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Navigating Cultural Convergence and Divergence in Sino-Russian Cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiatives: An Organizational Analysis Using Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory

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Abstract

In the contemporary landscape marked by dynamic transformations and progress, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has emerged as a pivotal catalyst, exerting a transformative influence on global political, economic, and cultural trajectories. Conceived by China in 2013 and rooted in the historical Silk Road, this initiative represents a concerted effort to reconsider international collaborations, integration, and development spanning across continents. Leveraging their inherent geographic positioning and strategic alignment, China and Russia have forged strategic alliances. The effectiveness of the Belt and Road Initiative hinges on the success of partner countries at every stage along the route. Cultural considerations are pivotal in facilitating and advancing transnational trade collaboration. Utilizing Geert Hofstede's cultural dimension model, we aim to assess variations in organizational behavior across five human resource management practices: organizational recruitment and selection, employee rewards and benefits, performance evaluation and feedback, training and development, as well as decision-making and leadership practices. This study conducts a comparative analysis in this domain. In the course of this investigation, secondary data derived from a transnational human resource management project were utilized. The study employed inferential independent t-tests through IBM-SPSS to meticulously scrutinize potential variations. Our findings reveal that culture exerts a noteworthy influence across various facets of the organization, manifesting considerable distinctions in communication, human resource policies, management styles, and decision-making approaches. This underscores the imperative of prioritizing negotiation, compromise, and adeptly managing these divergences in the context of cross-cultural collaboration and the administration of Chinese and Russian organizations.

Introduction

China introduced the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013, a contemporary iteration of its historical Silk Road (Mayer & Zhang, 2021). The initiative's objective is to establish an economic corridor and enhance economic interconnection by utilizing China as a hub to connect Asia, Europe, and Africa (Vangeli, 2017). Widely regarded as a paradigmatic shift in global economic and political cooperation, this project fundamentally redefines international collaboration, connectivity, and developmental paradigms (Garlick, 2019; Shen & Chan, 2018).

Within the framework of the BRI, the collaboration between China and Russia emerges as particularly noteworthy and efficacious. This prominence is attributed, firstly, to the geographical proximity of China and Russia, wherein their expansive and strategically advantageous geographical positioning fosters conducive conditions for bilateral cooperation (Feng et al., 2023). Secondly, the Belt and Road Initiative spearheaded by China aligns significantly with Russia's Eurasian Economic Union, creating a synergistic effect that propels advancements in economic cooperation (Shakhanova & Garlick, 2020). Notably, amidst the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and international sanctions, Russia has expedited its "look-east" strategy, thereby catalysing collaboration between the two nations (Aja & Bakare, 2021).

China and Russia exhibit substantial requisites for collaboration, particularly within the realms of politics and economics. Nonetheless, an often neglected yet pivotal determinant is cultural values (Xu, 2023). These intangible cultural values, though imperceptible, permeate various facets, including communication modalities, decision-making processes, and overall efficiency, thereby significantly influencing cooperation across all levels between the populace of the two nations (Ang & Inkpen, 2008).

In the extant body of literature pertaining to Belt and Road collaboration between China and Russia, a noticeable dearth exists in studies scrutinizing economic cooperation through a cross-cultural lens. Nevertheless, recognizing the multi-level dynamics integral to the success of a substantial initiative, our inquiry seeks to concentrate specifically on the organizational level. Our primary objective is to assess the influence of cultural congruities and disparities on this organizational stratum. Framed within this context, our research endeavours to address the query: "What are the convergences and divergences in organizational behaviors influenced by cultural values between China and Russia?".

To address this inquiry, the present study employs Hofstede's five-dimensional model as a framework for cultural comparison between China

and Russia, as elucidated by [Sarala and Vaara \(2010\)](#) and [Taras et al. \(2012\)](#). Furthermore, secondary data sourced from a multinational human resource management project are utilized, and independent inferential t-tests are conducted using IBM-SPSS for a comprehensive analysis.

This study aims to offer empirical support for cross-cultural management, enhancing the effectiveness and productivity of organizational cooperation within the BRI framework. Additionally, it intends to provide practical management recommendations for both current participants and prospective entrants into this collaborative framework.

Literature Review

Cross-Cultural Management under Globalization

In the present epoch of globalization, cross-cultural management has become an indispensable factor influencing the achievements of multinational enterprises. As elucidated by [Aureli \(2020\)](#), cross-cultural management encompasses an array of strategies and policies commonly employed by international corporations to enhance employee engagement within the organization and in dealings with external entities characterized by diverse behavioral norms and interpersonal expectations. These norms and expectations are significantly moulded by the national cultures to which individuals are affiliated ([Srite & Karahanna, 2006](#)).

The foundational tenet of cross-cultural management acknowledges the potential for misinterpretations in relationships involving individuals and organizations with disparate cultural backgrounds ([Neri et al., 2023](#)). While culture was previously perceived as an impediment to interaction and a source of discord between the 1970s and the 1990s ([Grigoryev & Komyaginskaya, 2023](#)), a contemporary perspective has emerged, positioning culture as a valuable asset conducive to organizational learning and competitive advantage ([Alas & Vadi, 2006](#); [Wang & Lin, 2023](#)). Companies adept at harnessing the potential of culturally diverse employees gain the ability to cater to a diverse customer base and expedite knowledge transfer ([Bender & Fish, 2000](#); [Zahra et al., 2007](#)).

The primary objective of cross-cultural management research is to identify distinct cultural traits, conduct insightful comparisons, and offer guidance for effective cross-cultural communication ([Aureli, 2020](#); [Neri et al., 2023](#)). This extends beyond conflict avoidance due to cultural disparities ([Chevrier, 2003](#)) to leveraging the benefits derived from profound understanding and adept management of cultural diversity ([Chen, 2018](#); [Chevrier, 2003](#)).

Embedded within the trajectory of globalization, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) stands out conspicuously ([Vangeli, 2017](#)), interlinking nations across

Asia, Europe, and Africa. Academic interest in this initiative spans diverse research domains (Jessop & Sum, 2018), with studies focusing on the collaboration between China and Russia emerging as a distinctive and recurrently prominent subject within the existing literature (Cox & Trotter, 2016; Feng et al., 2022; Gabusi, 2017; Jessop & Sum, 2018; Liu et al., 2020).

Research on China-Russia cooperation within the BRI framework encompasses three primary domains: politics, economics, and culture. In the political realm, attention is directed towards strategic alliances, power structures, and diplomatic policies within the BRI framework (Cox & Trotter, 2016; Flint & Noorali, 2024; Lukyanova & Solovev, 2021; Xu & Yang, 2021; Yu et al., 2018; Li, Liao, & Zhu, 2023). Economic considerations involve a focus on bilateral trade, investment, and infrastructure development (Gabusi, 2017; Qi et al., 2022; Song et al., 2018; Vinokurov & Tsukarev, 2018; Yu et al., 2019; Zou et al., 2022). Cultural aspects centre on interpersonal relationships and people-to-people exchanges (Cox & Trotter, 2016; Jessop & Sum, 2018; Liu et al., 2020; Minaeva & Hanzálek, 2021). Additionally, legal frameworks and industrial perspectives (Feng et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022; Ye et al., 2020) are explored. Despite these comprehensive studies, there is a notable dearth in literature examining economic cooperation from a cross-cultural standpoint, presenting a research gap that this study aims to address.

Geert Hofstede's Model of Cultural Dimensions

Geert Hofstede introduced his cultural model in 1980, comprising four dimensions: Power Distance, Individualism/Collectivism, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Masculinity/Femininity (Hofstede, 1980). In 1991, the Long-Term/Short-Term orientation dimension was incorporated into the model (Hofstede et al., 1991). The Values Survey Module (VSM08) replaced the original model in 2008 and included the Indulgence/Restraint dimension. However, VSM08 was subsequently succeeded by VSM2013, which omitted the Long-Term orientation dimension. The Indulgence/Restraint dimension, the most recent addition, has seen limited study or adoption (Hofstede et al., 2010; Hofstede & Minkov, 2012; Minkov, 2007). Consequently, this study employs Geert Hofstede's five-dimensional model to scrutinize cultural distinctions in organizational management between China and Russia (refer to Figure 1).

Geert Hofstede's model of national cultural values has been a subject of extensive debate (Dimitrov et al., 2014; Venaik & Brewer, 2013; Žemojtel-Piotrowska & Piotrowski, 2023). However, it remains widely acknowledged as one of the most comprehensive and prominent frameworks within the domain of cultural studies theory (Gallego-Álvarez & Pucheta-Martínez, 2021; Jan et al., 2022). While national culture is notably influenced by various factors, organizational culture is more susceptible to technological advancements, shifts in organizational structure, and changes in the business environment

(Hofstede et al., 1991). Initially, the direct application of the national culture model to the study of organizational culture was discouraged due to their distinct levels of social phenomena. However, appropriately applying and interpreting the cultural value model at the organizational level can offer a more profound understanding (Hofstede, 1998).

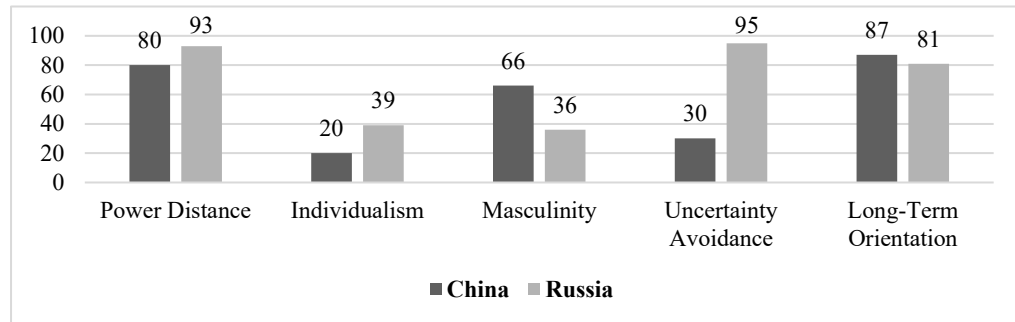


Figure 1: The scores of Geert Hofstede's five-dimensions model between China and Russia. Source: authors edited according to Hofstede Insights (2021).

Power Distance

China demonstrates a high-Power Distance, reflecting a preference for hierarchical structures and centralized governing power (Hofstede & Minkov, 2013; Michailova & Hutchings, 2006). In contrast, Russia exhibits an even higher score, indicating a heightened acceptance of hierarchical order and a more pronounced inclination toward centralized decision-making. The divergent Power Distance scores in both China and Russia underscore a shared acceptance of hierarchical organization, with Russia's elevated score signifying a stronger alignment with centralized decision-making (Daniels & Greguras, 2014).

Individualism/Collectivism

China and Russia exhibit notable collectivistic tendencies (Hofstede Insights, 2021). China emphasizes group cohesion and loyalty more strongly, as reflected in its lower score on this dimension (Michailova & Hutchings, 2006; Wang & Lin, 2023). In contrast, Russia, with a slightly higher score, maintains a balance between collective efforts and individualism, allowing for greater recognition of individual contributions compared to China (Michailova & Hutchings, 2006). This suggests that while Chinese organizations prioritize group cohesion, Russian organizations value and balance individual contributions against collective efforts.

Masculinity/Femininity

Chinese culture registers a higher Masculinity score, indicative of a preference for assertiveness, ambition, and materialism (Jaw et al., 2007). This implies a prioritization of competitiveness and achievement within Chinese companies. In contrast, Russia, also characterized by a strong Masculinity orientation, holds

a lower score than China, reflecting a greater emphasis on planning, modesty, and concern for others (Hofstede, 2016). This suggests that Russian companies may place a heightened focus on teamwork and the well-being of individuals.

Uncertainty Avoidance

Examining Figure 1 reveals a pronounced distinction between China and Russia, particularly in the cultural dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance. China obtained a score of 30, whereas Russia scored 95. This signifies that Chinese organizations exhibit a higher threshold for uncertainty and demonstrate increased adaptability when confronting ambiguous situations (Michailova & Hutchings, 2006). Conversely, Russian organizations display a lower tolerance for uncertainty, expressing a preference for regulations, order, and structured environments (Gaenslen, 1986; Michailova & Hutchings, 2006).

Short-Term/Long-Term Orientation

Diverging from the remaining four cultural dimensions, China and Russia exhibit the closest scores in the Long-Term/Short-Term Orientation dimension. China received a score of 87, while Russia scored 81, denoting both as long-term-oriented cultures. Individuals adhering to long-term values are inclined to prioritize frugality and persistence (Chimenson et al., 2022). In the context of Chinese and Russian organizations, the establishment of long-term organizational development goals is anticipated, accompanied by the adoption of analogous strategic plans (Michailova & Hutchings, 2006).

Methodology

In the present investigation, secondary data were derived from a cross-national survey conducted in 2019, specifically the HRMACC project (Wang et al., 2019). The survey, detailed in Appendix 1, encompasses inquiries pertaining to various human resource management functions, namely Organizational Recruitment and Selection (ORS), Employee Rewards and Benefits (ERB), Performance Evaluation and Feedback (PEF), Training and Development (TD), and Decision-Making and Leadership Practices (DML). Respondents were tasked with evaluating and assigning ratings to each question related to these five functions, utilizing a scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 7 ("strongly agree").

As indicated in Table 1, our analysis encompassed data from 274 participants, revealing a geographical distribution of 63.1% from China and 36.9% from Russia. The gender distribution comprised 64.2% females and 35.8% males. Participants were categorized into three age groups: 12.8% in Group A (before 1980), 25.2% in Group B (1981–1990), and 62.0% in Group C (1991–2000). Educational backgrounds varied, with 19.3% holding junior college diplomas and

below, 60.9% possessing bachelor’s degrees, 17.9% having master’s degrees, and 1.8% holding Ph.D. qualifications. Regarding positions, 35.8% occupied managerial roles, while 64.2% held non-managerial positions. Participants exhibited diverse work experiences, with 33.9% contributing for less than one year, 33.2% spanning one to three years, 9.1% engaging for three to five years, and 17.5% accumulating a substantial work history of five years or more.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Selected Respondents for Analysis (Wang et al., 2019).

Variables	N	%
Nationality		
China	173	63.1
Russia	101	36.9
Gender		
Female	176	64.2
Male	98	35.8
Age Group		
Age group A (before 1980)	35	12.8
Age group B (1981-1990)	69	25.2
Age group C (1991-2000)	170	62.0
Level of Education		
Junior college diploma and below	53	19.3
Bachelor	167	60.9
Master (or equivalent Russian specialist diploma)	49	17.9
PhD (or equivalent doctoral degree)	5	1.8
Position		
Managerial position	98	35.8
Non-managerial position	176	64.2
Length of Work		
< 1 year	93	33.9
1 year ~ 3 years	91	33.2
3 years ~ 5 years	25	9.1
≥ 5 years	48	17.5
Others	17	6.2
Total	274	100.0

In our investigation, we employ the independent samples t-test utilizing IBM-SPSS (George & Mallery, 2019) to conduct a comprehensive analysis of potential variations. This methodology aligns with our principal objective, which is to gain insights into and proficiently address the cross-cultural convergence and divergence within the context of Sino-Russian strategic collaboration. Our emphasis involves the examination of two distinct respondent groups, encompassing Chinese and Russian participants. As delineated in Figure 2, the cluster plot scrutinizes the average mean scores across the ORS 1.1 to DML 5.5 categories for both Chinese and Russian respondents. This graphical representation elucidates the initial and concluding points of each line, offering a lucid portrayal of the cultural dynamics under investigation. The outcomes of the independent t-test are delineated in Table 2, furnishing the requisite statistical information for our subsequent inferences and analysis.

Table 2: Independent *T*-test Report.

	Nationality (Mean±Std. Deviation)		Mean Deviation	95% CI	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	China (n=173)	Russia (n=101)					
ORS 1.1	4.97±1.55	5.02±1.68	-0.05	-0.442 ~ 0.345	-0.244	272	0.808
ORS 1.2	5.19±1.66	4.22±2.11	0.97	0.489 ~ 1.457	3.969	172.639	0.000**
ORS 1.3	5.07±1.68	4.93±1.91	0.14	-0.298 ~ 0.575	0.626	272	0.532
ORS 1.4	5.06±1.70	4.64±1.79	0.41	-0.013 ~ 0.841	1.909	272	0.057
ERB 2.1	5.11±1.81	4.28±2.11	0.83	0.337 ~ 1.328	3.315	184.322	0.001**
ERB 2.2	4.65±1.78	4.14±1.98	0.51	0.049 ~ 0.966	2.179	271	0.030*
ERB 2.3	4.88±1.82	4.76±1.72	0.12	-0.323 ~ 0.560	0.529	271	0.597
ERB 2.4	5.18±1.56	4.45±1.62	0.73	0.344 ~ 1.124	3.704	272	0.000**
PEF 3.1	5.16±1.60	3.95±1.89	1.21	0.769 ~ 1.653	5.409	182.889	0.000**
PEF 3.2	5.18±1.66	4.74±1.66	0.44	0.033 ~ 0.852	2.126	272	0.034*
PEF 3.3	4.16±1.87	2.68±1.91	1.47	1.009 ~ 1.937	6.252	272	0.000**
PEF 3.4	4.27±1.90	3.71±1.90	0.56	0.091 ~ 1.026	2.352	272	0.019*
PEF 3.5	4.31±1.80	3.54±1.96	0.77	0.309 ~ 1.226	3.297	272	0.001**
TD 4.1	5.56±1.31	4.04±2.13	1.52	1.058 ~ 1.984	6.496	144.835	0.000**
TD 4.2	5.44±1.45	4.32±2.14	1.12	0.649 ~ 1.596	4.68	154.499	0.000**
TD 4.3	5.20±1.41	3.50±1.92	1.7	1.270 ~ 2.133	7.78	163.58	0.000**
TD 4.4	5.29±1.36	4.05±2.07	1.24	0.787 ~ 1.703	5.374	149.44	0.000**
DML 5.1	4.72±1.66	4.57±1.62	0.15	-0.257 ~ 0.554	0.72	272	0.472
DML 5.2	4.99±1.47	2.81±1.66	2.18	1.783 ~ 2.570	10.905	189.958	0.000**
DML 5.3	5.35±1.46	5.11±1.66	0.24	-0.141 ~ 0.616	1.238	272	0.217
DML 5.4	4.21±1.81	4.03±1.95	0.18	-0.281 ~ 0.638	0.765	272	0.445
DML 5.5	5.69±1.30	5.03±1.75	0.66	0.262 ~ 1.054	3.284	164.83	0.001**

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$; Notes of abbreviations: ORS, Organizational Recruitment and Selection; ERB, Employee Rewards and Benefits; PEF, Performance Evaluation and Feedback; TD, Training and Development; DML, Decision-Making and Leadership Practices.

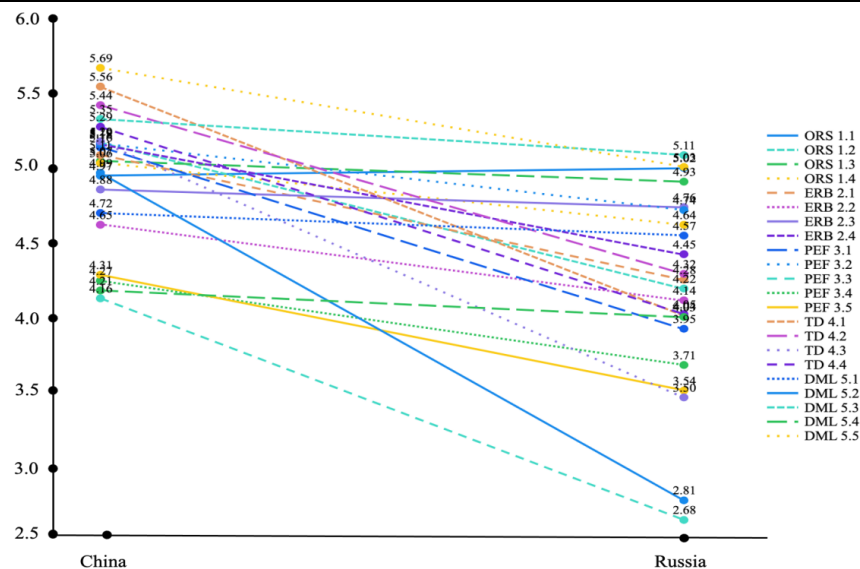


Figure 2: Cluster Plot of the Mean Scores of Responses between China and Russia.

Source: Authors' self-elaboration.

Notes of Abbreviations: ORS, Organizational Recruitment and Selection; ERB, Employee Rewards and Benefits; PEF, Performance Evaluation and Feedback; TD, Training and Development; DML, Decision-Making and Leadership Practices.

Findings and Discussions

Organizational Recruitment and Selection (ORS)

Interpersonal Relationships (ORS 1.1): The analysis reveals that both Chinese and Russian participants consider interpersonal relationships to have a significant influence on the recruitment and selection processes for new employees. The means for Chinese respondents (4.97 ± 1.55) and Russian respondents (5.02 ± 1.68) lie within the neutral to agree range, indicating a shared perspective. The minimal mean deviation and the convergence of standard deviations between the two groups additionally underscore that there is no statistically significant difference in their perceptions regarding the impact of interpersonal relationships.

Personal Connections/Recommendations (ORS 1.2): A disparity becomes evident when scrutinizing the importance attached to personal connections or recommendations. Chinese respondents (5.19 ± 1.66) exhibit a tendency towards agreement, underscoring the benefits derived from personal connections in the recruitment process. Conversely, Russian respondents (4.22 ± 2.11) manifest greater variability and a lower mean, indicating a less explicit reliance on personal connections. The statistically significant p-value (0.000) substantiates the conclusion that Chinese respondents attribute a more substantial significance to personal connections, thereby conferring individuals with a distinct advantage over other candidates.

Internal Candidates Priority (ORS 1.3): Both Chinese respondents (5.07 ± 1.68) and Russian respondents (4.93 ± 1.91) exhibit a proclivity to favour internal candidates in the event of job vacancies. The means fall within the neutral to agree range, indicating a common organizational practice. The absence of a substantial difference is corroborated by the marginal mean deviation and the convergence of standard deviations between the two groups.

Selection Criteria Effectiveness (ORS 1.4): When evaluating the perceived effectiveness of selection criteria, Chinese respondents (5.06 ± 1.70) and Russian respondents (4.64 ± 1.79) reveal subtle distinctions. Although a positive mean deviation suggests variance, the marginally significant p-value (0.057) warrants caution in drawing definitive conclusions. The overlapping standard deviations indicate that, despite statistical significance, the practical disparity in the effectiveness of selection criteria between the two groups may not be substantial.

In general, both cultures emphasize interpersonal interactions as crucial in the hiring process, reflecting high Power Distance values where relationships hold significance in hierarchical structures. The cultural traits observed stem from the varying importance attributed to personal contacts or recommendations (ORS1.2). Chinese respondents, aligning with a collectivist cultural orientation, underscore the significance of interpersonal contacts, showcasing the importance of personal networks. Conversely, Russian

participants demonstrate less reliance on connection networks, indicating potential differences in assigning meaning to personal ties in professional contexts. A statistically significant p-value reinforces the assertion that social connections play a crucial role in employee recruitment for individual Chinese, emphasizing the impact of Collectivism in their organizational practices. Despite both countries favouring internal candidates, minor differences in the criteria's effectiveness introduce new layers of complexity. Slightly trailing in terms of the mean, Chinese respondents may lean towards a long-term orientation emphasizing stability and loyalty. However, the marginally significant p-value and overlapping standard deviations emphasize the need for a nuanced understanding of the data, underlining the importance of precision in result interpretation.

Employee Rewards and Benefits (ERB)

Collective Performance Rewards (ERB 2.1): A discernible pattern manifests when assessing perceptions regarding the distribution of rewards for team/department performance. Chinese respondents (5.11 ± 1.81) prominently express a strong agreement regarding the common sharing of rewards among team members, reflecting a collaborative inclination in acknowledging collective endeavours. Conversely, Russian respondents (4.28 ± 2.11) present a lower mean, indicative of a less pronounced agreement and potentially suggesting a more individualized approach to performance rewards. The statistically significant p-value (0.001^{**}) substantiates the inference that Chinese respondents exhibit a greater propensity for collective distribution of rewards for team/department performance in comparison to Russian respondents.

Personal Relationships with Managers and Benefits (ERB 2.2): Significant disparities emerge in perspectives concerning the correlation between positive personal relationships with managers and the receipt of benefits and rewards. Chinese participants (4.65 ± 1.78) demonstrate an inclination towards agreement, signifying a perceived connection between positive relationships with managers and augmented benefits. Conversely, Russian participants (4.14 ± 1.98) present a lower mean, indicating a less pronounced belief in the influence of personal relationships on benefits and rewards. The statistically significant p-value (0.030^{*}) implies that Chinese respondents are more inclined to believe that positive relationships with managers positively impact increased benefits compared to Russian respondents.

Material Incentives versus Non-material Incentives (ERB 2.3): Scrutinizing the significance attributed to material versus non-material incentives unveils nuanced perceptions. Both Chinese (4.88 ± 1.82) and Russian (4.76 ± 1.72) respondents exhibit relatively similar means, signifying a moderate agreement that material incentives bear greater

importance than non-material incentives in organizational practices. The non-significant p-value (0.597) implies that, notwithstanding the mean differences, the perceived distinction in the significance of material versus non-material incentives may not be substantial between the two countries.

Monetary Incentives versus Non-monetary Incentives (ERB 2.4): In terms of the relative importance of monetary incentives versus non-monetary incentives, Chinese respondents (5.18±1.56) strongly affirm that monetary incentives, encompassing bonuses, merit pay, profit-sharing, or stock options, hold greater significance than non-monetary incentives. Conversely, Russian respondents (4.45±1.62) present a lower mean, indicating a less unequivocal agreement on the importance of monetary incentives. The notably significant p-value (0.000**) substantiates the assertion that Chinese respondents attribute a higher importance to monetary incentives in the realm of employee rewards and benefits compared to their Russian counterparts.

Chinese respondents exhibit a preference for collective rewards and emphasize internal harmony, reflecting the influence of collectivism. This contrasts with Russian respondents, who align with a more individualistic perspective that values individual success. The significant role of positive personal relations with managers in Chinese organizations aligns with collectivism and power distance, emphasizing interpersonal connections and mutual assistance. This cultural impact shapes the perception that rewards and benefits are linked to successful relationships with managers. Conversely, the lower degree of this belief among Russian respondents indicates a cultural inclination towards more individualistic approaches to interpersonal relationships in the workplace. The perception of material incentives versus non-material incentives reflects the uncertainty avoidance dimension in both cultures, indicating a preference for tangible, well-defined incentives and an inclination to avoid uncertainty in reward systems in both countries. Furthermore, the variation in the emphasis placed on monetary incentives versus non-monetary incentives aligns with the Masculinity/Femininity dimension. Chinese companies, valuing monetary success, are typically situated in countries with a higher Masculinity cultural orientation. In contrast, Russian companies, prioritizing non-monetary aspects, are concentrated in countries with a higher Feminine cultural orientation, emphasizing a focus on quality of life and cooperation.

Performance Evaluation and Feedback (PEF)

Well-Developed Standards (PEF 3.1): A distinct divergence is evident in perceptions regarding the presence of well-developed standards for performance evaluation. Chinese respondents (5.16±1.60) strongly affirm, indicating a robust framework for evaluation criteria. Conversely, Russian respondents (3.95±1.89) exhibit a lower mean, signifying a lesser

endorsement of well-defined standards. The substantial mean deviation (1.21) and a highly significant p-value (0.000**) underscore the conclusion that Chinese respondents perceive their organizations as possessing more well-established standards for performance evaluation compared to Russian respondents.

Direct Manager/Supervisor Assessments (PEF 3.2): Chinese participants (5.18 ± 1.66) tend to strongly concur that evaluations may originate from assessments conducted by direct managers or supervisors. Conversely, Russian participants (4.74±1.66) exhibit a lower mean, indicating a lesser reliance on evaluations by managers or senior colleagues. The results attain statistical significance (p-value = 0.034*), indicating that Chinese companies prioritize evaluations from their direct managers or supervisors, whereas Russian organizations place greater emphasis on performance assessments by subordinates.

Age Influence on Evaluation (PEF 3.3): Chinese respondents (4.16±1.87) marginally lean towards agreement, suggesting that age can exert influence within the context of their organization. Conversely, Russian respondents (2.68 ± 1.91) present a lower mean, indicating a belief that age has a lesser impact on behaviour. The considerable mean deviation (1.47) and a significant p-value (0.000**) indicate that age could have a more pronounced positive impact on performance appraisal in Chinese organizations compared to Russian organizations.

Peer-Based Evaluation (PEF 3.4): Chinese respondents (4.27±1.90) exhibit an inclination towards agreement, indicating a degree of support for peer-based evaluations. Conversely, Russian respondents (3.71±1.90) present a lower mean, signifying less emphasis on peer-based evaluations. The statistically significant p-value (0.019*) suggests that Chinese organizations are more inclined to promote peer-based evaluations compared to Russian organizations.

Avoidance of Negative Evaluations (PEF 3.5): Significant differences emerge in perceptions regarding managers' inclination to refrain from giving negative performance evaluations to subordinates. Chinese respondents (4.31±1.80) display a leaning towards agreement, signifying a preference for avoiding negative evaluations. In contrast, Russian respondents (3.54±1.96) present a lower mean, suggesting a relatively lower emphasis on avoiding negative evaluations. The results indicate that managers in Chinese organizations are more likely to avoid giving negative performance evaluations compared to their counterparts in Russian organizations (significant p-value at 0.001*).

Based on our statistical analysis, it can be inferred that Chinese respondents

exhibit a preference for a more structured organizational style, while Russian respondents display a higher tolerance for ambiguity. The stark contrast in their attitudes toward uncertainty reflects the dominant cultural dimensions. Chinese respondents accord greater significance to the assessment of their direct manager or supervisor, whereas Russians attribute less importance, revealing the power distance dynamics in play. This underscores the Chinese inclination toward hierarchical structures and the Russian preference for more horizontal ones. The influence of culture on the Age Impact on Decision-Making (PEF 3.3) highlights the distinction between Short-Term and Long-Term orientations. Specifically, Chinese respondents tend to consider both age-based and long-term preferences, whereas Russian respondents appear more inclined toward short-term orientations with fewer age-related considerations. Peer-Based Evaluations mirror this difference in line with individualism/collectivism principles, as Chinese respondents lean towards a collective approach, emphasizing group dynamics, while their Russian counterparts favour individualistic traits. The cultural preference for avoiding negative evaluations aligns with both Collectivism and Uncertainty Avoidance. Chinese organizations demonstrate a pursuit of stability and risk avoidance, while Russian companies exhibit a greater tolerance for negative evaluations.

Training and Development (TD)

Alignment with Company Goals (TD 4.1): Chinese respondents (5.56±1.31) strongly affirm that the training and development programs are congruent with the company's long-term development goals. In contrast, Russian respondents (4.04±2.13) exhibit less agreement, indicating a weaker alignment. The substantial mean deviation (1.52) and a highly significant p-value (0.000**) indicate that Chinese respondents prioritize aligning training and development programs with long-term company goals to a greater extent than their Russian counterparts.

Enhancement of Personal Abilities (TD 4.2): Chinese participants (5.44±1.45) express strong agreement that the training and development initiatives are geared towards enhancing personal abilities and skills. In contrast, Russian participants (4.32±2.14) present a lower mean, suggesting a less pronounced emphasis on personal skill enhancement. The highly significant p-value (0.000**) indicates that Chinese organizations prioritize the enhancement of personal abilities and skills more in their training and development initiatives compared to their Russian counterparts.

Ensuring Employee Loyalty (TD 4.3): The t-test results reveal a substantial difference (p = 0.000**) in perceptions regarding the provision of training and development opportunities to ensure employee loyalty.

China (5.20 ± 1.41) demonstrates a higher mean compared to Russia (3.50 ± 1.92), signifying a more robust belief in the role of training in fostering employee loyalty. This implies that Chinese organizations may perceive training not solely as a strategic resource for skill development but also as a strategic tool for enhancing employees' commitment and motivation.

Improvement of Organizational Image (4.4): Diverse perspectives arise regarding the perceived emphasis of training and development endeavours on enhancing the overall image of the organization. Chinese respondents (5.29 ± 1.36) lean towards agreement, indicating a focus on improving the organizational image. Conversely, Russian respondents (4.05 ± 2.07) present a lower mean, suggesting a relatively lesser perception of training and development as contributing to organizational image improvement. The considerable mean deviation (1.24) and a highly significant p-value (0.000**) suggest that Chinese organizations are perceived to believe that training and development efforts have a more significant impact on improving the overall image compared to Russian organizations.

In summary, the strong alignment of Chinese participants with company goals aligns with Collectivism and underscores a Long-Term orientation. Chinese respondents, reflecting a collective culture, strongly agree with long-term company objectives, indicating a long-term focus, while Russian participants exhibit lower agreement, suggesting a short-term orientation. The perspective on Ensuring Employee Loyalty reflects a collective cultural orientation, where training is seen as more than a skill development tool but as a means to enhance employee commitment and loyalty. Concerning Organizational Image Improvement, Chinese respondents, potentially driven by Uncertainty Avoidance, give higher scores, indicating a pursuit of organizational stability and a positive image, whereas Russian organizations may prioritize this less, showcasing a tolerance for ambiguity.

Decision-Making and Leadership Practices (DML)

Individual Participation in Decision-Making (DML 5.1): The data indicates marginal disparity between Chinese (4.72 ± 1.66) and Russian (4.57 ± 1.62) respondents regarding individual participation in decision-making. The slight mean deviation (0.15) and a non-significant p-value (0.472) suggest a likeness between the two groups. Both show a moderate inclination towards involving individual employees or subordinates in the decision-making process, indicating a lack of significant cultural divergence in this aspect.

Group Involvement in Decision-Making (DML 5.2): A pronounced contrast is evident in evaluating group involvement in decision-making practices. Chinese respondents exhibit a mean score of 4.99 ± 1.47 , signalling a

favourable inclination towards active group participation. Conversely, Russian respondents show a markedly lower mean score of 2.81 ± 1.66 , indicating a reduced role of group members in decision-making processes. The highly significant p-value (0.000) underscores a substantial difference between Chinese and Russian respondents in this aspect. This discrepancy emphasizes a distinct cultural variation, with Chinese respondents prioritizing collaborative decision-making involving groups, while Russian respondents lean towards more individual-centric decision processes.

Employee Encouragement in Decision-Making (DML 5.3): The data indicates a slight distinction between Chinese respondents (5.35 ± 1.46) and Russian respondents (5.11 ± 1.66) regarding the encouragement of employee participation in the decision-making process. With a mean deviation of 0.24 and a non-significant p-value (0.217), we observe similarity in both groups. Both exhibit a positive disposition towards encouraging employee participation in decision-making, with no substantial cultural disparities evident.

Independent Decision-Making by Managers DML (5.4): The findings reveal a slight difference in the autonomy of managers in decision-making between Chinese respondents (4.21 ± 1.81) and Russian respondents (4.03 ± 1.95). With a mean deviation of 0.18 and a non-significant p-value (0.445), there is an indication of similarity in the perceived autonomy of managers. Both groups tend towards the view that managers make decisions independently.

Role of Personal Relationships (DML 5.5): A notable cultural contrast is evident in the assessment of the role of personal relationships in managing peers and superiors. Chinese respondents (5.69 ± 1.30) demonstrate a higher reliance on personal relationships than Russian respondents (5.03 ± 1.75). With a substantial mean deviation of 0.66 and a highly significant p-value (0.001), this underscores a significant cultural disparity. It indicates that personal relationships play a more pivotal role in the organizational context of Chinese respondents compared to their Russian counterparts.

Our examination of Decision-Making and Leadership Practices offers insights into the cultural underpinnings of individual and group involvement in decision-making. Group dynamics reveal a subtle inclination toward engagement, aligning with the Individualism/Collectivism dimension and suggesting lower Power Distance. Chinese participants, engaging actively in group decisions, reflect lower Power Distance and a Collectivist orientation, while Russians, favouring individual decision-making, exhibit a more Individualistic nature with higher Power Distance. Employee Encouragement in Decision-Making, synonymous with collective involvement, indicates

potential variations in Uncertainty Avoidance. The study on Independent Decision-Making by Managers underscores a significant divergence, suggesting a tendency toward managers making decisions independently, indicating lower Uncertainty Avoidance. The emphasis on the Importance of Personal Relationships in the Chinese context suggests a low tolerance for uncertainty and a higher reliance on existing power hierarchies.

Conclusions

The strategic partnership between China and Russia through the Belt and Road Initiative underscores the need for comprehensive cooperation, drawing attention to cultural influences on success. Cultural disparities often lead to a "lost in translation" challenge in cross-cultural cooperation. This study delves into how cultural values shape organizational behaviours between China and Russia, focusing on human resource functions. It emphasizes the importance of addressing cultural misunderstandings through negotiations, compromises, and balancing strategies for successful cross-cultural cooperation and management. Incremental successes in bridging these gaps contribute to the overall success of the Belt and Road Initiative.

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Appendix 1: Survey Questions of the HRMACC Project.

<i>Organizational Recruitment and Selection (ORS)</i>	
1.1.	The significance of interpersonal relationships within our organization significantly influences the recruitment and selection of new employees.
1.2.	Recommendations or personal connections within our organization provide individuals with an advantage over other candidates.
1.3.	When a job vacancy occurs within our organization, priority is given to internal candidates before external recruitment.
1.4.	The selection criteria within our organization are well-developed and effectively implemented during the selection process.
<i>Employee Rewards and Benefits (ERB)</i>	
2.1.	If the team/department performance is rewarded, the rewards are typically shared and distributed among members within the team/department.
2.2.	Employees who maintain positive personal relationships with managers tend to receive more benefits and rewards within our organizational context.
2.3.	Material incentives hold more significance than non-material incentives (spiritual motivation) within our organizational practices.
2.4.	Monetary rewards are more important than non-monetary rewards within our organization.
<i>Performance Evaluation and Feedback (PEF)</i>	
3.1.	Our organization has well-developed standards and performance evaluation criteria to assess employee performance.
3.2.	Performance evaluations within our organization are typically based on assessments by the employee's direct manager or supervisor.
3.3.	The age of employees may influence the performance evaluation process within our organizational context.
3.4.	Peer-based performance evaluation is encouraged within our organization.
3.5.	Bad performance evaluation results are seldom given by any evaluator to avoid face-to-face conflicts and maintain harmony within our organizational setting.
<i>Training and Development (TD)</i>	
4.1.	Training and development programs within our organization are designed to support the long-term development goals of the company.
4.2.	Training and development initiatives aim to enhance the personal abilities and skills of employees within our organizational context.
4.3.	Training and development opportunities are provided to ensure employee loyalty to our organization.
4.4.	Training and development efforts are directed towards improving the overall image of our organization.
<i>Decision-Making and Leadership Practices (DML)</i>	
5.1.	Individual employees or subordinates within our organization actively participate in the decision-making process.
5.2.	Groups and formal internal organizations play an active role in the decision-making process, surpassing the involvement of individuals within our organizational structure.
5.3.	Employees or subordinates are encouraged to participate in the decision-making process within our organization, although final decisions are usually made by managers or superiors.
5.4.	Managers/superiors within our organization typically make decisions independently without consulting subordinates.
5.5.	Personal relationships are crucial in managing relationships between peers, as well as between superiors and subordinates within our organizational context.

Source: Authors edited from [Wang et al. \(2019\)](#).