trustworthiness</td>
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<td>• Adaptability</td>
<td>• Conflict management</td>
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<td>• Achievement drive</td>
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<td>• Initiative</td>
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<td>• Building bonds</td>
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<td>• Teamwork and collaboration</td>
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Figure 2. Framework of Emotional Competencies (Daniel Goleman, 2001).

Twenty competencies nest in four clusters of general EI abilities. The framework illustrates, for example, that we cannot demonstrate the competencies of trustworthiness and conscientiousness without mastery of the fundamental ability of self-management or the competencies of influence, communication, conflict management, and so on without a handle on managing relationships. Goleman analyzed 188 companies (large and with global operations) to determine the personal capabilities among leaders that appeared to drive outstanding performance within these organizations. His research proved that emotional intelligence to be twice as significant as technical skills and cognitive abilities for leadership jobs at all levels of an organization. Goleman’s (1998) contention that EI is the critical component for effective leadership and suggest that this leadership element may apply across different cultures.

Research in academic and consulting arena identified the importance of considering emotional intelligence when selecting expatriate managers (Jassawalla, Truglia & Garvey, 2004), and a study of managers from the U.S. the U.K., and Malaysia by Shipper, Kincaid, Rotondo, and Hoffman
(2003), indicated positive relationships between manager effectiveness and EI. In GLOBE research program focusing on culture and leadership, House & Javidan et al, 2002 studied cultural similarities and differences among group of countries or clusters (Anglo, Latin European, Eastern European & South Asian) that shared many similarities. Their work in 61 countries representing major regions collaborated to research the interrelationship between social culture, organizational culture and organizational leadership. The countries within a cluster reflect similarities than other countries outside the cluster. With lower risks, the returns for global organizations in a similar cultural cluster are more profitable. Furthermore, KPMG consultants found that the returns from cross-border mergers between U.S. and U.K. firms (Anglo cultural cluster) were 45% more successful than the average rate of return of all cross-border deals (Gupta, Hanges, & Dorfman, 2002). The most important leadership trait within the Anglo cluster was motivation that required working in a global setting. This finding is in contrast with many other cultures (including Latin Europe) where relatively more time is devoted to family and personal interests (Adler, 2002). Within the south Asian cluster (India & Iran included in the cluster), transformational and team-oriented styles were perceived (Gupta, Surie, Javidan & Chokar, 2002). The global leader in this cluster must be open and prepared to negotiations and ideas from many corners to ensure that group members are not disenfranchised (Gupta, et. al., 2002).

Since project performance may affect organizational performance, a specific culture in a country, specific attributes play a significant role in the determination and selection of project team and leadership. For instance, in some cultures, professionals prefer to perform and act as cohesive group (collectivism) compared to professionals motivated predominantly by self-interest (individualism). Hofstede (1997) and his team suggest that businesses become more effective when they are able to identify and foster appropriate leader behaviors for the relevant cultural situations. It is therefore, essential to critically assess the selected project team’s to ensure the right fit for the project delivery and a win-win for the funding agency.

In line with research and diversified project experience, we may argue that experienced professionals with demonstrated know-how, adaptability and experience in the project country culture, will incorporate EI to match the requirements of the culture and, therefore, enhances the successful outcomes of their projects. An intriguing question persists as to how high EI managers can and will attain in a specific culture other than their own culture. Alon & Higgins (2005) pointed out “because the cues to emotions across cultures vary from being somewhat different to quite different, Cultural Intelligence (CI) becomes extremely important as it enables leaders to translate the varying EI behaviors of different cultures, and to then choose a more appropriate EI action for a specific culture than the leader might otherwise have chosen”. Although it is trainable, EI does come easier to some than others (Goleman, 2004). Emotional intelligence training requires a relatively high investment in time and effort, because it involves changing habits and behaviors, which have been formed over time (Brushfield, 2012).

4. COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

Cultural metacognition & intelligence skills facilitate project managers (with different cultural backgrounds) to navigate intercultural interactions and foster trust and collaboration. The discussion will encourage collaborative research on cross-cultural similarities and differences among collaborating institutions and distinct differences in subcultures in four provinces of Pakistan and will add to the know-how in the fields of cultural and applied emotional intelligences. The subject matter has practical applications for understanding and promoting communication and innovation in development projects in multicultural milieu in Pakistan.
This paper also serves to stimulate collaborative research (qualitative & quantitative) on cultural intelligence, value-based leadership and ethics in project management of for instance, capacity enhancement/training programs in the academic industry, particularly challenging in the light of ethics and professional conduct that is a “hot” issue in academic institutions as faculty (in quest of monetary gains as summer jobs) and business units (in the hunt for revenue acceleration) seek economic growth in the global markets. The data analysis of projects, past and on-going need to be assessed in terms of proposed verses actual project delivery, will also enable the funding agencies including the DoS for policy and approach modification in the selection of prime contractors/U.S. universities. Such research topics will also help understand and determine the links and correlations associated with cultural and intelligence in project delivery.

5. CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

The review of literature echoes our project experience in multicultural and multidisciplinary environments. With a limited review and analysis of literature, we propose that Cultural Metacognition & Intelligence (CM&I) applied in conjunction with Emotional Intelligence (EI) are indispensible skill factors for project success as well as relationships building. We recognize that there are differences within each culture and institutions will succeed as a result of adapting to such cultural and business operation differences. We encourage institutions seeking global expansion to equip their project personnel with such skills for successful project implementation. Projects supported by cultural and emotional intelligent team leaders with interpersonal skills will augment an institutions’ competency to successfully implement project delivery in the global marketplace including Pakistan.

Within the framework of their contractual agreements, project teams/directors must plan, organize, and control projects and personnel; however, success in achieving their institutions’ objectives will only be realized by understanding and adapting to country’s cultural milieu. Industry practices and academic research signifies the relationship between EI and effective project leadership (Goleman, 1995, 1998, 2011). Many studies in multiple cultures support the correlation. Jassawalla and colleagues suggest that expatriate selection should be based on specific EI competencies, as an indicator of potential adaptation to a foreign assignment (e.g., a high level of empathy will allow a manager to place oneself in another’s shoes and understand differences in values and perspectives, 2004).

Academia and practitioners have benefitted from cultural and emotional training to recognize underlying elements of cultural differences and backgrounds. Therefore, to succeed and lead effectively in the global marketplace, international project managers will have to adapt to cultural differences, integrate cultural and leadership style/s. As part of their cooperative understanding catalyzed by the DoS, Pakistani and U.S., institutions are encouraged to cultivate CM&I in conjunction with EI for successful project implementation and building long-term relationships. We suggest allowing the professionals to experience country culture in its institutional or ethnic specificity. Our experience particularly in Asian countries dictates that while in the trenches, a project leader can begin to appreciate and understand the Pakistani culture and business/project implementation strategies and methodologies and building long-term relationships. The author posits and confirms based on project experience that distinction of cultural cleavages with skill-sets of the project director during project implementation facilitates trust building among collaborating parties.
We may conclude that a successful project is contingent upon leadership behaviors of project directors including cultural and emotional intelligence skills in a global milieu, and Pakistan is no exception. Research and practice demonstrates that a set of CM&I and EI skills and managerial performance are positively correlated. Professionals with higher cultural and emotional intelligence competencies will adapt to challenging ethnic and geographical situations. These skills and competencies are therefore, prerequisite to successful project leadership and building long-term relations with the collaborating institutions.

As a result of an impact of increased initiatives, the DoS needs to seize the opportunity to incorporate value-based project leadership as part of its initiatives in Pakistan for improved performance of its funding agreements. Incorporating the critical CMI & EI attributes with the core capacity of the project teams and project directors in particular, in the selection of a prime contractor/U.S. university for the project award, will ensure that ethical and risk considerations are addressed during the project implementation. The roles of project leaders determine the success of the projects and the funding agencies must weight their credibility on tasks and track records. The effective and successful functioning of project director's competencies and skills in multicultural context is key to DoS’s funding academic capacity enhancement projects in Pakistan.

We strongly recommend that project teams especially project directors be extensively screened for core competencies and value-based leadership skills including CMI & EI, to ensure that they are equipped with expertise and traits required perform (and deliver as proposed) in Pakistan. The screening process must also be carried out in the light of false and/or “cooked up and/or beefed up” credentials by proposed project director/s essentially for securing summer jobs (via grants funded by tax payers) to earn extra income outside their academic functions. The screening outcome will pave the way for the DoS to select only well qualified teams (based on core competencies and described skill-sets) and retrieve return on investments burdened by the tax payers.

References


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Javed Azam has more than 25 years of technical/engineering and management experience in conducting and leading projects in more than 15 countries (U.S., W-Europe and SE-Asia). He served in progressively responsible positions as Regional Director, Program/Project Director and Chief Operating Officer of consulting engineering firms, and demonstrated his management, operations and leadership skills in the acquisition and implementation of complex and multidisciplinary projects (capacity enhancement, geotechnical, inspection/testing, environmental, infrastructure & water resources development) projects in often culturally challenging environments.

In addition to his technical certifications, Javed is a Licensed Professional Geoscientist (P.G., Geologist), Certified Professional Geologist (CPG), and a Certified Project Management Expert (PME). He is member of several professional organizations including the American Institute of Professional Geologists (AIPG) and the Project Management Institute (PMI). He is an alumnus of University of Texas, University of California-Berkeley, and Delft University of Technology/ITC.

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