Guest editorial

Healthy organizations: insights from Latin American research

Introduction

Matters involving relationships among cultural and managerial issues, healthy organizations and performance have been growing in relevance in management literature, especially when focused on Latin American reality (Gupta, 2019; Jordão *et al.*, 2014). Despite this increase in importance and its impact on academic and business communities, this subject is still to be explored in depth.

Recognizing and exploiting this research gap, the purpose of this paper was to introduce the special issue on healthy organizations using insights from Latin American research, aiming to broaden our understanding of above-mentioned relationships and providing new evidence on competitive, sustainable and healthy organizational alternatives.

How do we ontologically conceptualize healthy organizations? What are the epistemological impact dimensions of alternative, contaminated organizations? Why does the axiological value of healthy organizations differ from that of the contaminated organizations? Where can we find the formative foundations of healthy organizations? When do contaminated organizations become a normative reality, despite the presence of healthy formative cultural foundations? Who is responsible for ensuring the health of organizations – in particular, is the responsibility limited to the managerial leaders of the organizations? How appropriate is it for the value-based academic institutions that are focused on training professional managerial leaders to absolve themselves from the responsibility for not developing a sensible appropriate model of management education that is oriented toward the ground realities correlated with healthy organizations? What can we learn from the Latin American research in a comparative international context? These are the research themes that were rigorously investigated and vigorously debated in the 2017 CLADEA Conference, organized by the Jack H. Brown College of Business and Public Administration at California State University San Bernardino.

CLADEA is a premier Latin American management education conference, comprising two parallel programming – the research programming involving the academics and the practitioners, and the development programming involving the deans, the academic directors and the corporate leaders and focused on the emerging societal challenges and responsible innovative management and management education models. Professor Vipin Gupta chaired the research programming at 2017 CLADEA conference, and Dean Lawrence C. Rose chaired the development programming. Professor Ricardo Vinícius Dias Jordão, as a member of the CLADEA board, played a pivotal role in forming collaborations with locally relevant and internationally acclaimed publication outlets for the presenters at the conference.

This special issue is based on three carefully selected papers from the conference and three additional papers for a comparative context. The first two papers help identify metaphysical foundations for making sense of the insights from the Latin American research, guided by an alternative cultural coefficient. The final paper serves to situate the insights from the Latin American research in a universal cross-cultural management context.

Developing metaphysical foundations for making sense of culture-specific research

In the first paper, Jain (2019) conceives what a healthy and great place to work is like in terms of five pillars of human capital – physical coefficient, intellectual coefficient, social coefficient, emotional coefficient and spiritual coefficient. She proposes that human capital, conceived as a

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human being whose needs for well-being are satisfied is a product of these five coefficients. In other words, human coefficient = spiritual coefficient × emotional coefficient × social coefficient × intellectual coefficient × physical coefficient. This five-fold framework is based on the five dimensions of a human being identified by ancient Indian sages. We, therefore, refer this as wisdom perspective. Using an augmented Trust Index of the Great Place of Work, she proposes that physical coefficient can be measured as personified pride in self (job), workgroup (team) and organization (corporate image). The intellectual coefficient can be measured as the degree of empowerment and opportunities for growth and development. Social coefficient can be measured as equity, impartiality and justice elements of fairness. These manifest as employer branding for equity in opportunities, a vivacious work environment that is holistic and therefore impartial, and innovative HR policies and practices that are situationally relevant and therefore just. Emotional coefficient can be measured as camaraderie within the workgroup and respect for stakeholder engagement without the workgroup. Spiritual coefficient can be measured as the credibility of managerial leadership (as an organizational embodiment of corporate image). As all the dimensions of augmented Trust Index are measurable, we refer to this as a scientific perspective. Overall, a major contribution of her work is to provide a pathway for the managers to address the grand challenge of sustainable healthy organizations by deploying a professional modern scientific perspective for furthering human capital, grounded in traditional wisdom.

In the second paper, Yadav *et al.* (2019) investigate the mediating role of innovation in market orientation and performance relationship. Market orientation is about the entrepreneurial cultural capabilities for proactively knowing about emerging customer needs (customer orientation), organizational work-culture investments into consequential knowledge (inter-functional coordination) and responsive stakeholder community ecosystem network-wide trading of desirable knowledge to service the emerging market opportunities (competitor orientation). Proactive knowing about emerging customer needs serves to personify the culture of the entrepreneurial organization in terms of the aspirational value system of those customers and therefore manifests the physical coefficient. Consequential knowledge serves to empower the community ecosystem of stakeholder networks, by creating an opportunity for growth and development and therefore manifests the intellectual coefficient. Trading of desirable knowledge is conditional on the fairness of exchange in terms of equity, impartiality and justice and therefore manifests the social coefficient. We can therefore identify physical coefficient in terms of customer orientation, intellectual coefficient in terms of inter-functional coordination and social coefficient in terms of competitor orientation. An innovative work culture of servicing the emerging market opportunities serves to promote camaraderie within the workgroup and respect for stakeholder engagement without the workgroup and therefore manifests the emotional coefficient. A consciously managed emerging socially minded entrepreneurial cultural capability, organizational work-culture investments and an ecosystem of networking stakeholder community trading serves to further the credibility of managerial leadership and therefore manifests the spiritual coefficient. In such sense, we can identify the purpose of the investigation conducted by the authors as evaluating the mediating role of innovation-oriented work culture (the emotional coefficient) in the relationship between market orientation (conceived in terms of the alignment of the physical, intellectual and social coefficients) and performance (the spiritual coefficient). Using structural equations modeling, the authors find that in an Indian sample of small and medium enterprises, only inter-functional coordination (intellectual coefficient) has a positive relationship between performance (spiritual coefficient). Consequently, innovation-oriented work culture (emotional coefficient) has no mediating effect on the relationship between market orientation and performance in this sample.

Method, hypothesis and findings

Taken together, the first two papers help us develop metaphysical foundations for making sense of culture-specific research. Traditionally, the emotional coefficient is measured as an intellectual coefficient for knowing the social coefficient, i.e. emotional coefficient = intellectual coefficient × social coefficient. Proactive knowing is a subjective behavior that modern science shows is subject to entity bias. In other words, the physical coefficient is contaminated and has three impacts. First, ontological impact: physical coefficient contaminates and descends the value of the emotional coefficient as part of constructing the system value of market orientation. Second, epistemological impact: When emotional coefficient mediates the physically contaminated system value of market orientation, there is an ascending need to polarize managerial leadership as a spiritual coefficient for differentiating the true entity value of primeval market orientation from the contaminated system value of the constructed market orientation. Third, axiological impact: Stronger the mediating powers of a pure emotional coefficient, the greater the organizational performing value (polarized value of managerial leadership as an embodiment of corporate image). Fourth, metaphysical impact. There is a positive mediating effect of innovation-oriented work culture on the relationship between the contaminated primeval system construct of market orientation and the consequential entity construct of performance. Consequently, findings of zero mediating effect in the second paper are significant because they imply one of the following three conditions:

(1) Value of the metaphysical wisdom culture coefficient = 0.

(2) Value of the metaphysical wisdom culture coefficient = 1.

- The small and medium enterprises have an at-par knowing linkages with their customers (such as due to the norms of uncertainty avoidance), without the contamination-effect of the physical coefficient.
- The cultural context of the study manifests at-par value of trading knowledge among stakeholders (such as due to the norms of in-group collectivism), without the polarization-effect of the social coefficient.
- As both physical and social coefficients = 1, only intellectual coefficient within market orientation has a positive effect on performance.
- As social coefficient = 1 and emotional coefficient = intellectual coefficient, innovation orientation work culture has a mediating effect of 1 (i.e. empirical findings of no significant mediating effect).

(3) Value of the metaphysical wisdom culture coefficient = ∞:

- There is an additional invisible moderating ecological coefficient whose value = 0.

We refer the first as the "dynamic condition," as the entire value is dynamic and there is zero prior formative capability effect of metaphysical wisdom. We refer the second as the "technological condition," as the entire knowing value is immanent as a constant system factor within each citizenship entity. We refer the third as the "technological exchange condition," as the performing of each citizenship entity is not oriented toward the constant local ecological (system) factor but instead is guided by an alternative exchange using a variable entity factor – i.e. intellectual coefficient. The three Latin American papers (third, fourth and fifth papers in the issue) highlight each of these three alternative conditions.

Dynamic condition – value of the metaphysical wisdom culture coefficient = 0

In the third paper, Ortegon-Cortazar (2019) evaluates the competing attraction power of the alternative pure natural ecological coefficient versus that of a predominating contaminated

physical coefficient in Latin American shopping centers, using a visit experience survey study of 470 customers across 29 shopping centers in the city of Bogota, Colombia. Predominating physical coefficients (measured as the profile and the agglomeration of the customers) in Latin American shopping centers comprise the variety of offer (manifesting high intellectual coefficients), accessibility (manifesting high social coefficients), innovative space design (manifesting high emotional coefficients) and entertainment (manifesting high contaminated spiritual coefficients) as a path to polarize differentiated ecological coefficient, given the presence of 1,800 shopping competing centers in the region. This differentiated ecological coefficient services a virtual fake imaginary atmospheric reality of status and power by creating a culture of exclusion focused on the international luxury brands. The alternative pure natural ecological model, based on the primeval authentic grounded native Latin American culture, relies on vegetation and natural green elements as a path to service not only health of the following customer seeking to trade the spiritually uplifting value but also the health of the servicing managerial leader who has been enlightened about the value of the local cultural coefficient as a self-luminous differentiator. Because of the competitive race syndrome, the polarized contaminated differentiated ecological coefficient has a cost-escalating proliferating effect. On the other hand, the pure natural alternative ecological coefficient creates a cost-effective refreshing breathable and healthy attraction power within each shopping center; a center that is inviting and conducive to the homegrown brands and social entrepreneurs. Using an exploratory factor analysis of the survey responses, the author identifies seven measurable factors – customer profile (physical coefficient), offer variety (intellectual coefficient), accessibility (social coefficient), innovative space design (emotional coefficient), entertainment (spiritual coefficient), luxury (ecological coefficient) and eco-natural environment (primeval cultural coefficient). This measurement model is confirmed by the findings of the confirmatory factor analysis as well, which shows how many shopping centers have integrated eco-natural environment as an essential metaphysical factor within their contaminated space design as a path to multiply their competing attraction power.

The third paper thus highlights how predominating effects of the contaminated ecological coefficient make it difficult for the organizations to understand the value of the pure primeval cultural coefficient. Consequently, organizations become a mediating factor in ascending social polarization, descending human health, negating the value of natural ecological endowments, escalating economic costs, isolating the nation and perpetuating a follower psychology among the entire citizen group. In such conditions, the value of metaphysical wisdom is zero.

Technological condition – value of the metaphysical wisdom culture coefficient = 1

In the fourth paper, Chong *et al.* (2019) investigate the last mile logistic profile within the congested commercial district of Lince in the megacity of Lima, Peru. The physical center of the last mile retail distribution in the district of Lince comprises private taxis specializing in the delivery of supplies to the wholesalers and supermarkets throughout the megacity. It is characterized by a strong intellectual work culture characterized by innovative methods for self-organizing a congested space, with lack of any space for parking or even loading or unloading. Active social profile characterized by frequent stops by private taxis, seeking to develop consolidated supplies from diverse stores, and by pedestrians, seeking to discover diverse stores (in a context of 97 per cent streets designed as two-lane one way, 83 per cent streets with zero signs and few traffic regulation signals), is the deciding factor in the emotionally intense frequent small vehicle collisions and disruptions in the flow of traffic. All these diverse energies are responsibly managed by small and medium enterprises that comprise 90 per cent of the entities within the commercial district and make up its spiritual

core. Given these conditions, there is little polarization of the social coefficient – only 14 per cent of the deliveries are made using vehicles that carry the logo of a company. Small and medium enterprise traders are not limited by the physical dominance of private taxis and effectively use a range of additional options, such as cargo trucks, private cars and public transportation, as a way to know their customers and to create long-term in-group relationships. Innovative work culture linkages are the key to their performance and endurance as the spiritual core of the district and indeed the megacity as a whole (through their vital role in the entire forward diverging supply chain), as well as the entire nation (through their vital role in the entire backward converging supply chain). Under such conditions, the value of metaphysical wisdom is 1.

Technological exchange condition – value of the metaphysical wisdom culture coefficient = ∞

In the fifth paper, Castro-Ríos *et al.* (2019) take the perspective of Colombian doctoral students to investigate the effectiveness of doctoral management education programs in training "social scientists capable of taking on the challenge of explaining and generating new paradigms in accordance with the organizational reality." Research methods in management as a social science are developed as a way to take on the complex challenges of the emerging context by generating new knowable paradigms for understanding the value of the local physical center. An important human well-being objective is to help the emerging market citizens transcend the psychology of devoted followership of the professional leadership of large industrial organizations (the physical reality of a global world), to not diffuse the entire performing value of the strong intellectual center to the latter. Doctoral programs oriented toward the local ground reality for creating knowable paradigms that are relevant to the socially minded citizens of an emerging market nation. Prior scholars have asserted that the doctoral programs in Colombia have a predominating emotional focus on the issues deriving from the national challenges of social health and economic development. The authors seek to validate this assertion using a scientific approach. To help understand the context, they note the presence of 11 government-approved management doctoral degrees granting degree-granting institutions in Colombia, of which two-thirds are private and the rest are public. In total, 45 per cent are situated in the capital city, Bogota. Authors use a survey of 39 doctoral students to report a predominance of presentations at the international conferences rather than national conferences. Most students rely on the funding from the university or are self-funded using private and non-government sources. About three-fourths of the universities have international agreements allowing the doctoral candidates to do a research internship at an overseas partner university. Consequently, international social networks are the dominating factor in the research interests of the doctoral students, with few identifying nationally relevant issues, such as marketing, innovation, leadership and social responsibility, as their study fields. International internships and social networks appear to be disempowering, as they have a negative effect on the publication productivity of the doctoral students (average publications before joining the program versus after joining the program), although this negative effect is justified in terms of superior publication quality. However, in reality, doctoral students are not engaged in discovering solutions to the emerging socially minded entrepreneurial challenges for technological growth and workforce productivity within Colombia. They are instead charged with the responsibilities for developing theoretical contributions that have few linkages with the technological and productive foundations of the nation. Such a spiritual coefficient of the doctoral programs in Colombia is correlated with limited local opportunities for the development of healthy organizations and workforce.

The fifth paper thus highlights the pathway for ascending the contaminating effect of the physical coefficient (the theory effect of large industrial organizations) as a consequence of the socially minded non-citizens servicing their own contaminated social coefficient (the polarizing ideal effect of international networks whose context is dominated by the large industrial organizations). Therefore, the mediating innovation effect of the emerging investigating scholars also becomes contaminated, engendering a false self-serving emotional belief that the contaminated theorizing is meaningful for understanding, mitigating and solving the national challenges of social health and economic development. Eventually, a contaminated spiritual effect is created that serves to strengthen the followership mind-set and limits the development of empowering, contamination-free, healthy organization and workforce in the nation. By consciously targeting an alternative ecological coefficient (the grounded experience perspective of the local subjects), a responsible investigating scholar can transcend the limitations of the apparent reality and help enlighten the entire citizenship universe. We can, therefore, conclude that the value of the alternative ecological coefficient = 0 and infer the value of metaphysical cultural coefficient as infinity.

Discussion – accountability for the varying values of metaphysical wisdom culture coefficient

In the sixth and final paper, Gupta and Zhang (2019) investigate the causative accountability factors in the formative capability of the firms to seek adaptation using equilibrium-seeking strategies versus normative natural green programming of creating a dynamic disequilibrium by consciously selecting sensible local contexts. Their study is based on a survey of small and medium enterprises in China. The survey findings confirm that a management model focused on systematic adaptation to the predominating competitive industrial ecology puts escalating pressures for polarizing energy into the contaminated path because of the forced "strategic fit" trade-offs between the competitive performance (inorganic, creating a sequence of chemical reaction effects) and the green natural performance (organic, without any negative effect). On the other hand, a management model focused on conscious selection of the environmentally conscious community ecosystem of stakeholder networks as the dominating spiritual center furthers the ecological cost-effectiveness of the entire organization, without the supernatural exchange of primeval uniquely differentiated, inclusive, diverse, engaging and responsible local immanent culture with the polarized, contaminated and commoditized leader oriented global work culture. The authors concluded that a management model guided by a sustainable cultural coefficient (the healthy workforce system) helps firms transcend the high-frequency short waves correlated with the predominating competitive industrial ecology (the organizational exchange system) and the low-frequency long waves correlated with the dominating spiritual center (the stakeholder networking system).

Overall, these findings substantiate the value of Gupta's (1998) equations as part of the dynamic model for measuring a unit of technological growth. Using ten of Vipin Gupta's equations, we summarize the major insights from the evidence presented in the six papers.

First, ontologically, a healthy organization is one that knows how to service the formative infinite value of the metaphysical cultural coefficient. Such knowable organizations do not need to norm alternative ecological coefficients by forming a followership of the polarized experiences of alternative entities. The transformative spiritual coefficient (bipolar desire for universal leadership) is sustained at a zero level. The metaphysical emotional coefficient (multipolar entrepreneurial energy cost for correlating ascending followership value and descending leadership value and discovering an alternative) can be zero as well. Therefore, the social coefficient (a proxy for the invisible mental coefficient, manifesting mental pressure for the responsible management of social networks) does not need to proliferate. The intellectual

coefficient (pressure for self-organizing mental stimuli) need not be activated, as metaphysical cultural coefficient services the differentiation factor naturally and cost-effectively. Consequently, the physical coefficient (i.e. the self-managing power) sustains the infinite health factor of the organization, with zero contaminating human-effect. In other words, the technological cost for compensating the contaminating human-effect is directly proportionate to the alternative culture coefficient. Greater the alternative ecological coefficient, greater is the alternative spiritual coefficient, the alternative emotional coefficient, the alternative social coefficient, the alternative intellectual coefficient and consequently the contaminated physical coefficient.

Technological cost – a cultural effect. Second, epistemologically, an alternative, contaminated organization experiences a constant pressure for social survival, as a direct function of the value of contamination, within its own ecological context. It, therefore, experiences a desire for polarizing its unique leadership, seeking to master plan its ecological context and program followership linkages using the power of the emotional coefficient (such as emotional intelligence for binding entrepreneurial citizens into agency covenants). Descending entrepreneurial freewill escalates the costs for responsible management of social coefficient, needing the organization to self-organize alternative paths by developing its intellectual coefficient for motivating a sense of universal responsibility among the entities oriented toward their own well-being. Consequently, the contaminating cost-effect of alternative ecological coefficient escalates further. In other words, pressures for managing social coefficient within the local system (local-effect) escalate the cost of contaminated corporate-effect.

Technological cost – a corporate-effect × local effect. Third, axiologically, the value of a healthy organization differs from that of a contaminated organization because of descending priority on human effects (which are guided by primeval, metaphysical cultural coefficients) within the corporate organization and ascending priority on trading effects (which are guided by strong, alternative ecological work culture coefficients) for managing the local social networks. Descending human effects ascend the contaminating polarized corporate effects, and ascending trading effects descend the value of the local ecological effect.

Corporate-effect – a 1/human effect

Local-effect – a 1/trading effect. Fourth, metaphysically, formative foundations of healthy organizations are situated within the national system. Lower the spiritual coefficient within the national system, higher the desire for trading alternative emotional coefficients without the national system, with the escalating cost of servicing the social coefficient.

Technological cost – a 1/national effect. Fifth, contaminated organizations become a normative reality, despite the presence of healthy formative cultural foundations, when the citizens lack holistic experiential awareness of the social costs (i.e. cost of social coefficient) of the alternative international ecological coefficient and make their decisions guided by the perceived partial knowledge about the value of attracting the alternative international physical coefficient. Therefore, they diffuse the value of their metaphysical culture coefficient and seek technological trading as a path for creating an alternative culture coefficient to exchange their strong work culture linkages and weak international linkages.

Technological trading – a work-culture-effect

Technological trading – a 1/international-effect. Sixth, the responsibility for ensuring the health of organizations is not limited to the non-citizen managerial leaders of the organizations. It is eventually the responsibility of the academic institutions to develop a sensible appropriate model of management education that is oriented toward the cultural ground realities. In the race for educating modern professional leaders, academic institutions must not let themselves be a medium of diffusing a system of contaminated knowledge based on alternative cultural coefficients among their citizens. It is important for the

academic leaders to take time for creating a sensible doctoral education program (that accrues proficient exchange value) based on the metaphysical ground realities of their own cultural coefficients (that accrue proficient workforce value) and its dynamic correlation with the universal, international cultural coefficients (that accrue proficient networking value):

$$\text{Exchange proficiency} = \text{Workforce proficiency} \times \text{Networking proficiency}$$

Seventh, the deciding learning from the Latin American research presented at CLADEA 2017, in a comparative international context, is as follows: growing consciousness about the value of healthy organizations is linked to descending workforce proficiency and ascending networking proficiency. Subconscious ecologically motivated networking generates escalating cost of social and intellectual coefficients, thereby limiting the value of feasible international linkages, as well as normative profiting value of otherwise healthy organizations. By educating their citizens on how to consciously determine the value of their international linkages, academic institutions can help promote an alternative proficient model of a networking system that enhances the normative profiting value:

$$\text{Networking proficiency} = \text{Organizational profiting} \times \text{International} - \text{effect}$$

Eighth, to build on the rich academic as well as administrative insights from CLADEA 2017 assembly, there is an additional need for the scholars to investigate how all entities may trade the value of international linkages to catalyze the normative performing value of their organizations and polarize a healthy proficient workforce system without escalating cultural, ecological, spiritual, emotional, mental, intellectual and physical costs:

$$\text{Workforce proficiency} = \text{Organizational performing} \times \text{International} - \text{effect}$$

Concluding remarks

In conclusion, there is an opportunity for a metaphysical perspective grounded in the integration of the Eastern wisdom and the Western scientific perspectives. Specifically, as the work of Gupta (2019) demonstrates and the insights here substantiate,

human coefficient = cultural coefficient × ecological coefficient × spiritual coefficient × emotional coefficient × mental coefficient × intellectual coefficient × physical coefficient;

healthy human organization coefficient = f (primeval cultural coefficient) as evidenced by the sustainability of normative human behaviors over successive millennia; and

contaminated human organization coefficient = (dynamic ecological coefficient, metaphysical spiritual coefficient, axiological emotional coefficient, epistemological mental coefficient, ontological intellectual coefficient and scientific physical coefficient).

All in all, the dynamic ecological coefficients may necessitate a transformation in primeval cultural coefficients, thereby descending the health factor. The metaphysical spiritual coefficient may destroy the primeval cultural coefficient entirely (such as by isolating traditional cultural norms as paganism). The axiological emotional coefficient may polarize an alternative cultural coefficient guided by leader beliefs under pressure conditions seeking survival of the follower group. The epistemological mental coefficient may differentiate this alternative cultural coefficient guided by varying

interactions with the subtly predominant primeval cultural coefficient. The ontological intellectual coefficient may proliferate infinite alternatives to the universe of an alternative cultural coefficient, seeking a sustainable strategic management path. Scientific physical coefficients may contaminate each of these infinite alternatives by challenging their zero consequential health value and instead exchanging own subjective human effect that is contaminated with the subtle wish to substantiate the value of the alternative cultural coefficient as a path to ascend the entire follower group into an omnipotent power in correlation with the infinity of non-follower groups.

Although traditionally Latin America was characterized by highest levels of cultural power distance in the world, increasingly the entire world is experiencing rapid growth in the social, human, ecological, economic, national and psychological power distance. Insights from Latin American research, in the cross-cultural comparative context, can help enlighten our leaders about the root cause of the grand societal challenges facing our organizations today and help construct appropriate models for self-managing these challenges using a sensible proportion of cultural knowing and scientific knowledge.

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