

BASIC INFORMATION

This document provides an overview of the so-called Diversity Framework, which was developed within a doctoral project at the University of Vienna by Christina Böhm. The framework is grounded in qualitative research and literature studies. Furthermore, it was evaluated and validated in three different studies using both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

This document furthermore contains an excerpt of the doctoral dissertation “A Framework for Managing Diversity in ICT Projects – Processes and Techniques for Explicating Soft Facts and Dealing with Behavioral Differences” which was published in 2016 in the field of Business Informatics under the supervision of professor Renate Motschnig. In particular, one of the performed validation studies – a quantitative online survey – is presented.

Please be aware that the copyright law governs this publication. Any duplication, processing, commercial use, distribution or any form of utilization beyond the scope of copyright law shall require the prior written consent of the author in question. For any further information or questions, please contact me via christina.boehm@univie.ac.at

More detailed information about the Diversity Framework is also available here:
<http://homepage.univie.ac.at/christina.boehm/>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christina Böhm is research associate and lecturer at the University of Vienna and has worked in several research projects. In her research she focuses on facilitating diversity aspects in ICT projects as well as on communication in international ICT project environments and agile management approaches. Currently, she is working on a human-centered and flexible approach to international ICT project environments that take an active approach to supporting teams with diversity. Her main motivation is to raise awareness for socio-cultural impacts and plead for ‘humanizing’ management. Christina is (co-) author of several peer-reviewed articles in scientific journals, book chapters and international conference proceedings and co-author of the practice-oriented book “Constructive Communication in International Teams – An Experience-Based Guide”. In addition, she has been teaching (international) project management at the University of Applied Sciences bfi Vienna and at the University of Vienna.

CONTENT

1 THE DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK	2
1.1 DEFINITIONS.....	2
1.2 STRUCTURE.....	2
1.3 BENEFITS AND PRECONDITIONS	3
1.4 WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT THE FRAMEWORK?.....	4
2 QUANTITATIVE ONLINE SURVEY	5
2.1 BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURE.....	5
2.2 RESULTS OF THE ONLINE SURVEY.....	7
3 REFERENCES	12

1 THE DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

The success of projects is highly influenced by implicit aspects – such as different work styles or the interaction between the team members – that cannot be measured or captured. It is well proven from literature and empirical studies (compare Amster & Böhm, 2016; Böhm, 2013; Böhm, Motschnig, & Obiagwu, 2014; iCom Team, 2014) that diversity has a major impact on the success of international ICT (Information and Communication Technology) projects. Being aware of differences and commonalities, creating an understanding for diversity as well as supporting respectful cooperation reduces the risks for conflicts and can make projects more efficient. Although the effects of diversity are well proven, neither project management standards nor cultural studies developed a comprehensive concept for dealing with diversity in dynamic project environments (Böhm, 2015; Böhm & Motschnig-Pitrik, 2015). So the question remained: How can a project manager deal with diverse behavior and social aspects in their work practice?

In order to answer this question, a structured approach was developed at the University of Vienna. This approach should reduce social conflict potential within project teams and enables projects to make use of the people factor. By applying the so-called Diversity Framework, social, interpersonal or implicit differences and behavioral patterns can be explicated, analyzed and actively managed.

1.1 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of the framework the term ‘diversity’ is defined as the variety of different behaviors (and their underlying values and beliefs) that individuals face when collaborating in project teams. This definition does not automatically imply international or locally distributed teams, although such team compositions tend to be characterized by a high diversity degree. Still, highly diverse teams can be also found in intra-organizational projects.

Within the framework, a diversity analysis is performed in the Elaboration phase of the Diversity Framework. During this diversity analysis certain clustered diversity aspects that affect the project success (referred to as Diversity Features”) are explicated and gaps between the individuals in a team are identified. Next, the identified gaps are evaluated and solution strategies are searched. In total 19 diversity features have been identified in an empirical study (compare Amster & Böhm, 2015) and validated in three further studies (Böhm, 2016).

1.2 STRUCTURE

The developed Diversity Framework should support project managers in managing diversity – following Thomas’ (1990) idea of enabling potential of people at work – in their [international] projects more effectively. The framework primarily deals with diversity aspects such as different work styles that are not explicit and easily manageable.

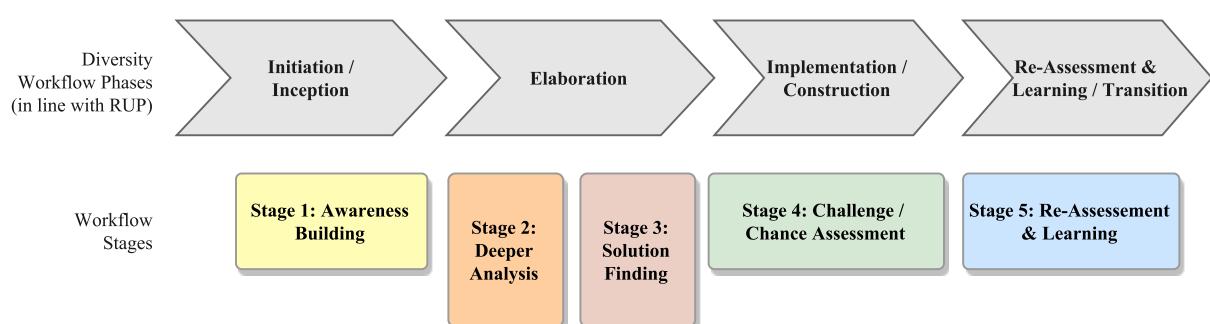


Figure 1: Overview of the diversity workflow and its phases and stages

The framework consists of several phases that build upon each other (see Figure 1). Each phase consists of steps and roles, which are described in detail. Templates and examples help during the application of the particular steps.

The workflow is structured in five stages that partly build upon each other.

- 1) The first stage aims at increasing awareness for the topic diversity and for differences and commonalities within the project team.
- 2) In the second stage, a deeper diversity analysis can be performed that allows more insights into the team's expectations, behavioral preferences, and potential gaps between those preferences.
- 3) In the third stage, solutions for the investigated diversity gaps can be elaborated and integrated into the project organization.
- 4) Furthermore, a fourth stage that deals with assessing arising challenges or chances is suggested.
- 5) Finally, the stage model is complemented by a continuous re-assessment and learning stage.

The steps of each phase are described in detail on <http://homepage.univie.ac.at/christina.boehm/>.

1.3 BENEFITS AND PRECONDITIONS

The Diversity Framework can be used for all project types and project sizes. Nevertheless, applying the framework in highly interdisciplinary or intercultural project teams seem to be most beneficial.

Applying the framework of course requires effort – namely time and money. This effort is worth investing at the beginning and throughout the project, as this investment will save time and money later in the project. These savings could avoid, for instance, what would be the additional costs of dealing with conflicts that arise from diverse work behaviors. In the worst case, such conflicts could even lead to project failure.

Another example would be that constructively managed diversity cannot only help to avoid conflict, but can also generate innovative, sustainable, and creative solutions. As projects are unique in their definition, making it impossible to compare two projects, it is hard to provide scientific evidence for the prior statement. Still, many practitioners will confirm this tendency.

Certain preconditions need to be in place in order to ensure a successful application of the framework. In any case, there need to be sufficient support by colleagues and/or team members. On a managerial level, the application needs to be supported by the management / project owner. Also, selecting a project manager with appropriate skills, experience, and knowledge is a vital success criterion. The project manager needs to bring the following skills and experience in this priority:

- 1) International experience / Intercultural competences
- 2) Leadership skills
- 3) Interpersonal skills (cultural sensitivity and awareness, open-mindedness)
- 4) Methodical project management skills

If anyone uses the framework to manipulate people or use the information from the process for any misleading purpose, applying the framework might show some effects, but these may not be the positive effects. Also, although this framework seems simple, people that apply it need to be aware that processing checklists will not be enough. Diversity is and will not be a simple or easy topic. This framework gives an orientation, but it also requires a deeper appraisal with the topic.

1.4 WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT THE FRAMEWORK?

The focus of the framework lies – in contrast to other intercultural frameworks (i.a. Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012) – on the individuals within the team, who have a direct influence on the project success. The Diversity Framework should support project teams in managing diversity in their projects more effectively. Furthermore, it primarily deals with implicit, non-visible diversity aspects such as different work styles that are not explicit and easily manageable.

An essential innovation of this Diversity Framework is the focus on the individuals within a project team and the focus on identifying differences and commonalities between individuals' behavior in a human-centered manner. This differentiates the framework from existing models that use certain factors, for instance nationality, to derive anticipated values and behaviors.

In addition, the framework is also characterized by the following unique attributes:

- **Generic:** The framework is designed in a generic manner to enable its integration in various existing approaches (e.g. as add-on to software development models like the Rational Unified Process or to any international project management standards). This characteristic also allows an agile as well as a traditional application. Still, it is recommended to use the framework as a supporting development process rather than fully integrating the framework into an iterative, agile approach. For practice it is suggested to have the phases Initiation and Elaboration as part of a supporting management cycle, whereas the Implementation and especially the Re-Assessment and Learning phases could be included in the agile procedure and its feedback loops (e.g. in Scrum this part could be integrated into the retrospective meeting).
- **Tailoring:** The framework can be tailored and applied flexibly. This means that not all workflow steps are necessarily essential for all projects, but project managers can use those activities that fit the project situation. Furthermore, the framework is open to be extended or adapted for organization-specific purposes.
- **Open:** The framework is open to any culture. Due to a variety of procedure options it is ensured that the workflows suit any culture.

2 QUANTITATIVE ONLINE SURVEY

In order to validate the developed framework, two qualitative studies and a quantitative online survey were performed. The online survey and its results are presented here by providing a summary and an excerpt of the doctoral dissertation (Böhm, 2016).

2.1 BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURE

The survey aimed at investigating the relevance and economic efficiency of the Diversity Framework, and the quality of the diversity features.

Before the actual survey was put online, a small pre-study was done with four test persons. These people provided input and feedback on the structure, the scope, and the focal points of the survey. [...] Finally, the survey was sent to two big international project management organizations in Austria and one project management organization chapter in Munich:

- Project Management Institute (PMI) – Chapter Austria
- Project Management Institute (PMI) – Chapter Munich
- International Project Management Association (IPMA) – Project Management Austria (pma)

[...] All organizations sent announcements (in regular newsletters and monthly magazines) to approximately 2700 project management professionals in Austria and Germany. Although such a large population was reached, there were only few responses – in total 21 that were linked to these announcements. These few responses did not allow drawing any conclusions on this population. [...]

Although apparently the target group – project managers of international projects that had a connection to Austria – could not be reached, there was still a need to gain more data even though it was clear that the study would not get a representative status. Hence, the survey was sent directly to a network of project management professionals from the preceding research project “iCom” via email. The partners from this project had agreed previously to participate in further research on topics and doctoral thesis related to the research project. The participants had also the opportunity to share the survey with other persons that fit the profile (experience project managers with international experience). Apparently, this direct mailing had the highest reach with 80 respondents (over about six weeks autumn 2015). Still, this survey procedure made it impossible to clearly define the population reached, as the original listed participants could hand the survey to other people. [...]

2.1.1 DATA ANALYSIS

To analyze the data, certain open variables (e.g. types of projects) had to be coded before analyzing. The coded data was then processed in analytical statistic software.

- Firstly, descriptive statistical analysis had been performed on the entire dataset. [...]
- Secondly, as the factor nationality showed an disproportional distribution (59 persons from Austria, 15 persons from Italy, 27 persons from other countries around the world), the data set was split into these three groups (Austria, Italy, other countries) and analyzed for the separate groups to reveal if there were any major differences in the answers. In addition, correlation tests based on Pearson Chi-Square, Cramer’s V and Kendall’s Tau were performed for major variables [...].
- Thirdly, to ensure the internal reliability of the questions, Cronbach’s Alpha reliability tests were performed for certain grouped questionnaire items [...]. The tests showed a high reliability (0.86 and 0.76 Cronbach’s Alpha) for the tested items.

2.1.2 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

As mentioned before, some nationalities were quite disproportionately represented in the survey. Persons with Austrian nationality made up 58.4 percent of the total participants. Another 14.9 percent were Italians, 9.9 percent Germans, and 3.0 percent Czech. The remaining 13.8 percent came from countries all over the globe: Slovakia, Spain, Ecuador, Columbia, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Palau, Poland, Turkey, and the United States.

Besides the differences in nationality, there was other demographic data that was collected and analyzed. From a total of 101 participants, 78 persons were male (77.2 percent) while 23 persons were female respondents (22.8 percent).

In terms of age, the majority of participants was quite equally distributed between 26 and 55 years old. Only two respondents were younger than 25 years, and eight respondents were older than 56 years.

[...]

Furthermore, the participants had different experiences in national (see Table 1) and international projects. All participants had experience with project management, the majority even over 10 years (54.5 percent). In contrast, 12 respondents (equals 11.9 percent) had no experience with international projects.

	Frequency	Percent
less than 2 years	5	5.0
2 to 5 years	14	13.9
5 to 10 years	27	26.7
over 10 years	55	54.5
Total	101	100.0

Table 1: Demographic information about survey respondents – Experience in project management

Still, the average participant had more than seven years experience in international projects (mean = 7.31 years). In summary, the demographic data shows that the majority of respondents were experienced or even highly experienced in managing national and international projects.

[...]

The participants were also asked which types of project they usually work with. This questioning allowed multiple answers. The responses show that 48 people had experience with software projects. Counted on the total number of 101 participants, these are 47.5 percent. Also, another 27.7 percent worked in IT projects. Other project types, such as change, organizational development, research & development, or construction projects added to this specialization on IT and software. Many respondents indicated several project types and combinations such as IT, change and organizational development, or software and process optimization and similar.

[...]

2.1.3 LIMITATION OF STUDY

Although the voluntary participation caused some serious issues for generating data, and although the population is not clear, as the research procedure had to be changed, the 101 responses still provide clear trends. It is obvious that the data composition does not allow any conclusions on the entire – yet uncertain – population. Nevertheless, the results can be used to create further hypotheses on the economic factors of the diversity workflow. To ensure that the results are valid, the survey should be repeated with a better defined population in future research.

2.2 RESULTS OF THE ONLINE SURVEY

2.2.1 RELEVANT DIVERSITY FEATURES WITHIN THE PROJECT TEAM

In the quantitative online survey [...], the participants were also asked to evaluate the importance of the diversity features of which each was described by an example [...]. The importance of each of the 19 diversity features was rated by the respondents on an ordinal scale consisting of the following possible items: 0 = no impact; 1 = low impact; 2 = medium impact; 3 = medium to high impact; 4 = high impact. In the data analysis, the median, which was the appropriate value for the ordinal ranking, was calculated for each diversity feature (see Table 2).

		Median (n=101)
1	Communication	3
2	How relationships are formed	2
3	How decisions are made and who makes them	2
4	How projects are planned, scheduled, and executed	3
5	Following defined processes	3
6	Recognizing and describing problems	3
7	How requirements are handled	3
8	Appreciation of work	2
9	The importance of milestones	2
10	Problem escalation	3
11	Value of monitoring and business processes	2
12	Approaches to motivation	1
13	Types of information prospects are seeking	2
14	Professional and personal time	2
15	Handling of passwords and access	1
16	Thinking and speaking patterns	2
17	Working on tasks	2
18	Information flow	3
19	Attention to detail	3
0 = no impacts 1 = low impact 2 = medium impact 3 = medium to high impact 4 = high impact		

Table 2: Evaluation the impact of the diversity features on the project success

As the nationality variable did not show an equal distribution, the medians of the diversity feature evaluation were evaluated separately for the major nationalities Austria and Italy. This helped to identify if there were connections between the evaluation and the nationality of the participant.

In addition, Pearson Chi-Square tests were performed with Cramer's V as a measure of correlation [...]. These correlation tests should show if there is any significant connection between the nationality of the participants and the evaluation of the diversity features. For the evaluation of the diversity features, the tests were performed with all nationalities as well as with the clustered variable of the major nationalities (Austria, Italy, Others). The Cramer's V value showed that for most diversity features there was a non-significant correlation at a level higher than 0.05. Only one diversity feature 6 'recognizing and describing problems' showed a significant strong relationship at a 0.01 level in both tests. Hence, this diversity feature was evaluated significantly differently depending on the participant's nationality. Overall, the results of this correlation test reveal that the nationality of the participants did not have a high impact on the results of the survey. Hence, in the presentation of results [...], no distinction between the nationalities has been made.

The majority of items (= diversity features) show a median of 2 (= medium impact) or 3 (= medium to high impact). Only two items – approaches to motivation, and handling of passwords and access – reach a median value of 1 (= low impact). When taking a closer look at the data, some participants did not perceive any importance (0 = no impact) for the handling of passwords and access, but other participants evaluated this diversity feature with a medium impact or higher. Overall, the respondents evaluated a low impact or higher for those two items. Therefore, no diversity features were rejected based on the survey analysis.

In addition to the evaluation of the diversity features [...] the participants were asked if they knew of any diversity aspects that also have a high impact on the project success – especially if there is a big range in expectation regarding this aspect within the team. The respondents noted some behaviors that were not included in the diversity feature list yet:

- conflict resolution
- understanding of quality
- proactive versus reactive mindset
- setting priorities (easy tasks first or hard tasks first)
- mind set (systemic versus chaotic)
- importance of hierarchy
- change requests
- application of past lessons learned
- respect to people
- usage of communication tools
- openness for receiving feedback
- timeliness

As each behavior was only mentioned once, none of these behaviors were included into the original diversity feature list. Still, this does not mean that they are not relevant. In future research, these behaviors could be tested for their relevance in projects in a quantitative study.

Moreover, participants mentioned other factors that were connected to the personal profile of a team member (e.g. culture, language, gender, full-time versus part-time employee, personal objectives) and managerial aspects (e.g. time zones, working hours, trust, contract management). As this work focuses primarily on behavioral aspects, those factors could add up to the framework, but should not be included into the diversity feature list.

2.2.2 RELEVANT DIVERSITY FEATURES WHEN INTERACTING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The survey participants were moreover asked which of the 19 diversity features they also perceived with a medium or high impact if the differences were not within the team, but between the team and external stakeholders (e.g. customer). The most significant result was that communication was evaluated as important by nearly all participants (97 out of 101 total). Moreover, how relationships are formed, how decisions are made, and how projects are planned, scheduled, and executed were features that were rated as important by more than half of the participants. On the contrary, few respondents perceived attention to detail, information flow, working on tasks, and thinking and speaking patterns as important for stakeholder management.

[...]

2.2.3 RELEVANCE AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK FROM THE ONLINE SURVEY

The quantitative online survey [...] did not only evaluate the diversity feature list [...], but also questioned the relevance and economic efficiency of the framework.

2.2.3.1 CURRENT STATE AND NEEDS

The participants of the online survey were first asked if they managed diversity actively in their project. 59.4 percent of the respondents answered ‘yes’ while consequently the other 40.6 percent chose ‘no’. In a follow-up question they could either write which actions they take (if they responded ‘yes’) or why they do not deal with the topic in their projects (if they responded ‘no’). Table 3 provides an overview of actions performed by the project management professionals in practice. The main categories were actions that improve communication, deal with differences and/or create awareness, and related project management activities.

Action	Number of responses*
Communication (e.g. meetings, discussions, reflections)	17
Dealing with differences (e.g. awareness for differences, evaluating differences in project team, establishing baseline and rules, explaining cultural differences, overcoming gaps)	16
Project management activities (e.g. consider diversity in project plans, stakeholder management)	10
Listening and understanding	8
Team building activities	7
Adjusting tasks and communication	5
Managing and mediating conflicts	5
Respect (for behaviors, seniority, cultural differences)	5
Language (common language and terms, language courses)	5
Adjusting own behavior	4
Ethics	4
Selecting diverse team members	4
Others	7
* Multiple responses possible	
* n = 101 respondents	

Table 3: Actions for managing diversity actively in projects

Those people who do not manage diversity in their project actively responded that there is no need (11 responses) in their projects. On the other hand, 7 persons stated that diversity is so natural in their field that they do not need particular actions. Other reasons were time constraints (6) and little appreciation, importance, priority, or acceptance (5).

Moreover, participants were asked if they would like to have a comprehensive guideline on the topic that they can use for managing diversity their projects. 83.2 percent would like to have a guideline; the remaining 16.8 percent responded ‘no’. [...]

Such a guideline should offer in particular checklists and guidelines, information on cultural aspects, best practices and examples, as well as information on team dynamics and personality types. [...]

2.2.3.2 ESTIMATED TIME EFFORT FOR APPLYING A FRAMEWORK IN A PROJECT TEAM

The online survey examined how much time the project management professionals would invest in their own projects for dealing with diversity. Three different factors were asked to be evaluated: approximate time effort for the project manager during the initiation and planning phase, as well as during the implementation and closure phase, and the time effort per team member for the entire project (see Table 4). [...]

	Frequency	Percent
0 = none	1	1.0
1 = less than 1 day	31	30.7
2 = 1 to 2 days	29	28.7
3 = 3 to 5 days	27	26.7
4 = 6 to 10 days	8	7.9
5 = more than 11 days	5	5.0
Total	101	100.0

Table 4: Time effort that should be invested per team member in the entire project

The average respondent would invest one to two days (median = 2.00) in each category. Although of course there were also persons who would spend less time, and persons who would spend way more time, the average project manager would spend two to four days her-/himself during the project and would schedule one to two days for each project team member.

2.2.3.3 RETURN ON INVESTMENT FOR THE PROJECT

Finally, the professionals were asked how they would argue to a superior as to why they calculate a certain amount of time – and consequently money – for managing diversity in their project plan. 22 respondents would argue that this would improve the team collaboration (teamwork, motivation, team building). 15 persons would claim that this investment would create better results and quality. Others would suggest that this time effort ensures the project success (14), serves as conflict prevention (13), improves communication (10), reduces risks or is part of risk management (10), results in higher efficiency or effectiveness (10), or will reduce costs (7). Others would convince the superior that the effort saves time and is thus an investment that pays off during the project.

In order to be able to support these statements on the return on investment, the participants were also asked to estimate how much time it usually takes to resolve diversity issues in a) low diversity projects and b) high diversity projects with a duration of six to twelve months.

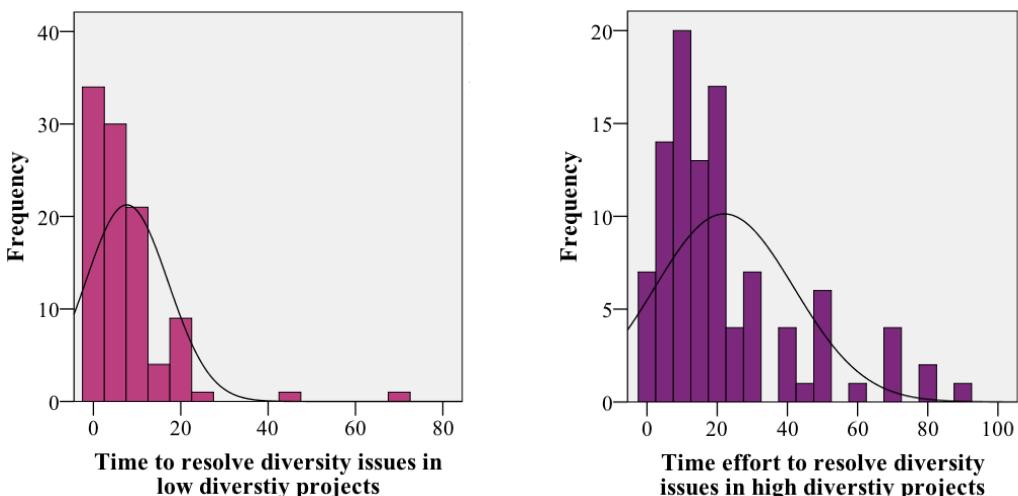


Figure 2: Comparing the time effort for resolving diversity issues in low (left) and high (right) diversity projects

For this context, low diversity projects are characterized by little variance in work styles and behaviors (e.g. with very homogeneous teams) while high diversity projects are characterized by high variance in work styles and behaviors (e.g. with very heterogeneous teams or in an international context).

The average duration for solving diversity issues was evaluated with 7.65 days (mean value) in low diversity projects and with 22.01 days (mean value) in high diversity projects. Some persons even estimated up to 60, 70, 80, or 90 days in high diversity projects, which explains the high value of the standard deviation (19.89).

[...]

Hence, in particular in highly diverse project team there could be a great value of investing in the application a structured Diversity Framework as this could lead to an improvement for the project. So far other factors – such as the cooperation with the team, the effectively, employee satisfaction or sustainability – have not been researched. Nevertheless, current research and studies (Böhm, 2014; Druskat & Druskat, 2006; iCom Team, 2014; Verburg, Bosch-Sijtsema, & Vartiainen, 2013) indicate that a constructive discussion of these factors can positively influence the trust within the team.

3 REFERENCES

- Amster, R., & Böhm, C. (2015). Cultural-based Behavior in Global IT Projects: An Investigative Study with Indian Managers of Outsourcing Projects. *Procedia Computer Science*, 64, 232–239. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2015.08.485>
- Amster, R., & Böhm, C. (2016). *Improving Intercultural Competency in Global IT Projects through Recognition of Culture-Based Behaviors*. Unpublished manuscript, Vienna/Boston.
- Böhm, C. (2013). Cultural Flexibility in ICT Projects: A New Perspective on Managing Diversity in Project Teams. *Global Journal of Flexible Systems Management*, Springer, 14(2), 115–122. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s40171-013-0037-6>
- Böhm, C. (2014). The Connection between Agile Project Management and Human-Centered Principles. In *Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Contemporary Business and the 14th Global Conference on Flexible Systems Management (Joint Conference), October 15-17* (pp. 661–666). Curtin University, Singapore.
- Böhm, C. (2015). Practical Insights on Managing Diversity in International ICT Projects. In Sushil, T. Bhal, & S. P. Singh (Eds.), *Managing Flexibility: People, Process, Technology and Business* (pp. 73–84). India: Springer.
- Böhm, C. (2016). *A Framework for Managing Diversity in ICT Projects: Processes and Techniques for Explicating Soft Facts and Dealing with Behavioral Differences* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Vienna, Vienna.
- Böhm, C., & Motschnig-Pitrik, R. (2015). New Research Perspective on Managing Diversity in International ICT Project Teams. In G. Chroust & Sushil (Eds.), *Systemic Flexibility and Business Agility* (pp. 21–31). India: Springer.
- Böhm, C., Motschnig, R., & Obiagwu, L. (2014). Constructive Communication in Teams that Succeed. In *Proceedings of the Fifth International Conference on Social Communication in the Real and Virtual World (CMEP 2014)*, November 25-27 (p. tbd.). Wroclaw, Poland.
- Druskat, V. U., & Druskat, P. (2006). Applying emotional intelligence in project working. In S. Pryke & H. Smyth (Eds.), *The Management of Complex Projects: A Relationship Approach* (pp. 78–96). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind. Intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- iCom Team. (2014). *Constructive Communication in International Teams – An Experience-Based Guide*. Münster / New York: Waxmann Verlag.
- Thomas, R. (1990). From Affirmative Action to Affirming Diversity. *Harvard Business Review*, 68(March-April), 107–117.
- Trompenaars, F., & Hampden-Turner, C. (2012). *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business* (3rd revised). London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
- Verburg, R. M., Bosch-Sijtsema, P., & Vartiainen, M. (2013). Getting it done: Critical success factors for project managers in virtual work settings. *International Journal of Project Management*, 31(1), 68–79.