



An Analysis of a Unity of Cultural Perspectives to Achieve Global Business Success

Indranie Gurusamy Ram

INTRODUCTION

The Business of International Business is Culture. (Hofstede 1994)

The need to understand and acknowledge cultural diversity in Global Business is of utmost importance in our modern global village. It would be immensely useful at this time for the construction of a framework that will serve to stimulate and contribute toward a unified and complementary vision of the relationship between culture and global business. This chapter will analyze a pluralistic worldview approach in the way businesses successfully connect with their employees, partners, and stakeholders. This chapter with its empathetic, complementary, pluralistic, and convergent approach in its analysis of the global business community seeks to fulfill that need. There is a common ground on which the different cultural traditions rest. In business, there is a common ground we all seek, the goals we seek are in most instances the same, using

I. G. Ram (✉)

Sector Education Training Authority, Pretoria, South Africa

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer
Nature Switzerland AG 2021

B. S. Thakkar (ed.), *Culture in Global Businesses*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-60296-3_8

different approaches and methodologies. There needs to be greater flexibility, understanding, and empathy among global partners of the needs within global organizations of addressing cultural diversity and inclusivity in the decisions and actions that are taken.

Globalization has sparked more interaction among people from different backgrounds and cultures than at any other time. One of the challenges facing the global business world is how to use diversity to tactfully manage people from diverse backgrounds and cultures for the improvement of organizational interactions and employee performance. Globalization is not simply a matter of societies, and civilizations being squeezed together in various problematic ways but also of such occurring with increasing intensity inside nationally constituted societies. Nowadays to quote Geertz, “forgiveness does not start at the waters’ edge but at the skins The wogs begin long before Calais” (Geertz 1973, p. 112). Geertz’s observations press us, to take seriously into account the position of individuals in the globalization process. Ninian Smart is another philosopher who can be quoted in this respect: “We live in a planetary place now, a kind of global city, in which communications have bound the world into a tight ball, and in which the great cultures of the past, and the differing cultures and political systems of the present, are in continuing and intimate interplay” (Smart 1981, p. 11).

WHAT IS CULTURE?

Culture can be seen as an “integrated, complex set of interrelated and potentially interactive patterns characteristic of a group of people” (Lytle et al., 1995).

Cultural beliefs and values determine a society’s judgment of how things ought to be in the world, the cultural sense of values, of moral right and wrong, of social justice. Any belief about the ultimate value and meaning of life tends to condition all subsidiary values throughout one’s value hierarchy. It is important that we try to perceive the role of such cultural belief systems in creating the current state of the human condition, in organizational interactions.

I will move beyond a subjective concept of the individual being to a creatively viable understanding of what it means to be a culturally aware individual. In my discussion of an employee in an organization, I will take the approach of an in-depth analysis of the human nature of that employee. This analysis will enable one to understand how complex

the concept culture is within the human nature of employees and how employees in organizations coming from diverse cultural backgrounds should be perceived.

HUMAN NATURE AND CULTURE

It is my conviction that within the present global business horizon there is a very pressing need for every culture to answer the basic questions of human existence. Human life has been transformed by a convergence of global and cultural forces. Each human being can be understood as a web of life, not just of life but of life, culture, energy, and work.

It is one of the essential characteristics of the global business environment that the borders between cultures are disappearing. Discussion therefore must be interdisciplinary to be fertile, for human nature and culture are topics that spread across boundaries of business, the sciences and even pure economics. It is my contention, that if a universal discourse in which different cultures can interact meaningfully is at all possible we must begin from the insight that it will be grounded neither in subjective certainties nor in objective reality but in the pragmatic conditions of a global form of business interactions. The preoccupation of the understanding of human nature is an old concept. Ideas and beliefs about human nature not only go back to the beginning of recorded history, but exist in some form in all known human groups. An analysis of the concept human nature reveals that humankind including employees of organizations possesses some common attributes. These attributes are to be understood not as qualities or aspects which are extraneous to a person but as belonging to human beings. They are universals in the sense that whenever and wherever humans are encountered these attributes also will be found.

This view of commonality or universality does not claim that all humans are identical. Indeed the purpose behind identifying universal attributes stems from the recognition that there are differences among employees in organizations. The aim of my analysis is to develop a common human vision and purpose through dialogue. Part of this common purpose is also the harmony among the various cultures themselves. Talk about multiculturalism tends to remain at a conceptual level. But culture is about life and interactions. It has to do more with behavior than with concepts. Unfortunately our tendency is to compartmentalize

our views regarding cultural dialogue. Intercultural conflicts within organizations can be avoided only when the various cultures stop focusing on themselves and find their focus in discovering the similarities and complementary areas in the workplace. Culture is a creation of individuals; a cultural moment is always only a pause in the process of becoming and affirming many personal attributes. It is true that a human being is a product of culture, and it is equally true that culture is produced by human beings; the two truths balance each other and include each other.

Ideas of human nature themselves are the product of the organization's self-reflection. Every culture has developed its own theory of what makes people human as distinct from animals, or how men differ from women and children from adults. In the construction of their personal identities, people are seen as integral parts of reality that have certain values, meanings, and choices. Human beings have a commitment to themselves and to others in the manner in which they interpret the role they perform in structuring their personal and professional lives. The individual human being is considered the subject of fundamental values. People have to be understood as human beings in the world who despite the multiple temptations of the world and their fellow beings and despite all internal and external influences have to assume the responsibility of their own existence, especially their levels of performance in their organization. By reflection upon their own existence, individuals establish the meanings of their personal identity and their own goals and objectives in being and becoming highly productive employees.

For Marx, people are not passive in the face of society. They are active agents, carriers of social tendencies that nevertheless can be realized only in community with other people, and in this sense they are likened to language (Marx, 1963). Just as language has to be collectively developed through individuals living together and talking to one another, so must people be reared in society in order to express their social tendencies. As a consequence, some aspect of the social affects every facet of human experience.

In every sphere of human activity, values are involved: moral values, aesthetic values, cultural values, intellectual values, political values, economic values, religious values, and so forth. Such values shape our lives, our society, our culture, and it is the pursuit of such values that is one of the major distinctions of human beings in this world. Both agreements and disagreements exist: Values we agree on, like peace and

tolerance and liberty, enable us to live and work together; yet disagreement about values often divides people with differing ideals. Values are good ends, ideals we ought to pursue. We have to learn how to uncover flaws and limits and destructive tendencies, shedding some of them, changing and incorporating others, and also how to uncover and draw on hidden strengths and creative possibilities.

In studying human nature, we are studying ourselves. Human nature is made manifest when an individual is all that he or she can be, all that he or she essentially is. The concept person plays an important part in our culture. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law. The concept person is used to indicate the human individual to whom certain rights can be assigned and who may be held responsible for his/her actions. It is our contention that the notion of a human person starts from the assumption that every human being has an awareness of his or her individual self. Human nature therefore is the natural tendency or natural reaction a human being has in relation to events and situations.

Each and every human experience invites reflection and further understanding. In an organizational context an individual as a rational, responsible being exercises an element of reflection and evaluation in the making of decisions in interpersonal interactions involving staff belonging to various cultural backgrounds. Besides having a capacity for reflective thought, the human person has a strong biological drive to live and to survive. This strong instinct for survival in a global business context manifests itself in how cross-cultural interactions are pursued across all boundaries even those of language. Human beings in every age and every culture have pursued salvation, understood as some form of overcoming the physical limitations of life. Salvation can be seen as a structural element of culture and is used across all cultures. The kind of human viability and continuity we have as human beings working together in a global business community will depend on the decisions we make regarding how we should live and work with others. What I want to suggest is that, if we can move our self beyond the subjective, phenomenal self to include our cultural, genetic, and cosmic selves, we should have a much more interesting and richer concept of human viability especially in the fulfillment of our interactions across cultural contexts and this is especially manifested in teamwork and higher levels of performance. The world and the structure of the world is in us as much as we are in the world. We are webs of reality, woven out of the threads of culture, biology, and cosmos

according to recipes (structure of language and values, DNA codes, and laws of nature) in each.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

One ingredient of the cultural self is language, including grammar and syntax that helps structure how we think. Language helps shape our minds. Thus, a language of a particular society or business environment is part of the recipe for the human minds in that society. Not only does the recipe or culture type include language, along with ways of thinking embedded in language, it also includes ways of doing things: ways of gathering, growing, processing, and eating food; ways of building houses, and other structures of human habitation; ways of getting around with transportation; ways of cultural interactions. And underlying all of these ways of doing things, manifested in them, and programmed into the brain through them, is a society's value system. At the heart of the cultural recipe lie the values, goals, and purposes that shape our actions. The culture type shapes both thinking and acting (it even shapes feelings). It helps shape our personalities and attitudes. Language and culture may provide the form in which we come to experience the multiple transactions of the global business community, but in all cultures there is an implicit demand being made to press beyond the limits of language, to enter eventually into a silence which recognizes that the goal is more than can be spoken of in any human form of words. There is in fact, a constant interplay between language and experience, a dialectic between the tradition and the challenge made to tradition by the very limits imposed by language. John Dominic Crossan, in his book, attends to precisely this point. If story is what creates world, it "becomes very important to differentiate the various ways or modes of story. It becomes especially important to see how story itself admits its creativity, admits that it is creating and not just describing the world" (Crossan 1975, p. 9).

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Every organization has a unique culture, depending on the people employed there, management policy, and several other factors. An essential element of an organization is how its unique culture is maintained, stimulated, and procured over time. Improvement will be dependent on close working relationships and high levels of performance. Employees

need to embrace and imbibe the organizational strategic plan and core values. Management can create an environment where employees can learn how to work and interact, with diverse groups of coworkers with mutual respect and trust, through promoting diversity policies, workshops, and diversity training.

According to Heitner, Khan, and Sherman (2013), organizations that have a priority of creating and sustaining diverse and inclusive environments and those that link their diversity efforts to the strategic plan of the organization are most successful. Coaching and mentoring, uplifting the morale of employees and other efforts to create stronger relationships in an organization can, according to Bower (2012), lead to team harmony and a sense of being valued and included which ultimately leads to increased levels of productivity among team members. As was alluded to earlier, people are the core component of any organization and they need to share and wrap themselves around its core values. Senior management needs to promote the core values to employees by implementing the relevant policies and procedures. The endeavor to promote coaching within organizations rests with senior management. This sometimes can become problematic, especially with the bottom line mentality of some organizations because coaching requires planning, time, and regular feedback. If time is spent on coaching and training, some businesses feel they are not utilizing the employee to their maximum and not increasing profit.

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2001), leadership is defined as “a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organizational goals.” Leaders need to facilitate the need to change to a more inclusive way of thinking with their employees. Distributive leadership and the reflective process promote collaboration and participation. An important and urgently crucial aspect of global business is the quality of leadership within organizations. Leadership is greatly tested when there is a crisis, as we realized when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out globally. Indecisive action and unclear guidelines proved very costly to human life during the early days of the global pandemic. Leaders ought to have a sense of vision which mitigates risk and does not create panic and chaos. Leaders are looked up to as role models and if they behave recklessly or irresponsibly, the consequences are devastating.

Leaders in trying to appear assertive can, unwittingly, create by the wrong language and actions a destructive environment and can cause

more harm. Leaders need to be able to improvise and have flexible skills to do damage control and repair work during times of crisis. Leaders should have the capability to adapt and have huge modifications in their normal instinctive behavior patterns when situations are tense and untenable. A good, strong, confident leader uses effective negotiation skills and diplomacy when there is a need. Leader's reactions to the incessantly changing conditions of the outside world need to be flexible and innovative. Any leader who respects and encourages multiculturalism has an open, flexible management style rather than being autocratic and rigid in their behavior.

DIVERSITY WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (2001, p. 37), diversity "stands for the various differences in individuals as well as similarities that exist among them." Pitts (2006) described diversity management as multifaceted, which includes the following three components: programs aimed at increasing cultural awareness, recruitment programs, and pragmatic management policies.

The encounter of people from diverse cultural backgrounds is the main shared experience of our times, especially in close working relations, where individuals are able to embrace diversity with respect. The issues of race and culture, language and gender, take us into the question of difference in complex and multiple ways, in a global business world. Today people of every culture meet one another, and develop deep personal or professional friendships, perhaps even marry one another. Our experience with people of diverse cultures may be difficult or rewarding, or both, particularly in an organizational context, when, for example, one works in teams on a project. In any case, our cross-cultural interaction does not usually begin with philosophy or theory, but with experience and relationships. Individually and collectively, our experience has now begun to challenge traditional cultural thinking and to contribute decisively to the reformulation of our accepted views and presuppositions. Yet to be honest as persons of culture who encounter the cultures of other individuals and are both challenged and enriched by that encounter requires that we ask questions. They emerge out of the very heart of our experience. And they are not theoretical questions with any relevance to the lived world. Our answers fundamentally shape the way in which we think of the cultures and the peoples with whom we share the world and our work spaces. The richness and diversity of cultural life of any one major tradition suggests

that most of us will lose little by so restricting our primary commitment. On the contrary, a refusal to participate fully in some specific “form of cultural life” may lead to an abstract and superficial cultural experience that will fall far short of profiting from what the cultural experiences our shared work experiences have to offer. So, for many employees and managers within organizations, there is good reason for a commitment to improving and promoting diversity in the workplace.

PLURALITY OF CULTURE

People of diverse cultural backgrounds bear witness to the truth, the transcendence, the universality, the uniqueness, and the distinctive beauty of what they have known and seen. To recognize this plurality of cultural claims as a profoundly important fact about our world does not constitute a betrayal of one’s own culture. It is simply a fact among the many facts that emerge from the historical and comparative study of cultural diversity. What we make of that fact from our different perspectives of culture is one of the most important challenges of our time, especially when we make important financial and policy decisions. The most compelling and important dialogue is that which arises in the communities and contexts of our daily lived experience, what some would call “the dialogue of life.”

Pluralists recognize that others also have communities and commitments. They are unafraid to encounter one another and realize that they must all live with each other’s peculiarities. The challenge for the pluralist is commitment without dogmatism and community without communalism. The task of a pluralist society is to create the space and the means for the encounter of commitments, not to neutralize all commitment. The pluralist stands in a particular community and is willing to be committed to the struggles of that community, even as restless critic. Pluralism can only generate a strong social fabric through the interweaving of commitments. Pluralism is not, then, the kind of radical openness to anything and everything that drains meaning from particularity. It is, however, radical openness to truth. Pluralism is the complex and unavoidable encounter, difficult as it might be, with the multiple cultures that are the very stuff of our world, some of which may challenge the very ground on which we stand. Unless all of us can enter into one another’s cultural forms and visions and understand them through dialogue, both critically and self-critically, we cannot begin to live with maturity and integrity in a global business context of coexistence.

A pluralist culture will not destroy differences, but has respect for differences and the meeting of differences. Its aim is quite the opposite of syncretism. The pluralist aim is not to create a worldwide community of one culture. It is rather to find ways to be distinctively ourselves and yet be in relation to one another. No doubt there is common ground to be discovered along the way; no doubt there are common aspirations to be articulated. But joining together in a new “world culture” based on the lowest common denominator of pieced together from several cultural traditions is not the goal of pluralism. In some ways, it is the very antithesis. Yet ours is a pluralistic society in which no one set of values prevails, nor just one supreme good to integrate them all.

The truth seeking of the pluralist, however, can be built on no other foundation than the give-and-take of dialogue. There is something we must know—both about the other and about ourselves—that can be found in no other way. We do not enter into dialogue with the dreamy hope that we will all agree, for the truth is we probably will not. We do not enter into dialogue to produce agreement but to produce real relationship, even friendship, which is premised upon mutual understanding, not upon agreement. A clear understanding of differences is as precious as the affirmation of similarities. The language of dialogue is the two-way language of real encounter and it is for this reason that dialogue is the very basis of pluralism. There must be constant communication—meeting, exchange, criticism, reflection, acknowledgement, reparation, and renewal. Without dialogue, the diversity of cultures and ethnic groups becomes an array of isolated encampments, each with a different flag, meeting only occasionally for formalities or for battle.

BEYOND DIALOGUE

John Cobb in his book *Beyond Dialogue*, is relevant to my discussion, he writes: “Authentic dialogue will necessarily carry us beyond itself. That is, authentic dialogue changes its participants in such a way that new developments beyond dialogue must follow” (Cobb 1982, p. 47).

A further aim of dialogue is to understand ourselves and our culture more clearly and to use dialogue meaningfully in developing business partnerships. Discovering one’s own culture is inherently part of the human journey. What motivates us deeply, what orients us in the world, what nourishes our growth and gives rise to our most cherished values? Every human being must cope with these questions or suffer the anxious

drift of avoiding them. But our challenges on this human journey are not solved once and for all by the unfolding discovery of our own culture, for we encounter other employees of other cultures. Dialogue means taking a vibrant interest in what motivates these other employees, what orients them in the world, what nourishes their growth and gives rise to their most cherished values and goals. To work together in a global business community, we need to know these things about one another and to risk the changes of heart and mind that may well come when we do. Another aim of dialogue is mutual understanding and mutual transformation. These two aspects are important, but in the world in which we live and work the cooperative transformation of our global and local cultures are essential. "Beyond dialogue," writes Cobb, "I suggest, lies the aim of mutual transformation. One may, if one wishes, speak of this as simply another stage of dialogue." "Only when some significant progress has been made in this work will it be important to meet again to take up the dialogue at that new place to which participants have come" (Cobb 1982, p. 48).

"Perhaps no societies in the history of humanity have been as pluralistic and dynamic as modern ones. Indeed, the terms 'pluralistic' and 'dynamic' have become not only descriptive of the way things are but prescriptive of the way, things ought to be" (Stackhouse 1986, p. 157). Our global contacts open up a new cultural world not only around us, but also within us. The interest in what others believe and experience is evident in our global interactions. People of all cultural backgrounds and belief systems seem to be looking for "more." These two kinds of pluralism, our own growing diversity and our greater inter-ethnicity, are interrelated in a way that the way we react culturally to one might throw light on how to interact to the other.

A pluralistic vision is not a question of a balancing act. It has to do with how we know, and how we believe we should interact with our fellow colleagues from other cultures. We need different visions and approaches to understand who we are and what we are heading for. The killings in our inner cities are not merely a criminal issue that can be overcome by an ever growing police force or the strengthening of criminal law. All kind of other circumstances, like the lack of realistic educational opportunities, the male absence in so many families and so on, have to be taken into consideration. If it is impossible to "understand" the physical side of our world except by several complementary views, how would we be able to fathom the width, the depth, the length, and the height of our cultural

interactions in an organizational context in another way? Our cultural reality resembles a diamond that is turned in light of the sun. It can only be described in an endless sequence of different colors and frequencies. If we want to be faithful to ourselves and to the others, it is in being one with, that we find the ground for our complementary diversity.

If you know nothing about the rituals, ethics or the experiences and emotions which animate a culture, or about its role in the social world, or about its art, music, and cuisine, then you do not have a view of the whole picture of that culture and it is not a balanced view. In my attempt to analyze culture and global business from a global perspective, I have shown that we live in a global and plural world and this globalization results in people from all different cultures meeting, and working together in a meaningful way.

People of different cultural backgrounds do not live apart, but are in constant interaction and need, if anything, to be in more intentional interrelation. The new images of inclusive sharing and coexistence are based on the need for multicultural dialogue and a pluralistic approach to cultural interaction as being vital to a peaceful coexistence in our global business community. If the move toward pluralism begins authentically in the places where people of different cultural backgrounds find openness, and even an imperative, toward encounter with another, it begins historically and culturally with the plain facts of our cultural diversity and our cultural proximity to one another, and our human interdependence. In very practical terms, how are we all to live and work with one another in a climate of mutuality and understanding? Those who live and work with others in an exclusivist paradigm frankly do not wish to live and work closely with people from other cultural backgrounds and would prefer to shut them out, which, in a global business environment, will be increasingly impossible, or to convert others to their own view of the world. Those who appropriate differences as do the inclusivists assume that the cultural worldview of others looks very much like their own, and the ground rules are presumed to be "ours." But those who think of life together as pluralists recognize the need for radical new forms of living and working together and communicating with one another.

Cultural pluralism requires active positive engagement with the claims of culture and the facts of cultural diversity. It involves not the mere recognition of the different cultural traditions and the insuring of their legitimate rights, but the active effort to understand difference and commonality through dialogue. Dialogue begins with the questions that

arise from the common context of our lives and how we work together. According to April and Blass (2010), the inclusion philosophy focuses beyond the concept of some and shifts the group effort toward the term all.

UNITY OF PERSPECTIVES

The credibility of a culture may be seen to depend on the capacity of its unifying perspective to effectively unify all aspects of life, thought and work in a meaning giving way.

By discussing the cultural, genetic, and cosmic source of ourselves, we can greatly expand our picture of what it is to be human and what it is to see ourselves as viable players in a rapidly changing global business community. What are the implications of this for human nature, for the viability of each of us as individuals and employees, or managers? If viability means in part continuation, then an important question is not just how long we will live, but how well we live in the sense of contributing further to human culture, biological well-being, and the ecosystems of the earth. This is the primary responsibility facing human beings in the formulation of their viable existence and in their conception of themselves as part of a greater global business community promoting a Unity of Perspectives which is sustainable and credible. Although we are a symbiosis of the various “types,” as discussed, the responsibility of structuring the quality of our daily living and interactions within a global business world is dependent on an understanding of human fulfillment as the ongoing work of a Unity of Perspectives to procure successful business and personal outcomes.

In its present state, the global business community is responsible for its life and is free to form this life not only according to pre-given patterns but according to new possibilities which it itself creates. A spirit of complementarities is the way in which any global business community establishes its collective identity, orients itself in the world, and articulates its basic convictions about what is real, meaningful and of value. The global business community needs a vision that provides a sense of direction and a basis of hope, a vision of a completed humanity. Indeed, what is required is an inclusive understanding of our common humanity whether in our business transactions or in our global communications. It is my contention that underlying all the surface diversity there is a deeper common ground which all global businesses share, not only because of

their common goals, but because they are manifestations of the unified reality of their need to survive in a very competitive and demanding economic environment.

The knowledge of one another's cultural traditions is not simply to inform our curiosity about the beliefs or customs of our neighbors, or fellow employees. People of every cultural tradition depend upon one another to interpret one another fairly and accurately. We are the keepers of one another's image. In this sense, any culture, thoughtfully studied, can become a kind of multiple mirror through which each of us learns to see himself/herself more fully. Each of us is an individual, and yet each is a part of a larger community. There are doors to be opened and each of us can help ourselves and others in the door-opening process. This is one of the most critical aspects of our interdependence and common humanity. We all depend upon one another not to tell lies, not to spread hatred, not to create a sensational or distorted image of one another. We all depend upon one another to correct those lies and distortions when they are made. There is no business community that can do this entirely for itself. Whether we like it or not, all of us bear witness to each other in an interdependent global world, especially in our economic and financial partnerships.

An important step in recognizing this kind of interdependence is being able to speak out when a cultural tradition not one's own has been attacked or distorted, which has devastating implications to the financial well-being for large numbers of people. Being keepers of one another's image and guardians of one another's rights are not roles that we as cultural communities can either accept or reject. They are assigned by the very nature of our world and we perform them, either well or badly, either with neglect or vigilance.

PROBLEMS FACING GLOBAL BUSINESS

Domestic problems within nations, regions, cities, and towns appear also to become increasing sources of human troubles and these same problems affect the global business community. There is a general rise in the severity of ethnic hostilities, and of internal conflicts between generations, political factions, and other divisions of the populations. There are also threats to human welfare from various forms of social disorganization, reflected in the spread of poverty, crime, vice, political corruption, and family disorganization. The threats of overpopulation and potential destruction of

the ecological environment have added further reason for public alarm. Contemporary society obviously does not yet provide the solutions, but what prospects of human survival there are depend a great deal on the increase of the applicable knowledge of the various cultural horizons of the vast spectrum of people who inhabit this world in a tolerant and meaningful way using dialogue and negotiation rather than hostility.

Another distressing problem facing some communities is the creation of hierarchies of superiority through trade, money, business, and power which have produced huge socioeconomic divisions within society. South Africa, a vastly diverse country, has one of the widest socioeconomic gaps among the members of its population in the world. There are multiple reasons for this grossly wide and seriously troubling social and economic disparity among its population, but one of the reasons is its high levels of unemployment and corruption. Global business is not only financial transactions, but at the heart of it, and through extreme manipulation is the deep desire for profit, and human beings are the collateral damage. This has become a vicious cycle which the poor and unskilled find themselves trapped in. They are trapped in long, hard hours of labor with unfair working conditions. If they complain, they lose their jobs and are left on the streets.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Senge (1992), an author on organizational change, proposes that successful change can be introduced using the framework of the Learning Organization. The Learning Organization for Senge (1992) comprises of the following components: “personal mastery; mental models; systems thinking; team learning; and building a shared vision of an organization.”

When in crisis mode, e.g., COVID-19, and you have frozen creativity for long periods of continual habitual behavior, the emergence of innovative and original solutions takes longer to procure. When human beings are in a crisis, e.g., COVID-19, there are signs of senseless behavior, repeating the same hopeless attempts to get out of it. The emergence of unexpected potentials which are dormant in normal routines is there if it can be tapped into and could result in feasible, probable solutions. Strategic change in organizations, I believe, is a dynamic process and should not restrain itself to an entirely top-down approach. All levels of employees need to be part of a collaborative and consultative

approach when decisions involving change are to be taken and implemented. Managers, who I believe, are cognizant of the well-being of their employees, should have high levels of emotional intelligence, and will therefore engage in participative forms of consultation promoting a two-way dialogue between themselves and their employees. Strategic change through which firms can survive and succeed by adjusting strategic directions, necessary resources and capabilities in a fast paced environment, has long been considered as an important field of strategic management. (Mac Kay and Chia, 2013). When management can effectively implement participative management or adopt a bottom-up approach, there is, I believe, increased decision-making information being shared and a positive effect among employees of ownership toward the outcome reached. According to Shimizu and Hitt (2004), resource flexibility, which signifies firms' capability in accumulating resources with inherent flexibility, plays an important role in implementing strategic change. Transition, change, and development are continuously taking place all around us and in this regard Zygmunt Bauman (2001, p. 137) writes: Changes happen all over the place and things are continuously moving but there is uncertainty regarding the direction the movement will take because there is contestation regarding the direction. When changes happen, sediments and imprints of the one change remain. Forms of life do not succeed each other: They settle aside each other, clash and mix, crowd together in the same space/time. A variety of life forms are here to stay. And so is the imperative of their coexistence (Bauman 2001, p. 137).

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence competencies seem to operate most effectively in synergistic groupings, with the evidence suggesting that mastery of a critical mass or cluster of competencies is a necessary prelude arousing the competencies in other clusters, but when both are demonstrated, the person is typically more effective in professional and management positions (Goleman, 2001). Many authors have discussed the influence emotional intelligence has on employees' behaviors, for example, according to Sosik and Megerian (1999), self-awareness contributes to a leaders' awareness. In line with these views, from my earlier analysis of the link between culture, human nature, language, diversity, and inclusivity, I believe that emotional intelligence has a positive impact on the attitudes, behavior, and productivity of employees.

At the onset of COVID-19, the part leaders were played in acting decisively in trying to deal with the problem was crucial to human life. Open confrontation like what (COVID-19) exposed the whole world to is rare, and human beings living with this challenge, this “invisible enemy,” would opt to solve the crisis with rationalization, facts, and pseudo-reasoning techniques. These attempts at a solution could lead to self-deception and perpetuate a delusive streak. This can be equated to what happens in organizations that operate in a crisis mode, there is a dichotomy between dividedness and wholeness and this can become an inseparable element of organizational hierarchical structures. Hierarchies can be dissected into their constituent elements. When a crisis occurs or the rules of the game are no longer the same the hierarchical structure can disintegrate. The dichotomy of wholeness and being fractured or disjointed of autonomy and dependence is inherent in the concept of hierarchic order. In a functional organizational structure, there is a line of command and power and control. In crisis mode the line of command, if there is no culture of trust and communication, can become ineffective. A practical example will be if a manager has taken a decision without any prior consultation with subordinates, these employees because of a culture of a lack of trust and lack of communication do not have any commitment to, effectively implement the decision made. According to Jordan et al. (2002), in organizations, there may be times when employees and managers are confronted with other employees who are experiencing strong emotions due to their insecurity of the proposed change. The hierarchical structure becomes a frozen line of command because of lack of collaboration and trust. The dangers of monotonous stereotypical routines can stymie freedom, and create acceleration toward enslavement to habit, freezing creativity and innovation. Human beings in trade are foragers, who develop a repertory of habitual skills. Learning condenses into habits, like for example cultural habits. Cultural evaluation responds to and corresponds with its contemporary system of interests and values, depending on interpretation.

THE DOMINATION AND MANIPULATION OF SOCIAL SPACES

I believe the spaces in which organizations and people conduct their business, whether it is technological or transactional, are “social spaces.” I believe these “social spaces” are dominated and manipulated through

labor and money and if the proper policies are not implemented, global businesses through their labor practices are creating economic inequalities. Culture is used to legitimize and produce social difference, for example, good taste, bad taste, standards, and brands. The perception that people that go to watch ballet or listen to opera, might not go to watch a soccer match is a perceived creation of social distinctions in terms of tastes and what you value. This can be linked to the perceptions created by the rich of what is supposedly good taste and quality. Cultural preferences and social domination are norms that are created by global business communities and the rich; their tastes become the standards and norms for other people to try to strive toward creating hierarchies of superiority, creating social separation and social hierarchy; this perpetuates the cycle of power, manipulation and domination engineered by trade, and global business to exercise power and control over consumers.

The cultural behavioral patterns and preferences of the vast majority of low income groups are perceived in society to be of bad taste because huge amounts of money have not been spent on their possessions. This has led to a judgmental, narrow-minded view of the power of money, the view that money buys taste and quality. In his analysis of class-based distinctions, Bourdieu (1984) discusses how the unity and aversion of classes are either united or separated by similar tastes. These distinctions, which reflect the level of a group's economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital, are used to show a group's status and rank in the social hierarchy. The advent of famous brands created a false sense of security in that anyone seen wearing a brand item of clothing is perceived to have quality and taste and those who could least afford it would spend their last cent trying to purchase an item of famous brand clothing merely to be seen wearing it. This false sense of identity and the desire to be accepted as part of the pack has created financial stress and frustration for multitudes of poor people. Acceptance and togetherness should not be a shallow materialistic object. The perception of the consumer is subject to tremendous pressure, through advertising and technology. According to Keller (2008), the brand association can be created via the association with attitudes, attributes, and benefits, respectively. Human beings have become weak and fill the vacuum they feel within themselves emotionally with increased consumption for materialistic gratification. "Materialism is a central element of societal cultures worldwide" (Diener and Seligman, 2004).

In the last twenty years more than at any other time in world history, materialism, the control money and wealth has over human equality and social engagement has been made very much a part of the current reality. Social domination and manipulation has the flavor of capitalist materialism. I believe the consumer mentality has created for the business world and people currently living in the world an imbalance in the manner in which materialistic goals are pursued. Materialism is the handmaiden of globalization. Shapiro (1987) in his article in Time Magazine states: “Materialism leads to moral corruption destructive to the state and to society at large: It leads to ‘transgressions’, ‘moral laxity’, ‘human failings’, ‘hypocrisy’, ‘uncontrolled avarice.’” Materialism highlights the deficiencies inherent in globalized economic structures which are premised on debt. Empathy and compassion is slowly eroding and we are becoming more like the technology we use than we ourselves realize.

THE SEEDS OF THE FUTURE—A NEW GLOBAL BUSINESS STRATEGY

COVID-19 has intruded on reality by creating patterns of behavior for survival. Social distancing, wearing of masks, gloves, testing, quarantine, isolation have become our new reality. This survival behavioral strategy does not support the future growth of global business environment. The rules of processing reality are changed; technology and automation have replaced, to a large degree, human interaction. If a close diagnosis of the human and global business predicament is undertaken there is a split between rationality and traditional ways of behaving, which I have discussed in the beginning of this chapter. This split can produce delusional problem solving, and survival of humans and the global business environment rests on a precipice which is looking frail and in some instances inadequate.

COVID-19 has with unprecedented speed created a turbulent inner world for everyone and seems to be an unrelenting force in the destruction of our once much appreciated interactions and closeness as human beings. This “invisible virus” has made people and corporations realize their inadequacies and frailties. The carnage in the business sector is a new phenomenon for many countries and governments. Many businesses are closing requiring bailouts to survive. Retrenchments are on the increase and the unemployment figures worldwide are alarmingly high.

CONCLUSION

With the advent of COVID-19 there is suddenly a global economic vacuum, a deep hole, through which you cannot see an end. The COVID-19 virus has made technology the tool of choice and the human predicament and the global business community is looking bleak unless the scientists can develop a vaccine in the near future.

In this chapter, I have analyzed the significance of creating an environment embracing dialogue, inclusivity, high emotional intelligence, and a Unity of Perspectives to contribute significantly to the positive feeling of employees, although they come from diverse backgrounds. Employees are the heart of an organization and the policies, flexibility, and consultative managerial processes they experience in their day-to-day encounters in their organizations instill in them the feeling of being part of a greater mission and vision. There is a need for greater flexibility, understanding, and empathy among global partners of addressing cultural diversity and inclusivity in the decisions and actions that are taken in the global business environment.

REFERENCES

- April, K., & Blass, E. (2010). Measuring diversity practice and developing inclusion. *Dimensions, 1*(1), 59–66.
- Bauman, Z. (2001). The great war of recognition. *Theory, Culture and Society, 18*(2–3), 137–150.
- Bourdieu, P. t. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bower. (2012). Leadership Coaching: Does it really provide value? *Journal of Practical Consulting, 4*(1, Fall), 1–5.
- Cobb, J. (1982). *Beyond dialogue: Toward a mutual transformation of Christianity and Buddhism*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Crossan, J. (1975). *The dark interval: Towards a theology of story*. Niles, IL: Argus Communications.
- Diener, E., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). Beyond money: Toward an economy of well-being. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 5*(1), 1–31.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Goleman, D. (2001). *Emotional intelligence competencies cluster*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Heitner, K. L., Kahn, A. E., & Sherman, K. C. (2013). Building consensus on defining success of diversity work in organizations. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 65*(1), 58–73.

- Hofstede, G. (1994). The business of international business is culture. *International Business Review*, 3(1), 1–14.
- Jordan, P. J., Ashkanasy, N. M., & Hartel, C. E. J. (2002). Emotional Intelligence as a moderator of emotional behavioral reactions to job insecurity. *Academy of Management Review*, 27, 361–372.
- Keller, K. (2008). *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring and managing brand equity*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Peason/Prentice Hall.
- Kreitner, R., & Kinicki, A. (2001). *Organisational behaviour* (5th ed.). New York: Mc Graw Hill.
- Lytle, A. I., Brett, J. M., Barsness, Z. J., Tinsley, C. H., & Janssens, M. (1995). A paradigm for confirmatory cross-cultural research in organisational behaviour. *Research in Organisational Behaviour*, 17, 167–214.
- Mac Kay, R. B., & Chia, R. (2013). Choice, chance and unintended consequences in strategic change: A process understanding of the rise and fall North Co Automotive. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(1), 208–230.
- Marx, K. (1963). *Selected writings in sociology and social philosophy* (T. B. Bottomore, Trans. & T. B. Bottomore and M. Rube, Eds.). London: McGraw-Hill.
- Pitts, D. (2006). Modeling the impact of diversity management. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 26(3), 245–268.
- Senge, P. (1992). *The fifth discipline*. Milsons Point: Random House.
- Shapiro, W. (1987, May 25). What's Wrong? *Time Magazine*, p. 28.
- Shimizu, K., & Hitt, M. A. (2004). Strategic flexibility, organisational preparedness to reverse ineffective strategic decisions. *Academy of Management Executive*, 18(4), 44–59.
- Smart, N. (1981). *Beyond ideology: Religion and the future of western civilization*. London: Collins.
- Sosik, J., & Megerian, I. (1999). Understanding leader emotional intelligence and performance: The role of self-other agreement on transformational leadership perceptions. *Group and Organization Management*, 24(3), 367–390.
- Stackhouse, L. (1986). *Public theology and political economy: Christian Stewardship in modern society*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B.Eerdmans.