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Cultural-Centric Globalization Strategies for Increasing Companies' Profitability

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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2019

Abstract

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BS, Metropolitan States University, 2011

MBA, Hamline University, 2013

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

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Abstract

Contemporary business leaders require suitable leadership strategies, skills, capabilities, and competencies to lead individuals with culturally diverse backgrounds effectively. Local retail business executives have experienced complex leadership challenges leading international and intercultural teams when expanding business operations into global markets. The objective of this multiple case study was to explore leadership strategies local retail business leaders used to lead a global workforce. The target population included 3 local retail business leaders from Minnesota who had 6 to 8 years of global leadership experience. The composite conceptual framework that grounded this study was leadership and transformational leadership. Data were collected from semistructured, face-to-face interviews and organizational documents. Member checking was used to ensure trustworthiness of findings. The data analysis followed Yin's 5-phase process: compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. Three themes emerged from the data analysis: cross-cultural awareness, cross-cultural challenges and competence, and cross-cultural leadership strategies. The findings from the study might contribute to positive social change by encouraging business leaders to explore business opportunities locally and globally, resulting in an understanding of cross-cultural differences, enhanced quality of cross-cultural work environments, increased job creation, and improved living standards for communities' citizens.

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Dedication

My dedication goes to my sweetheart and wife Sibi Anna Lawson who supported and consistently encouraged me during the entire Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) process. You are not just a wife; you are my inspiration, my aspiration, my advocate, my best friend, my goal achiever, my life, and the pillars of my accomplishments. The DBA program was one of the most extended programs in my educational journey. The program took longer than anticipated because of unpredictable circumstances. I could not have completed the DBA program without your consistent and enthusiastic encouragement words which always positively reinforce my ability to regain courage and confidence.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Globalization is influencing leadership across the boundaries of the world because of cross-cultural differences (Kappagomtula, 2017). Organizational leaders' lack of awareness of cross-cultural leadership can influence and affect employees' motivation and their performance (Mital, 2015). Developing a global mindset and global leadership awareness because of the rise of globalization leading to cross-cultural differences is essential for global leaders of multinational companies (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016). In this study, I addressed interconnectedness of globalization and strategies for cross-cultural leadership for addressing global perspectives in the global business marketplace.

Organizational leaders with appropriate transformational leadership styles are essential to the growth and development of employees and the organization (Pradhan & Jena, 2019). The need for global leadership development and cross-cultural leadership training appears evident for multinational companies (Ardichvili, Natt och Dag, & Manderscheid, 2016; Miska & Öner, 2015; Volz-Peacock, Carson, & Marquardt, 2016). In this study, I explored leadership and perceptions of leadership.

Background of the Problem

As multinational companies expand globally, leadership challenges have been reported because of the unfamiliarity of cross-cultural differences in the host countries (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016; Buck, 2018; Hodges, & Howieson, 2017). Cross-cultural leadership issues are among the most central and most persistent factors that influence global business activities (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016). Kappagomtula (2017) characterized globalization as a need for organizational leaders to understand social

characteristics to enable efficient operations in different countries which has resulted in greater interest in cross-cultural leadership studies.

Researchers found that organizational leaders in multinational companies continued to lose business opportunities in the global market because of the lack of experience regarding the realities of cross-cultural responsiveness (Cleveland, Rojas-Méndez, Laroche, & Papadopoulos, 2016; Kauder & Potrafke, 2015; Mehrabanfar, 2015; Potrafke, 2015). Operating globally, company leaders face numerous cross-cultural challenges, such as understanding differences in communication patterns and styles, values, principles, organizational structures, preferences for leadership approach, management practices, and different paths of decision-making (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016). Unaddressed challenges of cross-cultural differences are causing leadership underperformance, and negatively affecting multinational organizations' forecasted profitability in the world market (Lakshman & Estay, 2016).

Problem Statement

As of 2014, approximately 39% of the United States organizational leaders failed to develop global business opportunities because of cross-cultural unawareness (Shirley, Fujiao, & Ben, 2014). Ekelund and Adl (2015) found that of more than 1,700 organizations in over 20 industries across 6 continents, 69% of these organizations implemented global leadership development initiatives to address cross-cultural perspectives. Circumstances such as cross-cultural differences, globalization, lack of cross-cultural leadership's competencies, skills, and capabilities, global leadership unawareness, and diversity affect multinational organizations' effectiveness

(Choromides, 2018; Mehrabanfar, 2015; Mital, 2015; Sukanya, 2015). The general

business problem is that U.S. company leaders experience loss of revenue opportunities

when their leaders lack cross-cultural leadership competencies, skills, and capabilities.

The specific business problem is that some local retail business leaders lack cross-cultural

strategies to expand business operations into global markets.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore cross-cultural

leadership strategies local retail business leaders use to expand business operations into

global markets. The target population of this study included leaders of three multinational

companies located in Minnesota with successful experience growing companies

internationally through leading employees with culturally diverse backgrounds. I focused

on leaders who have developed cross-cultural leadership strategies leading culturally

diverse employees at both local and global locations. Through semistructured, face-to-

face interviews and companies' progress reports and financial records, I identified and

explored cross-cultural strategies local retail business leaders developed and used to

successfully lead culturally diverse employees at both local and global locations.

The implications for positive social change include improving local and global

employees' job conditions, which may enhance community business sustainability. The

findings of this research could positively support organizational leaders in sustainability

efforts in job creation, promoting the dignity of global employees with diverse cultural

backgrounds, increasing sales for businesses, improving the economy, and developing

labor movement programs. The results of this study may contribute to social change by

helping local retail companies create employment opportunities, which could improve employees' living standards.

Nature of the Study

I used a qualitative method for this study. Researchers use qualitative methods to explore the *what, who*, *how*, and *why* of phenomena and ask open-ended questions (Choromides, 2018; Enosh & Ben-Ari, 2016; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Quantitative researchers test hypotheses for examining numerical data and explaining relationships among variables (Basias & Pollalis, 2018; Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Park & Park, 2016; Ritchie & Ormoston, 2014; Yin, 2018). I did not select the quantitative method because testing any predetermined hypotheses about variables' relationships was not applicable for this study's purpose. The intent of qualitative research is to provide a close-up view, a deeper and richer understanding within a specific context, which is not the focus of quantitative research (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). The mixed-methods methodology is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods (Yin, 2018). The mixed method was not appropriate for this study as there was no quantitative element. The qualitative method was appropriate because I explored the cross-cultural leadership strategies local retail business leaders use to expand business operations into global markets.

Qualitative researchers can select from several research designs, including phenomenological, ethnographic, and case study. A case study design is useful for research within a defined space and timeframe, thereby providing a detailed and intensive analysis of a particular event, situation, organization, or social unit (Ridder, 2017; Yin,

2018). The researcher can use a multiple case study design to study various organizations' experiences regarding a particular business problem (Yin, 2018). Phenomenology encompasses exploring the essence of the personal meanings of participants experiencing phenomena (Kruth, 2015). In ethnography design, researchers attempt to understand human culture (Government Service Design Manual, 2014). Exploring the unique nature of participants' knowledge through phenomenological or ethnography design would not address the research question. A multiple case study was appropriate for this study because I sought to identify information regarding cross-cultural leadership strategies local retail leaders use to lead culturally diverse employees at local and international workplaces to expand their businesses globally.

Research Question

What cross-cultural leadership strategies do local retail business leaders use to expand their business operations into global markets?

Interview Questions

1. What are the major cross-cultural leadership challenges you faced leading employees from culturally diverse backgrounds when expanding into global markets?

2. What key barriers have you faced when leading employees from various culturally backgrounds when expanding into global markets?

3. What cross-cultural leadership strategies do you use to overcome these key barriers when expanding into global markets?

4. What cross-cultural leadership strategies do you use to motivate employees with diverse cross-cultural backgrounds in your company when expanding into global markets?

5. How do you measure the effectiveness of your motivation strategies?

6. What cross-cultural leadership strategies did you use to address the key risk factors that could affect the success of employees with diverse cultural backgrounds when expanding into global markets?

7. What other aspects, which were not mentioned in the questions above, do you consider important to mention?

Conceptual Framework

Leadership and transformational leadership theories comprised the conceptual framework for my study. Leadership expert and presidential biographer Burns (1978) initially introduced the concept of transformational leadership theory (Cherry, 2019). Burns's transformational leadership theory appeals to the "high road" in developing social values and individual purpose (Cherry, 2019).

Leadership is one of the most explored issues for understanding employee well-being and performance (Ghasabeh, Reaiche, & Soosay, 2015; A. Lee, Martin, Thomas, Guillaume, & Maio, 2015; Thill & Bovée, 2015). A. Lee et al. (2015) noted that leadership theories provide a means for assessing the leader's leadership style by asking followers whether their leader acts in a way that represents that style of leadership. For decades, leadership theories have been the source of numerous studies (Cherry, 2019).

Bass (1985) extended Burns's (1978) transformational leadership theory, and identified four components of transformational leadership behavior: (a) individualized consideration (leaders appreciate individuals' ideas and viewpoints, and pay close attention to the needs of the employees); (b) intellectual stimulation (leaders present anticipated future for both the employees and the organization); (c) idealized influence (leaders act as role model); and (d) inspirational motivation (leaders articulate vision for both the employees and the organization). The four components of transformational leadership may affect the creative self-efficacy of employees as they provide certainty to the followers to change already developed viewpoints and systems (Ramsey, Rutti, Lorenz, Barakat, & Sant'anna, 2017).

Burns (1978) stated that leaders are a particular kind of power holder. Bass and Avolio (1990) indicated that transformational leaders elevate the desires of followers for achievement and self-development while promoting the development of groups and organizations" (Avolio, 1990, p. 22). The incorrect understanding and the inappropriate handling of cultural differences can usually cause organizational conflicts and may cause severe inefficiencies and competitive disadvantages (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016; Saulton, Bülthoff, de la Rosa, & Dodds, 2017; Thompson, Kirby, & Smith, 2016). Burns and Bass's (1985) leadership theories provided a lens for understanding leadership strategies the participating company leaders used to expand business operations internationally through identifying and addressing cross-cultural differences.

Operational Definitions

Cross-cultural competence: Greene Sands and Greene-Sands (2014) defined cross-cultural competence as referring to "knowledge, skills and abilities to operating in diverse environments" (p. 357-358) with diverse individuals.

Diversity: NCATE (2014) defined diversity as "differences among groups of people and individuals based on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, language, exceptionalities, religion, sexual orientation, and geographic region in which they live".

Global leaders: The emerging class of professionals who are adept at operating in international and multicultural contexts (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016).

Globalization: The worldwide movement toward economic, financial, trade, and communications integration. Globalization implies the opening of local and nationalistic perspectives to a broader outlook of an interconnected and interdependent world with free transfer of capital, goods, and services across national frontiers (Globalization, 2014).

Individualism/Collectivism. Individualism is independent and takes into consideration only the needs or interests of the individual and immediate family members (Hofstede Center, 2014). Collectivism is the opposite of individualism. A collectivist society is one that focuses on and gives value to group norms and goals. Throughout a person's life span, this society offers protection to close-knit in-groups, which display sincere loyalty in return (Hofstede Center, 2014).

Leadership. The capability to provide direction, influence, motivate and optimize productivity through others. It is an activity involving groups, not a solitary activity and at its most basic leaders have to have followers (Thomas & Rowland, 2014**).**

Masculinity. The distribution of emotional roles between the genders, which is another fundamental issue for any society to which a range of solutions found (Hofstede, 2014).

Transactional leadership. A leadership that recognizes the constituents of associates' satisfaction arising from their activities and then encourages subordinates to achieve those goals by offering rewards and sanctions (Quintana, Park, & Cabrera, 2015).

Transformational leadership. The process by which, leaders and followers cause each other to reach to higher levels of morality and motivation (Khuong, Linh, & Duc, 2015).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

An assumption is an idea formed without evidence (Stern, 2013). The first assumption was that global leaders are professionals whose intercultural competence and capabilities are essential for the success of their companies. The second assumption in this study was that participants were available and provided honest, straight, and fair feedback to issues directly related to challenges of cross-cultural issues of local retail business leaders around the world. The assumptions that cross-cultural training helped global leaders on their leadership assignments were not necessarily realistic. The third and final assumption was that since the participants in this study included global leaders, the findings might not be broadly applicable to others, and as such, a further study may be necessary to show universal application.

Limitations

Limitations refer to the potential weaknesses and circumstances not within researchers' control (Yin, 2018). The first limitation was the possibility of dishonesty from the participants. I collected data from people from various organizations, because of the possibility that some participants were not honest enough to provide full needed information to achieve the purpose for the study. The second limitation involved participants' reluctance to share companies' progress records and financial and administrative documents as evidence to support the findings.

Delimitations

Researchers use delimitations to define a study's boundaries and propositions for defining the domain of the investigation (Yin, 2018). The findings from this study are not applicable to other populations. The geographical delimitation of this study was that the participating organizations were all operating in Minnesota. I collected data from only successful leaders leading in culturally diverse environments from different background in Minnesota.

<center>**Significance of the Study**</center>

Global businesses face increasing challenges and changes, including leadership issues because of the rapid rise of globalization and cultural differences. Organizational leaders, who comprehend cross-cultural leadership strategies for effectively leading their teams, can provide greater benefits to their organizations (Ramsey et al., 2017). Global retail leaders need new and fresh leadership skills to lead employees from diverse workforce effectively (Mital, 2015).

Contribution to Business Practice

The results of the study could help contribute to business practice by providing awareness for local retail business leaders, and CEOs seeking to expand business operations internationally, increase productivity, through effectively leading employees with diverse cultural backgrounds. As multinational companies move aggressively into the emerging global markets, cultural differences have become alarming challenges that affect leaders' performance. Previous researchers revealed the harmful effects of cross-cultural differences on multinational businesses (Buck, 2018; Mathew & Rakesh, 2016; Normore, Hamdan, & Esposito, 2019; Walker, 2018). The effects include leadership underperformance, intercultural communication, reduced profitability, and misunderstanding between leaders, and employees leading to declining productivity and loss of business opportunities (J. Kim & McLean, 2015; Shirley et al., 2014). Lack of knowledge on cross-cultural leadership causes major issues for businesses that desire to expand their operations globally. Multinational companies are expanding globally, but many organizational leaders are facing challenges because of the existence of cultural differences in the host countries.

Implications for Social Change

This study's results might bring positive social impact to societies and the communities at large. Because of the rise of globalization, leaders in multinational companies may rely on a diverse group of people to continue to grow in the global marketplace and promote beneficial social change for both employees and the communities. A leader may be able to make a social impact, such as positive

contributions to society and communities, by creating a pleasant and intelligently inspirational work environment that directly affects employees and their families' well-being. Leading and valuing employees from the culturally diverse backgrounds is an essential focus in this study. Therefore, a researcher needs to anticipate the impact of cultural change and learn more about the individuals who are creating and applying ideas to discover the current state of social change around the world (R. Mittal, 2015).

Organizational leaders need to review their leadership practices and policies while developing new and creative approaches to lead employees from culturally diverse backgrounds. Employees could bring fresh new ideas to support business efforts that can benefit communities (Stern, 2013). The results of this study could contribute to social change by decreasing unemployment rates and enhancing the living standards for communities' residents.

The findings of this research could positively support labor movements, organizational leaders in sustainability efforts in creating jobs, promote the dignity of local and global employees with diverse cultural backgrounds, increase sales for businesses, improve the economy, and develop labor movement programs. The results of this research may have an impact on business owners, communities, and employees, and may guide local and global leaders to addressing cross-cultural differences more effectively. In this study, I identified leadership practices in cross-cultural perspectives and provided solutions for appropriate effective leadership, which can have positive social impacts locally and globally by improving quality cross-cultural work environments that may lead to better living standards for employees and their families.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore cross-cultural leadership strategies local retail business leaders use to expand business operations into global markets. My goal was to identify the participants' strategies for addressing conceptual connections among cross-cultural differences, leadership performance, and profitability for Minnesota multinational organizations. I explored globalization, effective leadership strategies for global leaders in cross-cultural perspectives, and leadership strategies for companies' productivity using a qualitative exploratory case study by exploring global leaders of three international companies based in Minnesota.

The objective of this study was to explore intercultural leadership strategies for global leaders, cross-cultural learning development, transcultural competencies, and capabilities of effective global leaders. Herd, Alagaraja, and Cumberland (2016) noted that developing global leadership competencies is an important topic in human resource development. The purposes of the literature review are to: (a) explore previous research to determine best business practices, (b) identify essential elements of a topic, (c) synthesize ideas, (d) understand the problem, and (e) understand research techniques (Trochim, Donnelly, & Arora, 2015). The objectives of the academic and professional literature review are to compare and contrast related topics that addressed leadership underperformance leading to underproduction and less profitability for multinational businesses because of globalization and cross-cultural issues.

Exploring past research enables researchers to understand a topic more thoroughly, identify gaps in research, and to develop questions that guide future research

(Trochim et al., 2015). I conducted a comprehensive literature review on the topic using peer-reviewed articles, journals, dissertations, government reports, websites, and books. The review of the litterature provided insights in the historical and current research concerning the issues of cross-cultural leadership in the globally diverse workplaces. In the literature review, I explored the issues of cross-cultural differences, cross-cultural leadership at workplaces because of the rise of globalization (Andresen & Bergdolt, 2017).

Primary research libraries and databases for this study included the Walden University Library, ProQuest, Google Scholar, CrossRef, Sage, EBSCO Primary, and Emerald Insight search. I used 292 references in this study, 252 (86%) of which were published within the last 5 years (after 2014), 39 (14%) were published before 2015, and 257 (88%) were peer-reviewed articles. I used 135 peer-reviewed articles in the literature review. The number of references I used by category was: (a) 13 books, (b) 268 journal articles, (c) five dissertations, (d) two government and corporate reports, and (e) four websites. I used the articles published before 2015 to explain and define the history of globalization, culture, cross-cultural differences and the reasons why the need for developing global leadership awareness is critical. I searched the topic of globalization and cross-cultural leadership using the following key terms: *globalization, cross-cultural leadership, cultural diversity, cross-cultural differences, global leadership awareness, culture, organizational culture, ethnocentrism, prejudice, leadership, organizational culture,* and *diversity*.

Lisak and Erez (2015) noted that team members search for a leader or potential leader who displays confidence in the complex global environment, who seems well adjusted and capable of communicating with the entire team, and who helps to further the creation of shared understanding and trust among team members. Concomitantly, leaders and human resources professionals are constantly looking for better ways of how to improve the process and effectively manage the work of the people so that their effort results in staff satisfaction and successful progress of the organization (Milota, Mária, & Jozef, 2015).

The full force of globalization has affected 21st century organizations, and it is clear that there are many cultural and human problems because of the rise of globalization (Marinescu, 2018). Globalization has many ramifications, not the least of which is the search for leadership concepts universally relevant and efficient across various cultures, environments, settings, and populations (Lakshman & Estay, 2016).

Globalization and Cross-Cultural Leadership

Since World War II, globalization has been advancing throughout the world (Northouse, 2013, p. 383). Ekelund and Adl (2015) noted that globalization presents tremendous opportunities as well as increasing complexities for organizations worldwide. Increased globalization has created many challenges, including the need to design effective multinational organizations, to identify and select appropriate leaders for the entities, and to lead groups with culturally diverse employees (Northouse, 2013, p. 383).

Ekelund and Adl (2015) noted that multinational organizations face a myriad of challenges as the world interconnects through the process of globalization. The increased

global interconnectivity accentuates complexity and interdependence while increased

competition fortifies dynamism and uncertainty (Yadong & Qinqin, 2016). Global leaders

must learn to be socially responsible for their global leadership role and develop

interpersonal understandings of ethical implications to fulfill organizational vision in the

global perspective (Williams & Turnbull, 2015). Global leaders must understand the

linkage between corporate social responsibilities and governance systems in the global

perspectives and the interrelationships of institutional drivers and behavioral norms

(Preuss, Barkemeyer, & Glavas, 2016).

One of the biggest challenges accompanying globalization and affecting

businesses around the world is requiring employees to interact effectively with

coworkers, suppliers, and customers from many different cultural backgrounds (Reichard

et al., 2015). Leading workers from multiple cultural backgrounds requires greater

understanding, experience, and cross-cultural leadership competencies and capabilities.

Ghasabeh et al. (2015) noted that the globalized nature of competitiveness is placing

more pressure on organizational leaders to employ effective leaders capable of

developing a global vision for the organizations. The need for developing global leaders

capable of leading workers from various cultural backgrounds is important.

As global competition intensifies, companies are turning to business executives

with the leadership skills and global vision to create and sustain a strategic advantage

(Sugiyama, Cavanagh, van Esch, Bilimoria, & Brown, 2016). The globalized markets

have an impact on the roles of leaders in organizations operating in this modern

environment (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). The role of leadership in an organization is to

ensure that the business runs efficiently, that resources are available, is profitable, and

contributes to society to assist in the growth and development of the community

(Williams & Turnbull, 2015). There is a need for developing strategies for global leaders

and CEOs operating in cross-cultural environments to be able to lead effectively; achieve

their goals, vision, mission; and yield anticipated profitability.

The business marketplace is rapidly changing and becoming more competitive

because of globalization (Mathew & Rakesh, 2016). Because of globalization,

workforces are becoming increasingly multicultural (Sukanya, 2015). Business leaders of

multinational companies face leadership challenges because of cross-cultural differences

at workplaces causing loss of profitability (Reichard et al., 2015). Outdated business

models, old leadership practices, and traditional thinking did not propel growth in the

21st century ever-changing and highly perplexing transnational marketplace (Castelli,

2016).

Adler and Bartholomew (1992) pointed out that transnational firms need

transnational human resources management systems to achieve national competitiveness.

As contended by Adler and Bartholomew, Northouse (2013) emphasized the need for

global leaders to develop five cross-cultural competencies. First, global leaders need to

understand business, political, and cultural environments worldwide. Second, global

leaders need to learn the perspectives, tastes, trends, and technologies of other cultures.

Third, global leaders need to be able to work simultaneously with people from many

cultures. Fourth, global leaders must be able to adapt to living and communicating in

other cultures. Fifth, global leaders need to learn to relate to people from other cultures from a position of equality rather than cultural superiority (Northouse, 2013, p. 384).

Minkov et al. (2013) perceived globalization as a force obliterating national cultures and turning the world into a culturally homogeneous global village. Walker (2018) identified globalization as changing the nature of societies and linking groups of people from around the world to interact directly or indirectly in business transactions. Therefore, developing cross-cultural competencies and capabilities is essential for global leaders to lead workers from culturally diverse backgrounds effectively.

Globalization is evident in contemporary daily life (J. Kim & McLean, 2015). Northouse (2013) defined globalization as the increased interdependence (economic, social, technical, and political) between nations (Northouse, 2013, p. 383). Globalization has caused organizational leaders to look for ways to compete more efficiently on a worldwide scale (Castelli, 2016). Conversely, interrelationships and interdependencies among countries have increased steadily because of globalization (J. Kim & McLean, 2015).

The growing interconnectedness among peoples, places, and lifestyles (otherwise known as globalization) requires not only shifting production to other countries but also increasing knowledge of distant cultures and people (Magu, 2015). Kappagomtula (2017) raised the issues of global leadership and the requirements of leading in a global environment as perceived by the leaders participating, as well as the way these leaders learn and develop their global mindset. Developing a global leadership mindset has been

the key to success for leaders that are accepting worldwide assignments (Mattheus, Cristiane, Maria, Vania, & Dusan, 2016).

Globalization is a complex issue that encompasses political, economic, technological, and social factors (Cleveland et al., 2016; Mehrabanfar, 2015; Kauder & Potrafke, 2015; Potrafke, 2015). Cleveland et al. (2016) noted that globalization embodies a complicated process of intertwined cultural movements. Globalization has shaped and transformed the face of global project management and the flow of global labor between and amongst countries (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2018). The growing interconnectedness between peoples, places, and lifestyles (otherwise known as globalization) requires not only shifting production to other countries but also increasing knowledge of distant cultures and people (Magu, 2015).

Since the 1980s, there has been a growing realization that a researcher of cross-cultural differences in leadership practices needs to study and understand the proper conduct of cross-border businesses (R. Mittal, 2015). Abugre (2018) identified cultural differences as essential challenges for leaders of multinational corporations doing business in other countries because of the variations of culture patterns that people from different countries observe. Globalization influences leaders of global companies to be globally energetic and be successful. Global business, political, public, and nonprofit leaders need to recognize and understand the rise of globalization and manage the complexity of the changing world (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016). The scope of many previous studies was limited to cross-cultural differences, cross-cultural communication, and their effects on leadership without alarming leadership underperformance and

profitability issues. Kappagomtula (2017) noted that globalization had created a need to understand how cultural differences affect leadership performance, and the need for leaders to become competent in cross-cultural practices.

Globalization, beyond socioeconomic and political discourse, is transforming conceptions of culture and cultural studies, and changing and restructuring spaces, global, national and personal interactions and relationships (Magu, 2015; Mehrabanfar, 2015). The second characteristic of globalization is that multinational companies are expanding globally at an unprecedented rate, and their profitability is increasing year after year, because of the rise of globalization. The rise of multinational corporations had introduced many benefits such as the creation of local jobs, the economic development of impoverished nations, and advances in production and technological capabilities (Ogrean & Herciu, 2016). This situation is creating direct obligations for global business owners to develop new ways of enlightening global leaders regarding the realities of cross-cultural issues that may negatively affect their performances and reduce their companies' productivity.

Iovitu, Balu, and Bodislav (2016) noted that globalization is the result of a long historical and irreversible evolution. Third world countries use globalization to have access to the Internet, e-learning, and distance learning; promote gender equality; have better wages; and perform other international business transactions without having to be physically present (Grier, 2017; Walker, 2018). As many companies expand globally, leaders must develop global leadership competencies and capabilities, and more

importantly, knowledge and fundamental understanding of cross-cultural differences to lead effectively in the global business marketplace.

Global business leaders acknowledged the intensification of challenges and opportunities because of the rise of globalization (Minkov et al., 2013). In a context of the global workforce, leaders of multinational companies are faced with the challenge of integrating a more heterogeneous workforce (Davis, Frolova, & Callahan, 2016; Kirton, Robertson, & Avdelidou-Fischer, 2016; Ravasi, Salamin, & Davoine, 2015; Stone & Deadrick, 2015). Stone and Deadrick (2015) noted that globalization presents many challenges to business practice. One of the most important challenges is acknowledging and appreciating cultural values, practices, and subtleties in different parts of the world (Des Autels, Berthon, Caruana, & Pitt, 2015; Minkov et al., 2013). While leaders of some corporations compete successfully in the global marketplace, others have failed to sustain their competitive advantage because of cultural imperialism or inadequate acculturation of their leaders on global assignment (Leavy, 2016; Reichard et al., 2015). Globalization, offshore outsourcing, global value chain, and global division of labor have led business firms to globalize their activities addressing cultural diversity an important issue in leading the contemporary worldwide workplaces (Miska & Öner, 2015).

Despite the benefit of previous studies to global business owners, additional research is essential to demonstrate the unprecedented effects of cross-cultural differences on multinational corporations regarding leadership deficit, weak profitability, and possible loss of companies' brand image. Minkov et al. (2013) indicated that experts in global business agree that, leaders need the flexibility to respond positively and more

efficiently to practices and values that may be drastically different from what they are accustomed. Correspondingly, the dual forces of work that increasingly spans international boundaries and a rapidly diversifying domestic workforce require workers to develop skills, to negotiate the nuances and complexities inherent in cross-cultural interactions (Reichard et al., 2015). Knowledge is a power resource pivotal to the sustainability of organizations (Beauregard, Lemyre, & Barrette, 2015).

As leadership varies across countries, critical leadership behaviors for effective leadership across various national or cultural boundaries changed (Koohang, Paliszkiewicz, & Goluchowski, 2017; Lakshman & Estay, 2016). Many scholars of cross-cultural studies suggest that culture can influence leadership concepts, styles, and practices (Lakshman & Estay, 2016). In this heading, I described literature related to the study of cross-cultural differences and its effects on leadership and company's profitability. The introduction of the Internet, for instance, has revolutionized how the world does business (Belleflamme, Lambert, & Schwienbacher, 2014). Accelerating, intensifying, and deepening social, economic, cultural, religious, and recreational interconnections characterize the world we live in between one geographic and cultural area of one people to another. These interconnections have led to and been marked by, a recapitalization and restructuring of human relations occasioned and supported by rapid developments in technology, communication, and language (Magu, 2015).

Cross-Cultural Differences and Leadership

The effects of cultural differences on leadership evolved since World War II (Yin, 2018). Countries are rarely homogeneous societies with a unified culture (Dabić, Tipurić,

& Podrug, 2015). Since World War II, there has been a dramatic increase in globalization throughout the world (Northouse, 2013, p. 420). Therefore, leadership implications of cross-cultural leadership appeared to be an ensuing challenge for global firms extending their businesses because of the rapid pace of globalization (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016).

Because of the rise of globalization, global business leaders have developed a greater understanding of cultural differences and increased competencies in cross-cultural communication and practice (Northouse, 2013, p. 420). In the environment in which leaders ignore or show little understanding, knowledge, and ability to integrate customs, norms and the values that distinguish them from other cultural behaviors, some employees may feel mistreated, leading to negative profitability. Variations of cultural patterns affect both leaders and followers (Abugre, 2018). Therefore, global leaders must develop a high-level cultural intelligence for creating awareness and understanding workers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Cultural intelligence is an individual's capability to address culturally diverse settings effectively (Lisak & Erez, 2015). Cultural intelligence contains a multidimensional framework of intelligence (Presbitero, 2016; Schlägel & Sarstedt, 2016). Understanding workers from diverse cultural backgrounds and developing effective leadership capabilities depend on the level of competence of the leader on cross-cultural intelligence and skills (Abugre, 2018).

When organizational leaders operate inefficiently, they realize less profitability, and their contribution to society is less applicable in areas such as employment, community sponsored programs, and payment of company taxes (Stern, 2013). The study

on cross-cultural differences leading to multinational corporations' leadership underperformance is significant because of its negative impact on employees and communities. Poor leadership because of lack of cross-cultural competence could affect employees' job performance and job satisfaction, leading to under productiveness (Buck, 2018).

Global business leaders have created a need to understand how cultural differences affect leadership performance because of globalization (Northouse, 2013, p. 383). The global cultural changes and the undermined boundaries of cultures are the consequences of globalization (Mehrabanfar, 2015). Although leaders from many multinational corporations are becoming aware of the impending effects of cross-cultural unfamiliarity on their businesses, leaders may lack intercultural competence necessary to lead their staffs.

Cultural diversity is not new (Çelik, Storme, & Forthmann, 2016; S. J. Han & Beyerlein, 2016; Mishra, Devarakonda, & Kumar, 2015). Defining cultural diversity based on this multilevel understanding of culture helps to identify the different concepts of cultural diversity analytically (Galbraith, 2017; Romainville, 2016). Cultural diversity can refer, firstly, to a general statement of facts: the multiplicity of humanity (Galbraith, 2017; Romainville, 2016). At the second level, cultural diversity includes an anthropological viewpoint, which then refers to the variety of societies (Galbraith, 2017; Romainville, 2016). Mishra et al. (2015) acknowledged awareness of efficient management of diversity as a critical success factor of organization performance and its operations.

Globalization became progressively prominent in the early 21st century as many U.S-based companies look to grow by expanding their marketplace in other countries (Teoh & Yazdanifard, 2015). Previous researchers (Gupta & Bhaskar, 2016; Teoh & Yazdanifard, 2015) acknowledged the issues of cross-cultural differences and demonstrated a conceptual understanding of the effects of cross-cultural leadership specifically when two different groups interact with each other. Diversity refers to the existence of different cultures or ethnicity within a group or an organization (Northouse, 2013). For example, exposure to diversity can promote enhanced creativity and per-spective taking (Berry, 2016; Strategic Direction, 2016). Alternately, exposure to diversity can foster greater conflict, diminished cohesion and lower productivity (Berry, 2016).

There is a need to understand diversity and the importance of the need for multicultural workforces to ensure better human resource management (Sukanya, 2015). Current leadership theories acknowledge and promote diversity as a benefit and identify in which way leadership principles shape inclusive climates in organizations, which value, affirm, and support diversity (Strategic Direction, 2016). Human resource development professionals need to know what knowledge, skills, and attitudes are essential to develop global leaders (J. Kim & McLean, 2015).

Lack of cross-cultural competence could cause leadership issues in the environment of diverse cultural backgrounds (Minkov et al., 2013). Therefore, to avoid inefficiency an underproduction, leaders must demonstrate knowledge and responsibilities of leading in the environment of multiple cultural backgrounds before

being assigned leadership roles. The characteristics of responsible leadership in cross-cultural perspectives include considerable challenges, pressure, and complexities, and emphasized the importance of responsible leadership given current economic developments, globalization, and increased business interconnectedness (Waldman & Balven, 2015). It has become a necessity for global leaders to take this challenge by full utilization of the potential capabilities of the multicultural workforce to achieve organizational effectiveness (Miska & Öner, 2015). Effective global leaders understand how to lead and communicate with their employees and customers from different cultures with diverse backgrounds and build relationships with the neighboring communities including the labor movement groups that defend employees' wellness (Leavy, 2016; Tsai, Carr, Qiao, & Supprakit, 2019).

Ekelund and Adl (2015) noted that global leadership development would become more critical to an organization's success as the pace of globalization continues to accelerate. Business leaders are expanding businesses globally, the need to develop global leadership skills and capabilities for leaders, leading to a fundamental understanding of cross-cultural differences has become unavoidable (Sugiyama et al., 2016). The growing interest in the leadership of cultural diversity research is predictable because of the concurrent organizational challenges (Miska & Öner, 2015).

Previous research on cross-cultural leadership examined the effects of leadership-society resemblance without explaining how positive outcomes might result between leadership and societal culture and via which mechanisms the consequences of such similarities are transmitted (Glinkowska, 2017; Jönsson, Muhonen, Denti, & Chen,

2015). Global business leaders have provided business opportunities for organizations, and at the same time, have transformed the working environment into a highly multicultural setup because of the rise of globalization (Tsai et al., 2019). Accordingly, the issue of understanding and handling multiculturalism effectively is gaining importance in organizations (Tsai et al., 2019).

Previous researchers (Cumberland, Herd, Alagaraja, & Kerrick, 2016; Herd et al., 2016; Nasomboon, 2014) have demonstrated the urgent need for leaders to develop cross-cultural leadership competencies and the understanding of intercultural communication because of the rise of globalization. Developing global leadership skills and capabilities for global leaders capable of leading diverse cultural workforce is important (Cumberland et al., 2016; Herd et al., 2016). Nasomboon (2014) suggested that global leaders become knowledgeable about the importance of cross-cultural differences and leadership differences from country to country, and from one culture to another.

Global leadership competencies encompass personality traits, knowledge, and skills, as well as behaviors (Cumberland et al., 2016). Global leaders have the ultimate responsibility to understand the ramifications and implications of cross-cultural unawareness by developing competencies and capabilities capable of engaging followers with diverse cultural backgrounds and producing profitable results for their companies. Walker (2018) stated that global companies might not have enough leaders in their growth markets or leaders with the required global competencies in their headquarters. Developing global leadership initiatives is important in creating awareness for leaders leading diversity.

J. Kim and McLean (2015) defined global leadership as the universal and contingent characteristics consisting of underlying competencies that influence the attitudes, thinking, behaviors, and capacities of a global company to achieve its common goals in the globalized context. Despite the universality and the characteristics that define global leaders' skills, knowledge, competencies, and capabilities, global leaders must be culturally competent and able to use effective strategies that could positively influence followers' performance. Lau Chin, Desormeaux, and Sawyer (2016) defined cultural competence as the ability to work with and across diverse cultures and groups.

Yao and Huang (2018) noted that leaders use different behaviors in work environments, and those practices directly affect employee job performance and outcomes. It is a competency in which, a leader promotes inclusiveness of all groups and values and respects differences (Lau Chin et al., 2016). These global leadership practices according to Miska and Öner (2015) are robust and multifaceted resources for educators, students, and practitioners capable of stimulating multifold and reflective thinking about global leadership and cultural differences.

Despite multiple studies conducted on the issues of globalization and cross-cultural differences, previous researchers (Reichard et al., 2015; Schoefer, Wäppling, Heirati, & Blut, 2019; Tsai et al., 2019) have discounted its effects on leadership performance and how it positively affect social change. Ekelund and Adl (2015) suggested that multinational corporations must move beyond the traditional approach, but they provided little information on the immediate influence of cross-cultural unawareness, leadership underperformance and its effect on company's profitability.

Enlightening global leaders on basic cross-cultural understanding and capabilities is fundamental for businesses that are expanding globally. There is a clear distinction among leaders, which arises in the execution of organizational tasks (Rowley, Oh, & Jang, 2019). Leaders influence employees so that they are willing to accomplish objectives. They lead by example and demonstrate personal traits that instill a desire in others to follow. In other words, leaders provide purpose, direction, and motivation. Managers, on the other hand, administer the organization's resources. They create budgets, authorize expenditures, and hire employees (Rowley et al., 2019).

Globalization and Ethical Leadership

Previous researchers have demonstrated the importance of culture on cognitive development, in transformational leadership, ethical implications and generalization (Kasemsap, 2015; S. Kim & Shin, 2019; Rodriguez, Green, Sun, & Baggerly, 2017; Wang & Hackett, 2016). Consequently, the needs of developing global ethical leaders with cross-cultural competencies and capabilities are important undertakings for human resource management professionals (Kasemsap, 2015; Ko, Haney, & Lee, 2018; Wang & Hackett, 2016). Historically, characteristics and capabilities of leaders have long been a topic of interest in leadership studies (Besnoy, Maddin, Steele, & Eisenhardt, 2015). Cross-cultural unawareness and the nonunderstanding of the veracities of intercultural communication continued to influence leaders' performance as well as reducing multinational corporation's profitability.

Global leaders are ethically responsible for the contentment of their followers at workplaces. Ethics encompass values and morals an individual or a society finds

desirable or appropriate (Northouse, 2013, p. 484). Cultural diversity has become a

growing concern regarding universal ethics, values, and norms because of globalization

(Romainville, 2016). Organizational leaders need to have a precise knowledge about

cross-cultural and cross-sectorial commonalities as well as differences in defining ethical

leadership, and unethical leadership (Ahmad, 2018; Pasricha, Singh, & Verma, 2017). By

role modeling moral behavior, leaders have the opportunity to enhance the overall ethical

climate in their organizations while simultaneously improving the overall wellbeing of

employees (Wang & Hackett, 2016).

Accordingly, the contemporary discussion of the significance of virtues in guiding

leader behaviors appears mainly in the ethics literature, particularly within virtue ethics

(Wang & Hackett, 2016). Organizational ethical climate is the employees' perception of

what constitutes ethically right or wrong (Kasemsap, 2015). Wang and Hackett (2016)

described a virtuous leader as a leader-follower relationship wherein a leader's situational

appropriate expression of virtues triggers follower perceptions of leader virtuousness,

worthy of emulation. Wang and Hackett compared the virtuousness of leadership to the

ethical decision-making of a leader, which is important for global leaders. Northouse

(2013) noted that ethics encompass the virtuousness of individuals and their motives

(Northouse, 2013, p. 424).

Developing appropriate ethical codes for global intercultural leaders is important.

Pasricha et al. (2017) noted the importance of business ethics and organizational leaders

are aware of the influence ethics can have on organizations' performance. As a result,

ethical leadership is critical as it affects the employees profoundly. Accordingly, when

both ethical leaders and employees know their expectations and ethical actions are

supported with rewards and punishments, it strengthens the ethical organizational culture

and its ethical climate (Kasemsap, 2015). Kasemsap (2015) noted that business leaders

could change and develop the existing organizational culture by establishing moral codes,

providing training to recognize ethical dilemmas, for informing suitable ethical behavior.

Leadership

Leadership is a significant aspect of management (Management Study Guide,

2016). Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of people to

achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2013, p. 5). Leadership is one of the widely studied

and ever-advancing concepts (Sudha, Shahnawaz, & Farhat, 2016). It is important for a

leader to be excellent and effective to ensure the success of the organization (Blomqvist,

Agrell, & Sandahl, 2016; Management Study Guide, 2016).

The term "leadership" has different meanings depending on the geographical

locations of its application (Cherry, 2019). For example, centuries ago, kings and queens

ruled various parts of the earth using different kinds of leadership styles, powers, norms,

beliefs systems, values, and theories to overcome challenges and to achieve the mission,

vision, and personal ambitions of their kingdoms. Some societies have kings and

hierarchies while others reach consensus among equals (Hofstede, 1983). Some societies

defined different gender roles while other societies have the side-by-side collaboration of

women and men on the same tasks (Hofstede, 1983). Conclusively, in the past century,

numerous theories, empirical data, and practical insight have generated leadership

performance requirements, including skills, roles, and characteristics that are required of leaders, and how this knowledge is disseminated (Laud, Arevalo, & Johnson, 2016).

The role of a leader is indispensable to the success of the business (Söderhjelm, Larsson, Sandahl, Björklund, & Palm, 2018). Sudha et al. (2016) noted that leadership effectiveness is a significant concept in the area of leadership. Even though leadership plays an important role in the context of cross-cultural perspectives, Bird and Mendenhall (2016) noted that leadership is not only the key driving force for changing employees' behavior but also a fundamental force that shapes a work environment and organizational culture. Leaders promote change and challenge the norm (Choromides, 2018). An efficient and real leader is one who does not put them self before others, is humble, deferential, and altruistic (Management Study Guide, 2016).

In an ever-changing world with the rise of globalization along with technological advances doubling almost yearly, company executives need new ideas using their leadership skills to lead employees from diverse cultural backgrounds (Minkov et al., 2013; Sugiyama et al., 2016). These executives must position themselves as examples of innovation, as well as corporate leaders in workplace culture despite their differences in leadership roles respectively. Leaders must learn how to make the desired future during volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (Johansen, 2009, p. 1).

A successful leader who has organizational skills is a team player and a motivator using various intrinsic and extrinsic reward systems to promote and encourage team members with varying cultural backgrounds. Leaders cannot predict, but they can prepare (Johansen, 2009, p. 15). Leadership has always benefited from preparedness, but the

demand for preparedness is greater in a world of increasing uncertainty (Johansen, 2009, p. 15). While leaders can learn about how to lead followers effectively, the most impactful leader has the inherent qualities to become successful naturally (Stern, 2013).

Leaders need new skills to make the desired future (Johansen, 2009, p. 1). Conversely, Grobler and Du Plessis (2016) noted that in a faster-moving world, a leader is a change agent who needs to be not only flexible but also ready to act on short notice to stay competitive in the market. When leading in a global or multicultural workplace, practical use of relationship behaviors is critical to success in that environment (Söderhjelm et al., 2018). Johansen (2009) stated that being a leader is much more difficult than just studying leadership (Johansen, p. 14). Developing global leadership awareness on cross-cultural capabilities is important (Grier, 2017; Ju, & Shoham, 2017; Minkov et al., 2013). Ekelund and Adl (2015) noted that more leading organizational leaders are discovering the value of deploying consistent, high-effect leadership development on a global basis.

Leadership Theories

Early leadership theories focused on what qualities distinguished leaders from followers, while subsequent theories addressed other variables such as situational factors and skill levels (Cherry, 2019). Researchers demonstrated interest in leadership throughout human history, but several formal leadership theories emerged during the 19th century. Interest in leadership increased during the early part of the 20th century (Cherry, 2019). Many theories on leadership evolved in the 19th century, such as the great man

theory, trait theory, behavioral theories, contingency theories, transactional theories, and transformational theories.

The great man theory (1840s). The great man theory of leadership states that a leader is born with some gifted leadership skills and capabilities capable of accomplishing goals despite difficulties, criticisms, and negative probabilities from followers. The great man theory of leadership became popular during the 19th century (Cherry, 2019). The great man theory assumes that the traits of leadership are intrinsic (Cherry, 2019). That simply means that great leaders are born. This theory sees great leaders as those who are destined by birth to become a leader (Cherry, 2019).

Cherry (2019) noted that the mythology behind some of the world's most famous leaders such as Abraham Lincoln, Julius Caesar, Mahatma Gandhi and Alexander the Great helped contribute to the notion that great leaders are born and not made. The philosophy of the great man theory contradicts the purpose of this study in which I developed and trained cross-cultural leaders through teaching and awareness to lead workers from diverse cultural backgrounds effectively. To meet the demand for the 21st century because of the rise of globalization, effective leaders have to possess intercultural competencies, which most global leaders acquired through a comprehensive learning process and experience. In many examples with the great man theory, it appears as if the right man for the job seems to emerge almost magically to take control of a situation and lead a group of people into safety or success (Cherry, 2019), which is not the concept in this study.

The trait theory (1930s and 1940s). The trait theory evolved in the 1930s. The trait theory denied the inheritance ideologies of the great man theory and suggested a common or universal attribute among effective and ineffective leaders. The trait leadership theory indicates that either people are born, or people have certain qualities that make them excel in leadership roles. Certain qualities such as intelligence, sense of responsibility, creativity, and other values put anyone in the shoes of a good leader (Cherry, 2019). Traits such as extraversion, self-confidence, and courage are all traits linked to great leaders (Cherry, 2019).

Many studies (Chaudhry, Yuan, Hu, & Cooke, 2016; Cherry, 2019) analyzed the traits among existing leaders in the hope of uncovering the traits responsible for one's leadership abilities. The only characteristics identified were among these individuals were those that were slightly taller and slightly more intelligent (Cherry, 2019). Successful leaders have interests, abilities, and personality traits that are different from those of the less effective leaders (Management Study Guide, 2016). However, through many types of research conducted in the last three decades of the 20th century, successful leaders have identified a set of core traits. These traits are not responsible solely for determining whether a person is a successful leader or not, but they are essentially seen as preconditions that endow people with leadership potential (Management Study Guide, 2016).

Behavioral theories (1940s and 1950s). Cherry (2019) noted that behavioral theories of leadership contain the belief that great leaders are made, not born. The behavioral theory focuses on the behaviors of the leaders as opposed to their mental,

physical, or social characteristics (Cherry, 2019). The conceptual belief of the behavioral

theories is that an individual can become a leader through a learning process as opposed

to the great man and the trait theories. According to this theory, people can *learn* to

become leaders through teaching and observation (Chaimongkonrojna & Steane, 2015;

Cherry, 2019), which aligns with the scope of this study.

Contingency leadership theory (1960s). The conceptual belief of contingency

leadership theory scholars is that no leadership style is useful in all situations. Each

situation is unique, and the ideal leader-led situation is unique as well (Cherry, 2019).

Cherry (2019) noted that success depends on some variables, including the leadership

style, qualities of the followers and aspects of the situation (Cherry, 2019). According to

the contingency leadership theory, there is no single way of leading and that every

leadership style on certain situations signifies that there are certain people who perform at

the maximum level in certain places, but at minimal performance when taken out of their

element (Cherry, 2019).

Transactional leadership theories (1970s). Weber described the transactional

style of leadership in 1947 and Bernard Bass in 1981 (Management Study Guide, 2016).

Transactional leadership is the exchange between the leader and the follower (Prasad &

Junni, 2016). Transactional leaders are most effective when they develop a mutual

reinforcing environment, for which the individual and the organizational goals are in

harmony (Cherry, 2019). Transactional leadership focuses on the basic management

process of controlling, organizing, and short-term planning (Management Study Guide,

2016).

Transformational leadership theories (1970s). Burns (1979) first introduced the concept of transformational leadership and extended by Bass (1985). Transformational leadership theory is the process by which a person interacts with others and can create a solid relationship (Cherry, 2019). The essence of transformational leadership theories is that leaders transform their followers through their inspirational nature and charismatic personalities (Cherry, 2019). In contrast to the traditional forms of leadership that build on an exchange relationship such as transactional leadership, transformational leadership aims to address the intrinsic needs of followers (Andersen, Bjørnholt, Bro, & Holm-Petersen, 2018; Prasad & Junni, 2016). Transformational leaders challenge the status quo and lead us to the future. Transformational leaders inspire their followers, which is foundational to engagement (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018; Raso, 2016).

Leadership and Organizational Culture

Organizational culture includes essential instruments for organizations and the national development process (Walker, 2018). The characteristics or the components that define leadership styles and theories within a particular organization differ from one another based on the organizational culture of the specific company. When the members of organizations understand and internalize the organizational culture, it enables them to choose strategy and behavior that fit with their personality as well as organizational activities (Chaudhry et al., 2016).

The primary tool of a true leader to accomplish his/her goal, the company's vision, and mission is the understanding of the culture, the values, ethics, and the beliefs systems that defined the organization (Northouse, 2013, p. 200). Leaders develop their

techniques to shape their organizational culture typically with the thought of increasing

the organization's effectiveness (Kattman, 2014). Kattman (2014) noted that

organizational culture is dominant over one's national culture, and the influence of

leadership within the organization drives the impact of continuous improvement.

Nasomboon (2014) stated that an increasing behavior of a leader who commits to staying

with their company, working toward organizations' target success, focusing on achieving

goals, and working toward the success of organizational change appears to influence the

value of leadership performance as well as the engagement levels of employees.

Outwardly, organizational cultures may have visible attributes, or hidden

meanings, such as one's business attire, or communication styles, or even management

methods (Kattman, 2014). With the rise of the technological development, changes in

organizational culture including cross-cultural communication, globalization, and

employees growing concerns, companies' executives face multiple organizational

challenges. These challenges require leaders, and CEOs to understand basics beliefs

systems, and values of their organizations, promote a healthy organizational culture,

possess transactional, relationship, behavioral, transformational leadership skills,

personalities, and attitudes to effectively manage their day-to-day activities in workplaces

and be successful. It is worth emphasizing that the aim of organizational culture is to

ensure that there is an agreed and uniform way of doing things in organizations to

minimize all possible conflicts because of cultural differences (Saulton et al., 2017)

Transformational and Transactional Leadership

The success of businesses operating either locally or globally because of the rise of globalization depends on the effectiveness, and the competence of the companies' leaders in cross-cultural leadership (Ewest, 2015; Van Dierendonck, Sousa, Gunnarsdóttir, Bobbio, Hakanen, Verdorfer, Rodriguez-Carvajal, 2017). Transactional leadership refers to the bulk of leadership models, which focus on the exchanges that occur between leaders and their followers (Deichmann & Stam, 2015; Gross, 2016; Northouse, 2013, p. 186). Transactional and transformational leadership were ranked as the best leadership styles in the 1980s (Bass, 1997).

Research revealed that transactional leaders clarify for their employees the tasks that must be accomplished and their responsibilities, reward employees for achieving the specified performance levels, and take corrective action when necessary (Bass, 1985). Conversely, Jiang and Probst (2016) noted that transformational leaders motivate employees to do more than what implied in the employment contract and focus on employees' higher-order needs. Bodenhausen and Curtis (2016) indicated that transformational leadership has a significant influence on some aspects of employee's involvement in the workplace. Transformational leaders provide vision and a sense of mission, gain respect and trust, and act as role models (Jiang & Probst, 2016).

Transformational leaders make followers more aware of the importance and value of their work, thereby inducing them to transcend self-interest for the sake of the organization (Geier, 2016; R. Mittal, 2015). Research conducted revealed that transformational leadership style is a dominant predictor of followers' performance in a

standard context (Geier, 2016). Conversely, transactional leadership emphasizes traditional instrumental exchange, which means providing employee salary and position according to their contribution and performance (Jensen et al., 2019). The ability of leaders to implement transformational style may strongly invoke perceptions of procedural justice; transactional style may strongly increase perceptions of distributive justice, and both leadership styles may lead to higher trust in the leaders (Caillier & Sa, 2017; Kailasapathy & Jayakody, 2018).

Presbitero (2016) noted that leaders who have a higher level of cultural intelligence exhibit a higher level of transformational leadership style, which suggests that individuals with high-cultural intelligence can lead and manage more efficiently in multicultural environments. Multicultural implies an approach or a system that takes more than one culture into account (Northouse, 2013). In a transformational leadership, leaders tend to socialize formally with employees, build trust, and have confidence in them (Northouse, 2013, p. 200).

Transactional leadership, which is result-oriented, is only concerned about the short-term goals of the organization (Jensen et al., 2019; Kark, Van Dijk, & Vashdi, 2018). Transactional style of leadership results in high productivity of employees. Transformational leadership, which is process-oriented, improves employees' development, commitment through constructing a vision, trust, expectation, and suggestion (Bass, 1996). Creating awareness of cross-cultural leadership is essential for transformational leaders operating in culturally diverse environments.

Among the different styles of leadership**,** transformational leadership has gained most attention from organizational researchers and academics (Bodenhausen & Curtis, 2016; S. Mittal & Dhar, 2015). Transformational leaders regard employees as "social men" who have loyalty, independence, self-confidence, and potential desire to change and realize themselves (Afsar, Badir, Saeed, & Hafeez, 2017; Jensen et al., 2019). Even though numerous researchers defined it as a leadership theory and leadership style, the concept of transformational leadership according to many leaders, is still difficult to understand. Jensen et al. (2019) described transformational leadership as changing behavior to comply with the situation or current circumstances, to be flexible and adaptive. Transactional leadership refers to the bulk of leadership models, which focus on the exchanges that occur between leaders and their followers (Northouse, 2013, p.186).

Transformational leaders can produce significant organizational change and results because this form of leadership fosters higher levels of intrinsic motivation, trust, commitment, and loyalty from followers than does transactional leadership (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2008, Northouse, 2013, p. 479). In contrast to transactional leadership, transformational leadership is the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower (Northouse, 2013, p. 186). Transformational leaders foster a climate of trust and motivate employees to transcend self-interest for the sake of the organization.

Transformational leaders articulate ambitious' collective goals, encourage followers to accept and strive to achieve them (Jiang & Probst, 2016; Middleton, Harvey, & Esaki, 2015; Paolucci, Dimas, Zappalà, Lourenço, & Rebelo, 2018). Therefore,

understanding the definition of transformational and transactional definition is necessary for local and global leaders to appreciate its context. Transformational leaders have the following characteristics: (a) idealized influence (being the role model for followers); (b) inspirational motivation (inspiring and motivating followers); (c) individualized consideration (showing genuine concern for the needs and feelings of followers); and (d) intellectual stimulation (challenging followers to be creative and innovative) (Dimitrov, 2015; Fazzi & Zamaro, 2016). In summary, transactional and transformational leadership are both expected to have positive relationships with followers' performance even in extreme events (Geier, 2016).

Charismatic and Transformational Leadership

Charismatic leadership is another leadership style that shaped the attention of many researchers (Bass, 1985). Charismatic leadership originated with Weber in the early 20th century (Jamal, & Bakar, 2017; Sacavém, Martinez, da Cunha, Abreu, & Johnson, 2017). Charismatic leaders arouse enthusiasm and commitment in followers by articulating a compelling vision and increasing follower confidence about achieving it (Gebert, Heinitz, & Buengeler, 2016; R. Mittal, 2015). Charismatic leaders can motivate employees by functioning as an obvious, ideal point of reference, and by engaging in transparent communications processes that mobilize followers to action (Horn, Mathis, Robinson, & Randle, 2015).

Northouse (2013) displayed five personality characteristics types of behavior charismatic leaders demonstrate in their leadership. First, charismatic leaders are strong role models for the beliefs and values they want their followers to adopt. Second,

charismatic leaders appear competent to followers, articulate ideological goals that have moral overtones. Third charismatic leaders communicate high expectations for followers, and they exhibit confidence in followers' abilities to meet these expectations. Fourth, charismatic leaders arouse task-relevant motives in followers that may include affiliation, power, or esteem (Northouse, 2013, p. 189).

Bass (1985) uses the terms charismatic leadership and transformational leadership interchangeably, perhaps (R. Mittal, 2015) because both leadership styles are similar regarding outcomes, that of performance beyond expectations. R. Mittal (2015) noted that charismatic leadership should be the preferred leadership style in individualistic and loose societies, whereas transformational leadership style should be more acceptable in collectivistic and stable societies. The charismatic components of transformational leadership may transform followers' views of their work by demonstrating the purpose of work and by showing behavior that is in line with the organization's mission and vision (Deichmann & Stam, 2015; Xu, Caldwell, Glasper, & Guevara, 2015).

Presbitero (2016) found that leaders who have adapted to their multicultural environments might be able to lead in a more transformational style whereas an individual who is struggling to adapt may have to devote more cognitive resources to adaptation and fewer resources to transformational leadership. R. Mittal (2015) believed that charismatic and transformational theories of leadership are two theories which explain how leaders influence followers to make self-sacrifices and put the needs of the mission or organization above their materialistic self-interests.

The Importance of Effective Leadership in Business

The success or failure of an organization depends on the competence and the effectiveness of its leadership (Ghasabeh et al., 2015; Johnson, & Pak, 2018; Nasomboon, 2014; Vértesy, 2017). Nasomboon (2014) noted that organizational leaders are vital ingredients that contribute to the success of the organization. Leaders have the ultimate responsibilities to make their organizations succeed using skills, competence, knowledge, power, and influence on their followers.

Despite the multitude conceptualizations of leadership, (a) leadership is a process, (b) leadership involves influence, (c) leadership occurs in groups, and (d) leadership involves common goals (Northouse, 2013, p. 5). A leader must be able to influence followers to achieve these common goals (Northouse, 2013, p. 5). Influence is the sine qua non-of leadership, and without influence, leadership does not exist (Northouse, 2013, p. 5). Leaders must develop a profound understanding of the organizational culture, and proper definition and historical explanation of the beliefs systems and leadership to comprehend the conceptualization of leadership.

Effective leaders inspire and engage their followers using a style of leadership that is rewarding, shared and charismatic (R. Mittal, 2015). Even though compassion, kindness, and grace may have its values in today's contemporary business world (Thomas & Rowland, 2014) more importantly in leadership, it is not enough to fulfill the ideological responsibilities of organizational culture. Nevertheless, when a leader shows sensitivity to the needs and feelings of organizational members and sets inspirational strategic and organizational goals, employees are likely to display citizenship behavior

(Wong & Berntzen, 2019). Jamal and Bakar (2017) noted that when charismatic leaders play a facilitating role for employees to establish positive and helpful relationships, employees willingly help one other.

The style of leadership promotes motivation and high productivity (Stern, 2013). The competitiveness of the 21st century business market requires the ability to function properly in various geographical business environments with professional leaders capable of leading followers from different backgrounds. When there is alignment in organizations' values, employees become motivated to realize the shared values (Stern, 2013). Proper use of the knowledge of these environments directly influences productivity within a business market or amongst professionals from different backgrounds. Other scholars view leadership as a transformational process that moves followers to accomplish more than expected of them (Northouse, 2013, p. 5). The level of productivity is usually a reflection on the leaders' ability to ensure that followers are successfully completing their goals.

Globalization's impact, beyond the socioeconomic and political discourses, is affecting conceptions of culture and cultural studies, and changing and restructuring spaces, global, national and personal interactions and relationships (Magu, 2015). Beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of people change slowly (Mehrabanfar, 2015). When in the second half of 20th century, globalization significantly widespread, they started reforming promptly (Mehrabanfar, 2015). Workplace environments in the United States and globally are more diverse in the 21st century than in the 20th century. These

workplaces require effective leaders who are aware of cultural diversity and at the same time understand the need for integrity, situational awareness, and flexibility.

There are significant cultural differences in decision-making styles, and complex decisions are particularly affected by individuals' social and cultural values (Dabić et al., 2015). Making decisions in the midst of cultural diversity is complex, and requires exceptional competence, knowledge, experience, and capabilities. Elbanna and Fadol (2016) noted decision-makers deal with strategic issues that vary in their urgency and the seriousness of their consequences. However, it is critical that leaders recognize that diverse employees can bring value to decision making (Wyrick, 2015). Miska and Öner (2015) explained how leaders make decisions based on their global perspectives and emphasized the importance of responsible leadership given current economic developments, globalization, and increased business interconnectedness.

Culture: History, Definition, and Impacts on Leadership

The meaning of "culture" is different in various contexts and environments (Ullah & Murad, 2016). Tsai et al. (2019) defined culture as the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, values, attitudes, meanings, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving. Culture is an unchanging (regardless of context), subjective, trans-situational "value" (McSweeney, 2016). There are varieties of cultural theories (McSweeney, 2016). Culture in the United States is different from the cultures in Europe and the rest of the world (Pasricha, Singh, & Verma, 2017).

A leader's cultural background influences leadership (R. Mittal, 2015). Besnoy et al. (2015) noted that leaders' effectiveness and success is largely dependent on the ability to adjust to the various cultural contexts. Leaders need abilities to adapt to a variety of cultural situations, these abilities are called cultural intelligence (Besnoy et al., 2015). Cultural intelligence is essential to effective leadership in multicultural environments (Presbitero, 2016; Schlägel & Sarstedt, 2016). Developing and evaluating cross-cultural intelligence is challenging (Nunes, Felix, & Prates, 2017; Presbitero & Toledano, 2018). Besnoy et al. noted that cultural intelligence offers leaders an overall selection and perspective that can be applied to a numerous of cultural situations.

The focus on culture might have emerged in the 18th century in Europe where it meant a process of cultivation or improvement, as in agriculture or horticulture (Ullah & Murad, 2016). In the 19th century, culture referred to the betterment or refinement of the individual, mainly through education, and then to the fulfillment of national aspirations or ideals. In the mid-19th century, some scientists used the term "culture" to refer to a global human capacity (Ullah & Murad, 2016). The interconnectedness of global businesses (globalization), civilization, and the new methods of effective leadership in the environments of diversity embrace the ideologies of the 21st century's generation from various geographical locations including impacts on leaders, followers, and organizations.

Cultural bias is real (Thompson et al., 2016). Identifying cultural biases is important for global leaders for effective leadership specifically in the environment of diversity. Despite the presence of cultural differences in organizational leadership,

cultural biases can be problematic to global leadership. The amplifying effects of culture can allow weak cognitive biases to have significant population-level consequences, radically increasing the evolving of weak, defeasible inductive biases (Thompson et al., 2016). Conversely, the emergence of a strong cultural universal does not imply, nor lead to, nor require strong innate constraints (Lam et al., 2016; Thompson et al., 2016).

Northouse (2013) defined culture as learned beliefs, values, rules, norms, symbols, and traditions that are common to a group of people (Northouse, 2013, p. 383). Magu (2015) defined culture as a dynamic, adaptive concept and practice, liberally from ideological and technological innovations of other cultures and integrating these borrowed aspects into the construction and modification of culture across spatial and geographical divides to ensure particular cultures' survival. The above definitions viewed culture as shared values, ideas, traditions, and principles, mostly social, political, and religious characterized by different behaviors from various environments (Miska & Öner, 2015).

On a smaller scale, organizations have their cultures and their prevalent value systems (Hofstede, 1985). However, understanding culture can equip a person for the challenges of contemporary international business even within the national context (Dabić et al., 2015). More importantly, culture has become an essential ingredient in the economic development strategies of many cities (Collins & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016). Therefore, cross-cultural research in leadership serves the purpose of creating unique and new insights and of generating broader concepts, rather than simple comparisons (Dabić et al., 2015).

There is a need for multidimensional analysis and an in-depth understanding of cross-cultural leadership for leaders, and CEOs that are leading multicultural organizations across the world. The impacts of globalization have introduced a higher level of diversity in various multicultural industries (Stern, 2013). Diversity in multinational companies is real. Casey, Riseborough, and Krauss (2015) noted that the growing international trade and globalization are increasing the cultural diversity of the modern workforce, which often results in migrants working under the management of foreign leadership. As a result, immigration enhances cultural diversity and has recently been a contentious issue in many countries such as the United States of America, France, and the United Kingdom (Berry, 2016).

It is essential to understand that there must be both cultural diversity and equity in social participation for true multiculturalism to exist (Berry, 2016). In culturally diverse social contexts, virtually every person' experiences intercultural contact daily (Berry, 2016). The core notion of the multiculturalism hypothesis is that only when people are secure in their identities, they are in a position to accept those who differ from them (Lebedeva & Galyapina, 2016).

In organizational settings, there can be positive and negative consequences (Berry, 2016). The positive and the negative impacts of globalization on multinational companies because of cultural differences are tangible factors that leaders should comprehend. The advent of globalization further intensifies the need for an effective approach leader may deploy when assessing the long-term consequences of their actions and decisions (Castelli, 2016). Because of globalization, it is vital that leaders become

aware of the values espoused within their organization as well as among their business partners and contemporaries, which may facilitate cross-national business interaction and leader effectiveness (Castelli, 2016; Tsai et al., 2019).

The most dynamic changes occurring in the 21st century are results of globalization (Evans, 2016). It is imperative that planners develop the skills necessary to communicate and collaborate internationally (Evans, 2016) to meet the demands of an increasingly globalized world. These skills must include competence and capabilities for leaders to lead efficiently and professionally in the environment of employees with diverse backgrounds.

Despite a few criticisms on cross-cultural differences and its negative implications on effective leadership (Yang, 2016), Kattman (2014) assumed that having diversity present in organizations would facilitate growth and productivity through the uniqueness and creativity presented through differing experiences, cultures, personalities, and talents. Cross-cultural differences could create severe negative consequences over an extended period (Emuwa & Fields, 2017; B. Lee. & Kelly, 2019). B. Lee and Kelly (2019) noted that leading cross-cultural differences and diversity in organizations requires effective leaders who are more versatile than leaders in organizations without cross-cultural differences. Strategies organizational leaders need to handle leadership issues in the environment of employees with diverse cultural backgrounds are within the scope of this project.

Culture and Leadership

Leadership across cultures is an important topic in both the academic literature and in practice (Fan, 2018; Houghton, Carnes, & Ellison, 2014; Hwang et al., 2015). Culture has been the focus of many studies across a variety of disciplines (Northouse, 2013, p. 386). The notion of culture, as recognized in the scientific community, has been around for a while (Vaiman & Brewster, 2015). Culture signifies the fundamental values and belief systems of the individuals that expected to impact leadership mechanisms (R. Mittal, 2015). Culture is a pervasive construct (R. Mittal & Elias, 2016). Additionally, the term "culture" has been defined in many ways, each one claiming a meaningful understanding of the construct (R. Mittal & Elias, 2016).

Culture is the mental programming of the human spirit that allows distinguishing the members of one category in comparison with the members of another category (Hofstede, 1984). The definition Hofstede (1984) provided implies differences in human beliefs system, depending on its geographic, environmental, and social classifications. Culture affects all facets of life by influencing values, attitudes, and behaviors of society (Flatten, Adams, & Brettel, 2015). Therefore, the conceptualization of culture and leadership is critical to understand the scope of this project.

All over the world, companies find themselves in cultures different from the companies' parent country cultures (Dartey-Baah, 2013). Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin (2015) stated that globalization creates an uncertain environment characterized by diversity wherein multicultural corporations seek to gain a clear competitive advantage, in part by developing an aware cultural workforce. Nevertheless, leading

diversity could be complex (Berry, 2016). Berry (2016) noted that multiculturalism is a complex concept encompassing many dimensions and meanings. Conversely, the topic of leadership and culture extend to how leaders manage diversity (Stern, 2013).

Developing a culturally aware workforce requires the need to determine factors influencing the effectiveness of learning from cross-cultural experiences (Hannachi, 2015; Wood et al., 2015), an understanding of culture and effective leadership, and strategies for leaders to lead effectively in the environment of diverse cultural backgrounds. Leadership is crucial because it has an enormous impact on the condition of the organization (Chow Tong, Salley, & Ismail, 2017; Nasomboon, 2014). Nasomboon (2014) noted that leadership commitment directly affects organizational performance and employee engagement. Northouse (2013) suggested that an experienced leader should find a way to negotiate with followers from various backgrounds (Northouse, 2013, p. 386). It is important, even essential, for global business leaders to understand cultural differences at workplaces specifically when leading workers from multiple cultural backgrounds (Kattman, 2014).

Previous studies on cross-cultural leadership (J. Kim & McLean, 2015) have concluded that some leadership behaviors appear to be universally effective across culture. Other leadership behaviors and preferred leadership styles vary considerably from one culture to another (Hwang et al., 2015). Despite the universality of cross-cultural leadership (Minelgaite & Littrell, 2018), global leaders need to develop transcultural competencies, skills, and capabilities, and be able to adapt to followers with different cultural beliefs rather than their cultures or beliefs system. Culture's influence

on leadership processes is accepted (R. Mittal, 2015). Cultural context affects the leadership style of organizational leaders (R. Mittal, 2015).

Stern (2013) suggested that leaders should be able to identify with the styles their organizations could use to identify leaders and provide support to leadership development. Leaders must have the ability to apply precise leadership styles (transactional, behavioral, transformational or charismatic) on followers depending on particular cultural context. Organizational leaders and businesses traditionally looked for modern leaders with specific leadership styles and competencies capable of leading in multinational environments (Jönsson et al., 2015; Rana, Ardichvili, & Polesello, 2016; Seidle, Fernandez, & Perry, 2016). The argument that Westernization or Americanization is impacting foreign cultures in a way that aims to change and heavily influence foreign cultures is shown to carry some weight, but people in cultures are selective of processes they adapt (Magu, 2015).

In a multicultural setting, Kopelman, Hardin, Myers, and Tost (2016) suggested that the culture of the high-power person is likely to influence a low-power individual's expectations. For example, American culture could be more likely to influence other countries culture because of the high-low power concept in between them. Kopelman et al. proposed that in a situation of low power, leaders from cultures relatively attuned to power asymmetry and with a collective orientation might be more likely to adjust their behavior based on the culture of the person in high power. Since culture addresses the basic values and belief systems of an individual, according to R. Mittal and Elias (2016), it is evident that culture would influence the effectiveness of leadership processes (e.g.

the ability to influence others). It is important that cultural issues provide the needed

attention if multinational companies are to succeed particularly in a competitive business

environment (Dartey-Baah, 2013).

Ethnocentrism, Prejudice, and Impacts on Leadership

Ethnocentrism and prejudice are two important concepts that could influence the

effectiveness and performance of leadership (Northouse, 2013, p. 384) if the leader fails

to comprehend their meanings and effects. Ethnocentrism refers to one's discriminatory

attitude towards cross-cultural differences (Barbuto, Beenen, & Tran, 2015).

Ethnocentrism is the tendency for individuals to place their group (ethnic, racial, or

cultural) at the center of their observations of others and the world (Northouse, 2013, p.

385). These ideologies of racial superiority dominated the 19st century (Darian-Smith,

2016). Some Americans think that the democratic principles of the United States are

superior to the political beliefs of other cultures; Americans often fail to understand the

complexity of other cultures (Northouse, 2013, p. 385). Placing one's culture, ideology or

belief at the center of observations of others could weaken leadership effectiveness in the

environment of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Ethnocentrism can be a major obstacle to effective leadership because it prevents

people from fully understanding or respecting the viewpoints of others (Northouse, 2013,

p. 385). Northouse (2013) noted that ethnocentrism is a universal tendency, and each of

us is ethnocentric to some degree. Ethnocentricity risks damage to diversity initiatives (C.

M. Han & Won, 2018; Reilly, 2015). Ethnocentrism is problematic for leaders because it

prevents them from fully understanding the world of others (J. Lee, Crawford, Weber, &

Dennison, 2018; Northouse, 2013, p. 420). Conversely, cultural security negatively

correlated with ethnocentrism, and positively correlated with multicultural ideology and

with the perceived consequences of multiculturalism (Barbuto et al., 2015; Lebedeva &

Galyapina, 2016). A skilled leader cannot avoid the issues related to ethnocentrism

(Northouse, 2013, p. 385).

Prejudice refers to judgments about others on previous decisions or experiences

(Northouse, 2013, p. 385), which are culturally sensitive. Since the conceptualization of

leadership revolves around influence and influencing, it is inherently culture sensitive (R.

Mittal, 2015). When people feel threatened, they develop prejudice and engage in

discrimination (Lebedeva & Galyapina, 2016).

Lebedeva & Galyapina (2016) suggested that negative attitudes held by one group

toward another cause lack of knowledge about that group. Lebedeva and Galyapina noted

that when individuals of two groups come into positive, personal, and cooperative contact

with each other, they get to know each other, and by doing so leads to the elimination or

reduction of prejudice. Both ethnocentrism and prejudice interfere with the ability to

understand and appreciate the human experience of others (Northouse, 2013, p. 386).

Hofstede's Dimensions of Culture and Leadership Implications

Many researchers have focused their studies on various identifying dimensions of

culture (Northouse, 2013). Hofstede (1983) identified four major dimensions to

characterize cultural differences, which include: (a) power distance, (b) uncertain

avoidance, (c) individualism-collectivism, (d) masculinity-femininity, and (e) long-term-

short-term orientation. Hofstede (1983) studied industrial employees from 50 countries

using 116,000 questionnaires to measure cultural dimensions. These cultural dimensions represent universal categories for characterizing national societies offering a framework for developing hypotheses in cross-cultural organization studies (Hofstede, 1983).

Exploration of national cultures includes nine dimensions: performance orientation, future orientation, assertiveness, power distance, humane orientation, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and gender egalitarianism (Hofstede, 1983). Different societies have found different answers to Hofstede's (1983) four dimensions of culture related to very fundamental problems human societies face. As a result, Hofstede's four dimensions to explain (1) different ways of structuring organizations, (2) different motivations of people within organizations, and (3) different issues people and organizations face within society (Hofstede, 1983).

Power distance. Power distance is the extent to which the members of a society accept that power in institutions and organizations is distributed unequally (Hofstede, 1985). Power distance has implications in multicultural organizations. Ji, Zhou, Li, and Yan (2015) noted that power distance orientation had a significantly negative impact on employees' instrumental and emotional help seeking as well as their trust in the supervisor. Global leaders must develop concrete leadership capabilities and understandings to deal with the immediate implications of power distance on their leaderships.

Even though workers have the ultimate responsibilities to understand the organizational culture of their companies, differences between high power distance and

low power distance could cause cross-cultural leadership issues. Dartey-Baah (2013) stated that managers in high power distance societies tend to believe in giving subordinates detailed instructions with little room for interpretation. R. Mittal and Elias (2016) noted that people in high power distance societies accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place, and no justification is required for power inequalities. Subordinates are supposed to respect the authority and superiority of upper management (Dartey-Baah, 2013). In a low power distance environment, people believe in a decentralized system where communication flows horizontally, as opposed to in a high-power distance community in which people tends to believe in a centralized leadership system where communication flows from the top down.

Power distance is concerned with the way cultures stratified, thus creating levels between people based on power, authority, prestige, status, wealth, and material possessions (Northouse, 2013). Power distance is the extent to which less powerful members of a society accept the fact that power is distributed unequally (Besbes, Legohérel, Kucukusta, & Law, 2016; Sukanya, 2015). In systems in which superiors maintain a great power distance, subordinates tend to polarize toward dependence or counter-dependence (Hofstede, 1983).

Members of cultures having a lower power distance may feel sympathetic with egalitarian ideas and be more critical of corporate hierarchies (Deephouse, Newburry, & Soleimani, 2016). Conversely, in a culture where superiors maintain less power distance, subordinates tend to prefer the consultative decision style, which can be interpreted as a compromise solution, an interdependence of superior and subordinate (Hofstede, 1983).

Dartey-Baah (2013) noted that in cultures with high power distance, loyalty and obedience to those in a higher authority are required, and, in fact, are the norm.

Uncertainty avoidance. Uncertainty avoidance is the degree to which the members of society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity (Besbes et al., 2016; R. Mittal & Elias, 2016), which leads them to support beliefs promising certainly and to maintain institutions protecting conformity (Hofstede, 1985). Leaders in high uncertain avoidance environment are reluctant to change because of organizational strict rules and regulations they use to control existing work processing. Conversely, leaders in low uncertainty avoidance are open to change, open to innovate, and ready to take risks.

Hofstede (1984) stated that cultures with strong uncertainty avoidance are active, aggressive, emotional, security seeking and intolerant, while cultures with weak uncertainty avoidance are contemplative, less aggressive, unemotional, accepting of personal risk, and relatively tolerant. In cultures of strong uncertainty avoidance, there is a need for rules and formality to structure life and competence is a strong value resulting in belief in experts. In weak uncertainty avoidance cultures, there is a strong belief in the generalist (Besbes et al., 2016).

Hofstede's study conducted in 1980 revealed that the United States has a higher level of uncertainty avoidance than the United Kingdom (Zorn, Bellman, Robinson, & Varan, 2016). Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to reduce uncertainty with laws, rules, procedures, etc. (Deephouse et al., 2016). Even though Hofstede's study was conducted in the 1980s, later studies conducted on cross-cultural leadership confirmed the differences in uncertainty avoidance between the United States and the United Kingdom

caused by culture (Deephouse et al., 2016; Zorn et al., 2016). People in a low uncertainty avoidance society are more willing to take risks and appreciate flexibility and informality in the workplace. In contrast, people in a high uncertainty avoidance society tend to be risk-averse and favor rigid, formal decision-making processes in the workplace (Dartey-Baah, 2013).

Individualism-Collectivism. Individualism stands for a preference for a loosely-knit social framework in society in which individuals are supposed to take care of themselves and their immediate families only (Hofstede, 1985; Krassner et al., 2017; Obal & Kunz, 2016). Collectivism stands for a preference for a tightly knit social framework in which individuals can expect their relatives, clan or other in-group to look after them, in exchange for unquestioning loyalty (R. Mittal & Elias, 2016). In individualist cultures, people look after themselves and their immediate family only (Besbe et al., 2016; Krassner et al., 2017; Obal & Kunz, 2016). However, in collectivist cultures, people belong to groups that look after them in exchange for loyalty (Besbe et al., 2016). In many organizations with collectivistic cultural value, an individual wants to belong and enjoy being part of the group (Chen, Zhang, Zhang, & Xu, 2016).

Wong, Wyer, and Robert (2016) found that people with an individualistic orientation consider themselves independent from others, whereas those with a collectivistic orientation are more inclined to think of themselves as part of a group or collective to which they belong. In individualistic societies, employees are provided with a great deal of personal freedom and autonomy (Dartey-Baah, 2013). Conversely, collective cultures do not usually allow the freedom and independence necessary for

organizational members to think creatively and, thereby, fail to cultivate an environment that fosters an innovative spirit (Dartey-Baah, 2013).

Masculinity-Femininity. Masculinity stands for a preference for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material success (R. Mittal & Elias, 2016), as opposed to femininity, which stands for a preference for relationships, modesty, caring for the weak, and quality of life (Hofstede, 1985). In a masculine society, even the women prefer assertiveness (at least in men); in a feminine society, even the men prefer modesty (Hofstede, 1985). Assertiveness refers to the degree to which people in a culture are determined, confrontational, and aggressive in their social relationships (Northouse, 2013). Assertiveness is concerned with how much culture or society encourages people to be forceful, aggressive, and tough, as opposed to encouraging them to be timid, submissive, and tender in social relationships (Northouse, 2013). In feminine cultures, people tend to emphasize the quality of the "whole" life rather than money, success, and social status, which are easier to quantify (Dartey-Baah, 2013). Top management positions in masculinity cultures are usually filled with men who tend to display characteristics of dominance and assertiveness, which tend to be discouraged among women by societal gender norms (Dartey-Baah, 2013).

Transition and Summary

In Section 1, I discussed the foundation of the study, the problem statement, the purpose statement, the research question, the conceptual framework, operational definitions, and the significance of the study, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and a review of the professional and academic literature. In Section 2, I define the study's key

components including the role of the researcher. I also discuss the research method and

design, present a detailed description of the population sampling, and ethical research. I

include discussions of data collection, organization, and analysis, and approaches for

assuring the study's validity and reliability. In Section 3, I present results from the

interviews, the study's conclusions, applications to professional practice, implications for

social change, recommendations for future research and conclusions.

Section 2: The Project

In this section, I reiterate the purpose statement and describe my role as the researcher. I then describe the study's method, design, population and sampling; data collection instruments and techniques; and the data analysis process. Additional components of Section 2 include the actions I took to assure my conclusions' reliability and validity. This section concludes with a description of the foundation of the study, and transition into Section 3, which includes data results from the interviews, applications to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations, and conclusions.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore cross-cultural leadership strategies local retail business leaders use to expand business operations into global markets. The target population of this study included leaders of three multinational companies located in Minnesota with successful experience growing companies internationally through leading employees with culturally diverse backgrounds. I focused on leaders who have developed cross-cultural leadership strategies leading culturally diverse employees at both local and global locations. Through semistructured, face-to-face interviews and companies' progress reports and financial records, I identified and explored cross-cultural strategies local retail business leaders developed and used to successfully lead culturally diverse employees at both local and global locations.

The implications for positive social change include improving local and global employees' job conditions, which may enhance community business sustainability. The findings of this research could positively support organizational leaders in sustainability

efforts in job creation, promoting the dignity of global employees with diverse cultural backgrounds, increasing sales for businesses, improving the economy, and developing labor movement programs. The results of this study may contribute to social change by helping local retail companies create employment opportunities, which could improve employees' living standards.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher of a study has ultimate responsibility to ensure that the research follows certain guidelines, rules, and principles (Yin, 2018). Besides following guidelines, rules, and principles, my responsibilities included collecting data from local retail business leaders, providing a complete analysis of the data, and comparing my assessment with recently published peer-reviewed articles. The researcher is the primary data collector in qualitative research, whose interaction can influence the data deliberately or inadvertently (Yin, 2018). I collected data using face-to-face semistructured interviews supported by companies' additional documents.

Over time, individuals accumulate attitudes, biases, and values (Lehman, 2016). It takes a lifelong, evolving process to develop awareness, knowledge, and skills for multicultural competence while minimizing attitudes, and biases; this process is not achievable during a one-time event (Lehman, 2016; Orange, 2016). My assumptions, conceptions, and judgments are that poor leadership in the environment of cultural diversity could lead to inefficiencies. To mitigate the possible effects of personal biases, I followed the interview protocol and had participants describe their experiences leading employees with diverse cultural backgrounds.

Yin (2018) suggested testing one's tolerance to contrary findings to remove bias. Noble and Smith (2015) suggested mitigating bias by using various sources to gather and analyze data including notetaking, audio recording, observation, member checking with participants, and peer review. I avoided asking closed questions and allusive interruptions during the interviews to minimize the effect of my biases. Petronytė-Kvedarauskienė and Gudaitė (2016) recommended avoiding any form of narcissism by allowing participants to illustrate their viewpoints and experiences rather than projecting researchers' assumptions for the study and allow criticism to get relevant information from the participants.

The Belmont Report included three basic ethical principles that should underlie all research involving human participants (HHS, 2014). These principles are beneficence, justice, and respect for participants that directly or indirectly participate in the study (Schneider, 2012). As the researcher must follow ethical procedures (Greenwood, 2016), as discussed in the Ethical Assurances subheading, I followed ethical standards by respecting participants and demonstrating justice. These ethical codes of conduct guide researchers during data collecting and analyses processes, the interpretation of the data, and the writing of the research paper.

Yin (2018) proposed using interview protocols to ensure the protection of the participants. The interview protocol for this study (see Appendix B) contains a complete description of the interview process including discussing and the objectives of the research study. The interview protocol included: (a) an introduction reiterating the confidentiality nature of the interview to the participants, (b) a permission to conduct the

interview at a convenient location selected by the participants, (c) a clarification of member-checking follow-up interview, and (d) a presentation of appreciation to the participants for accepting the invitation to participate the study. The rationale of semistructured interview protocol was to allow participants to express their opinions, knowledge, ideas, and experiences. The combination of interviews and data from archival documents review represents a model for case study research and triangulation of data (Yin, 2018).

Participants

The participants of a research study are volunteers who provided information related to the study (Kornbluh, 2015; Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, & Hoagwood, 2015). I selected the participants based on their personal experience or knowledge of the topic under study. The participants included leaders of culturally diverse businesses operating both locally and globally. The participants in this study had recent and relevant cross-cultural leadership experience and were leading employees with different cultural backgrounds. Yin (2018) stated that experience with a phenomenon was a prerequisite for participants in a qualitative case study. Knowledge of research participants' experiences, opinions, and perceptions can inform the way research studies, and their informed consent processes are designed for the protection of human subjects (Kornbluh, 2015).

Yin (2018) suggested that participants' recruitments to be subjectively selected. I used a list of the top largest multinational companies operating in the United States, specifically in Minnesota to identify companies with prospective participants. I adopted

purposive sampling to recruit participants and conducted the interviews outside the
participants' workplaces. Castillo-Montoya (2016) noted that participants became more
relaxed when they met at a convenient location. I used purposeful sampling to select
participants with successful experience leading culturally diverse individuals both locally
and globally.

I used LinkedIn to locate professional email addresses for the top leaders,
including CEOs, operating these multinational companies. Claybaugh and Haseman
(2013) determined that LinkedIn was useful as a professional networking site to locate
executive email information. Upon IRB approval, I initiated and established email and
telephone conversations with the selected top leaders and CEOs (see appendix C).

Participants of a research study must sign an informed consent form allowing the
researcher to conduct interviews or surveys (HHS, 2014). Voluntary consent included the
right of the person to refuse to participate in the study or to stop the participation at any
time during the study without fear of any negative consequences (Schneider, 2012).
Palinkas (2015) suggested using purposive sampling to identify participants. I used
purposive sampling strategies to select the participants. The role of the participants was to
provide information for addressing the research question.

Research Method and Design

I adopted a qualitative research methodology and multiple case study research
design. Qualitative researchers typically collect information on one topic, phenomena, or
experience to enrich their desired understanding (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Matching
the goals of research and answering the research question can be guiding factors for

selecting a research method and design (Garg, 2016). My goal for this research was to explore effective leadership strategies for local and global leaders based on cross-cultural perspectives. My intent was to understand what leadership strategies local retail and global leaders used to enhance work performance and profitability for becoming multinational companies through leading employees with culturally diverse backgrounds.

Research Method

The qualitative method was the research approach for this study to explore leadership strategies and experience based on cross-cultural perspectives as well as managerial and personal viewpoints. Researchers use the qualitative method to explore problems and ask open-ended questions rather than testing preconceived hypotheses (Choromides, 2018; Enosh & Ben-Ari, 2016). Using the qualitative research method requires a plan for engaging in a systematic inquiry to bring about a better understanding of the phenomenon and, increasingly, to change problematic social circumstances (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2015). Researchers use a qualitative study to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations (Babbie, 2015; Yin, 2018). Qualitative researchers use formless data collection methods—such as observations or documents—to discover reasons, feelings, behaviors, attitudes, and meanings of situations, and to inform business leaders' understandings of a specific topic of research (Yin, 2018).

Researchers use the qualitative research method to explore a variety of data types and sources (Babbie, 2015; Cruz & Tantia, 2017). A qualitative research methodology provides the opportunity for face-to-face interaction or telephone interviews to explore

the '*what*' (Bowden & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015) of cross-cultural understanding for leaders in the global perspectives. The qualitative method is appropriate if the study is exploratory and the researcher seeks to interpret a phenomenon, or the researcher has control over the interpretation of the data (Babbie, 2015; Yin, 2018). The qualitative method was appropriate because I explored the requirements of leadership in a global environment as experienced by the leaders participating in this study as well as the way these leaders learned and developed their global mindsets. The purpose of qualitative research is not to generalize to other subjects or settings, but to explore deeply a specific phenomenon or experience on which to build further knowledge or to develop practical strategies that are sensitive to the research participants (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Studies of human experiences are not approachable through quantitative methods' focus on measurements and explanations of variables' relationships (Moustakas, 1994). Therefore, the qualitative method was appropriate to this study.

The nature of this study aligned with the qualitative research method versus the quantitative and mixed methods because the framework of the research was mainly exploratory. Because of the explorative nature of my research, a mixed method was not appropriate for addressing the research question. The qualitative method was appropriate for this study because the primary purpose of this research was to explore successful international leadership strategies in the cross-cultural environments, and not for testing preconceived hypothesis for quantitative or mixed methods studies.

Researchers use the qualitative method to investigate the *what, how*, *who*, and *why* of the issues, affording them the ability to draw rich descriptive explanations and

conclusions (Kruth, 2015). I choose the qualitative method over quantitative and mixed

methods because the qualitative method uses open-ended questions, which could give

participants adequate opportunities to provide answers in their words, rather than urging

them to choose from list of limited responses. Because the purpose of this qualitative case

study was to explore strategies global leaders use to lead domestic and international

employees from diverse backgrounds effectively, qualitative research methodology was

appropriate for this study.

Mixed-methods research methodology is a combination of qualitative and

quantitative research methods (Van Cauter, Verlet, Snoeck, & Crompvoets, 2017). Using

the mixed method requires the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative

research (Van Cauter et al., 2017). The mixed methods approach was not appropriate for

this study because the quantitative portion of the mixed method was not suitable to

answer the research question of this study.

Research Design

I selected exploratory multiple case study as the research design to explore

leadership strategies local and global leaders use to successfully lead culturally diverse

employees both locally and internationally. A case study design was particularly

appropriate to answer how and why questions or to describe a phenomenon and the real-

life context in which it occurred. A case study consists of a complete set of interpretive

material practices used to explore concrete issues, and to gain an understanding and

insights for addressing research questions. Researchers use case study design for in-depth

analysis of a phenomenon in a real-life context (Willgens et al., 2016). I used the case

study design to explore dimensions of local and global cross-cultural leadership strategies from different cases.

An exploratory multiple case study includes procedures central to all types of research issues, such as protecting against threats to validity, maintaining a chain of evidence, and investigating and testing rival explanations (Yin, 2018). I used the exploratory multiple case study to identify and explore strategic, ethical, and personal issues into the qualitative resource process because it addresses the purpose of this study. A benefit of case study research is that it allows the researcher's personal interaction with participants to determine perceptions and interpretations to questions (Yin, 2018). An additional benefit of case study research is that it is triangulated research (Yin, 2018) where researchers use multiple data types and sources such as interviews, documents, site visits, and general observations from which data are collected (Yin, 2018). Triangulation can decrease the limitations of a single case strategy and increase the possibility of convergence of findings (Varaki, Floden, & Kalatehjafarabadi, 2015; Yin, 2018).

The emphasis of a case study research is on identifying and summarizing of the principles and lessons learned in a particular instance, and their application to other cases or situations, thereby leading to potential transferability (Willgens et al., 2016). Researchers use the exploratory case study design to integrate the different components of the study such as methods, tools, data collection instruments, techniques, and population sampling coherently and logically, for addressing the research problem (Ridder, 2017; Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) identified six origins for collecting data in qualitative case studies: (a) documentation, (b) archival records, (c) interviews, (d) direct

observation, (e) participant observation, and (f) physical artifacts. Qualitative researchers collect data from natural set up of events (Boddy, 2016).

I collected data using field interviews, observation of participants, and an assortment of archive documents directly related to cross-cultural leadership strategies local and global leaders use to lead culturally diverse individuals. Preventing unwillingness to share information from the participants regarding the results of the study is important (Smith, 2015). A key feature of this study was interviewing those who have experienced the phenomenon (Bowden & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015). Participants included leaders who have experienced challenges of cross-cultural differences and demonstrated success in addressing the issues.

Qualitative studies can take a form of a case study, phenomenological, or ethnography (Yin, 2018). Phenomenology refers to understanding the lived or shared experiences of groups or individuals (Smith, 2015). The phenomenology approach was not appropriate for this study as the study's focus was not on exploring the personal meanings of individuals' experiencing a phenomenon.

Ethnographic designs are for the study of human culture in which the researcher connects to participants in hopes of understanding the culture (Government Service Design Manual, 2014). Ethnography design was not appropriate for this study because I did not connect participants' hope of understanding different culture sharing the same ideologies; instead, this study is about discovering strategies for global leaders for effective leadership in cross-cultural perspectives.

In this exploratory multiple case study, I explored the interactions and relationships among cross-cultural perspectives, and the interconnectedness of cross-cultural differences in both national and global standpoints, leadership performance, global leadership awareness, and the profitability of a company. For data organization purposes, Yin (2014) proposed different types of structures, such as linear analytic structure, comparative structure, chronological structure, theory-building structure, suspense structure, and sequenced structure. I arranged the study using a linear analytic structure. Explicit questions explored the variability of cross-cultural differences and its implications on leadership performance within environments. The driving force in this case study design of research was to assure objectivity, validity, and the reliability of the study.

Reaching the data saturation point for hematic analysis is important to validity in qualitative studies (Palinkas et al., 2015). Data saturation has been a debatable issue for some qualitative researchers (Marshall et al., 2015). Achieving data saturation should determine relevant sample size in a research study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The depth of participants' responses leads to data saturation (Tran, Porcher, Falissard, & Ravaud, 2016). The sample for the study included leaders from multinational companies operating in Minnesota. I continued interviewing leaders who experienced and addressed cross-cultural challenges until sampling became redundant with repetitive sample responses and the lack of new themes. Redundancy of responses from the participants demonstrates data saturation (Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014).

Population and Sampling

Because of the rise of globalization, some multinational companies and business leaders employ workers from diverse cultural backgrounds. Within the global business field, some leaders are facing challenges of cross-cultural differences. Qualitative research can traverse a range of information gathering and analysis methods, which have an impact on how participants are selected and when data collection should stop (Cleary et al., 2014). Cleary et al. (2014) suggested that participant selection must be congruent with the conceptual framework to evaluate qualitative research approaches.

I identified strategies global leaders use to lead workers from diverse backgrounds efficiently and meet their companies' goals. Participant familiarity with the research topic is an important consideration (Barratt, Ferris, & Lenton, 2015). Purposeful random sampling and snowball sampling are necessary for a research study to improve the credibility of the samples (Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & McKibbon, 2015; Palinkas et al., 2015). The selection of participants took place through purposeful sampling and snowball sampling. Yin (2014) proposed six participants for reaching data saturation. Marshall et al. (2015) suggested that 15 to 30 participants could be the most appropriate number of participants in qualitative research. The number of participants depends on reaching data saturation. Gentles et al. (2015) noted that researchers use purposeful samples to focus on study topics relevant to participants creating an increased understanding of a phenomenon. I reached data saturation when I interviewed the third participant within each of the 3 companies.

Researchers use the snowball sampling method to identify participants relevant to the study and then ask each participant to refer another individual who will be relevant to the study (Gentles et al., 2015; Patton, 2015). Waters (2015) noted that snowball sampling is a highly effective sampling technique for researchers to reach hidden populations. Snowball sampling is a valuable tool for the study of particularly sensitive or private matters (Waters, 2015).

I used a list of the top multinational 500 companies and LinkedIn to identify and contact leaders operating in diverse cultural companies in the United States specifically in Minnesota. Identification of the participants was through purposeful sampling to ensure acceptable data quality. The selection and the interview of participants depended on particular characteristics of the population. These characteristics included countries of origin, the company they worked for, and the type of leadership used to lead intercultural teams.

It is important that qualitative researchers justify the sample size on the grounds of quality data, something that should reflect in the presentation of the study's findings (Cleary et al., 2014). Selecting the right sample size is a significant component for the researcher in the process of addressing the research questions (Marshall et al., 2015). Historically, researchers demonstrate little rigor in justifying sample size in qualitative research (Marshall et al., 2015). Nevertheless, it is unrealistic to conduct interviews with a whole population, and therefore the issue of what is a suitable and sufficient sample size emerges (Palinkas et al., 2015).

Case studies can suffice with a small sample size because researchers use multiple types and sources of evidence (Cleary et al., 2014). Moustakas (1994) noted that the use of a small sample size in a qualitative study allows researchers to conduct more in-depth research on a phenomenon. I continued collecting data until the information from the responses became redundant and no new themes emerged. Ensuring data saturation is important (Cleary et al., 2014). Data saturation occurs when no additional new data emerge during the data collection process for answering the research question in a qualitative, exploratory, multiple case study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Yin, 2018). Data saturation entails bringing new participants into the study until the data are complete as indicated by redundancy or replication of information (Marshall et al., 2015), and stopping information gathering is dependent on 'redundancy' of information or 'saturation' (Cleary et al., 2014).

Ethical Research

There are some general ethical implications and issues that I needed to consider when conducting the research. These ethical implications and issues included (a) participants' protection (b) misrepresentation of results, (c) confidentiality, and (d) the participants' right to withdraw from the research without any penalty or consequences. Confidentiality of the participants and misrepresentation of results are ethical misconduct researchers have to avoid (Patton, 2015). Walden University IRB approval number for this study was 12-21-17-0474161. I avoided any form of misrepresentation of results, which could be subject to a rejection, and a delay of the research by the IRB. Mitigating biases is achieved through using various sources to collect and analyze multiple types of

data, including notetaking, interview recording, and member checking, is important

(Noble & Smith, 2015).

Ethical protection. Participants' protection is necessary for academic research to

ensure that it is ethical (Haines, 2017). I stimulated transparency with the participants,

developed trust with them in the process of the research, and promoted the integrity of the

research by granting informed consent to them. Obtaining IRB formal permission and

informed written consent is essential before proceeding with research (Gelling, 2015).

IRB approval is essential because ethical issues may arise when research involves human

participants (Tsan & Tsan, 2015).

When providing evidence of developing and implementing protections for

research participants, researchers provide data that indicate evidence and effectiveness of

such protections (Gelling, 2015; Kornbluh, 2015). I performed the interviews of the

participants by IRB requirements and standards. Before the interviews, each participant

read and signed the consent form.

Informed consent process and incentives. Informed consent should include

specific study details (Gelling, 2015). Participants must receive a copy of the signed

informed consent and the original kept in a file (Gelling, 2015). Gelling (2015) advised

participants to sign the consent forms before interviews. Participants signed a consent

form, demonstrated willingness to participate, and provided requested information

needed for a successful project. I emailed the consent forms to the participants.

Enhancement of ethical procedures can occur through participant informed

consent and appraisement of the intent, risks, and benefits associated with this study

(Greenwood, 2016). I used the consent form to inform the participants about the purpose of the study. The consent form included information on the participants' right to participate in or to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. As the potential benefits of the research can serve as an incentive (Palinkas et al., 2015), there were no monetary incentives offered to participants.

Withdrawal. Participants could withdraw from participating in the study anytime, before, during, or after the interview process. I ensured that participants understood the voluntary nature of the study**.** Explaining the content of the consent form to the participants for better understanding was important. Protecting human subjects includes making sure that they know that they are in control of the process (Burkett, & Morris, 2015; Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Participants could have withdrawn from the study without any penalty by contacting me via email, phone, or in person. None of the participants withdrew from the study.

Confidentiality and data protection. Tsan and Tsan (2015) posited that confidentiality of participants is significant in any study. Ensuring participants' confidentiality by securing all interview data sheets containing identifiers, such as names and addresses, with password-protection is imperative. Allowing participants to check and confirm personal data of their interviews ensures ethical adequacy and accuracy (Morse, 2015). Participants verified and authenticated the interpretation of the data to ensure uniformity and accuracy of the information they provided during the interviews. I asked the participants to give consent to have the interview recorded. Participants received a signed copy of the consent form.

Participants need autonomy to make decisions about interview logistics (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Participant's convenience is important to decide the site and the time of the interviews. In addition, the setting must be comfortable and provide each participant with a sense of control (Morse, 2015). Participants choose interview locations of their convenience. Establishing a relationally safe space is important for methodological and ethical reasons, as well as offering support when intense feelings are present during the interview (Burkett, & Morris, 2015). I informed the participants that the data collected will be saved and remain encrypted for 5 years.

All data, including the informed consent form, electronic data, hard copies of the research data, and the transcript linked to participants and organizations participating in the study are password protected on a thumb drive and stored in a secure place for 5 years. After the 5 years, I will destroy the information by shredding the paper documents and erasing the e-data from the thumb drive. To ensure participants' identities remain confidential, I did not use their actual names in the transcripts or the doctoral study.

Data Collection Instruments

The primary data collection instrument of research is the researcher (McDonald, 2015; Yin, 2018). I was the primary data collection instrument. Using effective means of data collection in research is imperative to ensure that the data collected in the process of the research are credible, accurate, and valid. Semistructured interviews offer a flexible medium of communication between the researcher and the participants (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

The use of interviews serves as a framework, allowing participants to speak freely (McIntosh, & Morse, 2015). Bryman and Bell (2015) noted that the use of semistructured interview creates rich depth meaning associated with a phenomenon. Semistructured interviews included questions prepared in advance but provide the investigator with the flexibility to probe based on participant's response (Castillo & Montoya, 2016; Yin, 2018). Using semistructured interviews allow the researcher to ask open-ended questions without predetermined answers (McIntosh & Morse, 2015; Yin, 2018). I collected data through face-to-face or Skype semistructured interviews. I also used a data collection instrument to record my observations and document findings from additional data to assure the validity and reliability of the study. Observation is a form of data collection instrument useful to understand participants' actions, roles, and behaviors (Salmon, 2015). Salmon (2015) noted that observational research methods are important for understanding people's actions, roles, and behaviors.

Participants' understanding of the consent form is necessary (Winterbottom, Boon, Mior, & Caulfield, 2014). I explained the content of the consent form to the participants for proper understanding before the beginning of each interview. The consent form included details and comprehensive clarifications regarding: (a) procedures, (b) the voluntary nature of the study, (c) conflicts of interest, (d) risks and benefits, (e) compensation, (f) privacy and confidentiality, and (g) contact information. Winterbottom et al. (2014) suggested that participants should read and sign the consent form before the interviews. Participants read and signed the consent form before the beginning of each interview.

I used documents to assure the validity and reliability of the data collected from participants. Yin (2014) noted that documentary information is likely to be relevant to every case study topic. Documentation provides evidence for data triangulation, increases the reliability of the research data, creates resourceful means of understanding a problem, and offers a richer understanding of the research phenomenon (Yin, 2018). Documentation provides access to a variety of events and settings using stable documents that contained specific references and details of events that researchers can frequently review (Yin, 2018).

I input the data collected into NVivo. NVivo is a secure system with advanced technology reliable for assuring data validity for both qualitative and mixed-methods research methods. I used the computerized text analysis from NVivo in the process of coding, analyzing, categorizing data, and mitigating bias in the interpretation of the results. Accurate data collection is essential in enhancing the ability to answer the research question (Yin, 2018).

To ensure rigor in a qualitative study, researchers recommend strategies, such as prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, member checking, audit trail, reflexivity, and thick descriptions (Houghton et al., 2014). Researchers assure the reliability and validity of the research findings through member checking (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Member checking is the process that allows participants to confirm researcher interpretations of their responses, add new information as needed, or make corrections to their responses (Morse, 2015). I used member checking to assure reliability and validity of the study. Member checking is

convenient to develop codes and identify themes (Birt et al., 2016; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016).

Ozertugrul (2015) suggested that participant validation of transcripts might increase trustworthiness. Researchers have to promote a climate of trust and communication that allows good explanation of the project, its aims, the expectations for the participants, the process of the communicative methodology, and what the information will help achieve (Morse, 2015). I used the questions in Appendix A during the interviews.

Data Collection Technique

Interview questions represent one of the most common ways of collecting rich and meaningful data in qualitative research (Oates, 2015). Data collection began after receiving approval from the IRB. I launched participants' recruitment after I received IRB approval. I sent the consent form to the participants and then scheduled the date, time, and location of the interview because participants' privacy is important for research settings.

Each participant reviewed and signed the informed consent before the interviews to validate their willingness to participate in the study. I established email communications with qualified leaders who demonstrated their willingness to participate in the study (see Appendix C). Birt et al. (2016) used email to communicate with participants. I used the email conversation with the participants to schedule the date, time, and the locations of the interviews.

Researchers use a semistructured, face-to-face interview technique, or real-time video and audio conferencing, e.g, Skype, Facetime, etc., to facilitate more effective communications (Oates, 2015). The data collection obtained in this qualitative multiple case study was through semistructured face-to-face or Skype interviews and a review of companies' documents. I conducted face-to-face, semistructured interviews with three local retail business leaders who had a least 6 to 8 years global leadership experience. Additional data collection involved a review of the companies' progress reports, and other administrative and financial documents and records, to confirm and to support the participants' interview responses.

The interview protocol (see Appendix B) included a brief introduction of the study, setting expectations for the interview, participants' time, addressing sensitivity concerns, and a list of open-ended interview questions. I used member checking follow-up and recordings to mitigate potential issues that could emerge after the data collection process. Burkett and Morris (2015) suggested that participants must be able to choose an off-site venue convenient for the interview. The initial interviews took place at convenient remote locations away from the respective participants' companies, in an atmosphere that was free of distractions. I asked seven open-ended questions to each participant to gain a detailed understanding of what leadership strategies local retail business leaders used when expanding business operations into global markets (see Appendix A). The use of open-ended questions helped collect information on strategies local and global leaders use to lead culturally diverse employees successfully.

Participants received the interview questions for review before the beginning of the interview (see Appendix A).

Following the initial interviews, I used member checking with each participant to ensure the accuracy and clarity of my interpretations and understanding of the initial interviews. Member checking is the process of bringing back an interpretive report of the interview to the interviewee for review and confirmation (Harvey, 2015). Each local retail business leader had the opportunity to review the interpretations of the first interviews to confirm the accuracy of the findings. I performed member checking to obtain participants' feedback on validity, trustworthiness, comprehensiveness of findings, and to validate the accuracy of the interpretations. Researchers use member checking to mitigate misconstruction, distortion, and misinterpretation of data (Noble & Smith, 2015). Tellado, Lopez-Calvo, and Alonso-Olea (2014) suggested data collection through a transcription of interpreted interview or member checking process until saturation.

The advantage of the data collection technique was the use of the face-to-face interview process, which helped me to collect accurate and credible data. The face-to-face interview helped me to capture the body language, emotions, and behaviors of the participants. In addition to the answers participants provided, I took notes of their body language, which could influence the interview process. A disadvantage of the face-to-face data collection technique is the travel required to interview the participants, which could incur additional expenses. The advantage of using multiple data collection techniques is the ability to use more data sources to assure the validity and reliability of a study (Check et al., 2014).

Methodologically, pilot cases can provide information about relevant field questions and the logistics of the field inquiry (Watson, 2016; Yin, 2018). Since case studies are subject to emergent questions and responses from participants, irrespective of the interview questions predefined for the intended study (Uwuigbe, 2014), I did not conduct a pilot study for this study after receiving IRB approval. The collection of data was done through various sources, e.g., face-to-face interviews, observations, and documentation, to clarify the realities of cross-cultural unawareness on global business leaders.

Most qualitative researchers, studying human phenomena, collect data through interviews with individuals or groups (O'Cathain et al., 2015). Researchers' selection of the type of interview depends on the purpose of the study and the resources available (O'Cathain et al., 2015). Face-to-face interviews, observations, and documentation offered the participants the opportunity to express and demonstrate their experiences of the phenomenon under study. As Patton (2015) suggested using audio recording during the interviews to ensure data quality, the interview method for this study involved digital audio recording throughout the process of the face-to-face interviews with the participants.

Data Organization Technique

In the protocols of data collection, researchers use multiple data sources to collect the data, organize the data, and document the data (Yin, 2018). Patton (2015) suggested that researchers firmly protect digital data. To ensure the confidentiality of the research, I used the guidelines required to satisfy the fulfillment of Walden University's IRB

requirements. The collected data will remain in a secure, encrypted, safe, and protected location accessible by administered password accessible by only me. Peer review or debriefing, negative or deviant case analysis and member checking are additional strategies to support credibility (Morse, 2015). The interview recording and transcript are password-protected accessible by me and would be made available by Walden IRB officials upon written request (Walden University, 2015a). I will destroy the interview recordings and documentation after 5 years. Additional data organization techniques I used included copying data into multiple locations, password protection, and saving data on several flash drives to avoid catastrophic data loss that could affect the study.

I used NVivo as computerized text analysis software to help organize, analyze, and find insights in unstructured or qualitative data like interviews, articles, social media, and web content. Watson (2016) recommended the use of NVivo software for effective and efficient content analysis of qualitative research data. Woods et al. (2015) confirmed that researchers can use NVivo to organize and manage research material, identify threads, and identify dominant themes.

Data Analysis

Data analysis can be perplexing, and overwhelming task researchers encounter during the process of qualitative research because of the large amounts of information the researchers collect from participants (Sealey & Hathorn, 2014). Analyzing case study evidence can be especially difficult because the techniques still have not been well defined (Yin, 2018). A persistent challenge in conducting a research study is to use high-quality analyses, which require attending to all the evidence collected, displaying and

presenting the evidence apart from any interpretation, and considering alternative interpretations (Yin, 2018). It is important to analyze qualitative data systematically and explain the data analysis process (Willgens et al., 2016).

Researchers use the conceptual framework as a connecting link between a literature review and the study results to better organize and analyze the study (Trochim, Donnelly, & Arora, 2015). Key themes in the literature review and conceptual framework in this study include cross-cultural differences, globalization, culture, cross-cultural leadership, leadership strategies in cross-cultural perspectives, prejudice, diversity, ethnocentrism, cultural intelligence, organizational culture, global leadership awareness, cultural diversity. I used these potential themes as guidance during the data analysis process to organize, categorize, and analyze the data I collected from the participants.

Data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing, or otherwise recombining evidence to produce empirically based findings (Yin, 2018). The process of data analysis in this study included methodological triangulation of data from the interviews and archival document review. Data triangulation involves the collection of data from different types of people, including individuals, groups, families, and communities, to gain multiple perspectives and validation of data (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe, & Neville, 2014). Triangulation helps reinforce the validity of the research (Yin, 2018). Data and methodological triangulation are qualitative research strategies used to assure validity through the convergence of information from different sources (Carter et al., 2014).

The process of data analysis began after completion of the transcription and achievement of data saturation. O'Cathain et al. (2015) suggested that researchers should conduct interviews until reaching data saturation. No matter what specific analytic strategy or techniques the researcher uses, Yin (2018) provided a multidimensional data analysis process for assuring the findings' and conclusions' validity. I utilized Yin's multidimensional data analysis process.

The goal of qualitative data analysis is to describe, explain, and interpret qualitative patterns by using words, numbers, matrices, pictures, sounds, or other forms of representation (Sealey & Hathorn, 2014). Yin (2011) suggested that qualitative researchers might use a five-step process to analyze the data, (a) compiling, (b) disassembling, (c) reassembling, (d) interpreting, and (e) concluding. Edwards (2016) used Yin's five-step process to analyze a qualitative exploratory case study data. Buchanan (2013) used Yin's data analysis method in another qualitative case study.

Compiling. Buchanan (2013) suggested that the researcher reviews articles comprising the study sample, label, and compile all articles with similar words, phrases, and sentences. I first compiled data by putting them into a sequential order and by reexamining and organizing field notes, interviews, and documents. This step helped develop the study database (Yin, 2011).

Disassembling. The second step included disassembling data, which includes dividing data into smaller pieces (Buchanan, 2013; Yin, 2011). I assigned codes according to each element of the data described in the literature review. Sealey and Hathorn (2014) suggested reading the data multiple times. Edward (2016) stated that

reviewing the transcriptions could enable a researcher to determine response patterns relevant to research question. I removed inappropriate remarks and notes from the data.

Reassembling. In step three, I evaluated, classified, and categorized the codes and themes using NVivo. The qualitative data analysis involved developing codes and using the codes to classify data (Lewis, 2015). In this step, categorized groupings of codes become themes (Jørgensen, Friis, & Koch, 2015). Developing themes and codes is facilitated by comparing the conceptual framework considerations with the participants' responses (Vaismoradi et al., 2016).

Interpreting. The interpretation step required a comprehensive reflection, judgment, and the ability to explain issues related to the study and the presentation of the findings in a meaningful way. Yin (2014) noted that the process of interpretation includes researchers' understanding about a topic and data analysis. I employed the understanding and experience I have about the topic of cross-cultural differences and leadership implications as a tool to help interpret the data.

Concluding. This step includes explaining conclusions through drawing from the entire study (Buchanan, 2013). In step five, I used an iterative strategy before loading data into NVivo software for coding and thematic analysis for effective data retrieval. Wood et al. (2015) noted that qualitative data analysis requires creativity on the side of the researcher, and typically requires several iterations before a researcher can reach a conclusion.

The concepts, patterns, and themes established throughout the study formed the basis for the interpretation provided in the conclusions to the project (Buchanan, 2013).

NVivo software supported the iterative process of synthesizing research data into themes and from the themes into a distillation of parallel findings (O'Cathain et al., 2015; Woods et al., 2015). I used Nvivo software to facilitate the data analysis process, to assist with coding, and to connect themes within and across interviews. NVivo can be helpful to support manually developed themes and codes (Wood et al., 2015). Using NVivo software, I searched for commonalities, themes, and threads from the information I collected from participants during the interviews and to develop my conclusions (Fenn, Sangrasi, Puett, Trenouth, & Pietzsch, 2015; Wun, Payne, Huron, & Carpendale, 2016; Yin, 2018).

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are two consistent requirements to ensure research quality (Morse, 2015). Lincoln and Guba (1985) introduced criteria for determining the trustworthiness of qualitative research in the 1980s. Lincoln and Guba replaced terminology for quantitative rigor, reliability, validity, and generalizability with their respective qualitative analogues of trustworthiness, dependability, credibility, and transferability (Morse, 2015). However, Morse (2015) recommended that qualitative researchers return to the terminology of social sciences, using rigor, reliability, validity, and generalizability. Different models are available for addressing how to build trust in qualitative research, such as the model of trustworthiness of qualitative research proposed by Lincoln and Guba.

Rigor, in qualitative terms, and reliability/validity, in quantitative terms, are ways to establish trust or confidence in the findings or results of a research study (Thomas &

Magilvy, 2011). Morse noted that dependability, credibility, and transferability refer to trustworthiness. To build trust in qualitative research, Thomas and Magilvy (2011) proposed four constructs for demonstrating trustworthiness: (a) credibility, (b) transferability (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. With reliability, results may be transferable to a broader society and affirm change in processes (Birt et al., 2016).

Reliability

Qualitative researchers define reliability as demonstrating trustworthy content, rich and, well-saturated data (Elo et al., 2014). Reliability is used to describe consistency in applying the employed analytical procedures in qualitative research (Noble & Smith, 2015). Noble and Smith (2015) defined reliability as consistency, trustworthiness, and dependability of the data that mitigate personal and research method biases, which may have influenced the findings. Reliability is the extent to which the inquiry and its findings could be replicated (Yin, 2018). It is imperative that all qualitative researchers incorporate strategies to enhance the credibility of a study during research design and implementation (Noble & Smith, 2015).

The purpose for achieving reliability is to minimize errors and biases in the study (Yin, 2018). Yin (2018) suggested that the general way of assuring reliability is to make as many data collection and analysis steps clear as possible and to conduct research as if someone were looking over your shoulder (p. 49). A researcher has to demonstrate rigor during the entire research process using recommendable strategies such as prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, member checking, audit trails, reflexivity, and thick descriptions (Houghton et al., 2014). Rigor is useful for

establishing consistency of the study methods over time, and for providing an accurate

representation of the population studied (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Also, rigor is useful

for providing details to enable replicating a study with a different research sample

(Thomas & Magilvy, 2011).

Demonstrating rigor when undertaking qualitative research is challenging because

there is no consensus on the standards for assessment of the research (Noble & Smith,

2015). For reliability, Moustakas (1994) suggested identifying the behavioral aspects of a

phenomenon by grouping experiences, validating information, creating themes from

experienced groups, and verifying themes. Noble and Smith (2015) and Yin (2014)

suggested a reliable study enables an independent investigator to arrive at the same

findings and conclusions following the same procedures as described by the original

researcher.

Saunder, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016) and Yin (2018) recommended assuring

accuracy and reliability of data using member checking. I used member checking to

assure accuracy and reliability of the data I collected. Member checking helps to ensure

dependability of a study (Yin, 2018). Researchers suggested using member checking for

validating data interpretation and proper documentation to ensure accuracy and

consistency throughout the study (Houghton et al., 2014; Yin, 2018). Carter et al. (2014)

suggested that researchers must have a variety of strategies to ensure data dependability

and credibilities, such as debriefing, member checking, triangulation, or use of a reflexive

journal. I used member checking with each participant to ensure the credibility of the

data. I used NVivo in data organization and a uniform data analysis process to assure reliability.

Dependability. Dependability describes reliability while credibility describes the internal validity of the study (Yin 2014). Dependability refers to the stability of data over time and under different conditions (Elo et al., 2014). Dependability demonstrates that the findings are consistent and repeatable (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Strategies used to establish dependability include having peers participate in the analysis process, providing a detailed description of the research methods, or conducting a step-by-step repeat of the study to see if results might be similar or to enhance the original findings (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). I assured dependability of the data by applying member checking. Member checking the participants occurs after the initial interviews (Birt et al., 2016). I used member checking to follow-up with interviews for accuracy and clarity. Member checking enhances trustworthiness (Ozertugrul, 2015; Shannon, 2014). Through member checking each participant receives an interpretive report of the interviews enabling them to confirm trustworthiness of the research (Harvey, 2015).

Validity

In qualitative research, Yin (2018) describes several criteria that researchers could use to measure the validity of the research. These concepts include trustworthiness, credibility, confirmability, and dependability (Yin, 2018). Validity is demonstrating a correlation of test results with outside criteria and theory or logic (Hofstede, 2002). Data saturation can have a significant effect on the validity of a study (Fusch & Ness, 2015). To achieve and demonstrate data saturation, the researcher must gather sufficient data so

that further collection of data results in no further themes (Fusch & Ness, 2015). I

continued interviewing the participants until no new data emerged. The researcher

achieves data saturation when no new data or themes emerge (Tran et al., 2016). To

achieve data saturation, I continued the interview processes until participants' responses

became repetitive, and no new data or themes emerged. All three participants

encountered and experienced similar difficulties, challenges, and opportunities leading

culturally diverse individuals when expanding business operations into global markets,

which resulted in redundancies in their responses.

Trustworthiness. Ensuring trustworthiness of the study's findings is important.

Participant validation of transcripts could increase trustworthiness (Elo et al., 2014;

Ozertugrul, 2015). Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined trustworthiness as the commonality

between the two methodologies. Lincoln and Guba noted that trustworthiness arises from

the truth, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. It is important to scrutinize the

trustworthiness of every phase of the analysis process, including the preparation,

organization, and reporting of results (Elo et al., 2014). For my study, each local and

global business executive had the opportunity to review the interpretive reports of the

interviews to ensure trustworthiness of the findings.

Credibility

Credibility refers to prolonged engagement and persistent observation,

believability, triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checking (Houghton et al.,

2014; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Employing triangulation enhances credibility of the study

(Houghton et al., 2014). Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined credibility as confidence in the

'truth' of the findings. I used methodological triangulation and member checking to establish credibility of this study.

A qualitative study is considered credible when it presents an accurate description or interpretation of human experience that people who also share the same experience would immediately recognize (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Examples of strategies used to establish credibility include reflexivity, member checking, and peer debriefing or peer examination (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). I used member checking to validate the credibility of data. Methodological and data triangulation contributed to validating the study. Methodological and data triangulation involved using multiple data types and sources including face-to-face interviews in an investigation to produce and verify a common understanding for both the participants and me. I compared the results of similar studies in the present study for assessing similarities and differences among themes using member checking and triangulation.

Additional strategies researchers could adopt to ensure credibility of the findings of their studies include: (a) data triangulation, whereby different sources and perspectives help produce a more comprehensive set of findings; (b) respondent validation, which includes inviting participants to comment on the interview transcript and whether the final themes and concepts created adequately reflect the phenomena investigated; and (c) demonstrating clarity in terms of thought processes during data analysis and subsequent interpretations (Yin, 2018). I developed, documented, and followed rigorous case study procedures and standards beginning from the interview and member checking and

triangulation to ensure the credibility, trustworthiness, dependability, and validity of the study.

Transferability

Patton (2015) defined transferability as the usefulness of research findings from one entity to another. Transferability refers to the application of research to other studies or services resulting in transfer of knowledge and contribution to future research (Yin, 2018). Transferability is the ability to transfer particular findings to another similar context or situation, while still preserving the meanings and inferences of the initial context (Houghton et al., 2014). I reviewed multiple peer-reviewed journal articles that emphasized recent findings from other scholars researching similar global leadership strategies phenomenon. Findings from current peer-reviewed journal articles I reviewed reinforced the importance of the focus of the current study.

Transferability occurs when the reader makes a determination of the findings to future research and determines if the information is transferable (Elo et al., 2014). Transferability enables other researchers to determine if the findings have applicability in other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Future research for other locations may be necessary to enhance transferability. In this qualitative multiple case study, I confirmed that the readers and future researchers have enough information about the research to evaluate the transferability of the results. The results of this study matched similar findings from other research results applicable in various comparable frameworks. In the broadest context, validity, reliability, and transferability refer to the integrity and

application of the methods undertaken and the precision in which the findings accurately reflect the data (Noble & Smith, 2015).

Confirmability

Confirmability refers to providing the audit trails and for verifying the reflexivity, neutrality, and accuracy of data (Houghton et al., 2014). Yin (2014) noted that the use of two types of data collection instruments in a study of one phenomenon demonstrates confirmability and completeness of data. I sought to demonstrate achieved confirmability by mitigating personal preconceptions and prejudice from participants' responses. Confirmability increases when researchers seek new insights from a broad view of research results to avoid researcher bias (Baillie, 2015; Eriksson, 2015; Patton, 2015).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined confirmability as a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation or interest. A reflexive researcher allows the research process to unfold without bias intervention (Morse, 2015). I allowed participants to answer the interview questions based on their experiences and knowledge regarding the cross-cultural differences and leadership implications.

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Transition and Summary

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In section 2, I reiterated the purpose statement and described the role of the researcher. I also, described the plan for the research methods, design, population and sampling, data collection instruments and techniques, and the data analysis process. Concluding components of Section 2 included methods for assuring the study's reliability and validity. Section 2 established the foundation and transition into Section 3, which

will include presentation of findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, recommendations for future research, and conclusions.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore leadership strategies local retail business leaders use to expand business operations into global markets. The targeted population consisted of business leaders from three local retail companies in Minnesota who used global leadership strategies to expand business operations into the global market. Three themes emerged from the data analysis: (a) cross-cultural awareness, (b) cross-cultural challenges and competence, and (c) cross-cultural leadership strategies.

The results of this study along with the conceptual framework of leadership and transformational leadership revealed leadership strategies local retail business leaders and global business executives can use to function in culturally diverse environments successfully. The findings of this study confirm that business leaders must gain and adopt new global leadership capabilities to successfully lead the global workforce when expanding business operations into the global market. In this section, I provide (a) an outline of the study, (b) a presentation of the findings, (c) applications to professional practice, (d) implications for social change, (e) recommendations for action, (f) recommendations for further study, (g) reflections, and (h) conclusions.

Presentation of the Findings

The overreaching research question was: What leadership strategies do local retail business leaders use leading culturally diverse teams when expanding business operations

into global markets? To answer the research question, I conducted a multiple case study

with three business leaders from three different companies (designated companies X, Y,

and Z) with headquarters in Minnesota. Companies X, Y, and Z offered a variety of

products and services in several local and international locations, and employed people

from different nationalities, religions, and ethnic groups. I focused on leaders who have

developed cross-cultural leadership strategies leading employees both locally and

globally.

       To ensure the privacy of the participants, I identified each participant as PT1,

PT2, or PT3, respectively leaders of local retail companies X, Y, and Z. Companies X, Y,

and Z have diverse working environments with employees from more than five different

nationalities. Cultural mix has brought more opportunities than challenges to these

companies. The data collection included semistructured interviews with three local retail

business leaders who had at least 6 to 8 years of experience leading intercultural teams.

       The preliminary interviews lasted approximately 20 minutes with each participant

and were composed of seven questions. Participants received the interview questions a

few weeks prior to the initial interviews. A week after the initial meetings, follow-up

member checking took place with each participant to support the validity and reliability

of the study, and to confirm interpretations of the participants' responses to the interview

questions. Member checking with each participant took place at the same locations about

1 week after the preliminary interviews and lasted approximately 15 minutes.

       I used Nvivo 12 software to organize, sort, categorize and code the data. I

analyzed the transcript of each participant, identified significant information from the

data, labeled the data, described and categorized the codes based on similarities. Three themes emerged from the data analysis of responses to the interview questions of the three local retail business leaders: (a) cross-cultural awareness, (b) cross-cultural challenges and competence, and (c) cross-cultural leadership strategies.

The responses to the interview questions along with administrative and financial documents and records heightened my understanding of the companies' leadership strategies for leading employees with culturally diverse backgrounds both locally and globally. The companies' progress reports and financial records revealed larger revenues over the years, which confirmed the consistency of the responses from the three leaders. For triangulation purposes, I used the data from the companies' documents and financial records to evaluate and confirm the evidence of the data from the interviews before developing the three themes.

Theme 1: Cross-cultural awareness

The first theme that emerged from the data analysis was cross-cultural awareness. Because of the complexities of the global workforce, local retail business leaders must be aware of cross-cultural differences and similarities when establishing business opportunities into the competitive globalized business world. Lokkesmoe, Kuchinke, and Ardichvili (2016) defined the construct of cross-cultural awareness as knowledge gained through experience leading intercultural teams. Cross-cultural differences arise mostly because of the lack of cultural awareness (Greblikaite, Sroka, Daugeliene, & Kurowska-Pysz, 2016). All three participants confirmed the need for employees and business

partners with culturally diverse backgrounds because of the increasingly globalized business workforce.

Participants shared the importance of cross-cultural awareness as they explored and experienced systematic growth of their companies (companies X, Y, and Z) leading and working with culturally diverse teams. According to the participants, cross-cultural awareness is not only the need for globally focused organizations but also a requirement for domestic and global organizations because of the driving force workplaces' diversity. A lack of cultural knowledge can be challenging for leaders of culturally diverse employees (DesAutels, Berthon, Caruana, & Pitt, 2015; Mehrabanfar, 2015).

Local retail businesses and global firms are confronting global competition, which requires sufficient cross-cultural knowledge to survive (Sheng, Hartmann, Qimei, & Chen, 2015). Participants claimed that obtaining knowledge and awareness of cross-cultural differences was needed to positively lead and work with culturally diverse people when expanding business operations into global markets. Before a leader can apply the multicultural expertise and understanding to the various team members, the project leader must be able to fully understand and be aware of his or her own culture and behavior (Kappagomtula, 2017). To understand and be aware of one's culture and behavior required fundamental knowledge, awareness, and competence, experience, and leadership capabilities in cross-cultural settings. Participants asserted that lack of awareness of cross-cultural leadership could cause severe ramifications and impending implications for local retail and global business executives who lead culturally diverse individuals.

Participants explained that developing awareness of cross-cultural leadership contributed significantly to the enhancement of leading intercultural teams. Participants confirmed the necessity for successful local retail business leaders to develop cross-cultural awareness when leading or to collaborate with people with culturally diverse backgrounds in both local and global markets. Participants accentuated the need for cross-cultural awareness as they employed people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Participants stated that several key factors such as observation and sensitivity helped them to overcome key challenges of diversity in their business operations with employees, contractors, and business partners with intercultural differences. Participants explained that observing and being sensitive to employees and business associates with culturally diverse backgrounds helped them to become more aware of cultural differences and similarities. PT2 said, "I listen to people with culturally diverse backgrounds more than I talk to them." This strategy helped PT2's organization to overcome most miscommunication issues as PT2 learned more from Company Y's culturally diverse team. PT3 said, "I observe my employees' work ethics despite their cultural affiliations, and I'm sensitive to them all." Participants expressed the importance of observation and sensitivity as being reliable tools to help culturally diverse leaders to become culturally aware and to develop associated leadership strategies.

Given the increasing globalization of organizations and the growing interdependencies among nations, the need for a better understanding of cultural influences on leadership and organizational practices is paramount (R. Mittal & Elias, 2016). Participants commented concerning the better understanding of the cultural impact

on leadership, that 21st-century leaders must improve their cultural awareness when leading or collaborating with culturally diverse individuals. To better enhance cultural awareness in cross-cultural settings, a leader must develop an understanding of the influence of culture on leadership (R. Mittal & Elias, 2016; Muenjohn & Armstrong, 2015).

PT1 and PT3 developed and improved their cultural awareness by embracing diversity in their organizations. Accepting diversity in one's organization includes considering the differences in individuals' culture, and becoming aware of other people's beliefs, norms, customs, and values. By developing awareness of cultural differences and similarities, and understanding the influence of culture on leadership, participants adjusted their leadership styles accordingly, which enabled companies X, Y, and Z to overcome multiple cross-cultural leadership challenges.

Theme 1: Correlation with peer-reviewed studies. Participants' concept of cross-cultural awareness correlates with various peer-reviewed studies. The participants' enlightenment on obtaining knowledge of cross-cultural awareness is similar to Mital's (2015) argument of the importance of developing cross-cultural awareness as a critical success factor for leading or working with culturally diverse teams. Correspondingly, the theme (cross-cultural awareness) aligns with the work of Bird and Mendenhall (2016), who classified cross-cultural awareness among the most essential and impending factors that impact global business activities. Van Dierendonck et al. (2017) extended this view on the importance of cross-cultural awareness and confirmed that because of the rapid

pace of globalization, implications of cross-cultural leadership appeared to be an ensuing challenge for global leaders as they expand business operations into global markets.

The participants' emphasis on cross-cultural awareness aligns with Miska and Öner's (2015) findings, where the authors focused on culturally diverse values and practices as critical success factors in the global marketplaces. PT1, PT2, and PT3 relied on enhancing their knowledge on cross-cultural awareness to lead intercultural teams effectively. Miska and Öner asserted that by gaining knowledge on cross-cultural leadership, local and global leaders could lead and successfully work with employees and global business partners with culturally diverse backgrounds. By enhancing their knowledge on cross-cultural awareness, participants were able to comprehend culturally diverse individuals' norms, beliefs, and practices, and to identify the challenges and opportunities leading intercultural teams in the global marketplaces.

Theme 1: Correlation with the conceptual framework. Theme 1 correlates to both Burns (1978) and Bass's (1985) leadership theories. Burns and Bass anticipated that individuals with cross-cultural knowledge have the essential ability to function positively in culturally diverse environments. Burns and Bass's arguments set apart from other leadership theories and ask the most fundamental question of what the ultimate goal of leadership is and why should one be a leader (Cherry, 2019). Once the participants became fully aware of the cultural differences, they developed competencies that enabled the leaders to overcome associated challenges.

Each participant demonstrated the applications of Burns (1978) and Bass's (1985) leadership theories of how a business should function in culturally diverse environments.

Participants demonstrated leadership skills and abilities as well as awareness of cultural differences in working or leading others from different culturally diverse settings. When expanding business operations into different local and global locations, participants spent an extensive amount of time and resources for understanding the cultural environments, including people, markets, and business partners. By conducting these preliminary feasibilities' groundworks, companies X, Y, and Z's executives were able to develop comprehensive cross-cultural awareness and expanded business operations into multiple domestic and international locations.

Cross-cultural leadership researchers have long recognized the importance of understanding cultural differences in the leadership process (Gupta & Veliyath, 2018; Mustafa & Lines, 2016). From the responses to the interview questions, participants demonstrated the importance of cross-cultural differences and an understanding and knowledge leading and working with employees and partners in cross-cultural settings. Participants considered and appreciated followers' viewpoints, beliefs, norms, and values when taking critical leadership decisions.

Cross-cultural leadership researchers identified a strong linkage between culture and leadership processes in that cultural forces influence the choice of behaviors exhibited by leaders and the effects of leadership (Mustafa & Lines, 2016). Before taking important decisions when confronted with cross-cultural leadership issues, PT1 appreciates followers 'viewpoints, norms, and values while making sure that PT1 influences and motivates their attitudes and behaviors to reach a common organizational

goal. PT3 said, "Embracing diversity in my organization was a factor that empowered me as a leader to include my subordinates' viewpoints in my decision-making agendas."

When trusted supervisors display transformational leadership, such as giving individual consideration, stimulating intellectually, inspiring motivation, and providing freedom, the ambiguity, anxiety, fear, frustration, and uncertainty linked with innovative work behavior is reduced (Afsar & Masood, 2018). PT1 said, "Employees feel welcomed and produced more when I embraced their viewpoints and recommendations during major decision-making situations." PT2 said, "Considering subordinates' assessments in major decision-making circumstances is critically important exclusively in cross-cultural settings." Participants' strategies coincided with Bass's (1985) transformational leadership component of individualized consideration in which leaders appreciate individuals' ideas, viewpoints, and pay close attention to the needs of the employees. Beside careful consideration of followers' valuations, beliefs, norms, and values, participants grounded their decision-making strategies on clear and focused communications with their employees.

Theme 2: Cross-cultural challenges and competence

The second theme that emerged from the data analysis was cross-cultural challenges, and competence. When expanding business operations into competitive global marketplaces successfully, local retail business leaders must consider investigating cross-cultural challenges and acquiring needed leadership competencies to positively lead intercultural teams. Van Dierendonck et al. (2017) noted that leading culturally diverse team is the most challenging task the 21st century leaders face. As behavior is always an

expression of values, developing an understanding to lead culturally diverse groups that shared different norms and values is challenging (Sheng et al., 2015). Cultures can be analyzed from a country, language, religion, values, ethical dimensions, and many other areas of study as a frame of reference (Sukanya, 2015).

Cross-cultural challenges. Navigating complex networks, leading dispersed and diverse teams and consistently implementing a global company strategy is a challenge (Ekelund & Adl, 2015). Leading employees from diverse cultural backgrounds when expanding business operations into the global market is a primary challenge for local and global leaders (Stewart et al., 2017). The 21st century leaders are facing tremendous culture challenges causing under-productivity and poor leadership performance because of a lack of cross-cultural leadership competencies (R. Mittal & Elias, 2016). Participants cited language as one of the significant challenges they faced when communicating and leading culturally diverse teams. As language being conceptualized as the number one challenges in cross-cultural settings, communication was one of the fundamental elements in which participants had established trust with their employees.

Cross-cultural communication is more relevant in the 21st century heterogeneous world of social order, which is impacted by globalization and the rising cross-cultural nature of business negotiations and business communication in multinational businesses (Abugre, 2018; Atay & Toyosaki, 2018; O'Neill & Nalbandian, 2018). According to PT2, a wrong decision in cross-cultural settings because of intercultural miscommunication could damage the leadership direction of the organization.

A trained multicultural leader should gain cross-cultural communication competency to address any performance challenges (Abugre, 2018). PT1 said, "A high level of cross-cultural communication is required to deliver a clear message to culturally diverse team successfully." PT3 believes that to take the right decision that benefits both the organization and the workers in cross-cultural settings, a leader should demonstrate communication competency to interact effectively with employees and important business partners.

PT2 stated, "A leader must be well trained to demonstrate cross-cultural communication competence." PT3 said, "Cross-cultural communication competence is essential when leading people from other cultures." To increase their communication expertise in cross-cultural settings, participants attended communication development programs recurrently to enhance their cross-cultural communication skills and abilities to lead the intercultural teams effectively.

PT2 said,

With many years of experience working and collaborating with intercultural individuals across the globe, I learned that some groups of people communicate calmly, politely, and they are good listeners; Others from the United States, Australia, France, and the United Kingdom, express themselves with precision.

According to PT2, communication is precise and open to people from the United States, Australia, France, and the United Kingdom compared with many others from the rest of the world. PT2 said, "Other groups of people from Japan, Mexico, India, and most Asian

countries communicate very calmly and politely, however, it is sometimes difficult to know if they agree or disagree on major topics."

PT3 commented on other groups of people from some African nations who communicate with a loud voice. Speaking and interacting with a loud voice can be seen as rude and arrogant for people from many countries. After investigating, PT3 discovered that communicating very powerfully while making noise is standard and part of cultural beliefs and norms for some African people. PT3 said, "They are not frustrated, or not satisfied with the conversation, it is just their normal ways of delivering their messages."

To overcome some of the identified intercultural communication challenges, PT2 preferred email communications more than face-to-face conversation to ensure accuracy and better understanding and to avoid miscommunications issues. PT1 and PT3 preferred both face-face discussions and email interactions with the team to encourage everyone to increase not only their communication skills but also to sustain the integrity among the entire team. By acknowledging the complexity of leading intercultural people, and understanding the patterns of differences among them, the participants concluded that a global business leader should be able to adjust communication style accordingly to be more effective in cross-cultural settings.

Leadership fails when there is a miscommunication between leaders and followers (Hartnell et al., 2016; Vértesy, 2017). PT2 said, "With my years of experience leading people from different cultures, it was clear to me that lack of cross-cultural communication could easily trigger poor leadership performance and a systematic underproductivity." PT1 said, "As I work with people from different cultures and

different backgrounds, I realized that miscommunication between a leader and a

subordinate is the cause of major underproductivity and leadership underperformance."

PT3 explained communication is an issue that PT3 had with culturally diverse

individuals, which created complete confusions in company Z. As a result of the incident,

the organization was unable to meet its demand. PT1 said, "Even though team members

possess the qualifications needed to do their jobs and reach the company's goals, it

sometimes takes time to give them assignments due to language barriers." PT2 and PT3

enumerated frequent misunderstandings, and miscommunications as significant

challenges they face leading the intercultural teams.

Additional cross-cultural challenges participants enumerated included lack of

trust, a perception in which employees from advance countries considered those from less

developed countries as inferior, constant misunderstandings, tardiness, and more

importantly how to distinguish employees' norms, beliefs, and values from their

behaviors. All three participants confirmed employees' unpunctuality as significant

challenges they faced leading cross-cultural individuals. PT3 said, "Almost all the

employees from different nationalities come to work late, and it took a well amount to

time to control, discipline, and normalize the issues of tardiness in the organization."

PT2 said, "Most culturally diverse employees do not see tardiness as issues to

even consider to be discussed." In addition, according to the participants, how to resolve

conflicts among workers from different nationalities, religions, and ethnic groups is

unquestionably difficult and challenging. Despite language challenges, difficulties of

conflict resolution among people from different cultures and the issues of tardiness, participants had overcome most problems through clear and authentic communication.

Despite numerous barriers and challenges leading culturally diverse teams, participants tend not to forget that culture has a significant impact on performance. PT1 recalled leadership challenges PT1 experienced by comparing employees' norms, beliefs, and values to their behaviors in critical decision-making situations. As a result, the assignment of several employees was terminated from the company (company X). PT1 used to show frustrations toward employees' behaviors. PT1 confirmed that PT1's reactions were grave mistakes when comparing employees' norms, beliefs, and values to their behaviors and by showing frustration when making significant decisions. PT1 said, "I was paying little attention to the cultural differences between the competencies of my leadership to the employees' norms, beliefs, and values." The situation negatively affected PT1's leadership performance.

It is increasingly imperative that global leaders understand the importance of intercultural communication (Bell & Riol, 2017; Schedlitzki, Ahonen, Wankhade, Edwards, & Gaggiotti, 2017). PT2 and PT3 did not mention showing frustration in learning norms, beliefs, and values of their employees, but shared a few mistakes they made leading intercultural teams because of lack of experience and cross-cultural leadership incompetence. Participants learned from their mistakes leading intercultural teams with the years of their experiences and changed their leadership behaviors through using newly acquired competencies.

Cross-cultural competence. Cross-cultural competence refers to knowledge, skills, and capabilities that enable an individual to adapt effectively in cross-cultural environments (Chow Tong et al., 2017). Participants asserted that developing intercultural competence when leading culturally diverse group is essential to overcome significant challenges and to quickly adapt to circumstances of cross-cultural differences at workplaces. Cross-cultural competence has become important research since the 1990s (Choromides, 2018; Chow Tong et al., 2017; Sucher, & Cheung, 2015). Leaders of the 21st century are to develop the competencies, skills, and capabilities to be effective in the globally connected societies as well (Barker, 2016; Chow Tong et al., 2017). Participants explained that developing cross-cultural competencies, skills, and capabilities increased their confidence and inspiration to lead people with culturally diverse backgrounds effectively.

Cross-cultural leadership competencies are leadership skills, capabilities, and behaviors that contribute significantly to the leader's ability to demonstrate superior performance (Barker, 2016). PT1 said, "The 21st century successful leaders are those that accept multiculturalism, diversity at workplaces, and are competent." PT3 said, "It is important that the 21st century business leaders learn appropriate leadership skills and competencies to lead a culturally diverse team effectively." PT2 explained, "Understanding the complexity of cross-cultural differences and developing leadership competencies to overcome its challenges is essential for leadership effectiveness in the 21st century globalized diverse business markets." The skills and characteristics of a business leader are crucial factors that determine company performance in a global

market (Charoensukmongkol, 2015). PT1 said, "The strategy is simple "never try to think that your culture is superior to your employees' cultures (ethnocentrism) and you will overcome most cross-cultural leadership issues." By identifying the challenges of cross-cultural differences when establishing businesses in different locations, and developing cross-cultural leadership competencies, participants were able to set up goals for enabling them to inspire and motivate the intercultural teams effectively.

Theme 2: Correlation with peer-reviewed studies. The participants' concept of cross-cultural challenges and competencies aligns with Mital's (2015) conclusion, that leaders must be equipped with cross-cultural leadership skills, capabilities, and competencies because of the diverse global workforce to lead culturally diverse teams successfully. Cross-cultural challenges are key issues global leaders face when operating in culturally diverse settings (Froese, Kim, & Eng, 2016). Participants explained daily challenges they faced leading diverse workforces. All three participants overcame most intercultural challenges through their leadership competencies.

Participants' perceptions of the importance of cross-cultural leadership competence aligns with Lakshman and Estay (2016) statement, which enumerated the cause and effect of cross-cultural challenges such as leadership underperformance, negative forecasted profitability, and job underperformance because of lack of leadership competencies in cross-cultural settings. PT1 said, "It takes times to understand most people from other cultures." PT3 said, "Understanding the behaviors of people from other nations is critically difficult due to the undisputable differences of beliefs, norms, attitudes, and values between various cultures." By acknowledging the problems of cross-

cultural differences and developing leadership competencies, participants learned how to effectively lead employees from culturally diverse settings, overcome most intercultural communication issues, inspire and motivate their followers, and increase their organizations' profitability.

Theme 2: Correlation with the conceptual framework. Theme 2 correlates to Bass's (1985) transformational leadership theory of inspirational motivation in which leaders articulate visions for both the employees and the organization. Once the participants became aware of the cross-cultural differences and opportunities, the participants developed competencies to overcome cross-cultural challenges, and articulated visions that enabled them to inspire and motivate the intercultural teams. Bass proposed that transformational leaders with cross-cultural competencies have the capability to motivate and inspire followers and to function in different cultural settings successfully. Before being able to motivate and inspire followers, the 21st century global leaders must understand the difficulties leading intercultural teams and be competent in cross-cultural settings. Developing global leaders through equipping them with skills, competencies, and capabilities to lead, inspire, and motivate workers with culturally diverse backgrounds is crucial to be successful in the global markets (Ramsey et al., 2017).

Transformational leadership entails behaviors for directing and inspiring efforts toward fulfilling organizational goals by articulating a vision that raises employees' awareness of the importance of organizational values, mission, and outcomes (Jensen & Bro, 2018). Participants demonstrated Bass's (1985) transformational leadership theories

to lead individuals with culturally diverse backgrounds by setting up goals to inspire and motivate their employees. To validate this strategy, participants adjusted their leadership strategies to the norms and beliefs of the employees. The participants demonstrated inspirational leadership capabilities resulting in profound understandings of how to inspire and motivate intercultural teams by articulating ideas that reinforced employees' engagement to reach shared organizational goals. By articulating visions and defining explicit goals, participants were able to measure the effectiveness of motivation strategies using intrinsic and extrinsic reward systems for their employees' performance.

One characteristic of transformational leadership is inspirational motivation, reflected in the leader's ability to express the importance of tasks and the follower's role for achieving organizational success that encourages and motivates followers (Sattayaraksa & Boon-itt, 2016). Inspirational motivation signifies the motivation of followers through meaning and optimism (Hildenbrand, Sacramento, & Binnewies, 2018). By developing an understanding of cross-cultural differences and implementing various motivational strategies, participants were able to use transformation leadership skills, and competencies, to inspire and motivate their intercultural teams effectively. Participants utilized inspirational motivation skills, capabilities, and competencies to lead culturally diverse employees that yielded increased productivity for companies X, Y, and Z.

Theme 3: Cross-Cultural Leadership Strategies

The third theme that emerged from the data analysis was cross-cultural leadership strategies. When growing businesses locally and globally, local retail business executives

must consider developing cross-cultural leadership techniques and strategies for enabling

them to lead the global workforce successfully (Choromides, 2018; Chow Tong et al.,

2017). Cross-cultural leadership strategies and techniques participants enumerated

included attentive listening, team building, knowledge sharing, and leadership

competencies gained from attending leadership development programs. Cross-cultural

leadership strategies include leadership development training, basic understandings of

cross-cultural differences, intercultural communication, and ethical considerations

(Martinelli & Erzikova, 2017). Even though participants identified challenges leading

intercultural teams, the participants developed cross-cultural awareness using appropriate

competencies catalyzing increasing their job performance, inspiring, and motivating

followers. Therefore, the need for developing cross-cultural leadership strategies was

critical.

Listening attentively when communicating with people with culturally diverse

backgrounds is essential for leadership effectiveness. Roebuck, Bell, Raina, and Lee

(2016) supported this conclusion, and stated that many leaders, managers, and employees

work in multinational organizations, but know little about what constitutes good or

ineffective listening skills from a cross-cultural perspective. PT1 stated that officials in

PT1's company organize internal open-mind communication conference calls with team

members of their organizations recurrently to resolve miscommunication issues. During

many open-mind communication meetings, company executives listened very attentively

to subordinates' concerns, challenges, and opportunities. PT3 listens carefully to ensure

accurate understanding explicitly when communicating with culturally diverse employees

and business partners. By listening attentively to the concerns and viewpoints of employees at workplaces, participants keep an open mind when interacting with people and partners with culturally diverse backgrounds.

Participants specifically enumerated the following active listening leadership strategies used to overcome communication challenges when leading or doing business with individuals with culturally diverse backgrounds: (a) listening more than talking, (b) using straightforward language while speaking slowly, clearly, and methodically, (c) being alert to cultural differences in terms of norms, customs, and behaviors, and (d) being attentive to discussion, and sensitive to variations in verbal and nonverbal communication. PT2 said, "When you listen more than you talk to the employees, you get a better result." All three participants used active listening techniques and strategies when communicating with people with culturally diverse backgrounds.

Participants demonstrated knowledge, understanding, and awareness of the impending implications of cross-cultural differences at workplaces. Martinelli and Erzikova (2017) affirmed that by acquiring knowledge and developing cross-cultural understanding, global leaders could gain leadership strategies needed to lead intercultural teams successfully. To obtain the required leadership competencies to lead intercultural teams, participants attended regular leadership development programs and acquired strategies for overcoming multiple cultural diversity issues.

Leadership development training is critically important for global business leaders to collect, manage, lead, and use knowledge for organizational success (Rana et al., 2016). Learning communities result from effective training and promote the application

of lessons learned (Chaimongkonrojna & Steane, 2015). By attending recurrent leadership development training, PT1, PT2, and PT3 gained relevant knowledge and competencies, and renewed their leadership skills, and abilities to lead intercultural teams effectively.

In a workplace where global business leaders immediately implement newly acquired knowledge and skills the leaders can contribute significantly to employees' engagement and the success of the organization (GethaTaylor, Fowles, Silvia, & Merritt, 2015; Packard & Jones, 2015). PT1 and PT3 stated that competencies acquired from leadership development training helped them to reinforce their skills and proficiencies leading culturally diverse teams, and to improve organizational performance. PT2 explained, "Competencies gained from attending leadership development programs helped increase employees' engagement, created environments in which employees shared ideas, and built trust."

The main concern for individuals living and working in a multicultural environment in the 21st century global society is how to work with people from other cultures, and how to be successful in cross-cultural settings (Qi, Smith, & Yeoman, 2018). How to work with people from other cultures and be successful without proper and applicable leadership skills and capabilities because of the complexities of cross-cultural differences is incontestably difficult and challenging. Large projects composed of multicultural or cross-cultural teams are afflicted with many complexities, such as: (a) team behavior becomes difficult to predict because of their cultural affinity, (b) cross-cultural teams tend to be interdependent and multilayered, (c) teams are geographically

dispersed for their operations, and (d) teams are culturally diverse (Kappagomtula, 2017).

Addressing the above challenges and complexities and being successful in cross-cultural

settings requires not only cross-cultural awareness or knowledge but also specific

scholarly and practical sophisticated competencies and experienced leadership strategies.

A global economy requires ongoing interactions with people from different

cultural backgrounds and demands generating constant alternatives for enhancing cross-

cultural encounters and competencies (Menon & Narayanan, 2015). However, repeated

interactions with culturally diverse individuals are exceptionally challenging. PT2 and

PT3 solved most cross-cultural issues based on circumstances or the kinds of situations

that arise. This strategy helped their organizations (companies Y and Z) facilitate team

interactions and companies' work-related documents sharing.

Participants encouraged team building as a successful leadership method to

enhance team cooperation. Team building promotes sustainability by increasing

employee morale and providing better customer service (Ciasullo, Cosimato, Gaeta, &

Palumbo, 2017; Ray, Decker, Mitsch, & Rocchetti, 2017). Team cooperation in which

individuals share ideas and exchange relevant information to reach mutual organizational

goals is vital for leadership effectiveness and employees' engagements in cross-cultural

settings. Participants frequently organized team-building activities to connect all team

members of their organizations to work together and share work-related information for

developing and promoting team connectedness.

PT1 defined team building as a technique used to connect employees

cooperatively as a team. According to PT3, team building is a method that allows people

to work together and share ideas that benefit both workers and organizations. PT2 encourages employees to share organizations' work-related documents to help speed up outstanding projects and to exchange information related to individuals' beliefs, norms, and values amongst each other. This strategy helped reinforce company Y's team connectedness and built trust among employees.

Although team building can partially mediate the effect of transformational leadership on project success (Aga, Noorderhaven, & Vallejo, 2016), team building strengthens relationships and builds trust amongst culturally diverse individuals (Ray et al., 2017). PT1 said, "I learned from other's culture through team building which helped me to reinforce my leadership role." PT3 explained, "I learned to communicate effectively with employees through team building." Team building strategy helped companies X, Y, and Z's executives create trust within their organizations, increase communications, improve leadership performance, and increase productivity.

Participants displayed evidence of robust leadership experiences through the implementation of team building in their organizations. The participants briefly described experiences where companies X, Y, and Z held meetings with team members using team building. During several team-building activities, participants assisted employees with culturally diverse backgrounds, shared pertinent information, and exchanged work-related documents. By organizing team building, leaders of companies X, Y, and Z learned how to bring workers from diverse backgrounds together collectively as a team, to enhance the relationship among team members, and increase overall company performance under different cultural settings.

In addition to team building, PT1, PT2, and PT3 also promote knowledge sharing as another positive tactic that encourages employees to share clear, intuitive, and knowledge gained through experiences. Knowledge sharing is vital in culturally diverse settings (Paulin & Suneson, 2015). In addition, values that embrace organizational ownership of knowledge facilitate knowledge sharing (Arpaci & Baloğlu, 2016). The sharing of knowledge and work-related documents among culturally diverse team members resulted in benefiting not only the companies that increased productivity but also the employees' trust and confidence.

Knowledge sharing occurs between different individuals and groups to communicate knowledge (Paulin & Suneson, 2015). Additionally, individuals with collectivistic orientations have the willingness to share explicit and implicit knowledge with peers, and are more open to collaboration (Arpaci, & Baloğlu, 2016). Participants affirmed that the technique of knowledge sharing helped their employees to become accustomed to each other, improved job performance, amplified their leadership performances, and facilitated companies X, Y, and Z's officials to create and maintain competitive advantages.

Theme 3: Correlation with peer-reviewed studies. The importance of cross-cultural leadership strategies participants used in theme 3 to lead intercultural team reinforces the conclusions of Reichard et al. (2015), who confirmed the need for global leaders to be experienced in leading the diverse cross-cultural team and to gain leadership understandings and capabilities. Researchers (Ardichvili, Natt och Dag, & Manderscheid, 2016; Hannachi, 2016; Miska & Öner, 2015; Volz-Peacock et al., 2016) stated that

organizational learning is central to enable employees' adaptation to new cultural norms

and to increase organizational performance, innovation, and effectiveness. PT1, PT2, and

PT3 confirmed the importance of leadership effectiveness to organizational performance

by proactively gaining inclusive abilities, skills, and competencies from attending various

leadership development training and programs to lead culturally diverse workforces

effectively. Ekelund and Adl (2015) emphasized the value of deploying consistent, high-

impact global leadership development as a critical success factor for organizational

success.

Business leaders incorporating leadership development training into their

programs gain not only competencies needed to lead culturally diverse individuals

effectively but also increase employees' job performance, organizational performance,

and effectiveness (Seidle et al., 2016). Promoting learning organizations increases the

likelihood of corporate health, performance improvement, and sustainability (Hannachi,

2016). Participants capitalized on several cross-cultural leadership development training

and programs to understand the importance of managing cross-cultural differences in the

global markets, developing needed skills and abilities to lead culturally diverse

individuals positively, which yielded increased profitability for their organizations.

Theme 3: Correlation with the conceptual framework. Theme 3 correlates

with Bass's (1985) transformational leadership theory of idealized influence in which,

leaders act as role models. Bass anticipated that leaders who act as role models have the

ability to positively influence followers in cross-cultural settings. Once the participants

identified the cross-cultural challenges, developed the needed competencies to

successfully lead, inspire, and motivate the intercultural teams, they established

leadership strategies that enabled them to influence their followers. All three participants

demonstrated transformational leadership theory characteristics of how to influence

followers, adjust their leadership competencies to the norms, customs, practices, and

values of their employees, and to successfully function in different cultural environments

while acting as role models.

Leaders who adjust can create sources of competitive advantage in any economic

environment (Marta-Dominguez, Galán-González, & Barroso, 2015). Implementing

transformational leadership makes a significant difference to followers' motivation and

development, and typically achieve performance beyond expectations in followers (Bass,

1985). Besides their knowledge, skills, and capabilities in cross-cultural awareness,

education, and understanding, participants used transformational leadership style to

influence their intercultural teams successfully.

Leadership is a critical element in the success of an organization (Blomqvist et al.,

2016; El Toufaili, 2018). Participants' perceptions of utilizing skills, capabilities, and

influence to lead culturally diverse teams aligns with the work of Wang et al. (2014), who

suggested that transformational leaders must be competent and identify the effective

ways to create productive and influential work environments using leadership

competencies to influence culturally diverse individuals. All three participants confirmed

that characteristics of transformational leadership have a positive and productive

relationship with employees, which have led to increased productivity (Breevaart &

Bakker, 2018; Ma & Jiang, 2018; Muenjohn & Armstrong, 2015). By recognizing the

influence of satisfying employees' needs, participants enhanced employees' abilities to improve individuals and group performances.

Global leadership development has typically been conceptualized as a series of learning activities that directly benefit *participants* through the acquisition of information and skills (Normore et al., 2018). The goal for companies X, Y, and Z's executives to incorporate leadership development programs into their agendas was to equip the organizations' leaders with modern leadership capabilities to address both complications and opportunities that could arise in the global cross-cultural environments. For effective leadership to be realized, organizational leaders need to be competent in transformational leadership, which is described as a situation in which the leader and followers empower and shape each other's behavior to attain the desired goal (Louw, Muriithi, & Radloff, 2017). By employing transformational leadership strategies, participants were able to influence their employees, gain trust, admiration, confidence, and respect from their team members.

Applications to Professional Practice

The purpose of this study was to identify effective leadership strategies local retail business leaders use to lead culturally diverse individuals when expanding business operations into global markets. The findings of the study along with multiple results from the analysis of the literature review and the study's conceptual framework provided a detailed academic framework for enhancing the professional practice of business. Many leaders lack the leadership strategies necessary to function globally while creating friendly and prosperous work environments resulting in undesirable outcomes

(Kappagomtula, 2017). Using effective cross-cultural leadership, local retail business leaders and global business executives can lead intercultural communities while increasing profitability for their organizations.

The findings of the study indicated that understanding the effects of cross-cultural differences, developing cross-cultural awareness and knowledge, and developing cross-cultural leadership strategies, skills, capabilities, and competencies are essential to lead culturally diverse teams effectively at workplaces and increase profitability for organizations. The findings from this research may be appropriate to improve business practices through reviewing, adapting, and developing cross-cultural leadership strategies to lead culturally diverse individuals when expanding business operations into global markets.

The global leadership mindset is a paradigm for developing competencies of leaders for transcending national and corporate barriers to integrate different perspectives and people and to adapt to any context (Mattheus et al., 2016). Cultural competencies' critical role in contemporary organizations is evident (Fellows, Goedde, & Schwichtenberg, 2016). Local retail business executives can also enhance their knowledge in cross-cultural differences when establishing businesses in different locations by developing cross-cultural leadership strategies to lead culturally diverse individuals effectively. Characteristics of cross-cultural leadership strategies local retail business leaders could utilize to positively lead culturally diverse teams and overcome challenges of cross-cultural leadership when expanding business operations into global markets may include: (a) knowledge sharing, (b) team building, (c) attentive listening, (d)

observation, (e) sensitivity, (f) open style communication, (g) demonstration of a good sense of humor, (h) flexibility, and (i) reduction to ethnocentrism.

Leaders who develop motivational cultural intelligence can apply their knowledge and experience to multicultural interactions and activities despite the challenges they may encounter (Schlägel & Sarstedt, 2016). Local retail business leaders with motivational cultural intelligence could quickly adapt to other cultures and adjust their behaviors accordingly by developing advanced understandings of cross-cultural differences and similarities in the globalized business world. By adapting to other cultures while developing complete understandings of cross-cultural challenges and opportunities, local retail business executives can avoid or mitigate problems from comparing their norms, beliefs, customs, and values to culturally diverse individuals' behaviors, and showing frustration when making significant leadership decisions.

Local retail business leaders can employ transformational leadership strategies to motivate and inspire followers, improve culturally diverse individuals' job satisfaction, improve leadership effectiveness, and increase employees' productivity. As trust and satisfaction are important mediators between a leader's behavior and the performance of followers (Bass, 1985), local retail business leaders can also use transformational leadership strategies to build trust within their organizations, promote job satisfaction, and increase confidence with culturally diverse individuals.

Implications for Social Change

In addition to the contributions to business practice, the findings of this research present opportunities for effecting positive change for both culturally diverse individuals

and communities at large. The strategies identified in the study have been successful for both employees and local retail business leaders seeking to expand business operations into global markets. Birt et al. (2016) suggested that if the purpose of a study is to contribute knowledge to enact social change, there is an ethical responsibility to explore different interpretations so that others can decide on the transferability of the results. Through communication and reinforcement, ethical leaders convey clear moral standards (Ko et al., 2018). The implications for positive social change include a better understanding of cross-cultural differences, enhanced quality cross-cultural work environments, and increased job creation for citizens.

The importance of leadership in cross-cultural settings is the ability to lead culturally diverse employees effectively and produce a profit for organizations. The findings of this research also indicated that leaders in multinational companies might rely on a diverse group of people to continue to grow in the global marketplace and promote social change for both employees and the communities. Growth and profitability can lead to better compensation and improved social lifestyles for people in societies.

Transformational leadership is being conceptualized as the best leadership style used in cross-cultural settings (Andersen et al., 2018; Pradhan & Jena, 2019). As leadership behavior has a significant impact on employee behavior, performance and well-being (Inceoglu, Thomas, Chu, Plans, & Gerbasi, 2018), transformational leadership style can assist future leaders seeking leadership strategies to improve culturally diverse people's employment opportunities for the betterment of families and communities' living standards.

Recommendations for Action

While this study's results identify leadership strategies local retail business leaders use to lead culturally diverse individuals when expanding their business operations into global markets, there are still significant discoveries that can emanate from using and expanding the results. Based on the analysis of the three themes that emerged from the study, I offer the following recommendations.

Because of the increasingly globalized diverse workforce, the first recommendation is for local retail business leaders and global business executives to develop cross-cultural awareness by embracing diversity in their organizations, and by appreciating culturally diverse individuals' norms, beliefs, customs, and values vis a vis their behaviors during significant decision-making circumstances. Business executives need to develop a comprehensive understanding of cross-cultural differences and similarities, along with competencies, when leading the global workforce. To be successful working and collaborating with the inclusive intercultural individuals, local retail and global business leaders should consider developing knowledge in cross-cultural awareness and a complete understanding of cultural differences and similarities to lead the global workforce effectively. By understanding and appreciating culturally diverse employees' norms, beliefs, customs, and values, local retail business leaders and global business executives can develop team collaboration within their organizations, build trust, promote open-style communications, develop relationships among followers, and enhance their abilities to improve business performance. Local retail business leaders and global business executives who lack cross-cultural leadership experience could benefit

from reviewing the participants' strategies of this study but also potentially from the associated knowledge that resulted from expanding the participants' business operations into global markets.

The second recommendation is for local retail business leaders and global business executives to develop and use transformational leadership styles to lead culturally diverse individuals when expanding business operations into global markets. The third and final recommendation is for local retail business leaders and global business executives to attend leadership development programs to gain extensive knowledge and appropriate leadership strategies needed to lead culturally diverse individuals because of the multicultural workforce. To be successful in cross-cultural settings, local retail business leaders and global business executives must consider attending recurrent leadership development training and programs to gain contemporary leadership competencies and renew their skills and abilities and lead the global workforce effectively.

To meet the challenges of the global environment requires global leadership development (Ekelund & Adl, 2015). By creating a cross-cultural workforce, acquiring intercultural leadership competencies, and gaining knowledge on how to lead cross-cultural individuals successfully, local retail business executives can gain detailed understandings of potential complications and opportunities of the effects of cross-cultural differences, and be proactive when expanding business operations into global markets. Because of the complexities of cross-cultural leadership, local retail business leaders and global business executives must consider obtaining advanced leadership

competencies to lead intercultural teams effectively when establishing businesses locally or globally. When expanding business operations into global markets, local retail business leaders and global business executives must also consider developing contemporary leadership capabilities to understand and mitigate communications and work performance challenges.

Leadership strategies acquired from attending leadership development training and programs can assist local retail business leaders as well as global business executives to understand cultural similarities and differences and quickly adapt to contemporary changes. Local retail business leaders and global business executives could use competencies gained from leadership development training and programs to help strengthen their commitment to healthy organizational change, team innovation, continuous improvement, employee engagement, trust, and to successfully meet the challenges of the 21st century interconnected world. Therefore, local retail business leaders and global business executives must be consistent, creative, diligent, and develop cross-cultural competencies to positively lead intercultural teams effectively and efficiently through promoting a supportive organizational culture.

The results of this study will be disseminated via literature, seminars, or training programs. Organizations seeking to grow locally and internationally could use the results from these initiatives to equip local and global leaders with appropriate cross-cultural leadership strategies. Local retail businesses seeking to expand business operations into the global markets could incorporate the results of this study into global expansion business leadership seminars or training programs. The objectives of the seminars or

training programs should include enlightenment of cross-cultural challenges, cross-cultural differences and similarities, and developing the essential leadership capabilities for growing businesses beyond domestic borders.

Local, state, and U.S. governments could develop and provide retail businesses and global companies with global leadership interaction seminars and programs enabling local retail business leaders, global business executives, and employees to share and build cultural intelligence to enhance their leadership knowledge on the impacts of globalization. Local governments, retail business leaders, and global business executives can use the above possibilities along with the results of this study to help understand the opportunities of business expansion across the multicultural business world, to develop cross-border leadership awareness, and to increase their knowledge of how to function in culturally diverse environments successfully.

Recommendations for Further Research

Local and global retail business leaders need business strategies and the cross-cultural leadership skills, capabilities, and competencies to lead intercultural teams effectively. For addressing the need for leadership strategies, future researchers should identify and use additional interview questions to enhance prospective participants' ability to provide more thorough and objective responses about suitable cross-cultural leadership strategies during the interviews. In referring to the second need for companies' data, future researchers should consider explaining in greater detail the importance of providing companies' progress reports, and other administrative and financial documents and records to enhance the results of the future studies. In addressing the third and final

need for additional populations, future researchers should consider extending studies'

populations to other geographic locations. The population for this study included local

retail leaders of three organizations headquartered in Minnesota. The limited

geographical location of Minnesota potentially restricted the transferability of results to

other geographic areas.

The results of the study involved comprehensive viewpoints of a few business

leaders from three local retail organizations operating in the United States. Even though I

achieved data saturation, I recommend that other researchers further investigate the

phenomenon by expanding the boundaries of the target population into different

geographical locations. I also suggest conducting research that integrates local and global

leaders from different disciplines such as teaching, manufacturing, and healthcare

organizations to reflect and compare their views on successful leadership strategies with

those of the retail sector. Researchers conducting semistructured interviews increase the

possibility of biases interfering with results (Lehman, 2016; Thompson et al., 2016). I

believed participants answered addressed questions straightforwardly, openly, entirely,

and to the best of their knowledge and experience.

Another recommendation is to approach this topic using the quantitative method,

which could help other researchers examine and compare the effectiveness of different

cross-cultural leadership strategies local retail business leaders use to successfully lead

culturally diverse teams when expanding business operations into global markets. I also

recommend future research about leadership strategies in a cross-cultural setting that

employees be included in the participant pool and scope of the study. Employees may

provide essential perspectives to compare the perceived effectiveness of leadership strategies applied in organizations.

Reflections

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study was to explore leadership strategies local retail business leaders use to expand business operations into global markets. By reading various peer-reviewed journal articles, books, publications, and dissertations that addressed numerous aspects of the study, I discovered the powerful force of globalization, and the need for local retail and global business leaders to develop cross-cultural leadership competencies. Leadership has been my passion for many years. Despite my love for leadership, I sought to remain unbiased throughout the data collection process to avoid potentially influencing participants' responses.

Although I attempted to remain unbiased during the data collection process, I had experienced situations of biases. I noticed that some situations for potential biases were because of how motivated and enthusiastic I was to pursue the topic of effective leadership in cross-cultural settings. This enthusiasm could have compromised the interpretations of the data. I took suitable measures to mitigate these biases, which included notetaking, using an interview protocol (see Appendix B), interview recording, and member checking to assure the reliability, validity, and accuracy of the data.

During the data collection process, I allowed participants to express themselves freely, straightforwardly, and openly, without preconceptions or bias. The data collection and analysis section of the program (Section 3) was more challenging than anticipated because I was less prepared. I did not start to recruit participants immediately after I

received IRB approval, which was the wrong strategy. I should have launched

participants' recruitment right after I received IRB approval to take advantage of the

time. As a result, I spent much more time searching for participants after I received IRB

approval, which delayed the process.

My experience during the DBA doctoral study process was unprecedentedly

challenging but rewarding because of the knowledge I gained from the top business

executives of local and global retail companies operating in the United States and around

the world. I followed the DBA program's handbook and rubric to develop and use the

interview protocol (see Appendix B), the 85% peer-reviewed references requirements, the

consent form, and the data collection process described in Section 2 of this study.

Although participants were at first reluctant to share their companies' progress reports

because of confidentiality issues, they demonstrated unexpected enthusiasm during the

interview sessions. I was pleased that all three participants demonstrated they were well

prepared and enthusiastic for participating in their interviews. During the interview

sessions, the participants openly answered questions and freely shared documents to

support their responses.

Conclusion

As global business executives continue to expand business operations worldwide,

local retail business leaders need appropriate leadership strategies to lead cross-cultural

teams effectively. Local retail business leaders and global business executives who learn

to lead intercultural teams are more likely to be successful in the 21st century globalized

business marketplaces. As world communication, technology, and trade become

increasingly integrated through globalization, multicultural corporations seek leaders with global leadership skills (Walker, 2018). The best leadership in cross-cultural settings is, therefore, the one that is clear, fair, inspiring, motivating, shared, communicative, rewarding, appreciative, and successful.

A multiculture society is a complex demographic scenario with unique beliefs and societal interactions (Kappagomtula, 2017). The need to develop global leadership awareness, global leadership skills, abilities, and competencies in cross-cultural settings is conclusively imperative. Enabling local retail business leaders with basic cross-cultural understandings and capabilities is fundamental for contemporary business executives who seek to expand business operations into global markets.

I used the results from the findings of this study to help confirm that global leadership along with the conceptual framework of leadership and transformational leadership could assist local retail business leaders as well as global business executives to lead culturally diverse individuals effectively; create values for organizations; enhance leadership skills and abilities; and promote a healthy organizational culture, a climate of trust, and open communications. The practical strategies used by the participants from companies X, Y, and Z can serve as a guide for local retail business leaders and global business executives seeking to explore contemporary leadership strategies to lead the diverse global workforce effectively as they expanded their business operations into global markets.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

I gave each participant the opportunity to answer the following open-ended questions in each interview. The central research question was: What cross-cultural strategies do business leaders need to expand their business operations into global markets?

Interview questions

1. What are the major cross-cultural leadership challenges you faced leading employees from culturally diverse backgrounds when expanding into global markets?

2. What key barriers have you faced when leading employees from various culturally backgrounds when expanding into global markets?

3. What cross-cultural leadership strategies do you use to overcome these key barriers when expanding into global markets?

4. What cross-cultural leadership strategies do you use to motivate employees with diverse cross-cultural backgrounds in your company when expanding into global markets?

5. How do you measure the effectiveness of your motivation strategies?

6. What cross-cultural leadership strategies did you use to address the key risk factors that could affect the success of employees with diverse cultural backgrounds when expanding into global markets?

7. What other aspects, which were not mentioned in the questions above, do you consider important to mention?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview: Local retail leaders' strategies used to lead workers from cross cultural environments because of the rise of globalization.

A. I will hold the interview at a location convenient to the participants probably not at their workplaces.

B. The face-to-face or the Skype interviews will begin with a brief introduction and an overview of the research topic.

C. I will present my appreciation to the participant for attending the interview and demonstrate my concern about the sensitivity of their time.

D. I will remind the participants that the interview will remain confidential.

E. I will inform the participants that the interview will be recorded for accuracy and reliability purposes.

F. During the interview, I will observe the participants' body languages and ask them follow-up questions as needed to get more in depth with the answer they provided.

G. I will thank the participants at the end of the interviews and explain the next step, which is member checking and schedule a follow-up date and time with them.

H. After I have concluded the study, transcribed and recorded findings, I will share a brief synthesis of the individual questions.

I. I will bring probing questions related to other information that I may have found noting the information related to adhering to IRB approval.

J. I will walk through each question, read the interpretation, and ask the participants if I miss anything and they have some additions.

K. At the conclusion of the study, I will provide the participant with a summary of the study findings.

Appendix C: Email Invitation to Participants

Dear {Participant},

My name is Yao Kossi. I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I would like to extend an invitation to you to participate in my research study. The purpose of my study is to explore cross-cultural leadership strategies local retail business leaders use to expand business operations into global markets. I hope to receive at least 6 volunteers to participate in this multiple case study.

If you are interested in participating, please review the attached informed consent form and feel free to ask any questions. You may reply to ███████████████, call my local number, or notify me in person. The first 3 volunteers will be accepted as potential subjects. If you accept and are selected for this study, I would invite you to an informal meeting in a mutual location to discuss the purpose of the study. I will also review the informed consent form with you so that you have a thorough understanding of your participation in this study. If I receive more volunteers than the required amount or collected a sufficient amount of data, I will notify you by email of your status as a participant.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Yao Kossi

Doctoral Candidate

Doctor of Business Administration: Homeland Security