AN EMOTION PROCESS MODEL FOR MULTICULTURAL TEAMS

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The impact of emotion in organizations has been an increasingly popular – and increasingly popularized – topic in recent decades. In light of the often-sweeping claims that have been made in the name of “emotional intelligence” (e.g., Goleman, 1995), excitement among practitioners, academics, and the public alike has brought greater attention to the affective element of workplace life. Emotion is a particularly important concept for teams – in which members work interdependently toward a common goal, with emotions often running high as teammates experience, for example, affection, delight, interest, relief, disappointment, irritation, and rage. The emotional life of a team is an area in which national differences among members can make a uniquely challenging impact. Although emotion is an evolutionary adaptation of the human species, largely universal across cultural groups, the cultural differences that do arise can be both pervasive and insidious. Given the automatic and fundamental nature of emotional processes, we can be profoundly aware of the result of a cultural difference with little awareness of its source.

Colloquially when one refers to emotion, typically this entails the feeling state that can accompany a noteworthy experience. However, rather than referring broadly to emotion as a single concept, researchers in psychology have developed component process models (e.g., Frijda, 1986; Scherer, 1984) that map the stages of emotion into a series of separate chronological steps. These steps unfold so quickly that they can appear together to rep-

1 resent a single phenomenon. However, each is distinct, and researchers'
attempts to develop theory concerning the role of emotion in teams benefit
3 from considering separately each step and its potential impact on team
members.

5 The current chapter attempts to make two contributions to the literature
on emotion and culture in teams. The first goal is to present an integrated
7 process model of emotion and to review succinctly the psychological re-
search on cultural differences that are infused into each stage of the emotion
9 process. The second goal is to examine multicultural teams through the lens
of this emotion process model and, in doing so, to shed light on some of the
11 challenges and opportunities for the culturally diverse team.

The emotion process model draws heavily from Frijda (1986), Mesquita
13 and Frijda (1992) and Scherer (1984), and further incorporates components
elaborated by Ekman (1972), Gross (1998b, 2001), and Matsumoto (1989).
15 Component models generally focus on particular processes of interest to
theorists. However, because each component or stage of emotion is relevant
17 to the effective functioning of teams, we attempt to achieve breadth by
integrating past descriptions into a single model. The emotion process model
19 builds upon previous conceptualizations by incorporating the processes
from all stages, and reviewing the cultural differences present at each. Fig. 1
21 illustrates this emotion process model, in which each box represents an event
that takes place during the chronological sequence. The next four sections of
23 this chapter define and describe each major stage in turn: emotional ap-
praisal, experience, expression, and recognition. Each stage is part of a
25 sequential process through which emotions unfold. Although these stages
are distinct, they are interconnected with each other, such that similar
27 processes can affect more than one stage in the model. In the sections that
follow, we discuss cultural differences in both the core automatic component
29 of each process, as well as the regulation processes that include all of the
“conscious and non-conscious strategies we use to increase, maintain, or
31 decrease one or more components of an emotional response” (Gross, 2001,
p. 215). Although models of emotional intelligence often consider emotion
33 regulation to be a unitary concept (Law, Wong, & Song, 2004; Mayer,
Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2001), as with the core processes, each stage
35 of the emotion process corresponds to distinct and interrelated processes of
regulation (Gross, 1998b; Campos, Campos, & Barrett, 1989; Mesquita &
37 Frijda, 1992). To conclude each stage in the process model, we discuss its
implications for multicultural teams.

39 The second section of the chapter discusses how multicultural teams are
impacted by the cultural differences that arise in each stage of the emotion

Fig. 1.

1 process. Diversity, and diversity in particular in terms of national origin, is
3 growing as the modern workplace becomes increasingly multicultural (Black
5 & Mendenhall, 1990; Milliken & Martins, 1996). Multicultural teams face
7 unique challenges in that cultural background is often visible and highly
9 salient. It is the salience of these differences among team members that
11 strongly encourages members to draw categories and create distinctions
13 between those in the in-group versus out-group (Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly,
15 1992; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998), with a general preference for those who
17 are in-group members (e.g., McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 2001; Newcomb, 1956). The challenges faced by teams that are demographically diverse –
19 such as communication difficulties, failure to understand new perspectives,
21 and misunderstandings resulting from different values and norms (Bond &
23 Smith, 1996; Earley & Ang, 2003) – are likely to be amplified for groups that
25 differ in terms of members' national culture.

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15 Despite these challenges, few researchers have opened up the “black box”
17 of organizational demography (Lawrence, 1997) to explain exactly how di-
19 versity inhibits effective organizational outcomes. There is relatively little
21 guidance in particular on the processes that differentiate the single-culture
23 team from the multicultural team. In this chapter, we attempt to address this
25 gap by examining the intra-personal and inter-personal aspects of the emo-
27 tion process model in an effort. We argue that with increasing cultural
diversity comes diversity in emotional dynamics. Because the emotional
dynamics of teams are inherently social, after outlining each step in the
emotion process model we identify and elaborate on two themes relating to
the social sharing of emotion – the communication of internal states through
the expression and perception of emotion, and group mood that can result
from the convergence of emotional states across individual members.

STAGES OF THE EMOTION PROCESS MODEL

Emotional Appraisal

Emotional appraisal is an act of sense making: What does a particular event
mean for me? It is not the event itself – but rather an individual's subjective
evaluation of the event – that elicits and shapes emotions (Scherer, 1997b).
Thus, appraisal is the crucial first step in the emotion process, and describes
how we attend, interpret and ascribe meaning to a given event or stimulus.
First, emotional appraisal requires attention; given cognitive limits, we must
prioritize which events are even worthy of our notice. Second, we must code

1 the event, interpreting its meaning, and in particular its implications for the
self (Mesquita & Frijda, 1992). If another person in a team environment is
3 being rude, how one interprets the personal significance of this behavior
may change significantly the emotional response – for example, whether the
5 rude individual is a teammate, a customer, a supplier, or a competitor, and
whether the rude behavior is directed at an innocent bystander or an in-
7 stigator. Likewise, a bear approaching a campsite may elicit fear, but the
same bear in a zoo could result in delight. Often the cognitive evaluation of
9 stimuli associated with emotional appraisal occurs so quickly and automati-
cally, before our conscious awareness, that we may be unaware of this
11 individual component of the unfolding process. However, even in such
cases, we can see the role of appraisal processes by examining, for example,
13 how emotional reactions change over time and vary from person to person.
An event that may have caused great embarrassment during youth might in
15 adulthood leave one unfazed, and an event that makes one person angry
might make another person sad. Indeed, it can be the lack of conscious
17 awareness of the appraisal process – and the sense that appraisal is clear and
lacking a subjective interpretive lens – that prevents individuals from ques-
19 tioning and evaluating it. This results in a particular challenge to reconciling
colleagues' often vastly differing emotional appraisals.

21 Models of the appraisal process focus on the schema we use to convert
evaluations of events into corresponding emotional states, by considering
23 the personal meaning of events in terms of a series of dimensions. Scherer
(1984) elaborated a stimulus evaluation check model that focuses on the
25 questions posed by events, for which the answers determine the resulting
emotional state. For example, we ask ourselves whether an event has posi-
27 tive or negative implications for the self, who caused the event, and how
well we are able to respond. Further efforts have extended these categori-
29 zation systems, and the models have been tested to varying degrees across
cultural groups (Campos, Frankel, & Camras, 2004; Karasawa, 1995; Ma-
31 uro, Sato, & Tucker, 1992; Mesquita & Walker, 2003; Scherer, 1997a; Smith
& Ellsworth, 1985). Relevant dimensions within these models include novel-
33 elty, pleasantness, goal relevance, goal compatibility, and responsibility and
control. For example, an event must be novel to result in surprise, it must be
35 pleasant to result in joy, and it must connect with relevant goals to result in
eagerness. The dimension of control distinguishes a number of emotions.
37 Given a team facing a major failure such as the loss of a client or a botched
presentation, the perceived locus of control might distinguish among expe-
39 riences of anger (control by others), guilt (control by the self), or sadness

1 (control by no one). In this manner, differentiated emotional states arise
from the outcomes of stimulus evaluation checks.

3 *Cultural Differences in Emotion Appraisal*

5 Cultural groups can differ dramatically in the events that capture the at-
tention. That is, what even counts as a stimulus? Triandis (2000) argued for
7 cultural differences in this fundamental process, noting “members of differ-
ent cultures sample with diverse probabilities different kinds of things in
9 their environment” (p. 145). Masuda and Nisbett (2001) argue that cultures
differ in context sensitivity, such that individuals in some cultures pay at-
11 tention to objects as part of their larger context, whereas others pay atten-
tion only to the object itself. What elicits emotion in one culture may escape
13 notice entirely in another (Mesquita & Frijda, 1992). In a multicultural
team, for example, one member might accept a phone call in the middle of a
15 meeting. Some teammates may not appraise this event as significant or
direct any attention to it. Others may be mildly irritated by the teammate’s
17 lack of respect, and others may be angered. Thus, the same antecedent event
can be appraised in various ways. It is our expectations about the ordinary
19 state of the world – often culturally derived – that determine which events
we appraise in a team environment, and how we appraise them.

21 Appraisal theorists have argued that there is a universal tendency to cat-
egorize events in terms of a series of stimulus evaluation checks. Evidence
23 for these claims results largely from studies in which participants from var-
ious cultures describe examples of antecedent events leading to specific
25 emotions, and later participants from other cultural groups judge with good
accuracy the emotional state resulting from the descriptions of antecedent
27 events (e.g., Boucher & Brandt, 1981; Mauro et al., 1992). Many antecedent
events, particularly extreme events, are shared universally – if someone dies,
29 most people will be sad. However, many stimuli are more complicated, more
open to interpretation, and therefore more difficult to appraise. In these
31 situations, individuals will often rely on situated cognition to make sense of
a situation (Fiske & Taylor, 1991), and in the process will rely upon their
33 cultural norms.

Just as there are situations that appear to result in the same emotions
35 across cultures, there are dimensions of appraisal that appear to be used
across cultures as well. This is particularly the case for the most basic di-
37 mensions of appraisal. For example appraising the pleasantness of a stim-
ulus tends to result in the same emotions cross-culturally (Mauro et al.,
39 1992). By contrast, cultural differences emerge more strongly for dimensions
requiring more complicated evaluation processes, such as control, respon-

sibility and anticipated effort (Mauro et al., 1992; Scherer, 1997b; Mesquita & Walker, 2003). Not only are these dimensions more challenging to evaluate, their meaning is more open to culturally specific scripts. For example, control can be difficult to determine – who is to blame for what takes place? Members of individualistic cultural groups attribute greater agency to the individual (Morris & Peng, 1994), and thus may evaluate events to have greater attributed control, resulting in greater anger and less disappointment. Together, these findings imply that complex events with multiple potential meanings for those involved are the most likely stimuli for members of multicultural teams to appraise differently – with different resulting emotional states – following the same event. Differing cognitive appraisals of the same events can lead to conflict for team members (Fisher, 1998; Garcia-Prieto, Bellard, & Schneider, 2003; Pinkley & Northcraft, 1994).

Lest this discussion of the emotional appraisal process make it seem excessively analytical, it is worth noting that appraisal occurs with emotional goals in mind. *Feeling rules* guide one's aspirations for emotional experience, and these rules tip the appraisal process in favor of desired states. Feeling rules can differ greatly across cultural settings (e.g., Campos et al., 1989). For example, individualistic cultures such as those of Western Europe and the United States have been found to think about emotions largely in terms of positive versus negative states – and to value positive experiences – whereas collectivistic cultures such as China and Japan more often think of emotions in terms of socially engaged (e.g., anger) versus disengaged states (e.g., pride) – and to value engaged experiences (Kitayama, Karasawa, & Mesquita, 2004; Kitayama, Markus, & Kurokawa, 2000; Scollon, Diener, Oishi, & Biswas-Diener, 2004). If the leader of a team praises one member publicly for great work, depending on the feeling rules engaged, the member could appraise this praise to result in pride for standing out, or embarrassment for not better fitting in.

Although attention, schemata, and feeling rules are theoretically distinct constructs, they are intertwined and mutually reinforced. We pay attention to those events that our schemata argue have the greatest potential importance and impact on us. Likewise, feeling rules describing our desired states influence the schemata we use to determine those states, and therefore the events that we are vigilant to notice.

Regulating the Emotional Appraisal Process

One of the most powerful methods for ensuring adaptation to one's environment is to select environments for which one is already well adapted. The chronologically earliest form of regulating emotion is to limit exposure to

1 situations that evoke undesired emotions, and to increase exposure to those
evoking desired states. Situation selection by individuals, or *nitchpicking*, is
3 the tendency of individuals to select preemptively the situations to which
they wish to expose themselves, often without conscious knowledge of doing
5 so (Campos et al., 1989, 2004). Although appraisal is an intrapersonal
process, individuals may regulate their interpersonal environments as a
7 means of regulating appraisal. For example, teammates may avoid those
individuals whose emotional reactions they find aversive. Individuals are
9 more likely to find others' reactions aversive if they lack the meta-cognitive
awareness required to anticipate those reactions in a multicultural environ-
11 ment – a key component of *cultural intelligence* (Earley & Ang, 2003). Ac-
cordingly, team members tend to self-select into positions and roles that
13 require more or less exposure to stressful situations. Affective events theory
argues that nitchpicking within teams or organizations can lead to a kind of
15 emotional division of labor across individuals (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).
For example, a team norm dictating impersonality in certain business re-
17 lationships may limit exposure for some employees to situations where oth-
ers act in an affectively charged manner. Nitchpicking also rises to the level
19 of national cultures, leaving an imprint on members' typical exposure and
habituation to the range of emotion-eliciting events. Differences in feeling
21 rules that encourage the experience particular states lead, over time, sys-
tematically to differences across cultures in the presence of elicitors for those
23 states.

Once an individual is exposed to an event, next in the regulation of the
25 appraisal process is the choice of whether to notice. *Attention deployment* is
the process by which individuals selectively choose to attend to elements of
27 the situation (Gross, 1998b). Whereas situation selection involves altering
exposure to a situation, attention deployment involves selectively attending
29 to the situation. For example, upon receiving both good and bad news from
a colleague, a team member may choose to ignore the negative information
31 and attend to only the positive feedback. Such attention deployment can
occur consciously – as it does in a conversation that ends with the individual
33 putting the outcome out of his or her mind – or can occur automatically and
with little awareness.

35 Differences in attention deployment at the cultural level may result from
cultural differences in beliefs about the importance of given events
37 (Triandis, 2000). That is, we tend to scan the environment for what we
believe is important, and such beliefs are informed by cultural norms. For
39 example, some firms in Silicon Valley encourage employees to bring their
dogs to the office. Although a dog walking into a room with a team meeting

1 might not draw attention from members of some cultural groups, this may
2 attract significant attention from members of cultures in which dogs are
3 considered dirty, and it could evoke feelings of disgust. What may have first
4 seemed novel and elicited emotion can become, if repeated, hardly worth
5 excitement. On the other hand, for someone who finds the dog sufficiently
6 aversive, its continuous presence may produce a negative reaction that
7 builds over time. In both cases, we are more likely to attend to stimuli that
8 seem outside of the ordinary, and the novelty of stimuli varies across cul-
9 tural groups.

10 The next step chronologically for individuals to regulate their appraisal
11 process is to revise their schemata for appraising emotions. For example, a
12 teammate may be horrified by a colleague's outburst the first time, but then
13 develop a situation-specific schema to dismiss such outbursts from the same
14 colleague in the future. Because change to the schema itself typically occurs
15 after an emotion is experienced, we discuss this phenomenon more in the
16 section on regulating emotional experience.

17 *Emotional Appraisal in Groups and Teams*

18 Taken together, cultural differences in situation selection, attention deploy-
19 ment, and the application of schemata to the emotion appraisal process have
20 powerful implications for diverse teams. Members of multicultural teams
21 can work in the same objective environment yet find their emotions driven
22 by different stimuli within that environment, and they may even have a
23 range of different emotions evoked by precisely the same stimuli. For ex-
24 ample, team members from different cultures will have different norms for
25 events as simple as daily pleasantries. "How are you?" in the US is generally
26 answered with "good, and you?" On the other hand, Germans ask the same
27 question only when they truly want to know how the other feels. German
28 members of a team might feel that Americans behave superficially by asking
29 a caring question without actually wanting to know the answer. A German
30 team member who is unaware of American norms might appraise the lack of
31 follow-through to the question as an insult, while American team members
32 might be taken aback by a German who provides a genuine response to this
33 rhetorical question or who stops and listens after asking it. These differences
34 in norms will lead to the same event resulting in different appraisals, and
35 consequently eliciting different emotions.

36 It is important to note that appraisal is only the first step in the emotion
37 process. Although, for the sake of conceptual clarity, we examine each stage
38 in the process as distinct – in practice it is nearly impossible to separate the
39 implications for teams of this one stage in the process without examining all

others. In order to continue this discussion, therefore, we move to the next stages in the emotion process model.

Emotional Experience

Emotional experience is the closest process to what is colloquially described as *emotion*. This is the stage associated with the psychological and physiological sense of being affected emotionally by an event (Frijda, 1986). Although there is a long debate regarding whether mental awareness precedes physiological arousal or vice versa (e.g., Zajonc, 1998; James, 1884; Schachter & Singer, 1962), the experience of a situation and the physiological aspects of emotion cannot easily be separated. Indeed, James (1884) argued that fear without awareness of one's heartbeat, breathing, muscle tenseness and trembling can hardly be thought of as fear. Experience is a crucial stage of the emotion process because it is experience that leads directly to the behavioral and cognitive responses to emotion. One evolutionary role for emotion is to respond to survival challenges with action – captured in the origin of the term emotion from the Latin word *promotionem*, to move forward. Emotions are means to move us, to propel us to response. Action tendencies are “action and the impulse for action, or their absence ... one wants to hit, destroy, or retaliate, or jump and shout, to regain a lost person” (Frijda, 1986, p. 231). In addition to these behavioral action tendencies, emotion has an impact on cognition by providing information about the world around us (Clore & Tamir, 2002; Schwarz & Clore, 2003). For example, the sensation of fear provides information about the likely safety of surroundings. Thus, emotional experience serves a valuable role for adaptation.

Cultural Differences in Emotional Experience

Although there is great overlap in the emotional experience of individuals from diverse cultural groups (Scherer & Wallbott, 1994), cultural differences in appraisal processes result in cultural differences in the tendencies to experience different emotional states. For example, focusing on the appraisal dimension of control, Solomon (1978) explained the low incidence of anger among the Utku Eskimos by citing a reluctance to blame another person for a negative event. Although this example may be extreme, it serves to illustrate how cultural groups can vary widely in their norms about the appropriateness of experiencing various emotional states, which feeds into the frequency of actual experience. We focus primarily on those cultural differ-

ences in experience that result from differences in the chronologically earlier process of emotional appraisal. However, it is also possible for people from different cultural groups to differ in their habitual emotional experience due to the presence of systematically different elicitors – for example, as close-knit communities offer more opportunities than war-torn regions to experience joy. Further, it is also possible for members of different cultural groups to appraise the same emotional state and yet experience it in subtly different ways (Matsumoto, 1993). A variety of studies have catalogued variation across cultural groups in the frequency of particular emotional states and the intensity of those states (e.g., Aune & Aune, 1996; Buunk & Hupka, 1987). Culturally influenced feeling rules can govern variation in the typical emotional states experienced.

Theoretically based approaches have focused on the ways in which higher-order dimensions of culture can influence conceptions and categorizations of emotional experience. We focus here on three such accounts, the classification of emotions in terms of valence, social engagement, and dialecticism. As discussed above, individualistic cultures tend to classify emotions largely in terms of positive versus negative valence, and value positive experiences more highly. By contrast, collectivistic cultures tend more to classify emotions in terms of those that are socially engaged – that is, emotions that “belong to the self–other relationship rather than being confirmed to the subjectivity of the self” (Mesquita, 2001, p. 73) – which are more desirable than socially disengaged emotional states signifying independence from others (Kitayama et al., 2004). Members of collectivistic cultures tend to rate their emotional lives as less pleasant (Mesquita & Karasawa, 2002), but more socially engaged (Scollon et al., 2004). This tendency results, for example, from the tendency of members of interdependent groups to rate emotions like shame as more desirable than pride, given the inherent disengagement of a state like pride that sets one apart from the group. A variety of empirical studies have replicated such findings, albeit using a range of terminology to explain these effects (e.g., Grazzani-Gavazzi & Oatley, 1999; Kitayama et al., 2004; Mesquita, 2001; Tsai, Simeonova, & Watanabe, 2004). Dialecticism refers to comfort with the simultaneous experience of states or traits that might be considered contradictory (Nisbett, Peng, Choi, & Norenzayan, 2001; Peng & Nisbett, 1999). Members of individualistic groups tend to categorize emotions in an oppositional or bipolar manner, largely considering multiple emotional states to be mutually exclusive, whereas members of collectivistic groups more often report multiple emotions simultaneously (Bagozzi, Wong, & Yi, 1999). Along these lines, empirical findings show a generally negative correlation for the ex-

perience of positive and negative emotion among Americans, but a generally positive correlation among Chinese (Bagozzi et al., 1999).

Although much of cross-cultural research has taken place in the individualistic–collectivistic dimension, recent research has connected cultural differences in values with the appraisal and experience of different emotions (Rozin, Lowery, Imada, & Haidt, 1999). Rozin and his colleagues build on Shweder, Much, Mahapatra, & Park (1997) rhetoric of morality – focusing on the values placed on community, autonomy, and divinity – and argue that different cultures have differential patterns for defining and appraising morally unacceptable behavior. In a series of studies, they show that experiences of contempt, anger, and disgust, which are three moral emotions critical to relationships with others, are linked to the appraisal of a situation based on a culture’s moral rhetoric (Rozin et al., 1999). For example, in a culture such as India where purity is central to the moral code, morally inappropriate behaviors related to purity can elicit feelings of disgust (Shweder et al., 1997). In the US where autonomy is prized, including individual freedoms and rights, moral violations of autonomy results more often in feelings of anger. Thus, underlying differences in something as fundamental as moral perceptions of what is right and wrong can result in differences across groups in the frequency of experiencing particular emotions.

Regulating Emotional Experience

Once we experience an emotion, the regulation of that experience can take two forms: reappraisal – changing how we think about a situation – and suppression – attempting to banish the feelings themselves (Gross, 2001). Reappraisal involves cognitively transforming a situation to alter its emotional impact (Gross, 1998b). For example, a teammate may be upset initially that an important meeting has been rescheduled. That individual might rethink this reaction and decide that, perhaps, rescheduling is helpful for allowing additional time to prepare. Over time, attempts at reappraisal are incorporated into the very appraisal schemata governing initial evaluations. By contrast, suppression does not attempt to turn back the clock of the emotion process model and to revisit the appraisal process – a deep method of regulation – but attempts to exert individual control at the stage of emotional experience, by muting or denying the emotion. For example, the teammate upset about being rescheduled may decide to try not to think about the meeting. Despite attempts at suppression being relatively common, studies show that they are rarely successful and often result in leakage. In fact, through ironic processes, attempting to deny an emotion often

1 backfires into increased physiological activity (Gross & Levenson, 1997). On
a routine basis using suppression to regulate one's emotional states generally
3 corresponds to negative health, decreased job satisfaction and greater intentions to quit a job (Gross & Levenson, 1997; Gross, 1998a; 2001; Coté &
5 Morgan, 2002). By contrast, reappraisal appears to be a more healthy method of handling undesired emotional states, associated with positive
7 health benefits and job satisfaction (Gross, 1998a; Coté & Morgan, 2002).

It would seem likely that cultural differences in appraisal process would
9 lead to corresponding cultural differences in reappraisal as well – governed by the same schemata and feeling rules. Those cultures in which feeling rules
11 are the most strong and tightly governed would be likely to exercise greater regulation over emotional experience. Members of independent cultures
13 may be less inclined to suppress their emotions, and may react to unpopular emotional states either by choosing to change them through reappraisal or
15 standing firm in their experience. By contrast, members of interdependent cultural groups would likely attempt greater regulation in order to adapt to
17 the expectations of others (Ekman, 1972). Indeed, in an interdependent cultural context, attempts at suppression may not be associated with negative
19 health problems. Given a more dialectic form of emotional experience, members may feel no discomfort with the contradiction arising from feeling
21 an emotional state that is different from the one considered appropriate. Thus, even if members of a culturally diverse team are in the same situations,
23 and appraise them the same way, they may differ in the extent to which they manage their resulting experience of emotion.

Emotional Experience in Groups and Teams

27 Much of the research on emotion in teams has focused on the experience component within the emotion process. We argue that it would be valuable
29 to extend this research to culturally diverse contexts. Although every person is capable of a wide range of emotional experiences, there are also systematic
31 individual differences in the frequency of experiencing particular states. This construct of affectivity – largely conceptualized in terms of positive versus
33 negative tendencies (Watson Clark & Tellegen, 1988) – has been a powerful influence on the field. Staw et al. (e.g., Staw & Barsade, 1993; Staw, Sutton,
35 & Pelled, 1994; Wright & Staw, 1999) found that individuals who self-reported more frequent positive emotional experience tended to be more
37 effective in their workplaces. Within teams, affectivity has been an increasingly powerful lens for studying emotion. Groups frequently converge in the
39 tendencies of individuals to experience particular emotional states and this convergence generally has beneficial consequences for teams (e.g., Barsade

1 & Gibson, 1998; Barsade, Ward, Turner, & Sonnenfeld, 2000; Bartel &
3 Saavedra, 2000; George, 1990; Kelly & Barsade, 2001; Totterdell, 2000). A
5 limitation of the existing body of studies is the sampling exclusively from
7 Western cultural groups, so the applicability to other cultures remains un-
9 tested. We hypothesize that group convergence will be less likely to occur in
multicultural teams – in which team members are less likely to start by
sharing the same emotional state following the same events, and in which
team members are less likely to “catch” each other’s feelings through emo-
tional contagion. We discuss this hypothesis in greater detail below.

Given these types of differences, members of multicultural teams may
differ in their likelihood of experiencing particular emotional states and
combinations of states (Aune & Aune, 1996; Bagozzi, Verbeke, & Gavino,
2003; Zammuner & Fischer, 1995). Taken together, differences in the fre-
quency, intensity and type of emotions experienced by different cultures
leave the potential for mismatch in the emotions experienced by individuals
in multicultural teams.

The above discussion focuses on stages of the emotion process that are
largely intra-personal. That is, these first stages takes place within a single
person’s perception and experience. However, given that emotion adapted
largely for us to manage our relationships with others, in the next section we
begin a discussion of the inherently interpersonal elements of the emotion
process.

Emotional Expression

Emotional expression consists of the outward displays of one’s internal
state, taking place largely via nonverbal channels such as facial expressions,
vocal tone, and body posture and movement. This is perhaps the most
crucial component of emotional functioning in team contexts, given that
emotional expressions are visible directly to others, and therefore have the
most potential to affect teammates’ interpersonal interactions. Psychologists
within a social functionalist perspective have even argued that emotions
evolved largely for their signaling value, providing an adaptive mechanism
for individuals to communicate and thus coordinate their relationships and
interactions with others (DePaulo & Friedman, 1998; Ekman, 1992; Keltner
& Haidt, 1999; McArthur & Baron, 1983). As such, the expression of emo-
tion is an act of social sharing – a message intended to provide others with
information to use as feedback. Indeed, this feedback function is so strong
that, according to the facial feedback hypothesis, individuals themselves

1 experience emotion resulting from their own facial expressions, vocal tones,
and body postures (Blairy, Herrera, & Hess, 1999; Hatfield, Hsee, Costello,
3 & Weisman, 1995; Zajonc, Murphy, & Inglehart, 1989).

Although there is an active debate regarding the extent to which emo-
5 tional expressions appear spontaneously as accurate readouts of one's internal
state – versus the extent to which they serve as emblems with an
7 intended social audience (Ekman, 1972; Fridlund, 1991; Hess, Banse, &
Kappas, 1995; Kappas, 2003) – members of teams are impacted by both
9 these phenomena; the presence of spontaneous readouts of members' emo-
tional states as well as intentional acts attempting to portray such states.

13 *Cultural Differences in Emotional Expression*

The scientific study of emotion has been intertwined with the question of
15 emotional expression's universality versus cultural specificity. Clearly, a
large component of expression must be universal: for example, people from
17 different cultures can watch foreign films and understand much of their
original feeling. Likewise, people can develop strong bonds with pets while
19 communicating largely through nonverbal displays of emotion. Thus, mes-
sages on an emotional level can cross barriers of culture and even species.
21 Classic studies have supported this intuition, demonstrating that posed
photographs of facial expressions from the United States are recognizable in
23 many countries around the world, even to those groups with nearly no
exposure to western civilization (Ekman, 1972; Ekman, Sorensen, & Friesen,
25 1969; Izard, 1971; but see also Fridlund, 1994 and Russell, 1994 for critiques
of this work). Much of the empirical evidence used to support claims that
27 emotional expressions appear identically across cultures has been indirect,
coming from research on the recognition rather than expression of emotion.
29 If facial expressions are well recognized across cultural groups, many the-
orists have concluded, they must be produced identically across groups as
31 well (e.g., Ekman, 1972). After all, it would be difficult to recognize a display
that is completely different from anything produced nearby. Additional re-
33 search recording spontaneous facial expressions across cultures and coding
the expressions' muscle movement has focused on patterns of convergence
35 across cultural groups, documenting great similarity in responses to similar
stimuli provoking the expressions (Camras, Oster, Campos, Miyake, &
37 Bradshaw, 1997; Ekman, 1972; Ekman & Rosenberg, 1997). On the basis of
these and related studies, many psychologists have concluded that emo-
39 tional expression has a largely biological basis, with relatively little room for
differences across cultural groups.

1 However, the presence of commonalities in expressive style does not pre-
3 clude systematic local variations across nations as well, with large overlap
5 yet also subtle distinctions. Further, subtle cultural differences in emotional
7 expression can have important implications for the members of teams.
9 Taking as a starting point Tomkins and McCarter's (1964) metaphor that
11 cultural differences in emotional expression are like "dialects" of the "more
13 universal grammar of emotion" (p. 127), a recently proposed dialect theory
15 of emotion argues for the presence of automatic and spontaneous differ-
17 ences in the style of expression across cultures that are subtle enough to
19 allow generally accurate communication across groups yet substantive
21 enough to result in greater potential for miscommunication (Elfenbein &
23 Ambady, 2002, 2003). Even in laboratory tasks in which participants at-
25 tempt to pose expressions with the goal to be clear and intelligible to others
27 – thus revealing culturally normative styles – systematic yet subtle differ-
29 ences in expression style emerge across national groups (Elfenbein, Beaupré,
Leveque, & Hess, 2005). These expressive dialects may have a particularly
strong impact on emotions that frequently signal social intent to an audi-
ence, such as anger and contempt, rather than those that are more biolog-
ically determined – for example, strongly linked to reflexes or highly similar
across species – such as surprise and fear (Elfenbein et al., 2005). As such,
dialects may impact those emotional states most frequently communicated
in team settings. Dialects may also be particularly strong for those aspects of
nonverbal communication that are under greater conscious control, and
therefore used the most voluntarily within a team interaction. Given the
largely automatic nature of emotional expression, it can be challenging to
develop the meta-awareness of one's culturally influenced style (Earley &
Ang, 2003) needed to select elements from one's expressive repertoire that
are clear and intelligible to teammates from other cultural groups.

Regulating Emotional Expression

31 Deliberate regulation processes are another source of variation – at times
33 dramatic – in emotional expression across cultural groups. Ekman (1972)
35 referred to display rules as "management techniques" (p. 225) allowing
37 individuals to "decouple their expressions from their feelings." (p. 127).
39 They are defined "as procedures learned early in life for the management of
affect displays and include deintensifying, intensifying, neutralizing, and
masking an affect display. These rules prescribe what to do about the dis-
play of each affect in different social settings; they vary with the social role
and demographic characteristics, and should vary across cultures" (Ekman
et al., 1969, p. 87). That is, display rules interrupt the coherence between the

1 emotional experience and the emotion that is displayed. Display rules can
2 become over-learned to the point where the expressor is barely aware of
3 their impact on modulating an emotional display. Even under such circum-
4 stances, however, they are distinct from cultural dialects in that display rules
5 change the intensity or category of emotion displayed, whereas dialects are
6 qualitative differences in the appearance of the same intended emotion.
7 Thus, the two concepts are independent of each other.

Examples of display rules abound in teams even within a single culture.
8 Display rules include an airline flight attendant smiling at a rude passenger
9 (Hochschild, 1983), or a bill collector showing anger to an indifferent debtor
10 but a sympathetic display to an apologetic debtor (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989;
11 Sutton, 1991). In teams, norms can emerge regarding the appropriateness of
12 expressing various emotional states. Display rules are thus adapted to serve
13 a function within social relations. Corresponding to social goals that can
14 differ tremendously across cultures, display rules in emotional expression
15 vary greatly across cultures as well. For example, Ekman (1972) argued that
16 display rules in collectivist societies such as Japan serve to promote greater
17 harmony and cooperation by suppressing the display of negative sentiment.
18 Display rules are connected closely to feeling rules; individuals are more
19 likely to intensify or use as a mask those emotional states consistent with
20 feeling rules, and to deintensify, neutralize, or mask over the display of
21 emotions against those rules. Individuals from some cultures do not expect
22 their feeling to match their expressions, but instead they expect to express
23 what is appropriate, no matter how they feel.¹ For example, there are cross-
24 cultural differences in the extent to which individuals feel a need to follow
25 emotional regulation norms (Gordon, 1989; Grandey, Fisk, & Steiner, 2005,
26 p. 895). In customer service jobs, the “impulsively” oriented French, who
27 value authentic emotional expression, and consequently less need for reg-
28 ulation, experience less pressure to adhere to “service with a smile” norms.
29 In contrast, members of the U.S. are more “institutionally” oriented, sug-
30 gesting “strong norms about regulating emotions to fulfill institutional roles
31 and standards” (Grandey et al., 2005, p. 895). Thus, multicultural teams are
32 likely to include wide variation among members in their emotional expres-
33 sions – resulting both from differences in underlying feelings as well as the
34 regulation of their outward displays. Even those experiencing the same
35 emotional state may express it slightly differently, not express it at all, or
36 express a different emotion entirely.

1 *Emotional Expression in Groups and Teams*

3 Cultural differences in emotional expression can have profound effects on
5 culturally diverse teams. Although cultural differences in appraisal and ex-
7 perience are important, largely their impact is downstream in that such
9 differences lead to visible behaviors. The expression of emotion is a signal
11 that is available for consumption by colleagues. Members of multicultural
13 teams can be confused by differences in emotional expression that violate
15 their expectations. For example, Japanese businesspeople often respond to
17 unreasonable requests with the display of smiles and affirmative nods as a
19 display rule to signify politeness rather than agreement. The misinterpre-
21 tation of these displays as assent has created confusion for many US team
members who have expected their Japanese counterparts to follow through
with these requests. One might expect similar difficulties in a team com-
prising of American and French members, in which French are less likely to
adhere to norms of regulating emotional display (Grandey et al., 2005). In
this case, members of both cultural groups might experience surprise and
confusion over the perceived emotional experience of the other group. These
perceptions of difference may heighten the already-salient cultural differ-
ences that may, in turn, lead to negative outcomes such as dissatisfaction
and desire to leave the group (Milliken & Martins, 1996; Tsui, Egan, &
O'Reilly, 1992).

23 *Emotion Recognition*

25 The expression of emotion does not occur in a vacuum; rather, other people
27 are inherently connected as an audience. Although people can and do ex-
29 press emotions alone, indeed often when this occurs there is another person
31 in mind, an implicit audience member (Fridlund, 1994). The impact of
emotional expression is not direct, but rather mediated through others'
33 perception. Emotion recognition is the flip side of expression's coin – if the
display of emotion is an act of social sharing, then the question arises
35 whether others get the message. As such, the outward expression of person
A's emotion may serve as a stimulus for person B, inspiring the repetition of
37 the chronological stages of the emotion process in another person. Thus,
individual sensitivity to others' emotional states – frequently automatic,
implicit and unaware – is the building block for dyadic-level phenomena
39 such as empathy, and group-level emotional phenomena such as group
mood and emotional contagion (e.g., Barsade, 2002; Bartel & Saavedra,
2000; George, 1990). Even for primitive contagion processes that are me-

1 diated by the unconscious mimicry of others' expressions (Hatfield, Ca-
cioppo, & Rapson, 1993), at some level facial feedback via mimicry still
3 requires others' expressions to appear similar enough to our own that their
mimicry results in an expression that evokes a particular emotional state. In
5 team settings, perceiving the expressive behavior of the people around us is a
window into their reactions and attributions, their inclinations and inten-
7 tions, their likely future behaviors, and at a basic and evolutionary level
whether they should be approached or avoided. Even in the modern world,
9 knowing when someone is having a bad day can greatly improve survival.
Understanding the emotions of others can assist in coordinating activities
11 and in working interdependently, can facilitate in the construction of effective
interpersonal networks, can make relationships more predictable, and
13 can provide a powerful source of feedback (e.g., Ashkanasy, Hartel, &
Zerbe, 2000; Fineman, 1993; Riggio, 2001). These social functions are par-
15 ticularly important for high-functioning teams. A teammate may wonder,
for example, whether or not colleagues support a proposal, whether a par-
17 ticular colleague is angry about a mistake or disappointed by the quality of a
work product, and whether a remark was sarcastic versus sincere. As these
19 examples illustrate, the emotion being perceived is often related directly to
the content of a team's work.

21 Given its functional value, most people develop reasonable accuracy at
detecting the emotional states of others. However, there are also individual
23 differences. The ability to perceive emotion is a core component of emo-
tional intelligence (EI), (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999; Mayer, DiPaolo,
25 & Salovey, 1990), and so far it is the component of EI with the most reliable
and extensively validated measures (Ciarrochi, Chan, & Caputi, 2000; Da-
27 vies, Stankov, & Roberts, 1998; Roberts, Zeidner, & Matthews, 2001). Some
of the most robust evidence for EI's predictive validity in organizational
29 settings has come from the positive relationship between job performance
and emotion recognition accuracy (Elfenbein, Marsh, & Ambady, 2002).
31 For example, in one study, business executives and Foreign Service officers
who were better at identifying the emotional content expressed in voice
33 samples and video clips also achieved greater performance ratings and were
promoted to higher-level positions (Rosenthal, Hall, DiMatteo, Rogers, &
35 Archer, 1979). The overall positive association between nonverbal decoding
skill and workplace effectiveness has replicated in counseling settings
37 (Campbell, Kagan, & Krathwohl, 1971; Costanzo & Philpott, 1986; Schag,
Loo, & Levin, 1978), medical settings (DiMatteo, Friedman, & Taranta,
39 1979; Tickle-Degnen, 1998), and public service settings (Elfenbein & Am-
bady, 2002b).

1 *Cultural Differences in Emotion Recognition*

3 Given the importance of recognizing others' emotions accurately for effective-
5 ness in team settings, it is worth considering cultural variations in accuracy
7 levels. Although much of an emotional message is retained across
9 cultural barriers, some does appear to get lost along the way. The loss can
11 present a challenge for multicultural teams. Much of the evidence for cultural
13 differences in the recognition of emotion come from the same classic
15 studies, described above, that were designed to demonstrate its universality.
17 Although participants from many nations recognized posed emotion expressions
19 better than one would expect by chance, samples outside the
21 United States rarely achieved accuracy rates as high as American samples
23 when viewing these American stimuli. For example, Ekman et al. reported
25 accuracy rates ranging from 86% for Americans (Ekman, 1972) down to
53% for tribespeople in New Guinea (Ekman et al., 1969) when viewing
American emotional expressions. In the most extreme case, the Bahinemo
tribe they tested could not respond to the individual photographs, and
labeled them all as "angry" (Sorensen, 1975). In a meta-analysis of cross-
cultural research on emotion recognition using a wide range of methods,
Elfenbein and Ambady (2002a) found evidence for an in-group advantage,
in that individuals were better at recognizing emotions expressed by mem-
bers of their own cultural group. Greater geographical proximity and/or
opportunities for cross-cultural contact seemed to reduce the extent of this
advantage. This pattern had gone largely unnoticed due to the Western
background of most researchers and experimental materials, and a goal
among researchers to demonstrate that work originating in the West was
"universal" (Matsumoto & Assar, 1992).

27 The recently developed dialect theory attempts to reconcile within a single
29 conceptual framework the range of empirical evidence for cultural universals
and differences in the expression and recognition of emotion. Elfenbein
et al. (Elfenbein & Ambady, 2003) have argued that subtle dialects in the
31 universal language of emotion result in a potential for greater misunderstanding
when communication takes place across cultural boundaries.
33 Judgments of other people's emotional expressions are faster and more accurate
for perceivers familiar with these subtle dialect variations. Although
35 prototypical displays of emotion are recognizable in many countries around
the world, they are recognized with lower rates of accuracy outside of the
37 country in which researchers developed these displays. This suggests a limit
to inferring indirectly that emotions must be produced identically across
39 groups due to their recognition across groups. According to dialect theory,
emotional expressions can still be largely recognizable to perceivers from

1 foreign cultures, even if the perceivers themselves might produce a slightly
2 different display.

3 Dialect theory emphasizes cultural learning as a source of differences in
4 emotion recognition across national groups. Although evidence is mixed
5 whether acquaintance with any given individual improves the accurate per-
6 ception of that individual's displays (e.g., Ansfield, DePaulo, & Bell, 1995;
7 Kenny & Acitelli, 2001; Sabatelli, Buck, & Dreyer, 1982; Zuckerman,
8 Lipets, Koivumaki, & Rosenthal, 1975), across cultural groups there is
9 consistent evidence that greater exposure and familiarity improves emotion
10 recognition (Ducci, Arcuri, Georgis, & Sineshaw, 1982; Elfenbein & Am-
11 bady, 2003; Sorensen, 1975). These findings provide a hopeful message, in
12 that greater cross-cultural contact for the members of multicultural teams
13 can serve to reduce the challenge of perceiving accurately each other's
14 emotional states.

15 Even when the cultural differences in perceiving emotion are relatively
16 subtle, they can still have important real-world consequences. Elfenbein and
17 Ambady's (2002a) meta-analysis revealed that in-group nation judgments of
18 emotions were, on average, 16% more accurate than out-group nation
19 judgments. Small misunderstandings can accumulate over time, and can
20 lead to cross-cultural interactions that are slightly less smooth than same-
21 culture interactions. In some cases, the nature of a misunderstanding can be
22 dramatic. In Bond, Omar, Mahmoud, and Bonser (1990), perceivers from
23 the USA and Jordan were unable to distinguish between displays in which
24 out-group posers attempted to convey great liking versus great disliking for
25 another person.² In their study, within-culture judgments were relatively
26 accurate, whereas cross-cultural judgments were basically no better than
27 flipping a coin. A team could be derailed by misattributions on such a basic
28 level.

Regulating Emotion Recognition

31 Regulation processes also impact the recognition of emotion, and provide a
32 platform for further cultural differences. Decoding rules (Buck, 1984) refer
33 to norms about the appropriate perception of others' emotions. Matsumoto
34 (1989, 1992) argued that negative emotion can be so damaging for social
35 harmony that members of collectivistic cultural groups do not merely at-
36 tempt not to experience it and attempt to limit its display, but they also
37 inhibit their ability to understand such displays that do occur. Likewise, in a
38 workplace setting, the flip side of Hochschild's (1983) airline flight attend-
39 ants display rule to smile at rude passengers is the decoding rule of over-
looking these passengers' hostile behavior. Note that decoding rules can be

1 deliberate – such as a team member telling another that they should ignore
an unintended blurt – or, as with display rules, they can be over-learned and
3 practiced so frequently that they occur largely outside of the perceiver's
awareness. The regulation of emotion at this stage is sometimes difficult to
5 distinguish, because the individual can regulate emotion recognition or reg-
ulate the reactions that occur upon recognizing others' emotions.

7 A further regulated process in the recognition of emotion comes from the
preconceived notions that perceivers may have about the emotional reper-
9 toire of another individual, for example based on the individual's cultural
group. Indeed, the first researchers to note an in-group advantage in their
11 data referred to it as ethnic bias (e.g., Kilbride & Yarczower, 1983; Mark-
ham & Wang, 1996), suggesting that individuals may be less motivated to
13 decode accurately emotional expressions from members of visibly different
cultural groups. This notion fits with evidence that decoders are more ac-
15 curate in their judgments of emotions the experimenter leads them to believe
have been expressed by in-group rather than out-group members (Hess,
17 Senecal, & Kirouac, 1996; Thibault, Bourgeois, & Hess, 2005), presumably
due to greater engagement in the task. Likewise, in a multicultural team,
19 colleagues may be more attentive to the emotional states of in-group mem-
bers, due to greater motivation to understand and respond to them. Further,
21 stereotypes about the likely emotions experienced by members of different
cultural groups (Hess et al., 2000) may introduce specific biases that alter the
23 base rates of the states attributed to individuals across cultural groups. For
example, African American team members may find themselves presumed to
25 be angry more often than their peers. In a judgment study, participants more
frequently rated Japanese expressions as happy or neutral, and American
27 expressions as angry or fearful (Elfenbein, Mandal, Ambady, Harizuka, &
Kumar, 2002). Individuals are particularly less likely to attribute to out-
29 group members those secondary emotions that are uniquely human char-
acteristics, such as the experience of love (Leyens et al., 2000, 2001). To the
31 extent that these stereotypes are incorrect, perceivers who use them will
decrease their accurate recognition of colleagues' emotional states.

Emotion Recognition in Groups and Teams

35 The recognition of emotional expression is crucially important in teams,
where teammates depend on these subtle signals in order to work inde-
37 pendently with colleagues. However, in teams with members from multiple
cultural groups, such signals can get crossed, with negative consequences for
39 the team. For example, in a case study of Russian and American business
collaborations, researchers found that both groups frequently cited com-

munication and misunderstanding as a primary source of frustration with their work together (Millhous, 1999). Speaking to the importance of recognizing emotional expressions, the Russians in this sample reported examples of frustration going unnoticed, e.g., “we finally asked the Americans to say goodbye properly before they raced out the door, but it took them a while to catch on” (p. 305). Minor and major difficulties may arise when members of cross-national teams fail to understand their teammates’ emotional signals.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MULTICULTURAL TEAMS

At this point in the chapter, we turn from a discussion of the stages of the emotion process model to their implications for multicultural teams. Particularly relevant to team functioning are the inherently social elements of the emotion process, the stages of emotional expression and recognition. Indeed, the earlier components of appraisal and experience are represented as upstream inputs to these two downstream processes, in that appraisal results in experience, which feeds into expression. Thus, we focus the discussion below on two themes that relate to the social sharing of emotion. First, we discuss the communication of internal states through emotional expression and recognition, and in particular the misunderstandings that arise more frequently in cross-cultural settings. Second, we discuss the impact of cultural differences on the phenomenon of group mood that results from the convergence of emotional states across group members.

Understandings and Misunderstandings

The group differences that arise at every stage of the emotion process leave the members of multicultural teams vulnerable to misunderstand each other. Consider the example of a team holding a meeting at which Member A arrives 10 min late, and Member B gets angry and later discusses this with Member C. At the level of appraisal, being late to a meeting may attract different levels of attention across teammates, who may or may not even direct their attention to lateness as an emotion-eliciting stimulus. Member C might remark to B, “I didn’t even notice that A was late.” Next, teammates may apply different schemata to being late, as one national group might consider 10 min of lateness a sign of disrespect and irresponsibility, another might consider it within the range of normal, and another might even con-

sider it early. "It wasn't a big deal", Member C might recall. These differences in appraisal lead correspondingly to different emotional experiences, in this case with Member A clearly irritated and Member C indifferent. Another teammate might have been surprised, or saddened by a perceived lack of respect for those who sat waiting. Member B may have sat through the meeting seething, but containing her anger, and A assumed nothing was wrong because A himself would certainly have made his feelings known had he been that irritated. Perhaps even though Member B tried to suppress the outward expression of her anger, some signs might have leaked through inadvertently. However, being from a different cultural group, A could have been challenged to recognize these signals.

Diversity in members' moods can be confusing. To the extent that others' emotions provide information to help interpret one's social environment (e.g., Schwarz & Clore, 2003), receiving a host of mixed messages can bewilder a sensitive teammate. Sometimes these messages appear mixed only due to miscommunication. Even when team members from different cultural backgrounds appraise an event similarly, experience the same emotion, and express it openly, cultural differences in their style of emotional expression can lead to breakdowns in interpersonal understanding. If the accurate perception of others' expressive behavior provides a valuable window into their reactions in the team environment, then the greater difficulty of achieving such accuracy across cultures presents a challenge for multinational teams. Effective interpersonal functioning can suffer greatly from the basic misunderstanding of emotional signals – imagine, for example, a team consisting of Bond et al.'s (1990) perceivers from the USA and Jordan unable to distinguish much better than a coin flip between each others' expressions of great like versus great dislike for another person. It could be hard for members of such a group to coordinate hiring, client contacts, sales leads, or multi-party negotiations, unable to recognize each other's most basic signals.

It is worth noting that increased exposure to different cultures can lead members of multicultural teams to learn to recognize better their teammates' emotional displays. Indeed, research shows that the in-group advantage in emotion recognition decreases with greater exposure to a host culture (Elfenbein & Ambady, 2003). Indeed, George and her colleagues suggest that experience negotiating with members of other cultures may allow individuals to develop schemas that allow them to deal successfully with members of that other culture (George, Jones, & Gonzalez, 1998) – and these schemas may encompass many if not all of the components of the emotion process. Perhaps for this reason, longitudinal research has shown that the impaired

1 performance of culturally diverse teams is most pronounced when the teams
are newly formed, but that these negative performance effects tend to dis-
3 appear over time (Bond & Smith, 1996; Thomas, 1999; Watson, Kumar, &
Michaelson, 1993). It may be that the ability to adapt to new cultural set-
5 tings (Earley & Ang, 2003) helps individuals to learn about the emotional
norms of new cultural groups. Earley and Ang's (2003) model of cultural
7 intelligence suggests that not only will exposure to a single new culture help
individuals learn to recognize the emotional expressions of that culture, but
9 that it may also help individuals to develop meta-perceptions that increase
adaptability to learn the emotional nuances of other cultures as well.

13 *Cultural Diversity as Emotional Containment and Amplification*

15 When multicultural teams first come together, cultural differences in emo-
tion at the stages of appraisal, experience, expression, and recognition are
17 individual level phenomena. These individual-level misunderstandings and
discord can iterate as team members respond to each other, so that soon the
19 team experiences not only the cumulative sum of these individuals' differ-
ences, but also the development of group-level norms. These group norms
21 that emerge may be dominated by the norms of one particular cultural
group, or they may be new hybrid norms incorporating numerous cultures
23 represented (e.g. Earley & Mosakowski, 2000). The type of norms that
emerge may depend on the composition of the group, where the group is
25 located, the host culture, and power asymmetries. For example, in a team in
a Singaporean branch of a US multi-national that is dominated by US
27 expatriates, the emergent norms might follow a Western model. However,
the same group might develop a more Eastern model if the parent company
29 is also Singaporean. A US software firm located in the Silicon Valley might
find its teams populated by a diverse population of multi-ethnic Americans
31 and expatriates from various parts of the world. In such an environment, the
emergent team norms might not follow the cultural norms of one group but
33 rather might take a hybrid form. We argue that these group-level norms can
serve either to accentuate or to ameliorate the underlying differences among
35 individuals.

A dampening function on group emotion can result from barriers to
37 sharing. If, as discussed above, individual sensitivity to others' emotional
states is the building block for team-level phenomena such as group mood
39 and emotional contagion (e.g., Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; Barsade, 2002;
George, 1990), then decreased sensitivity to the emotions of members of

1 other cultural groups serves to weaken these phenomena. Examining the
convergence and spread of emotional states across team members in terms
3 of each step in the process model, first members are likely to have greater
initial diversity in their emotional states. Having noticed different stimuli
5 and appraised stimuli using different schemata and feeling rules, their initial
emotional experiences are more likely to vary. Further, the mechanisms for
7 increasing convergence are impaired. Across cultural boundaries team
members are less likely to perceive subtle signals of colleagues' emotional
9 states, and thus less likely to respond in kind by mimicking and adopting
those states.

11 Having said this, cultural diversity can also serve as an amplifier of emo-
tion within teams. First, cultural diversity itself is a stimulus, one that can
13 create anxiety and discomfort – but also excitement and eagerness – in the
face of working closely with colleagues from unfamiliar backgrounds. Cul-
15 tural diversity can act as a further stimulus when team members find that
their colleagues do not act in predictable ways and violate their expectations
17 for responses to their own emotions. Further, just as individuals can catch
the moods of those around them (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994), in
19 the case of errors in emotion recognition we argue that individuals may
catch the moods that those around them appear to – but do not actually –
21 experience. If biases and stereotypes lead colleagues to misunderstand each
other's states, they may read signal into the noise of everyday interaction
23 and create convergence toward a state that was never originally present.
These factors can lead multicultural teams to be more emotionally intense
25 environments for their members.

Are teams better off with containment or amplification of emotion? We
27 argue that the spread and convergence of emotion among teammates can be
a double-edged sword. Researchers exploring affective diversity have found
29 that teams can benefit from similarity in emotional states among members
(Barsade et al., 2000). Barsade et al. (2000) argued that the relationship
31 between mood convergence and team performance is curvilinear – at low
levels of convergence, members of teams cannot come together, but at ex-
33 cessively high levels they may be distracted by the emotional intensity. Thus,
emotional similarity may be beneficial in moderate doses, but not in over-
35 dose. Accordingly, Tuncel and Doucet (2005), who suggest that mood di-
versity is related to greater accuracy in decision-making. In culturally
37 diverse teams, the cohesion and productivity that can result from effective
coordination among team members is likely to suffer if members do not
39 achieve synchrony in terms of their moods. However, we argue that taken to
an extreme, being emotionally in sync can produce a kind of *groupfeel* – the

1 emotional equivalent of groupthink (Janis, 1982). Groupfeel can be defined
as the dysfunctional overextension of a functional process. We distinguish
3 groupfeel from more beneficial emotional synergy in the sense that – up to a
point – it can be beneficial to the on the “same page” as others emotionally.
5 However, this can grow to be dysfunctional to the extent that the natural
diversity of emotional reactions becomes disallowed. Individuals need to be
7 able to maintain at least some degree of their spontaneous emotional states,
lest they begin to suffer the negative health outcomes suggested by those
9 who study the negative effects of suppression (Coté & Morgan, 2002;
Grandey et al., 2005; Gross, 1998a; 2001; Gross & Levenson, 1997). These
11 results suggest that team members should not be forced to package their
feelings; rather, they should be comfortable being authentic. We argue that
13 this is more likely in multicultural teams. However, at levels of mood conver-
gence below that of groupfeel, synchrony among teammates in their
15 emotional states can be valuable for teams. To the extent that cultural
differences serve to limit the convergence of positive emotion in a team, or
17 create negative emotion in a team, multicultural teams may suffer. On the
other hand, to the extent that negative emotion may also spread less when it
19 is misunderstood, the dampening function of cultural diversity may serve to
benefit teams.

CONCLUSION

25 Our goal in the current chapter has been to present a model of cultural
differences in emotion, and to draw on this model to discuss challenges that
27 result for teams working across cultural boundaries. We began by present-
ing an integrated component process model of emotion, outlining the
29 chronological steps that unfold as an event is noticed and appraised, the
resulting emotional state experienced, and outwardly displayed for others to
31 recognize (or not). Cultural differences are infused into each step in the
emotion process, and each step in turn is relevant to the effective functioning
33 of teams. We hope that this chapter helps to import from psychology into
organizational behavior an emphasis on the theoretical distinction among
35 different components of the emotion process. In doing so, we hope also to
encourage additional research on some of the stages of studied less often in
37 team settings, such as emotion recognition.

We use this model as our lens to discuss the impact of culture on the
39 emotional functioning of multicultural teams. Given the coordination and
communication necessary for effective teamwork, we identify two areas in

1 which to expect culture to affect interpersonal interactions. First, we argue
2 that members of multicultural teams will experience greater misunderstanding
3 ing at a basic level due to the differences that emerge at each emotion stage.
4 Second, we argue that cultural differences serve as both a dampener and an
5 amplifier of emotional states across teammates. In both cases, our primary
6 prediction is that cultural differences serve as a challenge for effective
7 teamwork. However, particularly for emotional convergence we argue there
8 may also be a benefit to greater diversity, in the case in which cultural
9 differences serve to contain the spread of emotion and such spread is not
10 always for the better. Empirical work in this area would be welcome, to
11 refine and test such ideas.

12 We close by arguing that it is the hidden and automatic nature of emo-
13 tional processes that, ironically, often makes their impact at times so bold
14 and noticeable. The individual steps of the emotion model occur so quickly
15 they largely go unnoticed and unquestioned. This speed can give us the sense
16 that we perceive the world directly, unmediated through a series of steps
17 shaped by our cultural background. Our goal has been to make the case that
18 culture imprints each stage of the process of noticing events, appraising their
19 meaning, experiencing emotion, expressing ourselves, and understanding the
20 expressions of others. These are among the building blocks of the effective-
21 ness of teams.

23 **UNCITED REFERENCES**

24
25 McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook (2001).
26
27

28 **NOTES**

- 29
30
31 1. We thank Lorna Doucet for this point.
32 2. Although this study is atypical for its extreme findings, it is also noteworthy for
33 using methodology with unusually high ecological validity, involving the judgment of
34 spontaneous moving expressions in a field of work often dominated by still pho-
35 tographs of the face.
36
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