

Analyzing the Moderating Role of Culture in Online Social Networks through Social Spatial Imagery, Xenocentrism, and Word-Of-Mouth

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Abstract

In a sample comprising of global cross-cultural teams of 1,240 participants from developed countries (e.g., United States and Italy) versus 1,176 participants from emerging economies (e.g., China, India, Colombia, Brazil, and Malaysia), the current research demonstrates how high social spatial imagery (SSI) enhances xenocentrism amongst users in global virtual teams (GVTs), and this further increases negative electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) shared in social media networked environments. The authors provide evidence suggesting that group culture moderates the relationship between SSI and WOM, which further impacts project outcomes. Low power distance, individualist and masculine cultures exert strong and positive relationships between xenocentrism and negative eWOM, thus enhancing overall project performance. In contrast, high power distance, collectivist, and feminine cultures exert positive relationships between xenocentrism and positive eWOM, thus enhancing overall project outcomes. The authors discuss theoretical and managerial implications for social media based projects with group culture and xenocentrism influencing these relationships in strongly- versus weakly-tied online social networks.

Keywords

social spatial imagery, xenocentrism, word-of-mouth, group culture, social media

Biographies

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Vas Taras, Ph.D. received his PhD in International Human Resource Management and Organizational Dynamics from the University of Calgary, Canada and his Masters in Political Economy from the University of Texas at Dallas. He teaches International Business at the Bryan School of Business and Economics at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is the X-Culture Project Director (www.X-Culture.org). Vas conducts research on cross-cultural and global virtual teams and crowd-based business problem solving, and experiential learning. His publications have appeared in the Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of International Business Studies, Journal of International Management, Organizational Dynamics and other respected outlets. He is an Associate Editor of the International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management, and the Editorial Board member of Journal of International Business Studies, Journal of International Management, and Management Research Review. He is a recipient of numerous research and teaching awards for his work in International Business. Vas has lived, worked and studied in half a dozen countries and has experience as a manager, businessman, and business consultant.