GUEST EDITORIAL PREFACE

Special Issue on the Socio-Psychological and Cultural Aspects of Information Technology Project Management

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Advances in project management due to globalization and the convergence of information and communication technologies, has caused a need to reflect on recent developments and to better understand and critically analyze the human, technological, and organizational elements that influence the strategic, tactical, and operational levels of information technology project management. These conceptual ideas apply to both large multi-national corporations and local organizations buying goods, delivering services, or contracting people globally to deliver goods and services that require interaction and engagement in cross cultural exchanges. Information technology services like application development or outsourcing services are delivered as projects using global resources from different cultures. As such, understanding the implications different cultures or cultural elements have and their role in shaping the experiences and outcomes of projects are important as business operations and globalization continues, thereby making the socio-psychological and cultural aspects of information technology project management an important topic of further research.

As researchers engage the scholarly discourse to inform managerial practices, the socio-psychological and cultural aspects of project management is ever more important as organizations and to some degree higher education prepares project managers with the skills and abilities to lead high functioning cross cultural project teams towards success.

This special issue of the *International Journal of Information Technology Project Management* includes six papers exploring the socio-psychological and cultural aspects of information technology project management that span the spectrum of interpretive research.

Additionally, this special issue highlights the various challenges that arise during the operational stages of the project management process that ultimate influence and shape the outcomes of a project and the associated interactions and experiences of members involved. One of paper explores the journey of project managers and team members involved in the enterprise resources planning system implementation process and offers recommendations based on an inductive analysis approach to improve project success through improving social capital amongst team members. A second paper describes key information technology (IT) project management activities known as the triple constraint. The authors contend that the ability to properly manage and execute the triple constraint is the quintessential component that oftentimes drives whether projects succeed or fail. Another paper proposes a conceptual framework for assessing cultural dynamics in the context of trans-national collaboration in information technology projects. A fourth paper studies the impact of positive psychology on information technology projects and presents recommendations on various aspects of project performance and success using psychological capital. This research has practical implications for project manager recruiting and training. A fifth paper explores the impact of rewards on team performance and discovered that rewards can enhance project performance. Based on this research directions for management practice and future research are discussed. The final paper describes a case study of a major IT system implementation project in East Africa. The findings suggest that the subsequent failure of a project can be attributed to a lack of user involvement in the definition requirement and implementation phase of the system.

As researchers and practitioners continue their quest to understand the socio-psychological and cultural aspects that influence the outcomes of information technology projects, contextualizing this field from the research standpoint shows that the socio-psychological and cultural aspects of information technology project management draws upon not only academic foundations in the management and organizational sciences, but also advances practice, aimed at exploring the technical, cognitive, and aesthetic basis of human interaction as mediated by technology and culture. The first paper "A Journey through the Wilderness: An Autoethnographic Study of the ERP System Implementation Process As Created by IT Project Managers and Team Members" provides a reflexive and interpretive analysis of the social forces that shapes ones involvement in the ERP (enterprise resources planning system) implementation process and the subsequent experiences of project managers and team members involved. The use of autoethnography, which involved recollecting, writing and re-reading experiences in light of social capital and organizational theories, explored the socio-psychological and cultural elements that shaped the experiences of project managers, their interactions, relationships, and performance within the implementation phase of the ERP system. The authors identified three prevailing themes that influence and shaped the ERP project outcomes and experience. These themes included psychological and intellectual capital, human relations and social capital, and negotiation within organizational spaces. This paper highlights recommendations for building human social capital, learning and development of project managers, and designing improved organizational spaces for IT project success.

In the second paper, "Positive Psychology in Information Technology Project Management: The Case of Bad News Reporting" suggests findings applicable to 21st century business expectations. The authors suggest that when a troubling situation arises on a project, the Psychological Capital (PsyCap) capacities of optimism, hope, efficacy, and resilience drives a project manager to be less concerned about his or her personal consequences and be more focused on the project when they consider whether to report or withhold the bad news. Additionally, the authors suggest that with high hope and optimism, project managers are less inclined to withhold bad news from client management. The results demonstrate the

advantage of positive psychology in various areas of life and in organizations, as it relates to the psychological realm of information technology project management.

"Involve Users or Fail: an IT Project Case Study from East Africa" examines a case study that involved implementing of a new IT system in a major bank in East Africa. The author findings suggest that the subsequent failures of IT projects within this case were in large part, attributable to a lack of user involvement in the definition requirements phase, as well as in the implementation of the IT system. This study suggests that user must be involved, outlining recommendations and suggestions as to when and where to involve users during the process. As stated by the authors, user involvement in IT projects are very important and can indeed determine the project's outcome; that is whether the project outcomes are deemed to be a success or a failure.

The fourth paper, "An IT Project Management Framework for Assessing the Dynamism of Culture under Globalization: Evidence from Zimbabwe" proposes a new methodology for assessing cultural dynamics in the context of transnational collaboration involving information technology projects. Using a mixed method approach, the authors collected evidence in Zimbabwe, to construct a framework for assessing the current state of communalist culture in IT. The study showed that in spite of inroads made by westernization and commercialization, a culture of sharing prevails throughout information technology projects, although this culture is affected by sensitivity to cost burden and inroads of individualism, the authors suggest that culture plays a major role in information technology project success in Zimbabwe.

"Exploring the Impact of Team based Reward on Project Performance in Outsourced System Development" examines the effects of team performance based reward structures on information systems development (ISD) project performance. The results suggest that rewards on team performance can improve enhance project performance. Using the theoretical underpinnings of social interdependence theory, which postulated the development of cohesive relationships among participants as a result of reward interdependence, this study discusses a direct link team performance to the reward structure used in projects as incentives. Their research serves as a useful tool for project manager to build a cohesive, information systems development team, where team based incentives are key factors to consider including outsourced projects that span national and organizational cultures.

Finally, the last paper, "The Effects of Project Management Certification on the Triple Constraint", the authors describes key information technology (IT) project management activities in terms of project scope, time, and cost management. These activities form what they have called the triple constraint. The authors contend that the ability to properly manage and execute the triple constraints is the quintessential component that oftentimes drives whether projects succeed or fail, calling into question the role and impact of project management certification in project success. Their empirical evidence suggests that certified project managers do not perform project scope, time, and cost management activities better than project managers without professional certification credentials.

As we look to the future, the current state of IT project management presents opportunities and challenges for researchers, academicians, qualitative experts, practitioners, and other stakeholders to propose, discuss, and implement new research findings relating to the socio-psychological and cultural aspects that may influence information technology project management practices. As the information technology and project management workforce becomes more globalized, research is needed to inform, practice on how to recruit, develop, retain, restrain, and empower effective information technology project managers for optimal success. Understanding the socio-psychological and cultural aspects that influence these practices will contribute significantly to the various decision-making situations that arise during information technology projects.

In closing, my co-editor and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the IGI Global for their kind support. We would also like to thank the authors and reviewers, who contributed to this special issue. Finally, we would like to thank Editor-in-Chief of IJITPM Dr. John Wang for his endless support during the editorial process. The collection of articles in this issue has shown the importance of the socio-psychological aspects that influence the outcomes of information technology projects. We hope that readers find the papers of this volume useful and innovative.

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Terry T. Kidd is a seasoned academic professional with over ten years of experience and exper-tise in information systems, higher education administration, and in college teaching, where he teaches courses in management information systems, digital media and web technology, and in technical communication/professional writing. Dr. Kidd has published in academic journals and has presented at numerous national and international conferences in areas such as educational informatics, IS and IT adoption, and teaching innovation. He received his BS, MS, and M.Ed degrees in Information Systems Technology and Education from University of Houston respectively and his PhD degree from the Texas A&M University. He is the author of the Handbook of Research on Technology Project Management, Planning and Operations, Social Information Technology: Connecting Society and Cultural Issues, and Adult Learning in the Digital Age, *to name a few.*

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