

## EFFECT OF CULTURAL DIMENSIONS ON COHESIVENESS OF MULTI-NATIONAL PROJECT TEAMS IN RWANDA. A CASE OF BRALIRWA'S PET PROJECT.

**Wilson Musafiri**

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and  
Technology,  
Kigali, Rwanda.

**Noor Ismael Shale (PhD)**

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and  
Technology,  
Kigali, Rwanda.

**Julius Warren Kule (PhD)**

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology,  
Kigali, Rwanda.

### ABSTRACT

In the last 10 years, a number of Rwandan firms have been acquired by larger multinational firms at a higher rate, this brings a new reality: working in multi-cultural settings, this in turn brings another challenge, managing diverse project teams to work cohesively. This study aims to show the relationships between the cultural dimensions as proposed by Hofstede (2011) and cohesiveness of multi-national project teams in Rwanda. This was done by studying Bralirwa's PET project with the aim of gaining a deeper understanding of how the cohesiveness or operational unity of a team with individuals from different cultures can be affected. The study bases cultural diversity on Hofstede's indicators of cultural diversity. The study adopted the concept and dimensions proposed by Hofstede (2003) that allow comparisons between the cultural dimensions of various individuals working together on the same project (PET project). The objectives of the study were to analyze the effect of power distance, individualism, collectivism, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity on a project team's cohesiveness. This study adopted a descriptive research design that made use of the questionnaires that were distributed to the respondents by the researcher and via electronic mail; the objective of gathering this information was to establish a correlation between cultural diversity in a project team and the team's cohesiveness. After which, data analysis was done with the help of SPSS version 21 and presented graphically and interpreted by use of statistical techniques, Slovin's formula to determine the sample size and Person's product-moment correlation coefficient to interpret the findings of the study. Regression analysis was also done. Results were presented in tables pie charts and bar graphs. The study findings indicated that that individualism significantly affect project team's cohesiveness ( $r= 0.505$ ,  $P$ - value  $< 0.01$ ). Also, PET project team members were more individualistic than collectivist. This was evidenced by the majority of respondents who agreed to the statement regarding the team members were more individualistic than collectivist. The study also concluded that collectivism significantly affected project team's interactions. PET project team was more collectivist than individualistic. Analysis of the statement that team efforts should be rewarded more than individual efforts was also done. Tasks within the PET project were being approached collectively. The study concluded that uncertainty avoidance and project team's cohesiveness has a significant relationship. This was arrived at following the correlation analysis that showed a positive and significant correlation between the study variables ( $r= 0.581$ ,  $P$ -value  $< 0.01$ ). Also, the study concluded that the PET project operated in structured situations. Following the study findings, it is evident that the variables under study significantly affect project team cohesiveness. In this regard the study recommend that project managers should effectively address issues that pertains to power distances, individualism, collectivism, uncertainty avoidance and issues of femininity and masculinity within the project team.

**Key words:** Power distances, Uncertainty avoidance, Individualism, Collectivism, Femininity and masculinity

## 1.0 Background.

By 1980's, globalization was a less common subject, developing countries hardly recorded outflows of Foreign Direct Investment. This reality has changed since then, thanks to the significant increase in the importance of these countries in the global economy and the competitiveness that their firms reached (MDIC, 2009). The now prevalent systemic process of internationalization of local companies has led to a significant increase in projects developed across national borders. This new reality introduces an unprecedented range of project team dynamics challenges, from the moment in which individuals from different organizations in different countries and with different value systems need to share authority, responsibility and decision making (Shore & Cross, 2005). The ability of multinational corporations to integrate resources, knowledge and assets globally dispersed, becomes, in this new context, one of its key competitive advantages. To that end, a major challenge for managers is to seek the cooperation and coordination between task forces and project teams through social networks and human interactions between culturally distant individuals (Atamer & Schweiger, 2003).

If on the one hand, the cohesiveness of diverse project teams is a global challenge, on the other hand the cultural issue is also identified as the cause of failures in projects of this nature. Because each individual carries their culture (beliefs and values), the project manager needs to be aware of the impacts of different cultural dimensions on the cohesiveness of the project team. However, despite such importance, research shows that the subject has been poorly studied by authors in the field of project management (Leybourne, 2007; Rodrigues et al., 2009; Henrie and Sousa-Poza, 2005). Even studies in the area of people management with an organizational focus, cultural aspects of people management in the international level appears as an emerging theme and lacking in publications, and the existing literature deals, in part, with issues related to expatriate professionals to foreign subsidiaries, not taking into account the specificity of multi-national projects (Barreto et al., 2011). This gap in the literature presents challenges for researchers who need to incorporate theories and concepts developed in other disciplines in order to build knowledge and methods applicable to project management.

As to the impact cultural dimensions can have on teams' cohesiveness, the expectation is that culturally diverse teams can perform better than homogenous teams, but with the risk of experiencing greater losses due increased conflict in agreeing on working practices and processes (Adler and Gunderson, 2008). Diversity, hence, appears to be a double-edged sword. While a project team's difference of cultural dimensions is seen to increase the opportunity for creativity but at the same time increases the likelihood of dissatisfaction and failure to identify with one's workgroup (Milliken and Martin, 1996). Research has also shown that diverse teams suffer more from poor cohesion and social integration than more homogeneous teams (Hambrick, 1994). The most common issues cited are conflict, turnover, low trust, low job satisfaction, stress, absenteeism, and communication difficulties (Adler and Gunderson, 2008). Dulaimi (2008) argued that such diverse teams have the opportunity to create new solutions. Watson et al. (1993) suggested that well-led diverse teams can outperform homogenous teams by as much as 15 percent. Williams and O'Reilly (1998) reviewed the literature in this field and conclude that heterogeneity generally leads to low satisfaction, low commitment, and low social integration. The same study showed that heterogeneity in functional background and race/ethnicity may improve group performance through the contribution of diverse information and skills. McCuiston et al. (2004) argued that cultural diversity (with reference to Hofstede's cultural dimensions) can improve companies' bottom line by improving corporate culture, improving relationships with clients, retaining talented employees, decreasing complaints, and improving employee morale. Although the creation of cultural "enclaves" within organisations can provide the space where cultural, minority, groups find social support and networking it is seen to weaken links and

cohesion with other cultural groups (Loosemore et al. 2010). Seymen (2006) review of the relevant literature led him to conclude that cultural diversity is an important tool for competitive superiority for organisations and therefore, should be supported. He stated also that the increase of the gap between the cultural dimensions necessitates managers to possess the information and understanding about how to manage people who are very different from each other in order to reach common goals. Project managers who work with teams that are culturally diverse have to use variable management and organisational behaviour techniques which harmonise different workforce needs and values (Wright and Noe, 1996). Miller and Rowney (1999) research on the management of cultural diversity in the workplace pointed out the importance of management of diverse workforce through human resource training programs. According to Hambrick et al. (2001), the composition of the cultural characteristics of team members have implications for the functioning and effectiveness of the top management team. These multinational project teams often have members from different national, cultural, and demographic backgrounds. Previous studies (e.g. Julian, Wachter, and Mueller, 2009) prove that these differences affect the smooth operation and team work, and eventually impact team performance. However, few studies have been systematically conducted into the assessment of cultural diversity and empirically correlating such diversity with team cohesiveness or connectivity.

The impact of national cultures in the management of organizations has been a constant target of scientific studies. Hofstede (2003), one of the great scholars of the subject, argues that the globalization of business does not necessarily lead to the globalization of culture and, therefore, generic managerial solutions may not be useful in specific cultural contexts. In other words, management solutions, to be successful, must take into account cultural differences that govern human societies. According to this author, culture works as a mental programming constituted by patterns of thought, feeling and potential actions that each individual carry. It is a result of continuous learning and predetermines partially the behavior of human beings. Despite the enormous diversity of minds, there is a structure that serves as the starting point for mutual understanding and which is composed by dimensions of cultural differences. Besides Hofstede (1981), several authors, including Hall (1990), Trompenaars (1994), Schein (2001), Kabasal and Bodur (2004) and House (2002) pored over the study of the different dimensions of national cultures. Among them it is possible to say that there is more complementarity than contradictions. For this study, we adopted the concept and dimensions proposed by Hofstede (2003) that allow comparisons between the cultural dimensions of various individuals working together on the same project. The cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede (2003) are called: a) Power distance , b) individualism c) collectivism d) masculinity vs femininity d) uncertainty avoidance. This set forms a dimensional model of the differences between national cultures. Each country, according to this model has different results for each dimension. There are two more dimensions - the long-term direction and guidance in the short term (LTO) and indulgence versus restraint (IND) that were not part of the previous model, which were built later by Hofstede in order to capture value from the perspective of Eastern society. These last dimensions contain a lower amount of data available from different countries were not used in this study (for a greater understanding of cultural dimensions, see Hofstede, 2003 and Rodrigues & Sbragia, 2011).

The Rwandan national culture is understood as high hierarchical distance. Both upper and subordinates believe that ignoring hierarchical levels, although it is best to carry out the work, it is a sign of insubordination. Rwanda may be a more collectivist than individualist country, albeit not as sharp as it witnesses in relation to the hierarchical distance and control uncertainty. In relation to femininity and masculinity, Rwanda's position is dubious, but with a tendency towards femininity. Finally, Rwanda is considered a country with high control of uncertainty, in which people feel uncomfortable with ambiguity.

For these mentioned statements, the researcher corroborates, in large part, the theoretical findings of Hofstede (2011), particularly with regard to the hierarchical distance and control uncertainty (Alcadipani and Crubelatte, 2003; Almeida, 2007; Freitas, 1997).

BRALIRWA, which is a part of the Heineken Group, is a Rwandan company with roots in the country that date back over 50 years to 1959 when the Company's flagship Rwandan beer brand, Primus, was first produced in Gisenyi. Bralirwa has since grown into one of the largest companies in Rwanda.

Heineken is an independent global brewer with its presence in 70 countries all over the world. In Rwanda, Heineken's operating company (Opco) is Bralirwa Ltd. Heineken's Rwandan operation (Bralirwa) also holds a bottling license from the Coca-Cola Company. This makes Bralirwa a prime candidate for this study because both Coca-Cola and Heineken implement projects regularly that cut across different OpCos.

Ownership stands as follows:

The Society HEINEKEN INTERNATIONAL B.V., owner of 205,740,000 ordinary shares, 40%, the Society BELEGGINSMAATSCHAPIJ « LIMBA » B.V., owner of 179,975,000 ordinary shares, 35%, others, 128,570,000 ordinary shares, 25%. PET is the primary chemical used to manufacture plastic bottles. The project dubbed "PET project" in Bralirwa is a project that was initiated in 2014 with the aim of producing Coca-Cola soft drinks packaged in plastic bottles. The project was initiated after a market survey carried out in 2014 to determine innovations that may be on demand at the time and in the future. The study results revealed a market trend in the region that's growing towards non-returnable packaging material; hence the idea to consider the PET project that eventually started implementation in 2015 and scheduled to close in March 2016.

The PET project is primarily managed by Heineken under the supervision of the Coca-Cola Company to ensure adherence to Coca-Cola's quality guidelines. These are both multi-national companies, the PET project team has 6 nationalities working together and hence the decision to consider it as a case for this study. The main objective of the PET project is to formulate and implement a Go-To-Market strategy for the new PET product. This involves a market research for the product, a feasibility study for the product, a marketing and channel strategy for the product, (this includes target channels, target consumer, brand positioning and many more.), and finally a sales strategy (which details the Route-To-Market, product pricing). The project is in its final stages with the product launch scheduled for May 2016 and project closure shortly after.

BRALIRWA's cultural diversity comes about as a result of several factors, the first is Rwanda's own cultural diversity that became prevalent in the past decade as a result of the government's embracing of regional integration, and as a result, Rwanda is a host to a multitude of cultures and nationalities that have come to pursue business opportunities.

The second factor that contributes to BRALIRWA's cultural diversity HEINEKEN's cultural diversity agenda, which fosters a cultural diverse environment with the belief that people from different backgrounds and cultures working together, fosters learning and enhances collaboration skills. This agenda is re enforced in all OpCos that Heineken operates.

The third is factor is BRALIRWA's own history, having been initially intended to be a Congolese brewery, this meant that mostly Congolese workers were hired for jobs by the Belgians who founded the brewery, so BRALIRWA has been culturally diverse from the start and has encouraged diversity by enforcing its "equal opportunity employer" status, this means that all applicants regardless the nationality or sex have equal opportunity as future employees of BRALIRWA.

### **1.1 Statement of problem.**

Increasing globalization in the Rwandan business environment requires more interaction among people from diverse cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds than ever before. People no longer live and work in an insular marketplace; they are now part of the worldwide economy with competition coming from nearly every continent. For this reason, organizations need diversity to become more creative and open to change. Since managing diversity remains a significant challenge, managers must learn the managerial skills needed in a multicultural work environment. However, despite this relevance, there is still a gap in research to address cohesiveness of culturally diverse project teams. A recent study analyzing the institutional factors that contribute to the delay of projects in Rwanda by Nduko, Shukla and wanderi (2016) did not; in its recommendations capture the cultural diversity aspect as a hindrance to team cohesiveness and hence causing delays in projects.

The PET project team comprised of fifty individuals from different cultural backgrounds and experiences, the biggest challenge for the project managers was trying to bring together all their different cultural dimensions of and create a cohesive project team without empirical knowledge of the implications of these cultural dimensions on how well the team can function cohesively.

Therefore, there exists a knowledge gap in project management literature on the impact of cultural diversity of a project team on how well the team a team performs, more so in Rwanda where regional integration has been put on the forefront of the national development drivers.

Taking the PET project team as our case study, the problem can be generalized that organizations like BRALIRWA don't have data that empirically relates cultural dimensions to cohesion of multi-national project teams.

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

#### **1.3.1 General objective**

The general objective of this study was to investigate how cultural dimensions can affect the project team's cohesiveness.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To investigate the effect of power distances on effective communication within a project team.
2. To analyze the effect of individualism on the project team's interactions.
3. To analyze the effect of collectivism on the project team's interactions.
4. To assess the effect of uncertainty avoidance on decision alignment of the project team.
5. To analyze the effect femininity and masculinity on conflict resolution within a project team.

### **2.0 Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Empirical review**

A study conducted by Ivete Rodrigues (2014) of 70 Brazilian multi-national companies to identify the challenges of managing global teams, established that, the data presented indicate that there is still little concrete concern with the issue of multiculturalism. Although the project managers recognize, even intuitively, that the cultural characteristics of individuals can affect performance they are still incipient and rare the activities of planning and development of teams seeking to address the issue.

Barbara Mazur (2010) in her research about the advantages and disadvantages of diversity in organizations concluded that a diverse workforce is a reflection of a changing world and marketplace. In the laboratory research, diverse work teams bring high value to organizations and respecting individual differences will benefit the workplace by creating a competitive edge and increasing work productivity. Diversity management benefits associates by creating a fair and safe environment where everyone has access to the same opportunities and challenges. Management tools in a diverse workforce should be used to educate everyone about diversity and its issues, including laws and regulations. Most workplaces are made up of diverse cultures, so organizations need to learn how to adapt to be successful.

Muhammed Dulaimi (2011) researched the The Impact of Cultural Diversity on the Effectiveness of Construction Project Teams, the study was done on construction projects in the UAE and the quantitative data did not provide the strong lead that was expected to explain the nature of the relationship between cultural diversity and project team cohesiveness. Although not significant the relationship between diversity and overall evaluation of team performance was negative. One of the performance criteria that have shown to be significantly influenced by cultural diversity was output, productivity, and efficiency. This result provides an indication of the negative influence of diversity on project team cohesion.

A related research by Suwannarat and Pornlapas (2012) examined the direct effect of cultural diversity of the top management team of international joint venture firms (IJVs) on team performance and IJV performance with focus the moderating effect of the style of the team leader on cultural diversity relationships. The study found that the higher the level of cultural diversity, the less cohesiveness will be observed in the team and hence the lower the level of team performance; the higher the level of cultural diversity, the lower the level of IJV performance. Also, the outcome showed that team cohesiveness positively affects IJV performance; also, the style of the team leader shows a significant positive impact on conflict. This means the greater the degree of task orientation, the higher the degree of conflict. Accordingly, these findings presented new data and new empirical insights into the moderating effect of the style of the team leader on the relationship between cultural diversity and conflict.

## **2.2 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is a virtual or written product, one that explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied- the key factors, concepts, or variables and the presumed relationships among them (Mathieson et al 2001). Conceptual framework, according to educational researcher (Stratman & Roth, 2004), are structured from a set of broad ideas and theories that help a researcher to properly identify the problem they are looking at, frame their questions and find suitable literature.

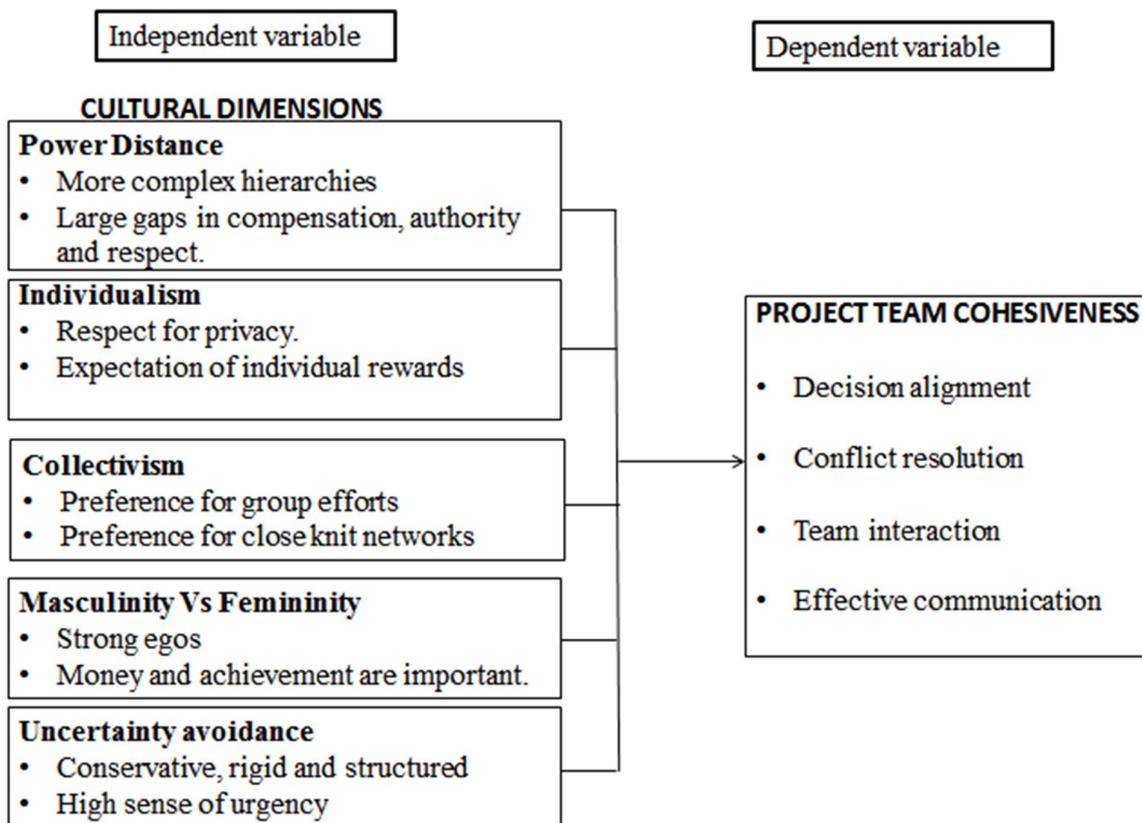


Figure 2.9: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher 2016

### 2.2.1 Conflict resolution

High-performing teams thoroughly discuss critical challenges and exchange their experiences and ideas openly to find the best possible solution. For many, conflict is scary and needs to be avoided at all cost. This is true when we are talking about negative or combative conflict in which team members are personally attacked, or if some members have a win-at-all-costs, my-way-or-the-highway attitude. But avoiding conflict entirely means you may not be tackling the challenges that really need to be addressed. Conflict is formed by a discrepancy in perspectives and concerns due to contradictory motivations (Tjosvold, 1986), leading to a divergent process (which can become convergent if the conflict is settled). Some research studies prove that task conflict can improve productivity, while personal conflict can undermine performance (Jehn, Chadwick, and Thatcher, 1997), while a meta-analysis (De Dreu and Weingart, 2003) indicates that both forms of conflict constitute negative outcomes. It is possible to say that group diversity tends naturally to lead to conflicts because each individual has been exposed to diverse sets of beliefs and values that inevitably have effects on how they present their characteristic traits and viewpoints (Wiersema and Bantel, 1992). Some studies conclude that it is too complicated to track the sources of conflict in multinational teams because cultural diversity is at a subconscious level, and thus conflict resolution is difficult to manage (Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1992).

### **2.2.2 Team interactions**

Teams thrive when their members are courteous to each other, take time to fully understand where team members are coming from, and expand on ideas from other team members to create new strategies previously thought impossible. Social integration or interaction reflects on the characteristics of group performance and teamwork (Katz and Kahn, 1978; Shaw, 1981), morale and trust (Smith et al., 1994), and coordination (McGrath, 1984; O'Reilly et al., 1989). The majority of research on teams, points out that social integration is negatively influenced by diversity. For instance, gender diversity is believed to weaken group cohesion and trust (Kirchmeyer, 1995). However, this correlation is not evident according to Donahue's meta-analysis (2001). Culture naturally supports intra-cultural social integration; therefore, it is anticipated that a multicultural group will inevitably enjoy less social integration. Based on a close relationship between cultural differences and the similarity-attraction and social categorization theories, social integration is influenced by cultural diversity as expected.

### **2.2.3 Decision alignment**

Critical decisions should be made only after all team members have contributed to, aligned with, and bought into the developed idea. Everyone should be deeply knowledgeable about the important details and able to defend the decision based on facts. Communication is crucial for an alignment process since it decides how effectively people get their meanings across without losing their intended message. Cultural diversity at times impedes alignment because participants in a communication need a common language so that the alignment process occurs. People from diverse language backgrounds and cultures do not always interpret messages in the same way, even though they use a common language. The dissimilarity of values and norms also obstructs practicality when a multinational team seeks an agreed conceptualization (Maznevski, 1994).

### **2.2.4 Effective Communication**

This variable captures the effectiveness of communication among members of the project team, and is adopted from the previous study of Attharangsun and Ussahawanitchakit (2010). It includes diverse communication implementation, communication openness, flexible communication channel, and so forth. This variable captures the effectiveness of communication among members of the top IJV management team, and is adopted from the previous study of Attharangsun and Ussahawanitchakit (2010). It includes diverse communication implementation, communication openness, flexible communication channel, and so forth.

Effective communication, or transmission of meaning from one individual to another as it was intended, is an important alignment process and it is highly unlikely that any group can exist without the transference and understanding of meaning among its members. Because communication enables organizational functions such as control, information and motivation, effective communication is associated with good team dynamics or connectivity, either directly or by impacting for example conflict and cohesiveness (Keller, 2011). There are a wide number of sources of interference that can enter and disturb the communication process, one being cultural differences. Effective communication requires individuals to have at least minimum shared values and language. The more different they are from each other, the more difficult it is to find such a shared platform (Maznevski, 1994).

## **3.0 Research design**

This study adopted a descriptive research design. Since the aim is to establish how project team cohesiveness is influenced by cultural diversity, a descriptive design was suitable for this study. To collect relevant data, this study adopted a survey research which is described as a method of collecting information

by asking questions. This study also utilized Hofstede's score of the cultural dimensions for each individual involved in the PET project. Qualitative and quantitative data was utilized. The preference for this design is due to its ability to collect data and the cost effectiveness. Furthermore, descriptive survey design raises concern for the economical completion of the research study. The method is rigid and focuses on the objectives of the study (Gay, 2011).

### **3.1 Target population.**

Population is defined as the total collection of elements about which the wish is to make inferences (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003), explain that the target population should have some observable characteristics, to which the researcher intends to generalize the results of the study.

Accordingly, this study focused on the 50 staff directly involved in the PET project implementation. Although the use of one company may be seen to limit the generalisation of the results it should be emphasised that the focus is on projects and project teams and hence can be argued that the unit of analysis is typical of projects in Rwanda. This particular project was considered because the researcher is an employee and would be able to facilitate data collection. Data was collected through questionnaires in English which were sent to the respondents via email and physically (for those in Rwanda), addressed to the target respondents of this study.

### **3.2 Sample size sample frame**

The sample design was determined using purposive, stratified random sampling technique to ensure that relevant interest groups of the population are adequately represented in the sample. Kothari (2004) defines stratified sampling as a method where the researcher divides the population into separate groups, called strata. Then, a probability sample (often a simple random sample) is drawn from each group. The sample for this study included selected project team members both the project team staff and team leaders. Each stratum was then sampled as an independent sub-population out of which individual elements were independently selected. Based on Ghazali (2006), Slovin's formula was used to calculate the sample size (n) given the population size (N) and a margin of error (e). It was calculated as follows

$$n = \frac{50}{1 + 50 (0.05)^2} = 47$$

## **4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.1 Power distances on effective communication within a project team.**

The study sought the view of the respondents in regard to power distance on effective communication within the project team. Respondents' opinion on power distance on effective communication within the project team was captured using 1-Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Indifferent; 4 – Agree; 5 –Strongly agree. The statements, respondents' opinions and their percentages are as shown below:

**Table 28: Respondents views on power distance on effective communication within the project team**

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Members believed that hierarchy is not an important in any society or group working together	21 (45%)	15 (32%)	4 (8%)	6 (13%)	1 (2%)
Individuals who are higher than you in the hierarchy are entitled to more benefits than those in lower in the hierarchy	14 (30%)	15 (32%)	4 (8%)	8 (17%)	6 (13%)
The PET project team had a clear and established hierarchy	43 (92%)	4 (8%)			
PET project team members had different perception of hierarchy and equality.	1 (2%)	46 (98%)			
Difference in perception affected the PET project team's cohesiveness	47 (100%)				
Perception of hierarchy and power distribution influenced how good members effectively communicated with the team.		17 (36%)	8 (17%)	22 (47%)	
Perceptions of hierarchy and power distribution influenced how good members handled conflicts within the team.	28 (60%)	15 (32%)	4 (8%)		
Perceptions of hierarchy and power distribution influenced how well the team interacted with the each other.	2 (4%)	7 (15%)	13 (28%)	25 (53%)	
Perceptions of hierarchy and power distribution influenced how good members embraced decisions taken by the team.	23 (49%)	21 (45%)	3 (6%)		

Analysis of the responses to the statement that members believed that hierarchy is not an important in any society or group working together it was found that 45% of the respondents strongly agreed, 32% agreed, 8% were neutral, 13% disagreed while 2% strongly disagreed. This revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that members believed that hierarchy is not an important in any society or group working together. Analysis of the statement that Individuals who are higher than you in the hierarchy are entitled to more benefits than those in lower in the hierarchy was also done and it was found that, 30% of the respondents strongly agreed, 32% agreed, 8% were neutral, 17%disagreed while 13% of them strongly disagreed. When the responses to the statement that the PET project team had a clear and established hierarchy were analyzed, it was found that 92% of the respondents strongly agreed, 8%agreed while none were neutral or strongly disagreed.

Analysis of the statement that PET project team members had different perception of hierarchy and equality was also done. From the analysis, it was found that 2 % of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement and 98% agreed. None of the respondents disagreed with the statement.

Analysis of the statement that perception of hierarchy and power distribution influenced how good members effectively communicated with the team was also done. From the analysis, it was found that 100% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement and none of the respondents disagreed with the statement. When the responses to the statement that perception of hierarchy and power distribution influenced how good members effectively communicated with the team were analyzed, it was found that 36% of the respondents strongly agreed, 17% agreed while 47% disagreed. Analysis of the statement that perceptions of hierarchy and power distribution influenced how good members handled conflicts within the team was also done. From the analysis, it was found that 60% of the respondents strongly agreed, 32% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 8% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Analysis of the responses to the statement that the perceptions of hierarchy and power distribution influenced how well the team interacted with the each other it was found that 4% of the respondents strongly agreed, 15% agreed, 28% were neutral, 53% disagreed while none strongly disagreed. Analysis of the responses to the statement that the perceptions of hierarchy and power distribution influenced how good members embraced decisions taken by the team it was found that 49% of the respondents strongly agreed, 45% agreed, 6% were neutral while none strongly disagreed.

**Table 29: Correlation between power differences and project team's cohesiveness**

		Project cohesiveness	team's Power differences
project cohesiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Power differences	N	47	
	Pearson Correlation	.406**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	47	47

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 indicates that power difference and project team's cohesiveness had a significant relationship ( $r = .406$ ,  $P$ -value  $< 0.01$ ). This indicates that the greater the extent of power differences the greater the project team's cohesiveness would be affected.

#### 4.2 Individualism on the project team's interactions.

The study sought the view of the respondents in regard to **individualism on the project team's interactions**. Respondents' opinion on regard to **individualism on the project team's interactions** was captured using 1-Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Indifferent; 4 – Agree; 5 –Strongly agree. The statements, respondents' opinions and their percentages are as shown below:

**Table 30: Respondents views on individualism within the project team**

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
PET project team was more individualist than collectivist.	21 45%	17 36%	9 1%		
Project members should be rewarded for their individual contributions	16 34%	18 38%	13 28%		
During the PET project, members approached tasks individually	6 13%	30 64%	11 23%		
During the PET project, members were more oriented towards individual tasks than collective tasks	21 45%	12 26%	7 15%	6 13%	1 2%
Members' approach influenced how members effectively communicated with the team.	14 30%	23 49%	9 19%		1 2%
Members' approach influenced how well members handled conflicts within the team.	22 47%	20 43%	5 11%		
Members' approach influenced how well members handled conflicts within the team.	1 2%	38 81%	8 17%		

Table 3 indicates that 45% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that PET project team was more individualistic than collectivist, 36% only agreed while 1% were neutral about the statement. The table also shows that 34% strongly agreed that project members should be rewarded for their individual contributions, 38% only agreed while 28% were neutral. Majority (64%) of the study participants agreed with the statement that during the PET project, members approached tasks individually, 13% strongly agreed while 23% were neutral on the statement. Majority (45%) of the respondents strongly agreed that that during the PET project, members were more oriented towards individual tasks than collective tasks, 26% only agreed, 15% were neutral, 13% disagreed while 2% strongly disagreed. Additionally, 30% strongly agreed that members' approach influenced how members effectively communicated with the team, 49% agreed, 19% were neutral while 2% strongly disagreed.

Majority (47%) of the respondents strongly agreed that that members' approach influenced how good members handled conflicts within the team, 43% only agreed, 11% were neutral. Additionally, 2% strongly agreed that members' approach influenced how good members handled conflicts within the team, 81% agreed while 17% were neutral.

**Table 31: Correlation between of individualism and project team's cohesiveness**

	Project team's cohesiveness	Individualism
project team's cohesiveness	Pearson Correlation 1 Sig. (2-tailed) N 47	
Individualism	Pearson Correlation .505** Sig. (2-tailed) .000 N 47	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 indicates that individualism and project team's cohesiveness had a significant relationship ( $r = 0.505$ ,  $P$ -value  $< 0.01$ ). This indicates that the greater the extent of individualism the greater the project team's cohesiveness would be affected.

### 4.3 Collectiveness on the project team’s interactions.

The study sought the view of the respondents in regard to **collectiveness on the project team’s interactions**. Respondents’ opinion on **collectiveness on the project team’s interactions** was captured using 1-Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Indifferent; 4 – Agree; 5 –Strongly agree. The statements, respondents’ opinions and their percentages are as shown below:

**Table 32: Respondents views on collectiveness on the project team**

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1.	PET project team was more collectivist than individualistic.	24 (51%)	11 (23%)	12 (26%)		
2.	Team efforts should be rewarded more than individual efforts	11 (23%)	21 (45%)	12 (26%)	3 (6%)	
3.	Tasks are approached collectively in PET project	28 (60%)	15 (32%)	4 (8%)		

Table 5 indicates that 51% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that PET project team was more individualistic than collectivist, 23% only agreed while 26% were neutral about the statement. The table also shows that 34% strongly agreed that project members should be rewarded for their individual contributions, 38% only agreed while 28% were neutral. This revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that members believed that PET project team was more collectivist than individualistic.

Analysis of the statement that team efforts should be rewarded more than individual efforts was also done and it was found that, 23% of the respondents strongly agreed, 45% agreed, 26% were neutral, 6%disagreed while none of them strongly disagreed.

Analysis of the statement that Tasks are approached collectively in PET project it was found that, 60% of the respondents strongly agreed, 32% agreed, 8% were neutral, while none of them neither disagreed nor strongly disagreed handled conflicts within the team, 81% agreed while 17% were neutral.

**Table 33: Correlation between collectiveness and project team’s cohesiveness**

	Project team’s cohesiveness	Individualism
Pearson Correlation	1	
Sig. (2-tailed)		
N	47	
Pearson Correlation	.443**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
N	47	47

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 indicates that collectiveness and project team’s cohesiveness had a significant relationship ( $r= 0.443$ ,  $P$ - value < 0.01). This indicates that the greater the extent of collectiveness the greater the project team’s cohesiveness would be affected.

#### 4.4 Uncertainty avoidance on decision alignment of the project team.

The study sought the view of the respondents in regard to uncertainty avoidance on decision alignment of the project team. Respondents' opinion on uncertainty avoidance on decision alignment of the project team was captured using 1-Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Indifferent; 4 – Agree; 5 –Strongly agree. The statements, respondents' opinions and their percentages are as shown below:

**Table 34: Respondents views on uncertainty avoidance on decision alignment of the project team**

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
PET projects preference structured situations	27 57%	6 13%	14 30%		
PET projects planned for the future to reduce uncertainty	27 57%	17 36%		2 4%	1 2%
PET projects members believed in sticking to a routine to have a sense of control	14 30%	30 64%			3 6%
PET projects members believed in taking risks.	22 47%	15 32%	10 21%		
Different beliefs about uncertainty affected the PET project team's cohesiveness	20 43%	27 57%			
Different beliefs about uncertainty beliefs influenced how well members handled conflicts within the team.	29 62%	18 38%			
Different beliefs about uncertainty beliefs about uncertainty influenced how well members embraced decisions taken by the team.		17 36%	8 17%	22 47%	

Table 4.12 indicates that 57% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that PET projects structured situations, 13% only agreed while 14% were neutral about the statement. The table also shows that 57% strongly agreed that PET projects planned for the future to reduce uncertainty, 36% only agreed, 4% disagreed while 2% strongly disagreed with the statement. Majority (64%) of the study participants agreed with the statement that PET projects members believed in sticking to a routine to have a sense of control, 30% strongly agreed while 6% strongly disagreed with the statement. Majority (47%) of the respondents strongly agreed that that PET projects members believed in taking risks, 32% only agreed while 21% were neutral. Additionally, 43% strongly agreed that Different beliefs about uncertainty affected the PET project team's cohesiveness while 57% only agreed. Majority (62%) of the respondents strongly agreed that that Different beliefs about uncertainty beliefs influenced how well members handled conflicts within the team while 38% only agreed. Additionally, 36% of the respondents agreed that different beliefs about uncertainty beliefs about uncertainty influenced how well members embraced decisions taken by the team, 17% were neutral while 47% disagreed with the statement.

**Table 35 Correlation between uncertainty avoidance and project team’s cohesiveness**

		project team’s cohesiveness	uncertainty avoidance
project team’s cohesiveness	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	47	
uncertainty avoidance	Pearson Correlation	.581**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	47	47

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 8 indicates that uncertainty avoidance and project team’s cohesiveness had a significant relationship ( $r = 0.581$ ,  $P$ - value  $< 0.01$ ). This indicates that improving the extent to which the project team engages in uncertainty avoidance would lead to better project team’s cohesiveness.

#### 4.5 Femininity and masculinity on conflict resolution

The study sought the view of the respondents in regard to **collectiveness on the project team’s interactions**. Respondents’ opinion on femininity and masculinity on conflict resolution was captured using 1-Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Indifferent; 4 – Agree; 5 –Strongly agree. The statements, respondents’ opinions and their percentages are as shown below:

**Table 36: Respondents views on femininity and masculinity on conflict resolution**

Statements	1	2	5
Focus on working towards an achievement yields better result	23 49%	24 51%	
supporting each other in the projects yields better results	38 81%	9 19%	
PET project managers were more task oriented than people oriented	12 26%	19 40%	8 17%

Table 9 indicates that 49% of the study respondents strongly agree with the statement that focus on working towards an achievement yields better result while 51 % only agreed. Majority (81%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that supporting each other in the projects yields better results while 19% only agreed. The table also shows that 26% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that PET project managers were more task oriented than people oriented, 40% only agreed while 8% strongly disagreed with the statement.

#### 4.6 Effect of cultural dimensions on the project team’s cohesiveness.

The study sought the view of the respondents in regard to cultural dimensions on the project team’s cohesiveness. Respondents’ opinion on cultural dimensions on the project team’s cohesiveness was captured using 1-Strongly disagree; 2 – Disagree; 3 – Indifferent; 4 – Agree; 5 –Strongly agree. The statements, respondents’ opinions and their percentages are as shown below:

**Table 37: Respondents views on cultural dimensions on the project team’s cohesiveness**

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Having different perceptions on power, equality and hierarchy affected the PET project team’s cohesiveness.	12 (26%)	31 (66%)	4 (9%)		
2.	Project team members with different approaches, individualistic and collective, impacted the team’s cohesiveness.		34 (72%)	2 (4%)	2 (4%)	9 (19%)
3.	The dynamic between the conservative individuals and the risk-taking individuals on the team affected cohesion of the team	23 (49%)	21 (45%)	3 (6%)		
4.	Some successes of the PET project team can be attributed to the team’s cohesiveness		24 (51%)	21 (45%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
5.	Some failures of the PET project can be attributed to the team’s cohesiveness	38 (81%)	6 (13%)	3 (6%)		

Analysis of the responses to the statement that having different perceptions on power, equality and hierarchy affected the PET project team’s cohesiveness.it was found that 26% of the respondents strongly agreed, 66% agreed and 9% were neutral. This revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that different perceptions on power, equality and hierarchy affected the PET project team’s cohesiveness.

Analysis of the statement that Project team members with different approaches, individualistic and collective, impacted the team’s cohesiveness was also done and it was found that no respondent strongly agreed 72% of the respondents agreed, 4% were neutral, 4%disagreed while 19% of them strongly disagreed.

Analysis of the statement that the dynamic between the conservative individuals and the risk-taking individuals on the team affected cohesion of the team it was found that, 49% of the respondents strongly agreed, 45% agreed, 6% were neutral, while none of them neither disagreed nor strongly disagreed.

Analysis of the statement that Some successes of the PET project team can be attributed to the team’s cohesiveness was also done and it was found that no respondent strongly agreed 51% of the respondents agreed, 45% were neutral, 2%disagreed while 2% of them strongly disagreed.

Analysis of the statement that some failures of the PET project can be attributed to the team’s cohesiveness itwas found that, 81% of the respondents strongly agreed, 13% agreed, 6% were neutral, while none of them neither disagreed nor strongly disagreed.

#### **4.7. Regression Analysis showing the combined effect**

Regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the five variables project team cohesiveness. The analysis results are indicated in Table 11

**Table 38: Regression Coefficient results**

Mode	I	Unstandardized		Standardize	T	Sig.
		Coefficients		d		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.308	1.297		1.623	.357
	Power distance	0.547	0.352	0.162	4.243	.0267
	Individualism	0.777	0.313	0.077	3.425	.0236
	Collectivism	0.619	0.241	0.144	3.451	.0215
	Uncertainty avoidance	0.735	0.147	0.219	3.479	.0281
	Femininity and masculinity	0.696	0.254	0.0145	2.875	.0224

From the data in the above table the established regression equation was

$$Y = 1.308 + 0.547 X_1 + 0.777 X_2 + 0.619 X_3 + 0.735X_4 + 0.696X_5$$

The regression equation indicates that taking all the five variables constant at zero, project team cohesiveness was 1.308. The findings also indicate that taking all other independent variables at zero, a unit increase in power distance a 0.547 increase in project team cohesiveness is realized. Also, an increase in individualism led to a 0.777 decrease in team cohesiveness. Further, increase in collectivism led to a 0.619 increase in team cohesiveness. Additionally, an increase in uncertainty avoidance led to a 0.735 increase in team cohesiveness. Also, a unit increase in level of femininity and masculinity within the project team will result into a 0.696 increase in team cohesiveness.

## 5.0. Conclusions

The study concluded that individualism significantly affect project team's cohesiveness. This was evidenced by the significant relationship ( $r = 0.505$ ,  $P$ - value  $< 0.01$ ) revealed through correlation analysis. Also, PET project team members were more individualistic than collectivist. This was evidenced by the majority of respondents who agreed to the statement regarding the team members were more individualistic than collectivist.

The study also concluded that collectivism significantly affected project team's interactions. PET project team was more collectivist than individualistic. Analysis of the statement that team efforts should be rewarded more than individual efforts was also done. Tasks within the PET project were being approached collectively.

The study concluded that uncertainty avoidance and project team's cohesiveness has a significant relationship. This was arrived at following the correlation analysis that showed a positive and significant correlation between the study variables ( $r = 0.581$ ,  $P$ - value  $< 0.01$ ). Also, the study concluded that the PET project operated in structured situations.

## 5.4. Recommendations

Following the study findings, it is evident that the variables under study significantly affect project team cohesiveness. In this regard the study recommend that project managers should effectively address issues that pertains to power distances, individualism, collectivism, uncertainty avoidance and issues of femininity and masculinity within the project team. The data presented indicate that there is still little concrete concern with the issue of multiculturalism. Although the project managers recognize, even intuitively, that the

cultural characteristics of individuals can affect performance, they are still incipient and rare the activities of planning and development of teams seeking to address the issue. The difficulties are worked in a style of trial and error, with little advance planning and a few actions effectively structured and systemic. The actions also err by superficiality, since, when there are such activities; they are related only to the outer layers of the “cultural onion”, which are artifacts -visible and easier to handle, such as clothing, food, social etiquette etc. The deepest beliefs and values are little perceived or worked on. Thus, intercultural knowledge is not internalized by the organization, depending on the experience of executives who are predisposed to work abroad. Defining a global mindset defined in the literature as a crucial point to achieve international success becomes a complex and time consuming task. Intercultural competence gains importance in the design of high cultural distance, since the latter reflects a difference in cultural values and environmental variables such as language codes, economics, politics, etc.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

The study suggested the following areas for further study

1. Effect of cultural dimensions on project performance.
2. Similar study should be conducted that will look at role of project team cohesiveness on the performance of the project
3. The current study looked at how cultural dimensions can affect the project team’s cohesiveness a study that will investigate cultural differences and their implications in managing multi-national project teams

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