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Efficient Management of Cross-Cultural Manufacturing Teams in the Dominican Republic

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Walden University
2015

Abstract

Efficient Management of Cross-Cultural Manufacturing Teams in the Dominican

Republic

by

Efrain Serrano Decos

MA, Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, 2000

BS, Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico, 1998

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

Walden University

June 2015

Abstract

Companies that have moved their operations from the United States to other countries have forced top management to rely on their managers for leading overseas assignments. However, the success rate of expatriate managers is low and is a concern for top management in corporations. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the shared lived experiences of 20 expatriate managers to identify methods which may improve the success rates of expatriate managers asked to participate in overseas assignments. Social learning, cultural shock, and experiential learning were used to support the conceptual framework linking how cross-cultural training, adaptation, problems, and knowledge acquisition may explain expatriate manager success. Data were collected through an interview process, and were coded to identify themes. Emergent themes included cross-cultural training, effective tools for managing cross-cultural teams, and challenges of managing cross-cultural teams. The results of the study indicated that, for these 20 expatriate managers, cross-cultural training was essential in improving their skills and effectiveness. Findings showed that cross-cultural training provided tools to improve communication, overall leadership, adaptation, understanding of the new culture, and increased collaboration when managing cross-cultural teams. U.S. organizations may benefit from these results by implementing best practice cross-cultural training programs for future expatriate managers. The findings contribute to positive social change by providing guidance that could improve the success rates of future expatriate managers during oversea assignments.

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Dedication

I want to dedicate this dissertation first to God, who has provided me with health to continue this important process in my life. To my lovely wife, Chiralee, who has been stood to my side through this entire journey; she has been my support and has encouraged me to be motivated. Her support has been there for the 20 years that we have built a great life together. Chiralee, I love you and thank you for all your support. My children, Efrain Jr. and Aryam, thank you for all your love and patience when dad was busy working with his doctoral papers. I did this for you and to demonstrate to you that nothing is impossible in this life if you are organized, are persevering, and have goals.

I thank my parents, Efrain and Dalia, for bringing me into this world and providing me the learning of life to continue working on my goals. Dad and Mom, thank you for being there and guiding me to never give up on my aspirations. To Alexis and Mayra, the best sister and brother in this world, thank you for being there and providing me with support. Also, I want to thank all my friends for all your support and motivation and for always asking about the status of my doctoral degree.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who has touched my life during this journey, especially Maria Dien, a friend and mentor, for all your support and feedback on my papers. Maria provided me with ideas and opened my mind on the selection of the dissertation topic. Thank you for being there to provide me feedback good or bad. There are many others, too numerous to mention, who have played an important role in my development during this journey. Thank you all very much.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The global competition and the growing number of international assignees have increased the need to understand why some expatriate managers are more successful than others in foreign countries (Templer, 2010). According to Gonzalez and Chakraborty (2014), expatriates serve as knowledge vehicles for corporations. As the need for international management grows, the use of expatriate managers increases in foreign countries (Causin & Ayoun, 2011). The term, expatriate, is used in international management as an employee with a different type of foreign work assignment (Zhang, 2013). Expatriate managers are considered an important part of the business; with their vision and knowledge, they help their organizations to be successful in foreign countries.

Expatriate managers are crucial for organizations due to their experiences and skills. According to Zhang (2013), expatriate managers bring to the host country their experiences, knowledge, technical skills, and commitment. According to Templer (2010), the success of the expatriate is based on indicators, such as engagement, job satisfaction, and leadership. Zhang wrote that managing global assignments effectively is crucial for businesses to be competitive internationally. Top management in corporations use expatriate managers in international assignments for several reasons: (a) technical competence, (b) management development, and (c) control. According to Causin and Ayoun (2011), there is a need for managers with these competencies in foreign countries because there are not enough experienced managers in the host country. Possessing

technical knowledge and expertise are requirements for top management in corporations, especially when they transfer their operations to foreign countries.

Technical knowledge and commitment are the most important competencies required of expatriates during foreign assignments (Templer, 2010). Expatriates who have been successful in their international assignments considered that the cross-cultural training programs are an important process that prepared them to live and work in a host country. According to Kataria and Sethi (2013), successful training and learning depend on a systematic approach that involves assessment, program design, and complete evaluation. Santoso and Loosemore (2013) indicated that successful expatriates in overseas roles have relationship skills, integrity, curiosity, maturity, cognitive, flexibility, and networking skills. Cousin and Ayoun (2013) indicated that successful expatriate managers have strategy awareness, adaptability, sensitivity, financial knowledge, and marketing experience. Moreover, many expatriate managers who are successful in their assignments understand the language of the host country in addition to nonverbal cues, such as body language and facial expression (Malie & Akir, 2012).

The success of the expatriates also is measured by their cross-cultural intelligence. According to Zhang (2013), a person who possesses cross-cultural intelligence is a multifaceted individual with the ability to adapt effectively to a new culture. Ramalu, Rose, Uli, and Kumar (2012) indicated that acquiring cross-cultural intelligence is essential to the experience and education of expatriate managers.

Expatriates who have been successful have not only cultural intelligence, but also have emotional and social intelligence (Ramalu et al., 2012). Expatriates are emotionally

and socially successful because they can manage any setting in the culture. In this process, expatriates can change from one cultural environment to another. According to Ramalu et al. (2012), cultural intelligence can be used to predict the attitudes and behavior of expatriates when working on international assignments. This competency is important for expatriate managers because they can work effectively across cultures and can guarantee the success of their international assignment.

Besides cultural intelligence, there are other factors that are essential for the success of expatriate managers in the host country. According to Zhang (2013), there are four factors that lead to the success of the expatriates in the international assignments: understand the cultural knowledge, understand the knowledge structure of the culture, understand motivation capability, and understand the behavior of the culture. These four factors are a complement of all the attributes by expatriates with cultural intelligence. Moreover, these factors help the expatriates to adapt and be successful in the host country.

The most important factor in an expatriate's success is cultural knowledge. According to Caligiuri (2013), successful leaders must have cultural knowledge. There are three types of cultural knowledge that the leader will use to adapt to the culture difference. Cultural minimization is how the expatriate controls any cultural difference and cultural integration, which is where the expatriate collaborates across the culture. Caligiuri indicated that this cultural knowledge allows the expatriate managers to be successful in their assignments. With cultural knowledge, expatriate managers can be more effective in working with cross-cultural teams, and this will improve their

performance, which is the reflection of the success of the expatriate managers because they control and coordinate the assets of the organizations (Bonache & Noethen, 2014). According to Bonache and Noethen (2014), the most common measurement of successful assignments for corporations is the completion of the assignment. The assignment completion by the expatriate manager positively impacts not only for the corporations, but also the host country where these expatriates have worked and used their knowledge.

Another factor for success is the adjustment to the host country. Ramalu et al. (2012) indicated that adjustment is a key factor for the success of the expatriates in the international assignment. Zhang (2013) found a relationship between the expatriates' adjustment and job performance. Zhang claimed that the expatriates who adjust to the cultural environment increase their performance on their job. This adjustment helps the expatriates to reduce the stress and be comfortable in the host country. According to Zhang, adjustments have four strategies, such as integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. These four strategies are essential for the adjustment of the expatriates (Zhang, 2013

Personality traits are important for the success of expatriate managers. Bhatti, Battour, Ismail, and Sundaram (2013) wrote that expatriates are successful due to their personality traits. Bhatti et al. indicated that successful expatriates have positive personality traits, such as extroversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism. Having positive personality traits will increase the performance of expatriate managers. Bhatti et al. indicated that personality traits influence the job performance of the expatriates. Moreover, Bhatti et al. stated that expatriates with these personality traits

can build good relationships, achieve their goals, improve their performance, and get promoted. To be successful in foreign countries, expatriates need to be culturally adjustable (Bhatti et al., 2013), and this is another personality trait that expatriate managers must have to adapt to a host country. They must understand the host country, culture, and be ready to perform their work.

Moreover, expatriate managers with positive personality traits are better able to adapt to the host country. Caligiuri (2013) indicated that expatriates with personality traits are better prepared to work on international assignments because they can adapt to the work in the host country. Caligiuri indicated that managers with positive personality traits could (a) influence the ability of the expatriates to perform and (b) accelerate the cross-cultural competencies of expatriates. Caligiuri established that expatriate managers who are extroverted interact better with people because they are open to communication, ask the right questions, and are patient, which improves the relationship and collaboration with the host team. Also, expatriate managers with higher levels of openness to new experiences search for new ways of doing things and are more comfortable with cross-cultural situations (Caligiuri, 2013). Bhatti et al. (2013) indicated that personality traits, which are also called the "Big Five," allow the expatriate to help cross-cultural teams to meet their goals in their overseas assignment. These five factors help the expatriates to adjust to their host country.

The success of expatriate assignments is important to corporations (Gonzalez & Chakraborty, 2014). Gonzalez and Chakraborty (2013) indicated that the success of the expatriates is dependent on their ability to transfer their knowledge to the host country,

which increases the performance of the host team. According to Gonzalez and Chakraborty, managing, building the structure, helping in the implementation of the operational function, and solving problem are the four primary reasons to transfer expatriates to foreign countries. Gonzalez and Chakraborty wrote that the learning process is another factor in their success in foreign countries. The learning experiences of expatriates in their assignment can help leaders in developing a cognitive process to learn and be agile leaders. During the learning process, expatriate managers can improve their leadership and performance, which enhances their success in their international assignment.

Researchers have noted that for expatriates to be successful in their international assignment they need cultural sensitivity. Cultural sensitivity is defined as an awareness and acceptance of other cultures (Buchtel, 2013). Buchtel (2013) claimed that knowledge of cultural differences is required to acquire cultural sensitivity. Expatriates with cultural sensitivity are more successful in their assignments because they adapt to the host country faster (Bhatti, Sundram, & Hee, 2012). Expatriates need to have the ability to adjust to different cultural processes to be successful. The success of the expatriates depends on how corporations have prepared them to assume the responsibility to lead cross-cultural teams or international business outside the U.S. territory. This success is measured throughout the expatriates' performance when they complete their assignments.

In this study, I explored the shared life experiences of expatriate managers from the Dominican Republic and analyzed their success while managing cross-cultural teams. These expatriate managers were exposed to different cultural challenges and were

successful in their assignments. However, there are a higher number of expatriates who have failed their assignments.

The Dominican Republic is an island located in the Caribbean region commonly called Hispaniola, which shares its territory with Haiti. The Dominican Republic is the second largest island in the Caribbean, and its estimated population is 10 million people (Dapena & Ortega, 2014). The industrialization and diversification of the Dominican Republic started in 1988, and this accelerated the economy of the island. The growth of the manufacturing process in the free zones improved the economy and led to an increase in the workforce. Free zones are areas or sections that the Dominican Republic government established for international businesses to build their facilities. The purpose of these free zones is to reduce imports and provide zero taxes, relaxed regulations and restrictions, lower labor costs, and convenient access to shipping (Dapena & Ortega, 2014). In these free zones, companies such as food processing, chemical corporations, textiles, nonmetallic minerals, and medical devices are typically located.

Several U.S. manufacturing companies have located their companies in the Dominican Republic, such as GE, Baxter, B Braun, Edwards Lifesciences, Abbott, and Ethicon due to the geographical location and low labor costs. These companies have high volume manufacturing operations with advanced technology. All of these companies have expatriate managers running their operations day-to-day. These expatriate managers provide technical knowledge to the local employees. These expatriate managers were successful because they received the support of their corporations and were able to adapt to the culture.

There are several positive outcomes that the expatriates in the Dominican Republic have accomplished. These expatriates were able to manage complex projects with their cross-cultural teams and transfer technical knowledge to the host team. The knowledge transfer is the key to the success of the organization. Most U.S. corporations that have transferred their operations to the Dominican Republic have relied on their managers, due to their technical knowledge to manage the cross-cultural teams in the host country.

The movement of U.S. manufacturing to foreign countries has created changes in the workplace that has led top management to rely on their managers (Chen, Kirkman, Kim, Farh, & Tangirala, 2010). However, this reliance has created a problem for top management in corporations due to the inability of expatriate managers to manage cross-cultural teams (Yuxiang & Hyungmin, 2013). Cross-cultural teams bring different challenges, such as language, education level, skills, communication, and trust. It is important that top management and expatriates identify, understand, and respond to these cultural challenges. Dong and Liu (2010) wrote that many organizations are conducting business internationally, and few of these organizations understand the cultural challenges to managing cross-cultural teams. Many of these organizations have made investments in foreign countries and have failed because they did not understand the culture.

Expatriate managers and employees who are unprepared to meet the challenges in a foreign country fail their mission (Mansour & Wood, 2010). Mansour and Wood (2010) indicated "the challenges to enable people to work effectively across cultures have forced

multinational companies to provide their expatriates with adequate cross-cultural training" (p. 382). However, top management in corporations has raised the question of whether these cross-cultural training programs prepare the expatriates to operate in foreign countries (Mansours & Wood, 2010). The results of this study may help top management in corporations understand the importance of cross-cultural training.

This chapter contains the following elements: (a) background of the study, (b) problem statement, (c) purpose, (d) research question, (e) conceptual framework, (f) nature of the study, (g) definition of terms, (h) assumptions, (i) delimitations, (j) limitations, (k) significance of the study, and (l) summary.

Background of the Study

Cross-cultural training programs are important for expatriate managers to effectively manage cross-cultural teams and be successful in the host country. Expatriate managers face many management problems, which they can only address if they are properly prepared through cross-cultural training (Ching, Ko, & Yang, 2011). These cross-cultural training programs are used to train the expatriate managers to be effective in the host country. Bhawuk and Brislin (2000) defined cross-cultural training as a program designed to prepare individuals to handle an assignment. Also, cross-cultural training provides expatriate managers with an environment to interact with the foreign team. Misra (2012) indicated that managers should be given training on cultural differences so that there are smooth interactions with employees in the host country. Moreover, Mansour and Wood (2010) stated that expatriate development and training programs are critical to the growth and performance of expatriates. Expatriate managers

who have not received adequate training from their organizations may not be able to achieve business goals, which define their success or failure in their assignment.

There are several reasons why expatriate managers fail their international assignment. Mansour and Wood (2010) noted that the failure of expatriates and the termination of their assignments are due to poor cross-cultural training. Moreover, Mansour and Wood noted that expatriates who are unprepared to meet the challenges in a foreign country fail their mission, and this is costly to the organization. According to Yuxiang and Hyungmin (2013), the average cost per failure was estimated between $300,000 and $1,000,000 annually per expatriate. Many corporations do not implement cross-cultural training for several reasons, which may affect the success of the expatriate manager. There is a lack of research on effective training to identify a relationship between productivity and quality (Kontoghiorghes, 2001). Black and Mendenhall (1990) mentioned that corporations do not implement cross-cultural training because they lack a systematic approach to training. With a lack of consistency for training programs, organizations continue to believe that the training programs will not be effective for their expatriate managers. However, Black and Mendenhall claimed that corporations may not provide cross-cultural training based on the assumption that good managers are effective in any place. Decision makers may conclude that cross-cultural training is not needed or justified (Black & Mendenhall, 1990, p. 513). Through the identification of methods to improve the effectiveness of expatriate managers, I could demonstrate to top management in corporations that cross-cultural training is necessary to improve the effectiveness of expatriate managers.

Problem Statement

There are several reasons why multinational corporations operate out of U.S. territory. Maertz, Hassan, and Magnusson (2009) claimed that globalization and the liberalization of trade and services in many parts of the world have created an opportunity for multinational corporations to operate in a diverse geographical environment. However, many of these relocations have impacted the economy of the United States. These relocations have impacted the salaries and jobs of citizens of the United States. Spence (2011) established that relocating some parts of the international supply chain have affected the price of goods, jobs, and wages in the United States. However, these movements are due to economics, new regulations, higher costs of a labor force, society, and government laws, which have resulted in transferring operations to other countries that provide a lower cost of production. These forces prompted many companies to adopt policies of outsourcing their manufacturing operations to Latin American and Asian countries.

U.S. companies move their operations to foreign countries for many reasons. According to Kumar and Arbi (2008), in the past decade, many U.S. manufacturers have moved their operations to foreign countries due to attractive tax policies and cheap labor costs. Meanwhile, several companies have decided to move back their manufacturing operations to the United States. Ellram, Tate, and Petersen (2013) noted that a number of reasons have driven this decision, such as the rising cost of fuel in transportation, an increase in the cost of labor in low-cost countries, slow supply chain, currency valuation, and theft of intellectual properties. This movement back to the United States may also be

due to globalization where foreign citizens are better informed and are requesting more benefits and a higher quality of job.

Companies that choose to keep their operations overseas depend on the quality of their leaders. According to Reilly and Karounos (2009), successful oversea businesses depend on effective leadership. Large companies, such as Baxter Medical Devices, Johnson and Johnson, Intel, Motorola, GE Corporation, HP, Dell, Apple, and Guidant, have adopted different methods to help expatriate managers to improve the quality of their leadership when dealing with cross-cultural teams. Baxter, Johnson and Johnson, GE Corporation, and Guidant have adopted training programs on personal skills and human rights, while Intel, HP, Dell, and Apple have established a rotational plan in foreign countries to study people, business, and traditions. According to Mansours and Wood (2010), cross-cultural training programs are designed to equip their employees with the basic skills to deal with many problems in the host country, such as history, politics, business norms, and education systems. However, developing these skills may have little value for some organizations. The lack of training can prevent expatriate leaders from being successful.

Management skills are important for the success of expatriate managers in host countries. According to Bird, Mendenhall, Stevens, and Oddous (2010), successful expatriates must have effective skills to influence the host teams. Cross-cultural training programs could provide these skills, such as the art of negotiation, conflict management, effective interpersonal communication, empowering others, results-oriented performance, accountability, relationship building, integrity, and motivation. Bird et al. indicated that

these skills are necessary to live and work in multicultural business environments. In order to be successful in the global marketplace, leaders must increase their cross-cultural skills to be effective in achieving organizational objectives, such as quality, production, budget, and sales. With these skills, managers will become knowledge experts as well as effective facilitators in order to lead cross-cultural teams to success.

Global leaders require tools for arriving at shared meaning and common understanding of one another in order to develop effective cross-cultural relationships (Mingji, Kessler, Khilji, & Gopalakrishnan, 2014). Companies that operate manufacturing processes in foreign countries need to prepare their expatriate managers to manage cultural problems and be competitive in global business; however, many companies fail to equip their expatriate managers with specialized training to be able to manage cross-cultural teams effectively. Ko and Yang (2011) noted that one-third of the expatriates who completed their assignments did not perform as expected. Yuxiang and Hyungmin (2013) established that 30% to 50% of expatriates are considered ineffective by their top management. These high rates of ineffectiveness from the expatriate managers have caused a problem for top management in corporations (Katarina & Sethi 2013). Therefore, the problem researched in this study was to explore why so many expatriate managers are ineffective in managing cross-cultural teams outside U.S. territory.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative, phenomenological study was to explore the shared lived experiences of expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams outside of

U.S. territory, specifically in the manufacturing environment of companies located in the Dominican Republic. The expatriate managers who participated in this study had at least 10 years of experience working day-to-day with manufacturing cross-cultural teams outside U.S. territories and dealing with various cultural problems. These expatriate managers worked with the cultural diversity of the host country to find the best ways to build quality products, as well as design effective organizations to meet the goals of their companies.

Research Questions

The following three questions guided this study:

1. What are the experiences of expatriate managers regarding the effective management of cross-cultural teams in the manufacturing environment in the Dominican Republic?

2. What are the perceptions of expatriate managers regarding the effectiveness of cross-cultural training?

3.   What do expatriate managers suggest to improve the effectiveness of future expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams in the Dominican Republic?

Conceptual Framework for the Study

There were three conceptual lenses that provided the main frameworks for this study: social learning theory, culture shock theory, and experiential learning theory. These theorists explored the learning process, experience, organization behavior, and the adaptation of the individuals. Social learning theory and social cognitive theory are used

to explain the positive effect of cross-cultural training programs (Nam, Cho, & Lee, 2014). Social learning theorists have established that individuals learn by observation and experience. Moreover, proponents of social learning theory indicate that the key variables that influence the development of the trainee are the environment, individual, behavior, and attitudes (Boyce, 2011).

There are some elements from the social learning theory that supports cross-cultural training programs. According to Chien (2012), the social learning theory has four elements of cross-cultural training: attention, retention, reproduction, and incentives. Cross-cultural training provides individuals with learning, knowledge, and skills to reduce misunderstandings and inappropriate behaviors (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). With these elements, managers can improve their knowledge in cross-cultural management when managing their teams.

Researchers have indicated that social learning theory provides a way to understand the process of the expatriate adjustment. Therefore, expatriates are better equipped to learn to recognize the behavior in the host country (Gojer, 2012). This theory was appropriate to examine the learning capacity and adjustments of the expatriates to understand their behavior in the host country. Understanding the process of adjustment and the knowledge acquired for expatriates provided answers to address the research questions.

Culture shock theory refers to the disorientation that a person feels when he or she functions within a different and unknown culture (Chen, Lin, & Sawangpattanakul, 2011). Culture shock affects the life of the expatriate because he or she needs to adapt

and adjust to a new culture. Gojer (2012) claimed that culture shock creates stress, anxiety, confusion, disruption, helplessness, and irritability. Culture shock may cause expatriates to fail their assignments (Wang, 2014). Expatriate managers face culture shock at the moment of their relocation due to the unfamiliarity with the country or teams, which can create frustration and anger that could affect the performance of the expatriate. Befus (1998) mentioned that cross-cultural training programs might address the problems associated with culture shock. The cultural shock theory provided a conceptual framework for this study to explain the processes of adaptation and adjustment that expatriate managers face when managing new cross-cultural teams in a foreign country.

Experiential learning theorists emphasize how managers learn from experience. Nam et al. (2014) noted that the experiential learning theory is used to determine a process for creating knowledge. In addition, experiential learning is a cycle of learning that starts with learners being involved in the experience (Butler & Gheorghiu, 2010). According to Nam et al., experiential learning theory has been used to develop cross-cultural learning competencies that are necessary for the success of expatriate managers.

Several researchers have called experiential learning the "heart of higher ambitions" because this is where individuals learn from their experiences. Smith (2011) stated that the experiential learning theory is a process where the individuals take the information and process the information to use it. In applying this theory to cross-cultural training programs, managers may acquire knowledge and competency to deal with cross-cultural teams. These conceptual frameworks were appropriate for the methodology

because I used them to examine the cross-cultural training, knowledge process, problems, culture shock, and adaptation that expatriate managers experienced during their assignment in foreign countries. Moreover, these theories provided information on how cross-cultural training programs can be applied to improving the effectiveness in managing cross-cultural teams or the creation of new methods.

Nature of the Study

The study was a qualitative, phenomenological research approach that focused on the life experiences of the phenomenon of several individuals. Patton (2002) defined phenomenon as a program, organization, or culture. For this study, the individuals who were expatriate managers had knowledge and experience with cross-cultural teams from different foreign countries. The participants provided information in this study to answer the research questions.

I used a phenomenological approach to collect data from individuals who had experience with cross-cultural teams and their problems. Patton (2002) claimed that phenomenologists focus on how to put together the phenomena and on how the individual experiences the real world. Using this approach in the study provided me with an opportunity to develop a narrative report from the expatriate managers on how they managed the cross-cultural teams. The data collection for a phenomenological approach involves interviews with individuals who have the knowledge and experience of the phenomenon. According to Englander (2012), the phenomenological approach includes using an interview to collect data. The interview process in this study included open-ended questions to encourage the participants to provide their life experiences about the

effectiveness of managing cross-cultural teams. Phenomenological studies involve many sources of data collection, such as poems, observations, and documents. Englander (2012) commented that the best sample size for an interview in a phenomenological study includes at least three to five participants with experience in the phenomenon. Based on this, the sample size of my study was 20 expatriate managers with enough experience in managing cross-cultural teams.

The data collected in this phenomenological study were analyzed using NVivo software to capture themes, significant statements, sentences, or quotes that provided an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon. In addition, the participants provided tools, strategies, processes, and procedures that they used to deal with cross-cultural teams. In addition, NVivo software was used for the codification of different themes. There are two types of phenomenology approaches-hermeneutic and empirical transcendental. The best approach for my study was the empirical transcendental because it focuses more on the experiences of the participants and less on the interpretation.

In this study, I focused on finding methods to improve expatriate manager effectiveness while managing manufacturing cross-cultural teams outside the U.S. territory. Other qualitative approaches would have been less effective because the intent of this study was to explore the culture of that country through the experiences of expatriate managers. In a qualitative research study, researchers use multiple approaches, such as narrative, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. These qualitative

research approaches were considered but rejected because a phenomenological study allows for evaluating the experiences of individuals in the research problem.

Approaches, such as ethnographic research, could be used to explore the cultural behavior of a cultural sharing group. However, this approach was not appropriate to this study because this type of study involves extensive time from the researcher for analyze the behavior of the culture. On the other hand, a case study could have been used for the study, but was not appropriate because the research must have a case, such as a process, activity, or event to analyze. A narrative approach was considered, but this approach only explored the life of a single individual. Lastly, grounded theory was not considered in this study because I did not wish to develop a new theory.

Definition of Terms

Cross-cultural team: A team or group of people from two or more different nationalities working together, face-to-face, to run a business, produce a product, solve a problem, or make a decision (Misra, 2012).

Cross-cultural management: Skills to manage cultural differences and establish a plan to deal with their effects (Bird et al., 2010).

Culture: Culture is social behavior patterns, beliefs, and institutions (Gerdhe 2012).

Cultural differences: The characteristics between two cultures that demonstrate certain behavior patterns (Kim & Egan, 2011).

Cultural diversity: Different nationalities with different experiences, languages, and behavior (Ramalu et al., 2012).

Expatriate: An individual from an organization who is sent to a foreign country to manage global operations (Mansour & Wood, 2010).

Host country: The host country is the new location where the organization will establish their business (Dong & Liu, 2010).

Assumptions

I made several assumptions in this study. The first assumption was that the expatriate managers would respond to the interview questions truthfully. In the study, all of the participants were guaranteed that their responses in the interview process were confidential and that the information would not be disclosed. The second assumption was that the participants had experience working with cross-cultural teams. The third assumption was that all of the expatriate managers agreed to participate in the interview process. The managers' time was an important factor for the interview because managers have a busy agenda, which make it difficult to coordinate a meeting with them. I created a schedule to allow the managers to select their free time to participate in the interview process.

The focus group interview approach was considered in this study because it provides tools for sharing ideas, cooperation, and more information from the participants. This approach was rejected because not all of the managers had the same available time to participate in the process. A one-to-one interview approach was selected because it was practical, and I was able to obtain the most useful information to answer the research questions. One-to-one interviews provided flexibility for the research because some interviews were performed by phone.

Delimitations

The study delimitations included a small number of expatriate managers from the manufacturing industry who currently were working or had returned from their assignment. There were 20 participants (*n*=20) used in this qualitative study, which is sufficient and acceptable for this phenomenological study. All of the data sources were limited to the interview process.

Limitations

A potential limitation of the study was the available time that the participants had for the interview process. The schedule of all of the participants was verified, and the interview was set up based on their available time. A confidentiality agreement was developed to protect the participants. Another limitation of the study was a small budget available for the investigation.

Another problem was the logistics of the investigation because most of the expatriate managers were located in different manufacturing facilities, such as Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, while I was located in California. To address this problem, I coordinated with the plant managers of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic facilities so that I could travel to the islands. Finally, another limitation was in coordinating all of the managers to perform the interview because most of them traveled a lot. Therefore, a conference call was arranged using Skype with all of the expatriate managers to complete the interviews.

Significance of the Study

Due to globalization, U.S. manufacturing companies have confronted problems of high cost in order to be competitive in the market; some have transferred their operations to foreign countries with lower labor rates. I expected to make three contributions to the area of cross-cultural management. First, I wished to identify and evaluate methods to improve the effectiveness of expatriate managers while managing cross-cultural teams outside the U.S. territory. This study might contribute towards a better understanding of the manufacturing operations and the quality of life of expatriate managers in foreign countries. In addition, this study might provide information to top management in corporations who are establishing their operations in foreign countries to deal with the cultural problems.

Moreover, the results of the study might be used to assist U.S. companies that plan to transfer operations to foreign countries by providing a better understanding of how to manage employees from different cultures by providing an efficient training program to their expatriates while managing cross-cultural teams. The results of this study may be instrumental for organizations to be more effective and improve their business knowledge in cultural diversity. Furthermore, this study has the potential to improve the business practices in foreign countries. Lastly, the study results might be used to provide more knowledge of cultural behavior to expatriate managers who currently are in overseas assignments working with a cross-cultural team. This study might provide top management in corporations new standards for improving their cross-cultural training programs for their expatriates before their assignment overseas.

Summary

In this chapter, I introduced the concept of cross-cultural training, including the problem of high inefficiency rates of expatriate managers that cause problems to the top management in corporations. The problem researched in this study was to explore why some expatriate managers are inefficient in managing cross-cultural teams outside the U.S. territory. Theories, such as social learning theory, culture shock theory, and experiential learning theory were the conceptual frameworks for the study.

I used a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach in order to identify methods to improve the effectiveness of expatriate managers when managing cross-cultural teams outside of the U.S. territory. The participants in the study were expatriate managers with more than 10 years of experience working with teams with different cultures. These expatriate managers might provide methods to identify all of the factors needed to improve their effectiveness overseas while managing cross-cultural teams.

Chapter 2 contains a literature review on the analysis of the theories of cross-cultural training, cross-cultural management, and cross-cultural teams.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

As the world economy is becoming more globalized, U.S. companies are expanding their businesses in the international market to increase their profitability (Misra, 2012). Therefore, international companies must understand cultural diversity. Cultural differences affect managerial behavior and practices, such as organizing, staffing, and controlling (Adekunle & Jude, 2014). The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the shared lived experiences of expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams outside of the U.S. territory, specifically in the manufacturing environment of companies located in the Dominican Republic, in order to identify methods to improve their effectiveness during their overseas assignment.

This chapter contains a literature review of articles on cross-cultural management, cross-cultural training, and organizational behaviors that affect the performance of individuals in different environments. The discussion includes a description and definition of culture. Also, I will discuss cross-cultural management issues and factors that deal with cross-cultural teams. In the literature review, I present different cross-cultural problems, as well as a process to design effective organizations. Moreover, I discuss the responsibility of the leaders or managers in managing cultural differences. The chapter ends with a conclusion on the significance of cross-cultural management concepts and the skills that expatriate managers must receive during their cross-cultural training programs.

Literature Review Strategy

Information about cross-cultural training came from different sources, such as articles, books, websites, and blogs. The search of peer-reviewed journals for the literature review included using the Walden University Library databases, such as EBSCO host database, ProQuest database, Sage Database, ABI database, Business and Management database, Emeralds Management database, and Science Direct database. Several Google and Yahoo online searches were also used to find information about cross-cultural teams and expatriation. The information accessed from publications, newspapers, and dissertations were also used to create a literature review. The keywords, terms, and phrases used to search information included *cross-cultural management*, *cross-cultural teams*, *expatriate*, *management*, *cross-cultural training*, *culture shock*, *theory*, *social learning theory*, *experiential learning theory*, and *cross-cultural problems*.

Conceptual Framework

The following section includes a review of three conceptual frameworks that provide information on understanding cross-cultural training programs. The discussion includes the needed knowledge required of expatriate managers to manage cross-cultural teams. The three conceptual frameworks discussed have some similarity and characteristics related to the cross-cultural training process. These theories are social learning theory, culture shock theory, and experiential learning theory.

Culture Shock Theory

Researchers have studied cultural shock as a factor that affects expatriate managers' behavior when arriving in a foreign environment. Culture shock has been

described as an anxiety or stress that expatriates feel immediately by an unfamiliarity of social practices in the host country (Shi & Wang, 2014). Also, culture shock is defined as a normal process of transition, adaptation, and adjustment in which an individual experiences some degree of anxiety (Gojer, 2012). Expatriates can exhibit culture shock in many ways, including anger, frustration, depression, and homesickness (Shi & Wang, 2014). Wilkelman (1994) established that culture shock has four different phases that affect expatriates, such as the honeymoon/tourist, crises, adjustment, and adaptation. There are different causes of cultural shocks, such as a stress reaction, roles shock, personal shock, and cognitive fatigue (Wilkeman, 1994).

Researchers have noted that expatriate manager failure is due primarily to culture shock and the different challenges that expatriate managers face in the host country. Shi and Wang (2014) indicated that there are different cross-cultural factors that contribute to expatriate failures, such as dress code, language, education, eating habits, infrastructure, religious beliefs, entertainment, and family life. These factors can be a problem if the expatriate managers are not exposed to adequate cross-cultural training programs to minimize their shock. Cross-cultural training programs can be used to help with the adjustment or adaptation of expatriates to the host country to reduce their culture shock. The process of successful adjustment to a new culture should be supported by cross-cultural training (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). Cross-cultural training facilitates adjustment, adaptation, skill development, performance, and effectiveness (Black & Mendenhall, 1990).

Expatriate managers must adapt to the host country to be successful. Shi and Wang (2014) wrote that sufficient cross-cultural adaptation training provided by corporations could be essential in improving the performance and effectiveness of expatriates. There is a need for cross-cultural training programs to reduce culture shock for expatriates. Cross-cultural training is needed for professionals to avoid chances of cultural shock (Muhammad, Ahmed, & Khan, 2012). With effective training programs, expatriate managers could avoid negative cultural impacts and manage their cross-cultural teams effectively.

Many researchers have investigated the effectiveness of cross-cultural training programs. Muhammad et al. (2012) conducted a study of health care professionals and the effects of cultural shock in foreign countries, and they found that culture shock and inadequate preparation were the major reasons for failure. Selmer (1999) examined culture shock in China and mentioned that the lack of cross-cultural training could lead to a stressful experience for expatriates.

Existing training programs are too short to provide the basic knowledge needed for the expatriate managers to avoid culture shock. Selmer (1999) claimed that the majority of cross-cultural training programs are too short to achieve many fundamental changes to reduce culture shock to expatriates. Selmer noted that the training duration must be between 3 to 6 months after the arrival in the host country to be effective in reducing culture shock. The cultural shock theory provides information on the nature of the shock that expatriate managers face when they are transferred to a different culture.

Furthermore, the cultural shock theory can be used to explain how the training program

can be effective to minimize cultural shock and improve the performance of expatriates.

Experiential Learning Theory

The learning experience is important for expatriate managers on international

assignments. Experiential learning is a process where individuals learn by experience,

also known as the heart of higher ambitions (Akella, 2010). The experiential learning

theory is used to understand the various stages of learning and the different ways people

receive and process new information (Akella, 2010). The experiential learning theory is

one of the most common theories used to understand how managers learn (Nam et al.,

2014).

Experiential learning theorists have suggested that gaining and revising

experiences is fundamental to the learning process (Butler & Gheorghiu, 2010).

Experiential learning theory has been used in management learning research for more

than 25 years (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). According to Smith (2011), experiential learning

theory involves two dialectical processes: the process of taking information and the

process of using information. Smith indicated that the first step is the process of

absorbing information through the experience, and the second step is the process of

transformation. Expatriate managers on their international assignments need to learn

about the culture of the host country to adapt to the environment and laws of the foreign

country. The learning process is a cycle where expatriate managers are in a continuing

learning process to improve their skills. Kayes (2005) noted that, according to the

experiential learning theory, individuals learn by engaging in concrete experiences,

reflective observations, abstract conceptualizations, and activate experimentations. These learning cycles are used by individuals for developing new skills (Kayes, 2005). Moreover, individuals prefer to learn through creating, imaging possibilities, and generating new ideas (Kayes, 2005).

Experiential learning theory is a process of creating knowledge. Based on this, experiential learning is the appropriate theory for examining how cultural knowledge is acquired (Lenartowicz, Johnson, & Konopaske, 2014). Cultural knowledge is a tacit knowledge that is based on actions, ideas, values, and emotions and is the root of personal experience (Lenartowicz et al., 2014). The most effective way to disseminate cultural knowledge in multinational companies is through cross-cultural training (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). Cross-cultural training programs provide the knowledge that expatriate managers need to be effective in foreign countries

There are several gaps in cross-cultural training programs. Nam et al. (2014) evaluated the gaps in current cross-cultural training, and they used the experiential learning theory to evaluate the effectiveness of cross-cultural training for Western companies. Nam et al. found that there is a lack of cross-cultural training by corporations. Moreover, Nam et al. indicated four issues that need to be included in cross-cultural training: cross-cultural assessment, family factors, domestic assignment, and trainer quality to improve the effectiveness of the expatriates. Santoso and Lossemore (2013) examined expatriate management in Australia using the experiential learning theory. Santoso and Lossemore found that the preparation was outsourced, and the expatriates felt unsupported during their overseas assignments and this caused the failure of the

expatriates. This theory was used in this study to understand the knowledge acquired by expatriates based on their experiences in managing cross-cultural teams and the type of support that they received from their organizations.

Social Learning Theory

Researchers have described the social learning theory as a process where individuals learn by observation. An individual's learning occurs when information or knowledge flows from one way to another (Moon, Choi, & Jung, 2012). The social learning theory was developed by Bandura and is known as a social cognitive theory (Boyce, 2011). The premise of this theory is that an individual can learn by example. According to Bandura (1971), most of the behaviors that people display are learned through the influence of an example.

There are some elements of the social learning theory that support cross-cultural training programs and help expatriate managers in their adaptation to the host country. Social learning theory has created many positive effects on cross-cultural training (Nam et al., 2014). Social learning theory has four central elements that help organizations to improve the life of their expatriates: attention, retention, reproduction, and incentives (Chien, 2012). According to Black and Mendenhall (1990), social learning theory elements have been used to develop a framework for intercultural training. Social learning theory provides the expatriate managers a learning process and skills to be effective in the host country. These learning processes and skills facilitate the adaptation of individuals. This intercultural training helps individuals to learn knowledge and skills that facilitate positive intercultural interactions (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). Moreover,

Black and Mendenhall (1990) established that cross-cultural training is considered a learning process in which expatriates acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities through observation or experience. Moon et al. (2012) noted that learning about different cultures can enhance an individual's competencies.

The social learning theory has been applied to the learning situations that occur over an individual's life in coping with problems (Gibson, 2004). Kauppinen and Juho (2012) used the social learning theory to understand the internationalization of small and medium enterprises and knowledge transfer. Kauppien and Juho indicated that the theory helped to address four issues for the internationalization: dynamics, acceleration, ideas, and the chaotic process that organizations experienced. In addition, Zhuang, Wu, and Wen (2013) examined mentoring functions for the expatriate adjustment and found that the social learning theory helps them to understand how the multinational companies use different mentors to provide knowledge to expatriates in adjusting to the host country. This theory was appropriate for this study because I explored the learning capacity of expatriates and their adjustment to understanding the behaviors in the host country. Understanding the process of adjustment for expatriates and the knowledge acquired can be used to evaluate how this knowledge and adjustment impacted the effectiveness of the expatriates in the host country.

Defining Culture

Culture refers to universal human capacity, especially through education. Gerdhe (2012) defined culture as a complex process that includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morality, custom, and other capabilities acquired by humans as members of a society.

Culture is a powerful tool for human survival, and there are two layers of cultures: subcultures and universal cultures (Gerdhe, 2012). Subculture is the diversity of people who come from different parts of the world. In the other hand, universal cultures include the behaviors, traditions, and language of a culture. Pasmore (1988) stated that culture is a complex process due to the influence that organizations have in society. Pasmore (1988) also mentioned, "Cultural barriers to sociotechnical systems change become especially apparent when an organization previously located in a stable environment enters an era of increasing environmental complexity" (p. 37).

Cross-Cultural Training

Cross-cultural training has been studied by several researchers in regards to expatriates. According to Wurtz (2014), multinational corporations are interested in learning about cross-cultural training because they can implement a cross-cultural training program for their managers. Also, training companies or consulting firms are interested in cross-cultural training research to assess the results of the success of these programs and to provide better information to corporations (Wurtz, 2014). Despite the research in the field, the there are many gaps in determining effective cross-cultural training (Wurtz, 2014). However, Black and Mendenhall (1990) established that, despite the gaps, cross-cultural training programs are enhanced through cultural adjustment and effectiveness of the expatriates. Bhawuk and Brislin (2000) mentioned that cross-cultural training programs improve the manager's effectiveness and performance in the host country. Qin and Baruch (2010) indicated that cross-cultural training stimulates the communication and activities of the business. Moreover, cross-cultural training may

reduce culture shock. According to Qin and Baruch (2010), expatriates who receive cross-cultural training are more effective.

Cross-cultural training programs have been used to improve the cultural awareness of domestic employees to empower them to interact with individuals from other cultural backgrounds (Gojer, 2012). Cross-cultural training has been used to reduce pressure, uncertainty, and negative attitudes toward work (Qin & Baruch, 2010). Qin and Baruch (2010) found that cross-cultural training helps employees in managing cross-cultural teams and improving their performance.

Cross-Cultural Management

Culture is a common understanding that is shared among organizational members, such as different philosophies, ideologies, values, expectations, norms, behaviors, and traditions (Sambasivan & Yen, 2010). Cultural change happens when people from different ethnic groups work together and have different languages and communication styles, manners, religions, political views, food, appearance, and clothing. Based on these changes, it is the responsibility of the organizations to provide managers the skills needed to manage these cultural differences and establish a plan to deal with these effects. Schomer (2000) established 10 skills for managing in a culturally diverse environment:

1. Self-knowledge: Understand your own culture values

2. Global thinking: Keep informed about events and global changes

3. Cultural curiosity: Observe cultural behaviors

4. Flexibility: Adapt to business style and social environment

5. Inclusivity: Make people feel understood and value their perspective

6.   Managing diversity: Get people to work together effectively as unified

        teams

7.   Interpersonal communication: Express yourself

8.   Motivational leadership: Lead in ways that inspire employees to take

        responsibility

9.   Credibility: Exercise integrity, openness, and trust in all interpersonal

        dealings

10.   Patience: Keep the focus on the long-term goal and do not waste time

        getting immediate results. (para. 6)

Schomer (2000) established that, with these skills, expatriate managers can increase their

effectiveness in understanding how organizations function in different cultures (para. 5).

Canals (2014) noted that expatriates are senior managers who have the

responsibility of making business and technical decisions internationally. Canals claimed

that expatriates must establish mission and meaning, strategy, execution, integration, and

leadership development. Moreover, Canals indicated that cross-cultural management in

the global business plays a role in each one of those competencies because they introduce

new challenges that make development more complex to some expatriates.

In Latin American countries, such as the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and

Mexico, their workforces are different and complex even though they speak the same

language. These countries have a different culture, different needs, and different

education levels. The cultural process includes three levels, and expatriate managers must

understand each of them (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012). The first level is includes different

behaviors in how people react to different situations. The behaviors include written expression, dress, and language. The second levels are the values and beliefs that represent the operating principles that guide decision making. The third level includes assumptions, which are a combination of values and beliefs that are ingrained and are believed to be unquestionably true. Caligiuri and Tarique (2012) established that these cultural levels help organizations to understand cultural management, group behavior, and cross-cultural competencies. Caligiuri and Tarique claimed that these cultural levels are acquired through cross-cultural training. Moreover, Caligiuri and Tarique indicated that to be successful in foreign countries with these cultural levels, organizations must understand and reduce cultural differences, cultural adaptation, and tolerance of ambiguity from their expatriates.

In Latin America, it is important to establish these levels because expatriate managers must observe and understand the behavior of the groups to understand how to manage them. Also, expatriates must understand the group's capacity, training, education, and experiences. Chen, Sun, and McQueen (2010) established that the culture levels may be difficult for organizations and expatriates, but can be improved by using a cross-cultural management model like the model adopted Holden as shown in Figure 1.
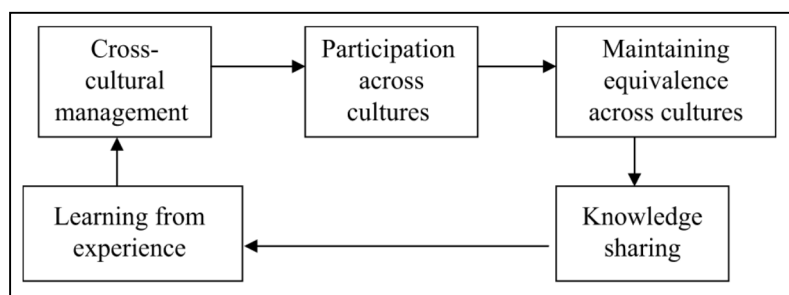
Figure 1. Cross-cultural management model

Chen et al. (2010) indicated that this cross-cultural model is a cycle in which the cross-cultural experiences never end. Chen et al. claimed that the cross-cultural management model is used as a knowledge management approach to increase the confidence and adaptation of the expatriate to the host countries. Chen et al. stated, "that knowledge is embedded in individuals, in the organization's rules, routines, structures, and technologies and knowledge may be embedded within its original context" (p. 299). In addition, Birasnav (2014) established that cross-cultural management processes provides expatriates two dimensions to support cultural knowledge: (a) tacit knowledge or the knowledge that is inimitable, valuable, and resides in the employee's brain and (b) explicit knowledge that is distributable, easy to handle, and storable. These dimensions provide the expatriates a knowledge process to establish their strategies. Cross-cultural management provides different perspectives to help expatriates to understand cultural differences, such as classical, anthropologist, physiological, stereotyping, systems thinking, and knowledge management.

Cross-Cultural Adjustment

In an international environment, expatriates must be able to adapt and integrate into a foreign country. Okpara and Kabongo (2011) defined adjustment as the process of

adaptation in a foreign culture. Baxter and Sommerville (2011) established that adjustment plays a role in the cross-cultural process and the success of expatriates. Peltokorpi and Froese (2012) mentioned that there are several factors that affect expatriates adjustments, such as job satisfaction, stress, attitudes, language, team composition, family food, appearance, and clothing. According to Peltokorpi and Froese (2012), some expatriates adjust to the foreign country easier than others. However, Tian and Borges (2012) mentioned that these adjustment changes are a learning process for the success and adjustment of the expatriates. Job satisfaction is connected to adjustment because the expatriates must choose to be in the host country (Qin & Baruch, 2010).

Furthermore, Siamwalla (2012) claimed that, in order for expatriates to adapt to the host country, they need to have the cultural sensitivity to be effective in performing their work. Siamwalla indicated that for expatriate managers to have cultural sensitivity, they need to have cultural intelligence. Siamwalla wrote that cultural intelligence provides the expatriate an awareness of cultural differences in the host country. Moreover, this cultural intelligence allows expatriates to better adjust in the host country because they will be able to identify the behavior of the host team. Peltokorpi and Froese (2012) indicated that the expatriates who are culturally adjusted are more open to the host country and introduce new behaviors, norms, and rules in the host country. Peltokorpi and Froese established that expatriates who are not adjusted in the host country experience anxiety and stress, which leads to poor performance.

Cross-Cultural Factors

Tian and Borges (2012) established that there are several cross-cultural factors that affect expatriates, such as language, motivation, communication, manner, religion, and political organization. Tian and Borges found that communication and language are the most important factors that affect the expatriate managers' ability to be successful in the host country. In Hispanic society, communication is the most fundamental instrument because in countries, such as the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Mexico, and Costa Rica, the language is expressive, humorous, energetic, loud, and informal. U.S. organizations and expatriate managers must take into consideration these differences because people in the United States may be more formal, quiet, and nonexpressive. Communication can drive a wedge between groups that could lead to misunderstandings of instructions, leading to incorrect work or work delays. Tian and Borges noted that English is the international business language in most foreign countries, and expatriates should be careful during conversations because words may be misunderstood as English is not the native language of the country.

Expatriate managers must understand personal relationships and space in different cultures (Tian & Borges, 2012). In Latin America, workers want more face-to-face conversations, and in some countries in Latin America like the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, instead of shaking hands, they prefer physical contact such as giving a good morning pat on the back or a kiss on the cheek. However, people in the United States may prefer their individual space, and their face-to-face interactions are limited.

Motivation is an important value for the workforces in Latin America. When teams or members in the organization perform good work or meet their goals, these members expect and believe they are entitled to feedback or some rewards from management. These rewards could be in the form of a gift certificate or cash. Some countries are more sensitive to this process, and expatriates must understand this difference. Time is another factor because, for some people in the United States, the time is an important priority because it is a way to increase and improve efficiency and production. However, in Latin American countries, time is less important compared to relationships and lifestyle.

The recruiting process is another factor for expatriates in Latin American countries. U.S. manufacturing companies require more technical expertise and knowledge in certain areas, such as PLC, solid work, heat transfer, material sciences, biomedical engineering, molding process, and statistics. It is difficult to find engineers with this knowledge in these countries. For example, in the Dominican Republic, many graduate students are in engineering, mostly industrial engineering, and their technical expertise and experience is limited. Cultural factors function as an invisible barrier, and expatriate managers who manage cross-cultural teams need to identify these factors and manage these differences between cultures (Tian & Borges, 2012).

Expatriation

U.S. organizations spend money and time to recruit engineers with different backgrounds in foreign countries to run their operations, but the process is complicated. Most U.S. organizations provide training that could increase technical knowledge in these

foreign countries, but it takes time to acquire the level of knowledge that the U.S.

organizations want. For that reason, U.S. manufacturing companies rely on expatriate

managers to run their operations in these foreign companies to minimize these

weaknesses (Chen et al., 2010). These expatriates are relocated not only to run operations

in foreign countries, but also to transfer their technical knowledge to the members of the

organization in the host locations (Okpara & Kabongo, 2011). However, the expatriates

create other issues for organizations, such as family situations, adaptability, job

satisfaction, organizational commitment, and communication.

According to Okpara and Kabongo (2011), one of the reasons that an assignment

fails is due to the adaptation of the expatriates and their spouses in the host country.

Another reason for failure is communication because this process is important between

family members and the expatriates during the adjustment in the host country (Qin &

Baruch, 2010). Qin and Baruch (2010) noted that an organization's commitment plays a

role during the expatriate assignment because this could affect their performance. Other

issues for expatriates include integration, management style, conflicts with cross-cultural

teams, and adjustment in the country. To avoid these issues, expatriates and organizations

must create strategies to deal with different cultures. These strategies can help the

expatriates to learn the communication style, the language of the culture, and the social

activities and customs of the culture. Organizations and expatriates must be able to

understand what the culture has to offer, take risks, develop cultural sensitivity, be

patient, have realistic expectations, and have the courage to experience culture shock

(Okpara & Kabongo, 2011). According to Bhawuk and Brislin (2000), therefore, organizations must provide cross-cultural training and eliminate culture shock.

Bird et al. (2010) indicated that, to be successful in an overseas assignment, expatriates must be effective in task completion and relationship building. However, the expatriates' characteristics can influence the success or failure of organizations. This depends on personality factors of the expatriate, such as emotional stability, agreeableness, openness, and conscientiousness (Bird et al., 2010). These factors could make or break the organization due to the extent to which the expatriates are willing to adapt to the culture of the host country. The workforce in Latin America prefers leaders who are flexible and open because that is the general personality of Latin Americans.

Cross-Cultural Team Organization

Expatriate managers in the host country must set the strategies and align them based on the cross-cultural team's needs. These strategies must be clear such that the team can understand and implement them. In Latin America, goals and strategies must be clear and simple and must be transmitted to the cross-cultural team in a process that can understand. This process should follow some basic elements, such as (a) the mission is clear, (b) the values represent the host organization, (c) the milestones are identified for the host organization, and (d) the needed tools (Trkman, 2010). These basic elements help the expatriate managers in the host country to establish the operational values for manufacturing support and accomplishment. These steps must be communicated on a day-to-day basis. Expatriate managers may find problems during the implementation of these steps.

Expatriates and organizations must design an organizational structure that will lead to a successful business model. Trkman (2010) commented that the design of an organization must fit with the environment and the subsystem. In addition, Aseidu, Aaworb-nang, and Opare (2014) claimed that the individual is the engine of the organization. During the process of designing the organization, expatriates and organizations must take into consideration the following characteristics to be successful: academic degree, skills, gender, experience, flexibility, commitment, communication, attitude, critical thinking, and technical knowledge (Aseidu et al., 2014). These characteristics help the expatriates to create a group with the knowledge and capability to develop the workforce to meet the goals and mission of the organization.

In the designing of an organization, expatriates must take into consideration the external and internal environment that affects their groups. Organizations and expatriates must follow the properties and performance characteristics of highly effective groups adapted by Likert (as cited in Pasmore, 1988, p. 32). Likert adapted these characteristics to help organizations to design and develop an effective organization structure to function. These 22-design characteristics are

1.   Members are skilled in the various leadership and membership roles required for effective interaction

2.   The group has existed long enough for good working relationships to develop

3.   Members are attracted to the group and are loyal to its leader

4.   Members help to shape group values

5. Members who are linked to other groups see a commonality of values across group settings

6. Individuals support pivotal group norms

7. Members are highly motivated to help the group succeed

8. Members engage in critical but mutually supportive problem solving

9. Leaders share information and create supportive problem solving

10. The group provides relevant technical knowledge to help each member develop his or her full potential

11. Group norms encourage striving for maximum performance

12. Help is provided to members who need it

13. Creative approaches are highly valued

14. Value is placed on constructive but not excessive conformity

15. Information is communicated efficiently

16. Information is taken at face value

17. Members share information crucial for success

18. There is a high degree of shared influence

19. Leaders are kept well-informed

20. The group examines proposed changes carefully, but is flexible when appropriate

21. Individuals are free to make relevant decisions for the group

22. Leaders are chosen carefully for their ability to facilitate the group's task and maintenance activities. (as cited in Pasmore, 1988, p. 32)

These characteristics allow groups and expatriates to perform any task and improve their effectiveness. In addition, Aseidu et al. (2014) stated, "Individuals and groups needs the following support such as leadership, purpose of the organization, its culture, structure, relationships, and the external environment to act as catalyst that facilitate the effective work of expatriates and teams in the organization" (p. 45).

The effective design of the organization in cross-cultural teams can be affected by the tasks assigned to the groups or members. In Latin American countries, the structure of the organization must not be complicated and needs to have minimal layers to maintain coordination and control with limited bureaucracy. In a functional organization, expatriates must be flexible in the organization to control problems. Organizations with more layers will have more problems to control, more bureaucracy, and the status of the hierarchy may be a problem (Aseidu et al., 2014). The organization structure in Latin America must be designed to help the expatriates to create innovation, rapid changes, new technology, and new processes.

Designing effective organizations includes providing stabilization, increased productivity, and increased innovation processes of the host organization (Aseidu et al., 2014). Expatriates and organizations must establish strategies to hire the correct workforces in these countries. For example, the Dominican Republic manufacturing plant is located in an industrial park which is managed by a board of directors that includes the general manager and human resources manager for each facility established in the industrial park. The selection of the hiring process for manufacturing operators in the Dominican Republic follows this process: first, an interview with the manager of human

resource of the industrial park; second, perform a math test, followed with reading and writing tests in Spanish; and third, perform a skill test for manufacturing. After these screening processes, the human resource department of the industrial park provides feedback and refers the employee to the site. After this feedback, the human resource representative from the plant performs an internal screening process that consists of an interview with the hiring supervisor, plant human resources manager, and staff. In addition, the new hire is submitted to a skill test for manufacturing and certification process for manufacturing. These processes are the filter for expatriates and organizations to create an effective organizational structure, which will lead to the success of the business in the host country (Caligiuri, 2013).

According to Caligiuri (2013), "The current lack of cultural agile expatriates is affecting organizations' global competitiveness and their plans for future strategic growth" (p. 175). Caligiuri commented that expatriates and organizations fail because they ignore the culture in which the business is being relocated. Furthermore, Pasmore (1988) mentioned, "effective organizations are those which produce excellent results by any measure of cost, quality, or efficiency while simultaneously enhancing the energy and commitment of organizational members to the success of the organization" (p. 1). Organizations must provide a training program for their expatriate managers to create an effective team that will handle the issues in the host country.

Leadership

Leaders are better educated than leaders from 20 years ago (Pasmore, 1988, p. 140). These leaders are prepared to manage their business or operations due to all of the

technologies that they have at their disposal and experiences from their education.

According to Cotae (2010), "leadership is the behavior of an individual in directing

through communication and interpersonal influence, the activities of a group toward a

shared goal" (p. 6).

The primary functions of a leader are controlling, organizing, leading, and

planning. These functions are the key factors for expatriate managers to achieve the

organizational objective and manage their resources. These resources are based on

human, financial, physical, and information. The managers perform these functions

simultaneously, and each function is dependent on the other. According to Darling and

Heller (2009), management must incorporate the leadership values, and these values must

be important for the success of the organization. According to Darling and Heller, these

values are joy, hope, charity, and peace. Darling and Heller (2009) indicated that

managerial leaders who use these values are the most successful in achieving their

objectives and strategies. These leaders are not necessarily the smartest, the best

educated, the most experienced, the highest paid, or have the greater skills or abilities;

however, they possess both the drive and business savvy to create a successful business

organization. Successful leaders focus on their vision, mentoring, and ability to

communicate and interact with others. Leaders not only create the future for themselves,

but also the future of the organization.

According to Darling and Heller (2009), managers should lead by example to

create a positive attitude in organizations and set expectations to meet the organizational

goals. Cotae (2010) established that managers are responsible for getting things done and

understanding the organization's needs. Cotae claimed that leadership deals with changes in the business and social, cultural, and political aspects of the host country. Leaders are appreciative of the contributions of the members in their organizations. These characteristics help the organization in creating a positive environment and expectations for the future.

Hopen (2010) stated that successful expatriate managers learn to become more aware of their expectations to achieve better team performance. Moreover, Hopen indicated that expatriates set the direction for the followers to carry out their work. Reilly and Karounos (2009) noted that expatriates must have the following characteristics to be effective: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Reilly and Kaounos established that, in addition to these characteristics, the expatriates must have four characteristics to continue growing in their effectiveness: trustworthiness, integrity, comfort with ambiguity, decision maker, delegate responsibility, and openness to change. Reilly and Karounos established that expatriates contribute to the success of the organization when they apply these tools when managing groups with diversity. Researchers have established that leadership is an integral part of the learning process. Organizations of the future will not be able to use their current methods for managing because the future expatriates must act as facilitator, liaison, and decision maker. Bird et al. (2010) listed several competencies that expatriate managers must have during managing cross-cultural teams, such as influencing the stakeholder, making complex ethical decisions, leading change, fostering innovation, and ensuring social capital. Reilly and Karounos (2009) stated, "expatriate leaders should attempt to match their leadership

styles to the various conditions" (p. 10).

Type of Environments Needed to be a Successful Leader

To ensure that leaders are successful in foreign countries, companies have created several programs that are designed to provide the expatriates an opportunity to work in one or more foreign countries and create an adaptive environment. These programs help the global leaders to improve their performance and help the organization fulfill the operational strategic plan (Caligiuri, 2006). Caligiuri (2006) identified three different programs that create value for expatriates. First, the didactic learning program includes cross-cultural training in diversity and language to help the managers to perform their tasks and manage their foreign teams' task. Second, the experiential opportunities program establishes an individualized coaching and mentoring process. According to Caligiuri, experiential opportunities provide the strength and development needed for expatriates to gain cultural sensitivity and cultural knowledge. The last program is the intensive cultural experience which provides the expatriates an opportunity to live and work in the foreign country.

The intensive cultural experience is designed to provide expatriates an exposure to the culture and the language of the host country. The success of the expatriates in an international assignment is based on the alliances that they create in the host countries. These alliances will provide the expatriates with the confidence to accomplish their objectives. Rodriguez (2005) stated, "At the heart of alliances successes, managers and top management teams play a critical role, they have the ability to inspire, influence, change, and conduct thinking, attitudes, and behavior of the people" (p. 2). Expatriate

managers must create operational and business strategies to implement and establish the initiatives by using their alliances. Rodriguez established that the alliances play a role in the culture based on the value, vision, and motivation of the workforce and the business.

Hopen (2010) established that some environmental factors can affect the success of the leaders. New expatriate leaders face organizational challenges, as well as new requirements. One of the factors is group diversity, which impacts managing and completing projects. Another factor is the change of technology, which impacts the delivery, service, and design of the product. Other factors that affect the environment of the expatriate leaders include the knowledge of the work force and organization composition; these factors are crucial for the success of the expatriates in the host country. According to Hopen, the key to success in these environmental issues is to acquire the correct knowledge to handle these factors. Hopen stated, "instead of trying to 'out-think' and 'out-smart' expatriates need to do everything possible to acquire the knowledge" (p. 7). Gabrielsson, Seristo, and Darling (2009) claimed, " successful managerial expatriates learn to become more aware of their intention, and as they learn to change these intentions and their perceptions" (p. 316).

Competencies of Successful Cross-Cultural Leaders

Successful expatriates are a competitive advantage for multinational firms (Caligiuri, 2006). However, organizations must provide quality training which addresses deficiencies in individuals, develops competencies, and focuses on tangible aspects of improving performance. Expatriates' knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform can be developed through training and development interventions, such as formal

education, individualized mentoring, immersion programs, and developmental

assignments (Caligiuri, 2006). Bird et al. (2010) suggested that intercultural

competencies, as they relate to global leadership, are comprised of three forms of

management: perception management, relationship management, and self-management.

Perception management includes a person's mental flexibility when confronted with

cultural differences. Relationship management addresses how aware people are of others

and their interaction styles and values and the level of awareness they have of themselves

and their impact on others. Self-management includes people's strength of identity and

their ability to effectively manage their emotions and stress. Success within the realm of

intercultural situations depends upon having a clear sense of self.

Metaphors, poetry, and storytelling have been used for to engage, educate, and

bond with one another. According to Grisham (2006), these three elements are valuable

when used within cross-cultural leadership. They help to establish trust, empathy,

transformation, power, and communication of multicultural leadership. Grisham (2006)

claimed that metaphors include linguistic, conceptual, social-cultural, neutral, and bodily

components, which human beings have used to make sense of the universe. The novice

multicultural leader may encounter difficulties relating to the values of another culture.

The metaphor expresses the underlying values of any given culture. Grisham (2006)

suggested that metaphors achieve intimacy (empathy and trust) between the speaker and

the hearer. In business, time is limited and so expatriates must find creative ways to

shorten the time necessary to transfer knowledge (Grisham, 2006). Poetry provides a

simple manner of conveying complex ideas and stories. Effective storytelling makes the

truth come alive, it keeps people focused, and it can introduce new ideas by starting with a familiar platform. This allows each person to discover the truth and avoid confronting people with their own inadequacies (Grisham, 2006). Denning (as cited by Grisham, 2006) suggested that storytelling creates transformation, trust, and empathy; transmits values; fosters collaboration; tames rumors; shares knowledge; and leads people into the future. Storytelling is a great way to get humans to venture into the unknown (Grisham, 2006).

Knowledge Management

Knowledge management consists of the strategies and practices used in organizations to create a learning environment for its expatriates. Learning is defined as a process of creating knowledge based on an experience. The focus on knowledge management is to provide expatriates with an objective or focus, innovation, lesson, integrity, improvement and performance, knowledge, culture integration, communication, infrastructure, and technology. Knowledge management provides the expatriates a role in the decision making, innovation, and cultural issues. Vorakulpipat and Rezgui (2008) commented that knowledge management creates value for expatriates. According to Vorakulpipat and Rezgui, the knowledge-based perspective of the organization has emerged in strategic management. Organizational management is recognized as a key resource of the deployment of knowledge and an organizational advantage. Vorakulpipat and Rezgui mentioned that one part of knowledge management is knowledge sharing, which means that people in the organization can acquire knowledge through experience.

Knowledge sharing is defined as a process of transmitting to a received target, as

well as the demand for knowledge management. According to Vorakulpipat and Rezgui (2008), traditional organizations are beginning to comprehend that knowledge management is a crucial factor for gaining and sustaining competitive advantages for their expatriates. According to Vorakulpipat and Rezgui, these advantages emphasize three dimensions of knowledge management: social organization, learning process, and sociotechnical. Knowledge sharing is a first generation of knowledge management and is the process of learning the best practices for the organization and expatriates. Knowledge sharing is the transmission and absorption used in the organizations. In knowledge management, it is important to define the skill of the expatriates as trainer, coach, writer, influencer, facilitator, marketer, communicator, and project manager. These skills provide the organizations an expatriate who can be effective. To be effective, expatriates must understand the different styles of leadership across cultures.

Massingham and Diment (2009) established that organizations must provide their expatriates with a process to develop an understanding of the culture in the foreign country. Expatriate managers with international assignment will have different challenges that could affect the strategies of the business. However, NG, Dyne, and ANG (2009) agreed stated, "cross-cultural interaction provides concrete experiences where individuals receive real-time feedback on their behavior and effectiveness based on reactions from other parties during cultural interactions" (p. 518). Massingham and Diment found a relationship between the organization commitment and the knowledge management initiatives. Massingham and Diment defined organizational commitment as an exchange agreement between the individual and the organization. In addition, Massingham and

Diment claimed that an organization must effectively manage its resources to respond to change and to learn from experience.

Massingham and Diment (2009) provided four models that help expatriates to improve their knowledge management: (a) organizational learning that is the process that an organization adapts to change and uses to acquire new knowledge, (b) skills and behaviors, (c) knowledge transfer that is the movement of knowledge within an organization, and (d) organization capability that is a process that creates an environment. These four models provide expatriates a process to maximize their knowledge and deal with issues in cross-cultural countries. Vorakulpipat and Rezgui (2008) stated, "managers can use this finding by increasing organizational commitment" (p. 137). According to Vorakulpipat and Rezgui, knowledge management has three dimensions: sociotechnical, socio-organizational, and learning processes; these dimensions define the knowledge process where organizations establish their strategies for knowledge transfer.

Collaboration Engineering in Cross-Cultural Management

U.S. manufacturing industries are searching for opportunities outside of the United States to reduce their operation costs. Collaboration engineering has a role during this transformation process. Yang, Dong, and Helander (2012) noted that organizations require an effective and efficient leader to be successful in the collaboration process. Popescu, Aldea, and Draghici (2012) established that this collaboration process has created some misunderstandings between expatriates and cross-cultural teams. Collaboration engineering provides tools that can help expatriates to deal with these problems. In addition, Popescu et al. listed several skills that leaders can use to manage

cross-cultural communication issues, such as speaking slowly, avoiding negative questions, taking turns, and being supportive. Moreover, Popescu et al. established two processes to minimize these problems: the mutual participation of each team in the process and an environment to generate collaboration among groups. Dourado, Silvia, and Silvia (2011) claimed that collaboration in the cross-cultural process can impact new product development due to market competition and product lifecycle due to the customer requirements. Organizations need to provide a structured method to assist the expatriate leaders in meeting the tasks and activities to generate collaboration between cross-cultural teams.

U.S. manufacturing industries need to provide adequate training and knowledge to the expatriates to be effective. According to Deshpande (2013), the creation of a cross-functional team an important dimension of the collaboration engineering process because this creates effective training and cultivates community practices to create transcultural partnerships to support the adaptation of the expatriates. Popescu et al. (2012) established that communication is one problem for cross-cultural management during collaboration engineering. However, collaboration brings together different people from different cultures giving expatriate managers the opportunity to create something together in an innovative way and integrated manner, avoiding communication barriers (Popescu et al., 2012).

Expatriate managers need to understand that cross-cultural teams working on collaborations can experience cultural misunderstandings. However, Popescu et al. (2012) indicated that misunderstanding is a positive process for cross-cultural teams and

expatriates because it provides a process of adaptation to understand each other and earn respect. In collaboration engineering, expatriate managers may experience challenges because they need to find the best solution to ensure that the team works as one cohesive group for the benefit of the organization. Sometime this is a problem due to the culture and the interactions of the teams. Popescu et al. noted that cultural differences increase misunderstandings and affect the communication between groups. In addition, Popescu et al. established that communication has two factors, sender and receiver; if one of these factors gets the wrong information, this creates a misunderstanding. Misunderstanding occurs when collaborative engineering teams have various types of communication tools, such as social software and 3-dimensional models.

Organization

The development process in the organizations is necessary for the success of expatriates. Organizations must invest in the education of their expatriates and involve them in the creative process. Organization development provides people the opportunity to function, develop their potential, increase effectiveness to meet the goal, create an environment for a challenging work, and an opportunity to influence. These values create a changing process in organizations in which expatriates apply their knowledge to solve their own problems in the workplace, allowing them to create and develop the best workforce. Expatriates must act as a role model for their members and groups. In addition, organizations must reinforce the learning process, support the development of their expatriates, share values, and challenge their expatriates to continue to learn.

The continuous development process in an organization is affected by factors, such as time, focus, and a lack of a developmental process. These factors impact the effectiveness of the business and the confidence of the members of the organization. Organizations are exploring other alternatives to grow their business, and these alternatives are the movement of their operations to foreign countries to reduce their production cost and to be competitive in the market. Meanwhile, organizations must provide to their expatriates a learning development process to deal with cultural differences when they are assigned to an international position. NG et al. (2009) established that, despite the role that international assignments play in global businesses, organizations have adopted a performance perspective, focusing on performance and adjustment of the expatriates. Organizations must establish a system to develop their expatriate managers to deal with cultural differences before the movement to foreign countries.

Expatriate managers must understand the behavior of the culture. According to NG et al. (2009), effective expatriate managers need to have ethnorelative attitudes to understand the behavior of the culture. NG et al. established that ethnorelative is the acknowledgement of the values and beliefs of another, which generates sensitivity and a respect for the other culture. Organizations must provide their expatriate leaders with a developmental process to improve their skill of influence while managing cross-cultural teams. According to Bird et al. (2010), successful expatriates must have three dimensions that influence different cultures: self-oriented dimension, other-oriented dimension, and perpetual dimensions. These factors provide the expatriate leaders with the knowledge to

understand the individual's performance in the global workplace. In addition, Bird et al.

claimed that an organization must provide their expatriate leaders with the skill of self-

awareness. Self-awareness refers to the strengths and weaknesses of interpersonal skills,

values, and the relationships with others. Moreover, Bird et al. indicated effective

expatriate managers understand the values of global culture. Irving (2010) established

that organizations need to develop expatriates to manage all the challenges in the global

world.

Summary

The literature review included a discussion of three theories: social learning

theory, culture shock systems theory, and experiential learning theory. These theories

were used to address the importance of cross-cultural training programs for expatriate

managers during their adaptation to the host country. In the discussion, several

researchers have demonstrated the impact of the expatriates in foreign countries. Most of

these theories have helped researchers to evaluate the challenges, changes, and stresses

that expatriates have experienced with cross-cultural teams to be competitive and

effective in global business. Based on the review, there are gaps in training, which need

to be addressed to improve the effectiveness of the expatriate managers while managing

cross-cultural teams.

Extensive changes are taking place, and organizations have to adapt by learning

requisite processes and procedures, thereby affording the opportunity to design and train

effective expatriate managers for success. The organizations must continue to maintain a

developmental process that cultivates a stronger competency of its expatriates. Creating

stronger competencies and training will help expatriates in making their decisions in solving problems that benefit their organizations. However, organizations must take into consideration all of the cultural factors that affect the society. According to social learning theory, culture shock theory, and experiential learning theory, factors such as language, communication, and behavior affect the expatriate managers in a new environment.

In the literature review, I discussed factors that influence the decision to move manufacturing operations to foreign countries, such as the Dominican Republic. I also analyzed the factors needed to manage teams in Hispanic societies. In the business world, cross-cultural management has transformed the way of doing business, and U.S. corporations must dedicate time to learning how to manage the social behavior of different cultures to establish their goal. Expatriate managers must receive effective training for managing cross-cultural teams in the global market. Organizations need to develop their leaders to manage cross-cultural teams. Reserchers have established skills needed to manage cross-cultural teams; however, organizations have not implemented these skills or have not provided the right competencies to their expatriate managers.

There are many roles that expatriate managers have to influence their teams and meet the organization's objectives. Expatriates must operate cross-cultural teams. Effective expatriates need to understand cultural adaptation, cultural minimization, and cultural integration to be competitive in the global business. This knowledge is important for expatriate managers to develop relationships and transfer ideas to the cross-cultural teams. To have these skills, it is important that organizations provide effective training to

their expatriates for their success in the host country. The training will help the expatriate to improve their skills, abilities, and communications to be effective with the cross-cultural team.

In the literature review, I discussed all of the tools and techniques that managers need to have when leading a cross-cultural team. However, researchers have not discussed the operational problems that expatriate managers face when leading their cross-cultural team. In this study, I filled these gaps by interviewing expatriate managers with experience in managing cross-cultural teams. This study will provide information about methods to help the expatriates to be effective when managing cross-cultural teams in foreign countries.

Chapter 3 includes a detailed description of the methodology of the study, the research design, population, role of the researcher, sampling, instrumentation, pilot study, data analysis plan, trustworthiness, ethical concerns, and a summary.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the shared lived experiences of expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams outside of the U.S. territory, specifically in the manufacturing environment of companies located in the Dominican Republic, in order to identify methods to improve their effectiveness during their overseas assignment. I wished to determine the reasons why some expatriate managers are inefficient in managing cross-cultural teams outside of the U.S. territory. When companies move their operation to foreign countries, they may fail to be successful due to the lack of training provided to their expatriate managers.

This chapter includes the methodology and research design of the study. This chapter is organized into the following sections: (a) research design, (b) role of the researcher, (c) population, (d) sampling procedure, (e) instrumentation, (f) data collection, (g) pilot study, (h) data analysis plan, (i) trustworthiness, and (j) ethical concerns. A summary of the methodological design of the study is given at the end of this chapter.

Research Design and Rationale

The study involved using a qualitative phenomenology research approach in order to identify methods to improve the effectiveness of expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams that might contribute to reducing the failure rate.

The main research questions that guided the study were as follows:

1. What are the experiences of expatriate managers regarding the effective management of cross-cultural teams in the manufacturing environment in the Dominican Republic?

2. What are the perceptions of expatriate managers regarding the effectiveness of cross-cultural training?

3. What do expatriate managers suggest to improve the effectiveness of future expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams in the Dominican Republic?

Other qualitative methods would be less effective to perform this study, as I needed the real-life cultural experiences of the expatriate managers. In qualitative research studies, researchers use multiple approaches, such as narrative, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. These qualitative approaches received consideration, but were rejected because the phenomenology method allows a researcher to find out the experiences of individuals in the specific phenomenon.

A qualitative method design was appropriate for this study because it can be used to describe how to understand an individual who has experienced a social problem. The qualitative method is used when researchers are trying to understand the problem that the participants are addressing. Also, a qualitative design provides an opportunity to generate open-ended questions during the interview process. Qualitative research has enjoyed growing popularity over the past 3 decades, and its contributions have become increasingly valued (Hodges, 2011, p. 90).

The phenomenological, qualitative approach best fit this investigation because I focused on the life experiences of the phenomenon from a single individual to several individuals. Patton (2002) established that the phenomenology approach is used to investigate the meaning of the lived experiences of a person or a group of people. This methodology originated in Germany at the start of the 20th century and had its roots in psychology and philosophy (Petty, Thomson, & Stew, 2012, p. 379). A phenomenological study is used to collect data from individuals who have experience with the problem. According to Petty et al. (2012), the focus of this design is on understanding the uniquely lived experiences of the individuals who constantly had contact with the problem to be investigated. Moreover, Petty et al. indicated that phenomenological methodologists collect descriptive data to understand the phenomenon. The phenomenological qualitative approach provides flexibility for the study, allowing the researchers to tell the story of the phenomenon using a variety of data and approaches that provides different types of information and multifaceted interpretation possibilities (Shin, Kim, & Chung, 2009, p. 850).

The phenomenon investigated in this study was the cross-cultural management of the manufacturing team in the Dominican Republic with expatriate managers from different areas assigned to this country. The Dominican Republic is an island located in the Caribbean region commonly called Hispaniola, which shares its territory with Haiti. The Dominican Republic is the second largest island in the Caribbean, and its estimated population is 10 million people (Dapena & Ortega, 2014). Several U.S. manufacturing companies have located their companies to this island, such as GE, Baxter, B Braun,

Edwards Lifesciences, and Ethicon due to the geographical location and the low labor

costs. All of these companies have expatriate managers running their operations day-

to0day. The intention of this study was to identify methods to improve the effectiveness

of the expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams.

The data collection method used in this study was the interview. The interview

involved expatriate managers with experience with cross-cultural team processes. A

structured interview data collection was prepared to get an accurate response from the

participants. This interview was conducted face-to-face or by conference call using

Skype.

Role of the Researcher

My primary role as the researcher in the study was to collect information from the

participants who had more than 10 years of experience working with a cross-cultural

team. These participants had worked, or are still working, in the medical device

industries, and they led groups of employees in the Dominican Republic. These

participants were located in Puerto Rico, Singapore, California, and the Dominican

Republic. The selected expatriate managers participated in an interview process

consisting of 10 questions that was designed to obtain accurate information about their

experiences. The identity of all of the participants was protected. A number was assigned

to each participant instead of the name. Moreover, to ensure reliability, the interview was

recorded and transcribed.

For data analysis of this study, NVivo software version 10 was used. NVivo

software is a data management tool that assists researchers in managing the materials so

that the researcher can classify, sort, and arrange information in an organized way that can generate codes for the information collected from the interview. The participants' responses were analyzed by using common themes, trends, words, and patterns from their experiences. With the help of the NVivo software, a final report was created summarizing the results of all of the findings that contributed to the cross-cultural management. The proposal was submitted to the institutional review board (IRB) for their approval, and the approval number was secured (Approval No. 02-06-15-0268466).

Population

The target population was 40 expatriate managers who worked in the medical device industry. The sample in this study consisted of 20 successful expatriate managers who worked in the medical device industry. Each of these managers had more than 10 years of experience working day-to-day with cross-cultural teams managing different cultural problems. These managers came from different experiences, such as finance, R&D, production, engineering, supply chain, and manufacturing. The size of the sample used for a qualitative project is influenced by both theoretical and practical considerations (Robison, 2014, p. 29). Robison (2014) established that most studies require a provisional decision on sample size at the initial design stage while choosing a new location or new research to compare. There are several debates concerning about what is the right sample size for research (Dworkin, 2012, p. 1319). However, Dworkin (2012) mentioned that saturation is the most important factor for sample size selection. Dworkin defined saturation in qualitative research as the point at which the data collection no longer offers any new data.

The sample size for my study depended on the population of employees at the manufacturing facility in the Dominican Republic. According to Englander (2012), for the phenomenological study, the participants must have experience with the specific phenomenon. The manufacturing facility in the Dominican Republic had 1,200 employees with 40 expatriate managers. I am a senior engineering manager for this manufacturing organization in Irvine, California. My primary role is to design new methods for the manufacturing processes in this facility and to evaluate the implementation of these new processes. However, none of the participants in this study reported directly to me; they reported only to the plant manager or manufacturing vice president.

The study was focused only on the administrators. These administrators included expatriate managers/engineers from finance, manufacturing, human resources, manufacturing, research and development, material sciences, IT, and supply chain who had been assigned or had worked in the Dominican Republic. The sample consisted of a diverse group of expatriate managers who worked in different departments: finances (one), manufacturing (five), human resources (one), manufacturing engineers (five), R&D (five), material science engineering (one), IT (one), and supply chain (one). This sample size was selected based on the accessibility that I have with the expatriates. The sample of managers was selected based on the willingness of the managers to participate, and I selected these participants because of the easy access to the managers for conducting the interviews. The 20 participants were a representative sample size of the whole population. The participants had similar experiences and a background with

medical devices. These expatriates had not only worked in the Dominican Republic, but also had lived in countries such as Singapore, China, Japan, Mexico, and Thailand. Englander (2012) mentioned that, for a phenomenological study, the participants must have experienced the phenomenon. Also, Englander mentioned that, in phenomenological research, the sampling strategy is narrow. In this study, I captured the knowledge that the participants had with cross-cultural teams.

In this study, I used purposeful sampling because the participants understood the central phenomenon of the study. According to Dworkin (2012), the purposeful sampling strategy does not necessarily include random samplings or a large number of participants and sites as typically found in quantitative research method. Moreover, Englander (2012) claimed that an important process for the phenomenological approach is the amount of information that can be obtained from the lived experience of the participants.

Sampling

The sampling plan selected for this investigation was a judgment sampling or purposeful sampling. Specifically, a homogeneous sampling was chosen because my investigation included a discrete subgroup. I selected a homogeneous group of participants in my sample. According to Nachimias and Nachimias (2008), homogeneous sampling is used to understand and describe a group in-depth. Nachimias and Nachimias indicated that homogeneous sampling consists of a group or individuals with similar characteristics. The approach that was used in this study facilitated the interview process, simplified the analysis, and reduced variation. The selection of the participants was based

on their accessibility, experience working with cross-cultural teams, and their willingness to participate in the study.

To verify that all of the participants were willing to participate in the study, I sent a communication via e-mail explaining the reason and purpose of the study. As soon as the participants agreed to collaborate in the study, I sent a consent form to them via e-mail (See Appendix A). This consent form explained to the participants all of their rights and their protection of privacy.

In this study, I had the opportunity to interview 20 expatriate managers with similar experiences as my sample (n=20). A larger sample size would have been difficult to attain due to the lack of access to more participants. This sample size fit in my research plan because the expatriate managers who had experience with cross-cultural teams had a busy agenda. Moreover, in the qualitative research method, the appropriate sample size is the one that best answers the research questions. Patton (2002) stated that a qualitative method produces data in a smaller number of people and causes. Englander (2012) established that the recommended sample size is at least three participants. However, Englander indicated that the more interviews a researcher performs, the more information the researcher finds out about the phenomenon. Based on this, the selection of 20 participants in the study was appropriate.

Instrumentation

The appropriate data collection for this investigation included the interviewing process because my three research questions addressed the experience of expatriate managers with a cross-cultural team outside of U.S. territory, specifically in the

Dominican Republic. The interviewing process helped me to answer my research questions with accurate data. The interview process used in the study was the standardized open-ended interview. Patton (2002) wrote that the standardized open-ended interview has several advantages, such as minimized variation, time is used efficiently, easy to analyze, and easy to compare. All of the participants received and signed the consent form (see Appendix A) to protect their privacy. I used the standardized open-ended interview, and I prepared the protocol and questions in advance (see Appendix B).

An open-ended interview provides the researcher with the ability to ask the same question in the same order for all of the participants. According to Patton (2002), this process reduces the interviewer effect and bias. Open-ended questions are created to encourage the participants to provide full responses and to be comfortable during the process. A copy of the interview questions was provided to all of the participants. According to Janesick (2011), this is a format used to prepare the interview process. The interview was digitally recorded, and field notes were taken during the interview. The interviews were transcribed for analysis and downloaded in the NVivo data management software version 10 to save the information and to code the data.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was developed for refining the research instrument of my study. According to Maxwell (2013), the function of the pilot study is to test the study methods and to explore any implications. Researchers perform pilot studies, or at least components of piloting techniques, to sharpen their skills (Janesick, 2011). Furthermore, the pilot study helped me to identify any problems in the interview protocol. Maxwell indicated

that pilot studies help the researcher to develop an understanding of the concepts from the people who are studied. This pilot study allowed me to improve the protocol for the interview and to evaluate the questions that were asked of the participants. Also, the pilot study helped me in sharpen my interviewing skills.

For the pilot study, I used three participants who were not a part of my sample size, but came from the same manufacturing organization in the Dominican Republic for testing my interview questions and verifying any gaps in the protocol method. Based on the feedback from the three participants in the pilot study, no modifications needed to be performed to the interview protocol questions. Therefore, a request for changes form was not submitted to IRB.

Data Analysis Plan

The data analysis plan included using NVivo data management software version 10. NVivo 10 is a helpful tool to analyze and organize the files and it generates the codes of the information from the interview. The NVivo software assists the researcher in organizing the material during the classification, sorting, and arrangement of the information. The NVivo software helped me to examine the data and compile the analysis with links related to the investigation, such as audio files, pictures, Excel spreadsheets, and PDF files. The NVivo software was used to manage the data, ideas, and query; provide graphics; create nodes; export data; analyze audio; identify words; and create a final report of the investigation. In the study, I conducted all of the interviews by using a recording process, and this helped me to organize my information and notes. A transcribed process was generated to create the coding of each interview.

In the data collection, I performed a verification to understand how the data were been managed. The data management techniques that were implemented in this research plan included backing up all of the information using an external hard drive to maintain copies of the information generated from the interview. Also, another computer with the same information was used as a backup. A master list was created to develop a matrix of the data collection as a tracking system.

Trustworthiness

Credibility in a qualitative study depends on the following three elements: rigorous methods, a credibility of the research, and a belief in the value of the qualitative inquiry. According to Patton (2002), a qualitative research strategy is necessary to use in order for study to be credible. In this study, an interview protocol was prepared with 10 open-ended questions so that the participants felt comfortable in providing their answers.

For the credibility process, I reviewed and practiced my interview questions to get a deeper knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon in the study and used a purposeful sampling to provide accuracy in my data collection. Moreover, to ensure the quality, trustworthiness, and credibility of my investigation, I asked my participants to verify and judge the data from the interview and to review the validity of the conclusions I generated..

Furthermore, I used an external person as an auditor who did not have a connection with the study to examine and measure the accuracy of the process. The use of an external auditor increases the accuracy in the study (Janesick, 2011). To improve the reliability of the study, I recorded in detail the field notes during the interview. Also, I

verified the quality of my recorder and made sure that the transcribing process was

processed in detail.

Ethical Concerns

During the planning and design process of my investigation, I evaluated all of the

ethical issues that could affect the study and analyzed how they could be addressed.

Based on this, I have established a procedure that was used in the study as follows:

- The investigation was submitted to IRB Approval No. 02-06-15-0268466

- I sent a letter of cooperation from the human resources department of the

    company in the Dominican Republic to perform the investigation

- Permission was requested from the expatriate managers to use them in the

    study

Prior to the interview process, I provided the general purpose of the study to all of

the participants. Also, I provided a brief description of how the data would be collected

from the participants and a discussion of how and where the data would be used. With

this procedure, I created trust and access to all the participants. During the interview

process in the study, the privacy of the participants was respected to protect their

anonymity.

All of the participants were assigned a number for their privacy. During the

development of the final report, I used all of the guidelines from the American

Psychological Association (APA, 2010) using the appropriate unbiased language and

appropriate level of specificity. Patton (2002) established that ethical problems do not

stop with the data collection or analysis, but should be analyzed in the final report. All of

the electronic data were saved and will be locked on my laptop for 5 years after the completion of the research. After those 5 years, all of the data will be destroyed and deleted from my laptop.

Copies of the final investigation report, including results, were e-mailed to all of participants for their review and feedback. I gathered high-quality data from the participants, and the interview was neutral. I followed several steps to ensure ethics:

- Explain purpose

- Risk assessment

- Confidentiality

- Ownership

- Inform results

- open-ended questions

- Advice

- Data access and management

- Sensitivity

Furthermore, Patton (2002) established that an important ethical issue is when the researcher shares the personal experience with the participant in the interview about the phenomenon that is under investigation. I was an expatriate manager who worked with cross-cultural teams, but avoided making any comments or sharing my experience with the participants in the interview process. This helped me to get the correct information from the participants in the study. Lastly, the final results of the research were shared with the participants through e-mail after receiving approval from Walden University that

my degree has been conferred. The final report was an executive summary that contained three to five pages of the results and conclusions of the investigation.

Summary

In this chapter, I described all of the steps that were used for the study including the research design, the role of the research, the instrumentation, and the research plan. Also, the population and sample size were presented to provide an overview of the participants and the responsibility of the researcher. All of the participants were expatriate managers with more than 10 years of experience managing cross-cultural teams. Moreover, this chapter contained the pilot test that was performed to gain confidence with the interview process. The pilot test helped me to improve the interview process and gain confidence with the participants.

Furthermore, this chapter included a description of the data collection and the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness and the credibility of the study. I allowed the participants to review the final report to ensure credibility. To ensure quality in the study, all the data were analyzed using NVivo data management, which improves the accuracy of the study and generates the coding themes to answer the research questions. Chapter 4 will include a detailed description of the field study results, such as the data analysis, setting for the interview results, and findings of the investigation regarding the research questions.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the shared lived experiences of expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams outside of the U.S. territory, specifically in the manufacturing environment of companies located in the Dominican Republic, in order to identify methods to improve their effectiveness during their overseas assignment. The interviews with expatriate managers with 10 years of experience from different functional areas managing cross-cultural teams involved the identification of methods to improve their effectiveness when managing cross-cultural teams.

This chapter contains the following elements of the results of the study: (a) pilot study results, (b) data collection, (c) data analysis, and (d) results. The chapter ends with a summary and short transition to Chapter 5.

Pilot Study Results

A pilot study was performed to test the interview questions for the study. These questions were field-tested based on the recommendations of three randomly selected participants who were a not part of my sample size, but came from the same manufacturing organization in the Dominican Republic. The three participants indicated that all of the interview questions were appropriate and would provide useful information for the study. The three participants mentioned that the questions were designed to provide them with the opportunity to contribute more information. As a result of these recommendations, no modifications were required to the original interview questions.

Participant 1 stated that all of the questions were useful in providing a method to improve the effectiveness of managing cross-cultural teams. Also, Participant 1 noted that the questions addressed the strengths and weaknesses in managing teams outside the U.S. territory. Participant 2 in the pilot study indicated that the questions provided an opportunity to contribute more information in the study about how to manage effective cross-cultural teams. Lastly, Participant 3 noted that the questions were appropriate to discover how expatriate managers managed effective cross-cultural teams.

Data Collection

The study involved 20 expatriate managers with more than 10 years of experience working in a medical device industry. The participants had worked, or were currently working, with cross-cultural teams in the Dominican Republic. The 20 participants worked in different departments, such as finances, manufacturing, human resources, manufacturing engineering, R&D engineering, material sciences, IT, and supply chain management.

The data collection used in this study was the interview. An invitation letter was sent via e-mail to all of the participants to verify their availability to participate in the research. The 20 participants responded to the e-mail invitation letter in 3 to 5 business days; 25% of the participants responded to the invitation letter in 3 days, 55% in 4 days, and 20% in 5 days. After this, all of the interviews were scheduled using their Microsoft Outlook calendar. E-mails were sent to all of the participants as a reminder of the interview, as well as the reason for the study.

Before the interview, all of the participants read and signed the consent form and sent it to my personal e-mail address. The duration of each interview was on average approximately 30 minutes. All of the interviews were performed by conference calls and were recorded using a digital recorder with an iPhone application. Each participant answered the 10 interview questions and provided detailed information that supported the study. The data collection followed the strategy established in Chapter 3. No variations were made in the data collections that were planned in the strategy outlined in the proposal.

Data Analysis

All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed in a Microsoft Word file using the same format. After the formatting process, all of the interview documents were imported to NVivo software. The analysis of the qualitative data involved using NVivo Version 10 to organize and store the data for accurate and reliable analysis. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis software tool that assists researchers in examining and compiling the data to classify, sort, and arrange the information in an organized process to generate different themes or codes from the interview. The coding application in the NVivo software was used to identify words and phrases linked by themes that came from the interview transcripts. The data were examined using coding for linking phrases, sentences, or words that were similar from the participants. Nodes were created in NVivo to correlate the specific themes that participants were provided using the same information. These nodes helped me in the analysis to look for patterns or ideas. The coding process is a fundamental task of a qualitative research study, and this helped me to

identify the participants' comments, the consistency of their ideas, and the sources in the interview to correlate the effective methods to be used in managing teams in foreign countries.

The results of the interview analysis process in the NVivo software produced several themes. The thematic categories were (a) participants with experience managing cross-cultural teams, (b) challenges of managing cross-cultural teams, (c) benefits of managing cross-cultural teams, (d) effective tools to manage cross-cultural teams, (e) cross-cultural training received, (f) competencies for future expatriate, (g) improving effectiveness, and (h) being successful in managing cross-cultural teams.

Results

This section contains the results of all of the findings from the study. The results were organized based on eight themes with their codes that came from the data analysis performed using the software NVivo 10. This section also includes tables and direct quotes from the participants for clarity of the results.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was as follows: What are the experiences of expatriate managers regarding the effective management of cross-cultural teams in the manufacturing environment in the Dominican Republic? Four themes arose in the analysis of the first research question, such as places with experiences in managing cross-cultural teams, the challenges of managing cross-cultural teams, the benefits of managing cross-cultural teams, and effective tools to manage cross-cultural teams.

Theme 1: Participants with experiences in managing cross-cultural teams.

Twenty participants (100%) had the experience of working with a cross-cultural team in the Dominican Republic. However, there were other participants who had worked with cross-cultural teams in other countries. Eight participants (40%) had experienced managing cross-cultural teams in Puerto Rico, five participants (25%) had experienced managing cross-cultural team in Singapore, and four participants (20%) had experienced managing cross-cultural teams in Mexico. Table 1 shows the codes as per the participant's interview.

Table 1

Codes for Participants with Experiences in Managing Cross-Cultural Teams

Codes	No. of participants to offer this experience	% of Participants offer this experience
Dominican Republic	20	100
Puerto Rico	8	40
Singapore	5	25
Mexico	4	20
Brazil	3	15
China	3	15
Japan	3	15
Netherlands	1	5

The majority of the participants reported that their transfers to these countries had been to perform a leadership role as transferring manufacturing lines with high technology, installation of the networking systems, establishment of financial process, or establishment of production capability for new products. Participant 5 emphasized that the primary objective of the expatriates included oversight, support, and the engagement of the team to complete facility expansion, validations, and quality policies.

Theme 2: Challenges of managing cross-cultural teams. The majority of the participants (95%) claimed that the major challenge of managing a cross-cultural team was the communication process. However, 70% of the participants (14 of 20) stated that the main challenge is language. Table 2 shows the codes as per the participants' interviews.

Table 2

Codes for the Challenges of Managing Cross-Cultural Teams

Codes	No. of participants to offer this experience	% of Participants offer this experience
Communication	19	95
Language	14	70
Technology Knowledge	7	35
Ethic	4	20
Planning	3	15
Accountability	2	10
Government	2	10
Location	2	10
Lack of Initiative	1	5

Participant 13 noted, "Oftentimes the message that was communicated was not understood by the team and different directions were followed, resulting on redoing the work and delay of projects, this is why the communication needs to be clear and accurate." Participant 12 had the same experienced and mentioned, "The limited vocabulary in communication causes delay of the projects is important the information is transferred effectively and clearly to the team." Participant 8 spoke about the difficulty of transferring the information to the team: "Communication seems to be the biggest challenge. Having the team understand what you are trying to convey can be more difficult than it seems." Participant 18 shared the same experience and mentioned that

communication needs to be robust because it will create a roadblock in the process. However, Participant 5 noted, "The communication is critical, especially if there is a language barrier that needs to be overcome and written communication is the best way to deal with communication problems."

Several participants indicated that language is a challenge when managing cross-cultural teams. Participant 4 stated, "Major challenges included the language, it is really a huge road-block if the team is not using the standard language during the project assigned." Participant 1 mentioned, "The language barrier is a big problem when having technical discussions with the team this creates confusion and mistakes." Participant 15 noted, "Language barrier can be a force to be reckoned with to ensure communication is effective and clear when managing cross-cultural teams." Participant 17 commented, "Language became a challenge because all the standard operating procedures are in English, and this is an issue to manage with the team when they spoke Spanish."

Theme 3: Benefits of managing cross-cultural teams. The participants in the study provided their experience about the benefit of managing cross-cultural teams. Eleven participants (55%) stated that a benefit of managing a cross-cultural team is that the team members are willing to learn. On the other hand, seven participants (35%) claimed that the benefits of managing a cross-cultural team include sharing ideas, which help the team to perform their job effectively. In addition, five participants (25%) noted collaboration as a benefit. Table 3 shows the codes as per the participants' interviews.

Table 3

Codes for the Benefits of Managing Cross-Cultural Teams

Codes	No. of participants to offer this experience	% of Participants offer this experience
Willing to Learn	11	55
Sharing Ideas	7	35
Collaboration	5	25
Energetic	3	15
Responsible	2	10
Career Advancement	1	5
Dynamic	1	5
Enthusiastic	1	5
Hard Worker	1	5

Several participants expressed that a benefit of managing cross-cultural teams was their willingness to learn. This helps them to manage the team more effectively. Participant 10 claimed that cross-cultural teams are eager to learn new ideas and methods. Participant 13 echoed the same experience about the benefits of managing cross-cultural teams and mentioned, "This enriched each side and provided to the team and managers a unique opportunity to ensure the knowledge transfer. This is critical for the project that involves design, product or processes."

Participant 12 stated that a willingness to learn creates an opportunity to improve the business strategy. Some participants indicated that an employee's willingness to learn provided opportunities for sharing ideas, and this made it easier to manage the team effectively. Participant 17 mentioned, "This creates an opportunity to learn different approaches to solving problems and manage the situation, create access to potential

talents, an opportunity to focus on the important areas, and increased the freedom of trying new things."

Some participants indicated that sharing ideas was beneficial during managing cross-cultural teams, which provides an enrichment for potential solutions and innovation. Participant 2 spoke about the benefit of sharing ideas with cross-cultural team: "Sharing ideas with the team increase the creativity and encourage innovation of the team." Participant 14 mentioned, "The strength of managing cross-cultural teams is the process of sharing ideas to generate different opinions and suggestions." Another benefit experienced by the participants was the collaboration. Participant 20 noted "Collaboration opened the opportunity for improving the communication with the team and created the opportunity for a better strategy."

Theme 4: Effective tools for managing cross-cultural teams. The participants in the study provided their experiences regarding effective tools for managing cross-cultural teams. Fifteen participants (75%) claimed that, in order to manage a cross-cultural team, effective project management was needed. Five participants (20%) experienced project management at their tea meetings. Table 4 shows the codes as per the participants' interviews.

Table 4

Codes for Effective Tools for Managing Cross-Cultural Teams

Codes	No. of participants to offer this experience	% of Participants offer this experience
Project Management	15	75
Team Meetings	5	20
Negotiation	2	10
Respect	2	10
Written Communication	1	5
SMART Approach	1	5
Speak Slowly	1	5

The majority of the participants indicated that an effective tool for managing cross-cultural teams was project management. Participant 13 mentioned, "Having clear end goal and milestones that ensure project completion." Participant 5 spoke about how project management is effective for managing cross-cultural team: "Setting objectives with the team is essential to understand the local constraints and ways of doing things; here is where project management tools help to organize the ideas." Participant 20 mentioned, "establishment of priorities and ownership is effective for managing cross-cultural teams, which is what project management provide." Moreover, Participant 4 noted, "The project management is a key process of planning to align the team and the proper selection of the project." Other participants identified that team meetings are a tool needed to manage cross-cultural teams. Participant 11 mentioned, "Team meetings set the ground rules and the perspective of the team, this helps to be aligned." Participant 7 indicated, "Team meetings helps to set expectations and clarify concerns with the teams,

this make sure that the project will be completed." Participant 20 emphasized that team meetings are a tool to track projects and their status.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was as follows: What are the perceptions of expatriate managers regarding the effectiveness of cross-cultural training? One theme arose in the analysis about the cross-cultural training.

Theme 5: Cross-cultural training received to manage cross-cultural teams. The majority of the participants in the study expressed their experiences about cross-cultural training received for managing cross-cultural teams. Twenty participants (100%) did not received cross-cultural training from the corporation. However, (20%) of the participants (four of 20) received cross-cultural training outside of their corporations. Table 5 shows the codes as per the participants' interviews.

Table 5

Codes for the Cross-Cultural Training received to Manage Cross-Cultural Teams

Codes	No. of participants to offer this experience	% of Participants offer this experience
No Training from corporation	20	100
Outside	4	20

All of the participants indicated that they had not received cross-cultural training from the corporations. Therefore, the participants did not provide their perception about cross-cultural training. However, Participant 18 spoke about the importance of the cross-cultural training for the expatriate managers; while he did not receive training, he applied some of the learning concepts to deal with cross-cultural issues. "I had no specific

training about the management of cross-cultural teams, but I tried to apply the knowledge and concepts learned in the East Lothian Learning Partnership (ELLP) training, OZ principle training, plus my previous leadership experience." Participant 17 mentioned, "No cross-cultural training. However, as the operation strategy leader, I have access to a very knowledgeable network of colleagues that have tremendous practical knowledge of the global business." Participant 5 had similar experiences and noted, "Very minimal guidance from Corporation HR, but I worked with current expats from the US and Switzerland to best integrate and learn myself with them."

Four participants (20%) noted that their cross-cultural training was not provided by the corporation, and they took the initiative to search for training outside of the corporation. Participant 9 mentioned, "Training from the corporation was limited, but I attended several courses at the University of California, Irvine such as Latin and Asia culture training and cultural issues." Participant 19 had the same experience, and he mentioned, "I had taken a modern anthropology class at the California State University at Long Beach, which focused on business, cultural differences due to that cross-cultural training from the corporation was limited."

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was as follows: What do expatriate managers suggest to improve the effectiveness of future expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams in the Dominican Republic? Three themes arose in the analysis about suggested improvements for future expatriate managers, such as competencies for future expatriate, improving effectiveness, and being successful in managing cross-cultural teams.

Theme 6: Competencies for future expatriates. The majority of the participants in the study provided their suggestions based on their experiences about the competencies that future expatriate managers must have when managing cross-cultural teams in foreign countries. Fifteen participants (75%) suggested that one of the key competencies that future expatriate managers must have is communication skills. Thirteen participants (65%) suggested that leadership skills are important to be effective in managing cross-cultural teams, and seven participants (35%) suggested that language is important for managing cross-cultural teams. Table 6 shows the codes as per the participants' interviews.

Table 6

Codes for the Competencies for Future Expatriates

Codes	No. of participants to offer this experience	% of Participants offer this experience
Communication Skill	15	75
Leadership Skill	13	65
Language	7	35
Result Oriented	5	25
Adaptable	3	15
Influence	3	15
Listener	3	15
Organization Skill	3	15
Relationship Skill	3	15
Patience	2	10
Detail Oriented	1	5

The participants indicated that communication skills are a key competency to managing cross-cultural teams. Participant 1 mentioned, "Communication is the most important skill in managing a team and needs to be adjusted to fit the local team better

and effectively to motivate the team." Participant 14 noted, "The communication style to be employed is relevant to be effective in driving action and results." Participant 17 claimed that communication improves the motivation of the team:

Communication skills will keep the organization motivated, focused on achieving short-long term goals of the corporation and as result individuals will feel they are working within a fair environment that provides opportunities for development and advancement based on merit. This also creates an opportunity to continue learning.

Participant 3 spoke about the importance of leadership competencies for future expatriates: "Good leadership skill is essential for managing a cross-cultural team to obtain good results." Participant 2 mentioned, "Leadership skills reduce the risk of wrong decisions and helps to achieve corporate goals." Participant 2 suggested, "Leadership is a competency that guarantees the success of your work because if the team sees you as a good leader they will follow you to any place."

Participant 8 spoke about the importance of speaking the same language to effectively manage a cross-cultural team: "Speaking the same language is necessary for managing cross-cultural teams because this can avoid misunderstanding and confusion when providing directions." Participant 6 echoed the same suggestion about speaking the same language: "Speaking the same language would be at the top of my list because this creates a perfect environment for collaboration."

Theme 7: Improving effectiveness. The majority of the participants in the study provided their suggestions based on their experiences on how to improve the

effectiveness of futures expatriate managers when managing cross-cultural teams in foreign countries. Nineteen participants (95%) suggested that future expatriate managers must have cross-cultural training to effectively manage cross-cultural teams. Six participants (30%) indicated that future expatriate managers must have planning knowledge to manage cross-cultural teams in foreign countries. Table 7 shows the codes as per the participants' interviews.

Table 7

Codes for Improving Effectiveness

Codes	No. of participants to offer this experience	% of Participants offer this experience
Cross-Cultural Training	19	95
Planning knowledge	6	30
Strategy Alignment	3	15
Motivation	2	10
Be Proactive	1	5
Define Objective	1	5

The participants indicated that cross-cultural training is necessary to improve cross-cultural teams. Participant 1 mentioned, "Companies should promote the right cross-cultural training where the individual can develop their cross-cultural skills." Participant 11 stated, "With cross-cultural training the manager can identify how to influence and motivate the team."

Participant 5 spoke about how the managers need to collaborate with human resources to get the necessary training to be effective in the host country:

The U.S. managers should collaborate with Human Resources to be thoroughly trained and aware of the culture he is to be immersed in before departure. This

will provide knowledge to recognize and accelerate the integration, adaptability and management of the team upon arrival.

Participant 15 noted, "Cross-cultural training would be very helpful in building better leaders that can manage cross-cultural teams." Participant 8 emphasized that cross-cultural training is beneficial for the adaptation of the host country: "Cross-cultural training provides skills to be adapted to the new cultures and this help to be effective at the work."

Other participants indicated that, to improve the effectiveness of managing cross-cultural teams, expatriate managers should have planning knowledge. Participant 11 mentioned, "Expatriate managers should have knowledge on planning to establish real, achievable goals this will be helpful to the host team." Participant 10 noted, "Planning knowledge can be beneficial to the team as a way to get everyone on the same page for completing a project."

Participant 20 claimed that expatriate managers with planning knowledge improve the effectiveness of the cross-cultural team: "The key to making the cross-cultural teams work well, is focusing on a set objectives. This planning process is the main output to generate the ideas and solutions." Participant 18 stated that planning knowledge ensures the alignment of the team and the corporation: "The planning skills guarantee the alignment of corporate and cross-cultural teams to support the business strategies."

Theme 8: Be successful in managing cross-cultural teams. The participants in the study provided their suggestions based on their experiences on how to be successful

when managing cross-cultural teams in foreign countries. Nine participants (50%)

suggested that future expatriates need to understand the culture. Five participants (25%)

suggested that future expatriate managers must receive coaching to manage cross-cultural

teams in foreign countries. Table 8 shows the codes as per the participants' interviews.

Table 8

Codes for be Successful in Managing Cross-Cultural Teams

Codes	No. of participants to offer this experience	% of Participants offer this experience
Understand the culture	10	50
Coaching	5	25
Learn about Local Law	3	15
Set clear expectations	2	10
Team Building	2	10
Bilingual	1	5

Several participants stated that, in order for expatriate managers to be successful

while managing cross-cultural teams, they need to understand the culture. Participant 18

mentioned,

> We must spend quality time on understanding the culture and their differences.
>
> Based on that, we must create and work the new experiences that will create and
>
> build the expected beliefs that will influence the right actions that will get us to
>
> the success.

Participant 20 echoed the same ideas about needing to understand the culture to

be successful in managing cross-cultural teams: "Understanding the culture facilitates the

establishment of the open communication with the host team and improves the adaptation

of the expatriate." Participant 10 said, "I would suggest to the leader to immerse himself

into the culture to better understand the ideas and conflict of the team, this will help to deal with the team members." Similarly, Participant 16 mentioned, "It is important to know your team members very well and their potential, based on this is important to learn and understand their culture to be successful." Participant 20 said, "Understand the cultural differences of the host country and what is important for them is an important step for the success of the leader because it creates confidence and an open environment to meet company goals."

Others participants focused on the importance of coaching to be successful while managing cross-cultural teams. Participant 9 mentioned, "To be successful in the host country the leader must get continuing coaching from human resources or a supervisor. This will establish future expectations, improvements, and adjustments that need to be done." Participant 4 said, "Coaching is vital to understanding and knowing what the corporation is expecting from you during the assignment."

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the shared lived experiences of expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams outside of the U.S. territory, specifically in the manufacturing environment of companies located in the Dominican Republic. The purpose was to identify methods to improve management effectiveness during their overseas assignment. The analysis helped me to analyze the 20 interviews and create themes and patterns. The results generated eight themes:

1. Participants with experiences in managing cross-cultural teams

2. Challenges of managing cross-cultural teams

3.   Benefits of managing cross-cultural teams

4.   Effective tools for managing cross-cultural teams

5.   Cross-cultural training received for managing cross-cultural teams

6.   Competencies for future expatriate managers

7.   Improving the effectiveness for managing cross-cultural teams

8.   Be successful in managing cross-cultural teams

All of the participants described the places that they have worked in managing cross-cultural teams. The participants mentioned that they had managed teams in the Dominican Republic. Also, other participants had managed cross-cultural teams in Puerto Rico, Singapore, and Mexico. Their primary role in these overseas countries was as a leader in charge of facility expansion, process validation, and quality implementation.

In terms of the challenges of managing cross-cultural teams in the Dominican Republic, most of the participants claimed that communication is the biggest challenge, followed by language and technology knowledge. Participants identified several benefits of managing cross-cultural teams in the Dominican Republic. Some of the benefits cited were willing to learn, sharing ideas, and collaboration.

In terms of effective tools needed to manage a cross-cultural team in the Dominican Republic, the participants cited project management, team meetings, and negotiation. No participants received cross-cultural training from the corporation previous to their departure to the host country; the majority of the participants had not received training experience.

All of the participants described several competencies for future expatriate managers, such as a communication skills, leadership skills, and communicating in the same language. In terms of how to improve the effectiveness of future managers, the participants cited cross-cultural training and planning knowledge as being important. Most of the participants provided suggestions about how to be successful while managing cross-cultural teams, such as understanding the culture and coaching. Chapter 5 contains the interpretation of the findings, limitations and strengths, recommendations, implications, and the conclusion of the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the shared lived experiences of expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams outside of the U.S. territory, specifically in the manufacturing environment of companies located in the Dominican Republic, in order to identify methods to improve their effectiveness during their overseas assignment. The interview process involved 20 expatriate managers with more than 10 years of experience working with cross-cultural teams in foreign countries. The interviews were important because all of the expatriate managers helped to identify methods to improve their effectiveness while managing cross-cultural teams in foreign countries. Also, the study provided information about cross-cultural training and recommendations for top management in corporations to be included in their business strategies. The results provided factors to improve the effectiveness of expatriate managers when managing cross-cultural teams.

Chapter 5 contains a summary, interpretation of the findings, strengths and limitations of the study, recommendations for future studies, the implication for social change, and conclusions. Chapter 5 also provides the results in Chapter 4 in correlation with the information provided in Chapter 1 and the literature review presented in Chapter 2.

Summary

The analysis for this qualitative phenomenology study included data obtained from interviews with 20 expatriate managers who are working or have worked with

cross-cultural teams outside of the United States, specifically in the manufacturing environment of the Dominican Republic. The qualitative data analysis provided themes that were used to respond the research questions for this study. This analysis produced eight themes:

1. Participants with experiences in managing cross-cultural teams

2. Challenges of managing cross-cultural teams

3. Benefits of managing cross-cultural teams

4. Effective tools for managing cross-cultural teams

5. Cross-cultural training received for managing cross-cultural teams

6. Competencies for future expatriate managers

7. Improving effectiveness for managing cross-cultural teams

8. Being successful in managing cross-cultural teams

These themes emerged from the analysis of the interviews conducted with the expatriate managers. All 20 of the expatriate managers were interviewed on their idle time, and all of the participants had the same amount of time to express their experiences. All of the interviews were conducted during a week and a half without any cancellations or rescheduling. Moreover, the interviews were conducted in privacy by conference calls or using Skype. The use of the NVivo software provided a quality analysis to obtain better results.

Interpretation of the Findings

In this section, I describe an analysis of the findings, applying the literature review and conceptual frameworks. The literature and frameworks provided information

about cross-cultural training and how to effectively manage cross-cultural teams that will help the expatriate managers during their overseas assignments. The discussion is organized based on the research questions of the study.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was as follows: What are the experiences of expatriate managers regarding the effective management of cross-cultural teams in the manufacturing environment in the Dominican Republic? A majority of the participants expressed that there are several challenges to managing effective cross-cultural teams. One of these challenges was the communication process with the host country team. The participants claimed that this process affects the effectiveness of the team if the information is not understood by the team, which can create confusion and a delay of the project.

Another challenge that the participants experienced was the language barrier. Participants indicated that this could be a roadblock in the process of technical discussions or transfer of knowledge and made it more difficult to manage the team. This confirms Tian and Borges' (2012) analysis who found that communication and language are the most important factors that affect the success of expatriate managers in the host country. These challenges can affect the performance of the expatriates, creating frustration and anger. According to the cultural shock theory, these challenges can create frustration and failure in the assignment (Shi & Wang, 2014).

However, the participants showed that there are some benefits and tools for managing effective cross-cultural teams. Regarding the benefits of managing cross-

cultural teams, the participants expressed that the cross-cultural teams are willing to learn, and this process helps the expatriates to ensure the transfer of the knowledge. The experiential learning theory confirmed this in the literature, which is used to understand the learning received by the individual and the processing of the information (Akella, 2010).

In terms of effective tools for managing cross-cultural teams, the participants indicated that project management is an effective tool for setting objectives and organizing the team. In addition, the participants noted that project management is key to aligning the team to set the strategies and meet the project milestones. The organization of the expatriates is important in managing an effective team. According to Trkman (2010), the goals, missions, and strategies must be clear and simple for the cross-cultural team. In addition, the expatriates must establish mission and meaning, strategy, execution, integration, and leadership development (Canals, 2014). The participants mentioned that setting clear expectation and priorities for the team is effective for the host team. Aaworb-nang and Opare (2014) confirmed that this process increases the productivity and stabilization of the host team. The design of a cross-cultural team is important for the expatriate managers for the stabilization of the team to increase the performance of the group in meeting the company goals.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was as follows: What are the perceptions of expatriate managers regarding the effectiveness of cross-cultural training? According to the study results, the majority of the participants were not exposed to cross-cultural training

previous to their departure for their assignments. Due to the lack of cross-cultural training, the participants did not provide their perception about cross-cultural training; therefore, Research Question 2 was an end point for the interview. Despite the lack of cross-cultural training, the participants in the study mentioned that they learned by themselves or from other expats about how to manage cultural diversity. This is confirmed in the conceptual framework theory, where the self-learning experience of the expatriate managers includes a process of creating knowledge to minimize their impact on adaptation, and this is supported by the experiential learning theory. According to Kayes (2005), the experiential learning theory has a learning cycle in which an individual learns by engaging in concrete experiences, reflective observations, abstract conceptualizations, and experimentations.

Due to the participants' lack of cross-cultural training, it is evident that corporations may have doubts about the benefits of cross-cultural training for their expatriate managers to improve their performance, adaptation, and effectiveness in foreign countries. This is confirmed in the analysis of the literature review where Wurtz (2014) mentioned that there are many gaps in cross-cultural training in corporations.

However, some participants took the initiative to search outside cross-cultural training to improve their effectiveness during their assignment in the host country. With this initiative, the expatriate managers acquired the knowledge to deal with the host team. Gabrielson, Seristo, and Darling (2009) confirmed that successful expatriates learn to become more aware of their intention. Hope (2010) mentioned that successful expatriate

managers must learn to become more aware of their expectations to achieve better performance.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 was as follows: What do expatriate managers suggest to improve the effectiveness of future expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams in the Dominican Republic? According to the results of the study, the expatriate managers suggested that future expatriate managers need to have several competencies, such as communication and leadership skills. These skills provide confidence and motivate the host team to meet their goals. Popescu et al. (2012) noted that misunderstandings increase with cultural differences, which affects the communication between groups. Communication tactics, such as slowing down to speak, avoiding negative questions, taking turns talking, and being supportive improves the effectiveness of the expatriates (Popescu et al., 2012). Expatriate managers need to use an effective communication process to transfer the information to their teams. According to the study results, participants mentioned that leadership skill is essential for future expatriates and will reduce the risks and bad decisions that prevent employees from achieving the company goals. Coate (2010) confirmed that leadership plays a role in dealing with the changes in business, social, cultural, and political areas. Management must incorporate the leadership values, and these must be important for the success of the organization (Darling & Heller, 2009).

The majority of the participants suggested that future expatriate managers should receive cross-cultural training. In the answers to Research Question 2, the majority of the

participants stated that they did not receive cross-cultural training by their corporations.

The participants mentioned that companies should promote cross-cultural training

because this helps the expatriate managers to identify problems and improve adaptation,

integration, and management of the host team. Cross-cultural training helps the expatriate

managers to feel better while managing cross-cultural teams and improves their

performance (Qin & Baruch, 2010).

Not only does cross-cultural training program help the expatriate managers in

their adaptation and integration process in foreign countries, but it also reduces culture

shock. Cross-cultural training is being considered as a positive phase for professionals to

avoid cultural shock (Muhammad et al., 2012). Muhammad et al. (2012) claimed that the

effects of cultural shock in foreign countries and inadequate preparation are two of the

major reasons for failure of the expatriate managers. The lack of cross-cultural training

could lead to a stressful experience for the expatriate manager (Selmer, 1999).

Moreover, the participants indicated that future expatriate managers must

understand the culture. The participants indicated that understanding the culture improves

communication and adaptation, which creates confidence in their ability to manage a

cross-cultural team. Expatriate managers must understand cultural process, such as how

the people react, values and beliefs, and their assumptions (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012).

Knowledge of cultural process is acquired by cross-cultural training (Caligiuri & Tarique,

2012).

The participants indicated that future expatriate managers need to immerse

themselves in the culture to understand the values and needs of the team. To be effective,

expatriate managers need to understand their values (Oddus, 2010). The effectiveness of the expatriate managers depends on the quality of the cross-cultural training that they receive.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The strengths of the study included the identification of methods to improve the effectiveness of expatriate managers during their overseas assignments. Another strength of the study was the information needed to demonstrate to the top management in corporations the importance of cross-cultural training to improve the effectiveness of the expatriate managers in foreign countries. The results of the study provided information regarding the experiences of expatriate managers who are working or have worked with cross-cultural teams in a manufacturing environment of the Dominican Republic. Few expatriate managers received cross-cultural training from their corporation to deal with cultural problems in foreign countries. As a consequence, several expatriate managers decided to search outside training or self-learning to improve their performance and adapt to their host country. However, the participants demonstrated several methods for future expatriate managers for improving their effectiveness, such as communication, leadership, and cultural awareness.

The results of the study were consistent with the literature review regarding the importance of cross-cultural training and the different methods to be effective while managing cross-cultural teams. In addition, the participants confirmed the conceptual framework theories (experiential learning theory, social learning theory, and cultural shock theory) about what the expatriates have learned from their experience or

observations and the challenges that the expatriate managers have with cross-cultural teams and their adaptation in foreign countries.

The study was not without limitations. The study was based on the experiences of a small number of expatriate managers using one culture; therefore, the results of the study cannot be generalized because these topics need more investigation using different cultures. Also, the study was bounded by one type of organization. Another limitation was the way that the interview was performed with some participants using Skype. The use of a Skype communication limited the observation of the participant's body language, and the face-to-face interaction was limited due to connectivity issues. Also, all the participants in the study came from middle management managers from an organization overseas. The results of the study can be used by future scholars to learn more about cross-cultural training and its effectiveness.

Recommendations for Future Study

There are several recommendations that can be made for future investigation about cross-cultural teams and cross-cultural training based on the findings of this study. Future investigators may include expatriates from different cultures to compare the behavior of culture differences. Another recommendation for future study is to investigate the quality and process of cross-cultural training provided to the expatriate managers from external contractors. Moreover, further investigation must include cross-cultural teams to obtain their experiences with expat managers.

One suggestion for future studies is to perform research using a quantitative method to provide statistical evidence that includes characteristics of the members, such

as age, gender, and education. Another recommendation for future studies is to explore

the coaching that the expatriate managers receive from their supervisors during their

assignments. Also, future researchers can focus on exploring the lives of female

expatriate managers in foreign countries. Scholars could include a comparison between

female and male expatriates, the techniques that they used to manage teams, and the

adaptation of their family. Furthermore, future researchers can explore the effectiveness

and quality of the cross-cultural training programs provided by corporations. This

research can include the type of resources, existing practices, places, trainer experiences,

and time. Finally, future researchers may take into consideration an evaluation of the

performance and practice of U.S. corporations in foreign countries, such as corporate

social responsibility, to understand the contributions that U.S. organization made to

foreign societies and governments.

Implications for Social Change

The results of the study provided information about the effectiveness of managing

cross-cultural teams in foreign countries. The participants shared the challenges that the

expatriate managers have during managing cross-cultural teams. Also, the participants

showed the lack of training provided to these expatriate managers. Top management in

corporations must understand the importance of cross-cultural training for their managers

before the assignment. Also, it may clarify the assumption that top management in

corporations has that good managers are effective in any place (Black & Mendenhall,

1990).

Top management in corporations should ensure that the implementations of cross-cultural training programs for future expatriate managers to develop their capacity to deal with all the challenges of being assigned to foreign countries. Based on the results, top management in corporations may include cross-cultural training programs not only for their expatriate managers, but also for their local U.S. managers due to the cultural diversity that is found in the United States. The results of this study may help U.S. companies that plan to transfer operations to foreign countries to better understand cultural diversity. Also, the results may be instrumental for organizations to be more effective and improve their business knowledge in cultural diversity. This study has the potential to improve business practices in foreign countries. Lastly, this study might provide new standards to implement or improve cross-cultural training programs.

Conclusion

In this study, I focused on the investigation of the effectiveness of expatriate managers while managing cross-cultural teams in foreign countries. For expatriate managers be effective in managing cross-cultural team, they need cross-cultural training to acquire competencies to deal with different challenges in the host country. Also, the participants demonstrated that there is a lack of cross-cultural training programs and top management in corporations are not preparing their managers to deal with cultural problems. The participants in the study indicated that future expatriate managers must have specific competencies to deal with cross-cultural teams, such as leadership and communication skills to effectively manage cross-cultural teams. Moreover, the participants indicated that future expatriate managers must understand the culture, and

they need to receive coaching from their supervisor or human resources. In this study, I demonstrated the importance of cross-cultural training programs for managers who accept assignments in foreign countries. Not all managers are prepared to deal with cultural diversity, even though they are good managers in the United States. This study contributed to the knowledge and best practices on how to improve the effectiveness of expatriate managers during their overseas assignments.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

You have been asked to participate in a research study of efficient management of cross-cultural teams. You have been included as one of the participants in this study because you are an expatriate manager which lead and have experience with cross-cultural teams in foreign countries. You will be asked several questions related to managing cross-cultural teams. This form is part of a process called "informed consent." Before you give your consent to participate, it is important that you read the following information and ask as many questions as necessary to be sure you understand the process.

<u>Investigators</u>
This study is being conducted by a researcher named Efrain Serrano, who is a doctoral candidate at Walden University at Minneapolis.

<u>Purpose of the study</u>
The purpose of this study is to explore the shared lived experiences of expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams outside of the US territory, specifically in the manufacturing environment of companies located in the Dominican Republic, in order to identify methods to improve their effectiveness.

<u>Procedure:</u>
If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked several questions:
1. Interview face to face or virtual conference
2. The interview will last for approximately 30 minutes
3. The interview will be audio recorded

<u>Some sample of the questions:</u>

1. What major challenges did you face in managing cross-cultural teams?
2. What kind of training did you receive to manage a cross-cultural team?

<u>Confidentiality:</u>
All results and interviews used in this study will be locked in the personal laptop of the researcher with password protected, and identified by ID number only, with no name recorded. Information gathered from these interviews will be coded; names will not be used in any analyses. Only group results will be published, with no reference to any individual.

<u>Voluntary Nature of the Participation:</u>

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision of whether or not to participate in this study is up to you. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent at any time.

Risk and Benefits of the study participation:
Being in this type of study involves some risk of minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as fatigue, upset, stress, and headache. Being in this study will not expose you to safety risk or well-being.

The proposed research will provide information about the effectiveness on working with cross-cultural team outside the US territory. The results of this research will be used to determine methods that are effective to manage cross-cultural teams for the success in the global business.

Cost and/or Compensation for Participation:
There is not cost or compensation for your participation in this research.

Contact and Question about the study:
If you have questions about the research now, please ask. If you have any questions later about the research, you may contact Efrain Serrano at XXX-XXX-XXX or by email: xxx@xxx.net, if you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact Dr. Leilani Endicott +1-612-312-1210 or by email: irb@waldenu.edu. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Walden University's approval number for this study is IRB 02-06-15-0268466 and it expires on February 5,2016.

Please print or save copy of the consent form for your record

Statement of Consent:
 If you agree to participate, based on the explanation of the study provided in this consent form, please respond to this e-mail with the words 'I Consent' to indicate your willingness to participate.

Appendix B: Interview Protocol and Interview Questions

My interview protocol and questions

Hi, my name is Efrain, thank you for taking the time for this interview, your participation is important for this study. I just want to let you know that I will interview yourself and 19 more participants. Just want to tell you that your participation is voluntary. Do you have any questions?

Description of the project:

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore the shared lived experiences of expatriate managers in managing cross-cultural teams outside of the US territory, specifically in the manufacturing environment of companies located in the Dominican Republic, in order to identify methods to improve their effectiveness.

Interview Protocol Project: Managing Cross Cultural Organization.

Time of the interview: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Questions:

1. What was your experience managing cross-cultural teams?

2. What major challenges did you face managing cross-cultural teams?

3. How did you handle them?

4. What are the weaknesses in managing teams outside the US?

5. What are the strengths in managing team outside the US?

6. What kind of training did you receive to manage a cross-cultural team?

7. What competencies are essential for managing a cross-cultural team?

8. How do cultural differences affect the performance of the team to meet company goals?

9. What do you do different to improve the performance of the team?

10. What can be done better to be successful during managing cross-cultural teams?

Appendix C: Letter of Cooperation

Edwards Lifescience DR
Parque Industrial de Itabo
Carr. Sanchez, Km 18.5
Zona Franca Industrial Haina
Haina, San Cristobal, Dominican Republic
Phone 809-375-2200

Date

Dear Efrain Serrano

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to send an invitation email to the participants to conduct the study entitled Efficient Management of Cross-Cultural Manufacturing Teams in the Dominican within the Edwards facility in the Dominican Republic. As part of this study, I authorize you to interview expatriate managers for your data collection. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,
Authorization Official
Contact Information