



UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

MEGA CONSTRUCTION PROJETS IN SOUTH AFRICA: CULTURAL COMPLEXITY

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Gcobisa Mashegoana; I am currently a student at Wits University, completing my master's degree in construction project management. I am inviting you to participate in my research which is to establish the existence of cultural disruptions in implementing Mega Construction Projects in South Africa.

Purpose

This survey is designed to solicit your input on your company/department/project culture, cultural barriers that could hamper progress on construction site, communication channels and day-to-day working environment.

This survey should take about 15/20 minutes to complete.

For this survey to be helpful and accurate in describing your organization, it is important that you answer each question as honestly as possible.

Confidentiality

Your responses to this survey will be kept completely anonymous.

As a safeguard of your confidentiality, no one other than the Researcher and the Study Supervisor Dr. Nthatisi Khatleli will ever see your completed survey. The Researcher will collect and compile the surveys and present the results to you and other survey participants of which the findings will be analysed and presented as part of the MSC Construction Project Management Research submission.

Completion of this survey is voluntarily, you are welcome to stop at any point in time and Not to respond to certain questions.

Contact Details

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SECTION A

INTRODUCTION

Multi-cultural projects are becoming the norm. More and more projects are being executed successfully using multicultural teams. To achieve project goals and avoid potential risks, construction project managers should be culturally sensitive and promote creativity and motivation through flexible leadership.

Effective use of cross-cultural project teams can provide a source of experience and innovative thinking to improve the likelihood of project success and enhance the competitive position of the organization.

However, cultural differences and related conflicts can interfere with the successful completion of projects in today's multicultural global business community.

According to Day (2008), organizations working with multi-cultural teams face a three-fold multi-cultural challenge.

- Enabling a mixed group work towards a common goal.
- Maximizing contribution of each project team member.
- Ensuring fair treatment for all irrespective of background.

DEFINITION OF SOCIAL IDENTITY

Responses to the following questions will help us understand how major employee groups view things. These and all responses will be kept confidential. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering these questions, you are welcome not to respond.

Please indicate your current classification

1. Management
2. Staff
3. Other

How long have you worked for the company

1. 0 – 2 years
2. 3 – 5 years
3. 6 – 9 years
4. 10 – 14 years
5. More than 14 years

Gender

1. Male
2. Female

Age Group

1. 21-35
2. 36-45
3. 46-54
4. 54 and above

Country of Origin

1. South Africa
2. Other (Specify) _____

Race

1. Indian
2. African
3. Coloured
4. White
5. Other (Specify) _____

Sexual Orientation

1. Heterosexual
2. Homosexual
3. Bi-sexual

Highest Education

1. Matric Certificate
2. Diploma or University Degree
3. Masters/Post Graduate Qualification
4. Doctorate
5. Other (Specify) _____

Ability

1. Are you a person living with a disability
2. Are you able - bodied

Culture: This refers to your ethnic identity

1. African
2. Malay
3. Afrikaans
4. Irish
5. English
6. Indian
7. Other (Specify) _____

Religion

1. African religions
2. Christianity
3. Islam
4. Judaism
5. Hinduism
6. Buddhism
7. Other (Specify) _____

Size of Project Team exposed to (Number)

1. <5,
2. Between 5-10
3. Between 10-20
4. >20

Directions

1. Read each item carefully
2. Circle one number for each item
3. Please strive to complete your survey

DEFINITION OF CULTURE AND VALUES

Culture is a word we use often, without having a clear idea of its meaning.

Is Culture...

1. The way people behave
2. The way people dress
3. The food people eat
4. The religions people follow
5. A system of shared beliefs ,values, customs and behaviours

Values are

1. A person's principles or standards behaviour
2. One's judgement of what is important in life
3. Principles, ethics, moral code, morals, standards, code of behaviour
4. Estimate the monetary worth of (something).
5. Important and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by the members of a culture about what is good or bad and desirable or undesirable

CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

1. Have you ever communicated with someone from another nation/cultural background?
 - No
 - Yes, indirectly (online, on phone, by written ways etc)
 - Yes, directly (face to face)
 - Other (Specify).
2. Have you ever been in a cross –cultural communication in your organisation/project team which ended up in misunderstanding
 - No
 - Yes, I misunderstood the person I talked to
 - Yes
 - Other (Specify)
3. In cross – cultural communication, have you ever misundertood someone in your team and/or been misunderstood due to the causes indicated below? Check the applicable one(s).
 - Verbal misunderstandings (misunderstanding the words/language used)
 - Vocal misunderstandings (misunderstanding what is indicated due to the tone of voice)
 - Non-verbal misunderstandings (misunderstanding the body language/gestures etc.)
 - None
 - Other (Specify)

4. In cross cultural communication, what is more important to you in order not to cause misunderstandings? Check the applicable one(s).

— Right choice of words
— Right use of voice
— Right use of body language (including facial expressions, gestures, etc)
— None
— Other (Specify)

5. Do you think that speaking in the same language can overcome the misunderstandings in cross-cultural communication?

— Yes, speaking the same language is enough.
— Yes, if the language is spoken fluently it is enough.
— No, even if the language is spoken fluently it is not enough .
— None
— Other (Specify)

6. While communicating with someone in the same language, I think his/her cultural background is important. (Choose the most appropriate one, circle the number under it.)

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

7. When different cultural backgrounds are involved, there are communicating barriers between me and the people I am communicating with in my organisation/protect team (Choose the most appropriate one, circle the number under it.)

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

8. Do you feel as if there are communicating barriers in your organisation Yes/NO, if yes what do you think the main reason(s) is?

— Language related (not speaking the same language, not speaking a mutual language fluently, foreign accent, using wrong words, expressions, etc.)
— Culture related (being from very different cultural background, having different expressions, gestures, etc.)

- None
- Other (Specify)

9. If multi-cultural construction project teams are to be effective, they need to have clear communication procedures

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

10. Do you believe that the use of a resolution process is very important in project teams and that it needs to be understood by all teams members.

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

11. Communication channels are very open here among management and workers.

Strongly Agree	Tend To Agree	Hard To Decide	Tend To Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

12. Language and method used for communication among the project team never seem to be a barrier

Strongly Agree	Tend To Agree	Hard To Decide	Tend To Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

1. Management seeks input from employees on major decisions and management of employees. The management style in the organisation is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation hard.

Strongly	Tend To	Hard To	Tend To	Strongly
Agree	Agree	Decide	Disagree	Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

2. The number of changes that we go through in my organisation and or in our projects is "about right."

Strongly	Tend To	Hard To	Tend To	Strongly
Agree	Agree	Decide	Disagree	Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

3. This organization is very supportive of change.

Strongly	Tend To	Hard To	Tend To	Strongly
Agree	Agree	Decide	Disagree	Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

4. It is "easy" to get things done in my organisation especially on projects.

Strongly	Tend To	Hard To	Tend To	Strongly
Agree	Agree	Decide	Disagree	Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

5. Most people in this organization are encouraged to make suggestions for improvement.

Strongly	Tend To	Hard To	Tend To	Strongly
Agree	Agree	Decide	Disagree	Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND DIVERSITY

1. To what extent do your organisational make it easy for outsiders and newcomers to be admitted and intergrated into the orgnaisaion system?

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

2. Do the various employment-related practices within the organisation reflect acceptance of diversity and valuing of all people regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion and age?

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

SECTION B

ASSESSING THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE BY WORKERS IN SA PROJECTS

Select by circling one definition of the term Mega Construction project that most describes your understanding of MCP's.

Definition of the term Mega Construction project

1. Large –scale , complex projects that are designed and constructed over a period of time, normally four years or more , at a cost of more than US\$ 1 billion and involve and have an impact on multiple public and private stakeholders
2. The “giants” among the projects; Gruno (2004) puts the emphasis on the aspect of multi-organizational enterprises (MOEs) and characterizes these by (I) singularity, (II) complexity, (III) goal-orientation (technical, financial, time) and (VI) the nature and the number of project owners.
3. The concept of a project is described as ‘a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a product, service or result’
4. Large – scale complex ventures that typically cost a US\$ 1 billion or more, they take many years to develop and build, they involve multiple public and private stakeholders, they are transformational, and impact millions of people.

Circle one statement that speaks most to your understanding of what constitute a successful project.

What are the important ingredients completed projects to have for it to be considered a success.

1. Project completed on time, at the right scope , and within budget time
2. The availability of funds, stakeholder buy-in and good governance.
3. Customer satisfaction, quality and time.
4. No project risk, right scope and within budget

Outline possible reasons that could have contributed to project delays in your organisation?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Definition of the term Complexity

Define the term complexity in project and work context;

Definition of the term Culture

Define the term culture in SA context;

Definition of the term Organisational Culture

Define the term Organisational culture in SA context;

ITERATE THE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES THAT EXIST IN SA WITH REGARD TO THEIR IMPACT IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT IS SA PROJECTS.

1. South Africa's culture is one of the most diverse in the world and has given rise to the term "Rainbow Nation". List the cultural differences that exist S.A.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2. Identity the four main characteristics of SA diverse culture
Circle the one list of characteristics that most speak to you.

1. Race, Language, Class and Ethnic group
2. Language, Race, Religion and behaviour
3. Language, Religion, Behaviour, Beliefs
4. Traditions, Customs, Language and Religion
5. Age, Gender, Race and Geographic's

INVESTIGATE AND IDENTIFY INTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL CULTURAL DYNAMICS AND THEIR IMPACT THEREOF IN IMPLEMENTING MEGA CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN SA CONTEXT.

Analysis of Cross –Cultural Impact on Mega Projects

1. Describe the relationship between you and your superiors based on the scale - very good, good, average, and poor.

1. Very Good
2. Good
3. Average
4. Poor

2. Describe the relationship between you and your subordinates based on the scale - very good, good, average, and poor.

1. Very Good
2. Good

3. Average
4. Poor
3. Management seeks input from employees on major decisions and management of employees. The management style in the organisation is characterised by teamwork consensus and participation hard.

1. Very high extent
2. High extent
3. Good extent
4. Average
5. Low extent
6. Very low extent

4. Most people in my organisation are encouraged to make suggestions for improvements or are allowed to take initiatives?

1. Never
2. Somehow
3. Good
4. High

5. Rate of information flow and its effectiveness in your organisation and or projects.

1. Quite efficient,
2. Inefficient
3. Efficient
4. Poor

6. To what extent do organisational leaders and organisational practices promote gender equality and minimization of gender-role differences?

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

7. Do you sometimes feel the enforcement of legislation on employment equity targets can be a serious barrier in achieving success in implementing projects, for example the level of bias against women for promotion

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

8. Do you sometimes feel there is some element of Discrimination behaviour in your organisation, ranging from slight to hate crimes, often begins with negative stereotypes and prejudices towards a certain group of people, specifically sympathy for the employees with a disability.

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

9. The extent of which you receive or expect to receive help from your colleagues or project team members.

1. Very high extent
2. High extent
3. Good extent
4. Average extent

10. The extent to which individual interest prevailed over collective team interest.

1. Yes
2. No

11. Has your organisation developed governance systems that contribute to a continuous sense of integration and coordination among organisational members? These systems include core values and established norms, rituals, rules and standardized procedures to avoid uncertainty, reduce ambiguity and help everyone in making consistent decision?
Extent to which these standard operating procedures applied

1. High Extent
2. Good Extent
3. Somehow Extent
4. Low Extent

12. Do all of the project team members have a clear understanding of the mission and purpose of the organisation and their roles and responsibilities in achieving organisational goals?

Very Important	Not Important	Important
3	2	1

13. Employees in my organisation are encouraged and motivated to perform better , Indicate the extent to which little achievements are appreciated.

1. Very High Extent
2. High Extent
3. Good Extent
4. Average
5. Low Extent

TO ESTABLISH THE EXISTENCE AND LEVEL OF IMPAC OF CULTURAL DIVERSITIES AND PRACTICES THAT IS BROUGHT ABOUT BY A PROJECT EXTERNAL FACTORS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN SA PROJECTS.

Level of tribalism in organizations and its effect on projects

1. In a multi-culture society like South Africa, tribalism plays a leading role in job security and employment. The extent to which tribalism plays a role in the management of projects in your organisation and its impact thereof.

1. Very high level
2. High level
3. Average
4. Low level
5. Very low level

1. The extent to which you feel your interests in your organisation are protected by the country's labour laws.

1. Very well
2. Quite well
3. Not at all
4. Poor
5. Very poor

2. Community involvement in project delivery promotes ownership after the project is handed over. Based on this, how important is community Involvement in your project work (activities).

Very Important

Not Important

Important

3

2

1

3. Provide examples if any of incidents that were caused by the exclusion of the community of Lephalele in the construction of the Medupi and Kusile projects .

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

TO ASSESS THE CHALLENGES OCCASSIONED BY SPLICING FOREIGN CULTURE INTO SOUTH AFRICAN CULTURE IN PROJECTS.

1. In daily life cross-cultural communication, which type of misunderstanding below do you think is more common in your organisation? Check the applicable one(s).

— Verbal misunderstandings (misunderstanding the words/language used)

— Vocal misunderstandings (misunderstanding what is indicated due to the tone of voice)

— Non-verbal misunderstandings (misunderstanding the body language/gestures etc.)

— None

— Other (Specify)

2. Indicate whether Standard Communication Procedure are implemented in cross cultural project teams in your organisation.

1. Yes

2. No

3. My organisation values its people, irrespective of Age, Race, Colour and Gender.

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

4. People work well together in this company irrespective of their background.

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
5	4	3	2	1

5. Do you feel your organisation is doing enough to integrate teams from different groups of people such black, youth, foreigners, women and people living with a disability.

Always	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
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CONSTRUCTION PROJECT DYNAMICS AND COMPLEXITIES

Circle one statement that speaks most to your organisation/project environment.

In construction projects, technical complexities arise from the design and technologies employed in the design and construction processes, social complexities arise from the inevitable impact of projects on the environment and social systems; and managerial complexities arise from the managerial and governance aspects of projects.

Changes occur due to:-

1. Dynamics High speed and time pressure due to fast developments in global markets;
2. Sudden changes due to fierce competition global markets;
3. Frequent changes due to involvement of numerous parties;
4. Sudden changes due to unforeseen risks/opportunities; and
5. Continuous coordination and alignment necessary due to high interdependency of different stakeholders

Resources

1. Limited Resources Additional cost due to comprehensive scope and poor coordination;
2. Additional time for planning due to greater complexity; and

3. Scarce human resources due to greater skills requirements and bigger scope (e.g. foreign languages, intercultural skills)

Team Dynamics

1. Complexity Heterogeneous stakeholders;
2. Numerous (sub)organizations with self-interests and sub-cultures;
3. High degree of virtuality
4. Multi-disciplinarity
5. Huge amount of information that needs to be processed resulting in complexity by volume and variety;

Project Risks

1. Project Risks are due to comprehensive scope;
2. Heterogeneous stakeholders with conflicting interests;
3. High number of interactions;
4. Huge number of environmental risks;
5. High uncertainty due to unpredictable global environment and novelty of project; and
6. Many internal risks due to complexity.

Cultural Risk

7. Native language as well s number of languages on the project
8. Cultural Values
9. Different currencies
10. Work ethics
11. Religion
12. Teamwork versus individual effort
13. Trust
14. Dispute Management
15. Standards terminology and different priorities
16. Management practices and expertise
17. Economic culture