MASTER THESIS
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“How does culture influence communication in multicultural teams in China and India”

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Abstract

With the increasing trend of globalization, the impact of globalization has lead to a fast changing environment the boundaries for business is diminishing day by day so is the movement of people between different countries and cultures. The requirements of multinational organizations like expansion plans in international market has continuously increased the need to understand the cultural dimensions of different countries to achieve better results. Therefore the companies are required to understand a national culture’s impact on areas like communication in multicultural teams in different countries which has a high degree of effect on team performance. So our research question revolves around this topic as “How does culture influence communication in multicultural teams”. This thesis makes an attempt to investigate the influence of national cultures on communication in project teams in China and India by focusing on construction industry based on a number of factors including Hofstede’s (1980) cultural dimensional framework. The researchers intend to explore the cultural factors having major impact on communication in multicultural project teams of both countries. Throughout our research and study, useful lessons on national cultures impact on communication can be drawn for multicultural project team in China and India. It can provide a better insight for the project teams to have concern for and understand why people from different countries and cultures react or respond to various situations in a different manner, giving high emphasis to communication process.

To support our thesis a total of 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted with managers in different companies from construction sector. An empirical qualitative research using semi-structured interviews was conducted from a total of 12 project team members from multinational companies in China and India based on their experiences on cultural influence on team communication when working in project teams. The research revealed that there are significant differences and similarities in communication styles of Chinese and Indian teams, and the differences are mostly attributed to have strong links with cultural aspects. Specially with increasing economical changes the traditional patterns of behavior in communication are changing with time. The results also addressed number of similarities; especially in both the countries, culture continues to dominate most aspects of communication. The major implication is that the knowledge of the cultural differences and similarities would facilitate better team performance. Therefore, by keeping in mind the importance as well as the impact of various national cultures and presenting each member with a better understanding and knowledge about social background of the team mates within the multicultural teams, arguments and conflicts arise due to misconception and pre-judgment can be reduced. Hence it will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the teams working in multicultural environment.

Keywords: National Culture, Communication, Intercultural Communication, Multinational Organizations and Multicultural Team.
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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

Cultural influence has been gaining more attention with increase in globalization. As the world is witnessing globalization there are no boundaries to business which in turn applies to movement of people and their cultures. This increased movement of people working globally has certain cultural influences. It is often easiest to spot culture at work when something goes wrong, when a key element of culture is overlooked (Beamer and Varner, 2008). Here we are going to analyze the cultural influence on communication in teams. As the scope of business all around the world is expanding so there is the need to communicate, this includes communicating outside local spheres and into global market place where culture is a crucial factor. Understanding of cultural factors is equally important as the effective communication. The rapid increment of globalization results in involvement in communication, and an effective communication required an understanding of the cultural aspects. Inter-cultural communication often refers to people from different cultures and background communication to one another where as Gudykunst and Kim (1997) define it as “a transactional, symbolic process involving the attribution of meaning between people from different cultures”. In international organizations whereby inter-cultural communication is heavily involved in activities such as project planning, decision making general meeting and etc. The understanding intercultural communication can contribute to the success of negotiations on whose results depend on the solutions for crucial global problems (Hofstede, 1997).

Project management as a discipline is getting enormous attention in the past few years, as the major organizations are executing the routine functions in the framework of projects so the need for project management is growing simultaneously. The bigger the organization is the greater need for managing different projects required. These multinational organizations have diverse work force to help them achieve their goals and targets. People from different backgrounds and nationalities work together as a team to accomplish common desired goals. Communication is the key factor to keep them together as a team. There are various factors which influence the communication in the team. The study will be focused on the cultural factors, how they can effect communication in internal and external aspects. Therefore, our core research area is to identify the influence of cultural factors on communication process in project teams of multinational organization.

1.2 Construction industry in developing countries

In order to narrow down our research we have chosen construction industry as our target and developing countries as our field of research, to be more specific in China and India. As two of the world’s fastest growing economies of the world, both China and India have undergone dramatic changes in terms of economic development and globalization. So we are going to focus on the cultural influence on communication in this era of globalization in these two fastest growing economies in Asia. Although there has been numerous of researches done on the intercultural communication but that corresponds to the situations which were totally different when compared to today’s situation as mentioned above the world is different today in terms of economic changes. Therefore, we feel that there is an opportunity to explore this area.
of intercultural communication and to attempt to add our findings to the mountain of information.

1.3 Research objectives

Research objective – the thrust and objective of the master thesis is to analyze the impact of culture on communication in multinational organization specializing in construction projects in China and India. Our research question is as follows:

“How does culture influence communication in multicultural team in China and India”

Other questions which need to be answered in order to define our research area are:

What are the key aspects of culture effecting the intercultural communication?

What cultural factors are making effective impact on communication?

Analyzing and comparing intercultural communication in China and India?
Section 2: Research Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the main issue concerning the research approach, the choices of research methodology, the selected techniques used to collect data, the process of data collection and the source, analysis process and the limitation of chose methodology. In order to guide our research process for the topic mentioned above we will undergo a set of guidelines which seeks answer to questions such as

- What can be our contribution to the subject chosen through our lenses of existing knowledge in the role of researchers?
- What inputs can be identified and used from existing research material to inform our research process?
- How can we ensure that the findings or results of the research process are reliable and valid?

2.2 Research philosophy

Based on our research topic “How does culture influence communication in multicultural team in China and India” the process of the research will be preceded based on the assumptions on the participating organizations along with the chosen methodology in order to find out the factors and determine how the factors apply its influences which influences communication. The research philosophy is defined as the way that people look upon the development of knowledge (Suander et al, 2003) In the process of business research assumptions based on epistemological and commitment influence the research that is being conducted. According to Bryman and Bell (2007) the selected research approach can impact the research processes such as data collection. Our research philosophy can be clarified by the understanding of the ontological and epistemological considerations. According to Remenyi et al, (1998) epistemology is about the theory of the nature of knowledge within its validity and limits. It can be used to identify the knowledge in a certain level which can be used to analyze and describe reality. As far as epistemology is concern, positivism is seen as the focus on the objective study in reality and believes that it can be measured by objective methods (Bryman and Bell, 2007). Whereas interpretivism believes knowledge is obtained from common meanings and concepts such as in typical situations. As our research is base on each interviewee as individuals who are working in a team which are likely to have different perspectives on and approaches toward certain issue. To design our research procedure the more suitable view will be based on interpretivism compared to positivism as Remenyi et al (1998) mentioned “it seeks to discover the details of the situation to understand the reality or perhaps a reality working behind them”

2.3 Research approach

According to Saunders et al. (2003), deductive approach is likely to attach to positivism whereby it begins from the general to specific. The thinking and creation
of a theory take places before narrowing down to more details hypotheses which can be tested. On the other hand, the inductive approach to interpretivism. According to Saunders et al (2003). Interpretivism begins from the specific or detail observation to the wide theory. The process on the basis of inductive approach is usually set off with data collection and observation, followed by detecting regularities which then provide hypotheses that can be explored and finally generating conclusions and theories. For the next step of our research, we have chosen inductive approach which is more suitable considering the above mentioned facts.

2.4 Research strategy:

Bryman and Bell (2007) refers qualitative research as a research that focuses on words more than quantification. It is being used to explore the insight of behaviors, systems, value and aspiration. As our research is base on the individuals’ behaviors and perspectives in scope of culture which can influence communication in teams, it will be analyzed base on the interviewee’s respond. Therefore, qualitative is chosen over quantitative research tools. According to Saunders et al (2003) qualitative is usually inductive which will be used in our research. The inductive is most suitable in our research because it will start off by collecting data from interviewees then slowly followed by procedures which eventually will formulate general conclusions or theories. Where as deductive approach will be unsuitable because our research is rather subjective depending largely on the individuals.

2.5 Research process

We will be utilizing the model of Prasad (1993) mentioned in Bryman and Bell (2007 ) to guide our research process which includes the following steps.

Firstly, general research questions: What leaded us to formulate the general research questions are the specific information we have observed from the beginning of our study such as the increasing amount of globalization which caused the necessary interaction/ communication and movement of people as in (workforce) and organizations to various venues in multicultural environment. The research objectives are necessary tools which will guide us into providing the answer to our research questions.

Secondly, the selection the relevant site/subject: The selected subject is 6 constriction companies in China and India whereby these companies have employees from different nationalities. These companies are involved with construction projects which are being held in overseas for foreign clients. Therefore, communication among personals from different cultural background and nationals are seen and practiced in these multi-national construction companies. The interview will be conducted on the employees (interviewees) who have experienced or involved in intercultural communication in these companies.

Thirdly, Collection of relevant data: The interview will be conducted on at least 2 team members from each company in China and India. The interviewees of different positions and environments would vision differently, therefore a semi-structure will be conducted for data collection. Conducting observations of the employees during their interaction period such as during team-meetings or observing work would be an
ideal way. However, due to the distance constraint, we can only manage to conduct the interview through telephone. The semi-structured will be as deep as possible in order to gain information in details and accuracy.

Thirdly, interpretation of data: The data which we have collected can be classified and organized through the 3 coding concepts suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1990)

- Opening coding: In order to conceptualize those collected data into group, open coding is used as a process of breaking down the data by examining and comparing them then separating them into units of meaning (Goulding, 1999). The opening coding processes are usually started in the early stage of the research.

- Axial coding: A process whereby data are placed back together in a new way after the process of open coding by creating connection between categories (Strauss and Corbin 1990).

- Selective coding. A process of selecting the core category which systematically connected to other categories where by it addresses the process of which the categories are connected to the core category (Babchuk, 1997). After the process of selective coding, the categories are then formulated into theory.

Fourthly, conceptual and theoretical work: According to Bryman and Bell (2007) the prime contribution from Prasad’s research regarding application of a symbolic integrationist perspective helped revealed some of the technological changes. This leaded to the development of propositions within the nature of symbolic realities regarding technological changes which form the basis of the study’s findings. From this point, we would then try to link our findings with Hofsted’s framework while analyzing the impact on communication.

Lastly, writing up findings and conclusions: The data collected would be based on how the individual felt and experienced in the company regarding communication processes in multicultural team and the extent of influence by culture in team. From the findings, we can focus on the connection between the communication and culture

2.6 Research Tools: Interviews

In this research, we will start with identifying the existing state of research in the aspect of intercultural communication, focusing on the how culture influences communication in construction project in China and India. The main purpose of this research is to find out on what research and studies have been made and to determine the existing situation as it is. In order to gain the objective, the tools of the following will be used

- Literature searches;
- Internet searches;
- Interviews with leading researchers;
- Interviews with the project managers of the construction projects
- Case studies.
2.7 Interviews as the main tool for research

The preferred mean of research is interview as compared to other means of research methods like questionnaires and surveys. The principle reason for selecting interview as a tool is the convenience of retrieving subjective information and the ability to adjust multiple interpretations of interviewees in the process of data collection. But the lack of time and scope prevented us from obtaining details observations of the participants.

2.8 Semi-structured interview

According to Bryman and Bell (2007) semi-structured interview is define as that “typically refers to a context in which the interviewer has a series of questions that are in the general form of an interview schedule but is able to vary the sequence of questions” The semi-structured interview is believed to be one of the most useful method to capture what the interviewees think on a particular way as it help to express the conceptions on the particular topic in more detail. The semi-structured interview can integrate various material and incident in order to solve as a basis to ask on that particular subject. (Domahidy-Dami and Banks-Leite, 1983) claim that “although semi-structured interview can be used for the purpose of research on thinking, it could be useful tool in an intervention context”. In addition, it is related to the intension on the study of the subsequent intervention that is meaningful for the interview. In order to conduct a semi-structured interview, the interviewer would prepare questions which are relevant to the topic which compliment the interviewee with a great amount of flexibility in answering the questions. A semi-structured interview was the most suitable method for answering the research questions in this particular topic as for the following reasons:

The nature of the question: The research question about the cultural factors influencing the communication process effectively in multinational organizations in emerging economies. A qualitative is therefore being used in this research.

The nature of the phenomenon to be researched: The cultural influence of changing economic conditions in China and India. How are the multicultural project teams in large organizations coping with the cultural influences on communication process in these emerging economies? However, a case study involves in depth details such as data which made it not suitable for the research question as the phenomenon should take place at least partly during the period the researcher is performing the study (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005).

The interviews will be conducted over the telephone conversation with the team manager and team members. The approximate period of time for interview will be predetermined after pilot test. In addition shorthand notes would also being noted simultaneously with interviews. After the interview, the interview transcripts and shorthand notes will be transcribed in order to develop the interview theme, within the context of the original study question. The transcribed interviews would be categorized in different categories presenting complete thought statements in order for our analysis.
2.9 Data Collection

Primary Data
Construction company profile of China and India

We have chosen 2 constructions companies from China and India which suit the requirements. 2 members from each company from each country will then be interviewed. The primary data will be based on the semi-structure interview with the interviewees so find out the cultural factors which influence team communication. In addition, the below are the companies’ profile which we have collected from the official web sites of these companies

2.9.1 Chinese Company 1 (CC1)

*China Communications Construction Company Ltd*

China Communications Construction Company Ltd known as CCCC was founded in 2006. CCCC is a multinational company registered capital of RMB 10.8 billion which has up to 38 share-holding subsidiary companies and 19 joint stock companies. CCCC based its competence largely on resource and technology. It consists of multi-national top ranking human resources, featuring 12 national level design masters and technicians, seniors engineers, and experts, 3 members of Chinese Academy of Engineering, 10 national level design institutes, 2 national level science and research centers and 5 key laboratories. The company has shown excellent performances and achieving its goals in the past decade. CCCC has been awarded countless of times in the top national level awards. The main business activities of CCCC are the construction and design of transport infrastructure. It is considered one of the leading construction companies in China, as the involvement in construction and design by CCCC for large and medium size infrastructures in both domestic and international clients.

The Infrastructure Construction Business of CCCC is being operated by 16 direct subsidiaries and their respective subsidiaries and associates which was valued at RMB28.8 billion, or 60.4%, of their turnover by the end of June, 2006. CCCC is known as the main player in Chinese communication construction industry as it also has contributed largely to the development of China’s infrastructure section. Other additional, business activities which CCCC involves are also the manufacturing of port machinery and the design and construction railway project after the opening of China’s railway contracting market. In the present, CCCC possess and operates independently of more than 800 high technology engineering vessels, over 5,600 sets of land construction equipment and modern facilities and machines for construction processes.

**Chinese Company 2 (CC2)**

*Pan China Construction Group*

Pan China Construction Group known as PCCG was established in 1989. It started of as a medium enterprise and over the past decade, it has turned itself into one of a big enterprise in China. The company owns over 50 units in China such as: subsidiary
company, holding company and full-capital company. It employs up to 900 employees, out of which up to 100 employees are foreign employee working as ranking blue and write collars. The nationalities accounted are Australian, Japanese and Korean. 300 of the PCCG’s employee belong to engineering technicians, 580 of them have are well –experienced in specialized technology and management, 70 of them are medium-grade specialized technology and management. Most of the blue collars of PCCG have high level of specialized practicing requirements in China. PCCG’S main business activities are constructions of infrastructure, project supervision, engineering reconnaissance, construction engineering, decoration engineering and municipal engineering. In total, PCCF has over 30 different types of qualification of specialty design and construction. Since the establishment, PCCG has been gaining good reputation in terms of quality and service to the clients. The employees of PCCG were awarded numerous of time by the state level. The company also achieved the international standard, ISO 9000, ISO 14000.

**Chinese Company 3 (CC3)**

*Zhen Jiang Construction Company Ltd (ZJCC)*

The third company selected is not as well-known compare to the ones mention above. Zhen Jiang Construction Company Ltd was founded in 1992. The company has 98 employees and up to 22 of them are non-Chinese employees. The main businesses of the company are the construction of industrial facilities, office building and infrastructure projects. Since the establishment of the company, ZJCC emphasized largely on the innovation, quality and performances and that is why they have expanded their business in South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan. Beyond China, they have established themselves as a specialist in complex construction projects. The company has proven itself with quality performances and results by achieving the ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 and passed the requirement by UKAS of assurance of quality. Due to the rapid development of construction industry in China and rise in foreign investment, ZJCC has been building strategic coordinating partnership in both domestic and international level in the construction section. Their strong networks enable them to offer clients the advantage of solid local presence and geographic reach across Asian Pacific region.

**2.9.2 Indian Company 1 (IC1)**

*Reliance infrastructure limited*

Reliance Infrastructure Ltd is one of the India’s largest private sector enterprises in power utility it is also the largest private sector player in many other infrastructure sectors of India. Reliance Infrastructure distributes more than 28 billion units of electricity to cover 25 million consumers across different parts of the country including Mumbai and Delhi in an area that spans over 1,24,300 sq. kms. It also generates 941 MW of electricity, from its power stations located in Maharastra, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and Goa. it is also emerging as one of the leading players in India in the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) segment of the power sector with an order book of Rs 83000 millions, having executed projects worth Rs 10000 millions in the past 4 years. In the power sector it is involved in
generation, transmission, distribution and trading of electricity and constructing power plants as EPC partners. In the infrastructure space the company is focused on roads, urban infrastructure which includes MRTS, Sealink and Airports, Specialty Real Estate which includes business districts, trade towers, convention centre and SEZ which includes IT & ITES SEZ and non IT SEZ as well as free trade zones.

**Indian Company 2 (IC2)**

*L&T engineering & construction division*

Larsen & Toubro Limited (L&T) is India's largest engineering and construction conglomerate with additional interests in electrical, electronics and IT. With strong customer-focus approach and constant quest for top-class quality L&T has been able to attain and sustain leadership position over 6 decades. L&T enjoys a premiere brand image in India and its international presence is on the rise, with a global spread of over 30 offices and joint ventures with world leaders. ECC - the Engineering Construction and Contracts Division of L&T - is India's largest construction organisation. Many of the country's prized landmarks - its exquisite buildings, tallest structures, largest industrial projects, longest flyovers, highest viaducts - have been built by ECC. Leading-edge capabilities of ECC cover every discipline of construction: civil, mechanical, electrical and instrumentation engineering. EPC project business constitutes a critical part of the L&T's engineering core. L&T has integrated its strengths in basic and detailed engineering, process technology, project management, procurement, fabrication and erection, construction and commissioning, to offer single point responsibility under stringent delivery schedules. Strategic alliances with world leaders enable L&T to access technical know-how and execute process intensive, large scale turnkey projects to maintain its leadership position.

**Indian Company 3 (IC3)**

*Nagarjuna Construction Co.,Ltd*

Nagarjuna Construction Company Limited is another emerging player in Indian construction sector. The company has a turnover of Rs. 34.78 billion as on 31st March 2008 with an order book crossing Rs. 113 billion as on 31st March 2008 and growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 36% for the past five years. NCC’s employs around 3620 people and growing day by day.

NCC’s range of business verticals comprising of buildings and housing, transportation, water and Environment, irrigation, power, electrical, metals, oil and gas and international business reflect an expertise positioned to capture every infrastructure upturn. NCC has a reputed record of completing projects on time without compromising on quality and is the only construction company in India to achieve the recognition as one of the 250 “best under a billion” listed companies in Asia Pacific in 2005 by Forbes Asia.

**Secondary Data**

The data collected in interviews have provided us with a larger source of information. In the secondary data, we based collection of information on various sources such as
academic journals, articles, documents and related books. As we mainly based findings on Hofstede’s theory, the data collected will then be grouped around various cultural dimensions including Hofstede’s framework, after having grouped the data in these categories then it will be redistributed into our data structure to analyze their impact on communication process after individually assessing the effect of these collected data we will try to establish the influence of these cultural factors collected in groups on communication process and will formulate theory for the findings

2.10 Reliability and validity of research

In the process of research, “Reliability” refers as the consistency of a measure of a concept. The measure of the research would be considered reliable if the measure produces the same outcomes simultaneously. According to Bryman and Bell (2007), there are three factors which should be considered when critiquing the reliable of the measure. Stability: refers to the measurement or testing on a similar topic over time in order to gain measure of stability. Internal Reliability: refers to the consistency of how the rating or scoring is being calculated. Inter-Observer consistency: prevention of the lack of consistency in the decisions made by more than more observers.

Validity in quantitative research helps to conclude the research measure of which it intends to measure in other word, to determine how true the research results are. There is numerous ways which can conduct to create validity such as concurrent validity, construct validity, convergent validity and face validity.

During the process, validity can be obtained by asking a set of questions are asked and research of the answer in the research of others (Joppe, 2000) However, We think that is not easy to gain reliability as there are some problems related to reliability which could occur. Especially, in the study of interaction of human being, there are limited tools which can be used for this particular study. One of the best tools which will help the researcher is the observation. Even though the method is considered subjective in its nature, the outcome could be viable.
Section 3: Literature Review

3.1 Culture

Introduction

We started our literature review as a beginning process of the related study in a particular field which will lead us to explore and gain better understanding of our main objective thesis topic which is “How does culture influence communication in multicultural team in China and India”. The objective of this literature review is to provide a preliminary mapping of the literature and researches in terms of culture and communication in a particular construction project in emerging economies of Asia in order to review the main factors of how intercultural communication is practiced within certain projects in different environments. To define the meaning of “culture” in organization, explore links and gaps as both in practically and theoretically, identify what are the causes and effects and lastly how culture can influence communication. Frameworks provided in our literature review will illustrate, what cultural factors will have impact on communication prospective.

Theoretical framework of culture

3.2 Different meanings of culture

The word “Culture” can be defined in various ways and it has several meanings. Over 164 definitions were defined by two anthropologists, (Kroeber and Kluckhohn, 1952) According to Trenholm and Jensen (2000) they define “culture as a set of beliefs and values, norms and customs, and rules and codes that socially defines a group of people, binds them to one another and gives a sense of commonality”. Cultural prospective scholar Hofstede (1980) stated that “culture is the collective programming of the human mind that distinguishes the members of one human group from those of another. However, culture is a large and an inclusive subject, therefore it is difficult to define. Based on Hofstede’s definition, Beamer and Beam (2008) add that culture also relates to learn and shared behaviors, values, norms and material object which encompasses what one creates to express values, attitudes and norms. According to (Terpstra and David 1985) they proposed the meaning of culture in international management context based on Hostede’s definition. “Culture is a learned, shared, compelling, interrelated set of symbols whose meaning provides a set of orientations for members of a society. These orientations, taken together, provide solutions to problems that all societies must solve if they are to remain viable” Culture in this sense is a system of collectively held values.” Where as Hall (1959) describe culture as a mean of communication. Cooper (2000) added that “culture can be seen as a concept that describes the shared corporate values within an organization which influences the attitudes and behaviors of its members” where as Cooper, Thomas and Simonds (2007) give us the three ideas about how culture can be affected “culture affects our perception”, “culture affects our verbal and nonverbal language”, “and “The culture affects our identity”

3.3 Hall’s Paradigm for intercultural communication
The main element of paradigm for international communication were defined as a conceptualization that helps provide exemplary problems and methods of research to culture scholars with the respect on international community (Kuhn, 1970). It focuses and describes about the behaviors of interactions between people of different cultures. Hall did not see the importance of the anthropological aspects, even though anthropologists only describes generally on macro-level, single culture studies, investigating the economic, government, kinship, and religious systems of a single culture Hall (1989). The paradigm for intercultural communication indicated by Hall on his studies at Foreign Service Institute based research in various countries as shown below

**Focusing on the micro-level**

There are many cultural studies have been focused on intercultural communication rather than on macro-level on a single culture studies. According to Hall (1989) “although intercultural communication had roots in anthropology and linguistics, it became quite different from either in the decades”

**Nonverbal communication**

Nonverbal communication refers as communications that exclude the exchanging of words. According to Hall and Trager (1953) they introduced the empirical study of different types of nonverbal communication. (proxemics, chronemics, and kinesics)

**The emphasis**

The heavy emphasis in nonverbal communication was on unconsciousness level of data or details-exchange. The influenced was bought by Sigmund Freud, Erich Fromm, and Harry Stack Sullivan (Hall, 1992)

**The approach to intercultural communication**

The approach to intercultural communication accepted cultural differences and was considered as unjudgemental, based on the vision from anthropological research and training. In addition, Hall (1992) support that the belief of a cultural dimension should only be judged in light of its context

**Training methods & Applications**

According to Hall (1992) participatory training methods were required as intercultural communication was taught at the Foreign Service Institute to trainees who already had extensive experience in the field. Activities such as games and exercises were used for experiential. The application of intercultural communication was applied heavily in order to improve the people who is has insufficient skill in terms of intercultural communication (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997).

**3.4 Trompenaars and Hampden’s cultural framework**
Smircich (1983) discuss the view of culture as feature of the organizations, in contrasting view of culture as what the organizations are can also be identified. In addition, culture does not set itself as an independent or dependent variable, as it can be looked as a process. Trompenaars and Hampden (1997) introduced the seven dimensions framework and conducted survey which indicate that “culture is the way in which a group of people solves problems and reconciles dilemmas”. The two authors note that it is the vision of the existence of culture in implicit and aspects are used than in the aspect themselves. The seven dimensions were introduced on empirical data involving over 15,000 people in around 50 countries data based on dealing with problems and unknown situations. (Trompenaars and Hampden, 1997)

**Universal vs. Particularist**

Involving in judgment of people’s behavior as it emphasis on how the application of abstract social codes or rules equally to variable situation or changing behaviors and rules, in order to match the unique context or relationships (Trompenaars, 1997).

**Individualist vs. Communitarian**

It involves in a culture where by individual concern more toward about themselves than the group or organization interest, on the other hand communitarian concern more about the surrounding groups and society and prioritize them before themselves being as an individual (Trompenaars ,1997).

**Neutral vs Affective**

It involves in a culture where by the feelings of people connecting to how they think and believe regarding the relationship among people. In an emotional cultural, people express their feelings openly. Where as in neutral culture, people mainly concern on the appropriateness of the expression (Trompenaars, 1997).

**Specific vs. Diffuse**

It involves in the relationships in a public and community space which open freely but keeping an eye on the private section such as friends and family. The feelings can be expressed plainly in a high effectively culture. In a diffuse culture, people might not like to be invaded in both of their own community and private space, in other words, they are afraid to narrowing down of gaps between their public space and private spaces (Trompenaars ,1997).

**Achievement vs. Ascription**

It achievement, the evaluations are based on what one has achieved, such as on projects or activities. Where as in ascription, the evaluations are based on people, gender, birth, age, connections, qualifications assign to you based on you connections (Trompenaars, 1997).

**Time Orientation**
In different cultures, time is being viewed in different perspectives. According to Hall (1992) "Time is one of the fundamental bases on which all cultures rest and around all activities revolve" According Trompenaars and Hampden (1997) “Time is being spited in two aspects, the relative importance cultures give to the past, present, and future, and their approach to structuring time” The sequentialism refers time as the movement in series or sequence approach. People in following this approach, believe in doing a single task at a time, viewing it as a consecutive segments and giving a great concern on time management and commitment. On the other hand, synchronism refers as an approach where by time moves around in cycles. The people following this approach tend to do various things or tasks at the same time, they are flexible in terms to time and modification plans can be adjusted freely without consideration of time (Trompenaars, 1997).

**Internal control vs external**

Internally, people vision nature as a mechanistic. They believe that with the right tools and technique nature can be under controlled and human can dominate the nature. In addition, the people in this culture view internal control as a challenge between the nature and people. Where as in external, people vision nature as the way it is. They believe that people should not go against the fact of nature, and should proceed life along with the naturally (Trompenaars, 1997).

**3.5 Hofstede’s cultural framework**

Hofstede, who has conducted a remarkable scale of cultural studies in history including in a multicultural company (IBM) where he did a research on the employees in 72 countries. According to Hofstede (1980) he mentions that there is no such approach / technique or management theory globally as different countries view “management” in various meanings. He added that in order to gain a better understanding of culture in management and communication of different countries, knowledge and empathy with the entire scene are essential. However, he originally contributed frameworks which describe the cultural dimensions model which describe four dimensions of differences / value perspectives with different cultures.

**Power** - The degree of which people involved expects and accepts that the power is being distributed unevenly. It describes the extent the people of less power such as employee accepts that the manager has greater power. In a country whereby there is high power distance, less power employees are afraid to against or defend themselves to their superiors during conflicts or disagreements. People in high power distance cultures optimistic emotions towards superiors and pessimistic emotions to the less power people. (Hofstede 1980; Blodgett et al, 2001)

**Individualism and Collectivism** - The degree where people feel that care should be taken of or to care of themselves, their organizations and families. Individualists value independence, and tend to believe that personal goals and interests are more important than group interests (Hofstede 1980; Triandis 1995; Schwartz, 1992). Collectivists refers to when individual are gathered into groups, it vision themselves as members of extended organizations or family and rather place themselves after their group interests.
Masculinity- The degree of which a culture is conductive to dominance. Assertiveness and acquisition of things versus a culture which is more conducive to people, feelings and quality of life. In a masculine society individuals are more aggressive, ambitious, and competitive; whereas individuals from feminine societies are considered as more humble and modest. (Blodgett, 2001; Muller et al., 2008)

Uncertainty avoidance- The degree of which people experience threatening by uncertain circumstances and have build beliefs and institutions in order to prevent from such situations. In a society whereby the levels of uncertainty avoidance is high, the demand of consensus and written rules are high. On the other hand, societies characterized by low uncertainty avoidance rely less on written rules and are more risk tolerant (Hofstede, 1980; Blodgett et al., 2001).

According to Muller and Tuner (2004) Hofstede has made an additional dimension to his existing cultural framework by which was initially called confucian dynamism.

Long term-Short term – It describes the impotency which attached to the future versus the past and present. Long term: values oriented towards the future, like saving and persistence- short-term: values oriented towards the past and present, like respect for tradition and fulfilling social obligations (Hofstede, 2003). High long term also faces considerations common but considered itself as weakness, and place relationships ordered by status, where as in low long term the protection of one’s face is important and placing status not as a important relation in relationships. (Hofstede, 2001)

3.6 Applications of Hofstede’s framework

Hofstede’s cultural framework has been used and applied extensively in a wide variety of contexts, across most of the behavioral science disciplines. Hofstede’s framework has been used to examine topics such as cross-cultural differences in attitudes and behaviors in the field of marketing and management (Blodgett et al., 2001) organizational identification and employee turnover intentions (Abrams, Ando, and Hinkle, 1998), and to compare stereotypes across different cultures (Soutar, Grainger, and Hedges, 1999). However, the invasive influence of Hofstede’s culture framework over the academic, and the excess of recommendations and finding arising from the study. The assumption of the applicable of the cultural framework has emerged. There were also doubts concerning about the applicability of Hofstede’s framework. The critique of theory was tested using a cross-cultural comparison of reward preferences in four countries. The findings reveal that although his framework provides both theoretical and practical contributions to the reward arena, the proposition that human values are conditioned solely by national culture ignores the potential influence of a variety of other contextual factor. (Blodgett et al., 2001)

3.7 Criticism on cultural theories

Some expertise viewed Hofstede’s framework based on inaccurate assumptions. Even though many studies that have applied Hofstede’s cultural framework, but there has not been subjected to accurate tests of reliability. Supported by Brendan McSweeney (1995) “The framework has over generalized the influence of national
cultures to every micro-location within a nation and places too much emphasis or an average character.” According to Turner and Trompenaars (1997), “there is no better place to start on the seven dimensions but moves to integrate and reconcile values lead to superior performance” It seems obvious that it was contrasted with how they think of Hofstede's framework that was to measure cultural values in different approach in different places. The framework with seven dimensions which Trompenaars and Hampden have developed seems to be a variation on the same theme of reducing cultural complexity. The definition of culture given by many leading anthropologists is “all that is learned and passed from one generation to the next” Their framework was also being challenged as a result of association and the analysis on the country level, the two dimension founded were correlated with Hofstede's 'Individualism' dimension(Trompenaars and Hampden 1997).

3.8 Views from other cultural experts
There are other cultural experts other than Hofstede, Hall and Hampden & Trompenaars who we have analyzed cultures and frameworks in different perspectives. Chang and Ding (1995) have contributed a framework with four dimensions (Integration, Confucian, Human Heartedness and Moral Discipline) They basically describe on the Asian’s perspective on the basis Hofstede’s framework. The research was the survey conducted in 22 countries across Asia. Schwartz (1994) has contributed the two frameworks which are the two dimensions on the basis of individual level, (Conversation to openness to change and self-ranscendence to self-enhancement) and the three dimensions on the basis of cultural level, (Embededness vs Autonomy, Hierarchy vs Egalitarianism and Mastery vs Harmony)

3.9 Summary on culture
Most of the theories and frameworks introduced by Hofstede, Trompenaars and Hampden view culture as in the anthropological method. However, what makes their theories difference is that the anthropological method focuses on a holistic understanding of cultures and the subcultures. Knowledge and empathy concern on the locally aspects are primarily foundation to achieve greater performance in an international organization or a country.
In order to explore in dept about the diversification inter-cultural which presented as the influence factors in communication in particular projects in China and India, Hofstede’s dimension will be used as a tool to analyze and answer our Literature review question on “How does culture influence communication in multicultural team in China and India” In addition, we would like to add to the prevalent of thinking of most of researchers in theoretical framework of culture if the small part of indigenous component inherited by every culture is removed the remaining part is similar everywhere. This means that every culture revolves around one common nucleus.

3.10 Reasons for choosing Hofstede’s five dimensions model for our research
The term of “Culture” is always difficult to define not because it is complex but it has more than 300 definitions and many of scholars have identified dozens of dimensions of cultural variability in terms of different beliefs, values, and practices (Stohl, 2001). But the most prominent, in agreement with many other researchers, Stohl (2001)
identifies the work of Hofstede (1984) as the most influential scholarly work in the area of culture. Hofstede (1984) defines culture as “the collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes the member of one human group from another.” This focused the differences between cultures. And as mentioned above there were other related empirical studies by Trompenaar (1997) which focused on the ways cultures develop approaches to handle problems and difficult situations and by Hall (1976), he categorized cultures by the extent their language is contextually related. But after reviewing all the models the most thorough coverage of appropriate dimensions and concepts for a work-related intercultural communication study is provided through Hofstede’s five dimensions model (Muller & Turner, 2004).

3.11 Analyzing China and India based on Hofstede’s dimensions

The comprehensive study by Hofstede indicates the values in different countries can be influenced by cultures. His well-known studies was conducted in the employee values scores collect in IBM from the year 1967 to 1973, featuring over 70 countries worldwide. The diagrams below will illustrate the two selected countries in Asia on the cultural differences based on the five dimensions and also the comparison studies of China and India.

Figure 3.1 Comparison of China and India score on Hofstede’s dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PDI</th>
<th>IDV</th>
<th>MAS</th>
<th>UAI</th>
<th>LTO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Average</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adopted from Hofstede (2003)

Note:
PDI Power Distance Index
IDV Individualism
MAS Masculinity
UAI Uncertainty Avoidance Index
**LTO** Long-Term Orientation

**Power Distance**

The figure shows that China as in power distance scores 80 points which is higher than the world average. This indicates the inequality of power and wealth within the society. Where as India, the power distance scores 77 points which makes it one of the highest score among its’ 5 dimensions. The high score in power distance explains the wide gap of the wealth and power in the country. Even though India has a big population, the condition is not necessarily undermined; instead it is being vision as a cultural norm. (Hofstede, 2003)

**Individualism**

Since the scores on individualisms of both countries are lower world average. The extremely low score of China categorized them into individualism group where by people are supposed to take care of themselves and their immediate family. In contrast with world where people are belong to the Collectivists group; they tend to gather themselves as groups and placing the group interests before themselves. Especially in China, where the level of individualism is very low, there is high level of emphasis on a collectivist society by the communist rule, as compared to one of Individualism. (Hofstede, 2003)

**Masculinity**

In masculinity, India scores closely compared to China. Low score in masculinity indicates that the gap between values of women and men are low accordingly. In China and India, gender role are less value predominated which indicate the gender roles are well differentiated and because of the wide gaps, it makes the environment very challenging and assertive from the female society. (Hofstede, 2003).

**Uncertainty avoidance**

In uncertainty avoidance, China has a rather low score comparing with India and the world. These indicate that China’s society has rather higher level of tolerance for uncertainty, and India where the high level of tolerance existed. In both countries, implementation of laws and policies are encouraged in order to decrease the level of uncertainty. In a society where by there is a low level of uncertainty avoidance , the societies are flexible in making change and can accept and adapted changes easily thus less risk involved (Hofstede, 2003).

**Long-Term and Short –Term Orientation**

China and India scores are higher than the world average. The high score of China represents a culture that is perseverant and parsimonious. According Hofstede (2003) the high scored China indicates valued which oriented toward the future unlike in India which its value oriented towards the past and present such as cultural norms and the respect for the tradition. The long term orientation of China can be described as persistence and savings. (Hofstede, 2003).
3.12 Communication

Since the evolution of man communication has been the essence of expressing the feelings of an individual to other by verbal or nonverbal means. Communication is a learned skill. Most people are born with the physical ability to talk, but we must learn to speak well and communicate effectively. Speaking, listening, and our ability to understand verbal and nonverbal meanings are skills we develop in various ways. We learn basic communication skills by observing other people and modeling our behaviors based on what we see. We are also taught some communication skills directly through education, and by practicing those skills and having them evaluated.

Communication is defined as a process through which we express and convey meaning as an attempt to create shared understanding. Application of the said processes is developmental and transfers to all areas of life like school, work, community and everywhere. Communication is responsible for occurrence of collaboration and cooperation. Communication is the articulation of sending a message, through different media whether it is verbal or nonverbal, as long as a being transmits a thought provoking idea, action, gesture, etc. There are auditory means, such as, singing, speaking, tone of voice, and nonverbal, physical means, like body language, touch, eye contact, sign language, paralanguage or the use of writing.

3.13 Business Communication

Business communications refers to the communication for sole purpose of business motive. Business communication is one of the vital areas in terms of effect on the business, after all it is communication which starts your business transactions and all other activities related to business operations. Therefore, business communication is equally important in business as the business is.

With the globalization of business operations worldwide the need to communicate at global level is continuously increasing, so business communication being major part of any business process plays a vital role in giving effect to the business. It includes a variety of topics, including Marketing, Image Branding, Consumer behavior Customer relations, Advertising, Public relations, Corporate communication, formal or informal meetings, Community engagement, Research and Measurement, , Interpersonal communication, Employee engagement, Reputation management, Online communication, and Event management. It is closely related to the fields of professional communication and technical communication. So communication is everywhere and in every business activity, so is the need of effective communication with better understanding of global markets and diverse cultures so as to reach them.

There are a number of communication channels to conduct Business including the Internet, Print (Publications), word of mouth and Radio, Television, Ambient media. Besides means of communication to external customers Business Communication can also be refer to as internal communication. For example - A communications director will typically manage internal communication and craft messages sent to employees. It is equally important that internal communications should be managed effectively because a poorly crafted or managed message could lead to hostility or foster distrust among employees. There are several methods of business communication like Presentations- the most popular means of communication in all organizations Email- instant medium of written communication
Telephone or fax- especially where the distance is large and the response required is immediate  
Reports – documented activities of certain process or departments  
New web based means of communications like messenger and video conferencing  
Forum boards- basically they are personal in nature, usually followed by written communication

3.14 Culture and communication

According to Beamer and Varner (2008) “communications system such as language and non verbal communication are products of culture. They are also tools intricately bound up in the processes of culture itself: language is related to thought processes and to mental learning processes.” In fact in the vast literature of culture and communication many scholars have used them interchangeably as culture is communication and communication is culture. But as our culture is often defined by our language, it leads to the distinction between the two as separate segments. It is quite inadequate to define culture on the basis of language as it limits our expression within a single word or words. But when language is turned back on itself and communication is the object of its enquiry as well as the means. Understanding communication can help us understand culture (Beamer and Varner 2008). Therefore, there is a great degree of impact on communication as far as culture is concerned.

3.15 Intercultural communication

The world is changing today rapidly and it is characterized by an ever growing number of contacts whether be it personal or business resulting in communication between people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. For the purpose of economic activities Communication is crossing national boundaries; it is not necessarily different from any other communication activity. What are different here are intercultural communication activities among people of different cultures (Wells and Spinks, 1994) this type of communication results because of contacts within the areas of business, science, education, tourism, military cooperation, mass media, and entertainment but also because of increasing pace of immigration brought about by political conflicts or labor demand. In any of these contacts, there is communication which needs to be as constructive as possible, without misunderstandings and breakdowns.

It is seen that research on the nature of linguistic and cultural similarities and differences can play a positive and constructive role. So assessing the impact of cultural factors on communication will further increase our understanding and be a part of the ongoing constructive process between cultures. So, Intercultural communication took place whenever a minimum of two persons from different cultures or micro cultures come together and exchange verbal and non verbal symbols (Neuliep, 2003). Intercultural communication is always considered as contextual. Which means it is a combination of factors like situation, circumstance, setting, the people involved, relationships between them, gender, age difference and so on. While intercultural communication refers to communication within multicultural teams as
well. Global customer satisfaction calls for effective functioning of geographically dispersed, culturally mixed work teams (Hofner, 1996).

Intercultural communication is very vast field due to vastness of both communication and culture. There is enormous literature and research in this field. There are many researchers and professionals of note within the intercultural field, who basically all have different definitions for ‘intercultural communication’. For example Karlfried Knapp (1987) says "Intercultural communication, can be defined as the interpersonal interaction between members of different groups, which differ from each other in respect of the knowledge shared by their members and in respect of their linguistic forms of symbolic behavior" (Knapp, 1987). The theories on communication developed by the researchers and academicians can and have been applied to many fields such as business, management, marketing, advertising and website design. As business becomes more and more international, many companies need to know how best to structure their companies manage staff and communicate with customers. Intercultural communication gives them an insight into the areas they need to address or understand most effectively. Intercultural communication theories are now also used within the public services like education, health care due to increasing multicultural populations.

### 3.16 Origin of intercultural communication research

To throw some light on the past developments in the research of intercultural communication, here is the list of Major events or development in the field of intercultural communication

Table 3.1. Major events in the development of the field of intercultural communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950-1955</td>
<td>Development of the original paradigm of intercultural communication by Edward T. Hall and others at the Foreign Service Institute in Washington D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>First publication on intercultural communication by Hall (&quot;The Anthropology of Manners&quot; in <em>Scientific American</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Publication of <em>The Silent Language</em> in English (a Japanese edition appeared in 1966 as <em>Chinmoku No Kubota</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 1960s</td>
<td>Development of the first intercultural courses at universities (e.g., University of Pittsburgh); and publication of Alfred Smith’s (1966) <em>Communication and Culture</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>International Communication Association established a Division of Intercultural Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>First publication of an edited book on <em>Intercultural Communication</em> by</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Larry A. Samovar and Richard E. Porter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td><em>Intercultural Communication</em> by L.S. Harms at the University of Hawaii is published (the first textbook on intercultural communication)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>First publication of <em>International and Intercultural Communication Annuals</em>; The Society of Intercultural Education, Training and Research (SIETAR) is found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td><em>An Introduction to Intercultural Communication</em> by John C. Condon and Fatih Youssef is published (the second textbook in intercultural communication); the Speech Communication Association established a Division of Intercultural Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td><em>International Journal of Intercultural Relations</em> begins publication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-</td>
<td>Theory development in intercultural communication is emphasized (e.g., three International and Intercultural Communication Annual volumes on intercultural communication theory are published)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Founding of the International Academy of Intercultural Relations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hart (1966)

### 3.17 Intercultural communication and Cross cultural communication

Intercultural communication and cross cultural communication are sometimes used interchangeably. However, in the words of Gudykunst and Kim (1997) “cross cultural communication involves comparisons of communication across cultures, intercultural communication involves people from different cultures.” (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997) This clearly defines the basic difference as comparison on one hand and interaction on the other. But in both cases the researcher has to study the internal culture of each side this common phenomena makes it looks much similar to each other.

Cross cultural communication – compares communication in different cultures

Intercultural communication – examines communications interactions between people of different cultures

### 3.18 Summary on communication

This section provided a glimpse what is communication, to be more specific intercultural communication how does culture effects in communicating and how it does matters to the organization especially to those organizations that are crossing the boundaries to expand their business, what is the importance of intercultural communication in such global operations.
The next section will address in detail the literature review on effects of cultural factors on the communication process. What aspects of culture can affect the communication in multicultural teams? This will help us to find out about our research topic, what could be the effect of increasing globalization in terms of intercultural communication in China and India termed as “emerging economies?”

3.19 Cultural factors affecting communication

Culture made of set of beliefs, traditions, moral values, language, and laws being gathered in an organization and community. The characteristics of culture include aspect such as interest, experience, selectivity, projection values and attitude, personality knowledge which influence the language spoken at home, workplace or in public. In other word culture plays an important role in the communication. Intercultural communication often described as the range of communication issue that unavoidably rise in societies consist of different cultural background. An effective communication in organization depends largely how the individuals understand and cope up with various cultures differences and its factors which could create impact on communication.

This table shows the cultural factors which can significantly affect the process of communication in project teams of multinational organizations. The factors listed below are an attempt to gather the pieces of information provided by earlier research on the possible aspects of cultural factors in terms of effect on communication the literature include the work of (Hofstede, 1984), (Muller and Turner, 2004), (Hall, 1989), (Suutari, 1996), (Gudykunst and Nishida, 2001), (Pheng and Leong, 1999), (Li, 1999), (Armstrong and Kaplowitz, 2001) (Pascal, 1978). The factors are as follows:

- Beliefs, traditions, moral values, language, perceptions and laws of the specific culture or society
- Low context and high context
- Explicit and implicit expressions
- Individual efforts and group efforts
- Social responsibility and tolerance for others
- Means of communication
- Masculine and Feminine
- Different cultures prescribe different patterns of rewards and punishment
- Hidden cultural norms and rules like how situation is defined in terms of operation, procedure and programs
• Intercultural universals like contextual commonalities of cultures, in terms of power against solidarity, direct and indirect speech, and avoiding face threatening behavior

• Situational norms which includes differences in characteristics of utterances, recognition of structures, and norms in talks

• Emotional feelings and intuitions

The detailed explanation of the major factors regarding their influence on communication process is defined under as follows:

Culture differences can create uncommon ways of conducting communication practices at workplaces. The result from the study on the cultural differences in the communication of project owner with project managers using Hall (1989) and Hofstede (1984) dimensions by Muller and Turner (2004) indicate that Germans tend to utilize various media to communicate in a very detailed manner. In contrast with the Swedish who tend to communicate verbally and through telephone.

Another culture factor which believe to have significant impact on communication was the low context and high context language identified by Hall (1998), high context refers to groups or societies where the relation has been strongly formulated over long duration of time, the aspects of cultural behavior are not expressed in a explicit manner as people know each other well, in contrast with the low context, which describes people in the society who has various connection and relations formulated, but in short period of time. The behaviors needed to be expressed out explicitly in order to deliver the clear message to the other parties (Hall, 1998) for example in North America where the former is explicit in its expressions where as in Japan the latter is implicit , and it represent itself as knowledge sharing from the sender to the receiver ( Muller, Spang and Ozcan, 2008)

Culture can also be influenced by the style of leadership. Based on the studies conducted by Suutari (1996) on the experiences of Finnish expatriates from their workplaces in Europe show the variation in manager interaction on leadership on behavior of managers across countries in such way that the German managers were less involved than Swedish in decision making process and autonomy delegation (Muller, Spang, and Ozcan, 2008).

The perceptions from project managers can be influence by cultural aspects, as supported by the result of the study conducted by Muller and Turner (2008) on the impact of project managers’ national culture on project success criteria and project success, which reveals the significance toward the success criteria and the project success, which are viewed differently based on the nations culture. (Muller, Spang, and Ozcan, 2008).

Another major cultural factors leading to significant effect on the communication aspect are anxiety and uncertainty, these factors do effect communication depending on their levels of usage, as Gudykunst and Nishida (2001) suggested that moderate levels of anxiety and uncertainty are required for effective communication. If the level
is extremely high the anxiety causes stereotyping and low anxiety will result in loss of motivation for communication they will hesitate to communicate, both leading to ineffectiveness. Again if the levels of uncertainty are high it lead to a lack of predictability of the other’s attitudes, feelings, and behavior, while on the other hand low uncertainty sometimes may result in overconfidence in these predictions, again making hurdles for ineffective communication. Therefore, there must be a balance of both anxiety and uncertainty according to the demand of the situation so as to make our communication more effective and better understandable to others.

Further going to seek the influence of different cultures on effective communication, it has been proved that even in the same culture or intra-culture work teams only 75% is actually captured by the receiver while on the other hand in case of intercultural teams it much lower to 50%, (Li ,1999). He analyses that this loss of information was independent from the languages kills (above a certain level) of the individuals which is a common perception and the amount of information sent by the sender. According to (Li ,1999) “barriers other than language prevented inter-cultural dyads from getting the information through” (Li, 1999). This clearly underlines the need to understand the hidden and unhidden cultural rules in a conversation and not only the language. Basically the people belonging to same culture have the same level of understanding regarding the undefined cultural norms and rules but the people from different cultures in absence of that understanding are generally misunderstood which creates problems.

Pheng and Leong (1999) conducted a case study in a Chinese American joint venture firm in construction sector which revealed that the assertive style of western managers were taken as not listening by their eastern partners and ultimately project failed (Muller and Turner, 2004).

Another important factor affecting communication according to Armstrong and Kaplowitz (2001) were intercultural universals which include differences between contextual commonalities of cultures, in terms of power against solidarity, direct and indirect speech, and avoiding threatening behavior, the second one is situational which includes differences in characteristics of utterances, recognition of structures, and norms in talks. Situational norms are the main resources as far as negotiation for relational meaning is concerned, so its absence can constitutes a loss of interaction due to inter-cultural misunderstandings.

### 3.20 Intercultural communication in multinational organizations

According to Barnard (1938) “communication” is one of the three essential elements to form an organization, as well as “common purpose” and “willingness to serve”. The power and influence of communication can be taken as a determinant of a corporate culture when we take communication with various facets: i.e. not only as mere exchange of information, but also as storage, reproduction, collection and transfer of information.

The study of cultural competence in intercultural communications is a natural extension of language teaching and political science, and examines the problems in communication among people from different cultural backgrounds (Johnson et al, 2006). And with the increasing pace of multinational operations among corporations,
the role of communication is crucial in the case of global companies where serious miscommunication could be caused by cultural elements as well as linguistic ability: little shared knowledge in business customs, cultural behaviors the way of discussion or communication (Fujio, 2004). If the cultural aspect is not taken into consideration in global teams it may cause failures in achieving the team objective, if the message is not communicated or received properly then expectation of achieving results is in jeopardy. The need for better understanding of intercultural communication is growing for success at global levels.

As cited in (Chaisrakeo and Speece, 2004) intercultural communication competency improves ability to analyze communication behavior within the context of values as well as ability to generate and react to communication messages as if from within another culture this competence is transferable and applicable to more then one culture (Beamer, 1992)

As Fujio (2004) mentioned in his studies on interaction between Japanese and American managers “A major factor in the failure was the inability of managers to understand the local culture of a subsidiary and to interact effectively with their counterparts overseas, rather than a lack of ability in the technical aspects of their job.” So besides technical capabilities understanding of cultural issues had to be taken into consideration and when it comes to communication process it is rather more important.

In multinational organizations where multicultural teams have to perform in increasingly competitive environment the intercultural communication within team members is most important aspect as cited in (Matveev and Milter, 2004) Many roadblocks and problems can occur if managers who do not communicate well with team members from different cultures are a part of the multicultural team. Managers must be able to communicate and understand clearly what they are trying to accomplish and what their goal is (Matveev, 2001). So effective understanding of what has been delivered is received in the same manner makes the difference between task accomplished or not. In countries like India and China which observe high national culture in their routine working culture the need for understanding is even greater.

Given the scope of the complexities and challenges mounting on multicultural teams, the question which arises most often is: what kind of person makes an effective team member? A person who is able to establish an interpersonal relationship with a cross cultural or foreign national via an effective exchange of both verbal and nonverbal levels of behavior preferably communication makes an effective member of a multicultural team.

With the increase in globalization and reduction in trade barriers among countries the need for effective intercultural communication skills in multicultural teams of multinational organizations will continue to grow and with this will grow the research on techniques to improve the effective communication skills overcoming cultural diversities.
3.21 Intercultural communication in multinational organizations in construction sector

As mentioned earlier the reduction of trade barriers has lead to opening up of economies in various countries including China and India which are termed as two engines of growth as emerging economies in developing countries and last 5 years has witnessed tremendous change in terms of growth at both economic and cultural level in both the countries. Construction sector in particular has witnessed significant growth in these economies due to improvement projects in infrastructure field and growing trend of urbanization which leads to more demand in housing sector. Major construction players from all over the world has participated in this growth in terms of business and these multinational construction sector companies are operating in full pace with the growing demand both from government sector and private sector, these multinational organizations have to operate in tune with local taste and local culture hence the project teams consist of members from national and international level and the this diversity is increasing with the increase in business to provide expertise and the local taste to projects, hence the need for understanding the cultural aspect in these multicultural teams is as important as the technical knowledge. It helps in effective achievement of goals and targets. while in this multicultural team settings communication is an important aspect as discussed in above section it is most likely to affect the team performance.

3.22 Overall summary

Figure.3.1 Cultural Influence on Communication

In order to provide a brief summary of theoretical framework and its relevance with the research objectives, the diagram clearly reflect the link between culture and communication and their effect on multinational organizations, where culture is an independent variable, influencing communication which act as a dependent variable. In other word, the influence of cultural factors on inter-cultural communication,
therefore in part 1 of our literature review, we have tried to explain the importance of culture aspect in terms of business understanding and have referred to the Hofstede’s cultural framework. In part 2, we have tried to focus on the growing importance of communication in globalization and including the changing multicultural dimension in large organization. In part 3, we have analyzed the possible factors affecting business communication in intercultural settings.

In order to figure out what factors in terms of culture, influence these multicultural team communication? We have chosen the construction sector of China and India as our research field. The next part will give an overview of construction sector in China and India

3.23 Knowledge gap and Summary

Inter-cultural prospective in organizations has been gaining interest in both practitioner and academic literature within the scope of organizational management. The importance and impact of cultures have therefore created interests in various literature studies and frameworks for example the widely – applied Hofstede’s theory and the five dimensions which has been used to examine topics such as cross-cultural differences in attitudes and behaviors in the field of marketing and management (Alden, Hoyer, and Lee, 1993)

Although, many researches have been done on intercultural communication, majority of researches were conducted on European and American countries and in recent past, a few researchers have also focused on Asian countries. However, the condition in developing countries of Asia have witnessed dramatic changes in terms of economy, specially in China and India which are termed as “Emerging Economies” so with the change, the intercultural structures have also been changed. Our research will focus on the cultural influence and change in intercultural structure on communication particularly in international organizations where people from national and international diversity work together in project teams. With the changes, the heterogeneity of cultures in project teams changes, so the knowledge gap in other cultures widen which eventually leads to complexities in managing multicultural project teams. In order to overcome the barriers practically relating to communication, this research attempts to explore cultural factors effecting communication in two giant and emerging economies in contrast to recent development and changes in the era of globalization. Therefore, we think this area is largely untouched, so is looked upon as a good opportunity for our research.

In the empirical chapter will to discuss about the context where the application of theoretical framework will be observed together with a brief overview of data collected from respondents in both countries the questions and their brief responses are provided in following section with a general overview of construction sector. As we have chosen construction sector as our field of research in emerging economies in China and India.
Section 4: Empirical Observation

4.1 Introduction

The data collected has been taken from leading companies from India and China in the construction sector. Data has been collected from 12 individuals from 6 companies each company with two employees have been interviewed to support our findings the list of questions asked to interviewees is shown below with a brief summary of their responses which has been analyzed in next section of data analysis but in this part will display the responses obtained from the respondents in the companies.

List of questions

1. From your past working experience in multicultural team, can you elaborate what was the difference in working with teams at national level and international level?
2. As a part of multicultural team, do you think effective communication plays an important role in team performance? Explain?
3. In the scope of Individualism and collectivism, which one is more encouraged in team working in your organization? Please state effects on the communication
4. How does position (hierarchy) and seniority influence communication in multicultural team?
5. Being a traditionally and culturally oriented country how do you rank long term orientation and high term orientation in team working? And up to what extent team communication is influenced by it?
6. How the genders in terms of national culture are is affects communication?
7. Assuming the levels as high, medium and low, how will you rank Indian culture on risk avoidance scale and how does this attitude of risk taking effects communication?
8. It is an accepted fact, that contextual differences like language and interpretation of meaning do occur, but what is the degree of influence of this contextual difference on communication in your organization? Can you give an example from your experience?
9. To what extent relationships influence communication in multicultural team?
10. Do you think you have always been able to receive the meaning of message or information transferred to you by your multicultural team mates? If no, what are the problems faced and how often it is repeated?
11. In a situation such as negotiation, informing updates or general communication, what means of communication are preferable? Does medium of communication makes a difference in terms of understanding the person from different culture?
12. How often does non-verbal means of communication for example body language used in your team? Please describe in what extent do you understand them given that each individual has comes from different cultural background?
13. In a situation whereby, miscommunication issue occurred by one or two members of project team which lead to the failure team project, how do you respond to it? As a team or individual?

14. Is there any training which aims to enhance communication within teams and understanding of different cultures?

15. How do you compare the present situation of intercultural communication in India with 5 years ago?

The answers collected for above questions has been provided in the brief as a collective summary of all the respondents to each questions in the following section, in this brief section we are just summarizing all the responses from our respondents in small paragraph. The detailed discussion of these answers will be done in data analysis and further sections. (Refer to appendix 1.1 for the detailed interviewees’ responses)

1. To this question most Chinese managers mentioned that they have more flexibility in communication hence, the working environment in the team is friendly and relax. In contrast, working in a multicultural team is more complex, as members look at the same thing but from different prospective. Communication at national level is conducted at ease comparing to the multicultural team. In India where most interviewees mentioned that there are significant differences between working in national teams and international teams. Adjustment to adapt the multinational working environment is needed.

2. As a part of multicultural team most of the Chinese respondents state that effective communication is what brings the team together. Effective communication can be achieved as long as the team members understand the characteristic of each others. Commonly, most of Indian interviewees also agree that effective communication is very important. Communication among team members has to be efficient and effective because miscommunication can lead one mistake to a series of mistakes.

3. In the scope of Individualism and collectivism, most Chinese respondents view collectivism as a more effective approach. The individualism is seen as an approach against the values of teamwork. Indian interviewees also state that collectivism is preferred over individualism. They feel that collectivism is necessary in teamwork whereby collaboration is needed; it also brings in better coordination.

4. As for the hierarchy issue in Chinese companies, most of the Chinese respondents state that people from the lower ranking are more concern about how they communicate to their superiors. Despite of the emphasis of the respect given to the seniority in Chinese working environment, one respond from Chinese interviewee adds that communication process does not usually follow the structure of hierarchy. On the other hand, most Indian sees hierarchy distance as a gap where by respects and formalities are to be given to the seniors. Communication has to be more formal and professional with them as it is their culture to be more respectful and formal to their elderly.

5. Majority of Chinese indicated that they are very much committed into the team. They see society affiliation as a tie to the commitment to the future. Communication
is influenced since team members concern a lot on companionship which might interfere with their future in their teams. Maintaining good terms with team members means to avoid conflict at any level such as going against one's opinions. Communication is therefore being conducted in an indirect way considering the long term commitment with the team and traditionally value which is giving appropriate respects to team members. In India, the respondents ranked long term orientation as medium to high. It shows a considerable difference on long term orientation between Chinese and Indian cultures.

6. In masculinity, majority of Chinese interviewees claim that feminism can affects communication in team working. Chinese male team members tend to be uncomfortable to work under female superiors; hence communication does not flow smoothly. Where as in Indian culture, women are still being looked as less privileged compared to males, in career perspective Indian women have tendency to limit their communication with male team members and act accordingly to what has been assigned.

7. Mentioned by most Chinese interviewees who describe that Chinese tend to resist changes as many people dislike the status of changing to somewhere they are not used to. The concern for the uncertain future is taken into main consideration which means the attempt to avoid any risk involved. Where as in India, the interviewees describe Indian culture as a society with high level of uncertainty whereby people are changing from being narrow minded and opening themselves to new opportunities for changes. The communication in team is conducted in a more optimistic manner where everyone has their voices heard in the conversation.

8. Contextual differences like language barrier and different interpretation of words do play a great role in both cultures as majority of respondents agree to it, in India respondents point out that interpretation of meaning cause high degree of influence in communication while in china most respondents consider language as well as interpretation has high degree of influence they cite the difficulty of language barrier compared to India.

9. Relationships play a major role in Chinese culture in communication as most of the Chinese respondents agreed that relationships do matter in communication in teams while Indian respondents were of the view that relationships does not matter when you are doing professional work, there was a angle of low degree of influence in Indian respondents as far as relationship effect on communication is considered.

10. This questions received different responses, as Chinese respondents relate it to contextual and language barrier while Indian respondents find miscommunication rare but majority of the respondents from both India and china agreed there are misunderstandings including miscommunication in the initial stage of working in a multicultural team but gradually those misunderstandings disappear as u spend more time with your team mates you understand them better.

11. On the question of preferred means of communication responses vary according to demand of the situation but in china face to face communication is generally preferred as most respondents preferred face to face communication while in India majority of
respondents preferred email as their choice some of respondents even preferred mobile or cell phone as they find it more comfortable medium of communication.

12. Non verbal communication has more acceptability among Indian respondents majority of them agree and advocate use of non verbal communication just as an alternative way of communicating yourself, Chinese respondents found it comparatively difficult as some believe silence and straight statements are preferred in Chinese culture rather then body languages while some agreed that use of non verbal communication is growing day by day specially among people working in multicultural atmosphere.

13. miscommunication is rather experienced by almost all respondents in china most respondents agree to miscommunication related problems and stress to solve it through exposing the root cause while in India majority of managers agree that miscommunication is taken as a team responsibility and strategies are in place to deal with such misunderstandings.

14. This question get similar responses from respondents n both countries as all the respondents agree that there was no separate training for intercultural communication even with the growing scope of multicultural teams most Chinese managers agree that general induction is the only training imparted by the companies while in India some mangers agree that such intercultural training was provided in western countries but not in India. While some mentioned that it is just a part of general training program imparted during induction.

15. Comparing the present situation of intercultural communication with 5 years ago we find one aspect in common between majorities of respondents it was that the requirements and need for intercultural communication has increased drastically but the steps to cope up with this growth are not sufficient enough. Most Chinese respondents mentioned that no specific culture oriented training is imparted while Indian managers said that the need is growing with growing globalization.

4.2 Area of research

Our research was carried out in construction sector in china and India, and most of our respondents were from multinational construction companies. 3 companies from china and 3 from India were selected for interviews. Construction sector was targeted as it is one of the fastest growing sectors in both the economies more details about which are given in following section.

4.3 Construction Sector Overview of Emerging Economies

Today, China is one of the fastest growing economic in the world. Countless numbers of established international organizations/ companies are entering its market hoping to seize the opportunity of China’s emerging economy. The world has witness China being the world’s biggest construction market from construction project such as the Olympics in Beijing 2008 , the rapid expansion of manufacturing industries, energy sector and national infrastructures, these created pull factors for international players
such as architecture firms, construction companies and business consultants to invest in China. In the era of globalization, it is possible to diversify business operations into different countries with different cultural background. An example of the design-build contract for the new airport terminal at the southern China (Guangxi Zhuang province) was won by the UK based Airsys ATM company (Lu and Paul, 2001). The given example shows that it is common to learn that products could now be designed in one culture, manufactured in another, and sold in yet another. (Muller, Spang, Ozcan, 2008)

The reform program and open door policy of China have created the rise of foreigner involvement in China’s construction sector. Out of all the foreign construction contractors in China, more than 60 percent of them has established offices in Shanghai and enjoyed the ranking of 225 top international contractors in China such as Fluor Daniel and Bechtel Group (USA) John Brown (U.K) and a few Japanese firms, (Lu and Paul 2001)

4.3.1 Overview of Chinese Construction Sector

China construction industry has been experiencing the rapid development and enjoying the steady growth rate for the past few years. According to National Bureau of Statistics, PRC, the main construction which brings upon the China’s Tenth Five-Year plan from year 2001-2005 was the construction of nation’s infrastructures featuring: railways, bridges, chemical plants, energy generation, and etc. The launch of “The Tenth Five-Year” plan has provided China’s construction industry with well guidance and opportunity for the greater development. The main objectives of The Tenth Five-Year Plan aimed to upgrade the design standard and rise up the design level and emphasis on the construction technique focusing on the necessary of construction market reformation and standardized for quality assurance.

Undeniable that China’s economy is the main factor of the rapid development of construction industry. According to National Bureau of Statistics, PRC, the growth of the industry develops at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 14.8% from the year 2001-2006. Figure 2.1 illustrate the increase of China’s GDP and overall contribution to GDP from the construction industry from year 2001-2006

Figure 4.1 China’s GDP and contribution to GDP from construction industry
According to China Statistical Yearbook (2002) indicate that in early 1990s, there were only 256 construction projects invested by foreign companies of which 136 were civil engineering works, 48 of them were the national means of transportation such as highway, railways, bridges and tunnel 7 of them were power stations, dams, harbor projects which valued at 5.65 billion RMB.

In year 2001, China started to march into greater involvement in construction projects arena which consisted of 622 construction companies with investment from parts of China such as Taiwan and Hong Kong. The construction projects which value were at 10.255 billion RMB had employed in total of 76,800 human resources. The incremental value was 2.735 billion RMB, Area under construction was up 3.748,500 square meters, and the completed area was 1,459,400 which created total profit of 375 million RMB. The construction industry achieved 646.2 billion RMB in total output value in 2001, accounted for 6.7 percent of the country GDP. The construction industry realized 704.7 billion RMB in total output value in 2002 with the incensement of 10.54% from year 2001, 637.5 billion RMB which accounted for 6.9 percent of its GDP. The total area under construction was up to 1,883,286,800 square meters, the accomplished areas was 976.99 million square meters which generated the total profit of 29.439 billion RMB.

In the beginning of 2002, the number of construction enterprises in China increased to 45,893, the incensement of construction enterprises also resulted in massive employment of 21,106,600 employees. Out of the employment from the enterprises and firms of which, 44,997 were locals. These firms generated 1,518.595 billion RMB in output value in 2001 and 398.022 billion RMB in added value. The area under construction was up to 1,874,480,800 square meters and the completed area was 975,532300 square meters.

Figure 4.2 Analysis of output values in China’s construction industry

Sources: China Statistical Yearbook 2002
The construction industry in China has been able to maintain the rapid growth and representing a higher than its gross national product. The output values of the construction industry was increased steadily as illustrated in figure 1.1 such as 10.19% in 1997, 10.25% in 1998, 10.84% in 1999, 12.06% in 2000 and 22.91% in 2001. The growth is expected to increase rapidly along with the booming economy of China supported by Lu and Paul (2001) who forecast that in year 2015 china’s construction industry is expected to reach USD 700 billion.

4.3.2 Overview of Indian Construction Sector

After having a look at the Chinese construction industry, our second field of research will be Indian construction industry which is one of the most attractive investment sector, due to immense potential and huge demand in terms of infrastructural and real estate projects. The Indian construction industry is the second largest contributor to the national economy. It is the second largest employment generator after agriculture in the country. The valuation of construction industry in India is worth over USD 51 billion and accounts for almost 20% of GDP. The Planning Commission of India published the 11th Economic Plan in 2007(2007-12), and allocates $500bn as investment outlay for development of infrastructure projects. The Indian construction industry is quite large and is crucial to various sectors of the economy. It employs approximately 31 million persons next to agriculture in terms of employment. It consumes 40-50% of the National Plan outlay. A few points to mention about Indian industry sector are as follows:

- India recorded the highest construction spend growth from 2005, driven by growing number of infrastructure projects and a booming real estate sector
- The introduction of REITs (Real Estate Investment Trusts) by mobilizing capital markets will further accelerate real estate growth
- Technological developments, such as ready-mix concrete, 3-D modeling, and mobile computing, are being used more often now
- Competition is very high across segments like road construction, housing and urban infrastructure development, but is relatively less in airport and port development projects.

Figure 4.3 Indian Construction Industries
The figure above shows the continuous increase of construction sector in terms of value in India. This growing trend is expected to continue with same pace in 2008-09 as per estimates. Year 2007 seven has shown significant increase from 2006 with a total investment of 2592 billion Rupees.

The economy of country has been on the upswing when the process of economic reforms was started in 1991. It has been a key growth driver for the national economy. A notable point here is that the industry is largely fragmented and overtly dominated by smaller players, although major players, especially those involved in big infrastructure projects, have already made their mark in the international arena, and it is on them to shape the future of this sector. The current estimates about the size of the construction industry in India is $70.8 billion, out of which the 87 key players account for nearly one third share, while the rest chunk of the highly untapped market is distributed amongst the 25,000 plus smaller players. The basic success factor responsible for the stupendous growth of the Indian construction industry is the support from the government their sustained political will since 1991. India, with its abundant land mass area and a billion strong populations, is definitely a major market for the construction sector in terms of infrastructure and property (residential & commercial) development. The increasing pace of development in this sector has attracted international construction giants from USA, UK & Middle East. The presence of multinational construction players has bought new techniques & methods for this sector. Our focus will be to assess the multicultural teams working in these corporations and to find some concrete data for our research. While India at present is one of the most preferred destinations for foreign investment, it needs more infrastructure facilities to convert these preferences into action.

India being the second most populous country has high rate of unemployment, but construction sector has played a role of major employment driver, being the second largest employer in the country, next only to agriculture. This is because of the chain of backward and forward linkages that the sector has with other sectors of the economy. More then 250 ancillary industries such as cement, steel, brick, timber and building material are related or dependent on the construction sector. A slight increase in expenditure in this sector has a significant & multiplier effect and its capacity to generate income to the levels as high as five times. But still there are a lot of problems as in real estate sector, post the US sub prime crisis and the slow down in the economy has affected the Indian construction sector as well particularly real estate, the real estate developers are caught between sluggish housing demand and rising cost of capital. The increasing trend for housing and capital loans have reduced immensely, causing a liquidity crunch for real estate players, while on the other hand a slowdown in the demand has led to a increasing fall in real estate prices between the range of 15% to 30% even in the normally price–inelastic metro areas.

Future prospects for Infrastructure investments continue to be the most important growth driver for construction companies. The proposed increase in allocation in the plan by planning commission during FY08 will translate into business for construction companies. The Indian construction industry is on its way to achieve its true potential of being leading the world, which clearly suggests a range of opportunities for various industry players.
Section 5: Analysis of Data

5.1 Introduction

This part begins with analysis of data and findings of national cultures in China and India which aim to explore the possible impact on communication in construction industry in these economic giants. The information and findings derive from our investigation can contribute to the better understanding of cultural influence on communication in project teams in China and India. The data provided in this part is supported by primary research findings in the form of interviews, focusing on the theoretical aspect of our literature review.

In our analysis of data, we have included cultural dimensions from Hofstede’s framework together with certain other elements of culture that are found in different countries and impact communication. Our primary research findings were based on semi-structured interviews conducted on construction companies in China and India. Interviews were conducted on team members who have experience working in multicultural teams. 3 construction companies were selected from each country and 2 members from each company were interviewed. In total we have interviewed 12 people from China and India. We have divided our correspondents into groups which are as follow:

China

Chinese Company 1 (CC1)
China Communications Construction Company Ltd
Interviewees: CC 1.1 (Mr. Lau Xi), CC1.2 (Mr. Wen Xiang)

Chinese Company 2 (CC2)
Pan China Construction Group
Interviewees: CC2.1 (Ms. Yeo Yu), CC2.2 (Mrs. Lim Choo)

Chinese Company 3 (CC3)
Zhen Jiang Construction Ltd (ZJCC)
Interviewees: CC3.1 (Mrs. Lau Xi), CC3.2 (Mr. Chong Kee)

India

Indian Company 1: (IC1)
Reliance Infrastructure Limited
Interviewees: IC 1.1 (Mr. Chinmay Mehta), IC1.2 (Mr. Prashant Gupta)

Indian Company 2: (IC2)
L&T Engineering & Construction Division
Interviewees: IC 2.1 (Mr. Kalian Mishra), IC2.2 (Mr. Rustam Jedi)

Indian Company 3: (IC3)
Nagarjuna Construction Co.,Ltd
Interviewees: IC3.1 (Mr. Kuldeep Sandhu), IC3.2 (Mr. Deepak Jain)
5.2 Classification of data

Our findings will be classified into 2 headings as factors in national culture and their influence on communication. This will provide us with classification of cultural factors in India and China, their affects on intercultural communication. Each of the 2 headings is further divided into sub-headings to extract maximum information from our research.

National culture in China and India

- Individualism
- Power distance
- Masculine
- Long term and short term orientation
- Uncertainty Avoidance

Effects on communication

- Individualism
- Power distance
- Masculine
- Long term and short term orientation
- Uncertainty avoidance
- High contexts and Low contexts
- Relationship
- Means of communication
- Non-verbal means of communication
- Miscommunication
- Intercultural training program

5.3 National culture in China and India

5.3.1 Individualism

Based on the responds from the 6 interviewees, most of them shared a common view in seeing collectivism as a more effective approach in working in a project team especially in construction project whereby every part is important step in delivering the main objective and see individualism as a approach which against the vale of team work(CC1.1) The Chinese tend to encourage collectivism in working as a team and prioritized teams before oneself, in other word teamwork is view as an important aspect along with the relationship among team members which are to be considered as well(CC2.1). According to (CC1.2) even though individualism is not encouraged in our team, there are some of the team members who tend to be adapting individualism. As most of the responds from Chinese interviewees were in favor of collectivism, the results did not reflect on Hofstede’s dimension which indicates that Chinese tend to belong to the individualism side, placing individual/ self-interest before the group. Supported by (CC3.1) who mentioned that in certain situation such as planning where by individualism is encouraged so that one can freely express ideas and opinions.
Moreover, (CC2.1) added that in some situation, individuals are assigned with specific responsibility for completing tasks and achieving objectives which is why there are some individual who focuses on their individual goals and achievement in their careers.

Most of the Indian interviewees state that collectivism is preferred over individualism. They feel that collectivism is necessary in teamwork whereby collaboration is needed also it brings in better coordination (IC1.1). The Indians see many advantages in collectivism such (IC2.1) mentioned that team setting collectivism is preferred to coordinate efforts. Supported by (IC1.2) who pointed out collectivism was emphasized by the team members from the beginning of the work. However, there are some contradictions on the discouragement of collectivism which depends on the requirement of the work; small tasks which team members are supposed to do together are preferred to do individually (IC2.1). The individualism illustrate in Figure 1.1 using Hofstede’s dimension shows that it has scored closely to the world average which reflected Indian as a mid-low level between the individualism and collectivism. However, the trend that the correspondents have shown indicate that generally, Indian are still in favor of working as a team as it brings in efficient results and produce greater team coordination. Where as (IC2.2) mentioned that in the term “team” itself means to work collectively for a specific purpose which can refer as their views toward individualism as less effective taking teamwork into consideration and strongly added that there is no place for individualism in team setting( IC3.2)

5.3.2 Power distance

As illustrated in the Hofstede’s dimension (Figure 1.1) which indicates the existence of high power distance in China which refers as an unequal distribution of power where decisions and planning are done by the seniors or superiors. Because of the large gap between them, daily tasks and job assignments are given without arguments. Respect was identified by all of the interviewees (CC 1.1,1,2,1,2,2,3.1,3.2) as a way to show that they accept the existence of power distance which can be in terms of experiences, ages or positions. However, level of respects are given in different situations, a member of CC 1.1 ,1.3 mentioned that only some basic manners are given to the seniors as in personal which does not influence working activities, in other word the respects are given to a certain amount supported by CC 2.1 indicates that even though people in the higher position have greater power but everyone still has the right in showing their opinions. Where as members from CC 1.2, 2.2, 3.1 agree that respects given to the seniors are as tradition values which are common in the Chinese culture, the amount of respects are given in great amount to the seniors in the extent that members of lower ranking do not challenge their seniors. In addition interviewees from CC.3.2 indicate that the respect shown to seniors can be spotted by the use of language, using polite or formal words when interacting with his seniors. In spite of the responds from 3 Chinese respondents, the acceptances on power distance on these 3 companies reflect equivalently to the Hofstede’s dimension on China which emphasized on the unequally distributed power.

As for India, the power distance based on Hofstede’s dimension which scores closely to China shows that both countries has similar approach toward the inequality distribution of power. Being a traditionally and culturally oriented country India sees power distance as a gap where by respects and formalities are to be given to the
seniors. It can be supported by the all the interviewees (IC 1.1,1.2,2.1,2.2,3.1,3.2) which emphasized on the respect given to the seniors especially by IC 3.1 who describes Indian culture which teaches people to respect the elderly. In the scope of hierarchy, Indian places positions and rankings into main concern while interacting the people but in the present, IC1.1 points out that the tense of being around people with higher positions in the team has been decreased where one could approach their seniors in a friendly way to some extent which is very common as in western countries (IC 2.1), where as correspondent IC3.2 mentioned that “we have certain level of distance with our seniors or we can say more professional when it comes to seniority”

5.3.3 Masculine

Based on the Chinese correspondents, all of the interviewees except for CC2.2 indicated those females are given equal opportunity in their careers. However, two correspondent CC1.1,CC3.2 raised up that in the past females were treated differently in both career and education. From the figure 1.1 (Hofstede’s dimension) we can see that Chinese scored rather high in masculine, even higher than India and world average. The higher the score is, the wider gap of male and female becomes but this dimension did not reflect on most of the interviewees’ statements. CC 1.1 mentioned that since the opened up of Chinese culture, the chances have been distributed equally and female are performing well, supported by CC 1.2 , CC 2.1 who pointed out nowadays, females are outperformed males in certain task. So the high scores which indicated the wide gap between females and males have been narrowed down due to the globalization which given females equally chances to perform and rankings promotions (CC1.1). However, there are some concern raised up from the increasing number of female securing positions in teams males are expected to work with the increasing women workforce and these changes could create unusual working environment (CC3.2). Apart from that there is also a doubtful issue on the biasness of females “I am not sure if any people still have the bias towards female role in China” (CC2.1). In China, since its economy is desperately require human resources and criteria have been based on the abilities and performance, There are campaign which aim to remove the bias of gender differentiation and promote women’s role in working environment (CC2.1).

In India, the general view from the correspondents have clearly define that there are certain gaps between females and males. Being a culturally oriented country, Indian females are less opened up to the society whereby males usually dominate in overall picture (IC2.2). IC 1.1 mentioned that due to cultural limitations, females prefer to act accordingly to the given order. In a working environment, Indian female team mates prefer to be more quite and calm during team discussions (IC2.1). There are some comparisons of Indian and American females in the working environment where American females are in level with the male where as in India, making decisions and team performance are still dominated by males (IC 22). The masculine and feminine of India on the Hofstede’s dimension reflects the reality situation which Indian scored 56 over the world’s average which was 50. In India where the nation cultural play an important role in genders differences, duties and jobs are seen as more suitable for males others as more for females. Generally, responsibilities towards different levels of decision making, strategic choices are based on the favorable gender which can be seen commonly in India. The operation of the organizations are based on the assigned
duty to males more than female whom likely will be dominate in the organizations or teams, these are certain restrictions of female which can be seen visibly in India culture (IC3.2)

5.3.4 Long term and short term orientation

According to Chinese interviewees all interviewees indicated that Chinese are typically belong to the long term orientation which reflects truly on Hofstede’s dimension. Chinese members vision results as something that will come eventually; they are more focus on the magnitude of the result than to look for the desire results (CC1.1). Being a traditionally and culturally oriented, people are concern over many factors such as seniority, relationship and risk taking, communication is conducted in a very careful manner taking those factors into consideration (CC1.2). Because Chinese prescribes to the values of long term commitments, they are committed to the team as mention by CC 2.2 “Chinese emphasized a lot on being committed to something permanent which is why we are not into risk-taking society” Being a high long-term orientation culture, communications are influenced by in fact that people tend to secure themselves to the strong commitment in the team by avoid conflict such as in conversation or opinions. Mentioned by CC3.2 “Chinese tend to communicate in very careful manner among teams, as relations are seen as a core aspect in working career”. Supported by CC1.2 “We see the importance of maintaining our relationships to the teams by compromising so that teamwork can ran though smoothly” In other word, Chinese are concern on the long commitment of the team, therefore they are taking precautions in their communication to avoid conflict. While in India, there is a mixed response on this particular aspect as some respondents (IC1.1, IC1.2) ranked India high on long term orientation while on the other hand some managers (IC.2.1) ranked India low on this scale while some believe the scenario is changing. The changes that most of our respondents feel are due to growing development and urbanization. There are changes in the view point of youth for long term orientation and short term orientation.

5.3.5 Uncertainty avoidance

4 out of 6 Chinese correspondents described Chinese culture as a mid-high in risk avoidance. CC1.1 indicated that in their culture, people dislike changes and viewing changes as risk. Chinese people are concern for their future, therefore risks are being avoided at all time. In Chinese culture, people are known to be non-risk taking people (CC1.2) and because risk taking is not encouraged in Chinese culture, people are less open to new things such as innovations and first- mover is seen as risk (CC3.1). In the team of Chinese nation, members like to follow on the same old routine or similar strategies which consider the risk as a treat if changes occurred (CC3.2). However, the respondents from (CC1.1, CC1.2, CC3.1, and CC3.2) do not reflect Hofstede’s dimension shown in Figure 1.1. The scores of the Chinese on uncertainty avoidance were considered low (30) which shows that they are open to changes and people feel less threatened by unpredictable situations which lead them to more become more opened minded. The low score of China shows that Chinese culture does not concern so much on the uncertainty and ambiguity. Chinese tend to have some amount of tolerance to the extent that they can listen to various ideas and opinions. Supported by the other 2 correspondents whom feel that Chinese are open for new things and changes as people are less concern on rules or formalities, therefore giving them
flexibility while working with the teams and tend to react on changes than acting (CC2.1) This can indicate that in Chinese society which is less rule-oriented and ready to for changes and risk taking for example expanding its business to unfamiliar industry.

In India, where the level of uncertainty avoidance based on Hofstede’s dimension is at 40 which is slightly more than China and lower than the world average. It describes Indian culture that is opened up to unstructured ideas and opinions with fewer rules which try to control unknown situations. What the correspondents have responded towards risk taking in Indian culture is that majority of Indians belong to high level of uncertainty avoidance where by people look at certainty as broadening minds and the providing opportunities for new ideas and changes. Mentioned by (IC2.1) where the high level of uncertainty avoidance is influenced by the national culture which crated risk taking culture. Therefore it helps to encourage innovations as a result; there are many global entrepreneurs from India there in today’s business industry. While most correspondents (IC1.1,IC1.2, IC 2.1,IC2.2, IC3.1) stated that Indian as high uncertainty avoidance, IC 3.2 brought up a point that Indian has become a risk conscious culture. His argument was that Indian business is moving towards better risk covering aspect rather then avoiding it. Based on the majority of the responds, India’s working environment seems to be flexible and lean towards short term goals as risk taking is encouraged. There are attempts to predict the ambiguity which perhaps very common seen in Indian organizations or teams.

5.4 Effects on communication

5.4.1 Effects on communication by individualism

Since majority of the Chinese and Indian correspondent agree that individualism is not encouraged in working as a team. Only in a certain task which does not required team affords is preferred to do in individual (IC2.1). Claimed by Indian correspondents (IC 1.2, IC3.2) projects are untaken as a teams and there seem to be no individualism in their teams. Where as in China, CC1.2 indicates that the existence of individualism is still part of the conflict which occurs as effects in team activities such especially in terms of communication in team. As mentioned earlier that construction projects required accurate information sharing and transferring of tasks to another. CC1.1 claimed that “being individualism is totally opposing the value of team work” in the way that the individuals conduct their communications on the self-based perspective such as messages to the listeners are not base on the team’s sakes or benefits. In other word, people who belong to individualism tend to concern less in team relations, therefore communications among the teams can not be proceed smoothly as there will always be conflicts and disagreements. Indian correspondent IC 2.2 believes that communication could be affected by individualism because “working as an individual in a team required collective efforts as individualism has a tendency of communicating less as compared to teams”. While CC3.1 mention that individualism also has a positive effect on communication in certain part of team work activities. In the planning process, being individualism can be seen as an approach which create liberty in raising ideas and opinions which needless to concern over the team. Communication can therefore be conducted freely and openly to every member of the team.
5.4.2 Effects on communication by power distance

Communication also can be influenced by the power distance which concern with the positions (hierarchy), seniority, age and level of experiences. All the correspondents from China and India agreed that paying respect to superiors is an important practice in their culture. According to (CC1.2) communication with people at higher levels in term of positions and ages are to be conducted carefully, supported by CC3.2 claims that such polite words are used which makes the communication very official and formal. Being formal while communication with seniors or superiors is found to be common with Indian culture as well, 4 out of 6 correspondents from India agreed upon it (IC1.1 IC1.2, IC2.2 ,IC3.1). (CI 2.2) “Communication has to be more formal and professional with them as it is our culture to be more respectful and formal to our elderly” The level of power distance which influence communication is not as seriously comparing to few years ago where jokes were not supposed to be in the conversation between the subordinates and seniors (IC1.1) However, effects have not been found on communication by power distance among people with the same level and age in India. Where as a Chinese respondent CC2.1 mention that people at the higher position does not effect the communication, “Our communication process did not follow the structure of hierarchy that much”. Her company uses report system which allows freedom in speech and opinions. In a different situation indicated by CC2.2, whereby the younger team members become the leader of team, this has great influences on the communication between the team leaders and the subordinates who feel discomfort being instructed by the younger team leaders. Effectiveness of communication can be decreased which will allow controversy to take place in communication due to the Chinese cultural prospective on power distance in such given situation.

5.4.3 Effects of masculine and feminine dimension on communication

From the Chinese correspondents 4 out 6 interviewees claim that gender can affects communication in team working. In the past, the Chinese males were given more opportunities in terms of career and positions, but this tradition has changed now, females are now given opportunities equally. Since the number of females in workforce is increasing rapidly, women has become a challenge for males in working career, and because of this challenge, CC1.1 pointed up that communications in team are restricted in way that the male team members tend to share information among themselves than to females. Because of the Chinese culture background that used to view Chinese males a leader and the power was being unequally to Chinese females, communications in the team can be affected further in a situation where by females are in the higher position than males. Male team members tend to feel discomfort communicating with them (CC 3.2). In the present situation in China, women are becoming acknowledged in the working environment. 2 of the Chinese correspondents state that female are actually outperformed males in terms of communication skills saying that females are more into details work which strengthened them in questionings and getting information.(CC1.2) In addition (CC2.1) feels that “Somehow women lean to have better communication skills under several particular circumstances”. Where as other 2 correspondent (CC 2.2, CC 3.1) have not acknowledged any effect of gender on communication due to minimum experience working in a team with females. Where as in Indian culture, women are still being looked as less privileged compared to males in career perspective. In
addition with the majority of the team performance which dominated by males (IC2.2), Indian women have tendency to limit their communication with male team members and act accordingly to what has been assigned (IC 1.1, IC 2.1). Because of the limitation of communication between Indian males and females in a team, important messages or information might not be able to reach out thoroughly in teams. The characteristic of Indian females described by IC 2.1, 3.1 is that they are tend to be quite and comparatively calm when communication is taken place in a team. This could also be looked upon as a society where by the traditional masculine values predominate. Hence, genders influences communication in working as team in Indian cultural oriented organization or teams. However, 2 correspondents IC1.2,IC2.2 claim that as India is adapting the increasing number to female workforce, the communication conflicts between males and females are yet to occur.

5.4.4 Effects on uncertainty avoidance on communication

The majority of the Chinese correspondents did not reflect on the Hofstede’s dimension which illustrates the low level in uncertainty avoidance in China. There were 4 out 6 correspondents whom reveal themselves as risk avoidance. CC1.1 mentioned that they tend to resist changes as many people dislike the status of changing to somewhere they are not used to. The concern for the uncertain future is taken into main consideration which means the attempt to avoid any risk involved (CC1.2). Since risk matters are seriously concern, communication can be influenced by uncertainty avoidance. Given an example by CC1.1 which describes a scenario where the subordinates are afraid to ask questions which were expected to know. This also could be associated with the power distance in Chinese culture where by the distance between two parties are wide; the subordinates are unlikely to approach their seniors in inappropriate circumstances. CC1.2 claims that communicating among the Chinese team members itself is preferred than in a multicultural team as there would be less risk encountered such as miscommunication or interpreting matters. In work practice, where uncertainty avoidance plays a crucial role in communication as such discussions which Chinese team members are reluctant to suggest their ideas which could be seen as incorrect to the members,CC.3.1. As the matter of fact, Chinese in teams are unlikely to attach themselves to their communication statements in order to avoid risk. However, CC2.1 indicates that she sees Chinese as a medium – high uncertainty avoidance society as people are more open-minded with flexibilities for changes. Therefore communication can be conducted without the influences of uncertainty avoidance, in more open manners where risk is less concern.

From Indian correspondents, it shows that Indian culture is in a society with high level of uncertainty whereby people are changing from being narrow minded and opening themselves to new opportunities for changes. The communication in team is conducted in a more optimistic manner where everyone has their voices heard in the conversation, this flexibility in communication creates innovation which explain the numerous of entrepreneurs in India (IC.2.1). Despite of being casual while communicating in teams, Indians are in precaution of the attitude and context which are expresses to the team members. In other word, Indians express themselves freely in communicating but risk is not neglected (IC 1.2).

5.4.5 Effect of high context low context on communication
Majority of Chinese managers (CC 1.1,1.2,2.1,2.2,3.1,3.2) agreed to high degree of influence due to contextual differences like language and interpretation of meanings. Almost all of them agreed that culture do effect communication in terms of understanding context as one respondent C1.2 mentioned “booked the room” can be taken in two aspects either as question or as answer. But most of the Chinese respondents do consider language barrier as a major problem. As one of the respondents CC2.1 indicate that English is second language to us and even within our team we have different meaning for same statements. While working in multicultural teams in China is now increasingly evident so is the adaptability of people towards intercultural communication as CC2.1 mentioned that we learned to be patient and avoid words which create misunderstandings. But the pace of economic development in China is getting fast and so is the presence of multinationals so many companies take services of intermediaries or translators to facilitate the conversation initially but even at times it is perceived as biased by either of the team members said CC2.2. Besides language the understanding of different meaning by different members of team do make a difference as in a multicultural team people have diverse background and their understanding of a particular term is influenced by their culture as respondent CC1.1 mentioned that “difference of culture prevent us from delivering exactly what we wish to say to listener from different culture”. As majority of respondents said Chinese people are usually quite and humble in team meetings which is sometimes misunderstood by teammates from other cultures but everybody agreed that after spending sometime with team mates from diverse culture both sides have better understanding as compared to the level of understanding in the beginning.

While in India all respondents agree to have high degree of contextual misunderstandings as they largely mentioned about understanding with western counterparts as respondent IC1.1 said you have to be straight forward with Americans you have to same them what you want as it is, they will ignore double meaning sentences while another respondent from IC2.1 mentioned that at times we could not understand their context as was the case with the Canadian guy when he said “who took my watch” it was taken as blame but he mean to ask a question that have you seen my watch. Indian culture although is very patient and understanding in working with multicultural teammates as mentioned by 4 respondents who have been to abroad and worked with international team mates. One of the respondents IC 3.2 mentioned that in USA initially you and your team mates both have to invest time in understanding each other. That means they will try to understand you by patiently listening to you and you have to speak slowly and clearly to make them understand and this is how things start and gradually cope up with each other. One think to be noticed here is that Indian managers as compared to Chinese managers were more comfortable with western partners which can be largely attributed due to language convenience as English is quite popular in India as compare to China.

5.4.6 Effect of relationships on communication

Relationship is another important factor which effects communication in multicultural teams as it was evident in the Chinese culture that the better the relation the better will be the levels of communications or better understanding in communication while there is slight difference as far as relationships are considered in India as they prefer limited effect of relationship in professional work. In China relations play a big role in effective communication and better understanding among team mates as respondent
CC1.1 said “it is a very important aspect and harsh disagreements are avoided in order to preserve the relationship.” So in Chinese culture relationships are valued comparatively higher for effective communication, respondent CC1.2 mentioned communication would become effective in supportive culture and harmonious working environment. Almost all of the Chinese managers except respondent CC3.1 agree that the better is the relationship more effective is communication. In other word relationships play an important role in influencing communication.

On the other hand in India the sense of strong professional attitude is favored as majority of the respondents agreed relationship do not matter that much in team communications but they agreed relations do make them comfortable with the person in communicating the more friendly the person is more relaxed is the communication as respondent IC1.2 mentioned “Relationships do matter but to a certain extent for example in team meetings, members who have developed a better understanding with each other or are friends, tend to be more informal with each other” while one more point need to be mentioned here that one of the respondent IC3.1) said relationships do matter in teams at national level but it hardly makes a difference in multicultural team because of the high degree of professionalism. While most of the respondents in India preferred professionalism over relationships in teams’ communications as respondent IC2.1 replied “There is no relationship in business when you are working as a team whole team means business and there is no informal communication even with in good friends in the official meeting, you have to be sincere with your job”. So it seems as if relationship has comparatively low effect in India than china.

5.4.7 Effect of means of communication

Medium of communication also plays a big role in understanding of communication as we find that in China, face to face communication is preferred, it is considered best to have face to face interaction to get clear and effective meaning of the communication, other medium of communication like email telephone are convenient as well but primary option is face to face again depends on seriousness of matter and ease of contact. While on the other hand Indian managers prefer email as best means of communication. Chinese managers consider email as informal means of communication as respondent CC1.1 mentioned “In Chinese culture, emails and faxes are being seen as informal ways of communication unlike in non-Chinese might find emails an ideal medium of communication as it is tangible.” While all managers agreed that means of communication depends on the task as respondent CC1.2 said “For general communication, informal mediums of communication are used such as telephone, SMS and email. However, I normally prefer face to face conversation when it comes to a serious matter because not only do I get to express my feelings but I also get to see the listener’s reaction”. Largely face to face communication is preferred in china depending on the situation. So basically in case of negotiation and general communication face to face communication is preferred but one respondent CC2.1 said “Especially in negotiation, we do not prefer oral agreement.”

In India, email is considered the most effective means of communication for all sorts of communications, almost all the managers agree to email as primary source of preference in all sort of negotiations and updates as they find it more comfortable in written format and quick way to communicate. Respondent IC1.1 mentioned “In our organization email is the most preferred means of communication when frequency is
concerned” they agree preference of medium of communication varies according to need of the situation as respondent IC 2.2 adds “It depends on the situation some times you think email is more effective sometimes face to face meeting and sometime telephone calls it depends on demand of situation, but for our official work in daily basis email is preferred”. While one of the respondent IC 1.2 preferred mobile as preferred medium of communication, he said “In our business we are working on site and office for whole day so for me mobile service is the preferred medium of communication as I can contact anybody anytime” it is important to mention here that email is most preferred means of communication in India as both formal and informal.

5.4.8 Use of non-verbal communication

Informal communication specially body expressions is one of the most often used medium to convey your feelings, it is prevalent in western culture but in china it is not that often used as most of the Chinese managers agreed that it is not prevalent in Chinese culture as they have more humble and patient manner to express there feelings but in multicultural teams they are used often and so they gradually get with it. Respondent CC1.1 mentioned “In Chinese culture or even at national level, we do not use much of non-verbal communication. Where as in multinational team, various ways of body languages are observed” while regarding understanding of these body expressions majority of them agree that after having spent some time with the team and getting accustomed to it they understand it well and even use it, respondent CC2.1 mentioned “At the beginning of project phase, I could not understand a few non-verbal communication means of foreigner members sometimes. After working with them for a while, I could adapt and got used to. I even learned several nonverbal means of foreign countries from them.” But with the increasing scope of intercultural communications there is a feeling to learn more non verbal expressions to interpret your counterpart in a better way said respondent CC3.2.

In India, we find that it is used quit often and is practiced everywhere, in fact Indian managers support this as a better way of stating your point. As respondent IC1.1 mentioned “I would like to say that by using non verbal expressions you are trying to stress your point and everybody exercises this frequently to put forward there point of view”. Indian managers are quite comfortable with understanding of such expressions in multicultural teams as one of the respondent IC2.2 said “It is a natural phenomena everybody use it, it is one way I express my feelings and spending so much time with the team develops a sort of understanding between team members” so one reason that may be attributed to this comfortable reaction is there higher exposure to western partners in fact Asians are getting more comfortable with using it, respondent IC3.2 mentioned one instance to support this finding, he said one of our team member was from Thailand when she joined us in US she used to be very quite without expressions in meetings but after 2 years she is using more expressions to convey his message than others do.

5.4.9 Miscommunication
Miscommunication is the result of misunderstanding as most of the managers (CC 1.1, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2) in China agreed to this as most of them did not have any experience of such failures but they do have experienced miscommunications and the best way generally agreed was to find out the root of misunderstanding and correct it with a commitment to not repeat it further. One of the respondent CC2.1 mentioned that in multicultural teams there are more chances of miscommunication due to cultural differences but extra attention is devoted towards confirmation and recheck of information between team members to avoid misunderstandings. While few managers (CC2.2, C3.1) mentioned that intervention of project manager is generally required to resolve misunderstanding and to solve the problem of miscommunication. So there is a general agreement that better coordination and extra efforts can avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding.

While in India, miscommunication is taken as a team responsibility and appropriate measures are taken to prevent it from happening again. Majority of the Indian managers (IC1.1, 1.2, 1.2.1, 2.2, 2.2.3.1, 3.2) agreed that there has developed some strategy to check miscommunication does not happen. As respondent IC1.2 mentioned “Miscommunication does occur at times but we have a set format to meet daily in the evening to verify our orders and contracts everyday so the chances of failure are minimized”. Miscommunications do occur but it is cured at initial stages, said one of the managers. One of the respondent IC1.2 mentioned our organization have specific action plan for the member who is responsible for the miscommunication, he said “in case we have find any order placed wrongly or in excess we put that member under supervision of senior manager for a month for working thoroughly on that particular aspect”. While most of them agree that to avoid miscommunication better team effort and strategy is required and if that is not working it should be changed respondent IC2.1 said “each failure is rectified by a improvement plan prepared by human resource team and better communication solutions are looked upon by our senior managers”. So for Indian managers miscommunication has to be dealt with immediate effect.

5.4.10 Training for intercultural communications

A very common phenomenon that we observed while interviewing our respondents were that there was no specific training for intercultural communications, there was generally a short program for understanding of some key information about the country specific but nothing specific about intercultural communications. This aspect we find in both China and India despite growing need for intercultural communication in both these emerging economies there is literally no specific training program for any of the managers who are either working in international teams or in multicultural teams in India or in China. As most of the managers (CC 1.1, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3.1, 1.3.2) agreed you have to learn on your own and have to brush your skills gradually. Each organization has its said program for employees but not for culture specific issues as one of the Chinese manager CC3.2 mentioned “No such training has been organized so far. But in beginning of every project, the members are gathered together for some non-work related orientation which briefly involved in introduction of themselves and getting to know the new members”. While one manager CC1.2 said companies stress on team building, he claimed “We organize gathering functions outside working hours among the project team members. We try to get full participation from the team.
members”. But nobody mentioned anything about culture specific communication programs which shows a growing need for such training initiatives.

On the other hand, in India there is training for team members to settle with work cultures but not with intercultural communications most of them agreed that they have general training but no specific training for intercultural communication. While one of the respondent IC2.2 mentioned there special training also deals with cultural aspect in teams, he said “from last 2 years our human resource department has started this special training for all new members working in any team which gives you an better understanding of work culture in our organization and the diversity involved and to deal with them.” While one respondent IC1.1 agreed that he had been given specific cultural training but that was in US office and not in India, he said “there was training in US office but not in India, we were given 3 days of training to deal with all cultural adjustments, what to do and what not to do and a basic understanding of cultural diversity.” So a need for in house training by companies on intercultural communication must be developed to cope with increasing globalization in these emerging economies like China and India.

5.5 Comparison of China and India on cultural effects

5.5.1 China

In China, collectivism is more encouraged in team communication individualism is acceptable in some level in particular of project. In Power distance, strong emphasizes on the respect on seniority and superiors created a gap in communication. Masculine, increasing of female workforce that created threats of female dominances in team have leaded to communication problems between males and females. Uncertainty avoidance, risk is to avoid at any level, communications with team members are conducted in careful manner. High contexts and Low contexts, contextual misunderstanding take place often in the team/ society. Relationships are seen as an important aspect in communication in team or society. Better the relationship creates better communication. Means of communication- Face to face a preferred means of communication especially in importance issues. Non-verbal means of communication- less used in Chinese societies / teams. Intercultural training program, mostly by informal gatherings or activities which aim to improve communication in teams.

5.5.2 India

Individualism is less dominant then team effort but under the influence of western culture the concept of individualism is gaining acceptance to prove itself. Power distance, due to cultural inheritance of respecting seniors the distance between seniors and juniors is prevalent. Masculine, traditionally a male dominated society Indian culture does have reservations with females prefer to take back seat but scenario is changing and they are increasing their participation. Uncertainty avoidance the assumption that India has normally been ranked at low levels in uncertainty avoidance is changing as generation wants better way to deal risk and other uncertainties. High contexts and Low contexts will remain to be the single most factor
which will effect communication as language can be understood but to understand cultures it will take a lot of time. Relationship, as per our finding relationships rarely matter, and professionalism is preferred in business in India. Means of communication, Email continue to be the most important means of communication over other means. Non-verbal means of communication. Non-verbal means of communication are getting increasingly popular in India as almost all the managers agree to use it and have seen people using it quite often. Intercultural training program, there is a lack on part of multinationals in providing sufficient training program to employees to give a better understanding of intercultural communication.
Section 6: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

In our presentation of thesis, we have discussed the aim and objectives for the research in section 1, along with the rationale for choosing the thesis topic. In section 2, the discussion is on the research methodology employed where the research plan or strategy, data collection, data analysis methods were presented. In section 3 we have provided a brief review of literature to identify knowledge gap in the literature. And, this identified literature has been employed in the analysis section. Empirical observations in section 4 discuss the data structure of semi structured interviews and a brief summary of responses and the background of country wise sector chosen for data collection and analysis. Section 5 presents the data analysis discussing the results from responses collected briefly with an aim to answer the research objectives. Finally, this section will focus on the conclusions for our research where the research aims and objectives will be answered based on the analysis and results from the previous chapter which includes theoretical and managerial implications. Also, the research is completed by providing recommendations for future and limitations completing the research requirements.

6.2 Findings

The increasing trend of globalization among developing countries has lead to the advent of cross-cultural project activities. But still most of the literature lays little or no emphasis on cultural aspects. The lack of sufficient empirical data in this area triggered our research to investigate and explore cultural factors influencing communication in multicultural teams in India and China. The knowledge gap was pointed out in literature review on the role of cultural factors in multinational teams in section 3. Some researchers have shown evidence of the influence of cultural dimensions on communication (Muller et al, 2005). We have made an attempt to further explore the influence of Indian and Chinese cultures on communication in project teams in construction sector by conducting semi-structured interviews in 6 multinational organizations.

As mentioned earlier, and now again concluding that we have been able to determine that culture as an independent variable has considerable effect on communication
which is a dependent variable while this effect of independent variable on dependent variable has been analyzed in a multinational organization settings, to be more precise in a multicultural team. And this attempt was made taking the national cultures of India and China. And the findings were quite significant in terms of both differences and similarities between these cultures.

In order to complete our research we conduct a series of interviews. The interview responses were analyzed using coding principles of grounded theory with the objective to answer the research question

“How does culture influence communication in multicultural team in China and India”

And the supporting research questions,

What are the key aspects of culture effecting the intercultural business communication?
What cultural factors are making effective impact on communication process in multinational organizations?
To Analyze and compare intercultural communication in China and India?

Our research findings have revealed some very important factors in cultural settings of both countries which make a significant effect on communication in multicultural teams. While there are some differences in conduct of Indian teams and Chinese teams but both have high impact of culture on there communication. These differences can be discussed under as follows:

1. Respect for seniority – in China people from the lower ranking are very concern about how they communicate to their superiors. Emphasis on respect to the seniority is considered in Chinese working environment. Traditionally Indian sees hierarchy distance as a gap where by respects and formalities are to be given to the seniors but recent trends are gradually replacing knowledge with seniority for recognition and respect. Communication has to be more formal and professional with them as it is their culture to be more respectful and formal to their elderly.

2. Growing trend of individual performance – collectivism still dominates Chinese work culture as a more effective approach. while individualism is seen as an approach against teamwork. As for the Indian they prefer a mix of collectivism and individualism. They feel that collectivism is necessary in teamwork whereby individualism is required to prove oneself.

3. Masculine and feminine difference - In masculinity, majority of Chinese claim that feminism can affects communication in team working. Chinese feel it uncomfortable to work under female superiors, hence communication does not flow smoothly. In Indian culture, women are still being looked as less privileged compared to males in career perspective. Indian women have tendency to limit their communication with male team members and act accordingly to what has been assigned.
4. Changing traditional risk avoidance patterns – Chinese tend to resist changes as many people dislike the status of changing to somewhere they are not used to. The concern for the uncertain future is taken into main consideration which means the attempt to avoid any risk involved. While, Indian culture as a society traditionally has low level of uncertainty avoidance attitude but with time they are transforming themselves, whereby people are changing from being risk takers to risk managers and opening themselves to new opportunities for changes.

5. Long term and short term orientation- Chinese people are ranked highly on this scale as we observe that they are more into relationships even in business they tend to avoid situations of conflict while there cultural values continue to persist in their professional life as well. In India, the respondents ranked long term orientation from high to medium. It shows some difference on long term orientation between Chinese and Indian cultures but we observed that the Indians tend to accept other cultures more quickly but they also have strong effect in terms of respects towards their cultural values in their professional life.

6. Contextual and language barrier - Contextual differences like language barrier and different interpretation of words do play a great role in both cultures, in India interpretation of meaning cause high degree of influence in communication but they tend to adjust quite fast to such differences, while in China most respondents consider language as well as interpretation has high degree of influence they cite the difficulty of language preferably English as a barrier compared to India where English has higher acceptance.

7. Cultural preference on Relationship - Relationships play a major role in Chinese culture in communication as they prefer to avoid disputes and give value to relations while Indian respondents were of the view that relationships doesn’t matter when you are doing professional work, there was a angle of low degree of influence in Indians as far as relationship effect on communication is considered

8. Means of communication - means of communication vary according to demand of the situation but in China face to face communication is generally preferred as they believe the output is more compared to written communication, while in India people preferred email as their choice some even preferred mobile or cell phone as they find it more comfortable medium of communication

9. Growing acceptance of non verbal communication - Non verbal communication has more acceptability among Indians and they advocate use of non verbal communication just as an alternative way of communicating yourself, Chinese believe silence and straight statements are preferred in their culture rather then body languages but agreed that use of non verbal communication is growing day by day specially among people working in multicultural atmosphere.

10. Requirements of intercultural communication in current scenario and need for training – it was common in both countries that there was no separate training for intercultural communication even with the growing scope of multicultural teams Chinese agree general induction is the only training imparted by the companies while in India no such intercultural training was provided, it is provided in western countries
but not in India but all of them agree that need is growing and measures to meet the
requirements are insufficient.

So we have tried to sum up most of our research findings in these points giving a brief
and factual idea about culture, their effect on communication and comparative
analysis in India and china. In the following part we are going to discuss theoretical
and managerial implications of our research.

6.3 Theoretical implications

Our research on cultural dimensions and values influencing communication among
multicultural teams in China and India shows that cultural dimension plays a
significant role in influencing communication within multicultural teams. Some of
these major cultural factors are as follows -:

Dimensions which influence communication in China and India

- Individualism
- Power distance
- Masculine
- Uncertainty avoidance
- Long term and short term orientation
- High contexts and Low contexts
- Relationship
- Means of communication
- Non-verbal means of communication

The study and analysis which were conducted on Chinese and Indians have shown
difference perspectives of individuals on national and international team members
towards communication aspects. Though, some of these factors are found to be
common in Chinese and Indian teams’ communication, there are also new discoveries
and findings which might be able to enlighten researchers in greater dept of
understanding cultural communication in China and India in order to formulate new
theory on cultural communication in these countries.

6.4 Managerial implication

The increasing development of economics globalization and internationalization
especially in Asia’s economic powerhouses such as China and India has brought
forward the issue of cultural communication. International managers in China or India
need to realize the fundamental of cultural differences and understanding. Therefore,
the contribution of this study is to provide cultural understanding and improvement on
communication. Based on the data analysis which was generated by 12
correspondents from China and India, several suggestions were identified for the top
managers to consider in their work practices.
China

Since Chinese are extremely concerned on the seniority culture of the team, more flexibility should be given to the subordinates in order to achieve more effective communication. The collectivism is a common approach in Chinese working culture, which seen as a rigid process as more communications consumes more time. Individualism should be encouraged in certain part of the project/ task in order to gain better team performance. Due to the increasing number of female workforce in high positions, communications are conducted in unfavorable environment. Therefore, gender issue should not be overlooked. The concern over risk is highly existed such as one tends to avoid communication which can place them in trouble. Punishment or penalty due to miscommunication should be more lenient and reasonable. Official intercultural training program should be implemented as there are only informal gathering activities which do not focus much on understanding of intercultural communication.

India

As indicated India is a male dominance society, Indian females should be encouraged in team communication such as discussions and opinions. The gaps of superiors are subordinates are relatively wide, which create distance in communicating among them. Working environment with less hierarchy system should be considered. Effective communication relies partly on good relationships of team members which are being overlooked in Indian society. Therefore, establishing good relationships among team members should be emphasized. In order to achieve better understanding of cultures and communication among team members, intercultural training program should be provided to all members.

6.5 Limitations

Through out our study, we have found that there were many difficulties dealing with the term “Culture” as it is considered as a sensitive and perceptive topic to be researched and looked upon. Even though, there were various contributions on academic and practical literatures about national cultures in the past such as Hofstede (1980), Hall (1989), Trompenaars (1997) each of them have focused cultural issue in different aspect. Yet, we managed to apply some of the related information and data from the contributions by these well-known scholars. But at times, we were uncertain on some analysis as it could be different in today’s situations. As we have chosen our research based on China and India which are considered as emerging economies in Asia or even the world, we were concerned with the possibility of some unnoticed cultural changes in the countries that are facing rapid changes in the era of globalization.

The selection of organizations and interviewees to be interviewed was more difficult than expected from the beginning because the criteria were considered demanding in developing countries. We had to choose multinational organizations with employees who have been working in a multinational teams or at least some exposure to the multicultural working environment in construction sector. Two of the potential
interviewees whom were selected from India were found be unavailable for interviews. More time was spent in acquiring potential and available interviewees.

During the interview, we had to be very carefully in asking questions concerning the nation culture issue as some interviewees might found to be offensive to their cultures. Especially for author#1 who is a non-Chinese had to prepare himself before the actually interview by asking his Chinese classmates on the appropriate manner during the interview with Chinese interviewees. The issue of restriction in interviews was suggested by his Chinese classmates not to question particular matters concerning his or her superiors in too detail.

Another main obstacle which author# 1 did not expect was the language barrier during the interview with the Chinese interviewees. Even though, English is the official language in their organizations, he felt some difficulties in understanding some of the answers to the questions from interviewees which had to be asked repeatedly. Vice-versa, some Chinese interviewees did not fully understand the questions, and explanations were needed as result in time-consuming.

As we based our research on semi-structured interviews which were conducted over telephone conversation, we could not see the emotional expressions or the body languages of the interviewees during the interview which we thought were important to notice as it would have provided better support in our data analysis. The semi-structure interviews would have given us more practical details if we had personally conducted interviews on them. Unfortunately, the distance prevented us from doing so.

Lastly, due to time constrain we were unable to cover other aspect of culture in communication arena, and also the additional of other cultural aspect which we think could influence in other work practices. The time also was also the main consideration of limiting our research on the construction sector. Our research could have been expanded into other sector/industry which involve with interactions of multinational team members if more time were to permit. Despite of numerous of limitations in our study, the research processes have been planned and conducted vigilantly to achieve the best answer to our research questions.

6.6 Recommendation for future research

As mentioned in earlier, the future research could be expanded to other sector/industry where involvement of multicultural existed such as in manufacturing industry where by many of the foreign manufacturers have now located their factories in these countries. The future research can be conducted using our research as a principle which can be analyzed and compared with the future research’s result. The similarities and differences of the result can therefore act as a comparison to judge whether or not the same or different cultural aspect influences work practices in multination teams regardless of industry.

The future research can also be conducted on the other developing economic such as in the South-East Asia region for example Vietnam which is seen as a new potential
player. In order to take this research into the higher level, there should be more similar studies in that country using the same methodology to collect data. The dependent and independent variables should well define in practically and conceptually.

Furthermore, the future research can cover other scope of culture on other arena which involve plentifully in multicultural movement. The aim of future research should be able to provide readers with update analysis and information in the present scenario which can be adopted and applied in organization to create greater understanding of national cultures and prevent cultural conflict which could lead to misunderstanding.
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Appendix

Interviews of China and India

1. From your past working experience in multicultural team, can you elaborate what was the difference in working with teams at national level and international level?

2. As a part of multicultural team, do you think effective communication plays an important role in team performance? Explain?

3. In the scope of Individualism and collectivism, which one is more encouraged in team working in your organization? Please state effects on the communication.

4. How does position (hierarchy) and seniority influence communication in multicultural team?

5. Being a traditionally and culturally oriented country how do you rank long term orientation and high term orientation in team working? And up to what extent team communication is influenced by it?

6. How the genders in terms of national culture are is affects communication?

7. Assuming the levels as high, medium and low, how will you rank Indian culture on risk avoidance scale and how does this attitude of risk taking effects communication?

8. It is an accepted fact, that contextual differences like language and interpretation of meaning do occur, but what is the degree of influence of this contextual difference on communication in your organization? Can you give an example from your experience?

9. To what extent relationships influence communication in multicultural team?

10. Do you think you have always been able to receive the meaning of message or information transferred to you by your multicultural team mates? If no, what are the problems faced and how often it is repeated?

11. In a situation such as negotiation, informing updates or general communication, what means of communication are preferable? Does medium of communication makes a difference in terms of understanding the person from different culture?

12. How often does non-verbal means of communication for example body language used in your team? Please describe in what extent do you understand them given that each individual has comes from different cultural background?

13. In a situation whereby, miscommunication issue occurred by one or two members of project team which lead to the failure team project, how do you respond to it? As a team or individual?

14. Is there any training which aims to enhance communication within teams and understanding of different cultures?

15. How do you compare the present situation of intercultural communication in India with 5 years ago?