THE IMPACT OF THE NATIONAL CULTURE ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN ARGENTINA

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Abstract. Organizations implement their strategies by executing initiatives called projects. To manage them, they use good practices or methodologies from different sources. The person in charge of directing the projects is the Project Manager, who, through his experience and the guides' help, carries out the necessary actions to obtain the project objectives. One of the most popular guides is the "A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide)". Because of the globalization that has taken place in the last 30 years, the national culture has begun to be taken into account in project management, but the incorporation of this topic in the PMBOK® has been slowly carried out. There are numerous papers that study the relationship between national culture and project management, but there are very few that includes Argentina in its research. Based on the hypothesis "National culture impacts the management of projects, which are managed by PMP® certified argentine Project Managers, in Argentina", this work aims to fill that void. To this end, a review of the existing literature was carried out, and from it, forty six statements were developed, which, opportunely, were presented to 10 Argentine PMs, with PMP® certification, within the boundaries of a qualitative research. After the analysis of their answers, the research hypothesis was confirmed. In addition, forty-two cultural considerations of practical application for project management in Argentina were identified, including aspects such as organization, leadership, relationships and communication with stakeholders, and interaction with the project team, among others. It is expected that these results may be applied in professional practice, to improve the chances of success in projects.

Keywords: National culture, project management, Argentina, Hofstede.

EL IMPACTO DE LA CULTURA NACIONAL EN LA GESTIÓN DE PROYECTOS EN LA ARGENTINA

Resumen. Las organizaciones implementan sus estrategias ejecutando iniciativas llamadas proyectos. Para gestionarlos, utilizan buenas prácticas o metodologías de distintos orígenes. El encargado de dirigir los proyectos es el Director de Proyecto (DP), que por medio de su experiencia y del auxilio que le brindan estas guías lleva a cabo las acciones necesarias para obtener el objetivo. Una de las más difundidas es la Guía de los Fundamentos para la Dirección de Proyectos (Guía del PMBOK®). Como consecuencia de la globalización ocurrida en los últimos 30 años, la cultura nacional ha comenzado a ser tomada en cuenta en la gestión de proyectos, pero la incorporación de este tema en el PMBOK® se ha realizado lentamente. Existen numerosos trabajos que estudian la relación entre cultura nacional y la gestión de proyectos, pero hay muy escasa literatura que incluya a la Argentina en sus investigaciones. A partir de la hipótesis "La cultura nacional impacta la gestión de proyectos, que sean dirigidos por Directores de Proyectos argentinos certificados PMP®, en la Argentina", este trabajo tiene el objetivo de llenar ese vacío. A tal efecto, se realizó una revisión de la literatura existente y a partir de ella, se

efectuó una investigación cualitativa, utilizando 46 afirmaciones, desarrolladas a partir de la base teórica, que fueron presentadas a 10 DP argentinos, con certificación PMP®. Como resultado del análisis de las respuestas, se confirmó la hipótesis de investigación. Además, se identificaron cuarenta y dos consideraciones culturales de aplicación práctica para la gestión de proyectos en la República Argentina, incluyendo aspectos tales como la organización, liderazgo, relaciones y comunicación con los interesados e interacción con el equipo de proyecto, entre otros. Se espera que estos resultados puedan ser aplicados en la práctica profesional, para mejorar las oportunidades de obtener el éxito en los proyectos.

Palabras clave: *Cultura nacional, gestión de proyectos, Argentina, Hofstede.*

Introduction

Within the strategic planning cycle of organizations (see Figure 1), there is a stage called "Implementation", where the initiatives that respond to the organization's strategies are carried out (Project Management Institute, 2014). These initiatives are called projects.

Figure 1

Strategic cycle
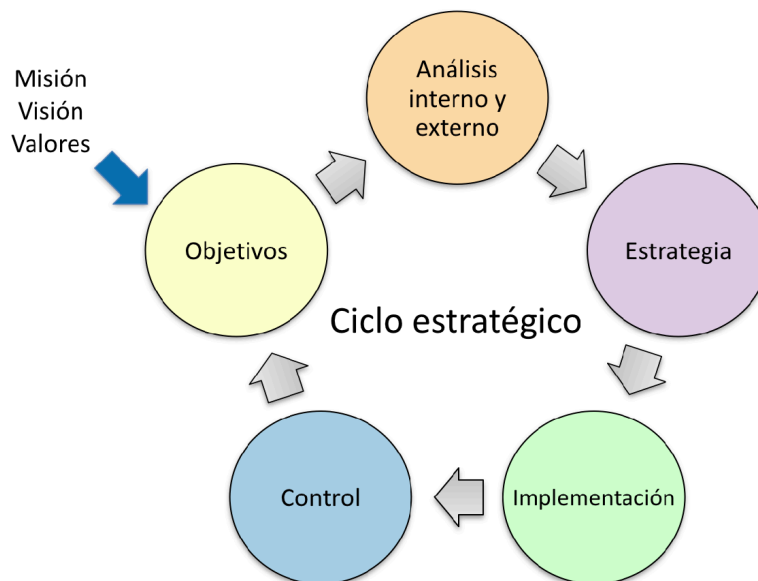
Projects are temporary efforts that are undertaken to achieve a unique product, outcome or service (Project Management Institute, 2017, p. 3) and are intended to bring about the strategic change required by organizations (Project Management Institute, 2014). The most widely known and used project management standard in the world is the Project Management Fundamentals Guide (PMBOK® Guide), which incorporates predictive and agile methodologies (Alwaly and Alawi, 2020; Project Management Institute, 2017)which incorporates predictive and agile methodologies.

The skills and experience of the Project Manager (PM) together with the best practices described in the PMBOK® improve the initiative's chances of success, which is measured by the achievement of objectives and customer satisfaction.

Given the ease of working from anywhere in the world where there is an internet connection, projects, whether local or international, involve people from different cultures involved in them, so it would be expected that the PMBOK® would make some reference to the effects of national culture on the project. However, the PMI has developed this concept very slowly since in versions 5 and 6 of the PMBOK®, it introduced the concept of culture, but more oriented to organizational culture. In version 7, it outlined the concept of national culture, within the section on the external environment, without going into the subject in depth (Project Management Institute, 2021, p. 18)without going into the subject in depth. This forces the PD to understand and manage the impact of the national culture, both of the organization and of the country or countries where the project is carried out, without PMBOK® support.

National culture has no single definition so for the purposes of this paper, culture will be defined as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others." (G. H. Hofstede et al., 2010).

For the purposes of this research, the choice of Geert Hofstede's model (2003; 2010) is based on the fact that its citations in scientific and popularization works outnumber other models by a wide margin (Beugelsdijk et al., 2017; Bing, 2004; Kirkman et al., 2006). In addition, Nakata (2009) indicates that the popularity of this work stems from the following reasons:

- The population surveyed is huge and the data collected is of such magnitude that statistically supported conclusions can be drawn.
- The dimensions identified by Hofstede, initially four, with the addition of a fifth later[1], are capable of describing all national cultures and not just a subset. In addition, the framework is flexible enough to be adapted to different research needs.
- The theory underpinning Hosftede's work is supported by previous anthropological, sociological and psychological studies.
- The availability of the questionnaire used in the research and the standardized values of the different dimensions facilitate its use in quantitative research.

This model consists of six bipolar dimensions:

- Power Distance Index (PDI). The degree to which less powerful members of institutions, organizations and family structures expect and accept that power is unequally distributed.
- Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI). The degree to which members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unfamiliar situations.
- *Individualism vs. Collectivism* or individualism vs. collectivism (IDV). Individualism corresponds to societies in which the ties between individuals are weak and each person is expected to take care of himself and his immediate family. Collectivism corresponds to societies where people, from birth onwards, are integrated into cohesive and strong groups that take care of them throughout their lives, in exchange for unquestionable loyalty.
- *Masculinity vs. Femininity* or masculinity vs. femininity (MAS). A society is called masculine when the emotional gender roles are clearly different: men are assumed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success while women are assumed to be more modest, tender and concerned with quality of life. A society is feminine when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender and concerned with quality of life.

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[1] This work does not take into account the sixth dimension, as identified by Minkov (2007).

- Long Term Orientation (LTO). Long-term orientation is based on promoting virtues oriented to future rewards, perseverance and savings. The opposite, short-term orientation, is based on promoting virtues related to the past and present, in particular, respect for tradition, preservation of image or reputation and the fulfillment of social obligations.
- *Indulgence vs. Restrain* or indulgence vs. containment (IVR). Indulgence represents the tendency to allow free gratification of basic and natural human desires, related to enjoying life and having fun. Restraint reflects the conviction that such gratifications need to be curbed and regulated by strict social norms.

The aforementioned dimensions are used to explain the behavior of cultural groups in different settings. Each one of them has an associated scale with values ranging from 0 (low) to 120 (high) ⊥, placing each country according to a value obtained from the statistical analysis of the respective data. Values of 50-60 are considered average values, while below 50 are low and above 60 are high.

The data for Argentina are as follows:

Figure 2

Values of the dimensions for Argentina
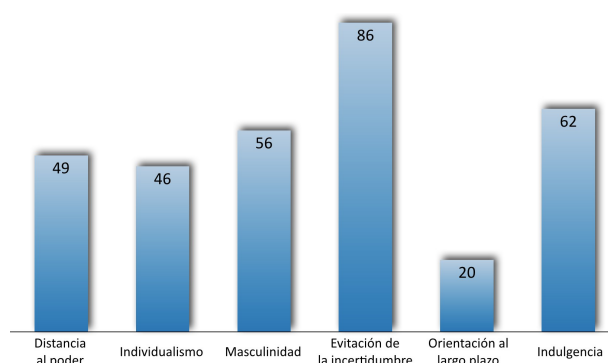
Note. Source: Hofstede (2018)

As can be seen in Figure 2, Argentina has slightly low values in PDI (distance to power) and IDV (individualism), medium-high in MAS (masculinity vs. femininity), very high in UAI (uncertainty avoidance), very low in LTO (long-term orientation) and high in IVR (leniency vs. restraint).

There are numerous works that explore the impact of national culture on the projects, such as, for example, (Avison and Myers, 1995; Baumann, 2013; Binder, 2007; Bredillet et al., 2010; Chen and Partington, 2004; Chin Mei Yen and Pulatov, 2008; Eberlein, 2008; Esteves and Bohórquez, 2007; Friday and Stella, 2019; G. Hofstede, 1983b, 1983a; G. Hofstede and Bond, 1988; Loosemore and Muslmani, 1999; Maruping et al., 2019; Milosevic, 2002; Müller and Turner, 2004; Newman and Nollen, 1996; Pheng and Leong, 2000; Rees-Caldwell, 2010; Rodrigues et al., 2014; Shore and Cross, 2005; Tata, 1999; Winch et al., 1997)among others, but those that do so with reference to Argentina are extremely scarce.

Method

The purpose of this work, represented by its general objective, is:

To establish whether there is an impact of the national culture on project management in Argentina from the PMBOK® point of view.

In turn, the specific objectives are:

- Identify the impact that the dimensions of the national culture have on project management in Argentina from the PMBOK® point of view.
- Develop cultural suggestions for project management in Argentina.
  To conduct the research, the following hypothesis is developed:
- H1: The national culture impacts project management, which is led by PMP® certified Argentinean Project Managers in Argentina.

To carry out this work, an instrument was developed consisting of forty-six statements, mentioned in Table 1, which were submitted to the opinion of each of the interviewees in interviews conducted virtually.

Table 1
Affirmations

Number	Affirmation
1	Project management requires assertiveness, performance and clear objectives.
2	Projects require very detailed planning and clear rules of the game to be successful.
3	Executing the project means obtaining concrete results in the short term and completing the project. Everything else is management's problem.
4	Innovations within the project work undermine the performance and objectives of the project.
5	I feel better working on a project when I am interested in the objective of the project.
6	Project roles must be clear and autonomy must be limited.
7	Either in meetings or in personal interviews, a team member may express his or her opinion or disagreement with the Project Manager or the Sponsor.
8	A planned allocation of team members' work is preferable to changes in the assignment of activities.
9	From the beginning of the project, it is important to demonstrate to suppliers who is in charge.
10	Even if the project is innovative and uncertain, it is important to have a well-defined organization chart to carry it out.
11	I am responsible for my daily work. When I finish I go home.
12	Rules and standards only serve to limit the freedom of action in a project.
13	In the project, it is preferable to focus on what can go wrong, in order to be prepared for that moment.
14	The project sponsor is always open to chat and have a beer with the team, contributing to a good working atmosphere.
15	It is important to focus on the project. Any personal gratification or celebration, even at the end of the project, is a waste of time and resources.

16	The quality of the project has to do with top management. User requirements will be considered if directed by my managers.
17	The important thing within the project is to be disciplined and focus on the project work, putting it before personal considerations.
18	I generally find it easy to put together high-performing project teams.
19	I prefer an assertive and firm leadership style to manage the project.
20	Generally, organizational norms make it difficult to assemble project teams.
21	Help from one team member to another should be acknowledged in a relatively short period of time.
22	I don't care what decision they make because I will never be consulted.
23	The autonomy I have is sufficient to modify the activities, if necessary.
24	As a Project Manager I am not comfortable when I have to make risky decisions.
25	Costs must be very detailed to meet long-term project objectives.
26	The relationship with stakeholders requires authority, firmness and control.
27	Input from the project team is essential to determine the work to be performed on the project.
28	Lower level employees should not be considered for stakeholder identification. Their contribution to the project is limited.
29	The important thing is perseverance. Results will be obtained when appropriate, but not before.
30	Project decisions are made at a higher level than mine and that is what I prefer.
31	Contracts with suppliers are essential to avoid project risks.
32	If I have a problem on a project, I prefer to consult an expert rather than a friend.
33	Status meetings and project reports are a waste of time, so I prefer to communicate one-on-one with team members
34	Project decisions should be made at the project team level.
35	The reward for a well-performed activity should be exclusively for the individual who performed it.
36	Project quality requires well-defined standards and constant monitoring to avoid problems in the future.
37	The description of the tasks to be performed is specified and there is no room for personal discretion.
38	Communication in the project is extensive and at all levels.
39	It is important to have a clearly established project team organization chart in order to manage it.
40	It is essential to have all stakeholders identified before starting project implementation.
41	Project risks should be defined as precisely as possible, leaving aside ambiguities.
42	The activities in a work package can change and that's fine.
43	The workload should be reasonably balanced among team members regardless of their individual capabilities.
44	Out-of-office activities with the project team are rewarding and help to consolidate the group.
45	Rest and freedom to choose tasks within the project are totally secondary.
46	Project cost planning should be provided in great detail.

These statements were developed on the basis of the literature surveyed, which details the relationships between Hofstede's dimensions and the different behaviors or attitudes of the individuals or groups studied. The aim is not only to provide a starting point for the

interviewees' comments, but also to use them as behavioral triggers for a more authentic response.

The statements were presented to ten active project managers, who obtained their PMP® (Project Management Professional) certification in different geographical areas of Argentina. To determine the total number of respondents, we took into account the recommendations of Hernández Sampieri et al. (2014, p. 384) that consider the operational capacity of collection and analysis, the phenomenon under study and what they call the "saturation of categories". The latter occurs when, when new answers are added, no new elements or data are provided. During the course of the research, it was observed that there was a repetition of responses between the fifth and ninth interviews, so it was decided to conduct ten of them.

Among his activities we can mention the management of projects of different sizes and scopes, national and international consulting, academic experience in university classrooms and companies, coaching and project auditing, among others. His field of action is both private and public, in companies, consulting firms and industrial and service organizations.

In addition, several of them are professors at prestigious universities in Argentina and, in particular, two of them are directors or members of academic committees that influence the contents of the university courses under their responsibility.

All of them are or were involved with PMI in Argentina, leading or being part of projects of the local chapters and the Educational Foundation. One of them has won an award of relevance from PMI.

Each of the 460 responses to the different statements was analyzed for agreement with the national culture theory, classifying them as high, medium or low agreement (see Figure 3), with an associated color. Thus, if the response reflected behavior that coincided with the theory, it was classified as high. On the other hand, if the response had a limited degree of agreement, but aspects of the theory were recognized in it, it was classified as medium agreement. Finally, if the response reflected behavior different from the theory, it was classified as a low match.

Figure 3

Classification of responses
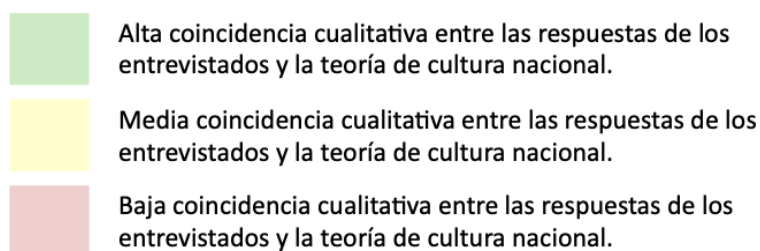
The result of all statements can be seen in Figure 4. Each of the squares contains a number representing the statement under consideration and a color, which represents, according to Figure 3, the coincidence of the responses with the theory of national culture (TCN). Then, for example, the green square, with the number 1 inside, should be read as meaning that the respondents, when proposing statement 1, made comments that have high agreement with what is expected according to the NCT.

Of all of them, 34 responses showed high qualitative agreement between respondents' answers and the national culture theory, 6 responses showed medium agreement and 6 responses showed low agreement. This means that the responses of the project managers interviewed, in some cases, deviate from what is expected, according to the theory and the literature surveyed.

Figure 4

Results showing the coincidence of the answers with the TCN

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42
43	44	45	46		

■ Alta coincidencia cualitativa entre las respuestas de los entrevistados y la teoría de cultura nacional.

■ Media coincidencia cualitativa entre las respuestas de los entrevistados y la teoría de cultura nacional.

■ Baja coincidencia cualitativa entre las respuestas de los entrevistados y la teoría de cultura nacional.
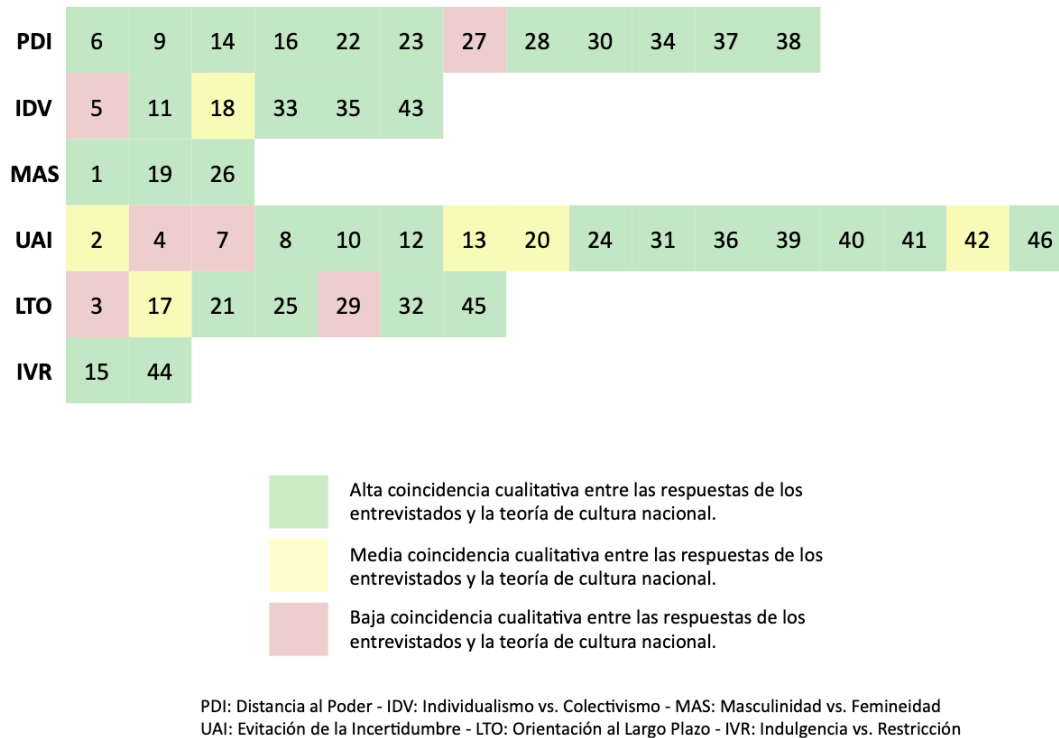
Figure 5 shows the distribution of responses according to Hofstede's dimensions.

Figure 5

Results showing the coincidence of the responses with the TCN distributed by dimension

PDI	6	9	14	16	22	23	27	28	30	34	37	38		
IDV	5	11	18	33	35	43								
MAS	1	19	26											
UAI	2	4	7	8	10	12	13	20	24	31	36	39	40	41	42	46
LTO	3	17	21	25	29	32	45							
IVR	15	44												

Alta coincidencia cualitativa entre las respuestas de los entrevistados y la teoría de cultura nacional.

Media coincidencia cualitativa entre las respuestas de los entrevistados y la teoría de cultura nacional.

Baja coincidencia cualitativa entre las respuestas de los entrevistados y la teoría de cultura nacional.

PDI: Distancia al Poder - IDV: Individualismo vs. Colectivismo - MAS: Masculinidad vs. Femineidad
UAI: Evitación de la Incertidumbre - LTO: Orientación al Largo Plazo - IVR: Indulgencia vs. Restricción

Results

As a result of the literature review and the data analysis carried out, it is observed that the national culture influences the behavior and opinions of the interviewees and, therefore, it is verified that it has an effective impact on project management in Argentina, within the limitations specified for the work.

The effects can be seen on multiple aspects, among them:

• Organization, hierarchical structure and leadership.

• Autonomy and decision making.

• Planning and management.

• Stakeholder relations.

• Relationship with the project team.

• Communications within and outside the project.

• Risk management.

• Behavior of the Project Director (PD).

As mentioned above, there are cultural impacts that coincide with the theory of national culture. With respect to project management, these are:

- The masculine behavior of the Argentine culture supports the consideration that the PD should have an assertive behavior, with clear objectives, which, as a consequence, reduces uncertainty. It is the opposite of doubt, indecision. He/she must be firm, understanding firmness as empathy, with solid convictions, with self-discipline, motivator, with clarity of objectives, willing to listen, and with a freer style of collaboration, order and organization, where there is room for dissent and exchange of ideas. Therefore, he rejects authoritarianism, represented by imposition, excessive order, excessive regulations and rules, being strict, not recognizing mistakes and not being grateful, among other things.

- The high UAI of the Argentine culture is represented by the PD's need for clear rules of the game, understanding by this term all those actions that tend to clarify the project and reduce uncertainty. These should involve all stakeholders, especially the sponsor and the team, and should be shared by all of them. The results of not having enough clarity on the project are confusion, miscommunication, and, eventually, failure.

- According to an average distance to power, it is indicated that, when the project is underway, daily decisions are the responsibility of the PD, implying the necessary autonomy to carry them out. Given the characteristics of management, there is a need to make decisions and apply discretion to project activities and management. Those that modify the previously agreed plan may be consulted through the agreed channels, but, during the project work, with the approved plan being executed, consultations are not necessary. In any case, organizational structures are recognized, where the sponsor occupies the most hierarchical level and makes those decisions that go beyond the plan. In this context, the PD's autonomy will be limited by the project's objective.

- Continuing with the distance to the middle power, it is important to highlight that the autonomy already developed above applies to the determination of the activities to be executed. Within the context of the project, team members can innovate, adding value to their activities. This implies that it is possible to perform technical tasks in different ways and to find new ways to obtain the expected results. On the other hand, there is the impossibility of reaching 100% specifications and it is emphasized that the activities have to do with technical aspects about which the PD may not have all the knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary to rely on the common sense of the person performing the activity and give him/her a certain amount of discretion. In addition, good communication within the team and with the PD is essential, as well as a clear strategic vision, communicated in a timely manner, so as not to restrict the contribution of team members.

- The uncertainty of the project is avoided by means of rules and norms that help its management, without confusing them with restrictions to freedom of action, a subject already discussed in previous paragraphs. These help to:

    ◊ Define acceptable behaviors.

    ◊ Establish behaviors that enhance the dynamics and possibilities of the project.

    ◊ Increase security and confidence in execution.

    ◊ Contain and channel freedom of action.

    ◊ To provide a reference framework for management.

    ◊ Keep chaos away.

    ◊ Make the limits clear.

    ◊ Order, organize and increase the probability of success of the project.

◊ Define the role of people and focus energy.

- Finally, even in uncertain and innovative projects, they are considered to maintain a neat environment within the project.

- In a culture whose individualism is average, the person responsible for the project is the PD and, as such, must lead, develop and take into account the planning of the project. This responsibility includes concern for stakeholders in general and team members in particular. Included in this commitment is the generation of team spirit, not only for those involved in technical issues, but for all stakeholders.

- Coinciding with a low LTO value, the DPs consider that consultations for technical issues should be made to experts. Although it is possible to obtain valuable feedback for an introspective view of interpersonal behaviors from consultations with friends, expert consultations are prioritized.

With respect to human resources, these are:

- The project organization can be impacted by cultural behaviors corresponding to several dimensions. In the case of the organization chart and the roles and responsibilities, on the one hand, we have the PDI dimension and on the other, the UAI. For the former, clarity of roles and responsibilities in the project management structure is fundamental. It clarifies power and authority relationships and allows to deduce the levels of autonomy available for work management and decision making. Autonomy is valued, but is limited by roles and responsibilities, scope, type of project, uncertainty of objective, structure of both the project and the organization carrying it out, and type of team work.

For the second, the organization chart is an important tool for its help in organizing the work, avoiding problems due to lack of knowledge of roles and responsibilities and allowing decisions to be escalated to the correct level, thus reducing uncertainty. It helps to understand, at a glance, the structure of an organization, whether permanent, such as an established company, or temporary, typical of project management. It represents the resources involved and allows for their proper management.

- Consistent with the medium level of distance to power, there is a hierarchical distance between the sponsor and the project team. He values his guiding role, his support for the initiative, and the greater communication and clarity that his involvement brings. However, it is indicated that their constant presence is not necessary for the work to be performed. In fact, it can cause inconveniences due to overlapping roles with the PD and the confusion in reporting that can occur, increasing the risk in the project.

- In a culture with a strong tendency toward personal enjoyment, celebration and gratification are important. The pressures on a project are considerable and one way to reduce them is to have moments of relaxation. These create an environment that reduces tensions, empowers, cohesionizes and provides feedback to the team, creates a climate of collaboration and communication and, fundamentally, allows people to be thanked for their work.

- Activities can be carried out inside or outside the office, either celebrating stages, milestones and events (birthdays, births and personal achievements, among others), or carrying out actions that emphasize team building, improvement, consolidation and gratification and highlight the relationship that is built outside the technical activities of the project.

- One of the dangers lurking for the PD and project team members is physical exhaustion from the demands they face. In a culture with a short-term vision that seeks immediate results, this danger is clear and present. Therefore, rest and freedom to choose tasks are not considered to be secondary issues. Both generate commitment and motivation and should be taken into account.

Excess work may exist, for reasons related to the project situation, but it must be totally cyclical. If it becomes a habit, the work team will suffer the consequences with a corresponding increase in project risk and consequent demotivation.

- Help among team members should be recognized. In a culture that expects everything to happen immediately, this recognition must be made as soon as possible. This helps to further integration and team building.

- The definition and implementation of recognition and rewards are part of the PD's responsibility. The slightly collectivist aspect of the national culture influences in the sense that group rewards are preferred, despite the fact that it is a member of the team that has developed the activity that provokes the recognition. This comment is based on the fact that it is not possible to obtain achievements without the help of the team.

- The way in which decisions are made is closely related to the distance to power. With a medium value, the PDs consider consensus desirable and emphasize that there are different alternatives for achieving it, but agree that the ultimate responsible party is the PD.

- According to mild collectivism, it is considered that the workload should take into account individual capabilities, but this should not be used as an excuse to overload a team member, since this would generate exhaustion, demotivation and increased project risks.

  With respect to the interested parties, these are:

- Early identification of stakeholders is considered very important or critical because of its impact on reducing project uncertainty and risk. For a culture that pursues both objectives, this activity requires sufficient dedication in both initiation and planning. The advantages are the verification of the impact of project decisions on them, avoidance of redoing activities already completed, and mitigation of risks and changes that could originate from unidentified stakeholders.

- It is important to bear in mind that there are projects in which stakeholders may be very difficult to identify or form part of a very large group of people where individualization of each one of them is virtually impossible. In these cases, it is important not to consider large conglomerates of stakeholders as uniform and to look for mechanisms to separate them into smaller, manageable groups.

- According to an average distance to power, it is considered that all employees of the organization, regardless of their level, should be taken into account as stakeholders. As reasons, they indicate the proximity to the operation and to the client, the impact on the project if their requirements are not met, the unsuspected stakeholders that are detected by avoiding using the organization chart as a filter, the contribution they may have to the project, and the reduced risk of boycott.

- Consistent with an average value of MAS, it is considered that the relationship with stakeholders should take into account firmness in protecting the scope of the project, in communication, without hesitation or hesitation, and in the timing and location of

stakeholder involvement. It is also important to know how to discern the moment to be flexible in order to adapt to their requirements or demands.

- Authoritarian leadership is not accepted by a culture with an average POI. In this regard, it is commented that, with respect to suppliers, clear rules of the game are sought and it is emphasized that collaboration is very important.

With respect to costs, these are:

- From LTO's point of view, it is considered that costs should be detailed according to the duration of the project and the control to be carried out. A possible guideline is found in the CAPEX[2] of the same, which will determine the discrimination of costs.

- However, from the point of view of uncertainty, the greatest possible detail is sought, which generates clarity, understanding that the information may be impacted by the time frame, size and uncertainty of the project.

With respect to quality, these are:

- Quality in a project implies customer satisfaction. In a culture with a medium power distance, it is considered that this objective should involve all stakeholders, listening to the users, surveying their needs and requirements, prioritizing according to the parameters established by the project strategy and the comments of the sponsor and key stakeholders, and agreeing on the final scope. Requirements build the value of the project, so it is essential to manage them.

- Reducing uncertainty in quality management is reflected in the need to define standards and perform quality planning. This will provide the project with a guide and the necessary mechanisms to monitor it.

With respect to communication, these are:

- With an average POI, communication is considered a relevant topic. Communications must be specific, precise and clear, with established responsible parties and identified recipients. A communications plan should be developed to manage the dissemination of project data and information based on stakeholder needs.

- For a culture with average individualism, both project meetings and status reports are important. The former must be planned and managed to avoid falling into unproductive sessions. The agenda and inviting the right people are important. The advantages that can be cited are:

  ◊ The exchange of opinions of the participants, after the presentation of the topic.

  ◊ The counterpoint between team members.

  ◊ The appearance of hidden problems.

  ◊ Different points of view on the same situation.

  ◊ The participation of all team members.

  ◊ Interactions that do not occur on a day-to-day basis.

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[2] Capital Expenditure - Capital Investment

Consequently, with respect to reports, and taking into account the comments in the previous item, it is suggested that the PD develop and implement a process for creating and distributing information in reports, the content of which is agreed upon with the stakeholders who will receive them.

- Regarding meetings, it is suggested that the PD develop and implement a protocol for meetings, containing, among others, the following points:

    ◊ Develop and send the agenda in advance of the meeting.

    ◊ Invitation to the corresponding interested parties.

    ◊ Development and application of rules of conduct, including punctuality.

    ◊ Identification of those responsible for the actions, with date of compliance.

    ◊ Preparation and distribution of the minutes.

    ◊ In addition, it is suggested to manage and conduct the meeting and the use of the "parking lot"[3] technique to record off-agenda items that should be considered at another time.

- It is considered uncomfortable to make risky decisions in the project. While inevitable and part of the profession, it is still a matter of concern. The PD must be prepared to deal with these situations and the sponsor must build a supportive environment.

- It is important to unambiguously identify and define project risks. This implies that they must be specifically defined, leaving aside generalities (Project Management Institute, 2019). For example, it is not the same to declare a "risk of disease", where a disease can range from a cold to a very serious health condition, as it is to declare "There is a risk of a flu epidemic due to the weather conditions expected during the course of the project". This reduces the uncertainty of the project.

- Contracts should serve to reduce risk exposure in a business relationship. To do this, they must set a clear framework within which the contractor will carry out its activity, including its responsibility, the scope of the task, the deadline and the deliverables. In addition, good contract and supplier management is required to aid in the success of the project.

The results reflected behaviors that do not coincide with the national culture theory. With respect to project management, these are:

- Contrary to expectations, taking into account a slight collectivism reported by Hofstede's IDV dimension, DPs analyze the possibility of not participating in the project if the objectives do not coincide with their particular interests. Therefore, from the point of view of the organization, sponsor or client, it is advisable to seek an alignment between the PD's personal objectives and the project's objectives. The results indicate that given this coincidence, there is a greater sense of well-being, greater commitment and greater interest.

- In contradiction with the need to avoid uncertainty and have all aspects of the project under control, the DPs, within the general framework of the initiative, consider innovation as an element to be encouraged. They believe that this choice boosts performance, adds

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[3] A technique developed to note important issues that arise in a meeting, but are not included in the agenda. These can be dealt with later in ad-hoc meetings.

richness to the project, provides creative ideas for problem solving and helps to adapt and converge towards changing objectives. They recommend taking into consideration planning, team training, risk assessment, support for innovation activities, the stage of the project at which it occurs and the methodology used. In general, agile methodologies and the early stages of a project are considered to be the most prone to innovate.

With respect to planning, these are:

- As opposed to the need to control and plan in detail to avoid uncertainty, the general preference is to work with less detailed, higher-level planning, with greater flexibility. However, this decision depends on the objective and type of project. The factors that have an impact are the methodology to be used, the scope, the resources available, the dynamism of the organization and the context of the initiative.

- Stakeholder pressures for immediate or short-term results, behavior that coincides with the LTO dimension, are counterproductive. The DPs emphasize that they must be obtained based on planning, whether in the short, medium or long term, and the responsibility for achieving them lies with the DP. It is important that there is a congruence between them and the final objective of the project. A fundamental aspect is perseverance, understanding that objectives must be achieved at the appropriate time.

- Although Argentine culture values predictability and avoids uncertainty, the modifications to the project are accepted, with some considerations. The DPs understand that there are elements that may affect the project and, as a consequence, impact the project activities. In general, the uncertainty of the project's objective, the external environment and issues internal to the organization that affect the project's development are mentioned. However, they add that changes cannot be anarchic, but must follow a process of control and justification and must contribute to improving the project's objective, reducing risks, satisfying the user and the sponsor, and lowering deadlines and costs.

With respect to resources, these are:

- Although strict processes are preferred in cultures with a high UAI, such as Argentina's, in general, the DPs indicate that teams are formed by the people and the leader. They accept that standards can help since they generate a standard of the links between people, but that the construction of the teams depends on the people who lead and compose them.

- Despite being a culture with a certain degree of collectivism, which favors team building, the DPs agree that there is great difficulty in putting together high performance teams. The causes are varied and they comment that, to achieve this, it requires time, sacrifice, communication, patience, persistence, finding the right people and achieving synergy between them.

- In spite of being a culture where there is a distance to medium power, the DPs agree that the participation of the project team is fundamental to determine the work to be done. This is due not only to technical issues such as technical knowledge, better technical estimation of the duration of activities and better risk management, but because of the team's greater commitment to something they helped define, better communication between members and better management of the project team.

- In a culture with a high UAI, tolerance of differing opinions is low. However, most DPs agree that freedom of expression to the sponsor or the DP is critical to reaching agreements, getting better ideas and making better decisions, and avoiding both groupthink and keeping quiet about what the bosses dislike. They explain that the

responsibility for achieving this freedom lies with the PD. Some propose that there should be some limitations, although it is important to be able to express oneself freely, bearing in mind that feedback is very important. They propose that the personal interview is the best tool to achieve this and that the target should be the PD, matching an average POI. In any case, the way in which this opinion is expressed is important in order to enrich teamwork and not generate conflict.

With respect to risks, these are:

- The focus on what can go wrong with the project is part of the characteristics of a high UAI culture. However, the DPs agree that a positive vision must be taken by focusing on achieving the objectives and protecting the value of the project to achieve success, without neglecting, through risk management, what can go wrong.

Discussion and conclusions

From the interviews conducted and the results obtained, it is verified that the national culture has an impact on projects in Argentina from the PMBOK® point of view, in accordance with the national culture theory.

In addition, H1 is tested: The national culture impacts the management of projects, which are led by PMP® certified Argentinean Project Managers, in Argentina, within the limits specified for the job.

From this validation, it is observed that the results of the analysis of the responses of 36 statements coincide with what was expected, in accordance with the theory of national culture. This means that the behaviors of the DPs respond to those described in the literature consulted.

For the rest of the statements, the answers show a different picture. In fact, 6 of them have medium coincidence and another 6 have low coincidence with the TCN. This means that the behaviors of the DPs do not coincide with those indicated by the literature consulted. The reasons for this divergence have not been investigated and may be the subject of future research.

It is important to note that the results highlight certain specific aspects of project management, such as the organization and hierarchical structure of the project, the type of leadership that is feasible to use, including autonomy and decision making, stakeholder relations from various points of view, project team management, communications, both internal and external, risk management, quality and costs, and PD behavior.

The application of these results can be immediately applied to ongoing projects and can be used for post-mortem analysis of projects to incorporate the findings into lessons learned. It is also possible to incorporate, within the project planning, aspects of the national culture that can be taken into account for each of the PMBOK® knowledge areas. For example, taking into account the low LTO of the Argentinean culture, it is to be expected that stakeholders will want to obtain results in the shortest possible time, even leaving aside planning. The PD, knowing this trend, can prepare strategies to respond to these requirements without increasing the pressure on the work team. In addition, the work team may be motivated by observing the protection that the PD provides to its members.

On the other hand, the limitations identified are as follows:

- The research focused on PMI PMP certified project managers. Although there is no such profession as Project Manager, there are numerous professionals who, with greater or

lesser adherence to PMI best practices or other methodologies, manage projects in Argentina. These were not considered and may produce different results in this study.

• The PMI indicates that there are more than 1800 certified professionals in Argentina, so the number of interviewees is very limited, which opens the possibility of expanding this research to confirm or modify the results of this work.

• Because the interview is a tool that requires contact between the interviewer and the interviewee, there is a possibility that the response will be influenced by this interaction.

Finally, it is hoped that these results can be applied in professional practice, both for Argentine PDs and for foreign PDs who must develop projects in Argentina, to improve the chances of success in the initiatives to be carried out. The more successful they are, the greater the possibility of building a better future for Argentina.

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