'THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND LEADERSHIP OF

CULTURALLY DIVERSE WORK TEAMS DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL

COMPETENCE IN MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES IN THE NETHERLANDS'

By

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I

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DEDICATION

I do at this moment dedicate this thesis to two heroes in my life, namely; **Mr George Duker** in Ghana and **Dr G.A. van Montfrans** in the Netherlands. Mr Duker, a retired educationist/ accountant and a senior uncle who took the full responsibilities of my secondary and my bachelor degree education in Ghana. You are true! The reason for the success of my academic life, and I dedicate this report to you. Again, Dr G.A. van Montfrans, a retired specialist and a medical practitioner at the Academic Medical Center Amsterdam, the Netherlands, who worked tirelessly to save my life after seriously falling sick and I thought I would not survive. Today, I am still alive, and I have been able to conduct this research because of your incredible medical knowledge, skills, personal sympathy and specialised care for your patients upon which I sincerely dedicate this research to you.

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ABSTRACT

'THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND LEADERSHIP OF CULTURALLY DIVERSE WORK TEAMS DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES IN THE NETHERLANDS'

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Studies show that leaders of culturally diverse work teams encounter problems with the adverse effects of cultural differences, so there is the need to develop intercultural competence to manage them in multinational companies. Several debates and evidence in the literature confirm that cultural differences create problems like miscommunication, discrimination, mistrust, high employees' turnover and poor performance for culturally diverse work teams in the functional and the cross-functional departments in multinational companies, despite their significant roles. As a result, researchers have proposed several intercultural competence models to manage the problems of cultural differences.

However, the considerable gap in the literature is that there are limited studies on intercultural competence for team leaders which has resulted in the absence of process and factors for intercultural competence for them. I observed that the gap has significant implications for team leaders in multinational companies in the Netherlands. Therefore, I researched to obtain knowledge and insights into how best leaders of culturally diverse work teams could understand the challenges of cultural differences in their teams, and develop intercultural competence skills and knowledge to manage them in multinational companies in the Netherlands.

I applied a qualitative research design by using face-to-face, skype, and e-mails with semi-structured interviews and observation techniques to generate the data from 68 research participants, consisting of 29 team leaders and 39 team members from 20 multinational companies (i.e., service and manufacturing) for the investigation. I then followed the guidelines of the thematic analysis of Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyse the data.

The research findings showed that miscommunications, attitudinal problems and host country dominant cultural issues are some of the challenges facing the team as a result of cultural differences. Again, factors like lack of skills and knowledge of intercultural competence, limited time and attention paid to cultural issues inhibit team leaders from managing the challenges successfully. The study showed that cultural differences have both positive and negative impacts on the team; however, the adverse effects far exceed the positive ones due to leaderships' failure to manage them effectively. Besides, the majority of the members are not satisfied with how their leaders address these challenges.

Significantly, the research provided the 'leaderships' intercultural competence frameworks', which become the process and factors for intercultural competence skills and knowledge for leaders to address the challenges of cultural differences in their respective teams. Again, the findings showed members' expectations on how best team leaders could solve the problems of cultural differences. It also provided strategic tools for leaders to identify the sorts of help they need to address the challenges accordingly. The findings further offered advice and recommendations on intercultural competence for teams and the management of multinational companies to manage the problems of cultural differences.

In conclusion, the study contributes to knowledge by showing how leaders and members could develop the ability to improve their cultural awareness and sensitivities to address the challenges of cultural differences in the team. Leaders could achieve that through effective communication, managing individual attitudes and behaviour, and the tools to lead effectively. The study also contributes to business practices, showing how leaders, their members and the management of multinational companies could identify cultural differences and their effects, and effectively resolve the problems they pose in the teams holistically.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
IC	Intercultural Competence
CQ	Cultural Intelligence
ISS	Intercultural Sensitivity Scale
ICC	Intercultural Communication Competence
CCL	Cross-Cultural Leadership
HRM	Human Resources Management
MNCs	Multinational Companies
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
BCIQ	Business Cultural Intelligence Quotient
VBLA	Values-Based Leadership Algorithm
IHRM	International Human Resources Management
GLOBE	Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness
BASIC	Behavioural Assessment Scale for Intercultural Communication Effectiveness

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research background and scope

This research investigates how leaders of culturally diverse work teams could understand the adverse effects of cultural differences on the teams and then develop intercultural competence to manage them in multinational companies in the Netherlands. My observation on how cultural differences affect leadership roles in the team and researchers' debates on intercultural competence as the strategies to remedy the challenges have played significant roles in my research.

As an International HRM and Diversity Management Consultant in the Netherlands, I have observed that several multinational companies (both manufacturing and service) rely on the teams in their functional and cross-functional departments for several essential purposes such as creating innovative ideas, providing suitable solutions to complex problems and performing excellent tasks. While multinational companies depend on such teams for their work-related activities, they are instrumental in organisations when they manage their diversity as an asset (Humes and Reilly, 2008; Matveev and Milter, 2004). It is also highly expected in the future that individuals will work with people from different cultural backgrounds in teams (Lloyd and Hartel, 2010). On the flip side, their performance could be profoundly affected negatively due to several problems they face with cultural differences. Poor management of cultural differences leads to coordination challenges, conflicts miscommunication, misunderstanding, poor performance and malfunctioning of the teams (Humes and Reilly, 2008; Matveev and Milter, 2004; Marquardt and Horvath, 2001; Shenkar and Zeira, 1992). The above consequences imply that cultural differences could be advantageous to the team. Still, when leaders fail to manage them, they might create enormous problems for them, and this calls for leadership attention to address the issues.

I purposely chose the leadership in culturally diverse work teams in the Netherlands for this study because some of them encounter several difficulties in managing the challenges of cultural differences. Again, several researchers have debated the causes of such problems in the Netherlands. For example, van Dijk et al. (2012) argue that the influence of globalisation in the changes of demography, economy and markets contribute to the challenges. Similarly, the inclusion of immigrants in the Dutch labour force has created demographic shifts (Hennekam and Tahssain-Gay, 2015; Subeliani and Tsogas, 2005). The above arguments

demonstrate that factors like globalisation and immigration have attracted employees from different cultural backgrounds to work in the Netherlands. Subsequently, the increase in a diverse workforce with different cultural beliefs, values, norms and styles of working could create several problems in the team if leaders do not manage them. Also, the change in the business landscape and the inclusion of the non-Dutch ethnic backgrounds in the workforce accounted for the problems created by cultural differences in the team (Fontaine, 2007). The increase in ethnic minorities which ranges between 45 to 65 per cent of the workforce compared to 69 per cent of the total Dutch population has changed attitudes to work (The Netherlands Statistical Institute, 2014). The rationale is that the minorities' perception of punctuality, teamwork, time to accomplish the task and individual approaches to work differ from the Dutch, and these could create challenges in the team. By 2050, not less than one-third of the total population in the Netherlands would comprise of first and the second generation immigrants (The Netherlands Statistical Institute, 2014). The implication is that the increase of people from different cultural backgrounds is most likely to create compelling challenges for the teams in the Netherlands if proper control measures are not put in place to manage the problems created by their cultural differences.

1.2 The definition of the research problem

The literature gap shows that there are limited studies on the intercultural competence of leaders of culturally diverse work teams. Therefore, the factors and process for leaderships' intercultural competence are lacking (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Hajro and Pudelko, 2010; Eagly and Chin, 2010). Studies show the need to understand the intercultural competence of leaders better because a leader who lacks such skills might not understand how cultural differences affect him/her negatively. However, there has been remarkably limited academic research to meet such demands (Alton, 2018; Moon, 2010). Intercultural competence is the set of cognitive, affective and behavioural skills and features that achieves significant interaction in multicultural teams (Bennett, 2011).

The challenges of cultural differences have motivated researchers and practitioners to call on team leaders[1] to develop the knowledge and the skills for intercultural competence to manage the challenges of cultural differences (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Eagly and Chin, 2010; Harvey, 2008; Ang et al., 2007; Avolio, 2007). It is imperative to note that these calls have

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[1] Leaders in culturally diverse work teams, team leaders and leaders are used indistinguishably to provide the same meaning in this study.

several implications for the leadership of culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies in the Netherlands, and this becomes another underlying factor which motivated me for this research. The rationale is that the leaders face several difficulties like conflicts, miscommunications, poor teamwork, high employee turnover, etc. due to the failure in managing cultural differences in their teams.

Several debates and evidence in the literature review show that the challenges of cultural differences affect the teams negatively in several ways (e.g., Holden, Michailova and Tietze, 2015; Scheffknecht, 2011; Humes and Reilly, 2008; Matveev and Milter, 2004; Kokt, 2003; Marquardt and Horvath, 2001; Kelsey, 2000). Despite the advantages of cultural differences, communication, different styles and attitudes to work are significant problems for the teams in the Netherlands (Subeliani and Tsogas, 2005). Again, de Waal et al. (2012) show that although culture contributes to the success of the organisations in the Netherlands, it creates several problems for the teams. The implication is that failure to address the challenges posed by cultural differences effectively might affect the performance of such essential teams. The challenges of cultural differences include conflicts that might negatively affect the shared values and their understandings towards a common goal (Vallaster, 2005). Although Vallaster emphasises on the effects of such issues, the factors creating them are lacking.

Diversity issues, especially, the problems of cultural differences compelled the Netherlands to enact legislation for diversity in the organisations (Tatli et al., 2012). However, Kopnina and Haafkens (2010) show that the diversity in the Netherlands concerns the management of the relationship between people from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds but not related to gender, sexual orientation and disability issues. The implication of the argument gives credence to the significant roles of cultural differences due to relationships in the teams, and this calls on the leaders to be highly aware and conscious of the adverse effects of cultural differences in their responsibilities. Consequently, Hennekam and Toussaint-Gay (2015) suggest that one should consider how the external and internal environments impact perceptions, attitudes and behavioural approach to resolving the challenges of cultural differences in the team by not entirely relying on the cultural dimensions of (GLOBE, 2004; Hofstede, 1980). Cultural dimensions are models which explain national cultural differences in multinational teams (e.g., Hofstede, 1980; Trompenaars, 1997 and GLOBE, 2004). To a large extent, the premise of Hennekam and Toussaint-Gay (2015) depends on the assumption that Hofstede's (1980) dimensions contribute towards national cultural differences more than

culturally diverse work teams. The connotation is that disagreements in attitudes and behaviour play considerable roles in the challenges of cultural differences in the team. Therefore, their complexities make it very difficult to be only managed by the application of cultural dimensions. In describing the challenges of cultural differences in their research in a service company in the Netherlands, Subeliani and Tsogas (2005b; 843) quoted a manager's frustration in his team as follows;

'During an appointment at 10 AM in the Netherlands, some team members would report at 11 AM and take it very easy, and by thinking all is right, they assume they could do it tomorrow. They do things very slowly without stressing themselves. There is, therefore, a problem with promotion considering this mentality'.

The above statement shows an example of how some team leaders struggle to manage the challenges posed by cultural differences in their teams, and this testifies to the challenges facing them. The intercultural encounter could create surprises and misunderstandings because the individuals in the multicultural[2] teams fail to adjust and adapt successfully (Irrmann, 2013).

1.3 Research aims

The research aims at obtaining knowledge and insight into how best leaders of culturally diverse work teams could understand the challenges of cultural differences in their teams, and develop intercultural competence skills and knowledge to manage them in multinational companies in the Netherlands.

The aim of the study confirms the argument that a leader should move beyond ethnocentric approaches to intercultural competence in order to manage the team effectively (Moodian, 2008). Intercultural competence, therefore, helps leaders and their members to negotiate cultural meanings, beliefs, and values for effective communication very appropriately (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Lustig and Koester, 1999). Besides, the team develops the

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[2] In this study, terms such as multicultural, cross-cultural and intercultural are used interchangeably depending on their context applied. For example, multicultural shows that the people have diverse cultures with different customs and beliefs, while the cross-cultural demonstrates the comparison between diverse cultures such as more cultures with diferent customs. However the intercultural demonstrates more than one culture. Nevertheless, they all connote diverse cultures with different ways of life such as diverse attitudes, behaviour and communications.

ability for open-mindedness for learning other cultures and respect their norms and values (Sharma et al., 2009; Earley et al., 2007; Triandis, 2006; Friedman and Antal, 2005).

Studies show that researchers have been focusing on issues regarding intercultural competence recently because it provides significant benefits like open-mindedness, knowledge of reciprocal interaction, respecting differences, intercultural engagement (Abduh and Rosmaladewi, 2018). When leaders fail to manage the problems of cultural differences, they could eventually affect the progress of the team. For example, Nardon (2017) argue about the keen awareness that intercultural engagements become the inescapable characteristics in the current workplaces affecting several employees. The reason depends on the fact that we regularly communicate with leaders and team members possessing different cultural backgrounds in our modern business world (Geller and Phillips, 2019).

Consequently, it has become indispensable for the team leaders and their members to acquire intercultural competence to manage the problems of cultural differences effectively. I undertook the following steps to achieve the aims of the research.

1.4 Research objective

The corresponding research objectives which guided the investigation include the following;

- To find out about the type of problems that cultural differences create for culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies in the Netherlands.
- To examine the factors which prevent leaders from managing the challenges created by cultural differences in their teams effectively.
- To determine how cultural differences affect the teams.
- To find out about the knowledge and skills that team leaders need to develop the intercultural competence of their teams.
- To assess the importance of leadership's development of intercultural competence of their team members.

1.5 Purpose of research

The essential purpose of the study is to contribute to literature debates and arguments on cultural differences and intercultural competence by critically reviewing the theories and models proposed by researchers and applied those which are most important to the leadership

of culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies in the Netherlands. The challenges created by cultural differences have generated researchers' debates and arguments on the impacts of cultural differences regarding the performance of the team (Knippenberg and Van Dierendonck, 2013; Jackson, Joshi and Erhardt, 2003; Williams and O'Reilly, 1998; Miliken and Martins, 1996).

In the first place, culture plays significant roles in the background of this research because the critical issues for the study depend on the differences in individual cultural contexts. After critically considering several theories, models and concepts of culture, I applied that of Minkov (2013) to conceptualise culture for the study. The model argues that cultural analysts should decide which perspective best suits the aims of their research to demonstrate them accordingly (Minkov, 2013). Since this study aims to gain knowledge and insight on how best leaders could contribute to the development of intercultural competence (IC) of their team members, Minkov's (2013) two types of the cultural framework; the kind which dwells in the individuals and those outside them (Singelis et al., 1999) add value to the study. They classify the type of culture which resides in the individuals as the subjective culture Triandis (1972), and Hofstede argues about the same view by categorising subjective - culture as the software of the mind (Hofstede, 2001). The concept contributed to the understanding of the differences in beliefs, values and internalised interaction patterns as well as the behaviour pattern perspective. The theory of 'cultural mosaic' of Douglas (2004) became applicable to understand cultural differences in the team because it provides knowledge with regards to the living together of the ethnic members, languages and diverse culture in a given society. The model offers much knowledge and insight in understanding how different attitudes and behaviour, beliefs, values and norms could create challenges in the team.

The theory and model of leadership of culturally diverse work teams are considered for this research because leadership roles in managing the challenges of cultural differences have become debatable. Researchers have been struggling in putting leadership in the proper context in culturally diverse work teams, and this provides the opportunity for the study to examine the extent of leadership roles in addressing the problems of cultural differences facing them. Nevertheless, this study applied Ramthun and Matkin's (2012) framework of 'Multicultural Shared Leadership' for the findings section. The framework argues that when the team members effectively assess their cultural differences, those with high intercultural competence could acknowledge and develop diverse knowledge, open-minded attitudes and

skills (Maznevski, 1994). Subsequently, conditions could be set up for the members to accept and deliver mutual influence (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995), nurturing cohesiveness, and thereby permitting the development of more innovative methods to address the challenges of cultural differences (Marquardt and Horvath, 2001). It is also significant to note that the model operates on the moderating factors of intercultural competence, and this contributes significantly to the achievement of the aims of my study.

Again, researchers have proposed several intercultural competence theories and models to address the challenges of cultural differences. However, those offered by (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Deardorff, 2006/2019; Matveev and Milter, 2004) provided the guidelines for the development of intercultural competence for leaders of culturally diverse work teams because of the relevance of their components.

1.5 Significance of research

The challenges of cultural differences in culturally diverse work teams are enormous despite their positive impacts. Despite several models and theories proposed by researchers (e.g., Alon et al., 2016; Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009; Thomas et al., 2008; Rathje, 2007; Deardorff, 2006; Matveev and Milter, 2004; Early and Ang, 2003; Bennett, 1998; Hamilton et al., 1998; Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998; Byram, 1997; Fantini, 1995; Dinges, 1983; Spitzberg, 1983; McCroskey, 1982) to address the challenges, there is still a gap on the intercultural competence of leaders of culturally diverse work teams to resolve the problems. The argument is that the theories, models and the concepts seek to address cultural differences from a national and global perspective, which is devoid of the individual perspectives in culturally diverse work teams.

It is significant to note that the findings of this study subsequently contribute to the body of knowledge by providing the intercultural competence frameworks for team leaders. The frameworks become the process and factors for intercultural competence skills, and knowledge for leaders to manage the challenges of cultural differences in their respective teams in multinational companies, and this helps to address the gap for the study.

Besides, the research contributes to business practice by assisting the team and the management of multinational companies to identify the challenges of cultural differences, their impacts and strategies to manage the challenges of intercultural competence in the team.

The findings also show the significance of leadership's development of intercultural competence in the team. For instance, Moodian (2008) argues that leaders need to build the skills and expertise for (IC) and move beyond ethnocentric approaches. The reason is that behavioural mistakes and misattributions create dysfunctional relationships among their members, which could result in poor performance. The findings further show advice in the form of recommendations to the leaders, members and the management of multinational companies to develop the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence. Leaders need to build intercultural competence so that they could define their roles as leaders and be in a better position to perform their responsibilities very well (Robinson and Harvey, 2008).

1.6 Research design

I applied Merriam's (2002) essential interpretive - qualitative approach which demonstrates the critical features of qualitative research. The argument is that the study aimed to concentrate on the meaning and understanding of the experiences of the participants and how they construct their world. At the same time, I, the one conducting the research, should be the main 'instrument' to obtain the data (Merriam, 2009).

I also used qualitative interview (semi-structured approach) to interview 68 participants, consisting of 29 team leaders and 39 team members from the service, manufacturing and service/manufacturing companies in the Netherlands. The method section shows that the interview questions were very flexible, understanding and probing, which encouraged the participants to provide detailed answers with valuable information for the study. The probing helped me to ask further questions to obtain productive and useful information, insight and learned more (Merriam, 2009). Moreover, Leavey (2014 p.2) argues that the 'qualitative research is an extended and constantly developing methodological field that embraces a broad approach to research, including multiple frames of reference on the type of research itself'.

The qualitative design also assisted me in applying the 'Thematic Data Analysis' of Braun and Clarke (2006, p.6) to analyse the qualitative data. The qualitative thematic analysis is the one which is dependent on the recognition of themes in qualitative data through codification (Arolker and Seale, 2012). The flexibility and the reliability of the thematic data analysis provided quality results because the writing process became part of the entire process by noting down good ideas and likely coding schemes throughout the process.

Finally, I followed the principles of qualitative research to achieve excellent trustworthiness, demonstrate credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The main argument for the groundwork for the theoretical, methodological approach and the design of the research depended on three critical objectives of Stiles (1999) to evaluate the qualitative study. They include the certitude of my research questions, the substantiation for selecting the team leaders and the members in multinational companies, and the apparent accounts for the methods I used to generate and analyse the qualitative data.

Nevertheless, the limitation of the study is the scope, where I used the multinational companies in the Netherlands only for the study. However, one cannot underestimate the general application of the findings because the literature review confirms them, which validates the feasibility of the results in general.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

The study contains five chapters, and the following shows the activities in each section.

Chapter one provides the research introduction, which examines the background of the study and the scope. The section defines the research problem, including the motivation and the evidence gap in the literature. Besides, the chapter examines the significance of the study, including the aims and the objectives of the study.

Chapter two examines the theoretical framework for the study by reviewing the methods, aims, processes, findings and underpinning theoretical constructs of previous research on the context of the study. The section finally identifies the literature gaps and ends with a conclusion which connects with the aims and the formulation of the research questions.

Chapter three examines the methodological approach by analysing the interpretative - qualitative approach leading to the qualitative research design. The chapter also discusses the ethics and the data generation techniques with the semi-structured interview and the observation process. The section finally assesses the five phases of the thematic data analysis of Braun and Clarke (2006) applied to generate the main findings of the research and ends with the examination of the reliability and validity of the study.

Chapter four provides the qualitative overarching conceptual findings on how leaders could contribute to the development of culturally diverse work teams and details the discussions of

the results as well. The chapter shows how the study adds, contributes and contrast the findings of the researchers.

Chapter five examines the conclusions and recommendations of the research by beginning with the assessment of the final findings for the theoretical framework, methodology and design, the answers to the research questions based on the results and their analyses. The chapter further provides the limitations of the research, examines the practical implications, and concludes with the suggestions for possible future studies.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section assists me to acquaint myself with the knowledge and insight on the adverse effects of cultural differences and how the leadership of culturally diverse work teams could develop intercultural competence to manage the problems in multinational companies. The literature review helps me to identify the gaps in knowledge and disputable challenges that my research hopes to address with new insight and contribute to achieving the aims of the study. The three fundamental concepts in my research topic upon which the literature review aims to analyse and expand knowledge for the study include cultural differences, intercultural competence and leadership of culturally diverse work teams. However, based on the discussions of researchers on the topic, other essential themes also emerged.

Cultural differences have become very complicated in the workplace due to the problems facing the members. The argument is that the continuous varying degree of the parameters of diverse workplace environment demands leadership dispositions which could position multicultural competence at a centre to progressively become an efficient and effective leader (Boboc, 2018). The argument presupposes that the culturally diverse work teams cannot be free from the problems of cultural differences. Subsequently, leaders should become knowledgeable about the influence of culture in their daily operations. For instance, globalisation influences the economy of the world, and this has motivated many organisations to internationalise to gain new markets and recruit workers from diverse cultural backgrounds but not without several challenges (Ascalon, Schleicher and Born, 2008). The connotation is that the teams have members coming from different cultural backgrounds, and they are struggling to manage the problems of cultural differences. Again, Holden, Michailova and Tietze, (2015) argue that business operations are increasingly taking place in various national and cultural boundaries. The demographic composition of the workforce in multinational companies has changed due to the purposes of ethnic diversity while the structure of the team also determines their success and poor performance (Aritz and Walker, 2010; Tung, 2008). The reasoning is that the success of the team regarding cultural differences depends on how best leaders manage the challenges of cultural differences successfully. Notably, Goodman (2012) shows that the teams face difficulties with decision-making, responsibilities, disagreements and accountability, which affect their effectiveness as a result of the failure to manage cultural differences effectively. The problems of the teams have increased the debate

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among researchers and practitioners regarding leadership's management of the challenges of cultural differences. The following sub-section examines the conceptualisation of culture to provide the fundamental background, insight and understanding of the problems of cultural differences in the team.

2.2 Conceptualisation of culture

Culture has been conceptualised by several authors differently due to its complex phenomenon in international business, and failing to understand its conceptualisation across diverse cultures could pose a problem for the team and how business transactions take place across borders (Minkov, 2013; Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Browaeys and Price, 2011; Hofstede and Hofstede, 2004; Peterson, 2004; Ailon-Souday and Kunda, 2003; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998; Schien, 1987; Hall, 1973; Kroeber and Kluckhorn, 1952; Wissler, 1920). For example, Hofstede and Hofstede (2004) define culture as the conjoint programming of the mind that set apart the members of one group of persons from the others. The connotation is that the members forming a group are likely to be programmed by them to discern the world differently, including themselves and others. To a large extent, Hofstede's definition is popular with cross-cultural research (Browaeys and Price, 2011), yet there are limitations regarding the roles of the individuals in the team. For instance, Holden, Michailova and Tietze (2015) argue that Hofstede's definition excludes the importance of the individual agency. The implication is that the concept lacks clear insight into how the individuals could perceive its influence among team members. Therefore, the definition of culture by Hofstede lacks critical insight into how the team could manage the individual cultural differences in the team because it concentrates on the collective approach of the group to the detriment of the individual cultural differences.

Comparatively, Ailon-Souday and Kunda (2003) argue about culture based on the advancement of the image of the individual considered as a merely the passive embodiment of a predetermined cultural template. The connotation is that culture is static but not dynamic, indicating that culture remains the same irrespective of new developments in society. Such limitation confirms the argument that individuals will be incapable of reflecting and changing due to their confinement to the boundaries of the software of the mind (Ailon, 2008).

Again, several researchers show that culture provides solutions in society. For instance, Browaeys and Price (2011) show that culture is a system containing a form of behaviour and

repairing the structure of exchanges which take place among members of a group. The solution concept of culture shares the assumption of Trompenaars and Hampden - Turner, (1998), although the process for the solution is missing. They define culture as the ways and means groups use to solve problems (Trompenaars and Hampden - Turner, 1998). The definition indicates that culture provides solutions to existing problems; regardless, they do not demonstrate their roles in the team since they connote a general application. However, Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) argue that culture could become the continuous implementation of an individual's actions and behaviours that contribute to sustainability. The limitation is that they fail to show how one could apply culture to achieve sustainability.

Other definitions of culture provide knowledge of value orientation, and predictions in society and such concept seem to impact culture's definition. The value orientations of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) and the predictions regarding personal issues of Inkeles and Levison (1969) have profoundly impacted researchers' and practitioner's definition of culture recently (Grosesch and Doherty, 2000). The value orientations connote that the society should address a few universal problems since the value-based remedies are limited and known universally yet, diverse cultures contain diverse choices among them. Besides, the definition shows that culture helps society to prepare for future problems. However, the concept could not demonstrate how the prediction should take place.

The definitions and discussions of culture above show a standard limitation of the attitudes, behaviour, norms, values, beliefs and practices of the individuals in culturally diverse work teams. Nevertheless, there are other researchers whose definitions seem to provide knowledge and understanding into individuals' roles in the team and as a result, contribute to achieving the goals of the study. (Minkov, 2013; Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Hall, 1973; Kroeber and Kluckhorn, 1952; Boas, 1930).

As an illustration, culture contains all results of the social habits of a community, the behaviour of the individuals regarding groups' influence and the effect of human activities impacted by their practices (Boas, 1930). The assumption is that culture could influence an individual's behaviour and the traditions of human beings in society. The implication is that individuals' attitudes and actions have a direct and indirect influence on daily operations in the team. In a similar perspective, (Hall, 1973; Kroeber and Kluckhorn, 1952) define culture as an entire set of social norms and responses which shape the behaviour of people usually achieved and taught earnestly and persistently. The knowledge from their definition indicates

that culture could guide individuals' attitude and behaviour in the team. That notwithstanding, the set of rules and behaviour patterns could be alien to others because cultural norms and values are not the same in every society. Like the concept of Boas (1930), the argument shows that culture could shape the moral values of people in the team by helping them to agree on what is right and wrong. Their conceptualisation justifies why team members perceive and interpret norms and values differently, and thus contribute to the main bone of contention regarding the challenges of cultural differences facing them in multinational companies. For instance, while the norms show the acceptable principles guiding attitudes and behaviour in society, the values explain the preferences of someone influencing his/her choices (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). In a similar view, Peterson (2004) argues that culture becomes the reasonably tight set of inner values and beliefs predominantly valued by members in given country or regions, and the noticeable effects they have on the people's outward behaviours and environment. The argument is that one could examine culture from the position of exerting a strong influence on an individual's behaviour (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012).

It is significant to note that an essential concept for this research is the one demonstrated by Minkov (2013) showing that culture falls into diverse perspectives, and this might have several merits. He argues that cultural analysts should decide which angle best suits the aims of their research to demonstrate them accordingly. Though the method of Minkov's concept is quantitative, this study uses a qualitative approach to apply the idea of (Minkov, 2013). For example, Minkov (2013) demonstrates the existence of two types of culture, namely; the kind which dwells in the individuals and those outside them (Singelis et al., 1999). They classify the culture which resides in the individuals as the subjective culture Triandis (1972), and therefore Hofstede also terms it as the software of the mind (Hofstede, 2001). The beliefs, values and internalised interaction patterns connect with the first type (Singelis et al., 1999). Therefore, the value of the subjective culture in the team becomes very relevant because it demonstrates the extent to which individual differences could create problems.

Regarding the second type, Minkov (2013) explains that it is made up of the human-made environment, involving everything made by people, including the institutions and the arts. Minkov argues about the subjective culture that exists in the mind of people. However, Hofstede (1980) also discusses the software of the mind to connote its collective programming. Nonetheless, Minkov (2013) claims that we should not accept all collective

programming of the mind with the argument that individual perspectives play significant roles. Howbeit, Hofstede (2001) seems to counter Minkov's view by showing that when people share the same values, they might fight against each other as far as they shared diverse identities. The argument suggests that different personalities in the team could create challenges, and this provides knowledge and insight into the behaviour pattern perspective of (Minkov, 2013).

To a large extent, anthropologists argue that the behaviour concept of culture regarding its modern definitions distinguishes between actual behaviour and abstract values, beliefs and perceptions of the world which lays behind the practice (Havilland, 1990). From this perspective, Minkov argues that culture is more related to values and beliefs that people apply to interpret their experience to generate their behaviour. The argument is essential for the teams due to the differences in the values and beliefs playing considerable roles in the challenges facing them. The answer to the practical question, according to Minkov (2013) is whether the cross-cultural analysts who find ways and means of illustrating cultural differences should compare behaviours, and according to him, the answer is in the affirmative. The assumption is that the behaviour patterns of culture relate to attitudes, beliefs and values that provide an understanding of the challenges created by cultural differences in the team.

The ongoing debates purport that researchers have provided several definitions of culture with different implications, but not all of them contribute to the aims of the study. The reason is that their concepts provide general knowledge and implications on the universal understanding of culture to the detriment of the specific roles about the individual perspective in the team instead. Therefore, applying them for the study could create misinformation. The misinformation of culture fulfils the argument of Venaik and Brewer (2016) that in management, several people perceive, get informed and acknowledge the impacts of culture wrongly and maintain cultural ignorance.

Conversely, the concepts of (Minkov, 2013; Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Hall, 1973; Kroeber and Kluckhorn, 1952; Boas, 1930) contribute very much to the aims of the study. The argument is that their concepts examine important cultural components and variables like norms, values, beliefs, standards, attitudes and behaviour and sentiments which provide fundamental understanding for why they could pose challenges for the team due to insight into their differences. Again, the concepts show that culture becomes a learning process

through acceptable practices for the team to infer from its history on how best to live and operate successfully. The rationale is that culture is dynamic, which keeps changing and guiding the members in the society to learn and adapt to the changes that bring with it. The concept provides fundamental knowledge and insight into the differences in culture, which could become advantageous and problematic to the team.

Besides, the various debates and arguments about the concepts also reveal that culture has received several definitions (Korabik, 2010; Kokt, 2003), and most of them provide a good understanding of its elements which add value for this study. Another point is that different literature in the field cited Kroeber and Kluckhohn's (1952) identification of 164 different definitions of culture (Spencer-Oatey 2012 and Doherty 2000), implying that culture attracts several meanings. The reasoning is that researchers encounter difficulties with consistency and clarity due to the complex nature of the term 'culture'. The situation depends on the complexity of culture that prevents a commonly accepted language for the description of the word (Grosesch and Doherty, 2000; Hofstede, 1983).

The diverse fields of research related to culture could play a role in the study because researchers come from different areas and cultural backgrounds possessing diverse perspectives on cultural norms and values (Grosesch and Doherty, 2000). For instance, various academic disciplines like sociology, anthropology and organisational behaviour have contributed to the multiple concepts and explanation of culture (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Schein, 1985). The knowledge and insight gained help to understand the differences in attitudes and behaviour, which are related to cultural differences. Regardless, one could derive that researchers' arguments about these definitions might be devoid of the understanding of the roles of social construct regarding the concept of culture, or they have underrated the dynamism of its functions in all spheres of life. Another insight developed from the above debates is that culture could become a way of life which has been learned from childhood to adulthood guiding individual's attitude, behaviour and shaping one's undertakings which could be carried on from one generation to another in a given society. Hence, leaders without intercultural competence skills could encounter challenges addressing the problems created by culture. Since culture forms the basis of the individual differences in the teams, understanding the theoretical models underpinning cultural differences for this research is very important, and the sub-theme below details this.

2.3 Theoretical models underpinning cultural differences

The challenges of cultural differences play essential roles in the goals of the study, and this makes it necessary to examine the theoretical models which underpin cultural differences to gain insight into the various arguments and findings for the study. The underlying reason is that the business of multinational companies involves several nations making culture as one of the most dominant factors creating problems and failures for them (Miroshnik, 2002). Since the roles of culture become very significant in multinational companies, failing to identify such purposes in the teams could create problems for them. Although researchers have developed several theories, concepts and models to explain cultural differences, this study considers some of them to see how they add value to the research (E.g., King, 2006; Douglas, 2004; House et al., 2004; Trompenaars, 1997; Hofstede, 1980; Kluckholn and Strodtbeck, 1961). The following sub-sections detail the analysis of the theoretical models.

2.3.1 The Value orientation theory

By applying a quantitative method to draw their inspirations from the social anthropology, Kluckholn and Strodtbeck (1961) for instance developed the six cultural dimensions which depended on the answers they obtained concerning human condition in the society. The framework includes the following; the nature of human beings, man's relationship with nature, time, doing or being cultures, individualism and collectivism, the privacy of space. The doing culture, for instance, denotes working hard to achieve results to gain rewards or promotion. By applying the concept of doing culture in teams in the Netherlands, a Dutch member, for instance, believes strongly in integrity, efficiency, directness and honesty at work (Janin, 2012). Howbeit, the challenge with the theory is that one cannot apply the concept in other cultures in some Asian countries like China, where some would prefer to socialise before proceeding to work. Such argument lays ground to question the feasibility of the general application of the theory. By using the concept of Kluckholn and Strodtbeck (1961), Schneider (2016) argues that unity connects primarily with human experiences, but diversity emerges from diverse sources of anxiety. The argument confirms the assumption of Kluckholn and Strodtbeck (1961) that culture becomes the remedy to universal problems of finding ways and means of adapting to the environment of people and being able to integrate.

The framework paves the way for cultural comparisons with regards to cultural dimensions, while the value orientations have also impacted attitudes to work in the teams (Browaeys and Price, 2011). Also, the theory has become a good source of inspiration to several researchers like (House et al. 2004; Hofstede 1980; Trompenaars, 1983). Despite that, the assumptions concentrate on national cultural differences to the detriment of cultural differences of the team members. Again, regarding the theory on the privacy of space, Nunez, Mahdi and Popma (2014) contend that what constitutes a private and a public domain differs between countries. Therefore, one could argue that the assumption does not explicitly demonstrate how one could apply culture to resolve the challenges emanated from individual cultural differences in the team.

2.3.2 The cultural dimensions of Trompenaars

The dimensions of Trompenaars similarly argue on variations in cultures which could identify on a selected module used to solve the problems at stake, revealing themselves as the dilemmas (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997). By applying the quantitative approach, they developed the seven dimensions. As an analogy, the Universalist culture relies on rules and regulations, while the Particularism culture instead prefers the establishment of relationships and unique circumstances. Despite the significances of the dimensions, their limitation is that the concept concentrates more on the identification of national cultural differences to the detriment of individual cultural perspectives in the team. Comparatively, the dimensions share similar assumptions with those of Kluckholn and Strodtbeck (1961) aiming to achieve global objectives of national cultural differences. Applying the theory to identify individual cultural differences in the team becomes problematic because individual cultural differences cannot depend on their national cultural differences entirely.

2.3.3 The cultural dimensions of Hofstede

The six cultural dimensions proposed by Hofstede (1980) seems to contribute to the research objectives more than the models examined already because the concept considers individuals and group's cultural differences in the team. By using the quantitative method, Hofstede (1980) developed the six cultural dimensions identified as follows; Power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity and femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long/short-term orientation, indulgence and restraint. The 'Power Distance' for instance measures the degree to which some members in society would recognise the fact that one

should accept power unequally. The concept could assist in differentiating between the democratic and the autocratic styles of leadership in the team because their members come from different national backgrounds with diverse cultural perspectives towards managers. With the low power distance culture in the Netherlands, for instance, de Waal et al. (2012) argue that people regard leaders who apply consensus in the team. However, this would be impossible in South Korea or China because culturally, their orientations focus more on high context leadership. Leaders could apply this insight to understand members' relationship with them. The concept of the individualism and the collectivism could also assist team leaders to recognise members' attitude and behaviour towards teamwork. Furthermore, the uncertainty avoidance concept provides insight into the challenges with planning in the team because of the principles of either accepting or avoiding chaotic situations. Typically, Hofstede's theory contributes to the aims of the study because cultural variables like individual values, beliefs, norms, attitudes, and behaviour provide insight into the differences of the team members.

Significantly, Beugelsdijk and Welzel (2018) argue that Hofstede's work has paved the way for researchers to persistently quantify cultural differences between countries and this has caused a surge in empirical studies regarding the effects of culture on the operations and performance of multinational firms (Kirkman et al., 2006). The argument is that the dimensions have contributed to the understanding of cross-cultural management. At the same time, Ailon (2008) shows that the framework has impacted cross-cultural management by shaping thoughts and practice, while Kolman et al. (2003) also postulate that there is, therefore, the influence of differences in national cultures on management. All these connote that the framework of Hofstede contributes immensely in analysing cultural differences in the team in various ways. The concept has developed our knowledge with regards to cross-cultural differences in the team since they have effects on business and management (McKenna, 1998). Again, Holden, Michailova and Tietze (2015) also argue that the dimensions influence the theory and practice of international management and intercultural communication while attracting over 100,000 citations making him a celebrated social scientist.

Despite the functional roles of the dimensions, there are gaps one could not ignore, and research confirms their limitations. The general application of Hofstede's dimensions could be false and misleading because they are weak to resolve internal conflicts and change (McSweeney, 2002). Again, the framework assumes that culture is concrete in uniform,

without contradiction, and cannot be changed (McSweeney, 2013). As a result, Holden, Michailova and Tietze (2015) contend that Hofstede's dimensions show a minimum, static and a vast image of national cultures which could be false and a misleading. Based on the above debate, Ailon (2008) argues that the definition of the dimensions in addition to the links with other values is devoid of neutrality which motivated Hofstede further examine the 'Large Powers Distance Countries'.

That notwithstanding, employees cannot keep mute under the extreme management styles of leaders who possess features of high power distance countries in the team within modern organisations. On the contrary, the dimensions' value for the study becomes more relevant in understanding individual attitudes and behaviour towards leadership, how the individuals could understand individual differences regarding teamwork and the extent to which the members could realise their emotions towards misunderstandings and conflicts in the team. Although (Maleki and de Jong, 2014; Hofstede, 2006) show that the total number of the dimensions has also become a subject of debate regarding their use among researchers, some think that they could better explain the variance among different cultures (Triandis, 2001). Also, the framework could help to understand the communication styles and differences among the members. To a large extent, the application of Hofstede's theory for my study is more feasible due to the roles of team leaders, individual values, attitudes, beliefs and other cultural elements connecting actively with the context of my research.

2.3.4 The theory of cultural mosaic

The application of the theory of 'cultural mosaic' in understanding cultural differences provides the most contribution to this study because of several factors. In the first place, the 'cultural mosaic' concerns the living together of the ethnic members, languages and diverse culture in a given society (Douglas, 2004). The cultural mosaic concept provides knowledge and insight into how members with different cultural backgrounds could work together and the way and manner leaders of culturally diverse work teams could develop insight into the challenges facing them. The argument is that it corroborates the assumptions of multiculturalism, which is different from the idea behind the assimilation concept of the melting pot in America (Burgess and Burgess, 2005). Unlike the other theoretical framework, the ideology of cultural mosaic depends on the assumption that people from different cultural backgrounds could live together in one place, making it essential to respect their cultural differences. Metaphorically, Chuapetcharasopon et al. (2018) compare that to decorative arts

by demonstrating it to be a collection of extraordinary individual segments of glass or stone named 'tesserae' organised to produce a unified entirely (King, 2006). The assumption has been considered by Chuapetcharasopon et al. (2018) as an essential metaphor for the formulation of multicultural teams. They further argue that the individuals in culturally diverse work teams maintain their individual qualities and features which assist in a unified and substantial being. By so doing, team members would be able to respect their cultural differences. For example, Sam and Berry (2010) add value to the mosaic theory by showing that the cultures of the newcomers are concerned, retained and incorporated into the host culture, creating the possibilities for groups contact and identity integration. The advantage is that the team could achieve cultural integration, adaptation and acceptance, which could promote unity in the team. Again, the members could accomplish the process of living together in harmony to prevent cultural clashes, which usually affect their progress. For illustrative purposes, time and lateness create problems among team members, but the identified integration concept of cultural mosaic could contribute to building understanding to resolve the issues. The assumption verifies the argument that different expositions of time and delay could lead to different purpose time gaps considered acceptable in specific instances (van Eerde and Azar, 2019).

Furthermore, the cultural mosaic theory assumes that the individual team members play essential roles to achieve the performance and the energy by preserving and expressing their unique cultural values, beliefs, and traditions. The differences and the challenges associated with cultural elements like beliefs, values, norms, and traditions become the main bone of contention in culturally diverse work teams. Because of this reason, cross-cultural psychology applies this metaphor to demonstrate individuals with multiple cultural attachments (Chao and Moon, 2005). From this perspective, Chuapetcharasopon et al. (2018) argue that the individuals achieve perceptions of their cultural surroundings at work regarding how they see their work teams as the environment which accepted and utilised their cultural differences in their daily work.

There are three dimensions of cultural mosaic beliefs which share the aims of the research, and also contribute to the rationale for using it for this research. Regarding the mosaic views, Chuapetcharasopon et al. (2018) progress the argument that a 'mosaic' psychological environment subsists as a team framework. The individuals use the team to leverage cultural differences to reinforce their work, candidly conveying and agreeing to the expression of

cultural differences, and finally recognising the depth of the cultural differences among them. Here also, Leonardelli et al. (2010) corroborate the assumption that the theoretical perspective for the cultural mosaic framework includes fundamental social classifications proceedings which delineate culture group boundaries underscoring individual uniqueness and stimulate the identification of the team.

Another argument of Chuapetcharasopon et al. (2018) is that members in teams could infer on their differences with regards to their values, points of view, beliefs, and experiences to promote their work processes further. The concept explains that when leaders understand the differences in individual values, beliefs, perspectives and other cultural practices, they avoid the negative impacts on the work process to achieve excellent performance. Again, it also supports the claim that the procedure becomes cultural utilisation, a framework which grasps if members discern their team as making use of the members' unique cultural values, perspectives, and experiences in completing their work responsibilities (Chuapetcharasopon et al., 2018). The assumption is that members could develop a sharp positive image about their cultural differences psychologically. The multicultural team might sustain diverse ways of thinking to nurture an innovative frame of mind Crotty and Brett (2012), as well as contributing to the development of broader viewpoints on challenges in the team (Watson et al., 1993). For example, the application of the cultural mosaic concept could craft procedure which might equalise, blend and align with the different values in the team instead of restricting to one approach (Adair et al., 2006).

The cultural mosaic theory further provides insight and knowledge into cultural acceptance and expression concept for the study. For example, the theory argues that the team could acknowledge and motivate themselves to freely express their different cultural values, cultural beliefs, and practices (Chuapetcharasopon et al., 2018). The self-verification theory (Swann, 2011) equally argues about the necessity of cultural acceptance and expression to enable the team members to perceive being understood by their colleagues, and also to prevent the pressure connected with inhibiting their genuine attitudes and beliefs or accepting the dominant culture.

It is significant to note that Chao and Moon (2005) proposed a new scientific method to be the most suitable venue by which one could observe the intricacies of culture in contemporary organisations. The proposal denotes that cultural mosaic could become a metaphoric conceptualisation of several pointers of cultures, exploited to portray the

uniqueness of the individual in the team. Based on the principles of the cultural mosaic, cultural behaviours might seem disordered or capricious, however elemental compositions within the cultural mosaic could assist researchers in determining and prognosticating behaviour patterns in the team (Chao and Moon, 2005). The concept implies that cultural mosaic could provide strategies for researchers to study the patterns of behaviour connected with cultural differences in the team. Chao and Moon (2005) confirm that cultural mosaic theory helps to develop an integrative conceptualisation to understand the impact of culture on behaviour.

By summarising the theoretical models, the various debates and arguments clearly show that the frameworks of (House et al., 2004; Trompenaars, 1997; Kluckholn and Strodtbeck, 1961) demonstrate useful information about cultural differences. On the other hand, their assumptions and implications could not contribute much to achieving the aims of the study because of their emphasis on national cultural perspectives. In comparison, the work of (Douglas, 2004; Hofstede, 1980) contributes to the goals and objectives of the study, with Douglas's (2004) cultural mosaic contributing significantly than all the other works due to the significant roles in understanding individual cultural differences in the team. The work of other researchers have also provided more insight into his assumptions and arguments (Chuapetcharasopon et al., 2018; Leonardelli et al., 2010; Burgess and Burgess, 2005; Ely and Thomas, 2001). Moreover, the findings of Chao and Moon (2005) also authenticate the value of cultural mosaic for the study, showing how cultural mosaic provide insight into the knowledge of research within the individuals including the examination of interactions among them. For example, regarding the team level, the model could also be used to research individual interactions with the team, including research among groups. Considering the context of the study, the combination of the mosaic cultural framework and the application of qualitative research methods in using Hofstede's model could contribute immensely in achieving the goals of the study. Here, the cultural variables, insight and knowledge demonstrated by the frameworks above provide useful guidance and directions for the study. The argument of Earley (1987) confirms my proposition showing that the dimensions could expand for the context of intercultural training of team managers including the antecedents to values like individualism and collectivism (Earley, 1993). The argument further validates the inclusion of Hofstede's framework for this study because the application of the two models could complement each other and contribute to understanding cultural differences in the team.

Empirical research authenticates the differences in value regarding the roles of culture (Hofstede, 1991). The problems created by cultural differences in the team are associated with the difficulties in understanding individual values, attitudes, beliefs, and other cultural variables. Therefore, developing the ability to understand the differences in the above cultural variables among team members could contribute to the achievement of intercultural competence. The cultural dimensions of Hofstede and cultural mosaic share similar assumptions with multiculturalism regarding language, ethnicity, nationality, etc. Such assumptions add value to the study, and the sub-section below provides detailed examination about multiculturalism.

2.4 Multiculturalism

The 'cultural mosaic' theory shows similar assumptions with multiculturalism for the study (Burgess and Burgess, 2005). The argument is that the concept assumes that people from different cultural backgrounds could live together in one place by respecting their cultural differences.

The term 'Multiculturalism' has received several definitions and insights by various researchers (Modood, 2012; 2010; 2007; 2005; Tully, 2008; Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003; Parekh, 2000). For example, multiculturalism has been analysed from the perspective of contextual because it is concerned with particular issue politically including cultural, religion and ethnic diversity and how best to adopt that in a given state (Modood, 2012). The argument is that political theory discusses a theme which usually emerges in a prevailing circumstance. The political ideology attached to it has no value with cultural differences in the team, making it impossible to contribute to the goals of the study. The reasoning substantiates the argument that contextualism deals with a range of political debates (Lægaard, 2015). Besides, Parekh (2000) also shows that multiculturalism is a form of political theory and a model for political practice in society.

By applying Modood's (2007) concept of multiculturalism, Lægaard demonstrates the evidence that multicultural needs to resolve the biggest question of the relationship between politics and religion (Lægaard, 2015). The reason is that multiculturalism in Europe paved the way for secularism, which indicates a detachment between politics and religion (Lægaard, 2012). However, Parekh (2000) argues that multiculturalism concept depends on the ideology of cultural differences and intercultural relationships that create problems in the society. For

instance, Parekh's (2000) concept addresses issues with values, individual rights and tolerance with regards to diversity in a given community. His theories paved the way for discussions between cultures on state institutions' levels and more elusive sphere of societal attitudes. The concept also shows the same assumption between culture and multiculturalism, and therefore, cultural diversity could become the means through which one could achieve a good life. The framework helps to assess and evaluate the respect individuals could offer for each other because the individuals should get the ability to criticise their culture and that different culture could correct and supplement each other in culturally diverse work teams. The argument further validates why Burgess and Burgess (2005) argue on the same assumption between multiculturalism and cultural mosaic (Chuapetcharasopon et al. 2018; Douglas, 2004) because they all aim to promote respect for cultural differences in the team, and therefore, assisting in providing insight into the study.

From a different perspective, Hall (2000) shows that multiculturalism resolves the problems in society and of governance emanating from diverse cultural communities living together by holding and safeguarding their original identities and culture. In a further argument, he shows that 'multiculturalism', instead demonstrates the strategies and policies applied to resolve the challenges of diversity and multiplicity in a given multicultural society (Hall, 2000). Multiculturalism helps one to understand the distinct cultural members in the team, including critical cultural elements like language, ethnicity, nationality and race. The problems associated with cultural differences are prevalent in multinational companies, and Hodgetts and Luthans (2003) argue that they recruit workers from the whole world. On account of this, there are several issues with multiculturalism in the teams which become relevant for this study. One could argue here that multiculturalism could become a moral value and how to invigorate our perception and judgment of different culture. The demonstration of multiculturalism by Parekh (2000) further adds value for this study by providing insight and knowledge into individual values, respect, guides and demonstrate the roles of cultural differences in the team.

The multiculturalism concept proposed by Hodgetts and Luthans (2003) also contributes to the understanding of individual cultural differences in the team. In the first place, they identify 'Domestic Multiculturalism' as a type where one could locate distinct cultural and linguistic groups within a particular nation (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). They argue that domestically, cultural differences could exist among indigenous people, and this is prevalent

in several countries. In Switzerland, for example, there are several ethnic communities like the French, German, Italian and Romansch (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). The argument presupposes that even within a given country, one is most likely to experience cultural differences due to differences in norms, values, traditions and practices among them. The implication for the study is that when multinational companies employ diverse people from different national backgrounds, cultural differences will increase in the team, and this could create several challenges if team leaders fail to manage them effectively. The 'Group Multiculturalism' is another type categorised in several ways, but the most common ones include the following; homogenous groups, the token group, bicultural group and the multicultural group (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). The homogenous groups, for instance, are the type where members share the same backgrounds with similar ways and means of perceiving, interpreting and evaluating issues (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). The definition connotes that due to similarities, members do not encounter any problem with cultural differences. Despite the reasoning, the argument seems to contradict the impacts of the similarities assumption since it equally shows that people could experience the challenges of cultural differences with domestic multiculturalism. Therefore, one could argue here that the homogenous group is also likely to encounter issues with cultural differences unless the assumptions explicitly clarify the context of the members forming that group. Nonetheless, the limitation of the premises is that the concept lacks knowledge of individual cultural differences in the team.

On the other hand, the 'Token group', is the type where all members of the group have the same background except one member (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). The assumption is that when a decision favours the majority, they could have their way most of the times. An example could be a team consisting of nine British and one Dutch investment bankers in the same team. The assumption is that the majority of the members could share similar views than the one person, and this could create problems. The concept could provide an understanding of why sub-culture occurs when the minorities in the team do not share the views of the majority. They could feel excessively manipulated and cheated during decision making and other operational practices in the organisation. The connotations of sub-culture justify why the team experiences problems because it shows the culture within the central one for the team's daily operation. Comparatively, Hodgetts and Luthans (2003) argue that the 'Bicultural group' has two distinct members with the same equal number of representations such as four Dutch professionals and four British professional forming a team to accomplish

a task. With this type of group, the conflict could be more when the team fails to manage the differences among the team. The denotion is that there could be two-division among them when the two distinct members do not agree with each other.

Notwithstanding the premise behind the bicultural group, Hodgetts and Luthans's (2003) assumptions of the 'Multicultural group' show the type where members come from three or more different ethnic backgrounds like the UK, the Netherlands, Ghana and USA. The assumption postulates that the members come from different countries with diverse values, norms, beliefs and practices. An increase in the diversity of the team members might minimise the same perception among the members (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). The postulation shows that a team with diverse cultural background encounters more challenges with cultural differences than those with fewer cultural backgrounds. The multicultural group concept seems to give more insight and knowledge into cultural differences because failing to understand different forms and patterns of communication, perception, beliefs, and practices could pose a considerable challenge in the team. The rationale also underscores the various debates regarding leadership roles and intercultural competence because the problems emanating from cultural differences are complex to manage. Diverse forms of communication in different cultures influence leadership styles among cultures (Bell and Riol, 2017). Besides, Plessis (2012) supports the argument that leaders of multicultural teams should develop unique expertise than the usual teamwork. The rationale is that the multicultural team setup creates a unique set of challenges emerging from intercultural conflict and other related problems that require active management (Plessis, 2012).

In summary, the researchers' arguments above indicate diverse concepts for understanding multiculturalism with different implications, yet not all of them contributes to the objectives of the study (E.g., Lægaard, 2015; 2012; Modood, 2012; 2007). The argument is that their assumptions do not share much knowledge of how cultural differences affect the team, but instead, they over-concentrated on issues regarding political ideologies. Contrary, the work of (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003; Parekh, 2000; Hall, 2000) contribute significantly to the understanding of cultural differences and the challenges they pose for the team. For example, the argument for the multicultural teams shows that people from different cultural backgrounds could demonstrate diverse cultural attitudes and behaviour, which demands leadership with intercultural competence skills and knowledge to manage them.

The ongoing discussions show that the members in the teams possess different cultural backgrounds, and empirical studies also confirm the impacts of cultural differences on them. It does become imperative to understand the advantages and drawbacks of the team as a result of cultural differences, and the following sub-section examines them.

2.5 The benefits and disadvantages of culturally diverse work teams

The elements from the proponents of (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003; Parekh 2000) regarding multiculturalism connote that the team might be encountering some challenges although the combination of their ideas, talents and other factors could benefit them in several ways if leaders effectively manage their differences. Based on this, it has become significant to examine the benefits and the disadvantages of culturally diverse work teams to explore their impacts for the study. Several researchers have provided several arguments for the advantages and disadvantages of culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies due to cultural differences (Liou and Lan, 2018; Vaibhav, 2012; Browaeys and Price, 2011; Xiao and Boyd, 2010; Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Brett et al., 2006; Scachaf, 2005; Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003; Thomas and Bendixen, 2000; Ivencevich and Mazneski, 2000).

Cultural differences contribute to the improvement of creativity and innovation in the team (Li et al., 2013; Mumford, 2012). The argument postulates that the team members possess diverse cultural backgrounds which provides them with the advantages of enjoying creativity and innovation. The reasoning corroborates that culture builds the capabilities, values, beliefs, and glimpse of the individuals resulting in innovative and creative behaviours and results (Bechtoldt et al., 2010; Goncalo and Staw, 2006; Erez and Nouri, 2010). Again, Liou and Lan (2018) postulate that critical contextual components and team processes which make cultural norms remarkable at distinct phases of innovative products in work teams could be used to comprehend cultural differences regarding their creativity (Li et al., 2013; De Dreu, 2010). Notwithstanding these significant benefits, failing to manage the problems of cultural differences could affect the creativity and innovation in the team, and this calls for them to address their challenges.

There are two conceptual distinctions which are crucially significant for perceiving and understanding the cultural impacts with regards to creativity (Liou and Lan, 2018). Firstly, the concept demonstrates the originality and the importance of creative products (Amabile, 1986). Secondly, creative production includes both the development of ideas and selection

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(Chiu and Kwan, 2010). The distinctions denote that the cultural impacts on creativity depend on originality and new ideas showing positive effects. The limitation of the concept is that one cannot identify the cultural process applied for creativity in the team. All the same, several scholars (i.e., Li et al., 2013; De Dreu, 2010; Erez and Nouri, 2010; Zhou and Su, 2010), argue that culture might exert more significant influence on the collection of ideas than its creation. One could also show that the impact of culture on both could be the same depending on the prevailing circumstances at stake. To the most considerable extent, the application of the conceptual distinctions in understanding the cultural impacts with regards to creativity and innovation is significant because one could understand the positive effects of cultural differences on the team. The conceptual distinctions affirm the argument that culture affects how individuals relate to, behave, and perform in workgroups (Liou and Lan, 2018).

In a different perspective, Ivencevich and Mazneski (2000) show that the teams are very creative, make the right decisions, useful and productive. The benefits share similar assumptions with those proposed by Liou and Lan (2018) because they both emphasise on creativity and production concept. The argument is that the members possess unique individual skills, knowledge and competence, and by bringing these together in an efficient way, they could perform very well. The reasoning fulfils the argument that the multicultural team provides more excellent and innovative ideas (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). The assumption is that multicultural teams manage complex problems better than monocultural teams due to the combination of their unique individual knowledge, skills and experience. Here also, one cannot undermine the negative impact of the challenges of cultural differences on the decision-making process of culturally diverse work teams, so leaders need to take precautions on such effects. Another positive perspective is that the combination of their unique ideas helps the team to provide essential solutions and recommendations, while they could also prevent groupthink. The Groupthink is the social conformity and pressures which are exerted on individuals in a group to achieve compliance to attain consensus (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). The definition assumes that different perceptions, values and ideas of the members help them to prevent groupthink since they are unlikely to agree on issues which might not help them. The argument shows that one should not ignore the significant roles of culturally diverse work teams despite the challenges facing them as a result of cultural differences (Thomas and Bendixen, 2000).

On the other hand, the team faces numerous drawbacks in multinational companies due to the complexity of culture and failure to manage their differences. By using the concept of national cultural diversity in teamwork, Han and Beyerlein (2016) argue that one usually depicts culture as a two-edged sword in multinational companies, and the connotation is that the team could benefit and also suffer from cultural differences. The national culture concept might have significant effects on how the individuals discern information to work with fellow members since they could filter information with regards to their cultural lenses which could lead to misinterpretations (Dreo, Kunkel, and Mitchell, 2002). The argument depends on the perspective of national cultural differences and their impacts on communication in the team. It assumes that cultural differences create the challenges of miscommunication; however, it does not demonstrate the roles of the result of the individuals in culturally diverse work teams. The teams face huge problems with both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication, and the argument is that the direct and indirect communications are significant problems facing them (Browaeys and Price, 2011; Xiao and Boyd, 2010; Brett et al., 2006). The expectation is that the team thinks and acts in similar ways to accomplish the task; nevertheless, this becomes very difficult for them and therefore resulting in misunderstanding and confusion which affect their work.

Hall's concept of the high and low context of communication among the team members also provides insight into the challenges of communication in the team (Hall and Hall, 1990). The concept shows that while the low context of interaction emphasises on the direct form of communication, the high context instead believes in an implicit approach to communication. In the Western world, the culture of communication is mostly straightforward and explicit, while it is indirect and implicit in some other countries (Vaibhav, 2012). The connotation is that there could be communication challenges among team members who come from Western Europe and Asians if they fail to manage their differences, and they are related to cultural differences. Despite the importance of Hall's concept, its general application to all cultures could be questionable to some extent. For example, some Dutch team members use implicit communication during discussions, although the Dutch prefer explicit communication generally. Communication norms are problems facing the teams (Kokt, 2003; Berger, 1996) and failing to understand their differences creates misunderstandings. The explication reaffirms the argument that one of the significant failures of the teams concerns how to deal with the 'social-emotional' aspects of interaction, which includes working with several personalities, different learning styles and lack of commitment from each other (Lingham,

Richley and Serlavos, 2009). Their reasoning presupposes that if the team fails to manage weak interactions, emotional sentiments increase, and this could negatively affect their commitment, trust and performance. The issue with their argument is that they fail to show how to identify the communication norms among people from different cultural background. Despite the limitation of the preceding discussion, Hodgetts and Luthans (2003) argue that miscommunication leads to confusion and disagreements in the team and this results in negative performance. Again, Vaibhav (2012) contributes to the debates on the adverse effects of cultural differences in the team weak by showing that interactions create misunderstandings or deep frustration because issues with the accent of the non-native speakers, limited fluency and use of translation sometimes affect the team.

Studies show that miscommunication generates more problems for the team, and leaders should address them to achieve their goals. Miscommunications could lead to challenges with cohesion among team members, and the rationale is that unity becomes the forces which bind individuals to each other (Wright and Drewery, 2006 a). The analysis denotes that the outcome of cohesion is bonding, and this assumes that lack of cohesion could lead to disintegration in the team. Here also, Wright and Drewery (2006 b) support the argument that they are less cohesive than homogenous groups. The reason is that homogenous groups consist of members who share similar characteristics, and this assumption could be explained by the 'similarity theory' that stipulates that people feel a stronger attraction to those who are most familiar to them (Nahemow and Lawton, 1975). The analysis validates the conclusion of Wright and Drewery (2006) that the absence of such similarity could create cohesion. The argument for cohesion challenges in multicultural teams (Wright and Drewery, 2006; Nahemow and Lawton, 1975) seem valid, yet one could equally argue that homogenous group could also face difficulties in cohesion because of different opinions among the members.

In a different perspective, Stahl, Maznevski, et al. (2010) show that the adverse effects of culturally diverse teams include poor social integration and increased level of conflicts. The conflicts level in the team is problematic, and this affects the teams' performance. The limitation of this effect is that the researchers did not show how conflicts occur. The results support the work of Han and Beyerlein's (2016) concept of the 'Social Attraction Theory' to demonstrate that the teams could show poor team performance as a result of differences in values, beliefs, and attitudes (Mannix and Neale, 2005). The concept is very relevant for the

study because the individual cultural differences with regards to certain critical cultural elements like values, beliefs and attitudes contribute to the understanding of the challenges created in the team. Besides, several researchers (e.g., Harrison and Klein, 2007; Jehn et al., 1999) attribute the problems of cultural differences team members to the differences in values and assumptions instead of the differences in demographics. Differences in individual values and assumptions are complicated because of their cultural implications. Leaders failure to perceive and understand their effects on the team could make their responsibilities difficult. The argument of (Harrison and Klein, 2007; Jehn et al., 1999) is very significant for the study because leaders could develop insight into how cultural variables like norms, values and beliefs influence the attitudes and behaviour in the team.

Studies also show that there is a strong relationship between cohesion and conflicts in the team due to cultural differences. By way of illustration, lack of cohesion creates conflicts and formation of subgroups among culturally diverse work teams (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010: Scachaf, 2005). The team could face problems with disunity, unaccomplished targets and poor results. Such argument upholds the conclusion that culturally diverse work teams incur many more failures than homogeneous groups (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Scachaf, 2005, p. 49). A framework developed to explain the causes of conflicts in the team attribute the challenges to animosity and interpersonal differences. For instance, relationship conflict is the cause of resentment between group members due to various interpersonal incompatibilities of the team members (Wright and Drewery, 2006). Such a situation shows how inconsistencies could create difficulties in the team when they do not examine and manage them well, and this informs leadership to address them. Therefore, Jehn (1995) suggests that this is relevant for studies on multi-national groups where cultural differences prevent cohesion in the team. Subsequently, Wright and Drewery (2006) conclude that the most crucial factor in the success of small groups is cohesion. Despite the assumption, one should not forget that the problems in a team do not only depend on the size of the members but how best the root cause of the issues are identified and these differences well managed.

It is worthy to note that the root causes of conflicts have become a subject of debate among researchers due to their roles in the team. Based on the review of the classical and foundational theories, conflicts in the team could be analysed under two models namely; 'the process and the structural models' (Appelbaum, Shapiro, and Elbaz, 1998). The structural framework examines the parameters for conflict such as frustration, communication,

structure, and so on. However, Thomas (1976) argues that the structural model analyses conflict under certain characters such as behavioural inclination, social pressure, incentive pressure, and so on. Such analysis infers the fact that the frustrations and the disagreements in the team contribute immensely to their conflicts. The limitation of the classical foundational theories for the research is that it fails to show how the individual team members create the conflicts explicitly. Howbeit, the framework provides insight and knowledge for this study because it could demonstrate how failing to understand the differences could result in frustrations, misunderstanding and challenges with cohesion in the team.

In a similar assumption, cultural diversity could intensify inherent conflicts in culturally diverse work teams and development (Appelbaum, Shapiro and Elbaz, 1998). By applying the cultural dimension of Hofstede (1980), researchers argue that cultural diversity could intensify inherent conflicts in culturally diverse work teams and development (Appelbaum, Shapiro, and Elbaz, 1998). The problem with the assumption for the inherent conflict is how the intensification takes place, yet it contributes to knowledge of the issues affecting the team. For instance, when the team comprises German, Nigerian, American and Arabian workers, the differences with regards to their cultural orientations such as the high power versus the low power distance, high and low uncertainty avoidance and masculinity versus the femininity are likely to create conflict. The connotation is that the process of disputes in the team establishes a considerable challenge, and this substantiates the argument that culture influences the perception of conflict of group members as well as its management styles (Appelbaum, Shapiro, and Elbaz, 1998). The rationale supports the reasoning that since culture differs in terms of the value centred on harmony during relationships, the context of culture becomes significant in the impact of conflict on performance (Cooper and Watson, 2011; Triandis, 1994). The empirical studies of Wall and Nolan (1986) show that dissatisfaction and conflict in task-oriented groups could increase perceived conflict when inequality perception rises. The assumption is that mono-cultural teams encounter less friction due to limited cultural differences.

The perceptual problems are other challenges facing culturally diverse work teams apart from conflicts and their processes, and this authenticates the argument that when the members meet, they sometimes face difficulties with preconceived stereotypes (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). One could argue from the premise of superiority versus inferiority complex whereby some members believe they are more superior to those they assumed to be inferior in the

team. The team suffers from unequal power distribution, inequality and discrimination (Kelsey, 2000). When team leaders lack knowledge of cultural differences, there is the likelihood that they might favour some members at the expense of others. Such attitudes could inhibit individuals from exploring their unique talents, and this also acknowledges that teams can suffer decreased innovation and productivity (Linnehan and Konrad, 1999). Although the argument of the researchers regarding power distribution, inequality and discrimination seem significant to the problems in the team, the problem is that it fails to show how the individual team members contribute to such challenges. Comparatively, Vaibhav (2012) discusses that the team encounters challenges with different attitudes regarding hierarchy and authority. The assumption is that when the majority of the members are from an egalitarian culture, those from the hierarchical background might even feel humiliated. The rationale is that such members are familiar with different treatment based on their status in the organisation, and they are uncomfortable in the flat organisation (Vaibhav, 2012). The power distance concept of Hofstede (1980) reaffirms that the members who are more familiar with the leadership style of the high context power are more likely to feel comfortable with such leaders than those with the low context leadership styles. Despite the argument, Vaibhav's assertion seems to consider the context of the team members to the detriment of team leaders because those who believe in high context approach are more unlikely to succeed when managing members with low context leadership styles. Different attitudes toward hierarchy and authority are a problem in teams consisting of people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Xiao and Boyd, 2010; Brett et al., 2006). Such dissimilarities could breed several challenges in the team, and this supports the argument about their problems with decision making because conflicting norms for making decisions is a problem in cross-cultural teams (Xiao and Boyd, 2010; Brett et al., 2006). Again, some members prefer planing very extensively before deciding for fear of making mistakes, but this could lead to long delays and time-wasting in accomplishing the work of the team. The differences in the decision-making process sometimes become a challenge for the team Vaibhav (2012), and the consequence is that they can waste time, energy, enforce lower performance norms, create bad decisions, stress and frustration (Hackman, 1987).

The teams face numerous problems with trust among themselves and their leaders due to cultural differences. According to Rousseau et al. (1998:395), trust is 'a psychological state encompasses the purpose to acknowledge susceptibility hinged on positive anticipations of the goals or behaviour of another'. The challenge with the trust concept is that one cannot

identify the process for the trust issues among the members of the team. All the same, the definition assumes that lack of trust in a team results in a rejected vulnerable situation with the least issue which is deemed contrary to another person which can destroy relationships. Again, one cannot underestimate the significant roles of trust in the team. Trust provides substantial functions in achieving sustainable relations among members who find themselves in ambiguous circumstances that take place among those from different cultural backgrounds (Saunders et al., 2010). The significant roles postulate that the lack of trust can destroy sustainable relationships among team members. People with diverse cultural backgrounds exhibit different values and beliefs, peculiar behaviours, as well as incompatible assumptions, and this could work against effective interactions and fruitful collaboration (Saunders et al., 2010). The consequential effect includes misunderstandings, shame, disconcertment, feelings of low self-efficacy, and even psychological distress among the team members (Saunders et al., 2010). Besides, the team encounters problems with little satisfaction, commitment and trust (Jackson and Ruderman, 1995; Ng and Tung, 1998). The above arguments denote that failing to resolve the challenges creating mistrust could affect the progress of the team in many ways because it becomes the symbol of hope embracing them together.

In summary, the critical review of researchers' argument shows that the adverse effects of cultural differences on culturally diverse work teams far exceed the positive ones because cultural differences are complicated. Leadership needs intercultural competence skills and knowledge to manage them effectively to achieve their goals. Researchers show that miscommunication is the major challenge facing the team and failing to address such problems could affect their progress. To solve such issues, Hall and Hall's (1990) model becomes essential for this research because it could explain the causes of miscommunication among them. The 'Social Attraction Theory' Mannix and Neale (2005) and 'the process and the structural models' (Appelbaum, Shapiro, and Elbaz, 1998) provide knowledge and insight into the research. The models explain how the differences in values, norms, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour in the team contribute to conflicts. Since conflicts further result in other problems like challenges with cohesion, trust and perceptual issues, the application of the model could play significant roles for this study. The importance of the model to the research fulfils the argument that cultural differences have impacts on a variety of team processes and affective reactions, with consequential effects on their performance (Bell et al., 2011; Mannix and Neale, 2005; Earley and Gibson, 2002; Marks, Mathieu and Zaccaro, 2000; Williams and O'Reilly, 1998; Lawrence, 1997). Although all forms of diversity create difficulties for the

teams, cultural differences pose one of the most challenging issues in recent times (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Foldy, 2004). Individuals might possess good knowledge of particular specific culture, yet they might lack the attitudes, skills and the abilities to effectively employ the experience in the team (Earley and Ang, 2003).

Researchers arguments show that cultural differences create numerous problems for the teams, so they have proposed several models to manage the challenges of cultural differences in the team effectively. The section below examines them in details to see how they could provide knowledge and insight into the goals of the study.

2.6 Intercultural competence

The enormous problems encountered by the teams as a result of cultural differences have generated debates on how best to manage these challenges effectively. Consequently, many researchers and practitioners have thought-through intercultural competence as the indispensable tools needed to become successful in the cross-cultural environment (Johnson et al., 2006; Johnson, Lenartowicz and Apud 2006). Several researchers have proposed diverse models to manage the challenges of cultural differences to operate successfully in multicultural teams (Alon et al., 2016; Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009; Thomas et al., 2008; Rathje, 2007; Deardorff, 2006; Matveev and Milter, 2004; Early and Ang, 2003; Bennett, 1998; Hamilton et al., 1998; Ting-Toomey and Kurogi, 1998; Byram, 1997; Fantini, 1995; Dinges, 1983; McCroskey, 1982; Spitzberg, 1983).

Nonetheless, studies confirm the disagreement among researchers on the most reliable model to apply in addressing the challenges of cultural differences in culturally diverse work teams because they need to establish a clear context for the application of the model. Such an argument substantiates the goal of the study by examining them to identify the one most applicable for the research. Therefore, the findings of Geller and Phillips (2019) authenticate intercultural competence for the leaders because of the argument that in this context, our achievements depend on the decipherment of our inferred beliefs, values, and assumptions which direct our conducts. The acknowledgement that being effective with others depends on knowing, fulfilling and embracing difference (Fisher-Yoshida and Geller, 2009). Again, the accepted definition of intercultural competence testifies to the argument that it is the key to remedying the challenges of cultural differences because they agree that it is the ability needed to perform in a different culture effectively (Gertsen, 1990). Besides, Leung, Ang and

Tan (2014) discuss that intercultural competence has attracted several models and conceptualisations.

The model of a global mindset, for instance, argues on the premise that global managers and multinational companies encounter several challenges. Therefore, Andresen and Bergdolt (2017) argue that the magnitude of these problems is so substantial to the extent that the usual structural remedies which do not custom to particular cultural contexts are ineffective (Evans, Pucik and Barsoux, 2002). The argument depends on the premise of cultural diversity in multinational companies where research emerged, entreating individuals and organisations to do away with the ideology of a merely ethnocentric mindset. Consequently, individual values and culture took a priority of the culture of different nations to move toward a global mindset containing the features of open-mindedness and the comprehension of diverse cultures (Andresen and Bergdolt, 2017). They argued that Perlmutter's (1969) concept of ethnocentric, polycentric and geocentric mindsets applied by managers in multinational companies contributed to the global mindset. The 'cultural complexity', a term used by Andresen and Bergdolt (2017), describing the situation for the emergence of the global mindset, is most applicable for individuals like an expatriate assigned to hold a lower management position in a given country to execute specific operative tasks. Such a situation requires both high cultural and increased complexity which could make the application of the global mindset a bit difficult to achieve its main aims (Andresen and Bergdolt, 2017; Harzing, 2001).

The limitation of the global mindset is that it only focuses on the elements and the complexity of culture in a given country and ignored the attitudes, behaviour, values, beliefs and cultural practices of the individuals in culturally diverse work teams. The reason is that the model lacks clear insight into the roles of the individual behaviour elements in the team, and this also reaffirms the argument of (Andresen and Bergdolt, 2017). Again, Story and Barbuto (2011) argue that the construct has become the solely extraordinary features of effective global leadership, and this fails to show the extent to which leaders could effectively apply the model to manage the challenges of individual cultural differences in the team.

In comparison, cultural intelligence (CQ), which is another model, has been defined as the level whereby an individual can effectively communicate with people from various cultures with openness and competence to manage complex situations (Ang et al., 2007). The definition indicates that one could effectively manage miscommunication in a multicultural

team with the framework of cultural intelligence. However, Thomas et al. (2008) argue that CQ, currently introduced as a quantitative spectrum of individual disparity besides which people might position depend on what extent of this feature they acquire (Earley and Ang, 2003; Thomas and Inkson, 2003; Earley, 2002). The argument shows that CQ provides insight into cultural differences in general. Again, Velez-Calle, Roman-Calderon and Robledo-Ardila (2018) also argue that cultural intelligence is the kind of knowledge which permits someone to effectively function because of cultural differences since it is not context-specific (Ang et al., 2011). Therefore, CQ becomes an essential factor for employees to succeed during international business and cross-cultural management (Alon et al., 2016b). Research indicates that CQ was first proposed by Early and Ang (2003) with regards to the way and manner individuals function based on the current challenges of cultural differences (Ang et al., 2011). Therefore, the problems of cultural differences contributed to the proponent of CQ, yet they have not shown the context of the differences. From the perspective of Andresen and Bergdolt (2017), this assumes that the application of the framework could be useful by utilising the elements of the three components.

Conversely, CQ implies that one could be in a position to ascertain whether a particular practice or behaviour could function against the background of specific cultural and institutional circumstances which could connect to a precise nation and if the method demands an adjustment to the country-specific context. The gap is that CQ cultural intelligence is country-specific oriented, and since culturally diverse work team consists of members with different cultural backgrounds, assessing its contribution to the goals of the study becomes problematic. For instance, Andresen and Bergdolt (2017) indicate that CQ is limited to a specific cultural context, and in an extreme situation, it could be one particular nation.

The Business Cultural Intelligence Quotient' (BCIQ) proposed by Velez-Calle, Roman-Calderon and Robledo-Ardila (2018) to use the multigroup exploratory factor analysis method to enhance the model of cultural intelligence for business settings particularly questions the application of CQ for my study. Another issue is that the BCIQ relies much on the elements of the CQ model. For instance, Alon et al. (2016) argue that the BCIQ has the objective of predicting the long-term cross-cultural favourable outcome by applying the factors of cultural intelligence like the cognitive characteristics and measurable independent variables. Similarly, Velez-Calle, Roman-Calderon and Robledo-Ardila (2018) claim that

their results provide further evidence with regards to the construct efficacy of the BCIQ and its aptness for cross-cultural applications. Howbeit, the model fails to recognise certain limitations like the failure to consider the individual factors in culturally diverse work teams with regards to their differences in values, beliefs, norms, perceptions and other critical cultural elements which could create challenges. Based on the gaps of the CQ models, Velez-Calle, Roman-Calderon and Robledo-Ardila (2018) proposed that further research needs to examine the roles of individual cultural capabilities on expatriate's adaptabilities. The gaps thus validate Waxin's (2004) application of a short measure of cultural open-mindedness, and this proposal confirms the missing link for my study.

Despite the above arguments, it is significant to note that there are other models whose assumptions and arguments contribute more insight and knowledge to the goals of the study. In the first instance, this research uses Deardorff's (2006) intercultural competence model because of its usefulness in viewing the significance of the expected results in culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies. For instance, Krajewski (2011) posits that the model contains essential cultural elements like attitudes including respect, openness and curiosity. These elements are crucial because failing to understand their differences could create problems in the team. The model provides knowledge and understanding engaging with skills, covered by expected internal results which refer to behaviour (Krajewski, 2011). The argument is that intercultural competence is a process (Deardorff, 2006/2009). Again, Johnson et al. (2006) confirm that one needs some developmental process before he or she could become culturally competent, and this supports the knowledge and the skills process factors of the model.

Figure 2.1 below illustrates the (IC) model of Deardorff (2006/2009) showing that the developmental process needed to achieve intercultural competence includes moving from the individual level attitudes to the interaction level, being the outcomes. The assumption is that attitudes and interaction play significant roles in (IC) due to cultural differences (Deardorff, 2006). Despite this, there is no universal agreement on the definition of attitudes (Olson and Zanna, 1993). However, I follow the concept of Bagozzi and Burnkrant of defining 'attitude' as follows: a multifaceted or three elements opinion, whereby affective, cognitive and conative factors are present; a single-dimensional view, that emphasises on the emotional component; and a third or intermediate status where emotional and cognitive elements are considered (Bagozzi and Burnkrant, 1979). The significance of the argument for the study is

that attitudes play essential roles in the observational process where members could develop what they learn into either a positive or a negative thought (affective development), and this could finally generate into behavioural consequences among them. The model shows that one needs attitudes, knowledge comprehension and interaction skills to develop intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006). The attitudes concept also includes; respect, openness and curiosity (Deardorff, 2006, 2009). The attitudinal assumption for the openness and curiosity imply that members should be willing to move away from their most familiar cultural ways to explore new cultures from their fellow team members. One problem with the attitude assumption is that it becomes impossible for one to do away his/her cultural background completely.
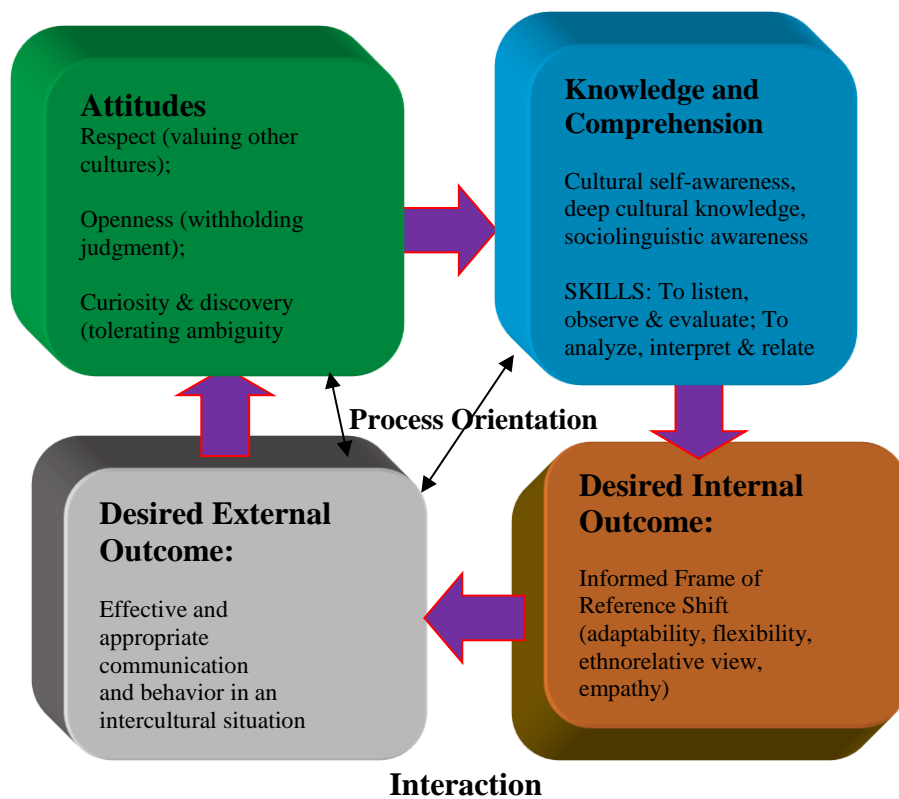
Figure 2.1: The Process Model of Intercultural Competence (Adapted from Deardorff, 2006/2009)

Despite everything, the team could achieve open-mindedness, avoid miscommunication, accept each other and demonstrate good understanding for themselves. Take for an example, a team member who possesses intercultural competence can communicate effectively and obtain good interpersonal relationship and appropriate behaviour (Matveev and Milter, 2004; Dinges, 1983; Spitzberg, 1983; McCroskey, 1982).

On the other hand, the model further shows that the knowledge concept includes cultural self-awareness, culture-specific knowledge, in-depth cultural understanding, sociolinguistic awareness (Deardorff, 2006, 2009). The variables for the knowledge concept could play vital roles in understanding cultural differences; however, the model could not provide the guide to achieve them. Nonetheless, members could develop their abilities to understand their own culture, colleagues' and cultural differences in general. The team could get the skills for cultural awareness and cultural self-awareness leading to intercultural competence. For example, cultural- awareness has been defined as 'the recognition and understanding of a different culture, comparing these insights with one's own culture and then responding to those differences (Humbert et al., 2011).

Cultural self-awareness, on the other hand, is an individual's metacognitive comprehension of how culture impacts on the self (Lu and Wan, 2018). Therefore, cultural self-awareness embodies the understanding regarding one's self and cultural experience in the team. Such a concept about cultural-self-awareness confirms Lu and Wan's (2018) argument that if you possess high cultural self-awareness, you could develop a more clear view and knowledge about how your cultural experience has formed who you are. The expected outcome is that individuals would become aware of the way and manner culture has impacted the various areas of their lives like their values and behaviours. High self-awareness paves the way for the team to strategically gain new competence and skills, while low self-awareness promotes self-deception and arrogance (Bird et al., 2010). The implication suggests that one needs sufficient awareness of his/her own culture and open-mind to explore diverse ways of perceiving and seeing issues to be intercultural competent (Piyush and Namwoon, 2014).

Notably, multicultural awareness entails affective and cognitive processes that develop in the individual equipping him/her with a positive attitude towards cultural differences (Shapiro et al., 2008). The development of the positive attitudes towards cultural differences could contribute to remedying the problems in the team in diverse ways. Subsequently, cultural awareness assists leaders to implement successful strategies, Deresky (2003) by becoming open-minded and clearly understanding the causes of their challenges. Regardless of the advantage, Desresky ignores the process to remedy the problems created by the differences. Cultural awareness enhances effective interaction among employees with increasing cultural diversity Deresky (2003), while it also assists one to understand better his/her own culture of origin (Atieno et al., 2010). The benefits also connote that miscommunication could reduce

and members would better understand their cultural backgrounds. Therefore, Goodman (2012) adds insight by showing that developing the ability to create self-awareness by helping the workers to discover what they do not know ensures the practical impact of training in a company. Besides, Storti (1999) also shows that intercultural awareness and sensitivity become the necessary survival skills for almost everyone in the team.

The skills concept of Deardorff (2006) adds more impetus to the goals of the study because it deals with how cultural knowledge is acquired and processed, and this includes the ability to observe, listen, assess, analyse, interpret and relate in the team. The work of Cross et al. (1989) provides more knowledge to the skills concept by explaining that factors such as personal attributes, knowledge and skills contribute to developing cultural competence. As a result, Deardorff (2006) argues that internally, members of the team need to adapt, become flexible and develop empathetic skills to work effectively.

The issues of skills and competence have become debatable, and Kanungo and Misra (1992) illustrate key differences which exist between them, showing that there is generic competence which could be more applicable to some range of tasks or situations. Despite this argument, Lloyd and Härtel (2010) instead argue that the skills competence, which is rather specialised, could be more appropriate for specific jobs or conditions in the team. Comparatively, the (IC) approach helps to identify clusters of attitudes or perceptions which are related to intercultural competence (Monthienvichienchai, 2002). The above arguments emphasise on the skills and the attitudes concepts as essential factors needed to achieve (IC) in the team, however, their achievement requires the roles of the leaders. At the same time, the intercultural approach includes the ability to deal with psychological stress to communicate effectively and to establish interpersonal relationships (Lustig and Koester, 1993). Coping with mental stress depends on ones' ability to deal with self-awareness. By so doing, one could contribute effectively in culturally diverse work team which could minimise conflicts among them. The argument also shows that the work of Deardorff could add to the management of the challenges facing them as a result of cultural differences.

In a similar perspective, Lloyd and Härtel (2010) used quantitative research to identify a consistent set of variables representing the competence predicted to impact on individual's satisfaction, trust, affective commitment, examination, and assessment of the performance of their team. The model's components profoundly show similar objectives with those examined

by Deardorff, (2006/2009) and therefore, they complement themselves to provide knowledge for my study. The competence classified under three categories, namely: cognitive, affective and behavioural connect and add value to the goals of the study. The cognitive intercultural competence includes a set of knowledge which comprises cultural self- awareness, culture-general knowledge, culture-specific knowledge, and interaction analysis one needs to function effectively in a multicultural team (Bennett, 2011). The cognitive competence relates to ones' ability to perceive information and be in a better position to interpret it (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010). The framework provides a clear indication about specific intercultural tools which assist someone to function in culturally diverse teams. Therefore, one needs to identify his/her culture, understand someones and then develops the skills for effective communication.

Cognitive intercultural competence provides opportunities for individuals to build a good understanding of events and offers a considerable range of alternative perception to deal with them culturally (Dodd, 1987). Again, Lloyd and Härtel (2010) agree to the opinion that one's ability to develop an excellent cognitive competence enables the person to adequately understand the attitude and behaviour of someone from a different cultural background (Yum, 1982). The combination of cognitive complexity and goal orientation result in cognitive intercultural competence. The assertion is further given weight by the tools offered by what Lloyd and Härtel (2010) consider as the cognitive complexity. The concept demonstrates the ability to perceive a wide variety of things concerning a different person, and then makes finer interpersonal discriminations than cognitively simple individuals (Dodd, 1987). For instance, Lloyd and Härtel (2010) support the concept by showing a strong relationship between cognitive complexity and cross-cultural effectiveness (Davidson, 1975).

The cognitively simple people do possess one framework which they use to examine and evaluate situations (Dodd, 1987). However, Gudykunst and Kim (1997) instead argue that the cognitively complex people possess different contexts which they use to explore and assess conditions in the team. To buttress their argument, they showed that cognitively complex people precisely form more extensive with differentiated impressions about other people (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997). There is a good representation of behavioural variability than cognitively simple people (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997; Kagan, 1992). They conclude that from an intercultural perspective, they possess a sophisticated well-developed understanding

of how culture might affect behaviour (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997; Kagan, 1992). The following statement demonstrates the roles of cognitive complexity in the team;

'Cognitive complexity improves one's knowledge about information which might assist in the reduction of stereotyping of people with different cultural backgrounds'. (Karim, 2003; p.36).

The above statement assumes that the development of the skills and knowledge for cognitive complexity helps to reduce the challenges of stereotypes in the team, and this could improve cohesion by ensuring togetherness. The argument of Kegan (1992) testifies that cognitive complexity helps to enhance interactions among diverse groups since the individuals could adjust their communications accordingly.

The affective intercultural competence also comprises of curiosity, cognitive flexibility, motivation and open-mindedness, used for effective functioning in the team (Bennette, 2011). It is worthy to note that Lloyd and Härtel (2010) agree with the argument that the affective dimension of (IC) concerns the feelings, attitudes and personality trait that they interact with (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997). Therefore, the affective competence plays significant roles in the multicultural team since members could develop the knowledge and understanding of the affective characters such as emotional expression, attitudes and values that someone from a different cultural background demonstrates (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997). The argument provides insight into emotional issues related to cultural differences that could influence attitudes and behaviour. Again, Lloyd and Härtel (2010) show that the elements of the affective competence include dissimilarity openness, tolerance for ambiguity and cultural empathy, which play significant roles in the team.

The tolerance for ambiguity concept, which concerns the ability to adapt and react positively to ambiguous circumstances contributes to the knowledge of intercultural competence (Dodd, 1987). The capability for tolerance shares similar values with empathy because one needs both tools to function effectively in the team. For instance, cultural empathy shows the ability to live in harmony with someone from a different cultural background by effectively recognising the person's identity, experience and position devoid of losing one's own cultural identity (Karim, 2003). The above argument connotes trustworthiness among the members, and this supports the findings of Johnson et al. (1996), showing that cultural empathy promotes trust and effective communication among team members.

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The ongoing debates and argument show that intercultural competence plays essential functions in the performance of culturally diverse work teams in (MNCs). Intercultural competence helps to negotiate cultural meanings, beliefs, and values for effective communication very appropriately among team members (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Lustig and Koester, 1999). Again, (IC) could play a significant role for the team to understand their basic understandings, regardless, researchers have not examined the process for effective communication among the members. Despite that, (IC) helps the teams to perceive and understand others' world views, cultural self-awareness, capacity for self-assessment, adaptation and adjustment in new intercultural settings. Therefore, it reduces ignorance in another's culture to create adaptation effectively in multicultural teams. Another significance is that (IC) helps the team to develop open-mindedness for learning other cultures and respect their norms and values (Sharma et al., 2009; Earley et al., 2007; Triandis, 2006; Friedman and Antal, 2005). The implication is that the lack of open-mindedness in the team could create marginalisation, racism, and so on.

The above analyses testify that intercultural competence plays dynamic roles, and this justifies the emergence of several debates on (IC) and cross-cultural effectiveness (Matveev and Milter, 2004; Kealey and Protheroe, 1996; Redmond and Bunyi, 1991; Samovar and Porter, 1991). Howbeit, studies show that there is little research for the understanding of intercultural competence in the context of leadership in the teams (Hofner and Saphiere, 1996; Wiseman and Shuter, 1994). The connotation is that there is a need for more studies for (IC) in the context of culturally diverse work teams (MNCs), especially their leaders.

In summary, researchers have developed several intercultural models to address the challenges of cultural differences; however, debates and arguments indicate that most of them do not contribute to the objectives of my study. Notably among them include the global mindset, cultural intelligence and the business cultural intelligence quotient (Velez-Calle, Roman-Calderon and Robledo-Ardila, 2018; Andresen and Bergdolt, 2017; Evans, Pucik and Barsoux, 2002). Such models are mostly global oriented, while they also address the complexity of culture in a given country to the detriment of the attitudes, behaviour, values, beliefs and cultural practices of the individuals in culturally diverse work teams. However, the other models which support the goals of the study examined the attitudes, skills and behavioural concept, the cognitive, affective and behavioural skills components, and the three essential components considered under the sufficient cultural knowledge, skilled actions, and

proper motivation or personality orientation (Deardorff, 2006, 2009; Bennett, 2011; Matveev and Milter, 2004). The argument for their choice of my study is that they emphasise on the roles of attitudes, knowledge, comprehension and interactions, and this fulfils the reasoning that intercultural competence depends on attitudes, knowledge comprehension and skills. Therefore, the team could develop the ability for intercultural awareness and sensitivities with the identification of a consistent set of variables representing the competence predicted to impact on individual's satisfaction, trust, affective commitment, examination, and assessment of the performance of their team. They provide insight and knowledge into individual communication, attitudinal and behavioural components. They could help the team leaders to address the challenges of personal interactions and other intercultural problems related to differences in norms, values, beliefs, and cultural practices.

It is also significant to note that effective communication plays essential roles in (IC). The reason is that the team encounters serious challenges with communication and the sub-topic below examines intercultural communication.

2.7 Intercultural communication competence

Research shows that that miscommunication is one of the fundamental challenges created by cultural differences. The rationale makes it necessary to analyse intercultural communication competence and explain its roles in the context of the research. According to Gudykunst and Kim (1997 p.19), intercultural communication competence (ICC) is a 'transactional, symbolic process which gives attributional meaning between people with a diverse cultural background'. However, another argument is that (ICC) is a conversation which takes place between many people with diverse cultural backgrounds that does exchange either verbal or non-verbal messages (Wiggins, 2012; Neuliep, 2006, p. 38). Comparatively, one could argue that Gudykunst and Kim emphasise on the roles of processes in communication among different people in the team. Still, Wiggins and Neuliep instead considered the types of conversation in general among diverse people. The connotation is that the team should pay attention to the process and the types of communication to prevent miscommunications.

It is worthy to note that culture influences communication in the team, and it is, therefore, not surprising to notice team members encountering problems with miscommunication (Gersten, 1990). By way of example, culture plays a significant role in deciding who, how, and what we communicate with (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010). Again, since communication takes place at

an early stage of our lives, it is difficult to identify the influence of culture on our interactions (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997). The rationale is that team members could not notice how their cultural backgrounds influence communication problems because they could cause the challenges unknowingly.

Communication challenges have influenced researchers to develop intercultural communication models to promote effective communication in multicultural teams (Härtel and Ma, 2006; Graf and Harland, 2005; Griffith and Harvey, 2001). There is an incorporation of the intricacies of cultural impacts that includes national and organisational into an intercultural communication model intended at upgrading the comprehension of the improvement of relationship quality (Griffith and Harvey, 2001). The model functions as a standardised intercultural communication procedure for companies to utilise among their worldwide networks.

Researchers (Palmer, 1997; Grönroos, 1994) argue that the organisation can recognise, sustain and develop inter-organisational networks for the shared use of network members strategically. Be that as it may, leaders could not use the model to achieve effective intercultural communication in the teams because the challenges emanate from the individual members at teams level but not among the network of organisations. In cultural diverse work teams, the differences in values, norms, beliefs and traditions contribute enormously to the challenges of intercultural communications because of the failure to manage them. The confusion and misunderstanding created during interactions in the team emanate from differences in values, rules, norms (Härtel and Ma, 2006). Based on this reason, (ICC) has been given more weight by researchers and practitioners demonstrating their essential roles in the performance of the teams (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Lustig and Koester, 1999; Gudykunst and Kim, 1997; Kirchmeyer, 1993; Beamer, 1992; Hammer, 1987; Hawkes and Kealey, 1981).

From a different perspective, there is the argument about the work of intercultural communication competence to the evaluation of communication effectiveness and appropriateness (Bradford, Allen and Beisser, 1998; Koester et al., 1993). To bolster their argument, they show that they have identified several behavioural categories which are associated with intercultural communication competence. These competence include attentiveness and interpersonal inclusion (Bradford, Allen and Beisser, 1998; Koester et al., 1993). The framework could not demonstrate precisely how to address the communication

challenges in the team, and therefore, its contribution to the goals of the study becomes questionable.

The cognitive, affective and operational concept of Kim (1999) provides valuable insight into intercultural communication competence for the research, despite the limitations identified from the other models examined. The classification denotes that the roles of observation and the influence of the interpretation could have impacts on the behaviour patterns in the team. The cognitive-communication competence Kim (1991; 1988) explains the ability of people to establish sense from the verbal and nonverbal language. However, Kim (1991) argues that cognitive skill should include the psychological concepts inherent in people's internal systems of values that impact their capability to decode the message of the communication partner precisely. The affective competence, on the other hand, includes the emotional and attitudinal demeanour of people (Kim, 1991). The argument for my study is that leaders could address the challenges with verbal and non-verbal communication by understanding how members interact effectively in the team. With this model, Griffith and Harvey (2001) show that the available ideas, inherent and implied meanings impact the inspirational and attitudinal tendency to explaining communication from people in diverse cultures. The assumption provides insight into the inspirational and the attitudinal ability of members' communication styles and patterns. Besides, Kim (1991) shows that the operational competence includes the versatility and the ingenuity of the people in responding to communications. The relevance of the framework to this study is that it provides insight and knowledge for members with diverse cultural backgrounds to develop ideas, motivation and the ability to perceive and interpret the core meanings of their interactions with different members. Research shows a positive relationship between effective communication and performance in the team. When one communicates effectively with his/her team members, the responsiveness and assessment of their performance will be very positive (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010). To bolster their claim, they hypothesised that:

'Individuals' level of intercultural communication competence will relate to their response in their team positively, in terms of satisfaction, affective commitment and trust as well as their assessment with regards to their vision, participation, support for innovation and task orientation'.

The hypothesis implies that communicating might provide several advantages in the team, but its success depends on how the process and the meanings are clearly defined and

understood appropriately. Therefore, the operational skills of the model become essential for the study because leaders could address the challenges of miscommunication effectively.

Team members also need empathetic skills and forbearance to address miscommunication in the team, and Chang and Tharenou (2004) confirm that cultural empathy and tolerance for ambiguity are essential skills and characteristics necessary for intercultural interactions. In a similar perspective, Lloyd and Hartel (2010) argue that developing patience for ambiguity is a crucial skill in (IC), and the argument is that patience and tolerance contribute to effective communication in culturally diverse work teams due to complexity associated with intercultural communication. The case for empathy and patient has some limitations with the process of achieving them due to different cultural backgrounds among team members. Empirical studies show that theoretical assumptions and models of (IC) consider interpersonal skills (or Interpersonal Competence) to be an essential variable (Graf and Harland, 2005; Spitzberg, 2000; Brislin, 1981; Hammer, Gudykunst, and Wiseman, 1978). The framework supports the model of Graf and Harland (2005) because of the underlining principle that failure to understand the differences in interpersonal skills could create challenges with communication in the team, and this relates directly with the behavioural framework. To support this argument, several researchers conclude that interpersonal skills facilitate intercultural interactions in a variety of empirical studies (Graf and Harland, 2005; Cui and Awa, 1992; Dean and Popp, 1990; Kealey, 1989; Abe and Wiseman, 1983; Ruben and Kealey, 1979). The argument for interpersonal skills also establishes a relationship with the specific behaviours of the team members. For instance, Martin et al. (1994) show that there are specific or micro-behaviours associated with competence with such characters as smiling, laughing, leaning towards the other person, nodding the head, shaking hands, and speaking clearly. Understanding the differences in the variables discussed above are necessary to promote smooth communication with regards to non-verbal communication, which becomes very difficult for team members to comprehend. The micro-behaviour concept contributes to this study because of the challenges associated with the non-verbal form of communication where the display of such attitudes could manage tensions.

In a different perspective, the three key factors identified as knowledge, motivation and skills also contribute to the insight into the intercultural communication competence for this study (Monthienvichienchai et al., 2002; Hofstede, 2001; Lustig and Koester, 1998; Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984; Wiseman, 1983). The argument is that the knowledge factor shows an

awareness or understanding of requisite information and actions which are needed to become intercultural communication competence. The motivation factor, on the other hand, explains the feelings, intentions, needs and drives, which are related to intercultural communication. The gap with the motivation factor is that researchers have not identified the type of motivation needed because there is both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in the team. Comparatively, the skills or actions factor examines the real actions selected to be appropriate in the communication context. Their significance of the study is that leaders need the skills and competence in knowledge, motivation, and abilities to manage miscommunication. They also augment the assumption that the team needs to apply good awareness of the information used, control emotions during interactions, attach appropriate behaviour, and they also support the premises of the behaviour concept of (Graf and Harland, 2005).

Intercultural communication competence is necessary to manage the challenges of miscommunication. The discussions above prove that miscommunication becomes one of the underlying factors in the difficulties of culturally diverse work teams, and therefore the models of (Graf and Harland, 2005; Kim, 1991) seem to contribute to the objectives of the study. It is imperative to note that the work of several researchers supports these models (Lloyd and Hartel, 2010; Chang and Tharenou, 2004) to authenticate their significance for the study. Although the intercultural and communication competence models analysed above demonstrate their roles in managing the challenges of cultural differences, the arguments and the debates fail to show leadership roles in applying them for the teams. Because this becomes essential for this study, the sub-teams examines that.

2.8 Leadership of culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies

The leadership of culturally diverse work teams is considered for this research to provide insight into their roles in addressing the challenges of cultural differences. For instance, Lu et al. (2018) argue that the benevolent paternalistic leaders manage the difficulties of closed communication, which affect culturally diverse teams and impacts their creative potential (Chen et al., 2014; Aycan, 2006). The argument indicates that the function of any working group in the organisation cannot entirely be possible without a leader who coordinates the integration of individual, the skills and the agreement of the specifics of work (Robbins, Judge and Campbell, 2010). Despite this argument, one could also show that there are self-managed teams without leaders. Howbeit, the fundamental issue for this section concerns the meaning of leadership in general and its implications for culturally diverse work teams.

It is worthy to note that leadership has attracted several definitions due to its significance. For instance, leadership is the process in which people are influenced to direct their efforts to achieve specific goal or goals (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). Similarly, leadership is about the ability to control a group to make a vision or set of goals (Robbins, Judge and Campbell, 2010). The definitions assume that the influential factor and goals achievement are very significant because they help to differentiate between an effective and ineffective leader. Influencing the behaviour of others is very important for leadership (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2004). From a different perspective, leadership is a social influence process whereby the leader needs the subordinates to partake willingly with the efforts to achieve the goals of the organisation (Kreitner, Kininki and Buelens, 2002). One could argue that the subordinates' contribution to the achievement of the goals voluntarily depends on the social influence of the leaders. The above definitions connote the ability for one to influence members to achieve the purposes of the organisations howbeit; the roles of culture seem lacking in the concepts of leadership analysed above.

Studies show that leaders in culturally diverse work teams struggle to effectively manage their members due to the complexity of cultural differences. For example, Groves and Feyerherm (2011) argue that the recent trends affecting a team's composition demand a leader with requisite knowledge and skills in cross-cultural skills or leader cultural intelligence. The denotion is that the roles of culture are indispensable in leadership responsibilities in intercultural teams. Leaders in today's growing organisations experience the complicated fact that the composition of work teams culturally, including the values of individuals, have spectacularly shifted and are expected to proceed (Groves and Feyerherm, 2011). The argument articulates that the growing challenges in the team due to cultural differences will continue if leaders fail to manage them. From this perspective, Moodian (2008) shows that leaders have been experiencing several difficulties which include their transformation from the local level to transnational, and even changing from monocultural to multicultural in the last decade of the 21st Century. The influence of culture in the complexity of leadership roles in the teams have contributed to several theories and models on intercultural leadership (Lu et al., 2017; Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Groves and Feyerherm, 2011; Pekerti and Sendjaya, 2010; Robinson and Harvey, 2008; House et al., 2004).

By studying leadership globally, the GLOBE's model developed by House et al. (2004), simply known as the 'Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness,'

defined leadership as the one possessing the capability to influence, stimulate and empower people to support the achievement of the effectiveness and success of the organisations they belong. Like the postulations of other leadership definitions, this one also covers significant components such as leadership ability and influence towards the goal of the organisation. By using mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative), the project employed 170 investigators living in 62 countries to generate data from 17, 300 middle managers in 951 organisations (House et al., 2004). A significant concern of the project was about the degree to which the practices and values related to leadership are universal including the degree to which they are specific to only some few societies (Grove, 2019). Their research found the six universally shared concepts of leadership, which are also known as the 'culturally endorsed leadership theory dimensions' being classified as the 'global leadership dimensions' (Grove, 2019). The study aimed to improve the knowledge vital to interactions in intercultural set up (Shi and Wang, 2011). The gender egalitarianism dimension, for example, examines the extent to which the collective culture prefer inequality among gender. In the collective culture, the difference in gender is high, and therefore, females are most likely to be underprivileged in teams where males dominate.

The GLOBE's concept contributes significantly to leadership theories; the limitation for my study concerns the cultural differences of the individual roles in the team as well. The argument is that it concentrates on leaders in different national cultural backgrounds to the detriment of the individual capacities. To a large extent, the assumption depends on the premise that the impact of globalisation on industrial organisation and how countries depend on each other makes it essential to understand cultural differences on leadership and practices in the organisation (House et al. 2004). On the contrary, the GLOBE's assumptions demonstrate the extent to which leadership in various countries could show their roles in the organisation. Subsequently, the argument of Grove (2019) that one of the critical areas addressed by the project concerns the degree to which the practices and values connect with leadership are universal, gives much credence to my argument against its contribution to my study.

Although the GLOBE model aimed at attracting large respondents from member countries, the purposes of the multinational employees in such survey raise some questions, and Hofstede et al. (2006) also authenticate such argument. As an illustration, Shi and Wang (2010) demonstrate the reasoning of McCrae et al. (2008), that there is the possibility that

false stereotypes instead of objective characteristics of the society based on GLOBES's scale assessment might have taken place. Therefore, Shi and Wang (2010) share the opinion that the time has come to shift research from the dependence on 'individualism-collectivism' concept (Earley and Gibson, 1998). Based on the limitations, Earley and Gibson (1998) also suggest that researchers should, therefore, pay much attention to the development of theories and frameworks to perceive the link among the following variables; culture, notions, deeds, organisations, structures.

Similarly, Robinson and Harvey (2008) have developed the 'Global Leadership in a culturally diverse world' for leadership in a multicultural environment. The fundamental purpose of this work depends on the fact that increasing roles of globalisation has resulted in a confused position of change because businesses encounter challenges adapting to new leadership paradigms (Robinson and Harvey, 2008). Therefore, globalisation requires contemporary approaches whereby the issue is to develop suitable leadership necessities in reactions to the changing challenges of being. Hence, the answer depends on the question of the new skills which could be efficient enough to endorse and applied by business leaders to resolve these current multicultural challenges happening under the era of globalisation, and the leader-follower relationship is very crucial in such transitional stages (Robinson and Harvey, 2008). The argument is that over the past two generations, researchers started examining the requisite abilities skills and features of people who undertake global leadership obligation (Pless et al., 2011). As a result, for the past two decades, researchers have been struggling to find the best solutions for the challenges of global leadership. Notably, they have attempted identifying the scope of global leadership responsibilities (Caligiuri, 2006). The complexities encountered in multicultural environment demand special skills which should be good enough to resolve the challenges created by cultural differences. The limitation with the model is that it concentrates much on global leadership and not specific to the teams' context. Furthermore, Mendenhall et al. (2012) also argue that the lack of an explicit, meticulous and commonly approved description of global leadership inhibits the field's theoretical and empirical advancement, and this argument also raises the question about the feasibility of applying the concept for my study. The limited roles of specificity of the construct also fulfil the critique of Pless et al. (2011) that the area does not have a specific, rigorous and broadly recognised definition of the construct.

The global objectives of the leadership models examined above do not share the goals of this study. Yet, Ramthun and Matkin's (2012) leadership framework instead contributes more to the aims of this research. The 'Conceptual Model of Shared Leadership in Culturally Diverse Teams' of Ramthun and Matkin (2012) argue that members infrequently depend entirely on the downward effect procedure of vertical leadership with regards to the recruitment of self-managed teams (Manz and Sims, 1993; Manz and Sims, 1987). Instead, they are most likely to follow the one who has excellent knowledge for every situation to achieve the common goals (Bathurst and Monin, 2010; Follett, 1924). With regards to the teams, the phenomenon marks an antecedent of shared leadership because it concerns an ever-changing, interactive influence procedure between individuals in which the members lead each other to achieve the goals of the group (Pearce and Conger, 2003). The leader of the team will motivate and guide the members to accomplish this process. Instead of depending on downward influence, the members influence other people in every course (lateral, downward, and upward) using the decentralisation and leadership allocation (Carson, Tesluk and Marrone, 2007; Pearce and Sims, 2002). With this approach, leaders could achieve excellent performance in the team because each member feels obligated and accountable for their attitudes and behaviour.

One should note here that the structure of the organisation cannot create success for the team alone due to other factors. All the same, researchers support the positive results of shared leadership and teams' performance as well as the effectiveness of leadership (Hoch, Pearce and Welzel, 2010; Pearce, Manz and Sims, 2009; Pearce and Sims, 2002). The process formation, in addition to the practice of shared leadership, relies on individuals in the team to expand and acknowledge lateral influence (Pearce and Conger, 2003). The implication is that leaders of culturally diverse work teams should apply lateral control in the team because Ramthun and Matkin (2012) argue that without this approach, the team faces the challenges of cooperating share leadership. The argument depends on the premise that the teams have members with different cultural backgrounds with clearly different connections of cultural importance (Cox, 1994). Therefore, the team might encounter relational and social problems due to internal conflict, reduced cohesion and miscommunication (Elron, 1997; Ancona and Caldwell, 1992; Pfeffer, 1985; Shaw, 1981). The assumption is that the challenges identified above connect with cultural differences which need the roles of leaders and the members to address them, and such confirms the argument that these problems in the team become possible interpersonal impediments to shared leadership (Cox, Pearce and Perry, 2003).

On the other hand, Ramthun and Matkin's (2012) provide the following model as the moderating factor of intercultural competence to address the challenges with cultural differences.
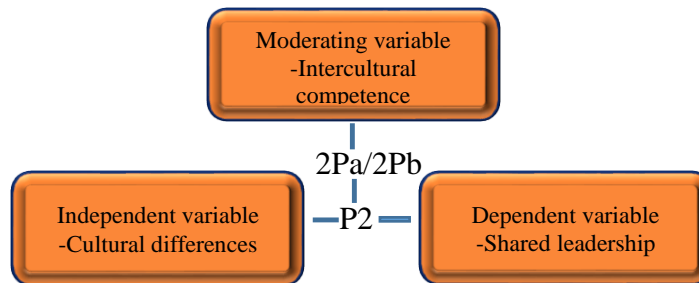
Figure 2.2: Visible illustration of the propositions and parameters constituting a conceptual model of multicultural shared leadership (Adapted from Ramthun and Matkin, 2012).

When the team members effectively assess their cultural differences, those with high intercultural competence could acknowledge and develop diverse knowledge, open-minded attitudes and skills (Maznevski, 1994). The implication is that team leaders could assist the members in exploiting their intercultural competence. As a result, conditions could be set up for the team members to accept and deliver mutual influence (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995), nurturing cohesiveness and thereby permitting the development of more innovative methods to address the challenges of cultural differences (Marquardt and Horvath, 2001). With this approach, members are empowered to take leading roles in resolving the problems of cultural differences, and this could add more values to goals of the study since it aims to exploit the extent to which leaders could contribute to the development of intercultural competence of their team members. In such a situation, Adler (2002) argues that cultural difference becomes an asset and advantageous to the teams, particularly when leaders acknowledge previous cultural difference, like the case involving the highly interculturally competent members. The framework further emphasises the roles of leaders in developing the (IC) of their members to achieve their goals. In no small extent, the connectivity of the leadership model to my study becomes clearer.

The model below demonstrates leadership roles and indicates that the team leaders should effectively manage cultural differences.
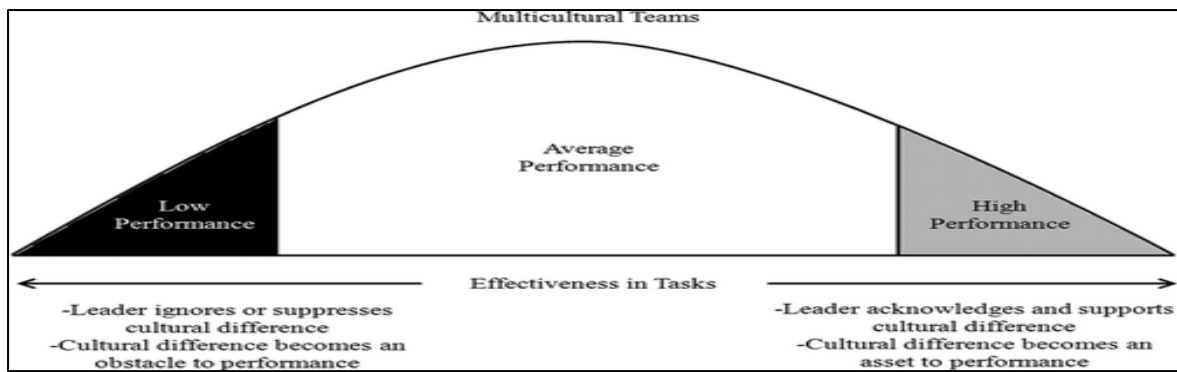
Figure 2.3: Visible illustration of effectiveness in tasks, multicultural teams and leader cultural awareness (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012). Adapted from the *International Dimensions of Organisational Behavior* (4th ed.) by Adler, 2002 (as cited in Bennett, 2007, p. 4).

Ramthun and Matkin (2012) show that the moment they disregard or restrain cultural difference, the performance of the team in creative tasks reduces. Besides, Ramthun and Matkin (2012) argue that the effectiveness in creative tasks goes high in culturally diverse work teams the moment their leaders adequately recognise and assists a cultural difference. Subsequently, team members who possess high intercultural competent skills and knowledge promote creativity and motivate flow, a coordinated framework of consciousness with organised invested psychical strength (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). Because of this advantage, Ramthun and Matkin (2012) again argue that the model encourages a high intrinsic motivation, interest, and social value in culturally diverse work teams including the development and practice of shared leadership (Hooker and Csikszentmihalyi, 2003).

On the other hand, Ramthun and Matkin (2012) show that individual team members who lack the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence cannot promote an atmosphere of creativeness and flow, and this inhibits the requirements for shared leadership. The argument signifies that team leaders should gain intercultural competence ability to manage the challenges of cultural differences by helping their members to take the leading roles, and this provides the fundamental background for the achievement of the goals of this research.

It is imperative to note that Deardorff's (2006) intercultural competence model adopted validates the relevance of this leadership framework for my study. Gaining the ability to acknowledge and function under several identities in culturally diverse work teams, individual members who possess high intercultural competent skills and knowledge could

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manage the problems created by cultural difference promote positive good team performance (Bennett, 1998; Deardorff, 2006). The framework assumes that individual team members who develop the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence could overcome the challenges of cultural differences and could, therefore, prevent the barriers to shared leadership. Nonetheless, those without the ability of intercultural competence could not manage the challenges of cultural differences and thus prevent the barriers to shared leadership. The above argument demonstrates two significant implications for the team; firstly, leaders should be interculturally competent, and they should be able to assist their members in attaining the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence. Again, leaders should help their members to effectively manage cultural differences to achieve the main goals of shared leadership.

It is essential to note that by applying the conceptual framework of multicultural shared leadership, this study also adds value to the practice of management and leadership in culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies. The model of multicultural shared leadership, taking a multidisciplinary approach, has incorporated the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity from the field of communications to meet the challenges stemming from the employment of culturally diverse teams in the workplace. For example, (Chin, 2010; Avolio, 2007) call for an increase in leadership research in a multicultural context, while Pearce and Conger's (2003) also call for research in the dimensions of diversity which either promotes or prevents shared leadership and its effect on the effectiveness of the team.

In summary, the above arguments indicate that several frameworks, notably (Robinson and Harvey, 2008; House et al. 2004) provide significant insight into global leadership; however, they do not provide knowledge and insight into how leaders could manage cultural diverse work teams successfully. Contrastingly, the 'Conceptual Model of Shared Leadership in Culturally Diverse Teams' of Ramthun and Matkin's (2012) becomes the most applicable framework for this study because their assumptions contribute to the goals of the study. Their work show how leaders could empower members to develop the ability for intercultural competence to manage the challenges of cultural differences. Again, since the framework could effectively operate on the factors of intercultural competence Maznevski (1994), one could argue that it could contribute to the achievement of the aims of my study. Another important argument is that the model clearly defines the roles of team leaders in motivating their members in addressing the challenges of cultural differences. The purpose of the

motivation in this context also establishes a direct link with the intercultural competence model of Deardorff's (2006), providing insight into the management of cultural differences for this study.

The application of the framework of Ramthun and Matkin's (2012) further validates the call of (Chin, 2010; Avolio, 2007; Pearce and Conger, 2003) for an increase in leadership research in a multicultural context, and the study in the dimensions of diversity which promotes shared leadership, including its effect on the effectiveness of the team. Understanding the relationship between culturally diverse work teams and shared leadership represents essential progress for both multicultural and shared leadership theory and practice (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012). They connote that the conceptual development of the multicultural shared leadership model has contributed to the advancement of the fields of management and leadership by setting the conditions for future empirical research. Here also, using the model for my study paves the way for my research to contribute to the body of knowledge with the application of the qualitative method to empirically investigate the leadership of culturally diverse work teams and the intercultural competence of their members. For instance, culture is as an essential factor influencing useful leadership behaviour in culturally diverse work teams (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). Finally, it would be right to argue from the analysis above that researchers have been experiencing some level of complexities regarding the proper positioning of the context of how leaders could perform effectively in culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies. The improper position of leadership, therefore, provides a gap in understanding leadership in culturally diverse work teams in developing intercultural competence to manage the challenges created by cultural differences.

2.9 Gaps in the literature

The gaps in the literature review are significant for this research because they explore the areas where the analysis is not complete. Therefore, the under-explored areas become vital for the problem statement upon which the entire investigation for the study depends. The literature review provides two significant gaps identified as follows; (1) The limited studies on leadership knowledge and insight on the adverse effects of cultural differences on the team, and (2) the intercultural competence of leaders in culturally diverse work teams.

Evidence in the literature shows that several researchers (i.e., Minkov, 2013; Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Browaeys and Price, 2011; Hofstede and Hofstede, 2004; Ailon-Souday and Kunda, 2003) have conceptualised culture in diverse ways for different implications. However, none of them examined how leaders could understand the adverse effects of culture on the team. The limitation of the theoretical models proposed by several researchers (e.g., King, 2006; Douglas, 2004; House et al., 2004; Trompenaars, 1997; Hofstede, 1980; Kluckholn and Strodtbeck, 1961) is the inability to include how leaders could understand the adverse effects of cultural differences on the team. The concept of multiculturalism (e.g., Lægaard, 2015; 2012; Modood, 2012; 2007) also show the same limitations. It is worthy to note that several researchers (E.g., Liou and Lan, 2018; Vaibhav, 2012; Browaeys and Price, 2011; Xiao and Boyd, 2010; Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Brett et al., 2006; Scachaf, 2005) argue about the benefits and the adverse effects of cultural differences. The problem is that they fail to show how leaders could understand the adverse impact on the teams they lead explicitly. The limitations identified need further investigation to address such.

Another critical gap from the literature review shows that researchers have understudied the intercultural competence of leaders in culturally diverse work teams. Because of this gap, factors and process for intercultural competence for team leaders are lacking. Therefore there is not enough information on how they could manage the challenges of cultural differences in the teams in Multinational Companies (MNCs). Different studies on leadership (E.g., Lu et al. 2018; Robinson and Harvey, 2008; House et al. 2004; Buchanan and Huczynski, 2004; Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003; Kreitner, Kininki and Buelens, 2002) show how leaders influence their followers to achieve their aims. Nevertheless, their concepts fall short of the intercultural competence of leadership of culturally diverse work teams.

It is worth noting that several researchers (i.e., Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Pudelko, 2010; Harvey, 2008) have confirmed the gap for my study, and this thus motivates them to call for further research on the (IC) of culturally diverse work teams, yet not with much success. Despite the recent trends and several requests from (MNCs) to better understand the intercultural competence of leadership, there has been remarkably limited academic research to meet such demands (Harvey, 2008; Ang et al., 2007). The recent calls substantiate the need and the urgent attention to fulfil the obligations for the gap on the (IC) for team leaders. Again, researchers have perceived and understood the factors for the functioning of multinational organisations; unfortunately, studies on the intercultural factors and process for

(IC) of team leaders in (MNCs) are lacking (Hajro and Pudelko, 2010). The argument implies that intercultural competence models for leaders of culturally diverse work teams are lacking. Besides, there is an argument for the demand for an increase in cross-cultural and multicultural contextual leadership research (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Eagly and Chin, 2010; Avolio, 2007). The implication further corroborates the gap for the study because empirical research for the issue provides the opportunity for my research to contribute to knowledge on the phenomenon. The situation reaffirms the argument that the theoretical and several empirical studies on conceptualisation and measurement of cultural intelligence are devoid of empirical research on culturally diverse leadership competence (Moon, 2010; Ng, Van Dynean and Ang, 2009; Ang, 2009; Van Dynean, 2008; Robinson and Harvey, 2008). The argument connotes that empirical research on IC of leaders is highly needed.

Culture is dynamic, and the roles of leaders in understanding the adverse effects of cultural differences to manage them in the team become paramount. For instance, Connerley and Pederson (2005) confirmed the literature gaps and emphasised the evidence for more research on the (IC) for team leaders in (MNCs). They substantiate their call with the argument below;

'The very qualities that made someone the effective monocultural leader may make her or him less qualified for a multicultural environment.' (Connerley and Pederson, 2005; ix).

The above statement shows the influence of cultural differences on leadership roles and the need for (IC) in the performance of leaders because they play significant roles in their responsibilities in the team. For example, multinational companies, whether manufacturing or service, now face complicated issues related to individual employee's culture and thus, leaders need the knowledge and skills for intercultural competence. Leaders must be interculturally competent and multilingual to motivate multinational team members. Such an approach will help them to explore, exploit and transfer adequate expertise within the team and entirely beyond (Hajro and Pudelko, 2010). Again, diverse cultural beliefs and values have made it essential for culturally-linked leadership styles to lead the companies (Jogulu, 2010).

2.10 Conclusion

The literature review shows that researchers have conceptualised culture in diverse ways due to its importance to international business. The different academic backgrounds of the researchers have also contributed to the diverse conceptualisation, and some key concepts of

culture provide a significant contribution to the study. For example, the cultural components like social norms, shaping attitudes, the behaviour of people, setting rules, moral values of people in the society, helping them to agree on what is right and wrong are very significant to this study (Minkov, 2013; Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Peterson, 2004; Boas, 1930; Hall,1973; Kroeber and Kluckhorn, 1952).

The study also demonstrates several theoretical models that underpin cultural differences; however, the theories of Hofstede (1980) and the cultural mosaic of Douglas (2004) play significant roles for this study and they complement each other as well. The 'mosaic' psychological environment subsists as a team framework whereby individuals believe in the team as leverage on cultural differences to reinforce their work. Such candidly convey and cordially agree to the expression of cultural differences, and finally recognise the depth of the cultural differences in the team (Douglas, 2004). In contributing to the theory, Chuapetcharasopon et al. (2018) further argue that the team could infer on their differences regarding their values, points of view, beliefs, and experiences, and this promotes their work processes. Hofstede's (1980) framework examines the national cultural differences and the individual values, attitudes, beliefs and other cultural elements that contribute to the aims of the study.

The findings show that the concept of multiculturalism by Parekh (2000) and Hodgetts and Luthans (2003) have similar assumptions for the study. For instance, Parekh (2000) argues about the roles of cultural differences and how to respect individuals' culture in the team. It also provides insight on values, respect and guides our judgments of other cultures, and all these contribute to the understanding of cultural differences in the team. The framework of Hodgetts and Luthans (2003), on the other hand, examines the types of multiculturalism, which provides useful knowledge and insight into cultural differences. The model shows that the team consists of members with diverse cultural backgrounds, and failing to understand their communication styles, perception, beliefs and practices could pose a considerable challenge for them. The multicultural framework and the challenges faced by culturally diverse work teams are related. The study shows that the adverse effects of cultural differences exceed the advantages due to the failure to manage the problems.

It is worthy to note that researchers have provided different intercultural models to manage the challenges of cultural differences. However, the framework developed by (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Deardorff 2006/2019; Matveev and Milter, 2004) provides more insight and

knowledge for the study. Significantly, the works of other researchers support them. (Bennette, 2011; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Thomas, 1998; Mendenhall and Oddou, 1985; Black et al., 1991). The study indicates that communication problems contribute to researchers' argument on intercultural competence. The rationale is that miscommunication creates numerous difficulties like conflicts, poor teamwork, delays in meeting targets, etc. The 'Social Attraction Theory' Mannix and Neale (2005) and 'the process and the structural models' Appelbaum, Shapiro, and Elbaz (1998) provide knowledge on how to resolve the problems. Again, the models of (Graf and Harland, 2005; Kim, 1991) provide added value to the study. These models share the assumptions with the works of several researchers, including (Lloyd and Hartel, 2010; Chang and Tharenou, 2004) to authenticate their significance for this study.

The literature review found that the 'Multicultural Shared Leadership' concept is very significant for my research when compared with other leadership models. The framework shows that the leaders empower their members to identify their intercultural competence skills, and this provides them with the ability to manage the challenges caused by cultural differences. Nevertheless, researchers experience some level of complexities regarding the right positioning of the context of leadership in culturally diverse work teams in (MNCs).

Generally, the literature studies demonstrate that the theories and the models examined used quantitative methods. However, the GLOBE project used both qualitative and qualitative to investigate 170 people in 62 countries to generate data from 17,300 middle managers in 951 organisations. For example, while Hofstede used 100,000 IBM employees from 50 countries, all the models for addressing the challenges of cultural differences, and the leadership of culturally diverse work teams (Bennett, 2011; Deardorff, 2009, 2006; Matveev and Milter, 2004) used quantitative methods. The limitation in the methods is that researchers have overused quantitative approach over the qualitative methods for their study. The implication for the research is that the results provide knowledge and insight into the specific techniques most conducive for the investigation to achieve the goals of the study because the above methods used large scales of data internationally to meet global objectives.

It is essential to note that the literature gaps provide implications for leaders in culturally diverse work teams in the Netherlands. Subsequently, I have been motivated to conduct this study to obtain knowledge and insight into how best team leaders could understand the adverse effects of cultural differences and develop intercultural competence skills and

knowledge to manage them in (MNCs) in the Netherlands. Accordingly, I developed the research question for investigation as follows.

'How Do Leaders of Culturally Diverse Work Teams in Multinational Companies in the Netherlands Understand the Adverse Effects of Cultural Differences to Develop Intercultural Competence to Manage Them?'

The above research question is very relevant for the study because Meeussen, Otten and Phalet (2014) argue that the workforces are progressively becoming diverse. Hence, leaders encounter the obstacles of managing their members and optimise the advantages of cultural differences. Against this background, researchers call for leaders of culturally diverse work teams to develop intercultural competence to address the problems of cultural differences (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Eagly and Chin, 2010; Avolio, 2007). Another argument is that the gaps for the studies resonate with the claim that studies on leadership in culturally diverse work teams are yet limited (Chin, 2010). The rationale is that most of the models developed to address cultural differences are globally and nationally based, which could not assist leaders in addressing the challenges of cultural differences in the team.

The argument is that since my study takes into consideration the roles of individual cultural differences in culturally diverse work teams, leaders could gain the ability to understand the critical cultural elements like personal cultural values, norms, attitudes, behaviour, beliefs and practices. Leaders could, therefore, manage the challenges caused by cultural differences effectively. The rationale validates the argument that the problems caused by cultural differences relate to the differences in values and assumptions of the individuals instead of demographic differences (Harrison and Klein, 2007; Jehn et al., 1999). Subsequently, the argument of Långstedt (2018) resonates with the goals of the study, indicating that a unique concern about cross-cultural research is that it motivates leaders to depend on refined stereotypes in intercultural encounters (Illman and Nynäs, 2017; Nathan, 2015; McSweeney, 2002). The sophisticated stereotypes rely on the assumption that a national-level examination envisions individual-level conducts, and Hofstede (2002) contends against it. Despite everything, there is a preliminary confirmation about the impacts of leaders on the performance of culturally diverse work teams (Meeussen, Otten and Phalet, 2014). It is against the general application of the national and the global approach to examining cultural differences that make the study a unique one in contributing to knowledge and business

practices. Therefore, the sub-questions below support the central question to achieve the goals of the study.

Sub-questions:

1. What problems do cultural differences create for culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies in the Netherlands? The supporting question is essential for leaders to identify the problems created by cultural differences because literature confirms the numerous difficulties facing the teams as a result of cultural differences (Han, and Beyerlein, 2016; Stahl, Maznevski, et al., 2010; Humes and Reilly, 2008; Matveev and Milter, 2004; Marquardt and Horvath, 2001; Shenkar and Zeira, 1992).

2. Why do leaders of the teams face difficulties in managing the challenges of cultural differences among their members in multinational companies? The question provides the rationale behind the complexities involving leadership in addressing the challenges of cultural differences. The argument depends on the premise that the failure of leaders to address the challenges of cultural differences has generated several debates about the requisite models to solve the problems. Culture is very complex, and this certifies the argument of Park et al. (2019) that individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds might possess different means to expound themselves concerning others (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). Subsequently, Groves and Feyerherm (2011) firmly recommend for leaders of the teams to develop intercultural competence because it is highly indispensable in our current organisations.

3. What effects do cultural differences have on culturally diverse work teams? The literature review further shows that cultural differences provide positive and negative impacts on culturally diverse work teams. Team leaders need to understand the consequences, and this fulfils the argument of Han and Beyerlein (2016), that one usually depicts culture as a two-edged sword in multinational companies. The connotation is that the team could benefit and also suffer from cultural differences. For example, Means, Mackenzie and Dewe (2015) show that there is the awareness that cultural diversity matters among the members. The rationale plays significant roles in the debates and argument among researchers, which validates the assumptions on a meta-analysis, indicating the complication of the impacts of cultural differences (Stahl et al., 2010).

4. What type of processes and factors do leaders need to develop intercultural competence for their teams? The argument is that the problems encountering the culturally diverse work teams have motivated researchers and practitioners to think-through intercultural competence as the indispensable tools needed to become successful in the cross-cultural environment (Johnson et al., 2006; Johnson, Lenartowicz and Apud 2006). However, researchers and practitioners have been unable to agree on the proper context of the models developed. Therefore, researchers have called for intercultural competence model for leaders of culturally diverse work teams to manage the challenges due to cultural differences.

5. What is the significance of leadership' development of intercultural competence of the team members? The supporting question aims to provide leaders with the knowledge and insight about the importance of developing intercultural competence. Such supports the argument for the benefits of intercultural competence among researchers (Matveev and Milter, 2004; Schwer, 2004; Kealey and Protheroe, 1996; Redmond and Bunyi, 1991; Samovar and Porter, 1991).

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

Main Aim:
The research aims at obtaining knowledge and insight into how best leaders of culturally diverse work teams could understand the challenges of cultural differences in their teams, and develop intercultural competence skills and knowledge to manage them in multinational companies in the Netherlands.

Discipline:
Culture and leadership in culturally diverse work teams

Design of the Research:
Qualitative

Nature of Qualitative Research;
Interpretive

Empirical Fieldwork:
Qualitative interviews and observation

Supporting Tool:
Dragon to transcribe The data

Data Analysis:
Thematic analysis

Supporting Tool:
NVivo11 pro for windows

Research Findings:
Thematic descriptions

Figure 3.1 The Framework of the Method and Research Design for the Study

The framework defines the method and the design for the study. It provides the research aims, showing that qualitative design is applied while the nature of qualitative research is interpretive and the discipline for the study is culture and leadership. The framework further shows that empirical fieldwork is a qualitative interview and observation. The method for the data analysis is thematic, and the supporting tool is NVivo 11 pro for windows which finally provide thematic descriptions for the research findings.

The section further provides the rationales for using the interpretive - qualitative approach, analyses the ethical consideration in addition to the observation and the semi-structured qualitative data collection process, method of sampling and the piloting process. Finally, it explores the thematic data analysis process, the reliability and validity of the research project. The following sub-sections detail the entire methodological process.

3.2 Qualitative research design

The literature review shows that researchers have mostly used quantitative design to examine cultural differences and cross-cultural management. The literature gaps and the research phenomenon motivated me to choose the qualitative design to contribute to new knowledge and explore new perspectives in cultural differences and intercultural competence of leadership of culturally diverse work teams in a unique way. Therefore, the qualitative design contributed to uncovering new insights, perspectives and views from the research participants. As a result, every stage of my research design, starting from the formulation of the research questions to the period of the research results fulfiled the perspectives of qualitative research methods. For instance, my research design showed a framework for data generation and analysis Bryman and Bell (2015). The premise is that the data collection methods and analysis depended on the design of the research.

The research topic and the aim of the study confirm a common goal for culture and anthropology as well as sociology so that the feasibility in applying qualitative methodological strategy to investigate the phenomenon is justified. Qualitative research has a firm root in an anthropological and sociological investigation regarding the social and cultural contexts that people live in and the perception developed by the people concerning their world (Merriam, 2009). The similar goals for the studies of culture and qualitative methodology contributed to explore knowledge and insight for the aims of my research (Merriam, 2009). The argument is essential because the social phenomenology of Schutz (1899-1959) proves it by demonstrating the opinion that people dwelling in this world could attribute explanations to life circumstances. Therefore, they can make judgments concerning their daily activities (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006. p. 81). Case in point, the participants provided good accounts of their challenges by making judgments of the problems of cultural differences in the teams in meaningful ways through subjective meanings of experience to become a reality. Their knowledge and expertise helped me to acknowledge their views and opinions for the research. The approach clarifies the acknowledgement of several researchers

(Horsfall et al. 2001; Leininger, 1994) regarding the second postulate of subjective interpretation of Schutz (1899-1959) as follows;

'This has a strong connection with the preservation of the subjective point of view of the research participants and therefore accepting the context in which one studies the phenomenon' (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006. p. 81).

The argument is that the reflections of my research participants obtained through their own words strengthened the face validity and reliability of the study (Patton, 2002). Furthermore, the limited research done in the context of the study makes it much easier for the qualitative design. The reason substantiates the argument that one could use a qualitative approach to explain phenomena with limited attention to ensure the exploration of under-researched issues (Minichiello and Kottler, 2010). Significantly, the cultural differences of the research participants contributed to the application of the qualitative design because psychologically, the research examined and understood the impact of culture on the leaders and their members in culturally diverse work teams. The effect of culture on psychology demonstrates how the cultural backgrounds of the people impact their perception and how they equally react to circumstances concerning them (Schaller and Murray, 2011, p.100). The qualitative design supported the aims of the study, which substantiates the premise that cultural concepts seek to identify phenomena without the advancement of hypotheses (Ratner, 2009).

It is also essential to note here that the demonstration of Merriam (2009) regarding the uses of terms like 'naturalistic' and 'interpretive' for qualitative research provides more value to the application of the qualitative approach for my investigation. The qualitative design for my study supports the argument that 'interpretivism places emphasis on the significance of how people take part in social and cultural life' (Arolker and Seale, 2012 p. 573). To a large extent, the above factors contributed to the application of the qualitative design; thus, making the use of quantitative design not feasible. The reason is the data generation was not in numerical form to measure in units for my study. Again, since the aim of the research was not to test a theory with the assistance of statistical tools to summarise the data to achieve the description of patterns and relationships, it became clear to me that it would not help to achieve the goals of the study.

One crucial fact is that I quantified some opinions on specific issues by the team leaders and their members who agreed on their line of reasoning. Therefore, I reported some few results

in percentages (%) by calculating the total number of participants who agreed on specific issues or opinion and divided them over the total number of the participants and multiplied them by 100. The approach authenticates the process whereby one analyses qualitative data in an objective and quantifiable manner (Michelene, 1997). The argument is that one could code qualitative data quantitatively to assign essential values numerically (Atieno, 2009). Despite this process, the application of percentages in explaining some of the findings was not sufficient enough to conclude that the method was quantitative. Besides, I did not examine that to qualify the study for a mixed-method design. From this section, I would continue to explore the qualitative research approach for my research by analysing the interpretive-qualitative research.

3.3. The application of the interpretive- qualitative research

First of all, the study involved team leaders and their members; therefore, the roles of human actors were very relevant to the application of qualitative analysis for this research. For instance, Merriam (2002) argues that qualitative research usually used by researchers include ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory and the basic interpretive design. Several factors motivated me for the interpretive - qualitative design. Still, it is essential for me first to analyse the grounded theory, phenomenology and ethnography, weighed as the other alternative approaches for my study.

In the first place, the 'Grounded theory', proposed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), has an inductive approach with the core objective of building meaning from collected data and accepts the researcher to become the main instrument for collecting and analysing data (Merriam, 2009). In that case, the outcome of the research will become a theory that is grounded in the findings (Merriam, 2009). However, my research instead had an interpretation level objective based on exploration as well as description in nature. The ethnography connects with interpretive stance because of issues with culture (Merriam, 2009). Yet, because the ethnography process compels me to use an enormous amount of time in the empirical site Merriam (2009), I would not be able to meet the ethical requirements for my study due to the time frame provided. Besides, the research participants refused to spend excessive time on the research due to professional responsibilities.

By considering the above arguments, it became imperative for me to proceed further with the basic interpretive - qualitative approach. Significantly, Merriam's (2002) examination of the

essential interpretive- qualitative approach demonstrates the critical features of qualitative research that shares the goals of the methodological approach of my research. The argument is that the study should concentrate on the meaning and understanding the experiences of the participants, and how they construct their world, while I, the one conducting the research, should be the main 'instrument' to obtain the data (Merriam, 2009). The experience of the participants ranges between 2 to 40 plus years in (MNCs), while my involvement in the research provided the opportunity to get the first-hand information for the primary information especially with the application of the observational method of data collection. The approach fulfils the argument of Merriam (2009) that my involvement and responsiveness in the empirical field are significant for the data collection because the context of the research entails much. Merriam (2009) suggests that I needed to be adaptive and start the process immediately, so my level of adaptability at the empirical site and the research participants were very dynamic to move along with the prevailing circumstances that occurred during the investigation. My study demanded that the inquiry should be inductive so that I could use the generated data to develop concepts or theories. At the same time, the results should be excellent and descriptive, including the application of words and quotations to demonstrate what has been studied accordingly (Merriam, 2009).

There are three essential processes identified with interpretive - qualitative research, and these include the definition of the research problem, the selection of the sample, collecting analysing the data and writing the final study (Merriam, 2002). My research fulfiled the three conditions because the literature gaps which related to the problem statement provided the basis of the study. At the same time, I have addressed the data generation, and the analysis in the current section of the methodology. Besides, the subsequent chapters of this study analyse the findings, discussions, conclusions and recommendations accordingly.

3.4 Ethical considerations for the research

The ethical consideration for my research was significant because it provided the guidelines for obeying the rules and regulations governing the study, and this became the roadmap to respect and maintained the confidentiality of the research participants. The purpose was to ensure my adherence to all rules governing the ethics of the research. Respecting ethics bears on obeying the rules and preventing harm in research (Beauchamp and Childress, 1989). Necessarily, I made sure to explain all guidelines and principles regarding the research adequately to the research participants to improve trust, achieve research integrity and

manage issues during the research process, and this affirms that ethics lead to quality practice of research (Goodwin, 2002). The approach also attests to the fact that I follow the guidelines and principles to protect research participants and the investigators, to reduce harm, maximise quality, improve trust, achieve the integrity of the research, fulfil the organisational and professional requirements, and manage unexpected challenges (Denzin and Giardina, 2007). Privacy and confidentiality are essential to ethics Hughes and Tight (2010), so I signed a confidential agreement to protect their identity and keep their information confidentially. The research participants demonstrated free expression of opinions, knowledge and insight very openly without much concern because they agreed to use 'stage names' in anonymous ways as shown by Blaxter et al. (2010) as pseudonyms forms.

To successfully win their trust, confidence, improved their competence and addressed their challenges regarding the research, I explained the aims and objectives, context, their roles, process and the type of questions used for the study. These were done for them to understand the entire process of the research (Blaxter et al., 2010). For instance, participants got the chance to read and ask all questions bothering their minds for clarity before the actual interview process began to avoid unexpected challenges. The study demonstrates that ethical problems in qualitative studies during the empirical sites seem to be more delicate than the difficulties in quantitative studies (Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden, 2001). The static, formalised guidelines might render invisible the inherent nature of tensions, fluidity and uncertainty of ethical issues arising from qualitative research (Denzin and Giardina, 2007; Lincoln and Cannella, 2007). I did not experience substantial ethical challenges during the study. However, some research participants became emotional in the course of giving some accounts of their experience with cultural differences in their teams, and I did my best to bring such situations under control. Such unexpected challenges demonstrate that the recent ethical guidelines could fail to consider the entire account of the psychological risks encountered by the researcher in the course of the research (Aluwihare-Samaranayake, 2012). The situation shows a gap in the authentic roles of ethics in qualitative research, which offers an opportunity to conduct a further investigation regarding the process and effects of emotions by qualitative researchers.

3.5 Data collection techniques

The process for the data collection was a highly involving, progressive, textual, observational and dynamic reflection of feedback from the empirical field. The data for my study was less

structured, devoid of excessive use of numerical value, adaptable and inductive as compared to the quantitative data collection process. The process authenticates the argument that qualitative research includes any research which applies data that excludes ordinal values (Nkwi, Nyamongo and Ryan, 2001). Again, the process I adopted also reaffirms the argument of Merriam (2009) that qualitative researchers are flexible and conscious of their evolving research. My level of flexibility moved me away from any form of stuck position during the process because I always needed to react to any event which occurred in the data generation process. I had to respond to all happenings during the research and become adjustable to fit into the context of the study (Minichello and Kottler, 2010). The following sub-sections, therefore, explain the process for the empirical fieldwork.

3.5.1 Empirical fieldwork: Gaining access to multinational companies in the Netherlands

The section on the fieldwork explains the activities that took place in the course of gaining access to the participants in (MNCs). The actual fieldwork took place between 15/02/16 to 31/05/16 when I received the ethics certificate to do the empirical research. Before starting the fieldwork, the process for searching and contacting potential research participants in (MNCs) in the Netherlands took place between 1st November 2015 to 31st January 2016. The purpose was to obtain participants' approval and confirmation for participating in the studies to fulfil the requirements for the issuance of the ethics certificate from the University. The process was a bit cumbersome at the initial stages because of rejections and disappointments from some companies. Yet, my profession as a consultant and a lecturer with the advantages of supervising internship students in (MNCs) assisted me in getting access to the companies. Due to this, all preparations towards the primary fieldwork had been completed before 15/02/16 successfully.

By applying the principles of Bryman and Bell (2015), my friends and professional contacts paved ways for me to get access to several (MNCs). I provided all participants with the 'Consent Form for Studies Involving Human Participants' issued by the ethics department to read and understand the primary purpose of the research with consent (Appendix A). The forms demonstrated the detailed knowledge of the context of the research and the eight main underlying conditions for participating in the research built the confidence and interest in the participants. The process fulfilled the argument regarding the acquisition of research participants because team leaders and their members voluntarily participated (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Blaxter et al., 2010; Gummesson, 2000). I adopted a prudent strategy which

motivated the research participants because they got to know at the onset of the studies that the topic was of high value to them. The strategy endorses the argument that 'If you apply a reasoned, prepared, more prudent strategy, you are bound to obtain the access you require' (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010; 158). Sometimes, some participants sent me messages to confirm and expressed their preparedness for the interview before the actual meeting took place, which indicated their willingness for the study.

3.5.2 Population and sampling

It was essential to use sampling to identify the potential participants for my research because it was impracticable to use the general population, which were the employees in (MNCs) in the Netherlands for my research. The method validates the argument of Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2010) that regardless of the procedure, you must thus, consider the accompanying issues of sampling and selection. Because it was not easy to obtain the complete list of the employees in the (MNCs) in the Netherlands for the studies, the best option was to apply the non-probability sampling techniques (Saunders and Lewis, 2018). The knowledge of the population and the available resources for the study Blaxter, Hughes and Tight (2010) contributed to the approach. The following demonstrates the detailed process for the snowball sampling used for the research;

3.5.3 The non-probability: The snowball and self - selection sampling

The qualitative design motivated me to use the non - probability sampling strategy instead of the probabilistic approach, which would not help me to fulfil the objectives of the study (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010). The non-probability sampling is the method of selection whereby, after the first sample member, subsequent members are identified and volunteered by earlier sample members (Saunders and Lewis, 2018). The argument for using the method of the sampling was that I encountered difficulties in acquiring the research participants from (MNCs) at the initial stages of the research while it was also cost-effective. As a consequence, I applied the snowball sampling. The process of the snowball sampling added value to the study because after contacting some few team leaders and their members, they also connected me to other team leaders and their members in other (MNCs). They, in turn, volunteered to participate in the research. The approach also fulfils the argument that those who step forward for snowball sample most doubtlessly lookout for and volunteer others who share the same value and thus leading to identical sample (Saunders and Lewis, 2018).

Furthermore, I used my professional networks, and consultancy experience to obtain employees from the varieties of (MNCs) with different services and products. They also identified and volunteered themselves to gather other participants for the research with the help of emails, telephones, social media like WhatsApp's groups, etc. Based on this, I also deemed it necessary to apply the self-selection sampling (Saunders and Lewis, 2018). The selection became successful because the participants believed that they would also benefit from the research since they experienced several challenges with cultural differences in their teams. The process corroborates the argument that those who self-select and offer themselves as part of your sample go ahead because they believe firmly in your research topic and thus accept to provide part of their time for it (Saunders and Lewis, 2018). The model below demonstrates the companies I used for the study. I used 20 multinational companies, out of which 10 were service, 8 were manufacturing, while 2 were manufacturing/service combined.
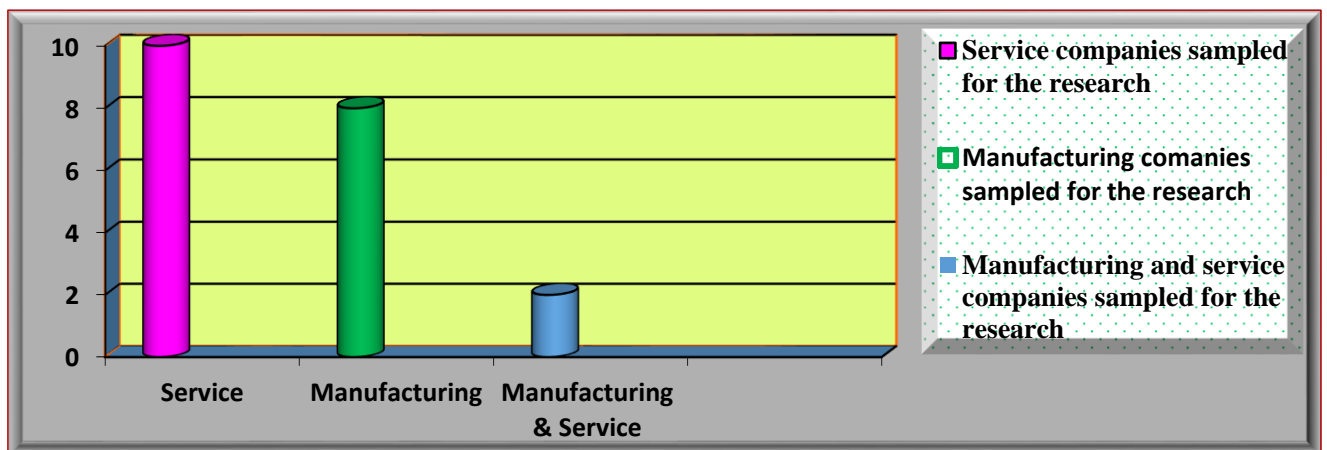
Figure 3.2: Multinational Companies Sampled for Research

The total employees I used for the study was 68, out of which 34 employees (i.e., 14 team leaders and 20 team members) were employees from the ten service companies. Again, a total of 25 employees (i.e., 11 team leaders and 14 team members) were also participants from the manufacturing companies. Finally, a total of 9 employees (i.e., 4 team leaders and 5 team members) were also from the service/manufacturing companies.

Significantly, the selection of the companies depended on the guidelines of the 'International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities Revision 4' (United Nations, 2008)[3]. Examples of manufacturing companies included the manufacturing of food products,

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[3] The UN demonstrates that the manufacturing sectors involve companies that apply the transformation of physical or chemical materials, substances, or components into new products.

motor vehicles, textiles, electrical equipment, and furniture. The service providers included banks and insurance companies, management consultancy, legal and accounting firms, telecommunication service providers, transportation, entertainment and recreation companies, NGOs and educational institution[4]. The manufacturing and the service were mainly from hotels and restaurants.

3.5.4 Demographic characteristics of participants sampled

I considered the characteristics of the participants sampled for the research significant because they played important roles in making the right decisions regarding national backgrounds, ethnicity, gender balance, age differences, educational experiences, and so on. The purpose was to generate various opinions and insights from diverse backgrounds to achieve a broad spectrum of the contribution of ideas for the context of the research.

Continents and ethnicity of research participants

I considered the continents and the ethnic backgrounds of the research participants to ascertain the differences in the roles of their national and ethnic backgrounds regarding their views and opinions on cultural differences in their teams.

Table 3.1 below demonstrates the percentages of participants by continent and ethnicity of the research participants[5]. The Table shows that participants sampled for the research cut across six continents, and they were considered based on their parental backgrounds, including their places of birth and raised as well. Again, the Table shows that the European participants constitute the highest percentage with 39% (i.e., 18% of team leaders and 21% team members), followed by North America with 16%, (9% team leaders and 7% team members). Furthermore, Africa and South America constitute 13% and 9% respectively, with a difference of 1% and 3% for their leadership and members representatives. Australia and Oceania form the least representative with 1% leadership and 3% team member.

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[4] The detailed structure and the notes explained could be found in https://unstats.un.org/unsd/cr/registry/regcst.asp?

[5] The percentage for each continent/ethnicity for team leaders and members is calculated by using the following formula (i.e., $\frac{\text{Continent/Ethnicity}}{\text{Total Participants}} \times 100$). Again, the percentages are rounded up.

Table 3.1: Percentage of Participants by Continent and Ethnicity of Research Participants

Continents/Ethnicity	Team Leaders	Team Members	Total Percentage
Europe	12 = 18%	14 = 21%	26 = 39%
Asia	5 = 7%	8 = 12%	13 = 19%
North America	6 = 9%	5 = 7%	11 = 16%
Africa	3 = 4%	6 = 9%	9 = 13%
South America	2 = 3%	4 = 6%	6 = 9%
Australia and Oceania	1 = 1%	2 = 3%	3 = 4%
Total	**29**	**39**	**68**

Significantly, the Table indicates that the percentage for the European participants is higher than the rest of the remaining continents because of part, the staffing attitudes of (MNCs). The regiocentric approach to staffing reflects the strategy of the region and the structure of the companies. Therefore candidates from the area of operation are widely considered for employment for such companies (Dowling, Festing and Engle, 2013). The companies used for the studies were in the Netherlands, and this allowed the European employees to participate more. Finally, Table 3.1 shows that the research participants demonstrate some level of fair distribution in terms of representations from the various continents.

Although the Europeans were the majority, the differences in percentages among the remaining continents are not vast, and this is significant for the validity of the research with regards to opinions and views analysed for the findings and conclusions. The variations acknowledge the argument that detailed information concerning the essential demographic variables among others such as the participants' number, the selection methods, agreements made, ethnicity, educational level, and types of assignment for them are very important for the research findings (Sifers et al., 2002).

Gender Variations

Gender variations were also an important factor considered during the sampling because I intended to achieve differences in opinions, views, richness, avoid bias and therefore contributed to a valid conclusion. For instance, Table 3.2 below demonstrates that the total

number of participants sampled is 68, out of which 34 constitutes the full male participants, while the remaining 34 are females.

Table 3.2: Gender Variations for Research Participants Sampled for the Research

Team Leaders		Sub-Total	Team Members		Sub-Total	Total Participants
Males Participants	Females Participants		Male Participants	Female Participants		
16	13	**29**	18	21	**39**	**68**

Again, the male team leaders exceed the females by 3 participants while the female team members exceed the males by 3 participants. More so, the total number of gender variations for the participants sampled is highly insignificant, and this is suitable for the research because of equality in terms of views, opinions and contributions from both parties. The number of male leaders exceeding females corroborates the argument of some diversity experts and other management practitioners that males exceed the females in the highest positions in (MNCs) in the Netherlands. For example, women's share in management position compared to men is still low because just 29 per cent of them are managers. In contrast, more men have full-time jobs than women in companies in the Netherlands (Rotterdam School of Management, 2014). Despite this, the difference is not significant for this study because of variations in knowledge, views and opinions needed for the study.

Age, gender and educational background of research participants sampled for the research

I took into consideration the age difference, gender and the academic backgrounds of the research participants during the sampling as a result of several factors. Tables 3.3 and 3.4 below demonstrate the age, gender and educational background of the team leaders and their members sampled for the research. Table 3.3, for instance, shows that the leaders possess outstanding academic qualifications with the minimum being a bachelor degree for both genders. The Table indicates that the majority of the team leaders have a masters' degree with 11 each for both sexes. The females within the age category of 51-60 years constitute the highest participants with six master's degree than the remaining age categories. Again, the males in the age group of 41-50 possess the second-highest master's degree certificates. However, while each of the leaders in both genders has 1 PhD qualification, one male team

leader is doing the PhD, according to Table 3.3. The implication is that there were minimal variations among the academic requirements of the team leaders sampled.

Table 3.3: Age, Gender and Educational Background of Team Leaders Sampled

Age Group	High School		Doing Bachelor Degree		Bachelor Degree		Masters Degree		Doing PhD		PhD	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
16-20												
21-30								1	1			
31-40							1	2				
41-50					1	1	5	2			1	1
51-60					1	1	3	6				
61-70							2					
Total	0	0	0	0	2	2	11	11	1		1	1

Table 3.4: Age, Gender and Educational Background of the Team Members Sampled

Age Group	High School		Doing Bachelor Degree		Bachelor Degree		Masters Degree		Doing PhD		PhD	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
16-20	3	1										
21-30			2	1	7	4		3				
31-40						2		3				
41-50							1	2	1			1
51-60					1		4	1				
61-70								2				
Total	3	1	2	1	8	6	5	11	1	0	0	1

Comparatively, Table 3.4 instead demonstrates that the least educational background of the participants is a high school certificate possessed by 4 participants within the age group of 16 – 20. While one female team member has a PhD degree, another male participant was doing the PhD within the age category of 41-50 years. Table 3.3 further shows that the female participants within the various age categories possess more masters' degree certificates with a total of 11 than their male counterparts with 5. Despite that, the male participants within the

different age groups also possess more bachelor degrees with a total of 8 than their female participants with 6, which is insignificant compared to those with the master's degree.

In summary, Tables 3.3 and 3.4 show that the research participants sampled in general possessed high educational levels, although few team members have the minimum educational qualifications. The tables also show a relationship between the age groups of the research participants and their level of academic skills to some extent. For example, while the age group of 16-20 indicates the minimum requirement of high school certificates, those within the age groups of 31-50 have a higher degree of qualifications. One could argue that the academic skills of the research participants imply a significant role in the understanding of the interview questions among the participants. The educational levels and the professional experience of the research participants created enabling background to interview them with ease because they understood the research questions. They also familiarised themselves with the context of the research questions because of their rich experience, which motivated them to provide detailed insights with several rich examples and practical cases in their answers.

The professional experience of research participants

I considered the experience of the participants because of their roles for the research[6]. Figure 3.3 below explains the number of years of experience possessed by the research participants. The Figure shows that within the age groups of 71-70 and 51-60 years, the team leaders (males) possess the highest years of experience with 42 and 37 in the organisation, respectively. However, within the same age groups, the female leaders followed with 36 and 35 years, respectively, and this implies that the team leader participants possessed the highest experience in the organisation. These participants got rich expertise because they had worked with diverse people from different cultural backgrounds, allowing them to provide detailed knowledge and good insight with several examples for the context of the research during the interview.

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[6] The years of experience were based on average years of the research participants within the age groups.
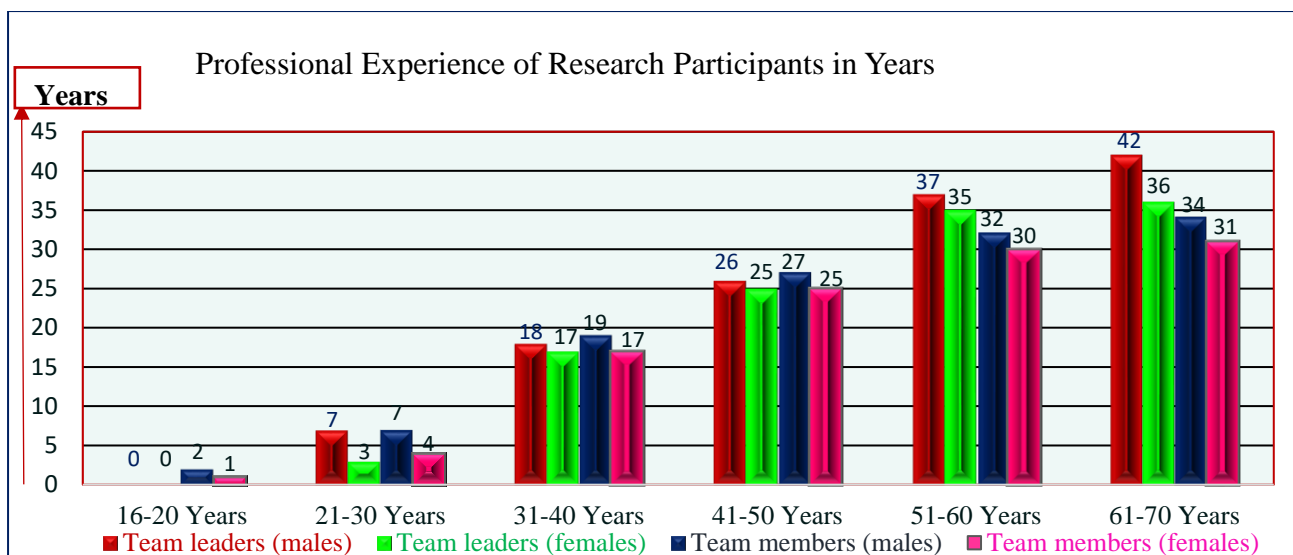
Figure 3.3: Professional Experience of Research Participants (Team Leaders and Their Members in Years.

Among the team members, the males between the ages of 61-70 and 51-60 are the sixth and seventh highest with 34 and 32 years respectively, although the female team members for the same age groups followed with 31and 30 respectively. The Figure also indicates that the team members between the ages of 16-20 possess the least experience of 1 year for females, followed by males with two years. The male team members have the highest experience within the age groups of 41-50 and 31- 40 with 27 and 19 years respectively, and this is followed by the male's team leaders with 26 and 18 respectively. The Figure finally demonstrates that the overall experience of the research participants was very high except the members in the age group of 16-20 years and the females (both team leaders and their members) between the age group of 21-30. The connotation is that the ages of the participants correspond with their experience to a large extent.

3.5.5 Piloting

In the first place, there is the argument that qualitative research advances naturally with aims for development as the investigation carries on, and therefore piloting is not a prerequisite in part (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). Again, qualitative enquiry encounters challenges in pilot studies because one does not develop the theoretical scheme until data are saturated; however, by definition, pilot studies demonstrate that data are unsaturated (Morse, 1997). Despite the argument above, I undertook to pilot before the first data generation for the study

took place with six participants (3 males and 3 females) with the same interview questions between 15th and 17th February, and five significant factors motivated me for the process.

Firstly, I conducted the pilot studies to identify the challenges with my design and instruments such as the administering of interview questions, responses from participants and others. The process validates the argument on the identification of problems with the proposed design and instruments (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001). Secondly, I did the piloting to develop experience on the attitudes and behaviour of the team leaders and their members regarding the process of the data generation, especially with the observation method to respond appropriately towards them. Thirdly, I piloted to see how best to examine my time frame since the leaders informed me about their time consciousness, and that I needed to prepare enough to meet that obligation. Fourthly, to make the adjustment with my research design and the general guidance for the research, and finally, to test the 'Philip voice recording tracer', the 'dragon machine' used to transcribe the data[7], and also to verify the data analysis process with the thematic data approach. The pilot research thus, laid a fruitful background for the entire study because I identified and found solutions for potential challenges such managing the time for the interview, resolving interruptions, addressing lengthy answers and prepared me well for the primary fieldwork.

3.6 Method of data collection: Interview and observation

When I consider the context of my research as a social scientist, I found that this research could not be completed without involving the empirical fieldwork to collect data through observation and interview. The reason is that the relationship development with the research participants was a critical factor in driving motivation, trust and confidence among the research participants during the interview process. The process also fulfils the argument of Minichiello and Kottler (2010), that relationship developments are whole in qualitative research. The fieldwork has a substantial mystique and accompanying norm for such researchers and disciplines (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010; 185).

The essential principles which aided me to apply these techniques included healthy relationship development, the conducive environment through confidence development,

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[7] It should be noted that detailed information about the 'Philip voice recording tracer', and the 'dragon machine' used to transcribe the data could be found in section 3.6 for the qualitative data analysis.
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safety and comfort in sharing their thoughts. Achieving quality and positive interaction with the open-minded approach were my core goals to making my research participants feel at home and develop full trust to deliver detailed and useful insights into their answers for the interview questions. For example, this authenticates the argument of several researchers (Minichiello and Kottler, 2010; Merriam, 2009) in that, the participants became comfortable and felt secured to share their thoughts.

3.6.1 Qualitative interview: Semi-structured

I used face-to-face, Skype, WhatsApp, telephone and email to conduct the semi-structured interview. The process reconfirms that face-to-face, telephone, email, messenger, or video chat apps such as Skype are used to conduct semi-structured as well as instructed interviews for qualitative research (Saunders and Lewis, 2018, p.165). Some significant factors motivated me to apply qualitative interview methods to generate my data. In the first place, the conditions surrounding the sampling technique with regards to the accessibility to the participants in (MNCs) paved the way for me to apply face-to-face semi-structured approach on one-to-one interviews. I got the opportunity to make in-depth conversation with each of the team leaders as well as the team members.

To some extent, the face-to-face interview technique took about 80% of the entire interview techniques applied to generate the data. The process provided full confidence between me and those interviewed in the empirical field, and this motivated the participants to provide detailed and lengthy information to generate quality and in-depth data (Blaxter et al., 2010). For example, the process offered the chance for each of the participants to share in-depth knowledge and experience on issues concerning cultural differences and (IC) in the team. The semi-structured process complemented the adoption of the observation technique to generate the data, and in this section, I provide a detailed explanation later[8]. The method I took also reaffirms the argument that qualitative research is an extended and constantly developing methodological field that embraces a broad approach to research, including multiple frames of reference on the type of research itself (Leavey, 2014 p.2).

Again, the qualitative interview helped the participants to provide detailed information about the research topic comfortably in their ways, and Byrne (2012) justifies this by showing that

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[8] Detailed information for the observation process as a method of data collection has been provided in (section 3.3.5).

the participants offer a response in their own words. I also wanted to explore the context of my research in such a way that I could explain the complete information regarding the findings obtained successfully. As a social scientist, the approach I took helped me to explore and explain social phenomenon within the social and behavioural sciences (Leavey, 2014). I had the chance to listen to the participants of my research attentively and critically analysed their views and perspectives for the study. The process equally shares the argument of Kvale and Brinkman (2009) because the interview data became a source constructed through the collective efforts of the research participants and myself. The reason is that although the participants provided an account of their experience regarding cultural differences through the questions I asked, it was through my subjective interpretation of the data that made the final results a reality. The approach helped me to achieve proper interaction with the research participants to construct a revelatory report of my interpretation and knowledge for the research (Byrne, 2012; Lincoln et al., 2011).

3.6.2. Semi-structured interview questions

I used two sets of semi-structured interview questions that were probing, instigating and inducing enough to encourage the team leaders and their members to provide more information for the study. The original interview questions for the team leaders were fourteen, but the members got fifteen. Yet, some responses to specific questions generated further probing during the process, therefore extending some of the probing questions due to the exploration process. While some interview questions were the same for the team leaders and the members, others were different to achieve similar and diverse perspectives for the context of the study (Appendix B). The team leaders and the members were more encouraged to give further answers to the follow-up questions, and this verifies the argument of Patton (1990) that my question induced the respondent to provide more information, free flow and in a more sequential manner.

I got the chance to achieve the goal of an extensive probing and a dialogue between those interviewed and myself to produce quality and detailed materials for analysis (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). The argument is that the probing helped me to ask further questions to obtain rich information Merriam (2009), and the process helped me to receive valuable information, insight and learned more (Merriam, 2009).

The following shows some sample interview questions used for the investigation.

Interview question for team leaders	Rationale
Being a leader of culturally diverse work teams, what problems or challenges do cultural differences create for you and your members?	The question aimed to obtain leadership perception of the kind of problems cultural differences create for the team. Cultural differences create several challenges for the team (Han and Beyerlein, 2016).
Why do you face difficulties in managing the challenges of cultural differences in your team, as a leader?	The goal was to know leadership's perspectives on the factors confronting them from managing the challenges of cultural differences. Culture is very complex (Markus and Kitayama, 1991).
What do you think is your level of knowledge and skills in understanding your personal cultural self- awareness (that is; the cultural values, beliefs and perceptions to identify cultural differences in your team?	The objective of the question was to find out about the intercultural competence level of team leaders through cultural self-awareness. The challenges of cultural differences relate to differences in values, norms, beliefs (Harrison and Klein, 2007; Jehn et al., 1999).
Based on your experience as a leader in your team, in what ways do you think developing the ability for intercultural competence could help you and your team?	The question aimed to find out how leadership's acquisition of intercultural competence could benefit the team. Intercultural competence could help leaders to manage the team effectively (Matveev and Milter, 2004).

Figure 3.4: Sample Interview Questions for Team Leaders

Interview question for team members	Rationale
As a member of a culturally diverse work team, what problems or challenges do cultural differences create for your team?	The goal of this question was to obtain members' perception of the kind of problems cultural differences create for the team. Cultural differences create several challenges for the team (Han and Beyerlein, 2016).
Based on your experience with regards to cultural differences, what impacts do you think cultural differences have on your team?	The goal of the interview question was to know the effects of cultural differences on the teams from the perspective of the team members. Cultural differences impact the team in several ways (Liou and Lan, 2018; Vaibhav, 2012)
Why do you think your leader faces difficulties or challenges in managing the problems created by cultural differences in your team?	The goal was to know members' perspectives on the factors confronting their leaders from managing the challenges of cultural differences. Culture is very complex (Markus and Kitayama, 1991).
How do you expect your leader to manage the challenges of cultural differences in your teams effectively?	The objective was to find out about members' expectation regarding the management of cultural differences by their leaders because they face complex challenges in their leadership roles (Moodian, 2008).

Figure 3.5: Sample Interview Questions for Team Members

3.6.3 Interview guides

I used four interview guides for the face-to-face, skype/WhatsApp, observation, email and telephone interviews to achieve flexible and smooth interaction to generate quality data (Appendix C). Factors such as delivering the quality interview question, proximity of the research participants, communication channel, participants' availability, the interview questions and time contributed to the interview guides I used for the investigation. The guides

became a roadmap for my study, and this authenticates the argument that it serves as a form of encouragement (Silverman, 2013).

The interview guides were flexible, and the adaptive techniques made it possible for me to react to the prevailing circumstances to the emerging view of the respondent, including the new ideas on the topic (Merriam, 2009, p. 90). Notably, I also considered the cultural backgrounds, age differences, gender variations and the social context during the application of the guide, and the process became dynamic because some unexpected circumstances sometimes changed the pattern of applying the guidelines for the interview to suit the prevailing situation.

3.6.4 The interview process

I began the face-to-face interview process with a pragmatic and friendly approach where I welcomed participants with smiles and a cheerful face, asked about their well-being in a friendly way which induced good reception and response from the participants immediately. I did that to achieve good professional acquaintance at that moment to overcome tension at work and stress for the day to open the door for a smooth and well-prepared ground for a successful interview. For example, Patton (1990) argues that the conversation and the quality of the information received is highly dependent on the skills and the personality of the interviewer.

While the average interview time for the team leaders was 46 minutes and 82 seconds, the members used 50 minutes and 58 seconds. Again, the individual team leaders used the minimum interview time of 30 minutes while the team members instead used the maximum interview time of 1 hour, 20 minutes. The flexible process provided some leads to identify some of the emerging themes traced across many responses from the participants even before I analysed the data.

It is worthy to note that due to the time factor and busy schedules, some participants gave me the chance to do a skype interview. The skyping process almost took the same format, although it offered a more flexible time because the respondents got enough time more than the face-to-face approach. The skype interviews provided in-depth information except that some respondents took so much time because of their interest in the context of the research. I also used the same introduction approach for the skype except that the respondents preferred

to get the interview questions in advance to ask all questions bothering them before the actual interview began. Besides, very few respondents also did the interview through telephone, and they preferred to receive the interview questions ahead, went through them for further explanations before proceeding with the primary semi-structured interview for the study. The approach also took a long time to finish because some participants preferred to talk at length. The skype also offered the chance to probe further for detailed information and almost achieved the same purpose as the face-to-face approach. The final one was the email technique, and this formed the least one because very few participants relied on this to submit their answers due to time factors.

3.6.5 The roles of recorder and diaries for the data generation

I used 'Philips Voice Tracer DVT4000/00 Digital Voice Recorder' (www.philips.co.uk) to record the interview after reaching an agreement with the participants. The voice tracer was able to record detailed information with perfect automatic settings, quality of speech and a precise playback with a quality soundtrack. I then stored all in-depth conversations on the voice tracer, and this became very useful during the data analysis[9].

Again, I included a diary to support and enrich my data generation because I took note of all forms of attitudes and behaviour that occurred during the interview process most notably, the observation process. The method fulfils the argument that the diaries provide supplementation and enrichment of the data generated through observation and the interviews conducted (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). The dairy helped during the observation technique, and the approach confirms Alaszewski's (2005) assertion that the interviews depend on memory. The sub-section below details the description of the observation technique used to generate the data, including how I used the diary.

3.6.6 Observation techniques

I got the opportunity to observe ten teams (six service and four manufacturing companies), after agreeing with them to use unstructured observation technique to generate data for my research by monitoring their work process to assess issues regarding cultural differences. The method validates the argument that observation, distinctively participant observation, is used

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9 The digital voice recorder was very instrumental during the interview process because all questions and answers for the interview were stored and this was played back for transcription during the data analysis. Without this, the data generation process would had been very cumbersome considering the total number of 68 participants where some participants sometimes used 1 hour plus in proving answers to questions.

in different disciplines as a technique for data collection about people, processes, and cultures in qualitative research (Kawulich, 2005). I informed the participants that I was there as a research student seeking to obtain new insight into the context of the study, and the research topic appealed to them. As a result, they genuinely attached importance to the study due to the challenges they encountered as a result of cultural differences. The aim validates the argument that the critic is not welcome, although the expert is accepted (Walsh, 2012; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). The purpose was to achieve trust in a conducive atmosphere for every participant to freely share knowledge, insight and experience about cultural differences with me.

I followed the observation guide of Merriam (1998), including all the essential elements that I used in the field. The guidelines included the environment of the empirical sites, the description of the context, the characteristics of the team leaders, the members, and I recorded all the activities and processes involved in the field. Although I did not use video recording due to privacy purposes, I considered the frequency that activities took place, including all sorts of unplanned events regarding their work process, attitudes and behaviour in the team, and took notes with the dairy. The method strengthens Lewis's argument that the unstructured observation is unorganised, concentrating on the surroundings, those observed including their activities, as well as the process and associated sentiments (Saunders and Lewis, 2018).

To make the unstructured observation successful, I made clear the purpose of my participant observation and the approach to team leaders and their members. I also included consent forms, note diary to take records and a voice recorder to record some questions and answers. The quality field notes explained the activities, the way they occurred, and added the relevant background facts to position the occurrence (Schensul, Scensul and LeComte, 1999). I observed and took note of their communication process (both verbal and non-verbal), how members questioned their team members on issues bothering them, and how the leaders reacted to them and their levels of emotions. For example, during the process, I took the opportunity to probe communication issues, had break times with them. Whenever I observed that there were some lengthy issues and discussions, I enquired about the matters happening, and they informed me about events that took place. Most of the times, I asked about the rationales behind individual attitudes and behaviour in the team. My approach acknowledges the recommendations that I should consider the interactions in the settings, observe the action

of leaders and their subordinates, and also observe variations in gender as well as their conversations (DeWalt and Dewalt, 2002).

The diary became very useful for the observation because most of the activities were noted down and became useful during the data analysis, and this became the most supporting tool which aided me to accomplish the mission for the observation. I also observed the different working styles in the team, their break times, how they resumed their work, decision-making process and issues that brought misunderstandings. In the process, I also observed more of the spontaneous attitudes and behaviour of the participants when cultural clashes took place and how team members and leaders intervened. I participated partially; however, my technique contradicted with what Gold (1958) argued about the fact that with full participation, the researcher does not advise those they are observing his/her true identity. The participants built confidence in me because I opened up to them, got patience, and this even gave them the boldness to demonstrate their true identity regarding the context of the research without difficulties. For instance, some team members and their leaders discussed the rationale behind the challenges that took place, the process they took to overcome them, the good and the lousy conversation that took place.

I was meticulous to prevent myself from getting involved in their activities fully because that was not my main intention. Such process maintains the argument that I restrained myself from becoming 'native' among the team members (Walsh, 2012). Due to that, I took note of the detailed descriptions of participants, feelings, activities and recorded in-depth conversations as well as my roles like questioning and probing them when the needs arose.

By way of illustration, when I was observing a team in a manufacturing company, I found that a particular production line came to a halt. Afterwards, there was a heated argument between an older woman of fifty years and a young lady of twenty-five years. When I enquired about the causes, the older woman told me that her younger colleague did not respect her because she did not want to listen to her advice. The younger woman, on the other hand, explained that her colleague tried to control her like a daughter because of the age difference between them, forgetting that they were colleagues. After discussing the issue with their team leader, he told me that their attitude and behaviour had caused them inadequate production for almost a year. The method corroborates the argument that what I saw and heard during the process among the participants produced more qualitative data activities like their implications or accounts (Saunders and Lewis, 2018).

The observational method of generating data for my study was fascinating and added value to the study because the entire situation observed helped me to obtain a complete overview of the challenges of cultural differences in its natural form with new insight. I deemed the observation technique better than someone providing me with an account of the events that happened. As a result, I instead saw that process had a more detailed primary approach of generating data than the personal interview.

Despite the significance, the observation method had some side effects too. Unlike the semi-structured interview where I chose to interview participants based on agreement on demographic characteristics, it was not merely using the same approach for observation because companies naturally formed the teams without any form of alteration. The process could affect representation, but in my research, some discussions about demographic variables took place before sampling. It sometimes took a lot of time using more than two hours, and this demanded a lot of energy. To achieve this successfully, I exercised a lot of patience and was tolerant, and took a lot of caution to prevent anger when the confrontation occurred among them and made sure to avoid unnecessary interference. For example, Wolcott (2001) recommend that I had to be tolerant during ambiguous situations through adaptability and flexibility. Although the observation method was very successful and contributed to the empirical data in a more meaning way, I also encountered some difficulties as a result of limitations like demographic variables, the time factor and energy.

3.6.7 Reflection on the methodology in the empirical field

Deciding to adopt the most feasible method to generate quality data from the empirical field for this research was not a simple task because of the availability of several options I got. For instance, gaining access to the team leaders and the members was another issue to tackle at the initial stages. Still, the adoption of the sample used for the research opened the doors for me to involve the participants for the study.

In retrospect, I could say that three significant factors contributed to the success of the investigation. In the first place, the team leaders and their members willingly cooperated due to their interest in the study. Again, I followed the rules and the process of qualitative techniques. Finally, my style and personality as a welcoming and friendly researcher played a huge role in success. When I considered the busy schedules and the work process of the

participants in multinational companies in addition to their confidential concerns, I took two main actions.

First of all, I developed the confidence of the participants to provide detailed knowledge and insight into the research. Secondly, I broadened my mind and the experience to capture every event during the process for the study. The approach justifies the argument of Ratner (2002), showing that I should be knowledgeable about the appropriate actions and concepts during the investigation.

Finally, the observation technique added more value to the data generation by helping me to gain practical experience about issues concerning cultural differences. The reasons are that I witnessed events in their natural form, which could not be understood if someone had reported them to me. Again, the diary and the voice recorder played significant roles, and I could conclude that without them, it would have been very cumbersome completing the data generation successfully. Analysing the data successfully also contributed to achieving the aims of the study, and the following sub-section explains the method of my data analysis, the factors which influenced my approach, the reliability and the validity of the research.

3.7 Qualitative data analysis

Making the right decision to choose the feasible approach that best fits my data analysis initially was a bit difficult due to the rationale that qualitative method could be sometimes complicated and nuanced (Holloway and Todres, 2003). The argument is that the qualitative data included words and observations, and deducing precise interpretation from the data was difficult. Although I initially considered the thematic data analysis, the grounded theory and the conversational analysis, I finally adopted the thematic approach of Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyse my data as a result of several factors.

Before proceeding to examine the adopted thematic approach, I would first explain why I rejected the other alternatives for my data analysis. For example, the 'conversation analysis' (CA), being another alternative, best fits into an interest in conversation which is the fundamental composition of texts, be it documentary or interactional, is very famous in social psychology (Silverman, 2001). The method was also not adopted because my study did not concentrate on social psychology.

For the reasons mentioned above, I adopted the thematic approach to analyse my data based on the demonstration of Marshall and Rossman's (1999) argument of bringing order, structure and interpretation to the mass of generated data for my qualitative research. The rationale is that the thematic data analysis included a process based on prior categories that became clear to me as the investigation proceeded.

Despite some contention against the thematic data, I dwelt more on its feasibilities for my research more than these challenges. For instance, Holloway and Todres (2003: 347) argue that 'thematising meanings' belong to the less shared general skills used across the qualitative analysis. At the same time, Boyatzis (1998) refuses the process of thematic data as a specific method but rather, a tool used across different ones. Due to the arguments, Ryan and Bernard (2000) conclude that the thematic coding becomes a process applied only in an effective analytic form like grounded theory, instead of becoming an approach on its own.

Contestable, the flexible nature of the thematic data method, as demonstrated by Braun and Clarke (2006) fulfiled the core objectives of my research methods. Specifically, the thematic data analysis has a direct connection with the 'interpretative phenomenological analysis' demonstrated in my philosophical stance (Smith and Osborn, 2003). Again, the argument of Braun and Clarke (2006) regarding its compatibility with my social constructionist paradigms further confirmed and consolidated my choice. The rationale for qualitative data which I adopted to generate the data fulfiled the process for the thematic data analysis. Therefore, I considered the flexible nature of the thematic analysis with its connection with the theoretical and methodological application of my research to authenticate the argument of (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The other contributory factor which motivated me for the thematic data analysis was the explicit assumptions of the philosophical stance I used for my method (Holloway and Todres, 2003). There was also the intended rationale to be precise about what, why and how to analyse the data successfully to obtain quality results to explain them clearly for my report (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Added to the above was the fact that although the method of my study was appropriate to my research question, I did not want to forget the topic or the contents of my research questions (Holloway and Todres, 2003). The sub-section below shows how I used the thematic data analysis to generate the results by firstly explaining briefly, what thematic data analysis is;

3.7.1 Thematic data analysis

This section is significant for the research because it explores how the data generated were processed to provide the findings for the study. Thematic analysis is 'a method used to identify, analyse, and report the patterns (themes) emerging from a data' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.6). Comparatively, qualitative thematic analysis is the one which is dependent on the recognition of themes in qualitative data through codification (Arolker and Seale, 2012). The vital concept found in the definitions concerns themes which became the fundamental key with the thematic analysis for my research. I wanted to achieve clarity of applying the process and the practice of the method, which was very paramount as argued by (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

One should note here that I made important decisions and choices during the data generation process, the analysis as well as making reflexive discussions throughout the entire process of the data analysis, as validated by (Braun and Clarke, 2006). For example, I decided to use the inductive approach as demonstrated by Frith and Gleeson (2004) instead of the deductive one (Boyatzis, 1998; Hayes, 1997). The recognised themes connected with the data, and I identified them as the data-driven (Patton, 1990). Due to this reason, the specific research question evolved through the coding process (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.6).

It is important to note that my research questions provided a road map for the coding, and the framework was an inductive approach. I started the data analysis by recognising the way and manner the data connected with the research questions (Merriam, 2009). Again, the data analysis process for my research started when I began to seek for patterns with what Braun and Clarke (2006, p.15) argue as the 'significant meanings and information which are interested in the data', began emerging.

The entire process included moving back and forward to authenticate the demonstration of (Clarke, 2006, p.15). As a result, the writing process became part of the entire process by noting down good ideas and likely coding schemes throughout the process. I followed the guidelines (phases 1-6) of Braun and Clarke (2006 p.16-23) to analyse my data, although I flexibly applied the method to suit the research questions and the generated data (Patton, 1990). The data analysis then became a process that evolved in the course of the period (Ely et al., 1997). The model below details the thematic data analysis adopted for the research.

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
│   Thematic Analysis Phases   │───────▶│     Process Description       │
└─────────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────────┘
              │                                       │
              ▼                                       ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
│    1. Data familiarisation   │───────▶│ Re-reading the data, jotting ideas │
│                             │        │ down and using dragon software │
│                             │        │    to transcribe the data     │
└─────────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────────┘
              │                                       │
              ▼                                       ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  2. Generating initial codes │───────▶│ Using NVivo 11 pro to code   │
│                             │        │ relevant features of the data with │
│                             │        │    manual approach.           │
└─────────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────────┘
              │                                       │
              ▼                                       ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
│   3. Searching for themes    │───────▶│ Sorted diverse codes into    │
│                             │        │ potential themes and collated │
│                             │        │ relevant coded data in themes │
└─────────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────────┘
              │                                       │
              ▼                                       ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
│     4. Reviewing themes      │───────▶│ Relevant themes refined to   │
│                             │        │ generate thematic map for entire │
│                             │        │    data analysis              │
└─────────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────────┘
              │                                       │
              ▼                                       ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ 5 Defining and naming themes │───────▶│ Detailed analyses conducted and │
│                             │        │ written by recognising the story │
│                             │        │   each theme informs          │
└─────────────────────────────┘        └─────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 3.6 Thematic Data Analysis Process

Data familiarisation

In the first place, I listened to the recorded interview several times to familiarise myself with the various accents and the responses of the participants to understand what they meant clearly before proceeding to transcribe the data. I continued to use the 'Dragon Professional Individual v15' software to transcribe the recorded information (shop.nuance.com). I followed the process of installing the software on a laptop and recorded my voice to recognise it. With the help of 'Philips Plantronics Blackwire C325-M Professional Earphone' (www.philips.com), the recorded interview was then replayed and spoken directly to the software for it to transcribe all recorded interview into texts (Appendix D). This process fulfiled the availability of different conventions to convert communicated information into transcribed documents (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999; Edwards and Lampert, 1993). The

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process allowed me to obtain 'word-for-word' narration of every verbal and nonverbal voice (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.17). At this stage, I got to understand my data properly by re-reading the written transcripts several times, made notes of my initial impressions, and realised the general overview and the meanings of the research data. The process gave me a good clue about some of the emerging themes because the majority of the team leaders and their members talked about similar issues about them. I then proceeded to the coding process by using both the manual process sometimes and mostly with the software, and the following details the process.

Generating codes with the manual approach and computer-assisted software

Coding has been defined as 'the process of indexing or categorising the text for the establishment of a framework of thematic ideas which capture issues of interest and significance regarding the research questions'(Gibbs, 2007 p. 38). The various concepts demonstrated what the team leaders and their members said regarding the context of the research in the transcript I coded with names through manual approach and computer-aided software (Appendix E).

Using NVivo 11 pro for Windows

With the computer-aided process, I used 'the NVivo11 pro' for Windows (www.qsrinternational.com), the qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software package produced by QSR International to code the interview transcripts and the field notes for the observation for both the team leaders and the members separately between 14/03/2017 to 26/04/2017. The design of the sophisticated research tool facilitates standard qualitative techniques to organise, analyse and share the data without favouring any specific methodology (www.qsrinternational.com). The software helped me to avoid the difficult work of achieving the overall coding process manually. I followed the guidelines provided by QSR International to use the consistent paragraph style to do the auto-coding. I arranged all transcribed texts with their research questions and answers in paragraph styles in the system to apply the coding to my content to organise all of them into node or containers[10]. Therefore, I coded vital information, including phrases, sentences, insights and words which were very

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[10] 1. The nodes served as storage area within NVivo where references for text were coded. I gathered the references by coding sources to the nodes. The nodes represented as a container where everything about a specific concept or category were kept. When a node was opened by double clicking on it, all references were seen in a specific place.

relevant to the study. The screenshot below shows the sample automatic coding process for some team members' data.

Table 3.5: Sample Automatic Coding Process for Team Members

Name	Nodes	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Team Member LD	116	185	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member MH	117	177	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member DS	120	171	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member S	120	174	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member EV	123	174	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member L	123	177	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member HD	126	180	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member BSS	129	183	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member SD	131	185	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member BS	132	189	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member MS	132	186	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member FH	133	187	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member BF	134	188	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member CR	134	185	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member EL	134	194	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member I	135	189	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member VR	135	195	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member BT	136	214	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member ED	136	190	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member FAR	137	194	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member SHH	137	197	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE
Team Member SU	137	193	14/03/2017 15:07	AE	14/03/2017 15:07	AE

The table shows sample nodes that served as storage area within NVivo where I coded the references for text on 14th March 2017 with their respective dates, the times and the name of the person who coded (i.e. AE, my initials). For instance, according to the table, the coding information for the data of the team member 'LD', had 118 nodes with 185 references which I created on Tuesday, 14th March 2017 at the time 15:07. When I doubled-clicked the node for 'LD', the NVivo system could provide all the references for every information.

The information labelled demonstrated the essential concepts, activities, views and opinions which had direct connections with the research questions. I coded because most of the respondents talked about the same issues and expressed their essential roles in the given

statements regarding the interview questions. Again, some of the information coded had strong reflections on the context and the underlying theories examined in the literature review for the research. The concepts coded demonstrated their relevance to the study, so several phenomena were coded by critically assessing and utilising the transcripts effectively.

After the automatic coding process, I also proceeded to create 'a matric coding query' to compare all coded material among themes concerning issues on cultural differences, intercultural competence and all research questions in the data. I got the opportunity to recognise the patterns in my data, which assisted me in answering questions. The software helped me to identify the characteristics of the data which appealed to me to fulfil the argument that the utmost fundamental component of the raw data appraised purposefully concerning the phenomenon (Boyatzis, 1998). The coding process of the software provided the opportunity to identify the total number of research participants that talked about the same issue with other relevant information related to them. The computer software provided me with the complete and lived access through the management of the project, making memos, searching and retrieving, coding while generating results with the same software (Lewins and Silver, 2007). Besides, the flexibility of the NVivo 11 pro had a good connection with the flexible nature of the thematic data analysis and several researchers confirm this complementation (Merriam, 2009; Bryman, 2004; Bazeley and Richards, 2000). The flexibility gave me the chance to redefine the coding process, and I explored the data in several ways, as demonstrated by Lewins and Silver (2007). This process helped me to assess the results with regards to the evolving ideas which surfaced from the entire process. For example, to determine the total number of team leaders who commented on a specific topic of importance to the context of the study based on the interview questions, I clicked on the 'explore diagram tools' of the software, and the model below provides sample information after the coding.

The flexibility of the software enabled me to apply 'open, axial, and selective coding process' to develop a comprehensive set of data to confirm the argument regarding the findings grounded in the data (Lewins and Silver, 2007). The open coding was adopted to code the transcripts to pave the way for the emergence of potential theme successfully because the transcripts were now fully opened for enquiry of their interpretation (Lewins and Silver, 2007). Based on this, I got the opportunity to code new ideas with new names. The run the axial coding process to develop and refine what emerged from the open coding to justify the

argument of Boeije (2010) that the data would be reduced and reorganised. The purpose was to obtain the authentic themes and categories to establish a connection between the data set and the research findings, which became clearer.

The figure below shows sample coding for communication, indicating that out of a total of twenty-nine leaders coded, sixteen of them mentioned communication gap as a significant challenge confronting them as a result of cultural differences.
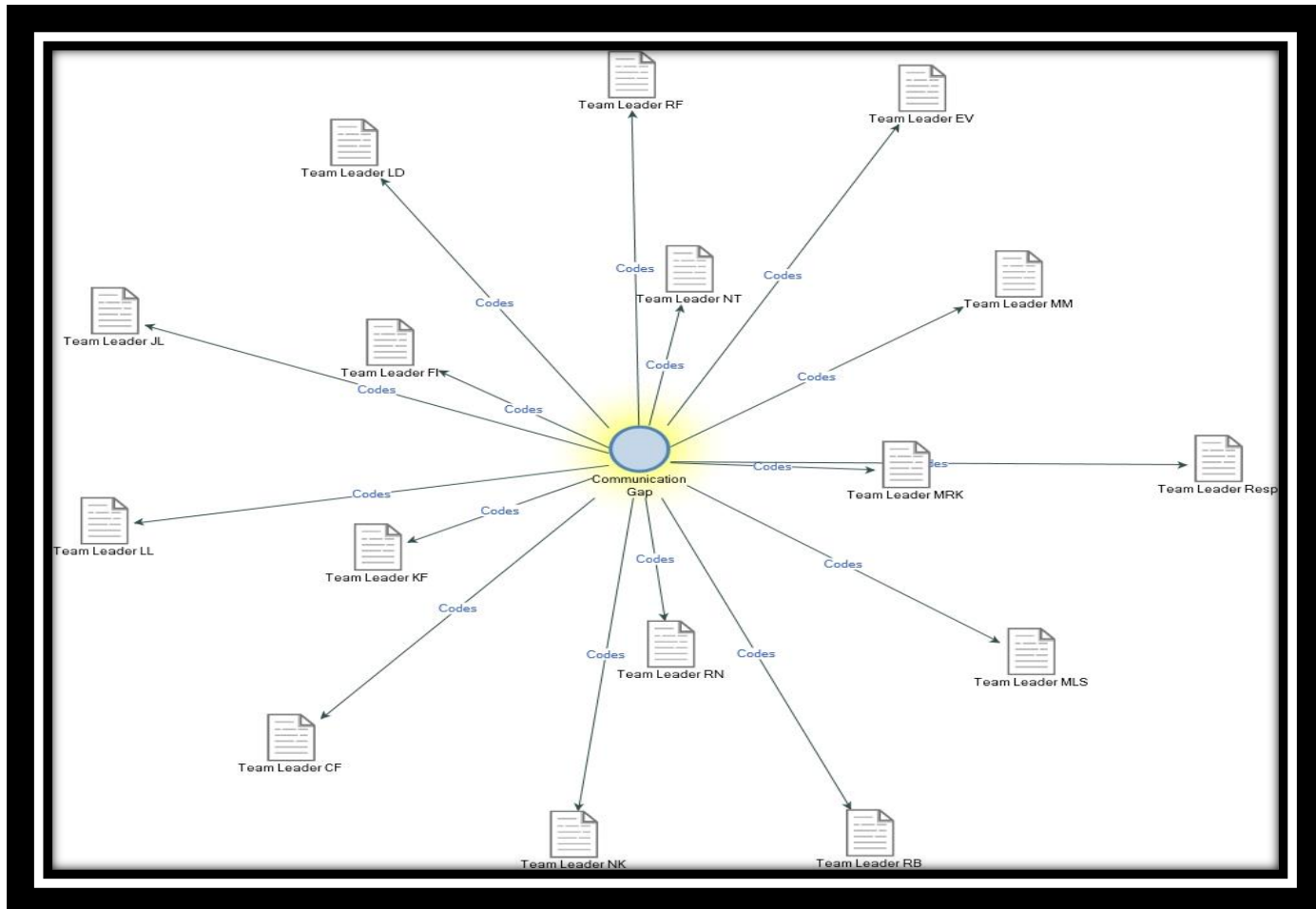
Figure 3.7: Sample Coding for Communication Gap from Team leaders' Data

The coding and the sub-coding process of the computer software provided a solid foundation for the research findings because while the key themes emerged, the software also assisted in identifying the attributional factors or reasons supporting the important ones, and this method contributed to the explanation of the findings effectively. The following shows sample codes and sub-codes for the study.

Table 3.6 Codes and Sub-codes

Nodes			
Name	**Sources**	**References**	**Created On**
Q6. Positively, you gain new ideas and different ways of working	6	7	03/04/2017 22:14
Q6. Open-minded	4	4	05/04/2017 23:05
Q6. Performance is affected	16	18	05/04/2017 23:40
Q6. Mismanagement	4	5	05/04/2017 23:04
Q6. High employee turnover	10	14	04/04/2017 21:05
Q6. Conflicts	14	17	03/04/2017 23:41
Q6. Confusion, disagreements, misunderstanding	5	6	05/04/2017 22:16
Q6. Backbiting, gossiping	6	6	03/04/2017 22:13

The Table shows that the Q6, for instance, describes the interview question 6, which indicates the effects of cultural differences on the team where the research participants provided information on both the positive and the adverse effects. The other Q6 with the various arrows explain the sub-codes with additional information provided by the research participants supporting the central theme. Finally, I applied the axial coding process of Boeije (2010) to examine the open coding, assessed the accuracy, merged them, changed some and also subdivided to reflect the assigned data, which assisted the evidence for them and re-examined the categories. Therefore, I made a decision not to go further with the data generated because the evidence was enough to warrant that, and this stage formed the final stage of the axial coding process with regards to the research design. The process affirmed the argument of whether or not I had to generate more data to increase the evidence base (Boeije's, 2010). The flexible nature of the adopted qualitative design for my research assisted me in deciding to stop because the sample size of 68 participants with different characteristics validates the argument that there were enough participants and sample sizes to address my research questions (Merriam, 2009). Besides, I replicated ideas to substantiate the argument that the marker of the saturation is achieved (Morse and Richards, 2002). It is imperative to note that I have provided detailed screenshots for the sample codes for team leaders and the members in (Appendix F) and (Appendix G), respectively. The next process demonstrates the searching for the themes.

Searching for themes

This stage became feasible because I collated the data to provide several codes in my data set and provided the grounds for the analysis of the broader level of themes. I then decided to

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select the most relevant codes and created categories[11] by bringing together all essential ones because they demonstrated some critical level of promising themes. When the codes generated into categories, with the categories becoming more overarching ones, I then obtained the abstract names for them. Consequently, I rejected the less essential codes for the most relevant ones. At this phase, I concentrated on sorting the diverse codes into promising themes. I collated all the relevant coded data extracts from the recognised themes in which I fundamentally began to analyse my codes, and considered the way and manner the diverse ones might integrate to develop the overarching theme (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

It is worthy to note that the particular coded technique adopted gave me the clue of the development of the theme. This section demonstrates how I thought profoundly and discovered the connections between the various codes, sub-codes, themes and the development of the ways and means I re-arranged them to organise the coded chunks to confirm the demonstration of (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 89). Figure 3.7 below shows the sample themes and explains how I ignored some sub-themes by bringing others under some important themes because of similarities of meanings. Here, I have obtained a deep and a broader perception with a clear understanding of the grouping of the codes under the interrelated themes of my data. Due to this, I identified themes that emerged from the interpretation of my data, while the priori themes also surfaced.

Challenges with cultural differences
Miscommunication
Trust issues
Intercultural conflicts

How team leaders and members manage the challenges
Making adjustments
Creating awareness
Conflict resolutions strategies

Why the challenges a major concern to leaders and members
Poor team work
Different expectations
Huge expenses for cultural trainings

Figure 3.8: Sample Themes for Data Analysis

Subsequently, I referenced some quotations from the data connected to the themes, which substantiates Silverman's (2005, pp. 171-187) argument for cross-referencing and

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[11] The categories were created by bringing together codes which were similar to each other to form a family of codes

prioritisation of their importance. The process set the background to conceptualise my data. The following stage demonstrates the review of the themes;

Reviewing themes

I reviewed the themes by refining those I identified in the data by taking into consideration the two approaches of (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The argument is that it became indisputably clear at this stage some themes were not clear due to lack of enough data to support them or diverse data, while also joined some separate themes into one (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The method reaffirms the argument that the data within my themes corresponded with each other meaningfully, while accurate, precise and recognisable distinctions between the themes became feasible (Braun and Clarke, 2006). I proceeded to label the most important and relevant themes, and also identified their level of correlations. In the first place, I analysed the extracts of data I had coded per each theme to achieve consistency to develop a purposeful unit of analysis. Secondly, I reviewed and refined continuously pending my satisfaction for the themes to capture the coded data and the extracts to develop the thematic map. From this time, I did not perceive the need for doing further coding because the themes were able to provide me with good knowledge and idea regarding the information they described my data. The stage verifies the argument where I obtained some good idea about my diverse themes, including the way and manner they fit together, as well as the story they informed about the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The stage prepared the ground for the definition and the naming of the themes to present them for my analysis, and the next step details the process and the explanation:

Defining and naming themes

This phase identified the meaning per theme, including the general ones, and figuring out what part of the specific data theme captures (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Hence, I defined and improved the themes which were ready for my analysis to assess the data within them. I went back to re-read, arrange and re-arrange the data which I had coded including putting the extracts into a more coherent, consistent and progressive information (story), having shown excellent connections with the research questions and aims of the research. I avoided overlapping in my themes by carefully examining the interview responses because I aimed to understand fully the meaning and the connection of the essential categories, which became the main results for my study. They also demonstrated their new implications and insight for

the research based on the perspective of the team leaders and their members. The model below provides a sample theme.
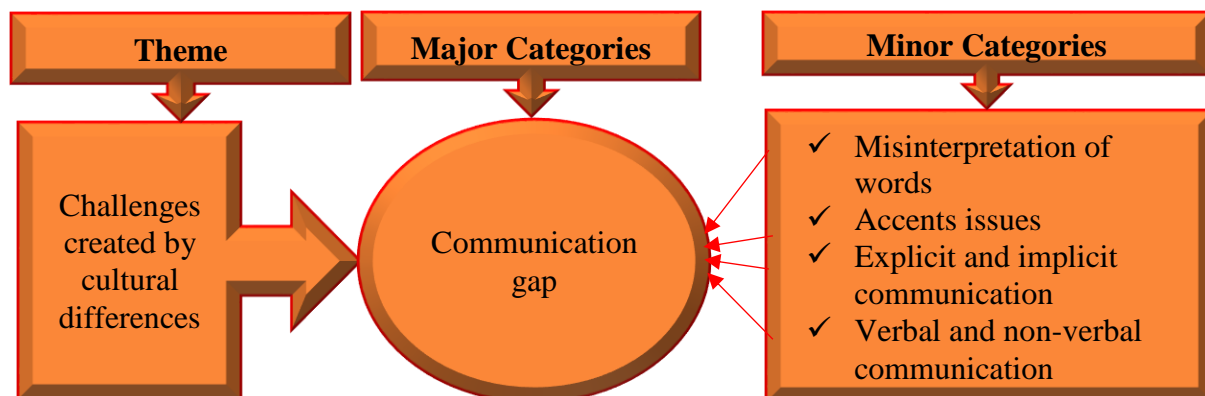
Figure 3.9: Sample Theme for Cultural Differences Challenge

The model shows that the challenges created by cultural differences include communication gap, which has attributional factors like the misinterpretation of words, accents issues, differences in implicit and explicit communication and verbal and non-verbal communication. Although I had given working titles to the themes, I followed the recommendations of Braun and Clarke (2006) to provide succinct and practical names to give a right judgment of the meaning of the themes. For instance, the findings in chapter 4 present the thematic map with five major themes that emerged due to the data analysis, which provided the background for the outcomes. This stage made it more transparent for the results based on the main themes used. The reliability and the validity of the research project was paramount, and the sub-section below details their explanation;

3.8 Reliability and validity of the research project

It is essential to assess the reliability, and the validity of my research to authenticate its replication by other researchers. Reliability and validity have been defined 'as being attentive to the conceptualisation of the research by applying and carrying out an applicable theoretical framework and the design of the research' (Merriam, 2009, p.210). Comparatively, reliability concerns the firmness of the findings, while validity shows the truthfulness of results (Altheide and Johnson, cited in Silverman, 2013: 360). The following information shows why and how my research is reliable and valid;

In the first place, the design of my research exemplifies the trustworthiness and the quality of my study because the identification of the literature gap which formed the fundamental

rationale for the study demanded the qualitative approach I applied in addition to the corresponding thematic analysis. The premise is that I deemed it necessary to assess the quality of the complete trustworthiness of the study to correlate with the quality criteria (Guba and Lincoln, 1985). Besides, the entire process of my research demonstrates openness and transparency that provides a reliable roadmap for other researchers to follow. I followed the principles of qualitative research to achieve excellent trustworthiness, demonstrate credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

The argument for the choice of the social constructionism contributes to the goals of the principles of qualitative research design, and the application of the interpretive - qualitative research becomes evident. Again, the ethical consideration I adopted for the qualitative data collection process, the use of the snowball sampling with the self-selection strategy, the data collection strategy, and the implementation of the thematic data analysis process also confirm the trustworthiness of the research. To a large extent, these processes provide roadmaps for other researchers to replicate. Still, since qualitative research has flexible features, one could equally divert somewhere to reach the same goal for the study.

It is important to note that several studies affirm the approach I used (Creswell, 2012; King and Horrocks, 2010; Denscombe, 2010; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Shenton, 2004). The credibility and prolonged engagement with research participants at the empirical site also support the reliability and the validity of the research. I took three and a half months to generate the data myself, including personal involvement regarding the observation technique to obtain primary data which helped me to manage distortions. At the same time, the research participants got the opportunity to sign consent forms to validate their will without being coerced to take part in the studies. Such opportunity fulfils the argument of the internal validity which is tantamount to the credible nature of the research and resolves the question regarding the conformity of the findings with the reality of the study (Merriam, 1998).

Again, some individual participants used one hour and thirty minutes for the interview, while I took several hours to do the observation. Such procedure also fulfiled the argument of Lincoln and Guba (1985), using the adequate time to obtain essential aims, researching the culture, preventing distortions and developing trust leads to the validity and reliability of the study. Similarly, spending quality and enough time in the empirical field is a necessary path to achieving a good relationship of trust between the research participants and me, as well as knowing the context of the research very well (Erlandson et al.,1993). I achieved internal

consistency by applying the explorative and the iterative approach during the semi-structured interview techniques. In this case, I was able to critically control inconsistencies in specific answers, which made the coding process in the data analysis more comfortable to handle.

Finally, several reasons support the requirements for honesty, transferability, reliability and confirmability for my research. For example, I followed the principles of ethics in my study to achieve fairness in the study. Here, I showed honesty to my participants, and they became very open and honest with full confidence. For instance, I did not restrict participant from expressing his or her opinions regarding any form of displeasure or from cutting the interview short, so I achieved high confidentiality and anonymity.

The issue of transferability is a critical one; however, an essential assessment of my approach used for the research shows that one could achieve this with my research to a large extent. For instance, several researchers (Merriam, 1998; Erlandson et al. 1993) argue that the results of qualitative research relate to a few numbers of individuals in specific contexts. Therefore, one could argue against generalisation; however, my research has a strong evidence base from the data with most findings confirming and supporting those from the literature review, as demonstrated by Merriam (2009), which reaffirms the reliability of my study. I could also apply the results to other contexts to generalise findings for larger populations (Krefting, 1991). By depending on this premise, I could say that most of the results of my study could achieve that with their practical implications for business practices. Despite individual's distinguish cases in research, there is the possibility to compare results to situations which support the findings on issues assessed in the study (Denscombe, 2010; Stake, 1995; Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Furthermore, confirmability is further achieved by the process of my data generation because of the application of 'Philips voice recorded instrument, the 'dragon software' used to transcribe the interview, and the 'NVivo 11 pro software' I sued to code the data. During the piloting approach, I also tested some interview questions, and this also played a useful role here. The process fulfils the argument of Silverman (2005) that recordings and transcripts provide the chance for a reliable record for researchers as a form of inference. For instance, I utilised the diary for essential notes regarding all manners of attitudes and behaviour among the participants, especially during the process of the observation. The argument is that confirmability demonstrates my awareness of the roles and the impact of the data for the study (Patton, 2002; Miles and Huberman,1994).

3.8 Conclusion of the methods

The design of the research method certainly shows and warrants the choices I made for the study due to essential factors that fulfiled the critical principles of qualitative research, and therefore making the standard to achieve suitable practice conditions (Stiles, 1999). The main argument for the groundwork for the theoretical, methodological approach and the design of the research depended on three critical objectives of Stiles (1999) to evaluate the qualitative study. They include the certitude of my research questions, the substantiation for selecting the team leaders and the members in multinational companies, and the apparent accounts for the methods I used to generate and analyse the qualitative data. I achieved the above objectives based on the examination of the philosophical context which assisted me to unfold the research background, idea and its nature. Accordingly, the guidelines of Merriam's (2009, 2002) interpretative - qualitative approach motivated me to adopt the qualitative research design for the study.

Although the objectives of the study helped me to evaluate the accessibility to (MNCs) in the Netherlands and the factors for choosing the snowball sampling, the major limitation for the method was the scope, because I used the Netherlands without expanding to other international countries. That notwithstanding, the information provided related to what the literature review found regarding the context of the research. The argument for using the semi-structured interview and the observation process to generate the data still holds because I experienced real live cases regarding cultural differences, and I obtained useful data for the study. Again, the thematic data analysis of Braun and Clarke (2006, p.6) I used to analyse the data contributed immensely for the main findings because of its simplicity and authenticity related to the research design. The reliability and validity of the study to confirm the theoretical framework and the design of the study became a necessity to achieve quality replication. Despite the qualitative implication of the study, some strong arguments validated the rationale for quantifying specific findings, yet that could not invalidate the core aims of the qualitative research. The qualitative method also enhanced permeability to fulfil the argument of (Stiles, 1999). The rationale is that I fully got engaged with the materials I used to conduct the interview my self, achieved a magnificent iteration process and connected interpretations with a good observation on the empirical field. I also explored the interview questions which included 'what', 'why' and such motivated the participants to provide detailed information with a rich experience for the results.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Overarching conceptual findings

Introduction

The model below demonstrates the thematic map with five major themes, and several minor themes which emerged as a result of the data analysis and provided the background for the findings.

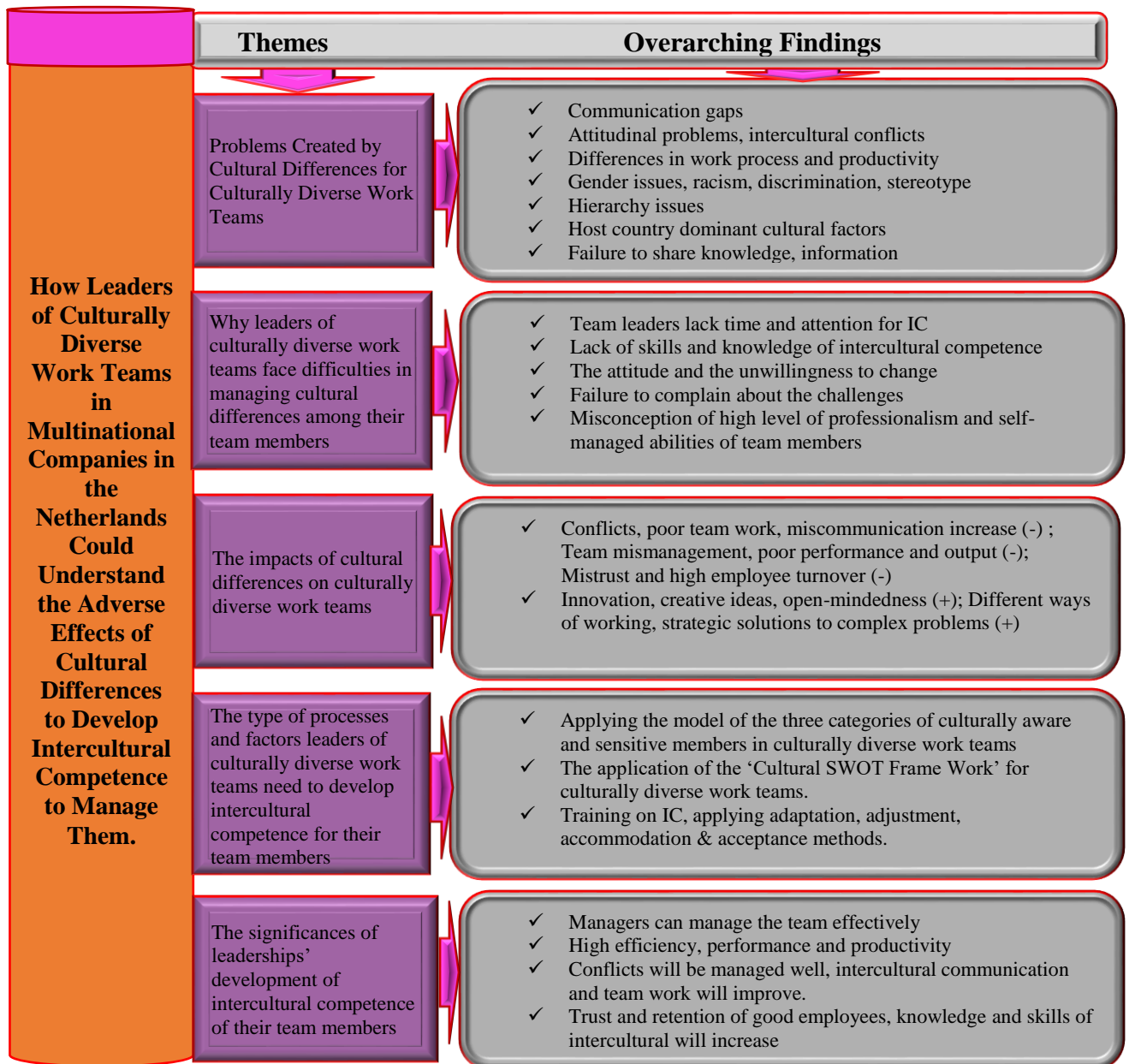| How Leaders of Culturally Diverse Work Teams in Multinational Companies in the Netherlands Could Understand the Adverse Effects of Cultural Differences to Develop Intercultural Competence to Manage Them.	Themes	Overarching Findings
	Problems Created by Cultural Differences for Culturally Diverse Work Teams	✓ Communication gaps ✓ Attitudinal problems, intercultural conflicts ✓ Differences in work process and productivity ✓ Gender issues, racism, discrimination, stereotype ✓ Hierarchy issues ✓ Host country dominant cultural factors ✓ Failure to share knowledge, information
	Why leaders of culturally diverse work teams face difficulties in managing cultural differences among their team members	✓ Team leaders lack time and attention for IC ✓ Lack of skills and knowledge of intercultural competence ✓ The attitude and the unwillingness to change ✓ Failure to complain about the challenges ✓ Misconception of high level of professionalism and self-managed abilities of team members
	The impacts of cultural differences on culturally diverse work teams	✓ Conflicts, poor team work, miscommunication increase (-) ; Team mismanagement, poor performance and output (-); Mistrust and high employee turnover (-) ✓ Innovation, creative ideas, open-mindedness (+); Different ways of working, strategic solutions to complex problems (+)
	The type of processes and factors leaders of culturally diverse work teams need to develop intercultural competence for their team members	✓ Applying the model of the three categories of culturally aware and sensitive members in culturally diverse work teams ✓ The application of the 'Cultural SWOT Frame Work' for culturally diverse work teams. ✓ Training on IC, applying adaptation, adjustment, accommodation & acceptance methods.
	The significances of leaderships' development of intercultural competence of their team members	✓ Managers can manage the team effectively ✓ High efficiency, performance and productivity ✓ Conflicts will be managed well, intercultural communication and team work will improve. ✓ Trust and retention of good employees, knowledge and skills of intercultural will increase

Figure 4.1: Thematic Map for the Overarching Conceptual Findings

The findings generated in an iterative process show the views, perspectives and opinions from team leaders and their members regarding the context of the study whereby they provided an extensive and quality account coherently. I followed the guidelines of the 'Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research' (COREQ) (Tong, Siansbury, and Craig, 2007). (See appendix H). The guidelines helped me to achieve transparency for the methods I used to derive the research findings. I have also used some quotes from the participants during the narratives. However, due to the confidentiality agreement I had with the participants, I did not include the original names and their places of work. Still, I only used 'staged names', the continents, gender and the type of the company. I was meticulous not to give a clue to the entire background of the participants. I reported the findings by introducing the significant themes before the minor themes for the narratives. I also made sure that my findings are a concise, orderly, reasonable, non-repeating, and gripping account of the data within and throughout the themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The section also provides an in-depth discussion and critical evaluation of the research findings, making the judgments through useful interpretations, and showing their significances for the aims of the study. Again, I referred to the literature review to assist my argument, so my findings either supported, contrasted or added to the body of knowledge on cultural differences and leadership intercultural competence in the teams. Hence, the results contribute to filling the gaps in the literature by examining their implications and explaining their connections with existing literature. Chapter four, therefore, provides the broader significance of the study by showing the practical effects and applications of the results. At the same time, they also lay the foundations for the limitations that make suggestions for improvements and directions for future research.

The information below provides detailed findings and discussions on the research topic; 'How Do Leaders of Culturally Diverse Work Teams in Multinational Companies in the Netherlands Could Understand the Adverse Effects of Cultural Differences to Develop Intercultural Competence to Manage Them?'.

4.2. Problems created by cultural differences for culturally diverse work teams

4.2.1 Communication challenges

Majority of the research participants interviewed indicated that communication challenges are a significant problem facing the team as a result of cultural differences. By applying Hall and

Hall's (1990) model, the study shows that majority of the team members from the Western culture who believe in a direct communication have problems with the non-Western team members who communicate implicitly. The concept shows that while the low context of interaction emphasises on the direct form of communication, the high context instead believes in an implicit approach to communication (Hall and Hall, 1990). However, the research findings provided additional knowledge by showing other attributional factors. Majority of the participants indicated that factors for the communication challenges included difficulties with English language proficiency, misinterpretations of words, differences in accents, and differences in verbal and non-verbal communication. They explained that communication challenges created confusions, misunderstandings, delays, poor decisions, supervision difficulties, and poor outcomes for teamwork. To give an example, one team leader shared his experience as follows;

'*We have problems with the mode of communication. Working with different people from different countries, we use English for our communication, and the level of understanding of certain pronunciation differs among people, and this causes several problems'*. (SHA, an Asian male team leader working in a manufacturing company).

Another team member also expressed her challenges with communication in the team as follows;

'*One problem we have in the team is communication because I, for instance, communicated directly, but my colleagues did not like that, and I have been taught to be prudent in my communication'*. (CR, an Western European female team member working in a service company).

The expressions of (CR) and (SHA) above indicate that communication styles create problems for the team, and the individual cultural backgrounds played significant roles in that. The members also explained that leadership failure in understanding these differences could create problems for them. The results confirm the findings of other researchers regarding cultural differences in the team. For example, there are differences in values, rules, norms which create confusion and misunderstanding, and people demonstrate them in intercultural communication (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Härtel and Ma, 2006; Gersten, 1990 p. 345). The argument is that impeccable and courteous communication or conduct in someone's culture could imply as improper, and even distasteful in another (Guan and Lee,

2017). The outcome of the interview shows that the majority of the leaders and their members lack adequate knowledge about individual cultural backgrounds and their roles in communication challenges. The finding verifies the argument that lack of training on intercultural competence or perhaps limited studies contribute to the situation because the issue is about interpersonal communication, which is understudied (Kealey, 2015). Howbeit, since the composition of the team shows members with diverse cultural backgrounds, one could deduce that the challenges of communication will increase when the team fails to manage them. For instance, misunderstanding usually happens when the interaction takes place among people coming from diverse cultural backgrounds (Abdulai et al., 2017). The emphasis is on the causes, and this also influences several suggestions for the remedy to the challenge. Thus, researchers argue that the value of intercultural communication competence should become a high priority in the team (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Lustig and Koester, 1999; Gudykunst and Kim 1997; Kirchmeyer, 1993; Beamer, 1992; Hammer, 1987; Hawkes and Kealey, 1981). The team members confirm the argument by showing that ICC could play significant roles in promoting effective communication in a team. The confirmation corroborates the argumentation that it helps to achieve agreeableness and cohesion, leading to excellent performance (Bradley et al., 2013).

4.2.2 Attitudinal problems

The findings showed that differences in belief patterns, values, norms and cultural practices in the team contributed to the attitudinal challenges. I used Minkov's (2013) assumption that culture is more connected with values and beliefs that people apply to interpret their experience to generate their behaviour. Hence, cross-cultural analysts should compare behaviours among the members. The results show that individual cultural backgrounds contribute to the attitudinal problems in the team because of differences in perceptions, views, values and opinions. The participants explained that diverse perceptions towards the norms and values influenced their attitudes to teamwork. They indicated that leadership's failure to manage these differences and complexities affected trust, created friction, cohesion, unnecessary delays, uncompleted tasks and poor performance in the team. An instance is where 'LD' a team leader expressed her experience on the attitudinal issue in the following words:

'Some team members come to work on time, but others would not, and this is a problem. We have a flexible working time between 8:30 to 9:30 in the morning to begin work, and yet

some people come to work very late irrespective of the time they choose, and this is very irritating because the work process and the performance of the team are affected'. (LD, a European female team leader in a manufacturing company).

The above statement substantiates different perceptions towards time in the team because the findings indicated that while some members preferred fixed and structured time management, others instead valued human interaction with flexible and unstructured time. The team members, especially stated in the interview that since attitudinal problems connect to culture, their leaders should develop the skills and knowledge for (IC) to manage them effectively. The findings show a similar outcome from the work of other researchers to a large extent. For instance, the results imply that attitudes towards punctuality to work could create some misunderstanding because while some report early to work, others do not, and this reflects Hall's (1983) concept of time where monochronic culture prefers fixed and structured time management. Yet, the polychronic culture instead values human interaction with flexible and unstructured time. However, Robbins and Judge (2017) provide a different perspective by showing that attitude is an evaluative account which could either be suitable or unsuitable regarding an object, person or events involving three significant components like cognitive, affective and behaviour. The emotional concept of Robbins and Judge (2017) shares the findings of the study because the attitudinal problems manifest themselves in excessive feelings towards each other, and this contributes to the 'blame game' attitudes in the team. Again, Cervellon and Dube (2012) also argue that the cognitive component encompasses the various traits and roles attached to what one observes and targeted in combination with the affective component, where one could predict the general attitude about a person. The attitudinal behaviour created misunderstanding and heated arguments with adverse impacts on motivation, job satisfaction and progress in the team. Similarly, Evans and Jarvis (1986) show that attitudes of the team members influence significant results such as job satisfaction and goal achievement (Locke, 1976). Again, such attitudes surface and work differently across the context of culture Cristina et al. (2010), and therefore understanding their differences could be complicated.

The findings of Ramamoorthy and Flood (2002) on whether individualism or collectivism orientations which anticipated the intentions of workers' attitudes and behavioural also fulfils the results of the study. The team showed that their perception towards individual norms and cultural practices influence their reactions to teamwork and such support that cultures attach

different meanings for collaboration due to differences in the norms as well as the team-member behaviours (Gibson and Zellmer-Bruhn, 2001). The outcome is that the team could experience challenges with trust issues due to different attitudes toward teamwork. The outcome validates the argument that members' attitudes to trust differ due to their cultural differences (Yuki et al., 2005). The implication verifies why the members ask their leaders to manage the challenges of attitudes since failing to do this could affect the sense of unity and cohesion in the team. Diverse attitudes affect teams' cohesion due to cultural differences (Man and Lam, 2003), while Kirkman and Shapiro (2001) also show that cultural differences influence individual members' resistance in teams. One should note that the findings on attitudinal problems in this study share similar insight with the work of other researchers, however, the difference is that the research participants asked the leaders to develop the skills and knowledge for (IC) to manage them effectively.

4.2.3 Differences in work process and productivity

The findings also showed that cultural differences created diverse work processes regarding productivity because of the failure to understand the different approaches taken to accomplish the tasks, and this became a hindrance to the progress of the team. The application of Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimension helped analyse the findings with the individualistic and collective concept. For example, the members with individualistic cultural backgrounds demonstrated much interest in their welfare at the expense of the group. However, those from the collective cultural backgrounds prioritised the group approach during the working process. Again, the team also faced issues with socialisation at work versus strict adherence to work ethics such as accomplishing the task before any form of socialisation, and failing to achieve mutual understanding created problems in the team. The participants explained that they could not agree on the planning process towards work due to differences in their approach. While some members preferred to accomplish tasks on time, others wanted to deliver them later, and failure to agree on a specific time frame to deliver results generated misunderstandings. The outcome was that they encountered misunderstanding, lack of cohesion, inefficiency, task delays and reduced productivity. For instance, 'ACK', a team leader in a service company expressed the following;

'*I am sometimes worried about the differences in the approach to work because failure to understand them caused us time, energy and money. I used to believe that our differences in approach to work could lead to innovation. Unfortunately, some members of the team do not*

get along easily since we encounter challenges with decisions to finish the task at a specific time, how to accomplish it and when to deliver'. (ACK, a team leader of African descent in a service organisation).

The above statement proves why the team leaders appreciated the different approaches to work, but at the same time, they were worried about their failure to manage them. The findings further showed that miscommunication caused attitudinal problems in the team. For instance, the results demonstrate that the rationale and assumptions behind the differences in communication styles between members from collective-oriented and individualistic cultural backgrounds become applicable to them regarding the attitudes to work and differences in work process and productivity. The argument is that culture influences the behaviour of the members in such teams (Crown, 2007). The implication is that individual cultural backgrounds, national cultural orientations, values, personal ideologies, work practices, perceptions to productivity, and attitudes to work played a role in the challenges. The argument also validates the similarities of the findings with the work of other researchers, showing that the highly collective members in a team emphasise social acceptance, the identity, develop great relationship interpersonally and share strong emotional ties (Nunez et al., 2014; Kirkman et al., 2006; Bradley et al., 2001). Although members with a collective approach to work could perform better, the results instead imply that sharing strong ties only does not equate to excellent performance in the team, and this creates the contrast between my results and the findings in the literature review.

Similar to the findings is that the team encounters difficulties in agreement with what is essential, and those with controlling attitudes even prevent others from contributing (Watson, Kumar and Michaelsen,1993). The construct also shows the optimisation of the group's contribution to the overall task. At the same time, the individual egocentric goals instead aim to maximise the performance of the individual without contributing to the team (Crown and Rosse, 1995). The analysis purports that since members could achieve high performance, leaders could manage them to add value to the goals of the team. Members with direct attention towards interpersonal needs and social harmony are essential for group success, while those focusing on task goals are important for group success (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2000).

In a different perspective, collectivism implies that highly collectivistic people have a high commitment towards the team (Kirkman and Shapiro, in press; Palich et al., 1995). However,

the highly individualistic approach to work promotes their self-interest at the expense of the entire team (Scarborough, 1998; Triandis, 1995; Hofstede, 1980). Although the positive impact of the collective approach to work is over-emphasised, the difference is that the results did not establish that. The gap for my findings is that the research did not show which particular orientation achieves excellent results, and literature review reaffirms the same issue due to the limited research on assessing their output, which creates a considerable gap for a further study.

4.2.4 Gender issues, racism, discrimination and stereotypes

The study found that the team experienced gender imbalance and preferences where a specific dominant gender preferred particular task and positions for themselves at the expense of the opposite gender. The findings also indicated problems with racism and stereotypes in their responses. For instance, some employees experienced indirect racism and discrimination during task distribution, request for holidays, promotion and performance evaluation, and they mostly blame their leaders for that. The results demonstrated that the problems created demotivation, insecurity, unwillingness to contribute skills, knowledge and poor performance of the team. Miss 'L' shared her experience as follows;

'Racism and discrimination have become natural to most team members and leaders because we embraced them from our childhood without knowing them. Therefore, we commit them unconsciously because they could become a norm unless conscious efforts are made to create good awareness to prevent them in the team. It is time for both members and team leaders to respect every individual in the team so that equality would be respected'. (Miss L, a European female team member in a manufacturing company).

The above expression shows that both the leaders and their members create the problems, and this provides insight on the process of committing them unconsciously, and why there is the need for the team to embrace quality awareness to manage them. The challenges created an inferiority complex, marginalisation, poor decisions, under-utilisation of specific knowledge and skills, inefficiency and poor results. The participants explained that some victims refused to express their feelings openly because of the sensitivity of the situation, and instead accepted it as a norm and struggled to go through their daily operations in the team. The essential outcome was that gender issues, racism, discrimination and stereotypes became the most subtle and complicated topic revealing several implications for the team because of the negative connotations on them.

One significant observation is that the members raised much concern than their leaders because the latter were most affected. For example, there were cases where several team members complained bitterly about being sidelined by their leaders when they qualified for a promotion. Some also shared stories about their leaders who gave preferences to male colleagues during foreign assignments or tasks, and they classified them as being gender-biased. Majority of the members indicated that their leaders ignored the issue, leading to blaming because the challenge created limited opportunities for some of them. The literature review also shows similar findings on the process and the outcome of the problems declared by the research participants. For example, gender or race variations create social classification regarding own group and other group leading to intergroup bigotries that affect performance negatively like being unwilling to cooperate with other team members demographically (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998).

The hardly detectable forms of racism found by the research substantiate the argument of Liao et al. (2016), describing the situation as the 'subtle one' because some do it gently, far and not direct. Again, Pettigrew (1998) describes it as the vague form of racism, which is in existence in the team. Here too, the team members expressed their experience as an indirect form of racism hidden under the carpet with no authority to complain. On the other hand, the leaders showed that the members failed to complain to them most of the times, although the latter mostly refute such claims. The situation endorses the point that ambiguous issue provides the individuals with a breathing space to rationalise and affirm the inexcusable treatment which makes it imperative to examine the consequences of such ideologies and group status (Liao, Hong and Rounds, 2016). The challenge becomes the 'stereotype threat' in a team because there is an internal agreement generally on the negative perception (Robbins and Judge, 2017). Such argument maintains the findings on why some members fail to report them openly despite the psychological effect on them. Notably, the results on the classification and imbalance have been given a lot of attention by researchers on the representative and cultural reproduction of gender imbalance (Ridgeway, 2011; Acker, 2006; Fenstermaker and West, 2002; Lorber, 1994), yet the challenge remains in teams, and that needs attention by the team leaders.

The findings further show that the dominance of specific gender in the team could create some challenges, according to some team members. The implication is that members with higher status even seem to become more competent, which enhances gender inequalities because males have higher social status than females (Fiske et al., 2002; Biernat and

Kobrynowicz, 1997). Such beliefs could create several challenges if its negative implications continue to thrive. Although, Ridgeway (2014) assesses the argument behind categorisation of gender stereotypes and its several problems like status inequalities, the way and manner they happen have received little attention, which demands urgent care by the leaders.

The issue of discrimination in various forms in the team is also vital for the team leaders to consider because most of the members, mostly the minorities, feel very uncomfortable with the consequences on their work processes and output. Taking into account the premise of Blau et al. (1998, p.186), discrimination is a situation where different one gives treatments to individuals who are equally qualified based on their gender and race (Schwieren and Slunk, 2008). The definition supports what the members showed in their response since it is composed of the said different gender, race and nationalities. The research findings corroborate with the social identity framework in addition to its extension on the self-categorisation theory, which indicates that people tend to identify more with groups they belong to (Turner and Oakes, 1986; Tajfel, 1978). Some members showed that individual team members were much closer to each other, so those who did not belong to such groups were isolated and discriminated. The situation authenticates the argument that such members desire to augment self-confidence, develop unique integrity, and minimise ambivalence in their lives (Hewstone et al. 2002; Mullin and Hogg, 1998). Team leaders need to examine the reasons for such a bond among individual members to reduce any chance for discrimination. The rationale is that during operations such identification might generate positive impacts for the team; nonetheless, a robust in-group identification could equally lead to adverse effects like discrimination against the outside team members (van Knippenberg, 2000; Kramer and Goldman, 1995). As being translated from the work of Fiedler (1996, p.162), in social psychology, stereotypes are simple beliefs about individual elements and members' behaviour of a team (Schwieren and Glunk, 2008). The findings draw a similar process and outcome of gender issues, racism, discrimination and stereotypes shown by other researchers, although, slide difference includes the adverse effects on the teams.

4.2.5 Hierarchy issues

I also used Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimension on 'Power Distance Culture'. The concept shows that some members of society believe that power is distributed unequally. The findings showed that while some members were very closed to some team leaders, others found that as unfair due to favours. However, the results provided new knowledge by showing two

significant perspectives, namely; 'leadership issues versus team members concern' applied to examine the situation based on the explanation offered by the participants regarding the challenges of hierarchy issues. The team leaders, for instance, indicated that some members developed excessive respect for them to the extent that they even failed to ask questions regarding assignments and tasks given to them for fear of being considered as disrespectful towards leadership. They also showed that such members could not provide accurate answers regarding their lack of knowledge towards job since it was against their culture, to tell the truth to leaders, and this belief created several mistakes, disappointments and failures in the team.

Conversely, the team members instead showed that some leaders were autocratic, bossy and controlled excessively without giving them the freedom to operate freely and independently. The authoritarian style of leadership reduced individual initiative, created weak innovation and slowed learning approach among them. They further encountered difficulties with the conservative approach of some leaders who failed to open up to new ideas and only stuck to old fashioned styles of leading. 'FI', a managing director shared his experiences as follows;

'I encountered my major cultural shock at work when one of my team members failed to inform the entire team about his inability to finish an important task on time due to some technical errors he failed to solve, and this caused the team some huge financial loss because of his cultural background. When I confronted him, he also refused to explain the main reasons to me until he explained his motives to another team member that it was against his beliefs to let know of his weaknesses to me as his boss'. (FI, a European male managing director of a manufacturing company).

The experience of 'FI' fulfils the argument that individual attitudes, behaviour and belief practices are influenced by cultural differences of some members in teams. The results showed members' concern about the leadership styles, their effects on members' attitudes and behaviour, and the consequence of teams' performance. The research also found that the national background of some members played a significant role in the belief concepts and challenges among members, and they mostly referred to those from the strong collective cultural backgrounds. The results showed that several members from the Western world used an independent approach to their work practices than the non-western members due to the hierarchical challenges in the team.

The hierarchical problems imply that the ideologies and practices of some leaders could affect the competence of the members. Still, most leaders instead perceive some members as uncooperative, incompetent and untrusted. For example, confirming the perspectives of the team members, Vliet (2006) argues that such leaders have unilateral decisions approach with excessive supervision of the work of subordinates. Such process connotes that their styles of leadership influence their members' reaction towards them. Culturally, several authors (Alves et al. 2006; Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005) share the same opinion of the team with the argument that the apparent differences exist between cultures about individual values, attitudes and behaviours, where these variations impact leadership roles in the organisations. The explanation reaffirms the members' concern about the leadership styles, their effects on members' attitudes and behaviour, and the consequence of the performance of the team. There is also the similarities between the beliefs of the team members regarding the autocratic styles of some leaders and the work of other researchers. For instance, in the high power distance cultures, social status, titles, and positions influence how leaders and their members see each other as unequal (Jogulu, 2010). However, Hofstede (1980) demonstrates that the perspective of the individualistic differs because the low power distance culture instead believes inequality with the democratic approach.

The roles of the national background of the team members regarding the challenges also substantiate the work of other researchers. For instance, among others, Vliet (2006) argues that members from the tropical climate areas appreciate and practice high power distance (Carl et al., 2004). Although what brings the difference here concerns the proper context of the climatic zone since there is a vast difference between some tropical regions in Europe, Africa and the Middle East and therefore, one could hardly identify which particular one becomes most applicable to their findings. Again, members from colder climates develop experience with flat structures, and that they prefer more gender equality and a more autonomous approach to work (Van de Vliert and Van Yperen, 1996). Despite the assumptions, one could equally argue that the structure of the organisation impacts leadership styles in the world. Based on the outcome of the study, the team should instead consider the impacts of culture on the issue of hierarchy.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the hierarchy problems is a shared responsibility in the team which should call for a complementary approach by the leaders and the members because of the blame game. Leadership processes impact the cognitive, motivational and

affective processes of the team (Zaccaro et al., 2001). Besides, Ensley et al. (2003) argue that the leadership process influences the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of the team members.

4.2.6 Intercultural conflicts

The study showed that factors such as miscommunication, differences in views, values, belief systems, leadership styles, decision-making process and misunderstanding contributed to the intercultural conflicts in the team. Although team leaders complained about conflicts, their members expressed more concern because of the adverse effects on their work process, cohesion, decisions and productivity. 'CS', a team member provided an account on conflicts as follows;

My team consisted of members who had different ideologies, beliefs and strange ways of approaching issues which were difficult to understand. We disagreed on everyday decisions regarding our tasks, and we also misunderstood our cultural lifestyles such as inadequate communication. The emotions attached to our disagreements were so much that I had to quit the team because I did not have the joy of going back to work the following day after experiencing bitterness at work.' (CS, an Asian female team member in a service company).

To add more value to the issue at stake, 'W', a male team member also contributed his opinion;

'We have been encountering unclarified expectations which lead to conflicts in the team. We also couldn't agree on issues, and the existing different opinions that sometimes result in conflicts become a problem because sometimes the pains resulting from these take a longer time to heal'. (W, an African descent male team member in a service company).

The expressions of 'CS' and 'W' supports the negative impacts of conflicts on the members, which urged them to implore on the leaders to manage such challenges. The team leaders also showed that cases of gossiping, impatience, stress levels, backbiting and casting of insinuations were some of the factors which contributed to these problems. However, the findings indicated that the members failed to complain about their worries and conflicts to their leaders for fear of being branded as unprofessional.

The study shows that the factors contributing to conflicts could be subtle, and they relate to cultural differences in the team, however failing to manage these factors imply that the team

could encounter a various degree of problems which could affect the performance. Although conflicts could occur in the monocultural environment as well, the findings indicate that failing to understand individual cultural differences sometimes exacerbates the situation in culturally diverse work teams due to differences in beliefs, values, norms and cultural practices. The literature review also indicates that conflicts occur among different members if there are differences in their beliefs, interest, values, needs (De Dreu et al., 1999). The similarities of the findings ratify the explanation of the leaders, showing that cases of gossiping, impatience, stress levels, backbiting and casting of insinuations were some of the factors which contributed to these problems. Here too, Mayer and Louw (2012) argue that conflicts cannot disassociate from people, and for that matter, it spreads throughout during communication in professional setups, socially and culturally. The team members failed to complain about their worries about conflicts to their leaders for fear of being branded as unprofessional. They explained that they have also lost trust in their leaders for failing to manage conflicts in their teams. However, they believed conflicts could cause a high-employee turnover, unproductivity and other related problems. The explanation justifies the argument that poorly managed intercultural teams could become highly unproductive due to factors like conflicts (Matveev and Nelson, 2004). The negative impacts of conflicts should motivate leaders to examine their causes and devise appropriate intercultural skills and strategies to resolve them.

4.2.7 Failure to share knowledge, ideas, information and contributions

The research found that it was against the culture of some members to openly share knowledge and ideas due to differences in their perceptions, norms, values, beliefs and practices. A major significant effect is a mistrust because some attitudes and behaviour of some leaders created adverse effects on them. 'LJ', a team member expressed her opinion on the challenge as follows;

'I will blame the behaviour of certain team leaders for the refusal of some team members to share their knowledge and ideas in the team because they discriminate against them, while some members also don't respect and value the contributions of their colleagues. Why should I bother to add my knowledge if my presence in the team is not respected and appreciated ?' (LJ, an Asian female team member in a service company).

The above rhetorical question of 'LJ' provides some insight into some of the causes contributing to the problem above. The results showed that there is a problem with trust in their teams, and both leaders and their members reaffirmed the adverse effects on information sharing. For example, while members developed a mistrust for their leaders for failing to manage their challenges, the leaders also mistrusted them for their reluctance to share their knowledge, ideas, information and contributions.

Similarly, literature shows that managers give special treatment to subordinates when there is a full trust for the loyalty of the latter, and this encourages them to share ideas and initiate projects (Wang et al., 2008; Gómez and Rosen, 2001; Liden and Maslyn, 1998; Liden and Graen, 1980). The implication of the findings and the work of other researchers support the argument that trust affects the knowledge sharing in culturally diverse work teams. The findings also validate the evidence that the situation has resulted in research on leadership and confidence in the sharing of knowledge (Lee et al., 2010). Again, Srivastava et al. (2006) argue about the positive direct impacts of leadership and trust on the team; however, the members also showed that lack of confidence in their leaders has contributed to their failure to share knowledge and information.

The findings show some contrasting effects on the work of other researchers. The participants were overconcentrated on the adverse impact of trust instead of the positive ones. Here, the work of (Renzl, 2008; Dirks, 1999; Kimmel et al. 1980) supports the argument that trust in the team is a significant concern because of the challenges with the sharing of knowledge. Another premise is that the attitudes of knowledge sharing are about the ability and the desire to share knowledge (De Vries et al., 2006). The situation fulfils the argumentation of the members about the lack of the desire to share knowledge but not the attitudes because they could do it, but they lacked the support from leaders.

The findings also share the assumptions of the loyalty dimension theory 'LMX' of Wang et al. (2008) with the argument that knowledge sharing becomes possible with the ability and the eagerness to do so; however, trust plays a massive role in achieving that. Knowledge sharing is the process in which a person agreeably exchanges his/her (tacit and explicit) knowledge with one another and together form a new one (Van den Hooff and De Ridder, 2004). Factors like team members' agreeableness, extraversion, a person's job gratification in addition to the performance beliefs contribute to a team member's desire to share knowledge (De Vries et al., 2006). The above variables explain why beliefs, perceptions, values, ideals

and the negative attitudes of some members reduce one's ability and the willingness to share knowledge, however, the roles of leaders, according to the members contribute to that. Factors such as the evaluative involvement with the company and the importance on the self which link with individualist cultures retard information-sharing among the members in the team (Oetzel and Ting-Toomey, 2003; Chow et al., 1999). Researchers suggest that team leaders should be cross-cultural competent enough to encourage members to share quality knowledge among them (Hajro and Pudelko, 2010). Furthermore, Srivastava et al. (2006) authenticate that the sharing of knowledge in teams enables members to achieve outstanding performance. Therefore, leaders should examine the factors affecting trust, address them to improve the sharing of knowledge, ideas, information and contributions in the team.

4.2.8 Host country dominant cultural effect factor

The findings showed that when the country hosting the organisation has more of its citizens employed than other nationalities, they dominate the team with their national cultural backgrounds, beliefs and cultural practices. Similarly, when the majority of the members come from the same country, and they share the same cultural values, beliefs and practices, the minorities experience huge problems with the dominant cultural factor in the team. As a result, the team faces issues with decisions, indiscriminate use of native language during communications, working, control measures, evaluations and promotions. The findings showed that the problems became worse when the leader of the team possessed the same citizenship as the majority, and this affects the minority members negatively. Although this is a significant concern, the members demonstrated more worries than their leaders. To illustrate, 'MT', a team member in the service company shared her experience on this issue as follows;

'In our team, I don't know where to start because I get a little bit lost of the members who speak the same language and even use their native language for discussion, which makes me angry. Since they are the majority with a similar culture, they even want to take full control of every activity in the team, and this is not fair'. (MT, a South American female team member in a service company).

The problem is also a significant concern for some team leaders who manage members with most of them possessing the similar cultural background, and 'SHA', a leader also expressed how the challenges affected his responsibilities as follows;

'I observed in my former team that because I came from a different continent, majority of the team members who shared the same cultural values, spoke the same language, socialised together and dominated with their cultural background. The situation affected my competence because they sometimes refused to obey the rules in the team, and this compelled me to join my new team'. (SHA, an Asian male team leader in a manufacturing company)

The above statement implies that the host or country dominant cultural factor is a challenge which affects the team since the challenges alienate the minorities in several ways. Again, the findings indicated that some leaders provided unequal treatment to some members and this created disunity in the team, and the effects included the feeling of unappreciation, poorly treated, low commitment and demotivated towards their primary objectives. The findings imply that when a particular cultural group dominates the others in the team, the minorities become the victims of the negative consequences of cultural differences, and this leads to the creation of a sub-culture with its adverse impacts on them.

The results further showed that leaders contribute to worsening the challenge with the accompanying effect identified as the 'cultural isolationism'. The members indicated that the term, 'cultural isolationism,' defines a process where the roles of team leaders influence individual members from the same cultural background to disassociate themselves from minorities. Such attitudes created hatred, mistrust, lack of confidence, inefficiency and loss of hope in the team, and this proves what Kirkman et al. (2004) relate to the construct of the social identity theory of (Billig and Tajfel, 1973). The model defines the process where members aim to develop social identities positively and solidify the personality through the demonstration of favouritism towards the members belonging to them (Billig and Tajfel, 1973). The outcome includes bias, discrimination, conflict and emotions in the team (Jehn et al., 1999). The result demonstrates the following associated challenges; stereotypes, prejudice, cultural clashes, favouritisms, seclusion and sub-culture in the team. The argument is that there is a strong correlation between subcultures and the attitudes of employees (Adkins and Caldwell, 2004; Lok, Westwood and Crawford, 2005). The findings further imply that leaders should team up with the International HRM departments to recruit members with equal distribution of national cultural backgrounds, and they should also demonstrate an attitude of equality and fairness in the team. The suggestion fulfils the assumption for the social construct of Guillaume et al. (2014) that the organisation provides equal treatment and encourages all employees to participate in decision making regarding the

undermining of the social integration of all members.

In summary, the findings generally show that cultural differences create several problems for the team due to the failure to manage them effectively with leaders mostly blamed for that, despite their reasons to justify their roles in the situation. The problems, therefore, motivated me to investigate why the leaders face difficulties in managing the challenges of cultural differences, and the following details the findings and the discussions.

4.3 Why leaders face challenges in managing the problems of cultural differences

4.3.1 Lack of time and attention on the part of the team leaders

Majority of the team leaders and their members interviewed showed that the leaders were preoccupied with many responsibilities such as attending meetings, supervising teamwork and participating in several activities for the team, so they failed to pay much attention to issues regarding cultural differences. 'KF' a team leader shared her experience as follows;

'One major difficulty is about the lack of concentration and action on issues about cultural differences because I do not have enough time for issues on cultural differences unless the problems occurring from these differences are escalating. I have too much pressure to finish the management task, finish the main agenda on the table, so I do not plan for cultural issues, but despite that, I should consider them as well'. (KF, a European male team leader in a service company).

The above statement testifies that prioritisation of other responsibilities supersedes issues with cultural differences. Although leaders blamed their failure with the preoccupation of several duties to the detriment of the challenges of cultural differences, their members instead deemed that as a mere excuse to cover their weaknesses in addressing the challenges. The team leaders notably suggested that multinational companies have to pay attention to the time factor, provide hours and budgeting for matters regarding the management of the problems of cultural differences in the team. The findings provide new knowledge by showing how leaders prioritise their task to the detriment of cultural differences. However, researchers concentrate on the outcome and the recommendations to address them regarding why the team fails to manage the challenges effectively. For example, Groves and Feyerherm (2011) argue that a substantial shift in the teams' composition creates problems culturally and its accompanying challenges for leaders. Again, the explanation of the leaders calls for the input

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of the management of multinational companies to incorporate the management of cultural differences as pivotal roles for leaders. The suggestion substantiates Hajro and Pudelko's (2010) argumentation that companies offer institutional assistance to team leaders to become intercultural competence leaders. Another supporting argument is that the roles of institutional aid in remedying the problem have also been given much attention (Hajro and Pudelko, 2010; Johnson et al., 2006).

4.3.2 Lack of skills and knowledge of intercultural competence

The findings showed that team leaders lack limited knowledge and skills of intercultural competence. Although the team leaders complained about this, their members expressed the most concern about this factor. I used the cultural mosaic framework to analyse the findings. For example, Chuapetcharasopon et al. (2018) argue that a 'mosaic' psychological environment subsists as a team framework whereby individuals use the team to leverage on cultural differences to reinforce their work, candidly conveying and cordially agreeing to the expression of cultural differences, and finally recognising the depth of the cultural differences among them. The findings showed that the lack of knowledge and the skills of intercultural competence make them ignore the importance of cultural differences, so some team leaders do not use them to reinforce their work in the team. For example, the team members explained that some leaders mainly lacked intercultural awareness and sensitivities, which prevented them from managing the challenges.

On the contrary, some leaders blamed the members by indicating that they most often did not receive complaints from them regarding the issue, although some did admit it. Again, while some members openly expressed their displeasure about such challenges without proper solutions; others preferred to keep silent over it in their teams. For example, 'JL', a team leader expressed her views on this as follows;

'The attitudes of some team leaders towards the complaint about the challenges of cultural differences do not encourage some members to share their problems further. Sometimes, some feel ashamed for reporting some of these problems because they are assumed to get matured enough to manage the problems themselves, and I think this is happening because some leaders do not even believe they do encounter such problems'. (JL, an African descent female team leader of a service company).

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The above information shows that the attitudes of some leaders toward the challenges could exacerbate the situation, and this could imply they are ignorant about the existence of the problem, therefore, validating the members' blame about the lack of knowledge and skills on (IC). The members' explanation implies that they lose confidence in leadership competence despite their field of expertise and experience. There are more negative processes in teams composed of members with diverse cultural backgrounds (Shapiro et al., 2002; Watson et al., 1998). The circumstances confirm the complexities of the challenges of cultural differences among the team, which urge their leaders to achieve intercultural competence. For instance, Maznevski and DiStefano (2000) recommend that multinational team leaders have to map, link and assimilate the diverse perspectives of their members. The members substantiate the argument of Hajro and Pudelko (2010) that leaders with intercultural competence skills develop the interest and awareness of other cultures, gain cultural empathy, enthusiasm to learn the cultural attitudes, behaviour, norms, and values of their members (Hajro and Pudelko, 2010). Again, team leaders should promote intercultural awareness and empathetic skills to resolve stereotypes, conflicts, reduce negative assumptions, improve commonly shared values and individual contributions to achieve their success (Schwer, 2004; Manning, 2003). The members' argument further authenticates the point that increasing differences in the workforce influence many organisations to employ managers with cross-cultural skills (Earley and Gibson, 2002). Besides, Manning (2003) contributes to the findings by showing that obtaining effective leadership to manage in the intercultural organisation has become highly desirable across the board.

4.3.3 The attitude and the unwillingness of some team members to change

The research found that despite the training and advice on intercultural awareness, some team members were unwilling to change and although, some members shared this, the majority of the team leaders instead shared this opinion the most. The team leaders explained that they encountered difficulties in changing the mindset formed about an issue regarding culture, and what constituted the moral right of a person without legal ramifications. Majority of the team leaders agreed that it was difficult judging the beliefs, cultural practices and values of some members once they seemed right in their sights, and all these connected to cultural differences. For example, the members explained that what was good and right for a colleague was considered wrong for someone in the team because of differences in values, beliefs and preferences. So the rhetoric question which arose was about the moral

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justification that one could use to correct someone's attitude in the team due to cultural differences. Majority of the team members demanded constant cultural awareness training for a more extended period, and they believed that their leaders had considerable roles to play. The study showed that when culture is ingrained in a person right from childhood to adulthood, changing the mindset of the person becomes very complicated.

The complexity involved in convincing team members to change individual attitudes and behaviour considered harmful in the team is sometimes beyond the comprehension of some team leaders. The explanation of the leaders implies that the cultural backgrounds of the individual team members become very complex to understand, and Humes and Reilly (2008) also reaffirm that the culture of people influence how they make assumptions about people, and this impacts their attitudes and behaviour in their teams. The difference between the research findings and the argument of Humes and Reilly (2008) is about general beliefs and practice concerning the complexity of team members versus influence and assumptions. The propensity that culturally diverse work teams would become unproductive would be very high due to issues like poor understanding, communication problems as well as a conflict if they are not managed well (Matveev and Nelson, 2004). Since individual members have different perceptions about the roles of the team, leaders should assist members in understanding the positive impacts of their cultural backgrounds. The argument is that members with diverse cultural backgrounds perceive teams' goals differently (Zhou and Shi, 2011).

4.3.4 Team members lack trust in their leaders

The findings showed that the negative influence of cultural differences and leadership failure to address them created limited trust in leaders, and this demotivated the members to share their problems emanating from cultural differences for the third time. Subsequently, the leaders received limited information to manage the challenges of cultural differences, and terminologies such as 'hiding the problems under the carpet', became a common phrase among some of them. 'CH', a team member shared her opinion on the effects of mistrust as follows;

'When a team leader loses the trust of his or her members, all your efforts for the team become worthless afterwards because members do not value the chances to share their challenges with you anymore. Because of this, team leaders should do everything to manage

the little trust their members have reposed in them because gaining it back becomes very difficult'. (CH, an African descent female team member in a service company).

The fundamental factor behind the mistrust for the leaders depends on leadership's failure to manage the challenges of cultural differences successfully, and this supports the contention for trust based on reliance and disclosure factors (Lee et al., 2010). The reliance-based trust concerns the desire of a person to depend on someone. In contrast, a disclosure-based trust demonstrates an individual's willingness to reveal personal or information about work activities to another person (Lee et al., 2010). The reliance-based trust typically shows much insight into the explanation of the team members because they needed that to provide information on their challenges to their leaders. The reliance and disclosure factors for trust depend on an individual's desire to rely on someone and the motivation to reveal personal information (Lee et al., 2010).

Furthermore, the two major prominent dimensions of trust in the context of the team includes the identified dependent on others and the revelation of delicate information to others (Gillespie, 2003). Another argument is that the eagerness of a person to rely on another defines reliance-based trust (Lee et al., 2010). Importantly, Newell and Swan (2000) also demonstrate that trust plays a role in the context of competence, companionship and commitment. For example, by comparing the literature and military doctrine on trust, Garvin (2009) explains the military principle as follows;

'Team development generates trust. Trust starts with activity when leaders exhibit control competence. As time goes on, subordinates get to know that leaders perform what they promised. On the other hand, subordinates are trusted by their leaders because leaders learn to do so. That link, that collective promise, is the connection which assists organisations in fulfilling the ultimate complex responsibilities'. (FM 22-100, 6-139).

The above statement provides essential lessons on leadership and trust regarding cultural differences as demonstrated by the findings, with the implications that they should be reciprocal in the team. The members' inability to complain about their challenges to their leaders also affirm the constructs of Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions on masculinity which emphasise on competitiveness, ambition, and achievements. The findings on trust further provide three significant implications for the team, namely; Ineffective leadership approach towards the challenges of cultural differences discourages their members from

sharing vital information on their problems with leaders. Again, defining appropriate intercultural solution strategies to mitigate the issues in the team becomes difficult due to a lack of proper information on the challenges. The trust and belief in the competence of the leaders decline because of the persistent occurrence of the problems with its adverse effects on the team. The participants showed that leaders should promote trust and confidence among their members by solving the challenges of cultural differences effectively.

4.3.5 Wrong misconception for professionalism and self-managed abilities of team members

The findings showed that team leaders misconstrued the professional and educational background of members for their self-ability to manage intercultural competence, and this has contributed to the failure in managing the challenges of cultural differences effectively. Howbeit, the members believed that such actions signalled ignorance and leadership's limited knowledge of cultural awareness and sensitivities in the team. I applied the cultural mosaic framework Chuapetcharasopon et al. (2018) that argue that a 'mosaic' psychological environment subsists as a team framework whereby individuals use the team to leverage on cultural differences to reinforce their work, candidly conveying and cordially agreeing to the expression of cultural differences, and finally recognising the depth of the cultural differences among them. The findings showed that due to the limited knowledge of intercultural competence, the leaders fail to understand the extent of cultural differences in the team positively. Hence, they did not consider the challenges of cultural difference as a huge problem but took them as granted. The following statement shows shocking feelings of a young female participant regarding her team leader.

'I had the shock of my professional life when my team manager once told me that despite my experience and educational background, I could not trash out my differences with my colleague and that brought shame to me. Although she failed to help me, I managed to bring the situation under control by avoiding my colleague totally in the team until I left. Although I knew that what I did was not right, since I could not bear her strange attitudes, I had to take the risk for that'. (SD, a European female team member in a manufacturing company).

The negative impacts of the misconception could be high since leaders could depend on that to ignore their essential responsibilities regarding the control of the problems. Another argument is that most of the leaders could not validate their perception with evidence, and

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they should avoid the mistake of comparing members' professional and educational backgrounds as an excuse to underrate the negative influence of cultural differences on the team.

In summary, the findings on why leaders fail to manage the challenges of cultural differences show that the results on the leaderships' lack of skills and knowledge of intercultural competence contribute significantly, one cannot also underrate the essential roles of the remaining factors. The literature findings also testify to the limited understanding of (IC) of team leaders, and this underscores one of the vital objectives of the study. For instance, the challenges reiterate the demand for modern organisations to employ leaders who should possess the requisite leadership competencies such as cross-cultural skills to manage the team (Ang et al., 2007). Again, Roberson and Park (2007) also added their argument to the call by showing that such a move would impact their performance very positively (Ang et al., 2007). Leaders of culturally diverse work teams need to develop the ability for (IC) to manage the cultural challenges to improve the performance of the team successfully (Schwer, 2004; Manning, 2003). The above analysis shows that leaders have been unable to resolve the challenges of cultural differences successfully, while members also demonstrate dissatisfaction with leadership's approach to the situation. The following provides the findings and the discussions for members' level of satisfaction regarding leadership's management of cultural differences.

4.4 Team members' level of satisfaction regarding leadership's roles in cultural differences

Majority of the team members interviewed showed that they were never satisfied with how their leaders managed the challenges of cultural difference. To find out the total number of participants who either agreed or disagreed and those who did not say anything about their opinion, I evaluated their responses to do the percentage calculation. With a total number of 39 respondents, the figure below details the members' responses in percentages after dividing each answer by 39 and multiplied by 100%; [12].

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[12] The following demonstrates the responses of the research participants; 20 = Never satisified; 8= Partially satisfied; 6= Indifferent; 3= Very satisfied; 2=Satisfied. It should be noted that I did not use any statistical tool to analyse the result. I only counted the total number of participants who agreed or disagreed or did not say anything to compute the percentages. I have used the same approach for the remaining percentages in this research.
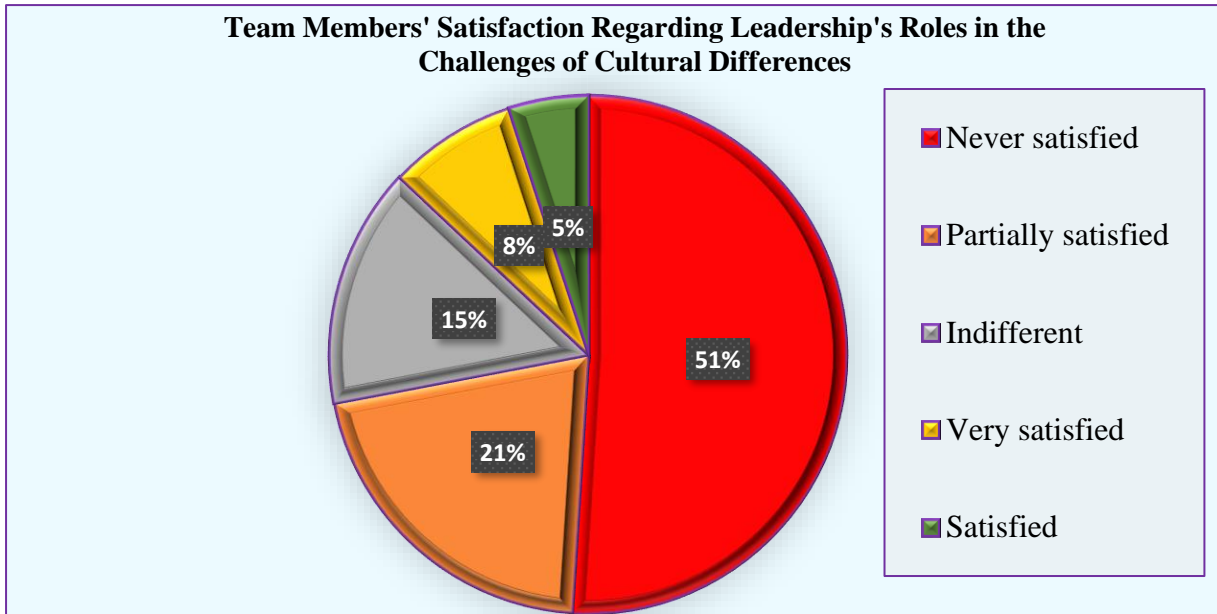
Figure 4.2: Team Members' Level of Satisfaction Regarding Leadership's Roles in the Challenges of Cultural Differences

Figure 4.2 demonstrates that 51% of the respondents were never satisfied with how their leaders managed the challenges of cultural differences. The unsatisfied members explained that their leaders did not care much and made no attempt to address the challenges of their differences. A female team member expressed dissatisfaction in her leader as follows;

'I was confused with how my manager dealt with the challenges in the team. He did not show any sign that he cared about the problems in the team, and because I could not cope with the situations, I contacted my mother in my country who advised me to keep calm and go through it because this is the way some people manage'. (SHH, an Asian female team member in a service company).

The statement above implies that members lose confidence in their leaders due to the negative attitudes and reactions towards the challenges confronting them. Leaders should demonstrate positive attitudes and responses towards the complaints about the difficulties of cultural differences. Comparatively, Figure 4.2 shows that 21% of the team members were partially satisfied with their leaders because they did not provide better ways to manage these differences effectively, and they continued to experience some of the challenges. However, the Figure also indicates that 15% of the team members remained indifferent on the issue of satisfaction because they have become used to the problems of cultural differences which

compelled them to accept it as the usual trend in their teams. Here, 'SA', a team member demonstrated her views as follows;

'The challenges of cultural differences do not bother us anymore because we have become used to them, and therefore, we do not also need our manager to assist us. They have become daily routine issues and are now norms with no intervention from our manager'. (SA, a North American female team member in a service company).

Notwithstanding the above, Figure 4.2 further demonstrates that 8% of team members were very much satisfied with their leaders because they were helpful when they needed their assistance. They explained that such leaders were 'people's managers' who associated with them daily, which helped them to understand and find proper ways to manage their challenges efficiently. For example, 'CN', a team member expressed his positive views as follows;

'I am very much satisfied with my manager for managing the challenges caused by cultural differences in the team. At the moment, I think that we are doing well by working together with no challenges, and being in the team closed to 10 years, I have seen good improvement such as more friendship in the team, informal communication and removal of old barriers, so I am delighted'. (CN, a North American male team member in a production company).

The above statement denotes a good impression about the leaders who manage the challenges very well. All the same, the combined percentage of the 5% and the 8% should be a concern and worry for the leaders despite that the rationale behind their satisfaction included good cooperation, effective communication and better working processes. The argument is that the total percentage is insignificant, considering the total number of team members who participated in the study. Therefore, team leaders should avoid unjustifiable excuses towards the situation as being claimed by their members, and instead consider members' complaints seriously, react positively and provide proper training for the members. The findings also substantiate the argument of Yukl (2001) that leaders should emphasise the significance of accepting cultural differences, and demonstrate how team members could react positively to their differences (Yukl, 2001). The members explained that the leaders should maximise the potentials of the teams' differences and assist them in understanding individual differences. The suggestion also authenticates the reasoning that leaders have to maximise the teams' potential through the capitalisation on the various skills, viewpoints and backgrounds of the

members (Zenger et al., 1994). Generally, the study showed that members' level of satisfaction regarding leaderships' management of the challenges of cultural differences depended on two main premises, namely; team members' complaint about their leaders' failure to manage the challenges effectively, and the reasons provided by team leaders to justify their approach in managing the problems. Considering the findings examined so far, it becomes imperative to also analyse the results on the impacts of cultural differences on culturally diverse work teams, and the sub-topic below details that.

4.5 The effects of cultural differences on the culturally diverse work teams

The findings showed that cultural differences had both positive and negative effects yet, majority of the respondents indicated that the negative consequences far exceeded the positive ones. The sub-themes below show the results in details by beginning with the negative impacts;

The negative impacts of cultural differences on the team

4.5.1 Intercultural communication problems

I applied the cognitive, affective and operational model of Kim (1999) to analyse the findings. The cognitive-communication competence explains the ability of people to establish sense from the verbal and nonverbal language. The affective competence, on the other hand, includes the emotional and attitudinal demeanour of people. Besides, the operational competence consists of the versatility and the ingenuity of the people in responding to communications (Kim, 1999). Majority of the leaders and their members interviewed showed that the verbal and non-verbal communication challenges were a significant issue due to cultural differences because they failed to establish meanings from the verbal and the nonverbal communication in the team. Again, they showed that most of them attached emotional attitudes to issues on communication. At the same time, their responses to the communication were mostly negative and such caused other problems like confusion among them. 'MRK', shared his experience with miscommunication as follows:

'I have observed that if a particular team member discusses with a person of a higher position about a given task and he asks, 'are you sure this is the way forward?'. That means that the member is never going to do it because he does not understand the task'. (MRK, an Australian and Oceania male team leader in a manufacturing/service company).

The above statement indicates that certain forms of communication could be misleading and misinterpreted, which could cause disappointment in the team because miscommunication created tension, misunderstanding, poor teamwork, poor decision, difficulty in planning issues, inefficiency and low output. A typical example is 'IC', a team member, who expressed her regrets over a complaint against her style of communication as follows;

'I never knew that my direct form of communication created emotional problems for my colleague until she cried in the presence of our leader and complained that I was abusing her with my choice and tone of voice, and I felt despondent about that'. (IC, a North American female team member in a service/manufacturing company).

The above statement demonstrates how communication creates emotional challenges and harbouring of resentment among the members. The findings imply that the leaders should consider issues of with accents, the impact of non-verbal communication and the various forms of communication because they connect directly with culture. The challenges validate Jameson's (2017) reasoning that to achieve effective intercultural communication you have to perceive and understand the integrity of your culture which transmits knowledge and beliefs derived from formal or informal fellowship in teams that influence attitudes, customs and life's conduct. Again, the findings further authenticate the argument that those who communicate in intercultural environments have to gain insight into the secret power of culture (Jameson, 2017). The connotation is that culture influences communication in the team. Although the findings failed to show the roles of national cultural differences in the communication challenges, researchers (Bret et al., 2013; Lauring, 2011; Stahl et al., 2010) show that cultural differences, including the national differences, create communication problems, so further research is needed to address them. Subsequently, the members' demand for the leaders to obtain (IC) fulfils the argument for the team to develop the skills and knowledge for cultural awareness (Piyush and Namwoon, 2014; Goodman, 2012; Monthienvichienchai et al., 2002; Bush et al., 2001; Bush et al., 2001; Fine, 1995 p.152; Zimmermann, 1995; Wiseman et al., 1989; Chen, 1987).

The team explained that effective communication plays significant roles in daily operations, and this shares similar findings with the work of other researchers. Team members need effective communication in their level of frequency and content as well (Stahl et al., 2010). Again, communication is essential for the provision, assessment, and the incorporation of the input of the members and failure to communicate effectively will prevent the unique ideas of

the members from being shared (Bret et al., 2013). The argument is that when there is a problem with communication, the team does not get the fundamental ideas they need, which creates difficulties for them. Accordingly, Lauring (2011) suggests that the differences in national cultures should not only be used as an intercultural communication model but also, include the link between the practices of communication and organisation of the differences in the workplace socially. Therefore, there is a demand for further investigation explicitly for intercultural interactions to put it in the context of the organisation and variables like practising informal communication and power relations (Lauring, 2011).

4.5.2 Intercultural conflicts in the team increases

The findings showed 'Silent and Open Conflicts' as two major types of intercultural conflicts affecting the team as a result of cultural differences. The outcome showed that the 'Silent Intercultural Conflicts' refer to the small issues like misunderstandings, which prevent some colleagues from associating with each other. For instance, the participants explained that they sometimes refuse to talk to each other or react negatively against a member during decisions and suggestions in the team. However, the findings provided an addition to knowledge by showing the 'Open Intercultural Conflicts' that occurred when open confrontation and emotions were openly flared up and resulted in fights among team members. The investigation showed that the silent conflicts, also regarded as the remote one, usually triggered the open conflicts in the team because of the failure to recognise and manage them. 'FI', a team leader disclosed his opinion on conflicts in his team in the following statement;

'Conflicts in the team spread like a striking fire in the forest because you usually come across some opposing and supporting team members who even make the situation difficult to solve. As a team leader, you need good information and the cooperation of the people involved to resolve them for the benefit of the team'. (FI, a European male team leader in a manufacturing company).

The above statement indicates that leaders need information about the causes of conflicts to address them because they could be a subtle issue in the team with several negative consequences. The participants explained that intercultural conflicts are complex and challenging to manage because they could create disintegration, employee's turnover, inefficiency and poor results. The challenges also validate the argumentation that the delicate nature of conflicts create complexities and affect team's performance because they are difficult to perceive and understand (Du Plessis, 2011; Brett et al., 2006; Naquin and Tynan,

2003: p. 2). For instance, the effect proves the findings regarding 'Silent Intercultural Conflicts' in the team as well as the negative impacts associated with them. The challenges of cultural diversity, including conflicts, create doubts about multicultural teams since this undermines their potency (Allen and Hecht, 2004: Naquin and Tynan, 2003; Gordon, 2002; Mueller, 1994). Again, the persistent paradoxical practices unavoidably sustain fundamental frictions, which are a background for conflict, instead of the settlement (Du Plessis, 2011). Management should perceive and manage the connotations of paradoxes in teamwork (Dubé and Robey, 2008). At the same time, the team fails to understand their complexities, and this could trigger conflicts (Naquin and Tynan, 2003). Therefore, the dynamic nature of teamwork in the surroundings of multicultural organisations might create several problems than collaboration itself, and this results in cross-cultural conflicts that need to be managed (Du Plessis, 2011).

To be able to achieve conflict resolutions in the teams successfully, researchers recommend applying the concept of paradox which explains the kind of challenge, implying a contradiction or disagreement that provides insight into phenomena in the organisation (Chae and Bloodgood, 2006; Lewis, 2000; Poole and Van de Ven, 1989). The stronger teams help their managers to make the team efficient and effective. However, the weaker teams which see the negative side of the conflict can destroy the relationships and minimise the performance (Du Plessis, 2011). The results connote that the members need to open up on the causes of conflicts with their leaders to manage them efficiently and even so adopt the skills and knowledge of (IC) to manage cultural differences successfully.

4.5.3 Poor teamwork or cooperation

The findings demonstrated that failure to manage the challenges of cultural differences resulted in harbouring of pains, resentments, unfriendly attitudes, and their differences sometimes prevented them from working together successfully. 'LD' shared her experience as follows;

'As a team manager, I sometimes feel that togetherness is very strong, but when there is a team's assignment, I observe that some members would not cooperate well due to their differences, and this affects team dynamics'. (LD, a European female manager in a manufacturing company).

The above statement shows that failure to cooperate could disintegrate the team, and this was a massive concern for the participants because they explained that some members either reported sick or used particular excuses to avoid working together with certain colleagues assigned in their teams. Another perspective shown by the members was that trust was a significant factor for cooperation in the team, and failure to improve confidence could be equivalent to disorganisation. A typical case is where a member who became a victim of disintegration in her team expressed her frustrations as follows;

'I used to think that I could join some members to converse and socialise around the same table during our team outing, but to my surprise, they all left the table. Little did I know that some members had chosen some colleagues they preferred most to sit on the same table with during outings'. (CN, a North American female team member in a manufacturing company).

Again, the findings showed that individual cultural differences, such as diverse attitudes and behaviour, contributed to most of the challenges in the team. Here also, Probst et al. (1999) show a connection between the features of culture and sort of dilemma for cooperation through their assessment of the cultural characteristics of individuals and their relations to behaviour cooperation in social dilemmas. Again, the cohesiveness of the team influences their processes and results, and culture impacts this relationship (Zhou and Shi, 2011). Furthermore, cohesion and cooperation are profoundly affected by the team due to cultural differences (Zhou and Shi, 2011; Probst et al., 1999). The team members showed that their inability to resolve their disputes set them apart, and the disgruntled members formed sub-groups and developed their sub-culture. The challenges prove the argument of Tsui and O'Reilly (1989) that individuals prefer trusting and selecting to be among those they feel comfortable with and share similarities. Team members who do not share similar views of the sub-groups are the out-group members who are not fit to be trusted (Li and Hambrick, 2005). The argument substantiates the research outcome because trust is a significant factor for cooperation in the team, and failure to improve confidence could lead to disorganisation. Team members prefer moving with those they feel comfortable with (Li and Hambrick, 2005; Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989). The argument supports the findings of the study because the results demonstrate a formation of classes of associations which could affect the team negatively. Issues with team-building become very challenging because the team is composed of members from diverse cultural backgrounds (Alpert, 2018). The research participants argue that when cultural differences affect the team negatively, the cohesiveness becomes a

problem. The development and understanding of the effectiveness of teamwork have become very difficult (Zhou and Shi, 2011).

4.5.4 Low performance and output of the team

The research also showed that leadership failure to manage cultural differences affected the performance and output of the team. The respondents explained that the challenges created inefficiency, teamwork problems, stagnation in the work process, slowed down a delivery on time, postponement of tasks, and even made the roles of team leaders very complex. 'MH', a team member expressed how specific behaviour affected output in the following words;

'We are currently experiencing low production because while some members do not cooperate well, others keep us waiting because of poor attitudes to work. Instead of concentrating on the work, we waste time dealing with unnecessary misunderstandings, and this is creating too much waste in our system'. (MH, a North American male team member in a manufacturing company).

The above expression indicates that failure to manage cultural differences creates low output in the production sector because they spend too much time on unproductive activities. For instance, the difficulties with miscommunication, conflicts and high employee turnover contribute to the malfunctioning of the team, which verifies the point that cultural differences could pose a problem for the accomplishment of assimilation, and this affects effectiveness (Means et al., 2015). Again, cultural differences could be a threat to the successful performance of the team if they are not managed well (Means et al., 2015). Furthermore, cultural differences can negatively affect task, create conflict, and could cause the team to malfunction (Li and Hambrick, 2005). One could conclude that the outcome of the research shares a strong opinion with the findings of the literature review. The implication is that leaders should manage the challenges of cultural differences effectively to improve the performance and output of the team.

4.5.5 Mistrust and high employees turnover

The findings indicated that the challenges with stress, emotional difficulties, frustrations, confusion, discouragement, demotivation, insecurity, bitterness and resentments resulted in mistrust and high employee turnover due to cultural differences. Again, those who failed to leave the team sometimes demonstrated lackadaisical attitudes towards work and reported a

constant sick or provided flimsy excuses to absent themselves from work most of the times. Furthermore, the findings showed that mistrust in the team equally contributes to the adverse effects of culture because the more the challenges increased, the more trust diminished. The following statement shows the experience of a leader who experienced the difficulties;

'I felt so much discouraged, disappointed and confused with the level of problems created by cultural differences in my team that after consulting the Human Resource Department several times for help with no avail, I decided finally to leave for another company' (MRK, an Australian and Oceania male team leader in a manufacturing/service company).

The participants explained that both the leaders and members were prone to quit when the problems persisted for a more extended period with negative impacts on their work. Again, 'BF', a member who found a new job as a result of her race shared the following experience;

'In my previous company, I was never appreciated by some team members and our leader himself due to my race. I lost complete trust in the team, and this influenced me to leave for my current company, where I hope my competence would be used to judge me instead of my race'. (BF, an Asian female team member in a manufacturing/service company*).*

The statement also shows that race and discrimination contribute to mistrust in a team, which compels some members to quit the team. Majority of the members explained that the team continues to lose excellent talents and honest employees, who contribute well because they could no longer comprehend with the level of stress, frustrations and insecurity. The significant risk is that those who pretend to stay could not entirely contribute because they bear bitterness and use flimsy excuses to create unnecessary absenteeism with a massive cost for the team like job dissatisfaction. The literature review also validates the findings, and Mayfield and Mayfield (2009) argue that the adverse effects of absenteeism in the workplace are enormous with direct, indirect cost and quality of service. Again, the decision of the employees to quit from the company incurs high price, and the firm also loses valuable employees (Siebert and Zubanov, 2009; Wright and Bonett, 2007). At the same time, it is argued that voluntary employee turnover is harmful to communication processes in the team (Van der Vegt et al., 2010).

The above argument substantiates the research findings. The theories of employee turnover attribute cause to job satisfaction Mueller et al. (1994) nonetheless, others demonstrate

environmental factors like co-worker behaviour and social relations at the workplace as attributional factors (Simon et al., 2010; Chiaburu and Harrison, 2008; Wharton et al., 2000; Mueller et al., 1994). The direct financial losses created by absenteeism sometimes excludes indirect cost such as salaries for replaced workers, paying overtime and poor performance (Robbins, 2005; Cascio, 2000). The reason is that absenteeism creates an enormous financial cost for the team, and the argument of Mayfield and Mayfield (2009) testifies the outcome of the study by showing that the team has to exploit strategic leadership roles to overcome the challenges. Considering the findings of this research, I will recommend that the exploitation of vital leadership roles should embrace the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence howbeit, the challenges needed a holistic solution from the team because mistrust and high employee turnover cost them in several ways. Even though the adverse effects of cultural differences were enormous, the following provides the outcome of other positive impacts.

The positive impacts of cultural differences on the team

4.5.6 Innovation and creativity in the team

The findings showed that the team contributed different knowledge, skills, new talents, resulting in innovative and creative ideas for their daily operations which helped them to achieve excellent results in unique ways. To illustrate, 'EV', a senior manager shared his positive experience as follows;

'Cultural differences in our team play significant roles because we combine creative and innovative ideas to achieve great results based on the individual ways of applying the diverse talents, ideas and knowledge in the team and as a leader, I am very happy for this development'. (EV, a North American male senior manager in a manufacturing company).

The explanation indicates that the combination of the individual's innovative ideas and creativity in the team gives them a competitive edge. The findings also substantiate the studies on cultural effects on the teams' creativity and innovation, which are growing tremendously (Li et al., 2013; Mumford, 2012). The argument is that such creativity-implicating system develops the capabilities of the individuals to simplify available conceptual bounds and to broaden their development and innovative thoughts (Crisp and Turner, 2011; Ward et al., 1997). Furthermore, the increasing research persistently assists in lasting creative benefits due to culture-mixing experience (Chen et al., 2016). The benefits

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become possible when they identify the differences between the team and their leaders manage them effectively. For instance, the capabilities of the individuals, values, beliefs and perspectives are shaped by a culture which impacts the creative attitudes/behaviours and performance in the team (Bechtoldt et al., 2010; Erez and Nouri, 2010; Goncalo and Staw, 2006). To contribute to this, Loin and Lan (2018) found that capabilities, identity, individual's values, the salience of cultural norms in particular conditions are other significant factors for creative behaviours and performance in the team (Morris and Leung, 2010). The findings of Liou and Lan (2018) from several studies show that culture has more significant effects on the selection of idea than the development of the concept (Li et al., 2013; De Dreu, 2010; Erez and Nouri, 2010; Zhou and Su, 2010). All these testify to the fact that culture has a substantial impact on idea generation, creativity in the team, and therefore, leaders should manage cultural differences to maximise these impacts.

4.5.7 The team becomes open-minded and exploit different ways of working

The findings show that the leaders and their members embraced different ideas, opinions and learned from each other to work successfully. Majority of the leaders revealed that managing different people offered them the chance to learn new skills and approach to provide various management styles to satisfy members in general. On top of that 'CF', a team leader, shared his experience with his leadership style as follows;

'Initially, I thought that following strict rules was the best way, but the experience I gained from my members taught me to be flexible sometimes because my leadership style was driving some of my best members away thereby affecting the performance of the team'. (CF, an African descent male team leader of a service company).

The experience of 'CF' shows an example of how cultural differences shape the management's style to meet the needs of the members of the team. Again, most of the members got the opportunity to open up to new ideas and availed themselves for new ways of working. 'ST', a team member shared her experience as follows;

'Initially, I could only put my feet in my shoes, but now I can put my feet into everyone's shoe because of the different experience gained in working with diverse people in teams'. (ST, an African descent female team member in a manufacturing company).

When I probed her further to clarify her views, she explained that she lacked the experience with working with diverse people initially, but could now she could work successfully in every team due to the knowledge of different attitudes and behaviour of various people. Again, the participants further showed that they could combine both structural and flexible ways of working without necessarily sticking to their former means of approach to work. 'VR', a team member shared the following opinion with regards to his experience as follows;

'When you join a team, you should make sure to clear your mind and thoughts about your ways of doing things and be more open to new ideas and ways of working from your team members. And this will shape your personality because you will develop a new set of skills which will make you a better professional than you used to be'. (VR, a South American male team member in a service company).

The statement above indicates that cultural differences serve as a road map for members to efficiently perform because they could develop new ideas, become open-minded and adapt to different ways of working. The advantage implies that the broader perspective developed help the team to achieve more significant results than monocultural teams, and such contributes to the argument that culture mixing contributes to open-mindedness, gaining new experience, except unknown and diverse viewpoints among the members (McCrae and Costa, 1997; Costa and McCrae, 1992). Again, individuals who possess high open-mindedness are ready to embrace new cultures with a mastering frame of mind (Leung and Chiu, 2010). The implication is that cultural differences enable the team to accept each other, recognise individual contributions and learn new ways of working. It has also been validated by several researchers (Chiu et al. 2010; Leung et al. 2008) that culture mixing experience brings together diverse cultural mindset, while it is also argued that it widens the cultural awareness groundwork (Chen et al., 2016). The challenges of cultural differences show that the attainment of such benefits could become difficult unless the leaders develop (IC) for the team to function effectively.

4.5.8 The team provides strategic solutions to complex problems.

The research found that cultural differences help the team to find dynamic solutions to deal with complex management problems confronting them with ease. The participants explained that they combined different ideas to solve complex problems based on the diverse strategies through brainstorming to allow several ideas to flow. Consequently, they combined different

approaches to achieve outstanding solutions. For instance, 'BT', shared her experience on their solution strategy as follows;

'We have Europeans, Africans, Asians and other nationalities, and if we all put our glasses on we see and hear differently, and the outcome is fascinating due to the fact that we combine our ideas into strategic solutions to resolve complex tasks in the team' (BT, a Western female team member in a service company).

The statement of 'BT' authenticates that the combination of differences, ideas, skills and knowledge yield positive results for the team. The findings further showed that the team benefits tremendously from open-mindedness, innovative ways of thinking and the development of strategic solutions to complex problems in the team when leaders manage their differences effectively. The problem-solving styles have been defined by Selby et al. (2004, p.222) as 'the persistent individual variations in how people like to plan, perform and aim actions to achieve clearness, create ideas and become ready for activity'. The argument is that multicultural identity inclinations mirror balance and persistent personal discrepancies among people concerning the way and manner they deal with culturally diverse conditions and engage persons that can serve as culturally diverse values and viewpoints (Ponterotto, 2008). The argument fulfils the process of forming ideas in the team to achieve good results, and this also proves Houtz's et al. (2010) debate that multicultural experience augments innovative problem solution by many structures, including 'a psychosomatic preparedness to employ ideas from unknown backgrounds' (Maddux and Galinsky, 2009; Leung et al., 2008). The above arguments support the findings of this study regarding how the team exploits different talents in finding reasonable solutions. It is further argued by Houtz et al. (2010) that multiculturalism develops fresh ideas from diverse cultures and influence style, which is analysed as 'readiness' (Leung et al., 2008). The teams resolve challenges highly adequately than culturally homogenous groups (Houtz et al., 2010). The discussion further substantiates the perception of the respondents, and therefore, team leaders have to improve on their (IC) skills to generate more solution skills to deal with complex problems.

In summary, when one considers the findings on the impact of cultural differences on the team, one could argue that their positive effects could be useful if the leaders address the challenges of cultural differences effectively despite the numerous negative impacts. The argument acknowledges that culture is both an asset and a liability because it contributes to organisations' success (Robbins et al., 2017). Again, since the negative impacts far outweigh

the positive ones, the team leaders should take the roles of cultural differences seriously to manage the challenges very well. The argument is that there are challenges in the teams to resolve because of cultural differences which equally demonstrate their potentials with creativity, right decisions, achieve quality productive and effective performance (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003). All these testify that (IC) would benefit the team so leaders should equally prioritise the responsibilities of acquiring it. The sub-topic below shows the findings and the discussions on the process and the factors for the development of intercultural competence.

4.6 The processes and factors leaders need to develop intercultural competence

In the first place, this section provides the findings and discussions on the personal cultural self-awareness, the cultural - general knowledge, and the cultural-specific knowledge of the team leaders and their members. The results also show how team leaders identify the differences in communication styles among members. After this, the essential findings and the discussions on the models for leadership intercultural competence follows.

4.6.1 Cultural self – awareness

I applied the process model of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006/2009) to analyse the findings. The model provides insight into openness, such as withholding judgment, becoming curious and discovery that deals with tolerating ambiguity. One could obtain knowledge and comprehension concept, which explains the cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge and sociolinguistic awareness.

The findings showed that acquiring the skills and knowledge to identify cultural self-awareness enables one to gain the first step in developing intercultural competence because this becomes the first step to operate successfully in the team. By dividing the total number of respondents' opinion by the full participants per team leaders and their members, and multiplying by 100[13], the findings reported in percentages are demonstrated by Figures 4.3 and 4.4 below;

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[13]1. The total number of team leaders who participated in the research were 29 and their members were 39, making a total of 68 research participants.
2. Respondents opinions were based on the number of participants who agreed on the level of their knowledge and skills as average, good, high and none.
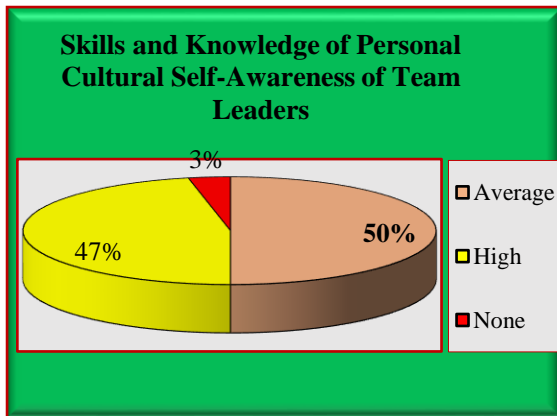
Figure 4.3: Skills and Knowledge of Personal Cultural Self-Awareness of Team Leaders
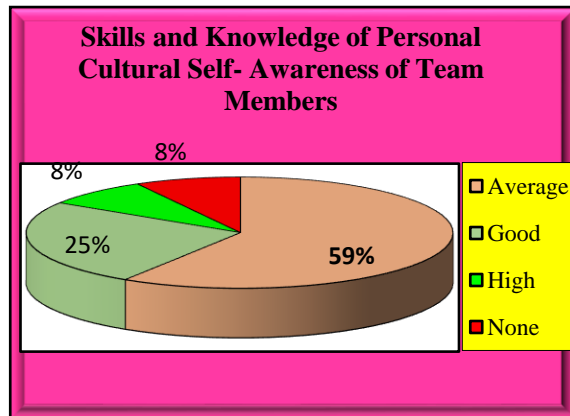
Figure 4.4: Skills and Knowledge of Personal Cultural Self-Awareness of Team Members

In the first place, the findings indicate that 50% of the team leaders and 59% of the members possessed average skills and knowledge in understanding and identifying personal cultural self-awareness, according to Figure 4.3 and 4.4, respectively. The implication is that more team members than the leaders could gain the first step in moderately developing intercultural competence. Again, Figure 4.3 further indicates that 47% of team leaders possessed a high level of knowledge and skills for personal cultural self-awareness. However, Figure 4.4 instead demonstrates that only 8% of the team members have this level. The implication is that the leaders could gain the first step in developing intercultural competence at a higher level than the members. Furthermore, while Figure 4.3 also shows that 3% of the team leaders possess no level of skills and knowledge of cultural self-awareness, Figure 4.4 indicates that 8% of their members also lack the ability. Although the figures are not high, it is equally not suitable for such members due to the roles of cultural self-awareness. Figure 4.4 instead shows that 25% of their members possessed excellent skills and expertise, and this signal very positive for them, although the percentage is not significant for the team.

The result of the study also reaffirms the argument that being aware of your own cultural beliefs becomes a necessary first step to ensure the development of collaboration effectively with different people culturally (Beth, 1992). Per contra, the percentage scores and their connotations do not favour the team especially the leaders, because the majority of them scored 50% for average skills and knowledge in understanding and identifying cultural self-awareness with their members exceeding them by 9%. The argument is that lack of the awareness of the lenses of our culture enables us to react to other people based on the

perceptions of our culture which influence us to judge others unfairly because we want them to behave like us (Dean, 2017). The argument corroborates the explanation of the members regarding the challenges confronting them due to cultural differences because cultural self-awareness provides the ability to identify weaknesses and strengths in other cultures.

One significant surprising finding is that while the leaders could not record any information about their level of skills and knowledge being good, the 25% of their members showing excellent skills and knowledge about that also becomes questionable for the leaders. The situation connotes that team leaders should upgrade their skills and expertise for cultural self-awareness to better since the highest results recorded was just average for them. The result also affirms the argument that an individual's culture explains the rationale behind his/her behaviour in the variations of life's contexts (Dean, 2017). As a consequent, we have to understand ourselves very well while comparing ourselves with others (Dean, 2017). Subsequently, the team leaders need to upgrade the cultural self-awareness from an average level to good to maximise the full potentials. For instance, cultural self-awareness helps us to understand our identity and results in the development of interacting with other people to know our differences and similarities. (Plum, 2008, p.66). The argument is that our ability to identify our similarities and differences influence cohesion in the team. Again, Smedley (2010) shows that potentially, one could immerse in another culture to promote personal dissonance, while cultural immersion helps us to perceive and accept different people based on their cultural perspective (Kitayama and Duffy, 2004). The results imply that the leaders could manage the challenges of cultural differences effectively by improving the knowledge and skills about cultural self-awareness.

4.6.2 Culture-general knowledge

I applied the intercultural competence model of (Deardorff, 2006/2009) that also shows that positive attitudes concerns respect for other cultures, and such could help one to develop deep cultural knowledge to produce intercultural competence. The skills concept demonstrates how to listen, observe and evaluate like analysing, interpret and relate to the issues. The findings showed that cultural- general knowledge could help the team to develop useful knowledge about their cultural differences and the attitudes of their colleagues in general, which could help them to address the challenges of cultural differences. By calculating the

total number of responses on opinions and dividing them by the total number of participants, and multiplied 100[14], the model below provides the findings in percentages.
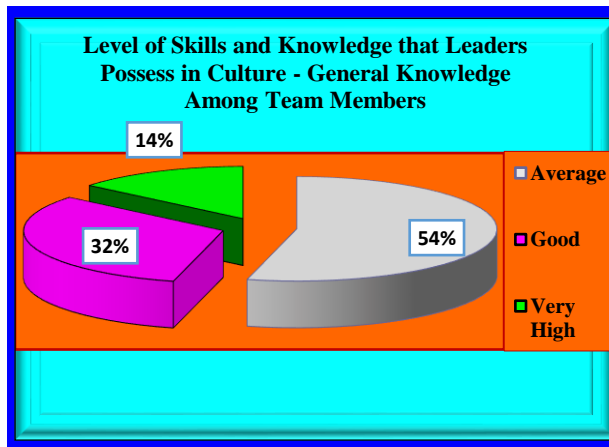

Figure 4.5: Level of Skills and Knowledge that Leaders Possess in Identifying Culture-General Knowledge Among Team Members
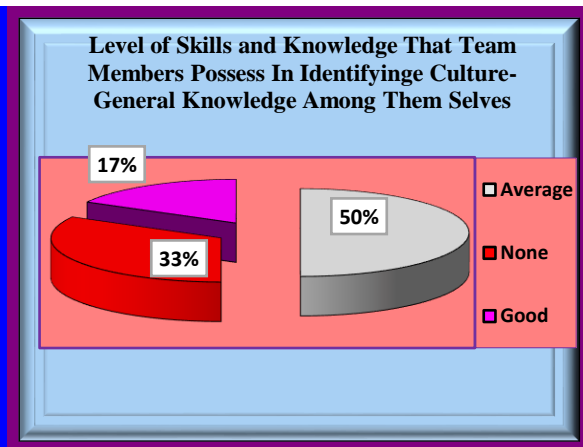
Figure 4.6: Level of Skills and Knowledge that Team Members Possess in Identifying Culture-General Knowledge Among Them Selves

Figures 4.5 and 4.6 demonstrate that 54% of team leaders and 50% of their members possessed an average level of skills and expertise in identifying culture-general knowledge, respectively. Again, while Figure 4.5 shows that 32% of team leaders have a right level of knowledge and skills to identify cultural – general knowledge, Figure 4.6 indicates that 33% of the members have none. Even though Figure 4.5 demonstrates that 14% of the leaders have very high expertise and skills, and Figure 4.6 also indicates 17% of the members possessing a good ability, the figures are not high enough regarding the total number of the team members who participated in the study. The leaders with some high expertise explained that they could understand the values, beliefs and behaviour among members in the team, while they emphasised their tolerance as another essential factor. Take for example, 'LJ', a team member demonstrated how her experience helped her to identify cultural – general knowledge in the following statement;

'My background as an anthropologist has contributed a lot because when I sit down in the restaurant I look at the people around me and I try to analyse and perceive their attitudes

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1. The total number of participants for team leaders = 29, while that of the team members = 39
2. The total number of research participants = 68

and behaviour which help me to predict what could happen next in their group'. (LJ, an Asian female team member in a service company).

The percentage scores show that slightly more than half of the team possess an average level of skills and knowledge in identifying cultural-specific knowledge; however, the claim that the team still encounters some obstacles in managing intercultural challenges should raise concern for them. The results also imply that the members, in general, do not have many experts to identify cultural general - knowledge, and this is a vast pitfall considering the positive impacts of the cultural - general knowledge, and thus leaders should address the situation. For instance, Leung et al. (2013) found that social metacognition examines the differences between cognitive and metacognitive thoughts (Briñol and DeMarree, 2012). Despite that, the secondary ideas discuss thoughts on individual's contents or other`s opinions primarily (Chiu and Bendapudi, 2012).

It is imperative to note that the acquisition of meta-knowledge of culture would highly enhance the knowledge of culture generally because the team could understand good knowledge about themselves, their colleagues in general, which could become an added value for (IC). Evidence has been provided by Leung et al. (2013) for the roles of meta-knowledge in intercultural competence. The meta-knowledge of cultures reconcile cross-cultural differences in social cognition and behaviours instead of the people's real philosophies or values. (Shteynberg et al., 2009; Zou et al., 2009). The teams' explanation regarding cultural-general knowledge substantiates that cultural differences in social cognition and behaviours achieve reconciliation by assumed allocations of cultural knowledge instead of the real differences in the desires of the appropriate cultural teams (Shteynberg et al., 2009; Zou et al., 2009; Chiu et al., 2007; Wan et al., 2007). The findings contribute additional knowledge to the context of intercultural competence by showing the differences between the leaders and their members regarding their expertise in the field of cultural-general knowledge in the team. However, literature provides insight into the metacognition's roles in examining the differences between cognitive and metacognitive thoughts in the context.

4.6.3 Culture-specific knowledge

Deardorff (2006), and the assumption is that attitudes and interaction play significant roles in (IC). Members should be willing to move away from their most familiar cultural ways to explore new cultures from their fellow team members and such improves open-minded.

The response showed that culture-specific knowledge provides knowledge and insight into the awareness of cultural norms, and this helps them to be patient and empathetic in the team. By dividing the total number of respondents in a particular opinion by the total number of 29 participants for the team leaders, and using the same method for 39 team members, and multiplying each by 100% respectively, the models below demonstrate the results in percentages.
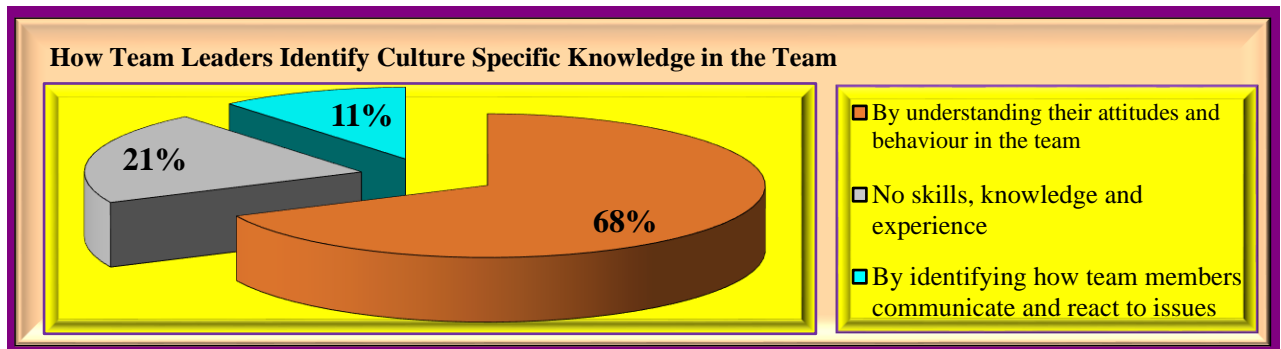

How Team Leaders Identify Culture Specific Knowledge in the Team

- 11%
- 21%
- 68%

- By understanding their attitudes and behaviour in the team
- No skills, knowledge and experience
- By identifying how team members communicate and react to issues

Figure 4.7 How Team Leaders Identify Cultural Specific Knowledge Among Team Members

How Team Members Identify Culture-Specific Knowledge Among Themselves

- 21%
- 46%
- 33%

- By understanding attitudes and behaviour among team members
- No skills, knowledge and experience
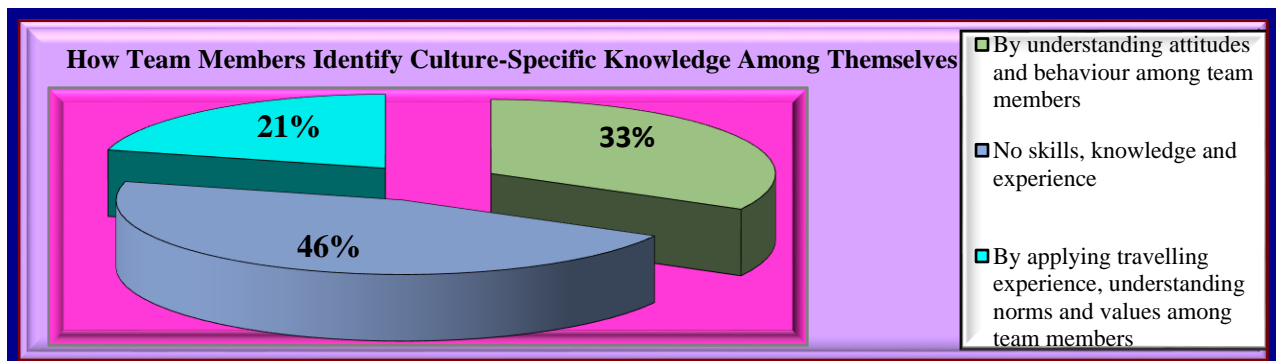- By applying travelling experience, understanding norms and values among team members

Figure 4.8: How Team Members Identify Culture-Specific Knowledge Among Themselves

Figure 4.7 shows that 68% of the team leaders being the majority, identified culture-specific knowledge by understanding the attitudes and behaviour in the team, however, Figure 4.8 rather indicates that 33% of the members, being less than half of the research participants achieved the same among themselves. 'MRK', a team leader explained his opinion as follows;

'*I make sure to get in touch with my team members most of the times, and through effective interaction with them I develop the ability to understand their cultural patterns which also*

helps me to understand the differences in the team very well'. (MRK, an Australian and Oceania team leader in a manufacturing company).

The above statement indicates that effective communication paves ways for leaders to understand the cultural patterns in the team. Again, Figure 4.7 also demonstrates that while 21% of the team leaders lacked the skills, knowledge and the expertise to identify culture-specific knowledge in the team, Figure 4.8 instead shows that more than twice of their members being 46%, do not even possess any, and this is problematic for the team due to the significance of culture-specific knowledge. Furthermore, Figure 4.7 demonstrates again that 11% of the team leaders identify culture-specific knowledge by examining how team members communicate with each other either in groups or with individual members. Figure 4.8 instead indicates that 21% of their members somewhat differed in their approach by applying their experience in travelling, understanding norms and values among themselves.

The participants explained that the roles of attitudes and behaviour in helping team leaders to identify culture-specific knowledge are significant because the majority of the team leaders apply the same method. The team leaders explained that their method included the development of constant strategies to ensure continuous communication with their members. For instance, they showed that they held one-on-one meetings with their members during intercultural challenges, helping them to examine their attitudes and behaviour. Also, the studying of the cultural background of members, including their countries or national cultures and the knowledge they gain contribute to the identification of the culture-specific knowledge in the teams. Comparatively, because most of the members lacking the adequate skills to identify cultural-specific knowledge are high, it signals a massive challenge for them. Again leadership's process of getting closer to their members during working sessions connotes that they need to study their attitudes and behaviour pattern, become more empathetic towards the challenges. But the member's process of obtaining the experience through their relationships in the team, understanding their cultural norms, values help to resolve some of their challenges. Culture-specific knowledge is about the particular features which belong commonly to a group of a specific culture (The Queens International University Centre, 2014). The characteristics define the norms and the values which become acceptable to that culture. For instance, Steward et al. (1999) indicate that culture-specific knowledge helps one to gain insight into the awareness of cultural norms and become more empathetic towards each other, and this corroborates the explanation of the research participants. The indication is that identifying culture-specific knowledge improves cohesion in the team. Besides,

gaining empathy means developing the ability to understand the person, as well as to adapt and accept the cultural self-image of the person (Zahn-Waxler, 1991; Dahl, 1989). The finding shows that although some team leaders and their members use the same approach; there are some variations applied to identify culture-specific knowledge sometimes too, and whatever the forms applied, the team needs to achieve a high level of expertise in identifying culture-specific knowledge due to its advantages.

4.6.4 How leaders identify communication styles and patterns among their team members

The models of (Lloyd and Hartel, 2010; Chang and Tharenou, 2004) helped to examine the findings. Lloyd and Hartel (2010) argue that developing patience for ambiguity is a crucial skill in (IC), and Chang and Tharenou (2004) show that cultural empathy and tolerance for ambiguity are essential skills and characteristics necessary for intercultural interactions. Majority of the members, in particular, indicated that leadership ability to identify gaps in communication styles and patterns were very crucial due to issues with the verbal and the nonverbal interactions in the team. The model below shows the results from the 39 team members interviewed.
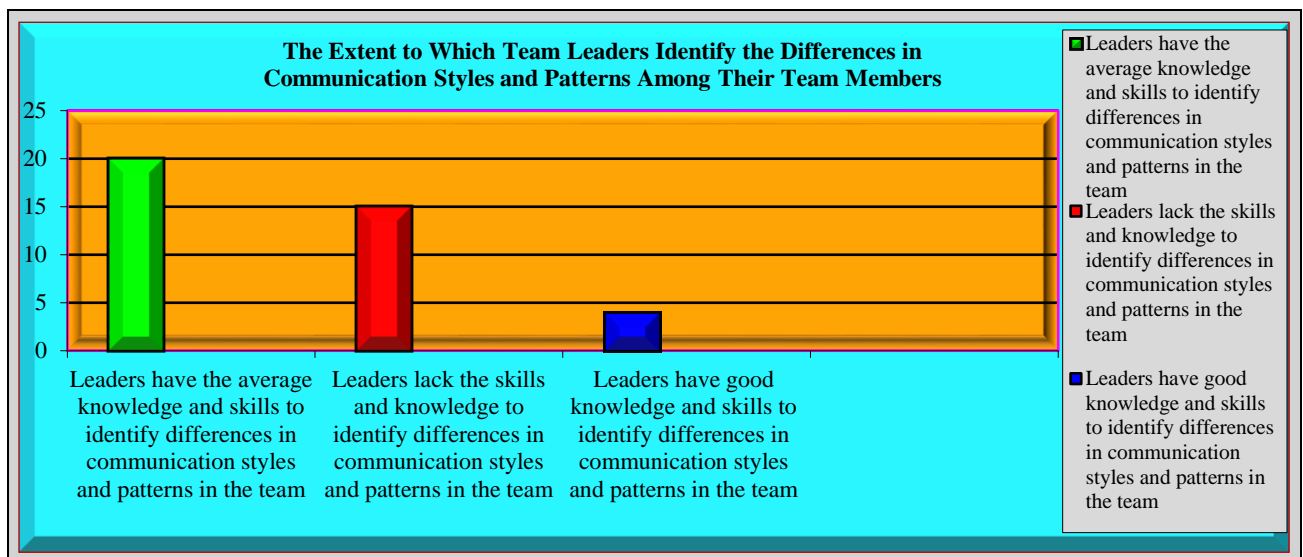

Figure 4.9: The Extent to Which Team Leaders Identify the Differences in Communication Styles and Patterns Among Their Team Members.

The findings showed that 20 out of 39 team members who participated in the studies believed their leaders possessed average skills and knowledge to identify differences in communication styles and patterns in their team. The results revealed that the leaders

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identified some communication gaps and corrected the challenges to some extent, but they faced some limitations due to the challenges confronting them. Again, the results showed that 15 out of the 39 team members indicated that their leaders lacked the skills and knowledge to identify the differences in communication styles and patterns in the team. They revealed that their leaders lacked the expertise and abilities to acknowledge the challenges of miscommunication, while they also prioritised other operational matters at the expense of communication challenges. 'LJ', a team member, expressed her frustration with the communication style of her team leader as follows;

'My leader speaks bluntly in the team, but she never considers the effect of her style of communication. Again, there are a series of complaints about communication challenges, but unfortunately, she doesn't pay much attention to them, and this worries many team members'. (LJ, an Asian female team member in a service company).

The above statement shows that failing to identify and manage the challenges with communication styles could pose a massive problem in the team. Finally, only four team members believed that their leaders possessed excellent skills and knowledge to identify differences in communication styles and patterns among the members. The argument is that the leaders communicated expertly, identified the weaknesses in their verbal and nonverbal communication, and provided some remedies to control their communication challenges.

However, the explanation offered by most of the members regarding the failure of the team leaders to identify communication gaps is not a good sign. The team leaders should thus achieve intercultural communication competence to manage the forms and patterns of verbal and non-verbal communication. The findings on communication interactions fulfil the following argument of De Vries et al. (2009, p. 179);

'The way and manner a person delivers a verbal, paraverbal, and nonverbal signals in interactions socially connotes whom the person would like to be and how the person desires to associate with the one interacted with, and how the messages should mostly explain'.

The statement denotes the complex nature of intercultural communication and failing to develop the expertise to identify and manage the challenges of communication styles could pose a massive problem in the team. Again, the result indicates that the leaders lack excellent skills and knowledge to identify differences in communication styles and patterns, and such

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signals problematic due to its essential roles in the team. For example, communication styles perform significant functions in individual relationships and professional relations in all endeavours (De Vries et al., 2013).

Again, the participants' explanation justifies researchers' insight into the diverse interests developed by people on how communication takes place among people (Perse, and Seibold, 2009; Gudykunst et al., 1996). Although the team encounters several communication challenges, De Vries et al. (2013) argue that there is a limited integrative framework to examine the style of someone's communication (Beatty, 1998; Daly and Bippus, 1998). The argument implies the need for further investigation on an integrated framework for styles and pattern of communication in the team. Therefore, my research findings share the assumptions of other scholars. However, the difference is that their premise depends on the roles and why more study is needed to overcome the gaps in the integrated framework for styles and pattern of communication in the team.

4.6.5 The intercultural competence model for team leaders

I used Deardorff's (2006/2009) intercultural competence model to analyse the findings. The model shows that attitudes and respect relate to cultures. Developing knowledge for deep cultures leads to openness like withholding judgment. One has to be curious and then tolerate ambiguity. There is also the need for the skills to comprehend knowledge, and then develop the skills for cultural self-awareness, gain in-depth cultural knowledge and sociolinguistic awareness. The skills concept demonstrates how to listen, observe and evaluate like analysing, interpret and relate to the issues. Consequently, Deardorff' (2006/2009) shows that the desired internal outcome is that there would be an informed frame of reference shift, adaptability, flexibility, ethnorelative view and empathy. Besides, the desired external outcome would be useful and appropriate communication and behaviour in an intercultural situation (Deardorff, 2006/2009)

The observation process and the answers to interview questions on the type of processes and factors leaders needed to develop intercultural competence for their teams concentrated on leaders' identification of skills and knowledge of cultural awareness and sensitivities. The findings showed two key intercultural competence frameworks namely;

(a) 'The Three Categories of Cultural Aware and Sensitive Members in Culturally Diverse Work Teams in Multinational Companies, and (b) 'The Cultural SWOT Framework of Culturally Diverse Work Teams in Multinational Companies.

4.6.5.1 The Three Categories of Culturally Aware and Sensitive Members in Culturally Diverse Work Teams

The model below consists of three frameworks analysed as follows;

Figure 4.10: The Three Categories of Culturally Aware and Sensitive Members in Culturally Diverse Work Teams in Multinational Companies.

4.6.5.2 The 'Highly Cultural Aware and Sensitive Team Members'

The findings showed that the highly culturally aware and sensitive members were those who possessed a very high level of knowledge and skills about cultural differences yet, they were very few in the team. Here, Deardorff (2006/2009) argue about the need for the skills to comprehend knowledge, and then develop the skills for cultural self-awareness, gain in-depth cultural knowledge and sociolinguistic awareness. For example, 'MLS', a team leader described the attitudes and behaviour of one of her team members in this category as follows;

'*For example, there is a lady in my team who tolerates, accepts and embraces everyone in the team and majority of the members admire her level of open-mindedness, and I wish we have many of her type in the team*'. (*MLS, a European team leader in a service company*).

The statement indicates that such members create unity in the team because of their intercultural competence skills. The research found eleven characteristics used to identify the

highly culturally aware and sensitive team members, and these features emerged from their attitudes and behaviour during socialisations, relationships, communication and teamwork process. The Table below demonstrates the characteristics of this team. The results imply that the leaders need the skills and knowledge to increase the total numbers of the 'Highly Cultural Aware and Sensitive Team Members'. The argument is that although this group contains the fewest members, they possess a very high level of knowledge and skills about cultural differences, and their characteristics could help the team to address the challenges of cultural differences.

Table 4.1: The Eleven Characteristics of the 'Highly Cultural Aware and Sensitive Team Members

	Characteristics
1	They are empathetic, compassionate and sympathetic in the team
2	In the team, they are patient, team players, open-minded, assertive and non-judgmental
2	They demonstrate excellent communication skills, are good listeners and are very thoughtful about their choice of words in the team
4	They possess the ability to identify and respect different values, norms, beliefs and cultural practices of fellow team members
5	They welcome and encourage different opinions, ideas, discussions and contributions
6	They discourage and prevent discrimination, stereotype and marginalisation in the team
7	They possess positive attitudes, behaviour, motivation, are encouraging and they are likeable and admired in the team
8	They are peacemakers, avoiding conflicts, quarrels, disagreements and try settling them to promote cohesiveness in the team
9	They are very accommodating, flexible, tolerant, accepting, adjusting, adapting and integrate easily in the team
10	They are very trustworthy, confidential and dependable too
11	They are very friendly, willing to share ideas, helpful and understandable

Again, the findings further imply that leaders need to acknowledge and help the team to identify the eleven features by carefully examining their attitudes and behaviour during socialisations, relationships, communication and teamwork process. The leaders need the skills to comprehend knowledge, and cultural self-awareness, gain in-depth cultural knowledge and sociolinguistic awareness (Deardorff, 2006/2009). The participants showed

that leaders need to help the members to develop the ability to identify such colleagues because this could benefit the team tremendously regarding their intercultural skills.

4.6.5.3 The 'Highly Cultural Unaware and Insensitive Members'

The findings also showed that the highly cultural unaware and insensitive members were those who lacked the knowledge and skills about cultural differences. So they are unable to adapt well, inflexible and not empathetic. For example, Deardorff (2006/2009) argue that there would be an informed frame of reference shift, adaptability, flexibility, ethnorelative view and empathy when they become intercultural competent. Such team members constituted the second-highest members in the team. A female team member shared her experience about her colleagues who belong to this group in the following words;

'*In my team, I have such members who are not open, but they refuse to accept other views from colleagues. They are also very rude, disrespectful, and quarrelsome in the team and people can't get closer to them for a long time*'. (FAR, an Asian female team member in a service company).

The description above indicates that members who lack knowledge of cultural competence could disintegrate the team. The research found seventeen characteristics which could be used to identify members in this category, and these derive from their attitudes and behaviour, communication, relationships and work processes in the team. The Table below provides the characteristics of this team.

Table 4.2: The Seventeen Characteristics of the 'Highly Cultural Unaware and Insensitive Team Members'

	Characteristics
1	They lack excellent communication skills, demonstrate rude attitudes and show disrespectful behaviour in the team.
2	Unconsciously, they repeat negative attitudes and behaviour because they are ignorant of the effects on their colleagues since these seem reasonable to them.
3	They cannot cooperate well, very polarised, and they could disintegrate the team due to lack of knowledge and skills for integration and adaptation.
4	They irritate fellow team members, seem immature, create confusion and their actions sometimes contribute to high employee turnover in the team.
5	They do not respect other cultures and possess narrow-minded attitudes with judgmental behaviour.

6	They are ignorant of cultural differences, very inflexible, sticking to their personal opinions while always doing things in their own ways only.
7	They are insecure with divisionary habits and tactics, unstable in the relationship among colleagues, and they contribute to the creation of sub-team and sub-culture.
8	They demonstrate ethnocentric attitudes and behaviour, perceive wrongly, are sexists, racists, stereotypes, and they marginalise a lot.
9	They disrespect rules, regulations, are quick-tempered, challenging bosses, and create confusion in the team.
10	They feel superior to colleagues, display bossy attitudes and are very selfish.
11	They are intolerable, highly argumentative and creating unnecessary misunderstanding and conflicts in the team.
12	They are very complex to work with, discouraging positive contributions and very dominant in the team.
13	They lack knowledge about the positive impact of cultural differences, unwilling to learn about them and to show the 'I don't care attitude'.
14	They always blame their fellow team members for their mistakes, weaknesses and are not prepared to accept their faults.
15	They lament and complain about everything, gossip a lot and politicking most of the times on slide issues in the team.
16	They are very selective in their relationships and prefer drawing closer to people with similar characteristics because they are only comfortable with them.
17	They are very emotional, sensitive to petty issues and compound them by creating problems out of unnecessary situations in the team.

Comparatively, the results suggest that the leaders should develop the skills to reduce the total number of 'Highly Cultural Unaware and Insensitive Members' because such members lack the knowledge and skills about cultural differences. However, they constitute the second-highest members of the team. The implication is that failing to identify such features and taking actions could affect the progress of the team because the identified features could affect the team negatively. The team members also suggested in their explanations that the leaders should apply the needed expertise to upgrade the competence of this category so that there will be no 'Highly Cultural Unaware and Insensitive Team Members' among them.

4.6.5.4 The 'Culturally Average Aware and Sensitive Members'

The findings further indicated that the 'culturally average aware and sensitive members' were those who possessed an average level of knowledge and skills about cultural differences and are also identified by their attitudes, behaviour, relationships and work processes in the team.

They constituted the highest members, and the ten characteristics define them in the Table below. In contrast, the findings demonstrated that the leaders could help the 'Culturally Average Aware and Sensitive Members' to become the 'Highly Cultural Aware and Sensitive Team Members' due to their ten characteristics that could not contribute positively to the team entirely. The implication is that the majority of the members belong to this group. Since their roles could not add more value to the team, it benefits the team more by also upgrading such category to those of the 'Highly Cultural Aware and Sensitive Members'. Leaders have to help the members to develop the ability to identify such members by analysing their attitudes, behaviour, relationships and work processes in the team.

Table 4.3: The Ten Characteristics of the 'Culturally Average Aware and Sensitive Members'

	Characteristics
1	They have average knowledge and skills about cultural differences because they display neutral attitudes and behaviour during cultural clashes in the team.
2	They possess moderate acceptable social behaviour, selective in their friendship, but can easily disassociate themselves from complicated and difficult members.
3	They could sometimes be unreliable and unstable in their relationships in the team yet, feel comfortable associating with peaceful makers in the team.
4	They possess moderate communication skills with some listening skills.
5	They try to avoid complex circumstances in the team, cope sometimes, but they manage to find their feet with some assistance.
6	They have a moderate ability to understand the challenges of cultural differences which help them to survive in the team without much complaint.
7	They possess mild problematic attitudes, behaviour and are sometimes flexible and structured in their working behaviour.
8	They display empathy towards fellow team members during cultural clashes, but when the situation becomes worse and complicated, they do not get closer again.
9	They could be inconsistent and unpredictable in their behaviour, and they could be blown away by the 'moving wind' in the team.
10	They have moderate ability to cooperate, adjust and accommodate differences in the team.

4.6.5.5 The significance of 'The Three Categories of Cultural Aware and Sensitive Members' model

The findings indicated that the model could play significant roles in culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies in several ways. In the first place, team leaders could use the framework to identify the members with good, average and weak intercultural competence based on the identification and the utilisation of the characteristics of the three categories. Again, the model could help leaders to effectively pair team members by depending on the three types to select and combine members for team projects appropriately. The process could help them to avoid over-concentration of a particular category in teamwork, which could assist them in sharing their experience and competence to benefit them to address their intercultural challenges. Furthermore, leaders could use the framework to effectively maximise the talents, skills and potentials of team members by managing their cultural differences efficiently. The model could further assist leaders in providing proper training for their members because it could guide them on the type of training needed for each of the categories by defining the cultural backgrounds of team members. For example, leaders could correctly assign specific training tailored to suit each of the three groups instead of providing training for the team in general. Finally, team leaders could enhance the effectiveness of their leadership with the model since the complexity of their roles depends on their inability to address the challenges of cultural differences.

4.6.5.6 The 'Cultural SWOT Framework for Culturally Diverse Work Teams'

During the observation and the interview process, I asked the team members to evaluate the cultural strengths and weaknesses of colleagues internally fairly and honestly. After that, I asked them to either confirm or dispute the results of the exercise. The outcome of the investigation process formed the internal framework for intercultural competence. Again, I urged them to undertake the same activity to critique the display of the cultural opportunities and threats of each member. Afterwards, I encouraged them to either confirm or dispute the outcome upon which the external framework was developed. The final results of the experiential exercise produced the 'Cultural SWOT Framework' that becomes a strategic, intercultural competence model. The Figure below demonstrates the model in details.

Team leaders could effectively use the model to generally evaluate their members' internal cultural strengths, weaknesses as well as the cultural opportunities and threats.
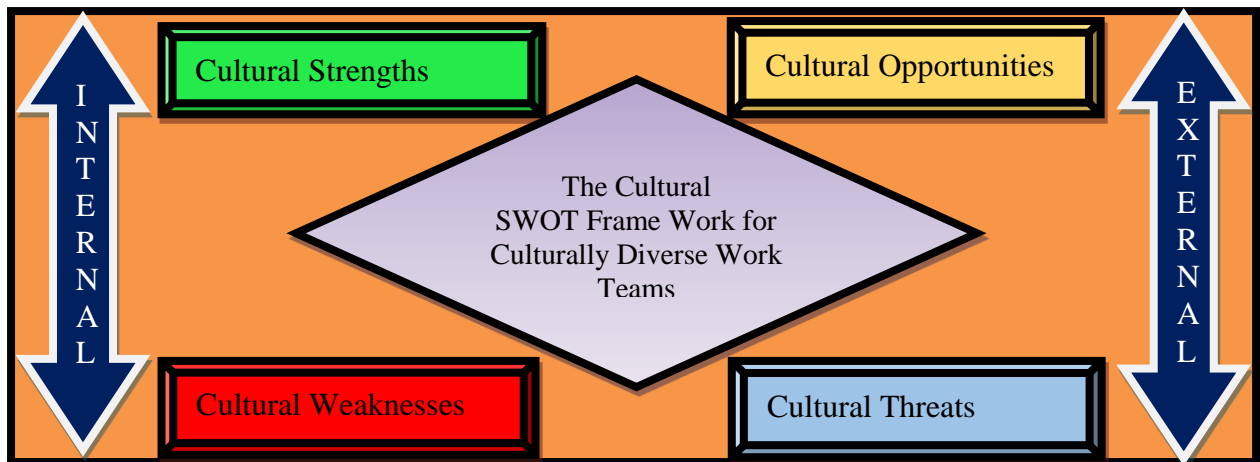
Figure 4.11: The Cultural SWOT Framework for Culturally Diverse Work Team

4.6.5.7 The Cultural Strengths

The above figure shows that the cultural strengths identify all the internal positive cultural characteristics which are demonstrated by the individual team members, and they are beneficial to the intercultural competence of the team. For example, the research found that the cultural strengths included an individual's ability to identify his or her cultural background, the ability to understand his/her cultural norms, beliefs, practices and so on. As an illustration, 'RN', a team manager shared her experience on the cultural strengths of her colleague as follows;

'*I have one colleague who has gained knowledge of intercultural differences very much. In the first place, she is aware of her cultural background, and she is also outstanding in analysing reactions of people here in the team. And this is because she could explain the rationale behind the attitude and behaviour of some team members'*. (RN, an Asian female team manager in a manufacturing company).

The statement supports the features of members possessing the characteristics of cultural strengths, like gaining the understanding of the assumptions behind the reactions of colleagues.

4.6.5.8 The Cultural Weaknesses

Figure 4.11 again shows that the cultural weaknesses are all the negative internal cultural factors which are usually demonstrated by the individuals in the team and could become a hindrance to intercultural growth and progress. The results indicated that the internal cultural

weaknesses include the individual's limited knowledge of his or her cultural norms, values, beliefs and practices which created problems in the team. The respondents revealed that their failure to identify these weaknesses affected them negatively.

4.6.5.9 Cultural Opportunities

Figure 4.11 indicates that the cultural opportunities comprise of all the positive external cultural characteristics which are externally demonstrated by the team members that could influence colleagues positively. These included all the positive cultural features like communicating effectively in the team, being empathetic towards fellow team members, displaying open-mindedness and possessing the skills to resolve conflicts. The findings indicate that members in this category have the skills and knowledge for cultural awareness and sensitivities, while they could be receptive and accommodating. They are also patient towards colleagues, understand differences in national cultures, and so on.

4.6.5.10 Cultural Threats

According to Figure 4.11, the cultural threats explain all the negative external cultural characteristics which are exhibited by the individuals in the team, and they could affect their progress negatively. For instance, the research found that members with cultural threats demonstrate racists' behaviours, marginalise fellow team members, show disrespectful behaviour, discriminate, display quarrelsome behaviour and create conflicts in the team. They also show narrow-minded attitudes, demonstrate sexist and stereotyped behaviour. 'EF', a team member, for instance, expressed his views on cultural threats in the following words;

'*They are racist, disrespectful and highly discriminative members whose behaviours could expel you from the team. They cannot hide their ignorance of cultural differences because their actions become visible for team members to notice*'. (EF, a male team member in a service company).

The statement above shows that members who demonstrate cultural threats contribute to the high employee turnover in the team due to their attitudes and behaviour. The research findings further connote that the 'Cultural SWOT Framework' depends on two major intercultural competent factors identified as the internal cultural framework (i.e., the cultural strengths and weaknesses) and the external cultural framework (i.e., the cultural opportunities and threats) for the team. The outcome of the experiential exercise suggests that team leaders

should critically evaluate the cultural strengths and weaknesses of colleagues internally fairly and honestly, and after that, confirm or dispute the results of the exercise. Again, leaders should also critique the display of the cultural opportunities and threats of each member in the team and afterwards ask members to either confirm or dispute the outcome. The process implies that leaders could effectively use the model to generally evaluate their members' internal cultural strengths, weaknesses as well as the cultural opportunities and threats. Again, the findings show that to identify the cultural strengths of the members; the leaders need to evaluate individual's ability to determine his or her cultural background, the ability to understand his/her cultural norms, beliefs and practices. Furthermore, the results indicate that leaders could identify the cultural weaknesses of the members by examining the negative internal cultural factors such as the individual's limited knowledge of his or her cultural norms, values, beliefs and practices which could create problems in the team. The outcome of the studies shows that such attitudes and behaviour could eventually become a hindrance to intercultural growth and progress of the team, and therefore, failing to achieve this could affect the team negatively.

Comparably, the results demonstrate that the leaders could analyse the cultural opportunities by examining cultural features like communicating effectively in the team, being empathetic towards fellow members, displaying open-mindedness and possessing the skills to resolve conflicts. As a consequent, such members could demonstrate the skills and knowledge for cultural awareness and sensitivities. At the same time, they could be receptive, accommodating, patient towards colleagues and understand differences in national cultures. The cultural threats, on the other hand, show that the members could be racists, marginalise fellow team members, show disrespectful behaviour, discriminate, display quarrelsome behaviour and create conflicts in the team. Moreover, they could be narrow-minded, demonstrate sexist and stereotyped behaviour. An essential factor to consider cultural threats is that they could create high employee turnover in the team due to their attitudes and behaviour.

The framework could help the leaders to identify and exploit their cultural strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats effectively, which could enhance the skills and knowledge of (IC) of leaders and their members to improve cultural awareness and sensitivities in the team. The complexity of the challenges created by cultural differences underscores the relevance of the analysis of the two models above. The research found that

leaders who lacked intercultural competence were inefficient in the team, and this verifies the following argument.

'*The very qualities that made someone the effective monocultural leader may make him or her less qualified for a multicultural environment*'. (Connerley and Pederson (2005; ix).

The above statement connotes that the acquisition of knowledge and skills for intercultural competence becomes paramount for team leaders. The findings on the process and factors for intercultural competence in the team emphasise on positive attitudes, behaviour and excellent communication. The process and the factors for IC show that effective communication becomes a means to achieve intercultural competence in the team (Holmes and O'Neill, 2012; Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Deardorff, 2006; Philipsen, 2002; Jablin and Sias, 2001). Comparatively, the findings of this research instead revealed different dimensions, including intercultural communication competence as well and the frameworks demonstrating broad factors and processes in achieving (IC) in the team. On the other hand, Hunter et al. (2006) examine intercultural competence as an individual's ability to develop an understanding of his/her domain of culture to perform well in the globalised world. In a different perspective, IC is about the ability and the flexibility to resolve tension caused by cultural differences (Canen, 2004). Another argument also stipulates that acquiring the ability to identify self-knowledge about culture, and developing expertise for cultural difference awareness are essential tools in achieving intercultural competence (Krajewski, 2011). The following shows the vital roles of the 'Cultural SWOT FrameWork' in culturally diverse work teams;

4.6.5.11 The significance of the 'Cultural SWOT framework.'

Team leaders could use the framework to assist their members in identifying and exploiting their cultural strengths effectively for the development of the team successfully. Again, the model helps to identify and manage the cultural weaknesses through the appropriate training to address such deficiencies. Moreover, team leaders could use the model to utilise the external cultural opportunities for the benefit of the team by using such capabilities to help fellow members in addressing their challenges. Besides, team leaders could use the model to identify all cultural threats and apply them as guidelines for appropriate training to overcome them. Finally, it could contribute to enhancing the skills and knowledge of (IC) of leaders and members, which would further improve cultural awareness and sensitivities in the team. The investigation showed that the complexity of the challenges created by cultural differences

underscores the relevance of the analysis of the two models above. The research found that leaders who lacked intercultural competence were inefficient in the team. Majority of the research participants clearly showed in their responses that the acquisition of the skills and knowledge of (IC) should be highly indispensable for the members and especially the team leaders to resolve the challenges caused by cultural differences in the team. The leaders should embrace the process and factors for the intercultural models to address the difficulties caused by cultural differences.

4.7 How team members expect their leaders to manage cultural differences successfully

In addition to the findings on (IC), the study also found team members' expectations regarding how best their leaders could effectively manage cultural differences in the team. The members' expectations depended on general views and opinions regarding specific management approach to the challenges of cultural differences in relationship with their experiences of the difficulties in the team. The findings provide knowledge and insight into how leaders could manage the challenges of cultural differences effectively. I presented the research findings in percentages (i.e., *the total number of responses per each expectation divided by the total number of 39 participants and multiplied by 100%)*. The Figure below shows how the team expect their leaders to manage cultural differences.
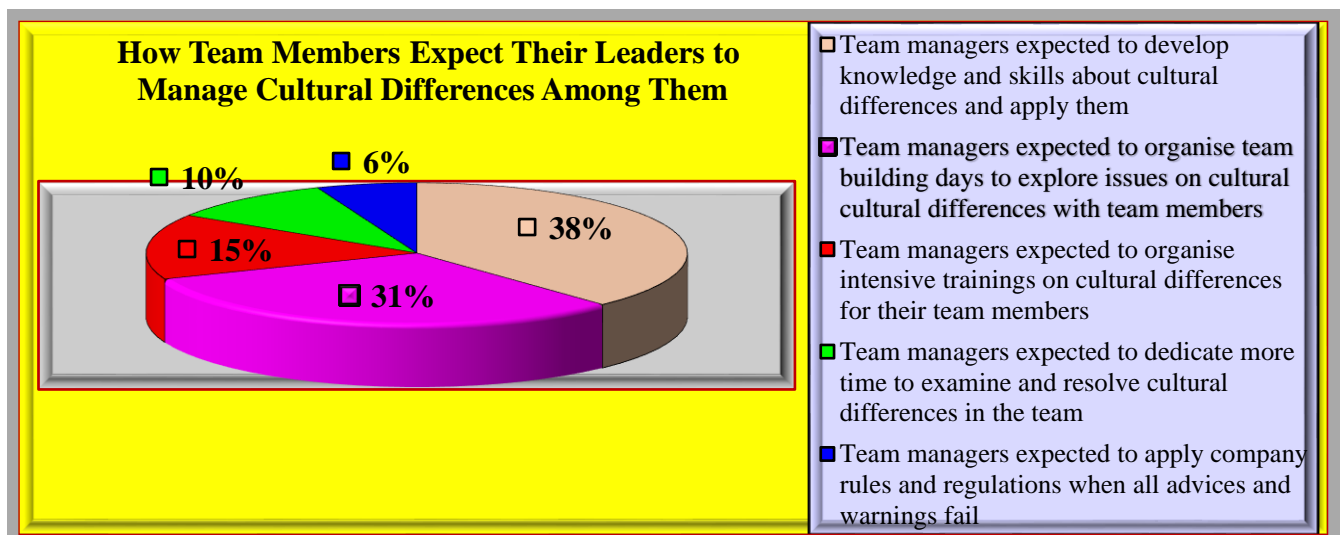

Figure 4.12: Team Members Expectation Regarding Leadership's Management of Cultural Differences in the Team

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4.7.1 Leaders expected to develop expertise in cultural differences and apply them

Figure 4.12 demonstrates that 38% of the team members expect their leaders to develop knowledge and skills about cultural differences. The findings showed that leaders could accept and accommodate the diverse attitudes and behaviour in the team, manage miscommunications, conflicts and other related problems associated with cultural differences with ease. The result is that leaders would develop more interest in issues concerning cultural differences and motivate them to explore the cultural issues in the team thoroughly. Three major underlying factors like the challenges of cultural differences, the adverse effects, and leadership's inability to manage them adequately account for the expectation. Accordingly, leaders should consider the underlying factors above carefully and find an appropriate remedy to manage them successfully.

4.7.2 Leaders expected to organise team-building days on cultural differences

Figure 4.12 again shows that 31% of the team members expected their leaders to organise team-building days to explore issues on cultural differences with their members thoroughly. The results indicated that by doing this continuously, members would get the opportunity to share their experiences, challenges, opinions and their leaders could also exploit the outcome of these meetings to find the appropriate solutions to their problems. The results indicate that relationship development could become a key to managing the challenges of cultural differences successfully. The rationale is that the leaders do not usually get the opportunity to explore issues on intercultural challenges, and the team-building days could offer the chance to exploit appropriate solutions to their problems.

4.7.3 Leaders expected to organise intensive training on cultural differences for the team

Furthermore, Figure 4.12 indicates that 15% of the members expected their leaders to organise intensive training on cultural differences for their members. The members showed that this should be done continuously to create awareness and sensitivity to minimise their challenges. The following shows 'BS', a team member's opinion on the importance of intensive training.

'Intensive training on intercultural differences would help us to understand the positive impacts of cultural differences. And this is because we have to mine the individual skills,

talents, knowledge and experience for the benefit of the team. Unfortunately, we have not taken advantages of them due to the failure to understand our differences'. (BS, a European team member in a manufacturing company).

The rationale for the intensive training is that the members hope such training could create awareness and sensitivity to minimise their challenges.

4.7.4 Leaders expected to dedicate more time to examine and resolve cultural differences

Moreover, Figure 4.12 shows that 10% of the team members expected their managers to dedicate more time to examine and resolve cultural differences in their teams. They believed that lack of time made it impossible for their leaders even to understand the nature of the challenges created by cultural differences among them. They also explained that if their leaders had enough time for issues concerning cultural differences, they could have listened more to their numerous problems, more especially the newly employed team members. The expectation to dedicate more time to examine and resolve cultural differences in the team also shows that leaders lack time to deal with issues regarding cultural differences. The connotation is that they miss the opportunity to understand the nature of the challenges created by cultural differences among them. By having enough time on issues regarding cultural differences, the results demonstrate that they could listen to their numerous problems, more especially the newly employed team members.

4.7.5 Leaders expected to apply rules and regulations when advice and warnings fail

Finally, Figure 4.12 demonstrates that 6% of the team members expected their managers to apply the rules and regulations governing the organisation to members who fail to pay heed to the advice and stern warnings about problems they create. The findings showed that the approach could deter fellow team members, and they would be cautious with their attitudes and behaviour in the team. For example, 'AT', a team member expressed her worries regarding misunderstanding and frustrations in her team in the following words;

'Sometimes, I get frustrated with some of my colleagues because they are highly impatient and intolerable in the team due to differences. Unfortunately, no amount of advice persuades them, and in my opinion, when persuasion fails, company rules must be applied to create a

strong awareness about their negative attitudes'. (AT, an Asian female team member in a service company).

The findings on the expectation to apply company rules and regulations become a bit controversial. However, the members hope this could deter fellow team members from becoming more cautious with their attitudes and behaviour in the team. All the same, there could be some complexity with the complete application of such recommendation since the complex nature of culture becomes very difficult to deal with, so leaders need to take some precaution for this. In summary, the findings on members' expectation of leaders regarding the management of the challenges of cultural differences are essential to the leadership development of intercultural competence because they depended on the experience of leadership roles in the issue. Again, the kind of help needed by the leaders also complement the expectations of the members, and the following shows the findings and the discussions.

4.8. The sorts of help team leaders need to manage cultural differences among their members

Considering the challenges team leaders faced in managing cultural differences, I investigated on the sorts of help they needed to address cultural differences successfully. The following sub-themes provides the findings for the above research question. The results contribute to the skills and knowledge about intercultural competence.

4.8.1 Leaders need the ability to manage cultural differences in the teams

Majority of the team leaders interviewed showed leadership's desire to address cultural differences effectively. One female team manager whose members were composed of twenty-five different nationalities in a service company expressed her view on the above result as follows;

'I think that the academic knowledge of intercultural differences is 20 years old, and it's a cultural theory, which is my due respect is also outdated. So I would appreciate this state of the arts, new insight and new tools which would be very much appreciated'. (MS, a South American female team leader in a service company).

Again, Johnny, a manager in one of the teams in a service company consisting of about thirty different nationalities also contributed his opinion in the following words;

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'I need skills and knowledge of cultural awareness to manage attitudes and behaviour that are completely different from mine in the team. And this will help me to respond appropriately to the various challenges confronting my team members'. (Johnny, a South American team manager in a manufacturing company).

Also, the results indicated that the leaders needed adequate knowledge and skills in managing cultural differences to understand individual practices to reduce their negative impacts. Comparatively, the findings connect with the significant expectation of the members for their leaders to acquire the skills and knowledge for IC. The desire of the leaders further authenticates leadership's explanations regarding the lack of adequate knowledge and skills to create active cultural awareness in their teams. Gaining insight into managing cultural differences could help the team to create a peaceful atmosphere without offending individual members. Again, leaders could also recognise the differences in culture, understand them to create the space for team members to accept the fact that there were differences in their teams, and recognise individual practices to reduce the negative impacts of cultural differences.

4.8.2 Leaders need reinforcement and progressive training on intercultural competence

The results showed that the reinforcement and progressive training on intercultural competence management could create continuous awareness of cultural sensitivities in their teams. To give an instance, the leaders showed that new employees had to go through proper orientation on cultural differences through this approach to gain knowledge and skills to manage these differences so that they could improve on their work processes. Again, they could also develop much empathy towards the challenges of cultural differences in the team, and one manager commented on compassion as follows;

'Empathy is a strong point in my team as far as cultural differences are concerned. As people' manager, it is a strong social point for me to work with people from different cultural backgrounds, so I think one needs to understand the differences and understand different ways and means of approaching issues through progressive and constant training in my team'. (LD, a European female team leader in the manufacturing company).

Furthermore, the findings also correlate directly with the members' expectation for them to offer intensive training on intercultural competence. The results imply that they could create continuous awareness of cultural sensitivities in their teams, identify these differences and

help their members to gain insight into cultural differences to become more sensitive to issues concerning intercultural competence.

4.8.3 Leaders need strategies to induce feedback on cultural differences from team members

The results showed that failure to share important information about cultural differences created difficulties because it became difficult to know the problems confronting them until something negatively occurred unexpectedly. They showed that when they developed strategies to induce their members for feedback culturally, they could get the ability to detect errors in work processes so that corrective actions could be taken quickly to ensure good results in the team. And this could also minimise disappointments and failures, leading to improvement in their intercultural competence. One team manager shared her opinion as follows;

'I need good strategies to encourage some team members to provide me with feedback on cultural differences for me to examine the causes of these problems and develop a proper plan of action to resolve them'. (SHA, an Asian female team leader in the manufacturing company).

The leaders' request for strategies to induce feedback on cultural differences from team members also connotes that they could not influence input on issues regarding cultural differences in the team. Lack of information and feedback on the challenges of cultural differences makes their leadership roles complex sometimes. The skills could help them to detect errors in work processes so that corrective actions could be taken quickly to ensure good results in the team. Thereupon, they could minimise disappointments and failures, and the intercultural competence would further improve because they could also know the causes of the problems of cultural differences, the actual effects and developed a proper solution without wasting resources.

4.9 How culturally diverse work teams manage cultural differences

The findings further add value to the skills and knowledge into the intercultural competence of the team. The results show that the team leaders and their members used several approaches to manage cultural differences. Nonetheless, while some of the procedures are the

same, they sometimes differ from their strategies. The following sub-themes detail the findings.

4.9.1 *The team offers training on intercultural management to manage cultural differences*

The results indicated that the leaders invited experts and practitioners to train their members on the effects and the management of cultural differences, most notably to the newly employed team members on how to integrate into the team. 'FI', a managing director expressed the benefits of intercultural training as follows;

'*The cultural difference training provide some awareness and sensitivities about the roles of culture and how they could effectively use them to benefit the team positively*'. (FI, a European male director in a manufacturing company).

However, the results also revealed that although team members received the training for cross-cultural management sometimes, they were too pessimistic about the success since they continuously faced the challenges of cultural differences. The results imply that intercultural management training is essential for the team because both the leaders and their members recognise the positive impacts on them. For example, while the leaders believe it provides awareness and sensitivities about culture, the members instead become pessimistic about the success sometimes due to the challenges of cultural differences they continue to encounter. The explanation substantiates the argumentation that cross-cultural training assists employees to perform their assignments and task efficiently; however, the effectiveness of cost-efficient cross-cultural training becomes an issue (Kirpalani and Luostarinen, 1999). Another argument is that some courses on intercultural training are devoid of educational depth in dealing with the fundamental cultural values. Due to that, some participants benefit superficially and not with the appropriate skills to function in teams with diverse cultural backgrounds (Tharp and Scott, 1990). Thereupon, cross-cultural training should begin with a problem-oriented approach instead of applying complex definitions and theories (Tharp and Scott, 1990). The analysis indicates that excellent intercultural training help to manage the challenges of cultural differences; however, leaders should make it more efficient to benefit the team.

4.9.2 The team organise social events to manage cultural differences

Majority of the participants indicated that socialisation included trips for fun making, going out to eat together, playing outdoor games, and this offered them the opportunity to communicate effectively, shared ideas and got to know each other better to address their challenges. They learned each other's weaknesses, understood each other well and this allowed them to share their experiences efficiently. 'CR' explained how socialisation improved cohesion in her team as follows;

'*Such socialisations contribute to stress reductions, and we manage some conflicts, disagreements, quarrels, amend bad relationships and improve cohesion because we get the chance to get closer to each other better than during the working process in the team. And when we get back to work, we sometimes forget about our differences because we work smoothly and efficiently*'. (CR, a South American male team member in a manufacturing company).

The explanation connotes that the team achieves efficient communication, share ideas, get to know each other better, understand each other's weaknesses very well, and this leads to the sharing of their experiences efficiently. The findings also share a similar argument from other researchers. For instance, material culture, especially with food, drink and socialisation connect cultural differences, motivate members, improve information sharing, excellent cooperation, contribute to active relationship development and enhance performance in the team (Means et al., 2015; Barrett and Oburn, 2010). Again, cultural socialisation and equitable information create a positive connection with self-concept (Davis and Stevenson, 2006; Bowman and Howard, 1985). Despite this, socialisation as a form of managing cultural differences has not been given much attention by researchers. The argument is that anthropologists have done a lot on the roles of culture in food and drink in managing differences despite this, researchers have paid less attention to that (Sturdy et al., 2006). The argument of other researchers add more value to the findings of this study, and this shows that team leaders should pay much attention to how best the team could benefit from socialisation. Despite the positive impacts of socialisation in the culturally diverse work teams, it could also create cultural rifts, individual conflicts and become problematic (Barrett and Oburn, 2010; Stahl et al., 2010; Neblett et al., 2008; Neblett et al., 2006; Marshall, 1995). From this perspective, one could argue that this depends on the knowledge and skills of the

team to effectively manage the process, including the context upon which the operation takes place. Hence, the team should prepare for such challenges during socialisation to reduce the adverse effects on them. Even though there are similar opinions of the findings with literature result, the difference is that my findings could not demonstrate the challenges with such socialisation apart from the few who complained of certain colleagues refusing to socialise with them.

4.9.3 Team members adapt, adjust, accommodate, accept, trust and sacrifice to manage cultural differences

The findings demonstrated that the members reduced some of their belief practices and embraced the norms and values of colleagues, managed to overcome some of their culture shocks and got themselves accustomed to the new cultural environment through the above approach. They also collaborated, integrated personal views, practices, built on the trust they had for each other and worked towards universal principles of beliefs and practices for the common good of the team. The study found that this system of working together was considered as 'the surviving approach' because the process contributed to minimising the intercultural challenges for them to cope every day at work. 'VR', a team member expressed his opinion on this process as follows;

'There were several times I had to give up certain views, beliefs and accepted those of my colleagues so that we could be on the same level to achieve one common goal for our team. Although this is a huge task, it became important for me to develop this system of working in the team'. (VR, a South American male team member of a service company).

Notwithstanding the above, they still encounter some challenges because of the complex nature of culture, which motivates them to demand further training in intercultural competence. The findings also share similar results with the work of other researchers. For example, the adaptation predisposes the need to make some changes to meet the standard of another, which makes change the necessity for adaptation (Hughes, 2009). Hence, Boerner and Jopp (2007) suggest the need to give up something to achieve something new. However, the study shows that fulfilling such requirements becomes a difficult task in the team. Cross-cultural adjustment concerns the degree to which the expatriate becomes comfortable with all endeavour of the culture of the host country psychologically (Black, 1988). In a different perspective, Caligiuri (2000) instead sees an intercultural adjustment, being the psychological

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result relating to adaptation, as the essential process of change that one goes through to adjust to a diverse environment. The findings showed a relationship between intercultural adaptation and adjustment because both have the same process and cultural outcome. When individuals fail to adapt to the cross-cultural team, they will create financial and other problems for their companies (Chen, 2014). Therefore, the cultural adjustment becomes a necessary process for the performance in the team as far as cultural differences are concerned. For instance, Okpara (2016) shows a direct connection between poor job performance and ineffective cultural adjustments. The direct relationship substantiates that the challenges with cohesion in the team affect their ability to adjust very well. The results also showed that the members' ability to adapt and to accommodate in the team leads to unity, and they explained that they needed better training on accommodating each other. For instance, cultural accommodation defines a process where one adjusts his or her expressive behaviour to be able to aid communication with linguistically and culturally diverse people who participate in conversations (Giles et al., 1977). The argument is that accommodation becomes the process one needs to modify his or her communication behaviour to pave the way for useful mutual understanding (Boylan, 2001).

The team members explained that modifying themselves become a difficult task to achieve because of several implications on their cultural norms, attitudes, beliefs and practices. Formal accommodation indicates the acceptance of the differences and adjusts to the cultural norms of the other person through acceptable behavioural adaptation (Boylan, 2001). For example, the substantial accommodation includes personalising the cultural differences of the other person and lives with them (Boylan, 2001). Again, acceptance is about the promotion of empowerment and hopes through an emotional, cognitive and behavioural process (Spaniol and Gagne, 1997). The connotation is that cultural acceptance leads to empowerment and confidence in the team when they practice. It is imperative to note that one of the essential components in culturally diverse work teams is a trust (Webber, 2008). When there is no trust for each other, the members cannot agree on issues and work together successfully. One could deduce from the analysis of trustworthy that it could become a necessary tool for achieving the effective management of cultural differences because it is upon such basis that team members could accommodate and adapt to each other.

4.9.4 Leaders organise frequent meetings with their members on cultural differences issues

The findings showed that members got the opportunity to present their challenges of cultural differences, which gave ideas and experience to their leaders to manage the problems. As a result, they could manage conflicts and misunderstanding that could benefit the team in several ways because they could get the chance to learn much about individual differences. The findings on organising frequent meetings on cultural differences also denote that members gain the opportunity to share their challenges with cultural differences. However, the leaders use the information derived from such meetings to manage the challenges. Such meetings could also solve the problems associated with leaders' limited time with issues regarding cultural differences. The findings also corroborate the argument that the team becomes productive when their differences become useful and beneficial (Kirkman and Shapiro, 2001; Earley and Mosakowski, 2000). The teams also generate diverse perspectives, different ways and means to achieve tasks and improve commitment to the responsibilities of the group (Adler, 2002). All these indicate that holding constant meetings on cultural issues in the teams help members to gain the opportunity to express their views on issues affecting them. Intercultural challenges like misunderstanding, communication problems and conflicts could create malfunction teams (Matveev and Nelson, 2004). The effectiveness of intercultural teams becomes a reality when the members of the team identify and manage their differences (Adler, 2002). These could be achieved through constant meetings in the team because members could learn much about individual differences, and leaders should encourage such a process to manage their challenges effectively.

4.10 The significance of leadership' development of intercultural competence

The findings demonstrated that while team leaders and their members attached equal importance to specific significance, they also differed in their opinions for relevance[15] in some cases. Table 4.4 below demonstrates the ranking sections for both the leaders and their members starting from 1-5 and 1-7 in addition to the nature of significance attached to them, respectively.

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[15] The ranking of the significances were based on the total number of research participants (.i.e; team leaders and their members) who shared the same opinion on the nature of significances.

Table 4.4 below demonstrates that the research participants ranked the above function as number one, and 7 out of 29 team leaders and 9 out of 39 team members agreed on the same opinion.

Table 4.4: The Importance of Acquiring the Skills and Knowledge of Intercultural Competence in Culturally Diverse Work Teams

Ranking	Team Leaders	Total no of Participants	Ranking	Team Members	Total no of Participants
1	Team managers can better manage their teams effectively	7	1	Team managers can better manage their teams effectively	9
2	Efficiency, performance and productivity would be high	5	2	Efficiency, performance and productivity would be high	6
2	Knowledge and skills to manage cultural differences in the team will improve	5	2	Teamwork would improve in the team	6
3	Intercultural conflicts would decrease in the team through effective management	4	3	Intercultural conflicts would reduce through effective management	5
4	Communication would improve in the team	3	4	Opportunity to learn new things and innovative ideas would increase	4
4	Teamwork would improve	3	-	-	-
5	Trust and commitment would be high leading to retention of good employees	2	5	Communication would improve in the team	4
			6	Differences in attitudes and behaviour would be better understood and appreciated	3
			7	Trust and commitment would be high leading to retention of good employees	2

The participants demonstrated that the skills and knowledge of (IC) would help the leaders to understand the different attitudes, the behaviour of the people, their cultural norms, values, beliefs and manage the team well. For example, 'LD', a manager shared her view as follows;

'Intercultural competent skills and knowledge will help me to understand the individual team members better, develop problem-solving skills, reduce the challenges in the team and manage them effectively for them to explore their talents, skills and knowledge in innovative ways'. (LD, a European female manager in a manufacturing company).

Another team member, 'EF', also contributed her views as follows;

'*I believe that the acquisition of the knowledge and skills of intercultural competence would help my manager to be more open-minded and understand our team better. He will change his management styles to connect with everyone in the team, and this will improve his management skills*'. ('EF', a European male team member in a manufacturing/service company).

The participants explained that the leaders could manage insecurity, improve the working process and minimise the complexity in the team. They also indicated that they could better receive excellent feedback from their members that would help them to examine their weaknesses in cultural differences, better understand them, and such corroborates the argument of other scholars. Team leaders could develop useful insight into cultural awareness, empathy, resolve conflicts, misunderstandings, build ethical perceptions in the team, stop stereotypes, develop equal shared values, team norms and contribute to the overall success of different members (Schwer, 2004). Again, team leaders should be competent in intercultural management to reduce issues with critical incidents among their members, encourage them to share the goals and develop excellent social skills to manage the team successfully (Hajro and Pudelko, 2010).

4.10.2 Improvement in efficiency, performance and productivity in the team

Table 4.4 indicates that 5 out of 29 team leaders and 6 out of 39 team leaders agreed on the functions above. At the same time, they also rated that as the second most important benefit of acquiring the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence. The leaders, for instance, indicated in their responses that they could guide their members to understand their work process very well, minimise the delay in work accomplishment and reduce waste in the system because they could effectively manage their differences that create their challenges. 'TB', a team leader also shared her experience on (IC) as follows;

'*Intercultural competence will improve our knowledge and the sense of individuals' responsibilities by being aware of each other's cultural differences, understand the differences in the work process, reduce unnecessary delays, improve efficiency in teams and increase performance and productivity in the team.* (JB, a European team leader in a service company).

The team members, on the other hand, revealed that intercultural competence skills and knowledge would help them to appreciate each other's differences, reduce stereotypes, improve respect for each other and encourage them to offer their best without fear of intimidation. As a consequence, efficiency would improve because impediments created by cultural challenges would reduce, and this could help the team members to work together to achieve their targets to increase productivity. 'LJ', a team member shared her view on the significance of (IC) on productivity in the following words;

'The leaders will motivate the entire team members to utilise our potentials fully, give our best input, cooperate very well with each other, share our knowledge and improve productivity very well and not only relying on the few members to the detriment of the majority in the team'. (LJ, an Asian female team member in a service company).

The leaders believe that IC could help them to manage the challenges of cultural differences which could affect work processes with the negative impacts on efficiency, performance and productivity in the team. Comparatively, the members instead believe that IC could assist them in resolving all challenges like miscommunication which are associated with relationships and could affect performance and productivity. Intercultural communication competence improves multicultural team's performance, provides the capabilities for decision making and solution for challenges of managers in the global marketplace (Matveev and Nelson, 2004). The implication is that there is a connection between effective communication and performance of the team.

4.10.3 Leaders believe in managing the differences, but members believe in teamwork

Table 4.4 further shows that while 5 out of 29 team leaders believed in the effective management of the challenges of cultural differences, 6 out of 39 team members instead indicated in the improvement in teamwork. These participants rated these functions as another second most significant benefit for acquiring the knowledge and skills of intercultural competence. On the other hand, 3 out of 29 leaders again rated teamwork as their fourth most crucial benefit. The team leaders indicated in their responses that they would develop the knowledge and skills of intercultural awareness, sensitivities, understand the individual cultural backgrounds, appreciate different norms, values, beliefs and cultural practices which could help them to manage the challenges of cultural differences. They also demonstrated

that (IC) would open their minds on how best to respect and appreciate both similarities and differences among their respective cultures. 'BB', a team leader shared her opinion on this in the following words;

'We can gain awareness about these differences, become more open-minded about the problems created by these differences, better understand the complex nature of these differences and manage them effectively'. (BB, a North American male team leader in a service company).

The team members, on the other hand, showed that teamwork would improve because they would understand and appreciate their differences, accept, accommodate and work together without difficulties. With this, they could better work together in harmony, become more united and achieve synergy. 'MT', a team member expressed her views on the cohesiveness as follows;

'We would be able to integrate by creating understanding among us, work together and appreciate each other and then avoid the development of the sub-teams because I think we can maintain better relationships within the team and effectively collaborate'. (MT, a South American female team member in a service company).

One could argue that although several studies have taken place for cultural diversity, international workgroups persistently encounter challenges by ethnocentrism and prejudices (Levitt, 2016). They further demonstrate that ethnocentrism destroys intercultural relationships, prevents satisfaction and results in ineffective international teamwork (Levitt, 2016). The implication is that stereotypes could become rampant when the team does not address the challenges of ethnocentrism. The research shows that cultural differences create tension, and other contradictory forces destroy the unity of the members, and this validates the argument of Levitt (2016) showing that there is an urgent request for increased intercultural competence for industry practitioners. Intercultural competence could assist the team in achieving excellent cohesion. The advantages and trust achieved through excellent understanding among the members lead to an improvement in performance and effectiveness in the team (Bandura, 1997; Klimowski and Mohammed, 1994). When the team members communicate effectively, it promotes excellent team culture (Pearson and Nelson, 2003). Furthermore, cultural synergy could also become the ability to unite two or more cultures in

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successful unison based on their skills, ideas and talents to build an organisation (Adler, 1997).

At the same time, cultural differences could either become a hindrance for fruitful teamwork in multicultural teams or improve creativity and maximise achievement (Panggabean et al., 2013). The argument authenticates the opinions of the team members because they believe that failure to resolve their differences has a strong negative influence on teamwork. Such a view is also shared by Panggabean et al. (2013), showing that conflicting cultural values become a problem for intercultural synergy. Individual culture consists of its symbols, demonstrates unique benefits and applies ways and means in structuring behaviour (Thomas, 2003). Furthermore, (IC) helps the team to manage cultural differences, resolves conflicts, takes successful action in the appropriate contexts, leads to broad-mindedness, social initiative, emotional balance, adaptability, while also advising the team to develop intercultural competence more than before (Friedman and Antal, 2005; Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2001, 2000; Gregersen et al., 1998). Additionally, Friedman and Antal (2005) argue that in recent times, a prerequisite for core intercultural competence demands the knowledge to perceive and apply cultural diversity as a resource for learning and also to take successful action in the appropriate contexts.

Extensive literature reviews have revealed five dimensions which support the success in an intercultural perspective, including cultural fellow feeling, broad-mindedness, social initiative, emotional balance, and adaptability (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001). These variables confirm the explanation of the research participants regarding the significance of (IC). Wherefore, Gregersen et al. (1998) conclude that it has become indispensable for people engaging in international business to gain the knowledge and skills for intercultural competence more than before because of the challenges created by cultural differences.

4.10.4 Team leaders and their members believe intercultural conflicts would reduce

Moreover, Table 4.4 demonstrates that 4 out of 29 leaders and 5 of 39 team members showed that intercultural management knowledge and skills would help the team to manage conflict and both participants positioned this function as the third most important benefit to them. The leaders explained that they would better understand the differences in values, norms, belief patterns, communication, intercultural practices in the team, and this would help to avoid

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unnecessary quarrels, misunderstandings and conflicts. One team leader, 'EV', expressed his views on these views in the following words;

'We can become more empathetic, patient, develop an understanding for each other, understand the individual cultural differences and then effectively resolve conflicts because we could better understand the assumptions behind our attitudes and behaviour in the team'. (EV, a North American male manager of a manufacturing company).

On the other hand, the team members showed that they could be more tolerant, patient, empathetic and more accommodating, effectively communicate to avoid unnecessary intercultural conflicts. The research also found that the leaders could develop the skills to improve the team spirit and mediate intercultural conflicts peacefully without showing favouritism. And this too, 'DS', a team member expressed his view in the following words;

'We can improve on our working environment because of fewer conflicts, avoid unnecessary disagreements, become more efficient, understand each other properly and work with peace of mind without bearing any pains against each other'. (DS, a male team member in a manufacturing company).

They could then effectively resolve conflicts because they could better understand the assumptions behind personal attitudes and behaviour in the team. As a result, members also demonstrate that they could avoid unnecessary disagreements, become more efficient, understand each other properly and work with peace of mind without bearing any pains and grudge against each other. Intercultural conflict usually begins with diverse anticipations regarding conformable and non-conformable behaviour in an interaction event (Choe, 2002). Again, cultural misunderstandings happen during communications (Barna, 1998). At the same time, cultural confusions experienced as conflicts become problematic to both the accomplishment of the goal, sense of self-esteem, competence, including the personality of the people included (Rothman, 1997). The above argument supports the revelations from the research participants regarding the challenges of miscommunication, leading to conflicts in the team. Here also, Friedman and Antal (2005) discuss that intercultural competence includes resolving the difficulties ingrained in one's culturally shaped repertoire, causing new reactions and therefore extending the collection of promising clarifications and behaviours existing in future intercultural communications. Conflict patterns concentrate on thoughts, barriers in language and cultural orientations (Choe, 2002). The argument validates the reasons provided by the participants regarding the roles of intercultural competence in

resolving intercultural conflicts in the team. As an illustration, Choe (2002) shows that the pattern of thoughts demonstrates the forms of thinking, how to solve the problems and this changes in different cultures.

4.10.5 Leaders believe in excellent communication, but members believe in innovative ideas

Table 4.4 again shows that 3 out of 29 team leaders believed communication would improve in the team due to the skills and knowledge of (IC) however, 4 out of 39 team members instead thought that the opportunity to learn new things and innovative ideas would increase. The two parties ranked these functions in the fourth position. The team leaders demonstrated that (IC) would improve their communication skills both verbally and non-verbally because they would effectively understand individual styles, implications and communicate. 'ACK', a team leader with about twenty different nationalities shared his views as follows;

'By acquiring intercultural competence, the most important advantage would be effective communication since we can understand some dialects and implications of certain gestures in the team. We can also apply direct and indirect forms of communication moderately without hurting anyone because their implications would be properly understood'. (ACK, an African descent male team leader in a service company).

The results also indicated that the team members could explore new talents, gain different perspectives and enrich their skills and knowledge in the team. Mr. 'S', a team member expressed his views on this as follows;

'We can explore the unique skills, knowledge, talents, gifts and experience in the team because we can freely share and help each other to utilise our potentials for the benefit of the team since our understanding of our roles could enhance without any prejudice'. (BS, a European male team member in a service company).

The explanation of the team leaders denotes that (IC) could address the challenges leading to intercultural miscommunication. Comparatively, the members believe (IC) could assist them in exploring the unique skills, knowledge, talents, gifts and experience in the team. They could freely share and help each other to utilise their potentials for the benefit of the team since the understanding of their roles could enhance without any prejudice. Amongst other

things, appropriate communication, both verbal and nonverbal in intercultural teams could be achieved through intercultural communication competence (Brew et al., 2011; Hara and Kim, 2004; Hall, 1989). The main factors for effective communication and exchanges occur through intercultural competence (Krajewski, 2011). At the same time, the appropriateness in communication connects to cleverly direct interactions, and this has developed a link with interdependence (Hara and Kim, 2004). With regards to this, Brew et al. (2011) suggest that there should be an extra definition for appropriateness by considering the broader elements of communication competence. And this also calls for more investigation on intercultural communication competence with regards to relevance in the team.

4.10.6 Leaders believe in the retention of good employees, but their members believe in communication

Table 4.4 moreover shows that 2 out of 29 leaders believed the skills and knowledge of (IC) would improve trust and commitment in the team, and this would lead to the retention of good employees. However, 3 out of 39 of their members showed that communication would improve, and both parties place these functions on the fifth position on the table. Again, another 2 out of 39 team members slightly placed trust and commitment leading to retention in the team as their seventh most crucial benefit of acquiring (IC). The team leaders showed that their members would believe and accept each other by understanding their attitudes and behaviour in the team. The participants demonstrated that trust would also increase, leading to a positive retention margin of good employees because the adverse effects of differences would reduce. 'CF', a team leader expressed his knowledge on this as follows;

When the trust in the team increases the excuses given by some members for unnecessary absenteeism would be reduced, and the team would benefit from the full participation of team members during team assignment. Therefore, the pressure at work would reduce because there would be more hands at work instead of relying on a few members present. (CF, an African descent male team leader in a service company).

The research findings further revealed that team members would understand individual communication norms and verbal and non-verbal communication patterns in the teams. Again, unlike the team leaders, the two team members who slightly placed trust and retention as their seventh most important benefit believed they would be willing to forgive each other, share ideas, opinions and contribute to the team's development without any limitation. Trust

is generally accepted to become a momentum among members when goals are achieved through individuals and collective members (Lusher et al., 2014). Again, there is a correlation between trust and the effectiveness of the team including the accompanying importance of the effective performance of the team (De Jong and Elfring, 2010; Costa, 2003; Costa, Roe, and Taillieu, 2001; Costa, Roe, and Taillieu, 2001; Jones and George, 1998). The connection signifies that lack of trust creates several difficulties, including broken ties in the team. The relationship in the team is equally attributed to lack of confidence (Ellwardt, Labianca and Wittek, 2012; Huitsing et al., 2012; Labianca and Brass, 2006; Labianca et al., 1998). On the issue of communication, Karim (2003) argues that cognitive complexity improves one's knowledge about information which might assist in the reduction of stereotyping of people with different cultural backgrounds.

Similarly, the cognitive complexity helps to improve interactions among diverse groups because the individuals in a culturally diverse team could adjust their interactions accordingly (Kegan, 1992). The conceptualisation of intercultural competence by researchers has demonstrated important cultural variables like motivation, knowledge, skills, outcomes (Odağ et al., 2016). However, Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) argue that adaptability plays essential roles in almost all of them. Despite this, Odağ et al. (2016) demonstrate that two significant intercultural competence based namely; the content-competence and processual-competence have been identified (Stier, 2006). For instance, the content-competence includes important variables like language, viewpoints, belief systems, norms, traditions, the dos and the don'ts (Stier, 2006).

On the other hand, the processual-competence demonstrates the intrapersonal and interpersonal competence, which showcase the cognitive skills of the individuals such as the thinking skills and the ability to control challenges (Stier, 2006). The emotional skills include wordless clues, indications and emotional reactions as well as communication competence including conditional sensitivity (Stier, 2006). The above analysis supports that (IC) improves effective communication, understanding of cultural awareness of individual norms, values, cultural practices, the development of reflective skills of the team members and the ability to resolve conflicts to promote teamwork successfully.

4.10.7 Members think they could understand different attitudes and behaviour.

Finally, Table 4.4 shows that 3 out of 39 team members believed they would better understand and appreciate different attitudes and behaviour in the team when they develop the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence. They placed this as sixth on the table. They explained that they could better understand individuals cultures, that of their colleagues, national differences, and develop knowledge about cultural awareness and sensitivities. The process could help the team to manage themselves and achieve excellent results. 'EF', a team member explained his view on the significance of (IC) as follows;

'I will be flexible, open to new cultures and talk to everyone in the team in a professional way without hurting the feelings of others because some of us believe strongly that our ways and beliefs are always the best. By so doing, I can appreciate every little contribution to the team since the perception of inequality in the team would be erased'. (EF, a European male team member in a service company).

Heterogeneity of culturally diverse work teams increases its innovative power (Burger-Menzel and Syring, 2013). Without regard to that, cultural challenges like conflicts call for the significance of intercultural competence in such teams (Rohn, 2006). Accordingly, the level of (IC) of the individual members should exceed the actual level of the differences in the team (Adler, 2008). The indication is that one should not underestimate the challenges of cultural differences.

In summary, the variations in the rankings among the leaders and their members regarding the significance of IC implies that there are different beliefs and perceptions about the roles of IC in the team, and the various explanations offered for the rankings confirm that. It is imperative to note that the members have not entirely agreed with the reasons provided by their leaders regarding their failure to manage the challenges of cultural differences to a large extent. The idea is that IC formed part of their general management responsibilities. Therefore, leaders should ascertain the rationale behind the variations in the ranking to achieve effective prioritisation for their training in their teams, and this could also become an essential area for further research.

Research on (IC) substantiates the research findings except that there has been much emphasis on communication as the significant importance. As an instance, the argument is

that cultural awareness, an open-minded attitude, intercultural knowledge and skills lead to effective communication and behaviour (Deardorff, 2006; Byram, 1997; Gudykunst, 1993; Gudykunst and Kim, 1984; Bloom, 1956).

In a different perspective, Deardorff (2006) shows that the expected results in (IC) include effective intercultural communication and behaviour which is dependent on individuals intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes to reap the goals of the individuals. The research findings also imply that although the respondents revealed effective communication, the results included other essential variables like attitudes, behaviour, trust, commitment and cohesion as necessary skills for intercultural competence. For illustrative purposes, research finds an attitude as one of the significant issues in intercultural learning, and this assumes that one should understand different cultures, gaining respect for diverse values and becoming curious in the team (Krajewski, 2011). The findings and the arguments also testify that (IC) plays significant roles and leaders should prioritise the development of the skills and knowledge of (IC) in the team to maximise their potentials. The view of 'BSS', a team member, adds more impetus to the argument as follows;

'When I consider the roles of our leader in managing the challenges of cultural differences in our team, I see that he struggles in many ways, and this undermines his competence as a leader. I hope that she develops the skills and knowledge for intercultural competence that could benefit the team in several ways'. (BSS, a team member in a manufacturing company).

The statement above postulates that due to lack of skills and knowledge for intercultural competence, some team leaders struggle in their leadership roles as far as the challenges of cultural differences are concerned, and this makes it vital for them to acquire such skills to manage these challenges in their teams effectively. Finally, the advice provided by the team to leaders and members in culturally diverse work teams based on their experience add value to the intercultural competence, and the following shows the findings and the discussions for that.

4.11 Final advice from team leaders and their members on intercultural competence

The findings showed that the pieces of advice were for the team in general, the leaders, members and the management of multinational companies.

The team should develop the ability for the patient and avoid unjustifiable judgment

Majority of the research participants advised team leaders and their members to be patient with each other, gain the ability for human understanding, and avoid judging a team member wrongly unless they know and understand him or her very well. They explained that patience was highly needed to find out about the rationale behind members' actions and inactions. They should avoid focusing too much on themselves to understand each other better, and this could prevent unnecessary judgment. One female team leader shared her opinion on that as follows;

'You know, my grandmother used to advise me that I shouldn't blame somebody until I step into his/her shoe so that I could feel what the person is feeling first because you need to have a good understanding and thoughts for your fellow team member before any judgment'. (LD, a European female team leader in a manufacturing company).

The statement shows that the team needs to take precaution before judging a colleague, and this could create a better understanding among the members.

Team leaders and their members should receive training in intercultural competence

The advice indicated that both the team leaders and their members struggle with the challenges of cultural differences, so there is a need for them to get training on intercultural competence to address the problems. They demonstrated that cultural awareness and sensitivity training could help them to become empathetic and gain more ability to manage better to improve communication and performance. A team manager expressed his opinion on this as follows;

'Developing intercultural development through more training is very important because we can build a strong relationship with each other, work properly as a team, share good ideas and communicate effectively for the progress of the team'. (WL, a European male leader in a manufacturing company).

They further explained that intercultural competence could help them to accept cultural differences, make use of the advantages, respect each other, and show the willingness to work with everyone. The argument is that failing to identify the influences of ones' behaviour such as your thoughts or feelings could deprive someone of understanding another person's with

regards to these differences. They indicated that members should step out of such a circle and make sure to appreciate that in somebody's world, there is an entirely different way of approaching things. Another team leader also shared her opinion in the following words;

'It is essential for both team members and leaders to develop knowledge about cultural differences, be open-minded, respect individual values, avoid discrimination, stereotyping and treat team members with fairness. As a team manager, you need to like people irrespective of their different cultural backgrounds, get to know them better, understand the cultural context and make sure to get along with them very well'. (NK, a North American team leader in a service company).

The team should consider cultural differences as an asset and respect them

The team managers advised that cultural differences could benefit the team in several ways, so they should value and respect everyone without underestimating its potentials. They should learn to appreciate different cultures and exploit their benefits instead of concentrating on the negative sides. The team should accept, respect and enjoy the differences among the people irrespective of their race or ethnicity, which could help them to maximise the benefits of cultural differences. They argued that different cultures contribute to enriching the company so people should respect the differences, learn to appreciate various views, opinions, exploit all advantages and never think one's beliefs were only the best. One team leader contributed her opinion as follows;

'All team members have to go through the lenses of the five dysfunctional teams, seek out for the differences of cultural perspectives, find ways and means of dealing with some conflicts encountered in cultural differences and understand the basis of the trust in your fellow team member to be able to enjoy the benefit of cultural differences'. Gain some knowledge about cultural differences, talk about values, understand your culture and yourself in the team, voice out the differences, see what is valuable in each team member, and give them some space, accept the gaps, then you be able to try to go for the best of these differences'. (RN, an Asian female team leader in the manufacturing company).

Team members should make all efforts to work together with a colleague whose attitudes and behaviour are not the same as them, and they would benefit from each other.

The team leaders showed that some team members found it difficult to work with colleagues whose attitudes and behaviour seemed different from them, and this could disintegrate them when it continues. They indicated that such members should do their best to pair up with someone, unlike them to work together. Team members should try their best to work with someone different from them and not to make the person becomes alien in the team because they will be all accountable to the organisation.

Team leaders should motivate members to acknowledge, create awareness and celebrate cultural differences in their teams

The members urged their leaders to motivate them to celebrate, acknowledge and create awareness about cultural differences in their daily operations. They showed that without the roles of the leaders concerning sensitisation and motivation on cultural differences, some of their members would not also see the relevance of the significance of cultural differences. They urged their leaders to concentrate on the positive impacts of cultural differences instead of dwelling much on the negative ones. Team leaders should be proud of the benefits of cultural differences to improve trust, prevent stereotypes, avoid discrimination and racism.

Multinational companies should maximise the benefits of intercultural competences

The team leaders showed that in these recent times and in the coming years to come, it would be difficult to survive in multinational companies without the ability for intercultural competence. They showed that businesses founded across the globe depended on multicultural teams. Therefore the management of multinational companies should team up with the team to address the problems of cultural differences collectively.

'EV', a senior manager in a manufacturing company shared his experience as follows;

'The issue of intercultural competence is significant to me because, despite the huge benefits, cultural differences could also cost a lot of money, problems, litigations. It is significant to embrace intercultural competence in multinational companies'. (EV, a North American senior manager in a manufacturing company).

The information above shows that when the team maximises the benefits of intercultural competence, they could address the problems emanating from cultural differences to make leadership responsibilities more useful to be able to achieve the teams' goals.

CHAPTER V: RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This qualitative study explored the research question on the adverse effects of cultural differences and leadership of culturally diverse work teams' development of intercultural competence in multinational companies in the Netherlands. The motivation of the study depended on the adverse effect of cultural differences, and the gap in literature review regarding the lack of studies on the intercultural competence for team leaders with its implications on leadership roles in teams in (MNCs) in the Netherlands. Subsequently, I used team leaders and their members in some selected (MNCs) in the Netherlands (i.e., Service and Manufacturing) for the research. To be able to fulfil the main aim of the study, I used five main research objectives, considered as the five steps below for the specific guidelines and actions for the investigation.

The first step was that I needed to know the problems created by cultural differences for the teams in (MNCs) in the Netherlands. The objective guided me to investigate the challenges cultural differences create for the team. Again, the second step was that I needed to examine the factors preventing team leaders from effectively managing their teams in (MNCs). This objective supported me to identify the challenges confronting them from effectively managing these challenges. Besides, the third step was to assess how cultural differences impact the teams, and the primary purpose also contributed to developing insight and knowledge into the roles of cultural differences. Also, the fourth step was for me to gain insight and understanding into the type of processes and factors which could assist team leaders to develop the skills and knowledge for intercultural competence. The objective helped me to investigate how team leaders could develop the ability for (IC) to build their members' (IC) in the teams. Finally, the fifth step was to understand the purpose of team leaders' acquisition of (IC) to develop insight into the roles of (IC) in the teams in (MNCs). The objective assisted me in researching the significance of the team leader's acquisition of (IC).

The above steps contributed to the general procedure and the processes applied to investigate the phenomenon with regards to the theoretical framework, the design and the methods, the findings and the conclusion for the context of the study. The sub-themes below detail the

assessment of the general conclusions, the implications and the recommendations for the research.

5.3 Conclusion of findings and implications

This part provides the synthesis for the importance of the research findings for answering the questions of the study. It also includes a highlight on the research's findings regarding additions, differentiated or contributed to the results of other studies and practitioners. The information below contains the research questions and the synthesis of the findings.

In the beginning, the question about the problems cultural differences create for culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies in the Netherlands showed several essential findings which either supported or differentiated from the work of researchers and practitioners. First, the majority of the respondents (team leaders and their members) showed that communication challenges are a significant problem created by cultural differences for the team. The participants showed attributional factors like English language proficiency issues, misinterpretations of words, differences in accents, direct and indirect ways of communicating. These challenges cause tension, imperfect decision-making process, cohesion problems, intercultural conflicts, inefficiency and low output. The findings also showed that diverse forms of miscommunication (verbal and the non-verbal), caused by cultural differences in the team, are attributed to factors like differences in the norms, values, cultural practices and national cultural backgrounds in the team. To a large extent, the findings on the attributional factors of communication challenges contribute to new knowledge, while the direct and the indirect forms of communication confirm the work of other researchers. For instance, cultural differences create the difficulties of communication in the team (Abdulai et al., 2017; Guan and Lee, 2017; Kealey, 2015). Again, culture influences our interactions, and they emanated from differences in values, rules, norms (Lloyd and Härtel, 2010; Härtel and Ma, 2006). The practical implication is that team leaders could examine the attributional factors creating the challenges of miscommunication to manage them. Therefore, intercultural competence skills in the areas of communication patterns shown by the results could play significant roles in overcoming such difficulties.

Team leaders could also understand that differences in the belief patterns, cultural practices, religious beliefs, values, and norms create attitudinal problems in the team. Therefore, by knowing and understanding such important cultural variables, leaders could manage cultural

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differences. Leaders could also develop the skills and knowledge to understand and manage the effects that include lack of trust, misunderstanding, high employee turnover and other challenges.

The findings on conflicts provide additional knowledge to the causes of cultural differences in the team. Leaders should make sure to resolve the causes of the 'Silent conflicts' because they could trigger the 'Open conflicts' with several adverse effects on them. Similarly, research on the subtle nature of conflicts in the team shares the same characteristics with those provided by the research participants (Du Plessis, 2011; Brett et al. 2006; Naquin and Tynan, 2003). The reason is that they equally create complexities and affect the teams' performance due to the difficulties in perceiving their causes. The practical implication is that leaders could evaluate their roles in such attitudinal problems by taking into consideration the concerns of their members. Such a process could help them to create holistic strategic methods based on intercultural competence skills and knowledge.

The findings on the differences in work process regarding productivity are also related to cultural differences and such contributes to new knowledge. This is because workers with team-oriented backgrounds prefer to work in teams better than those with individualistic backgrounds. The implication for team leaders is that they could identify members who believe in relationships and socialisations that usually clash with those who depend on rules and regulations. The rationale is that there are differences in values, ideologies and cultural practices relating to work, and this affects the performance and output of the team. The opinions of the participants certify the arguments and constructs that while the collective culture believes in the team approach, the individualistic depends on a loose tie (Nunez et al. 2014; Crown, 2007; Bradley et al. 2001; Hofstede, 1980; Crown and Rosse, 1995). Furthermore, the team also encounters problems with effectiveness, threats to successful performance, the formation of sub-teams and many more (Means et al. 2015; Li and Hambrick, 2005; Mosakowski, 2000). Another practical implication is that team leaders could develop a different approach to create success for the team by not undermining the functional effects of cultural differences as some used to do. They could also maximise such work processes in the team to achieve a higher goal.

Significantly, the majority of the team members showed that cultural differences create gender issues in the team. However, both the leaders and the team members confirm that cultural differences also contribute to racism, discrimination, stereotypes, although the

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leaders showed much concern with the intercultural conflicts more than the members. The practical implication is that team leaders could understand how gender imbalance impacts the team negatively. Another practical importance is that team leaders could resolve the problems of subtle racism that is also complicated to notice and then raise awareness about it. Team leaders could also become aware that failing to manage racism leads to demotivation, insecurity, unwillingness to contribute skills, absenteeism, disunity, decision problems, mistrust, high employee turnover, reduced productivity. Here also, my findings relate to the results of other researchers.

The challenges of cultural differences cause absenteeism, high cost on the firm, miscommunication, social classification leading to intergroup bigotries and conflicts (Van der Vegt et al., 2010; Mayfield and Mayfield, 2009; Siebert and Zubanov, 2009; Wright and Bonett, 2007; De Dreu et al.,1999; Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). Team leaders could identify gender balance, causes of racism, their roles of discrimination and other intercultural factors contributing to conflicts and apply the cross-cultural models revealed by the results to avoid them. By so doing, issues with high employee turnover in the team could decrease to retain the best employees for their benefit.

The findings on the host country dominant cultural effect factor is another challenge created by cultural differences, and this also provides an addition to knowledge. The reason is that the team is dominant with national cultural backgrounds, beliefs and cultural practices when employees from the same country or national cultural background exceed the minorities in the team. The practical implication for team leaders is that they could understand the effects like poor decisions, indiscriminate use of native language during communications, control measures, biased evaluations and promotions. However, the adverse effects have been confirmed by other researchers. For example, the challenge creates nepotism, discrimination, conflict and emotions in the team (Jehn et al., 1999). Another important implication is that the International Human Resources Department (IHRM) could help by critically examining the teams' composition regarding the individual nationalities for equality.

The findings on hierarchical problems depended on 'leadership issues versus team members concern' based on the complaints by the leaders and their members against each other, and cultural differences cause them. The findings confirm the work of other researchers. Team leaders could understand that their members could not share ideas effectively, contributed inefficiently, reduced innovation process, and this resulted in slow learning among the team

members. The argument is that such leaders have unilateral decision approach with excessive supervision of the work of subordinates (Vliet, 2006). The apparent differences exist between cultures in relations to individual values, attitudes and behaviours, and these variations impact leadership roles in the organisations (Alves et al., 2006; Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005). To some extent, my findings show some contrasting effects on the causes, although Hofstede's (1980) dimension on power distance also shows some similarities.

The question of why team leaders face difficulties in managing the challenges of cultural differences among their members in multinational companies also provided diverse and surprising findings. For example, leadership's lack of requisite skills and knowledge about intercultural competence to manage cultural differences offers new knowledge. Again, leadership's lack of time and attention to issues regarding cultural differences results in challenges like high employee turnover and poor results. The findings add to the knowledge of the effects of cultural differences. The practical implication is that the findings could help leaders to prevent overestimation of their skills and knowledge in cultural awareness and then preclude some level of ignorance as claimed by their members. The explanation that some leaders cared less about the complaints regarding cultural differences challenges depends on their lack of skills and knowledge to resolve the problems. As a consequence, the members argued that some leaders would prefer to stay away instead of getting involved with issues they could not solve. According to the team members, this could be equivalent to 'deliberately remaining silence' and not having enough time to their complaints.

Despite this argument, the findings showed that the management of (MNCs) should pay attention to the concern of the leaders regarding the insufficient time to the detriment of other responsibilities in the team. The argument is that team leaders do not have enough time to work on issues regarding cultural differences. Leaders with intercultural competence will show interest and become aware of different cultures, gain cultural empathy, develop the enthusiasm to learn the cultural attitudes, behaviour, norms, and values of their members and that leaders should be motivated to acquire this competence (Hajro and Pudelko, 2010; Schwer, 2004; Schwer, 2004; Manning, 2003). The research findings provide similar impacts as those shown by other researchers, except that the work of other scholar has not called for extra time from the management of multinational companies regarding cultural differences.

Regarding the level of satisfaction on the management of the challenges of cultural differences, the research found that more than half of the team members were not satisfied

with how their leaders manage them. The connotation is that the challenges of cultural differences are a huge concern in the team because the findings denote that there are challenges with leadership trust, failure to share knowledge, ideas, in addition to adverse effects on teamwork and results. The practical implication is that leaders could depend on that to do better to win the trust and the satisfaction of their members. Accordingly, the roles of management in (MNCs) should not be left out since they could also contribute to sound policies to reduce these challenges.

The findings also showed that the following intercultural competence skills influence the level of satisfaction regarding leadership's management of cultural differences. They include; the level of skills and knowledge the team managers possess in identifying culture-general knowledge, culture-specific knowledge, and the extent to which team leaders identify the gaps in communication styles and patterns among their members. The reason is that both the team members and their leaders demonstrated that their leaders possessed low skills and knowledge in identifying all the above variables related to intercultural competence. Leaders could enhance their intercultural competence ability to achieve effective management of the challenges. They could also obtain the fundamental knowledge of cultural awareness and sensitivities to manage the team.

The research question on the impacts that cultural differences have on the teams showed both positive and negative effects. The significant adverse effects shown by the research participants concerns the increase in intercultural communication problems, which substantiates the argument that communication challenges are one of the significant issues facing the team, so they have to resolve them. (Bret et al., 2013; Lauring, 2011; Stahl et al., 2010). Based on these challenges, researchers suggest the need for the team to develop the skills and knowledge for cultural awareness (Piyush and Namwoon, 2014; Goodman, 2012; Monthienvichienchai et al., 2002; Bush et al., 2001; Bush et al., 2001; Fine, 1995; Zimmermann, 1995; Wiseman et al., 1989; Chen, 1987).

The result further showed that failing to manage cultural differences increases intercultural conflicts in the team. The findings provide a specific effect of cultural differences on the team negatively, although researchers show that cultural differences do create problems in the team. Again, the participants also confirmed that they achieve poor teamwork or cooperation due to the inability to manage cultural differences. Here too, the study has shown how the team feels with regards to the adverse effect of cultural differences and such adds to new

knowledge. Other negatives effects include racism, stereotypes and gender issues. Other findings also included the adverse impact on the performance and output of the team, while failing to address the challenges of cultural differences also leads to mistrust and high employees' turnover. Such findings also provide new knowledge to the effects of cultural differences. The practical implication for team leaders is that they could become aware of how cultural differences influence the performance of the team. Again, the IHRM department could use the research outcome to recruit employees who possess adequate skills and knowledge in intercultural competence or train them to function effectively in the team.

Despite the negative connotations of the challenges of cultural differences, the research found positive gains in the team regarding innovative and creative ideas, becoming open-minded and exploitation of different ways of working due to cultural differences. These findings confirm the work of other researchers. For example, the results on how the team provides strategic solutions to complex problems due to cultural differences connect with the argument on creativity and innovative ideas regarding the roles of cultural differences (Maddux et al., 2014; Li et al., 2013; Mumford, 2012; Wiruchnipawan and Wang, 2012; Tadmor, 2012; Tadmor, 2012; Crisp and Turner, 2011; Maddux et al., 2010; Ward et al.,1997). Again, cultural differences provide several advantages to the team, including open-mindedness (Leung and Chiu, 2010; McCrae and Costa, 1997; Costa and McCrae, 1992). Majority of the research participants showed that cultural differences help the team to solve complex problems (Houtz et al., 2010; Maddux and Galinsky, 2009; Leung et al., 2008). The practical implication is that the team could also obtain motivation for cultural differences without necessarily considering them as something negative.

Generally, the results demonstrate to a large extent that the adverse effects of cultural differences exceed those of the positive impacts on the team by far, and the rationale behind the revelation is about leadership's failure to manage the challenges effectively. Regardless, culture is both an asset and a liability because it contributes to organisations' success, yet the team should handle the adverse effects (Robbins et al., 2017). The enormous challenges facing them as a result of cultural differences should motivate the leaders to develop the skills and knowledge for intercultural competence to address them successfully.

The findings on the type of processes and factors team leaders need to develop intercultural competence for their team members showed two significant models. The results showed similar assumptions and aim regarding the following cross-cultural models for team leaders;

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'Three Categories of Culturally Aware and Sensitive Members in Culturally Diverse Work Teams in Multinational Companies' and the 'Cultural SWOT Framework for Culturally Diverse Work Teams'. They both share similar objectives and guidelines to assist team leaders in identifying team members who possess excellent, weak and average intercultural competent skills and knowledge but in different approaches. Since the findings showed that only a few members develop the ability for strong intercultural competence skills, team leaders need to apply the process for identifying individual members' attitudes and behaviour to discover the characteristics of members belonging to each category in the frameworks. To a large extent, the findings provide new and essential knowledge to intercultural competence.

Another implication is that team leaders could use the opportunity to transform the majority of the team members who lack the skills and knowledge to develop the ability for (IC). The models also demonstrate the ability to combine team members appropriately for teamwork based on the identification of their characteristics of intercultural skills and knowledge. Such guidelines could assist the team to function effectively by utilising the full potentials among the members appropriately.

At the same time, the models validate the arguments of several researchers that (IC) helps individuals to develop the ability to understand cultural differences effectively and manage their challenges, because it enhances the knowledge and skills of cultural awareness and sensitivities in the team (Krajewski, 2011; Hunter et al., 2006; Canen, 2004).

Besides, the findings on how team leaders are expected to manage cultural differences effectively could contribute to the development of (IC) in the team, and such provides an addition to knowledge. The practical implication is that the team leaders could understand the expectations of the majority of the team members appropriately. For example, the findings indicate that due to the weaknesses of the leaders in managing the challenges effectively, the members expect them to develop knowledge and skills about cultural differences and apply them. The factors shown by the participants contribute significantly to the acquisition of the ability for (IC), and it also confirms the work of other researchers because they argue that they could aid the team to function effectively (De Vries et al., 2013; Briñol and DeMarree, 2012; Steward et al., 1999). Such argument also reinforces the call of Hajro and Pudelko (2010) that (MNCs) should employ leaders with the capabilities to maximise the full potentials of the members in the team by managing their cultural differences for their performance effectively.

Moreover, the findings on how team leaders and their members manage cultural differences further add value to the process and factors the team could use to develop intercultural competence, and such contribute to knowledge. For example, majority of the research participants showed that organising continuous cross-cultural training, social events and developing the ability to adapt, adjust, accommodate, accept, trust, and sacrifice could help the leaders to assist the team in managing cultural differences. Besides, the process factor also confirms the work of other researchers. For instance, the results support the argument that the roles of adapting, adjusting, accommodating and organising social events as a means of managing cultural differences help to address the challenges in the team (Okpara, 2016; Hughes, 2009; Boerner and Jopp, 2007; Kirkman and Shapiro, 2001; Caligiuri, 2000; Earley and Mosakowski, 2000). Leaders could value how socialisation contribute to the management of cultural differences.

Finally, the findings on leadership' development of (IC) of their team members could help team managers to manage their teams effectively, and this provides new knowledge. The argument is that the variations in the ranking and the accompanying significance provide knowledge and insight into how team leaders could appropriately train the team on (IC). For example, while the participants agreed on specific factors for the ranking, the differences in the ranking show a gap regarding the perception of the necessity of developing the skills and knowledge for (IC). The observation is very relevant for the team leaders to plan with their members towards the management of the challenges of cultural differences in the team. The implication is that leaders could respect the participatory roles of their members in making decisions regarding the control of the problems of cultural differences.

The findings further provided advice in the form of recommendations by the participants. It is worthy to note that such advice and recommendations were based on the rich experience of the research participants. The advice and the recommendations provided by the participants could contribute to the development of intercultural competence. The findings imply that management could make them a policy framework for the team to follow.

However, by considering the separate advice provided by the team leaders and their members, it could be argued that there are differences in perceptions regarding (IC) in the team and this reaffirms the findings on the importance of developing (IC). For instance, the members advised their leaders to motivate them about cultural differences, accept them and continuously seek feedback on issues concerning cultural differences from them. The leaders

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instead asked their members to work together with a colleague whose attitudes and behaviour is not the same as them, and they would benefit from each other. Again, they asked the members to be open-minded to issues concerning cultural differences and learn new things. These recommendations reconfirm the differences in perceptions of cultural differences in the team, and failure to understand these perceptions could create challenges. The findings provide additional knowledge on intercultural competence.

In conclusion, one could argue from the research findings that, in no small extent, they connect with the five main objectives of the study. The argument is that the research findings provide the knowledge and the insight shown by the team leaders and their members regarding the challenges facing the team due to cultural differences. The results also confirmed leaderships' gap in addressing the challenges of cultural differences, and the application of the intercultural competence models and other framework demonstrated by the findings could help in addressing them effectively. Therefore, the research objectives contribute effectively to achieving the aims of the study to a large extent. Despite everything, the study also has some limitations, and the detailed information below provides them.

5.4 Limitations of the research

One cannot underestimate the significance of this study because the rich knowledge, ideas, insight and the experience of leaders and members in the teams in (MNCs) have been effectively exploited during the investigation to demonstrate how leaders could contribute to the development of intercultural competence of their team members. Nevertheless, there are limitations to the study.

Firstly, the application of the qualitative method instead of a complete mixed one (qualitative and quantitative) is one of the limitations. Several factors contributed to the adoption of the qualitative research design, and this has helped immensely in achieving quality and excellent process, meaning, and understanding with good insight through the semi-structured interviews and the observation during the investigation. Such a method supports the argument that the researcher develops an interest in the procedure, meaning, and decipherment obtained in words (Atieno, 2009). Despite this, I observed during the investigation and the analysis of the findings that certain information shown by the research participants could be applied in the quantitative approach to demonstrate their implications.

Due to the above reasons, I reported a few specific results in percentages to quantify some views and opinions. The method informs me that if the research design had incorporated quantitative approach as well, I could report specific significant findings in a more meaningful and efficient manner. At this stage, I seem to agree that qualitative research could be applied to ascertain very distinct hypotheses; however, some researchers fail to perceive that both methods could be applied to investigate virtually all kinds of the research question (Atieno, 2009).

In demonstrating the importance of using both qualitative and quantitative methods in intercultural research, Matveev (2002) argues that using both methods provide the opportunity to build on the strengths of each technique to reduce their weaknesses for the study. Again, the time used for the observation could be more than the three and a half time I used. Such could provide more time to achieve detailed information. Nonetheless, the requirements and the limitations placed on me to respect the period used for the investigation could not offer me additional time. To make effective use of the time efficiently, I had to maximise every little opportunity provided to explore detailed information for the findings.

Furthermore, the inability to broaden the scope of the investigation to other (MNCs) in different countries apart from the Netherlands is another limitation for the study. Considering the adoption of the qualitative research design for the research, it was not easy to interview or observe team leaders and their members in international countries due to the many people involved. With regards to this, using the Netherlands only for the investigation could raise questions on generalisation and applications of the results in (MNCs) globally. Nonetheless, the findings of researchers confirm most of the findings in the study to authenticate their generalisation. For example, Payne and Williams (2005) argue that generalisation remains a significant problem in qualitative research.

Finally, I realised some limitations with the total number of research participants used for my research because using 68 people in the qualitative research created complexity in the coding and the identification of common and similar opinions for the findings. Although researchers recommend that saturation usually happens around 12 research participants in a study involving homogenous group Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006), this study used team leaders and members of different cultural backgrounds (heterogenous participants) which eventually resulted in the total participants used. To a large extent, the method fulfils the argument that more data lead to better results (Latham, 2019). In contrast, I spent several hours to code and

analysed the data leading to exhausting and delaying the final findings for the research. Even though the application of the NVivo helped to achieve the core aim of analysing the data, it would have been much easier to have limited the total number of research participants during the design of the study. The method could validate the argument that in qualitative research, not more than 20 participants used could assist the researcher in developing and building an excellent relationship, and this would result in the exchange of information (Crouch and McKenzie, 2006). Nevertheless, the total number of participants used for the study brought diverse and vibrant insight to generate quality findings.

5.5 Research contributions

The research contributes significantly to the body of knowledge and business practices, and the information below demonstrates this.

5.5.1 The body of knowledge

One of the significant contributions to knowledge that this study makes is to provide new insight and facilitate knowledge creation to increase the understanding for the under-studied phenomenon on limited factors for (IC) of team leaders in (MNCs) which concerned the literature gap for the study. A phenomenon induced research is a problem-oriented study, emphasising on encapsulating, authenticating and conceptualising organisational and managerial phenomena of importance to achieve the facilitation of the development of knowledge and amelioration (Schwarz and Stensaker, 2015). The underlying research problem depended on the numerous negatives effects of cultural differences on the team, and the calls to fill the gap as confirmed by the literature review and also supported by the implications on leadership in culturally diverse work teams in the Netherlands (Ramthun and Matkin, 2012; Hajro and Pudelko, 2010; Eagly and Chin, 2010; Moon, 2010; Ng, Van Dynean and Ang, 2009; Ang, 2009; Van Dynean, 2008; Robinson and Harvey, 2008; Harvey, 2008; Ang et al., 2007; Avolio, 2007).

By contributing and increasing the body of knowledge on this phenomenon, the research first provided deep insight into the fundamental challenges to the research problem by showing the challenges that the teams face due to cultural differences and why leaders face difficulties in managing the problems. The study also explored the impacts of the issues and why the leaders fail to manage these challenges. The research also showed the level of knowledge and

skills that the leaders and the team members possessed to address their cultural self-awareness, identifying cultural general-knowledge and culturally specific - knowledge. Besides, the research showed the extent to which leaders identify and manage the differences in communication styles and patterns in their teams. In the end, the study explored the importance of acquiring the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence. The findings for the above areas for the investigation contribute to the current debates and arguments on leadership and culture by focusing on cultural differences and leadership acquisition of intercultural competence in the team. Thus, my research concentrates on the individual cultural differences in the team and the roles of leadership regarding intercultural competence, more than the global perspectives and the national cultural differences as proposed by other researchers.

Despite everything, the essential contribution to knowledge shown by the study is the findings on intercultural competence frameworks (i.e., see sub-chapter 4.6.5 for detailed information), identified as;

(a) 'The Three Categories of Cultural Aware and Sensitive Members in Culturally Diverse Work Teams in Multinational Companies, and (b) 'The Cultural SWOT Framework of Culturally Diverse Work Teams in Multinational Companies.

The 'Three Categories of Culturally Aware and Sensitive Members in Culturally Diverse Work Teams in Multinational Companies' demonstrates the 'The 'Highly Cultural Aware and Sensitive Team Members' with the eleven characteristics; the 'Highly Cultural Unaware and Insensitive Members' with the seventeen features; and the 'Culturally Average Aware and Sensitive Members' with the ten characteristics. Again, the 'Cultural SWOT Framework for Culturally Diverse Work Teams', that becomes a strategic, intercultural competence model helps the team leaders to identify the cultural strengths, weaknesses, the opportunities and the threats in the teams. Notably, the models could enhance the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence of leaders and members by improving the cultural awareness and sensitivities in the team through effective communication, managing individual attitudes and behaviour connected with cultural differences, and providing leaders with the necessary tools to lead the team effectively.

Comparatively, researchers have instead over-concentrated on communication as a means of achieving intercultural competence (Holmes and O'Neill, 2012; Lloyd and Härtel, 2010;

Deardorff, 2006). They also used a quantitative approach to achieve global objectives due to the context of global leadership. My models distinguish themselves due to the additional factors and processes demonstrated by using a qualitative method for culturally diverse work teams purposefully. Intercultural competence is about the ability and the flexibility to resolve tension caused by cultural differences (Canen, 2004). Another argument is that acquiring the skills to identify self- knowledge and developing expertise for cultural difference awareness become the essential tools in achieving intercultural competence in the team (Krajewski, 2011).

5.5.2 Business practices

The research significantly contributes to business practices in several ways because the findings provide a direct connection between the body of knowledge and business practices, which could be employed by management in organisations and team leaders to manage the team effectively. The contribution validates the argument that the significant scientific research to business practitioners generates cross-fertilisation of knowledge, insight and experience which amplifies compassion, learning and comprehension (Ellson, 2009).

In the first place, leaders could apply the findings to identify the problems created by cultural differences and then develop strategies to manage such factors. Management could also use the results to understand the impacts of cultural differences on the team. By so doing, they would appreciate cultural differences better. Besides, management could identify their weaknesses in managing the challenges created by cultural differences and then explore ways and means to overcome such shortcomings. Not only that but also, management could develop the skills and knowledge for intercultural competence and also, appreciate the necessity of acquiring such.

Another contribution made for business practice is that the findings show what team members could expect from their leaders regarding the management of cultural differences based on their experience. The results, therefore, help team leaders to meet their expectations regarding how to manage the challenges of cultural differences in the team effectively.

The findings further give insight into the process and the importance of acquiring cultural self-awareness, general-knowledge, specific-knowledge and how team leaders could understand the extent to which they could identify the differences in communication styles

and patterns in the teams. These processes contribute to the fundamental knowledge and insight into the factors to develop intercultural competence in the team.

Team leaders and management of multinational companies could also apply the intercultural competence models for successful teamwork and then maximise the potentials in the team to achieve good results. Finally, the findings provide recommendations for team leaders, members and management of multinational companies on intercultural competence based on the quality advice provided by the team leaders and the members. The application of these suggestions could contribute tremendously in making the responsibilities of the challenges of cultural differences a holistic one, and not necessarily the sole responsibilities of the team leaders in multinational companies. The findings could assist the team in achieving the following significance; improve communication, reduce intercultural conflicts, improve work processes, reduce high employee turnover, develop effective team processes, improve team's efficiency, maximise the potentials and increase output.

5.6 Recommendations for future studies

The limitations and the findings for the research provide opportunities for possible future studies and the necessary areas suggested for further research include the following;

Firstly, I recommend investigating the same study with both qualitative and quantitative methods. The rationale is that I discovered during the investigation that the inclusion of quantitative methods could build on the weaknesses of the qualitative approach to pave the way for the quantification of certain important information shown by the research participants to achieve a concrete validation of certain conclusions through objective reporting. Therefore, further application of both methods could be most efficient to accomplish to build on their strengths. This suggestion is also confirmed by Matveeev (2012) by showing that by applying qualitative and quantitative methods for further research on the intercultural phenomenon, you can achieve high accuracy of data, perceive the context of the study, adapt quickly, become open-minded in collecting the data and accomplish the explanation of the study holistically.

It is also recommended to include leaders and their members within multinational companies from other international countries to conduct the investigation instead of relying only on the Netherlands for this study. Although, using the Netherlands as a starting point for a PhD

research is not a problem for this phenomenon, broadening the scope for further research could achieve broad representative. For instance, this could increase the views, opinions and insight of the research participants to produce a more comprehensive representation to enhance the generalisation and the application of the results. The idea of a thorough representative validates the argument about interpreting the research phenomenon in a holistic manner (Matveev, 2002).

It is further recommended for future research to apply a quantitative approach to investigate the various characteristics of the intercultural competence model for leaders of culturally diverse work teams as identified in (sub-chapter 4.6.5). The argument is that I used qualitative interviews to develop the above frameworks, and by developing and testing hypotheses with the help of a survey, one could achieve objective reporting for the findings. For example, the survey could reveal how much percentage of the team members belong to the 'Highly Cultural Aware and Sensitive Team Members', the 'Highly Cultural Unaware and Insensitive Members' and the 'Culturally Average Aware and Sensitive Members'. The method could create more awareness in the team regarding members and their connections with intercultural competence.

Finally, it is recommended to extend the period for the observation. Due to the busy schedules of the research participants, it would be nice to negotiate extensively with the team leaders and explore the opportunity of making this happens.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Form EC6: Participant Information Sheet and Form EC3 Consent Form for Studies Involving Human Participants.

APPENDIX B: Interview Questions for Team Leaders and Their Members.

APPENDIX C: Interview Guides.

APPENDIX D: Sample Semi-Structured Interview Transcripts for Team Leaders and Team. Members.

APPENDIX E: Sample Manual and Computer Coding and Analysis of Interview for a Team Leader.

APPENDIX F: Screenshots for Sample Codes for Team Leaders.

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APPENDIX H: The Application of Consolidated Criteria to Report Qualitative Research (COREQ)

APPENDIX A: Form EC6: Participant Information Sheet and Form EC3 - Consent Form for Studies Involving Human Participants

UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE

ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH INCLUDING THE USE OF HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ('ETHICS COMMITTEE')

FORM EC6: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Title of research

'How Do Leaders of Culturally Diverse Work Teams Contribute to the Development of Intercultural Competence of their Team Members in Multinational Companies in the Netherlands?

Introduction

You are invited to participate in the study. Before making a decision on whether to do so, it is essential to understand the study and what your involvement will include. Please take some time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Do not relent to enquire about anything that is not clear or for any further information you would like to have, to help you make your decision. Please consider carefully with your decision on whether you wish to take part or not. The regulations of the University regarding the conduct of studies involving human participants can be accessed via this link: http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/RE01.htm

Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of this research?

The research aims at obtaining knowledge and insight into how best leaders of culturally diverse work teams could develop the intercultural competence of their team members in multinational companies in the Netherlands. The study is aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- To find out about the type of problems that cultural differences create for culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies in the Netherlands.
- To examine the factors which prevent leaders from managing the challenges created by cultural differences in their teams effectively.

- To determine how cultural differences affect the teams.
- To find out about the knowledge and skills that team leaders need to develop the intercultural competence of their teams.
- To assess the importance of leadership's development of intercultural competence of their team members.

Do I have to take part?

It depends on your discretion as to whether or not you decide to take part in this research. If you make up your mind to participate, you will get this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. Agreeing to join the research does not mean that you are obliged to complete it. You have the freedom to withdraw at any stage without giving any reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part at all, will not affect any treatment/care that you may receive (should this be relevant).

Is there any age or other restrictions that may prevent me from participating?

Yes! Participants should be equal to 18 years old and above that.

How long will my part in the research take?

If you plan to participate in this research, you will be involved in it for 15-20 minutes.

What will occur to me supposing I participate?

The first thing to happen will be a discussion about how the interview would take place. You would also be informed about the advantages of gaining new knowledge about the research through the questionnaires. Apart from this, nothing terrible would happen.

What are the challenges, possible disadvantages, risks or side effects of taking part?

There are no possible severe disadvantages, risks or side effects in taking part. Still, there is the possibility that you would get tired during the interview, but here you are free to signal me to stop. But bear in mind that the questions are general and very simple, and I have the knowledge to explain any problematic part of the questions.

What are the anticipated benefits of taking part in the study?

- You would gain knowledge about issues concerning cultural differences.
- You would be able to understand some possible impacts of cultural differences.

- You would also obtain some information on how to identify cultural differences and develop intercultural competence.
- In the end, you would get the ability on how leaders could improve intercultural competence in culturally diverse work teams in multinational companies.

How will my taking part in this research be kept confidential?

Under no circumstances would any information obtained from you be revealed to someone. Your information would be kept confidential for this research only, and no names, or identity would be revealed. Everything would be anonymous. After the investigation is done, your information would be destroyed. Nonetheless, in case further studies are to be done, I would seek your further consent first, but then the same rules governing the confidentiality would be applied.

What will occur to the data generated during this research?

The data would be kept safe until the research has been completed. After the studies, it would be destroyed unless there is a need for further studies on the same subject where your consent would be sought.

Who has reviewed this research?

This research has been reviewed by:

The University of Hertfordshire Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities Ethics Committee with Delegated Authority

The UH protocol number is *BUS/PGR/UH/02200*

Whom could I contact supposing I have any questions?
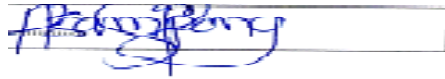
Supposing you might need further information or would like to discuss any details personally, please get in touch with me, in writing, by phone or by email: asampongekow@yahoo.com, Amsterdam.

Supposing you have issues regarding any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this research, please write to the University's Secretary and Registrar.

Thank you very much for reading this information and giving consideration to taking part in this research.

Researcher

Alex Ekow Asampong

UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE
ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH INCLUDING THE USE OF HUMAN PARTICIPANTS
('ETHICS COMMITTEE')

FORM EC3
CONSENT FORM FOR STUDIES INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

I, the undersigned Juliet, from (**Name withheld**) Company, Amsterdam, hereby freely agree to take part in the research entitled: 'How Do Leaders of Culturally Diverse Work Teams Contribute to the Development of Intercultural Competence of their Team Members in Multinational Companies in the Netherlands?'

1. I confirm that I have been given a Participant Information Sheet (a copy of which is attached to this form) giving particulars of the research, including its aim(s), methods and design, the names and contact details of key people, and as appropriate, the risks and potential benefits, and any plans for follow-up studies that might involve further approaches to participants. I have been given details of my involvement in the research. I have been told that in the event of any significant change to the aim(s) or design of the research, I will be informed, and asked to renew my consent to participate in it.

2. I have been assured that I may withdraw from the research at any time without any disadvantage or having to give a reason.

3. In giving my consent to participate in this research, I understand that voice recording will take place.

4. I have been given information about the risks of my suffering harm or adverse effects. I have been told about the aftercare and support that will be offered to me in the event of this

happening, and I have been assured that all such aftercare or support would be provided at no cost to myself.

5. I have been told how information relating to me (data obtained in the course of the research, and data provided by me about myself) will be handled: how it will be kept secure, who will have access to it, and how it will or may be used.

6. I know that my participation in the study may reveal findings that could indicate that I might require medical advice. In that event, I will be informed and advised to consult my GP. If during the research, any evidence comes to light that I may have a pre-existing medical condition that may put others at risk, I understand that the University will refer me to the appropriate authorities and that I will not be allowed to take any further part in the research.

7. I understand that if there is any revelation of unlawful activity or any indication of non-medical circumstances that would or has put others at risk, the University may refer the matter to the appropriate authorities.

8. I have been told that I may at some time in the future be contacted again in connection with this or another research.

Signature of participant JG.
Juliet, G.

Signature of the (principal) investigator
Alex E. Asampong.

APPENDIX B: Interview Questions for Team Leaders and Their Members

Questionnaires for Team Leaders

1. What kind of problems or difficulties does your team face as a result of cultural differences?

2. To what extent do you think the problems of cultural differences are a significant concern to you as a leader and your team?

3. In what ways are you able to manage these cultural differences in your team?

4. What problems do you face as a leader in managing cultural differences in your team?

5. With regards to question 4, why do you face such difficulties in managing the cultural differences in your team?

6. Based on your experience as a leader of a culturally diverse work team, what impacts do you think that the failure to manage cultural differences have on the performance of your team?

7. With regards to the impacts of cultural differences on your team, what kind of help do you think you would need as a leader to manage your team to improve their performance?

8. What is your level of knowledge and skills in understanding your personal cultural self-awareness (that is; the cultural values, beliefs and perceptions to identify cultural differences in your team to manage them?

9. As a leader of a culturally diverse work team, could you please describe your level of experience and skills in culture-general knowledge (that is; the values, beliefs, and behaviours in any culture)?

10. Based on your experience in your team, how do you identify culture-specific knowledge (that is; the ability to develop deeper and clearer interpretations of cultural patterns among your team members)?

11. How worried are you when you discover the problems created by cultural differences in your team?

12. With regards to question 11, how does the level of worries compel you to seek a solution to the cultural differences in your team?

    13. A. Have you observed in your team some members who possess the ability for cultural awareness and sensitivities, how do you identify such members, and what do you think are their characteristics?

    B. What about the members who lack the ability for cultural awareness and sensitivities in your team, how do you identify them, and what do you think are their characteristics?

    C. Do you also identify those who are in-between the first 2? How do you identify them, and what are their features?

14. How do you identify some of the differences in communication styles and patterns among your team members?

15. What kind of help do you need to manage cultural differences effectively?

16. Based on your experience as a leader in your team, in what ways do you think the acquisition of the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence would help you and your team?

17. Finally, based on your experience as a leader of a culturally diverse work team, what advice can you provide to other leaders of the team and their members in general?

Questionnaires for Team Members

1. As a member of a culturally diverse work team, would you please describe some of the problems you encounter in your team based on your experience?

2. To what extent do you think the problems created by cultural differences in your team are a significant concern to your team members and your leader?

3. Would you please tell me how your team members deal with or manage these cultural differences in your team?

4. Would you please describe the steps taken by your team leader in managing the cultural differences in your team?

5. What problems do you think your leader faces in managing cultural differences in your team and why?

6. Based on your experience with regards to cultural differences in your team, would you kindly describe the impact of cultural differences on your performance and the team in general?

7. How satisfied are you with regards to the roles of your leader in managing the cultural differences to improve the performance of your team?

8. How would you want your leader to manage the cultural differences in your team to improve your performance?

9. As a team member, what do you think is your level of knowledge and skills in understanding your personal cultural self- awareness (that is; the cultural values, beliefs and perceptions to identify cultural differences in your team?

10. Being a member of a culturally diverse work team, could you please describe your level of experience and skills in identifying culture-general knowledge (that is; the values, beliefs, and behaviours in your team)?

11. What skills and knowledge do you have to identify culture-specific knowledge (that is; the ability to develop more in-depth and precise interpretations of cultural patterns among your team members)?

12. In what ways do you think your team leader shows signs of worry when he or she discovers the problems created by cultural differences in your team?

13. A. Have you observed among your colleagues those who possess the ability for cultural awareness and sensitivities, how do you identify such members, and what do you think are their characteristics?
    B. What about the members who lack the ability for cultural awareness and sensitivities in your team, how do you identify them, and what do you think are their characteristics?

C. Do you also identify those who are in-between the first 2? How do you identify them, and what are their features?

14. How would you expect your leader to deal with issues concerning cultural differences in your team?

15. To what extent do you think your team leader can identify the differences in communication styles and patterns among your team members?

16. With regards to the problems of cultural differences in your team, in what ways do you think the acquisition of the skills and knowledge of intercultural competence would help your leader and your team in general?

17. What advice would you provide to members of culturally diverse work teams and their leaders considering your experience in your team?

The following information demonstrates the interview guides used to collect the data. They include the guides for face-to-face, observation, skype/WhatsApp, Emails and telephone.

A: Semi-Structure Interview Guide (Face-to-face)

A1. Research Topic

'How Do Leaders of Culturally Diverse Work Teams Contribute to the Development of Intercultural Competence of their Team Members in Multinational Companies in the Netherlands?

A2. Introduction (Interviewer's background) and General Information

First, I introduced myself, the research context and the purpose of the research participants. Afterwards, I showed the consent forms '**FORM EC3 CONSENT FORM FOR STUDIES INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE'** for an agreement and also to understand the purpose of their privacy. I also introduced the materials for the interview, including the purpose of using the recording for the interview process to them.

A3. Participants Background

Participants were made to introduce themselves by showing the following; gender, age group, educational background, working experience, position in the organisation, national/ethnic background, religious beliefs, and so on.

A4. The Interview Process and Duration

Conditions involved in the interview process such as the explorative nature and its characteristics, number of interview questions and length of the interview, participant's freedom involved, recording etc. were demonstrated.

B: Observation with Semi-Structure Interview Guide (Face-to-face)

B1. Research Topic

'How Do Leaders of Culturally Diverse Work Teams Contribute to the Development of Intercultural Competence of their Team Members in Multinational Companies in the Netherlands?

B2. Introduction (Interviewer's background) and General Information

Firstly, I introduced myself, the research context and the purpose of the research participants. Afterwards, participants were introduced to the consent forms '**FORM EC3 CONSENT FORM FOR STUDIES INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE'** for an agreement for them to fully understand the purpose of their privacy. They were also introduced to the materials for the interview, including the purpose of using the recording for the interview process.

B3. Participants Background

Participants were made to introduce themselves by showing the following; gender, age group, educational background, working experience, position in the organisation, national/ethnic background, religious beliefs, and so on.

B4. Conditions Attached to the Observation

Participants were made to understand the approach involved in the observation, such as getting required to seek for illustrations and explanations regarding individual attitudes and behaviour demonstrated and also asking some probing questions during the observation. I also informed them about how to get involved regarding some unforeseen scenes like some extensive interactions, misunderstanding and also the roles of the team leaders.

C: Semi-Structure Interview Guide (Skype and WhatsApp)

C1. Research Topic

'How Do Leaders of Culturally Diverse Work Teams Contribute to the Development of Intercultural Competence of their Team Members in Multinational Companies in the Netherlands?

C2. Computer and Telephone Set Up

Since the conditions involved with the telephone and the Skype set up are different from the face-to-face, I first spent some time with the participants to set up the skype and the WhatsApp properly to avoid unnecessary interruptions. Again, participants were also made to understand that in case of poor internet connection which might interrupt the flow of the interview process, a telephone could be used to set up the video connections to resume the interview. Apart from this process, all other conditions attached to the face-to-face process followed accordingly.

C3. Introduction (Interviewer's background) and General Information

First, I introduced myself, the research context and the purpose of the research participants. Afterwards, participants were introduced to the consent forms '**FORM EC3 CONSENT FORM FOR STUDIES INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE'** for an agreement for them to fully understand the purpose of their privacy. They were also introduced to the materials for the interview, including the purpose of using the recording for the interview process.

C4. Participants Background

Participants were made to introduce themselves by showing the following; gender, age group, educational background, working experience, position in the organisation, national/ethnic background, religious beliefs, and so on.

C5. The Interview Process and Duration

Conditions involved in the interview process such as the explorative nature and its characteristics, number of interview questions and length of the interview, participant's freedom involved and etc. were demonstrated.

D: Semi-Structure Interview Guide (Email)

D1. Research Topic

'How Do Leaders of Culturally Diverse Work Teams Contribute to the Development of Intercultural Competence of their Team Members in Multinational Companies in the Netherlands?

D2. Introduction (Interviewer's background) and General Information

First, I introduced myself, the research context and the purpose of the research participants. Afterwards, participants were introduced to the consent forms '**FORM EC3 CONSENT FORM FOR STUDIES INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE'** for an agreement for them to fully understand the purpose of their privacy. They were also introduced to the materials for the interview, including the purpose of using the recording for the interview process.

D3. Participants Background

Participants were made to introduce themselves by showing the following; gender, age group, educational background, working experience, position in the organisation, national/ethnic background, religious beliefs, and so on.

D4. Conditions Attached to Email Interview Process

The conditions attached to the email interview process were different from the face-to-face or the telephone or the Skype/WhatsApp process. Participants were made to understand that because there would not be the chance to achieve active probing during the answering of the questions, participants would receive further clarifications for some answers provided through replies to emails.

E: Semi-Structure Interview Guide (Telephone)

E1. Research Topic

'How Do Leaders of Culturally Diverse Work Teams Contribute to the Development of Intercultural Competence of their Team Members in Multinational Companies in the Netherlands?

E2. Introduction (Interviewer's background) and General Information

First, I introduced myself, the research context and the purpose of the research participants. Afterwards, participants were introduced to the consent forms '**FORM EC3 CONSENT FORM FOR STUDIES INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE'** for an agreement for them to fully understand the purpose of their privacy. They were also introduced to the materials for the interview, including the purpose of using the recording for the interview process.

E3. Participants Background

Participants were made to introduce themselves by showing the following; gender, age group, educational background, working experience, position in the organisation, national/ethnic background, religious beliefs, and so on.

E4. Conditions Attached to the Telephone Interview Process

The conditions attached to the telephone interview process were different from the face-to-face, Skype/WhatsApp process, email, and so on. Participants were informed at the beginning that in case there was any disruption, there would be another chance for a second call. I also told them about the conditions involved in the interview process, such as the explorative nature and its characteristics, number of interview questions and length of the interview, participant's freedom involved, etc.

APPENDIX D: Sample Semi-Structured Interview Transcripts for Team Leaders and Team Members

Sample Transcript: Team Leader

1. Date:16/02/2016; Time:12:00 -12:46 = 46 Minutes

Gender: Male

Age group: 51- 60

Nationality/Ethnicity: European

Type of company: Manufacturing company

Team Member/Leader: Managing Director

Professional Experience: 37-38 Years

Education: Master's degree

Alex: Being a leader of a culturally diverse work team, what do you think are some of the challenges/problems/difficulties you have encountered as a result of cultural differences in your team?

FI: The challenges we have in the team are communication problems, hierarchical issues, time factors, attitude and behaviour such as facial expressions, body language, handshakes, different work processes which create conflicts and disagreement. I encountered my major cultural shock at work when one of my team members failed to inform the entire team about his inability to finish an important task on time due to some technical errors he was unable to solve, and this caused the team some substantial financial costs. His cultural background played a significant role in this. When I confronted him, he also refused to explain the main reasons to me until he told his motives to another team member that it was against his beliefs to make his weaknesses known to me because I was the boss.

Alex; To what extent do you think the problems of cultural differences are a significant concern to you as a leader and your team?

FI: They are significant concerns to my team and me because it affects our performance and output.

Alex: How do you manage these differences in your team?

FI: We make cultural differences in training. The cultural difference training provides some awareness about the roles of culture in the team, and this sensitises the members on how these differences could benefit the team positively.

Alex: In trying to manage these differences and the problems in the team, what difficulties or challenges do you encounter, and why do you face them?

FT: Because I do not have many skills in cultural differences, I have to invite experts, but still we do encounter the problems. Another hindrance is the attitude and behaviour of some team members who are unwilling to change because it has become a habit. I think limited attention is paid to the issues concerning cultural differences, and for that matter, we need more awareness about the problems.

Alex; What do you think are the impacts of these differences on the performance of the team?

FI: Output is sometimes meagre, some team members who could not contain some of the problems do leave, trust is also reduced, managing the team becomes very difficult. It also affects our efficiency, and miscommunication also makes some team members lose focus, and they become inactive in the team, and this affects me as a leader. Unfortunately, we do encounter conflict situations. Conflict in the team spreads like a striking fire in the forest because you usually come across some opposing as well as supporting team members who even make the situation difficult to solve. As a team leader, you need useful information and the cooperation of the people involved to resolve these conflicts for the benefit of the team.

Alex: I can see that you have problems with cultural differences in your team, so with regards to the impacts of cultural differences on your team, what kind of help do you think you would need as a leader to manage your team to improve their performance?

FI: I need adequate knowledge about how to create sufficient cultural awareness in the team, how to prevent conflicts and its effects so that members can agree to disagree.

Alex: What is your level of knowledge and skills in understanding your personal cultural self- awareness (that is; the cultural values, beliefs and perceptions to identify cultural differences in your team to manage them?

FI: It is minimal.

Alex: As a leader of a culturally diverse work team, would you please describe your level of experience and skills in culture-general knowledge (that is; the values, beliefs, and behaviours in any culture)?

FI: It is somehow okay because I know my values, beliefs and I can also understand some of these from my members.

Alex: Based on your experience in your team, how do you identify culture-specific knowledge (that is; the ability to develop more in-depth and precise interpretations of cultural patterns among your team members)?

FI: My skills in doing that are not strong, so I need some training here.

Alex: Suppose you have observed in your team members those who are highly culturally sensitive, would you be kind to describe some of their characteristics with regards to their attitudes and behaviour towards their fellow teams' members?

FI: That's, of course, there are people whose knowledge are very high in the team because they can cope very well with those who create troubles in the team, they have patience, understand the weaknesses of their team members, and tare very understanding because they are very open to new ideas.

Alex: Again, suppose you have observed in your team the members who lack knowledge about cultural differences (that is, those who are not culturally sensitive and aware), would you be kind to describe their attitudes, behaviour and qualities in the team?

FI: They lack patience, can't team up well with fellow colleagues, complain a lot about their fellow team members and they don't tolerate others at all.

Alex: Suppose you have observed in your team members those who have average knowledge about cultural differences (their cultural sensitivity and awareness is average), would you be kind to describe their attitudes, behaviour and qualities in the team?

FI: They can cooperate a bit, and they are also accommodating. They don't complain too much, but sometimes you can see that they have some weaknesses which can affect their team members. But it's familiar.

Alex: Now based on your experience as a leader in your team, in what ways do you think the acquisition of the skills and knowledge of the culture competence would help you and your team members?

FI: Team members would learn how to accept and accommodate each other. Members would be proactive because they would understand the attitudes and behaviour of their colleagues. As a leader, it would make my work much more comfortable since I will not leave other essential jobs to resolve problems in the team, I can also manage effectively, the trust would improve, and the overall performance in the team would be high.

Alex: Working with such a dynamic team, what sort of advice would you give to leaders leading such teams and their team members?

FI: Cultural differences are significant for any multicultural team, therefore respect each other cultures, understand the differences in your team, you should appreciate peoples 'attitudes and, we should be able to plan together as a team and be more patient. As leaders, we have to give some consideration to all team members irrespective of their attitudes or behaviour.

Sample Transcript: Team Member

Date: 26/02/2016; Time: 09:40 – 10:32 = 52 Minutes

Gender: Female

Age groups: 31-40

Nationality/Ethnicity: European

Team Member/Leaders: Team Member

Type of company: Service

Experience: 17-18 Years

Education: Bachelor's degree

Alex; As a member of a culturally diverse work team, what problems/challenges/difficulties have you encountered as a result of cultural differences in your team?

The way people communicate and how they perceive and think and misunderstand each other in the team is a real problem among us. The other one is perhaps sensitivity to politics in the team, for example when I do business with a British, Dutch or a Spanish person, we the Dutch usually speak directly, but the Spanish team members try to mediate, whereas the

French people are so strict on their position, and so we have a lot of problems arising from these in the team. With regards to my new team now, I don't see too many problems, but I also understand that people have different attitudes which are sometimes useful. Mainly, I have some colleagues/ team members who will take more work/task under adverse situations, but some would do less work, and sometimes we do have problems with stressing the team.

Alex; To what extent do you think the problems created by cultural differences in your team are a significant concern to your team members and your leader?
ED: I think they are of a lot of concern to us and the team leader because it is affecting our progress.

Alex; Now, would you please tell me how your team members are able to deal with or manage these cultural differences in your team?
ED: I don't know, but I think we are relatively building suggestions strategy in our team, where we look for alternatives, and then the team is bonded together.

Alex; Would you please describe the steps taken by your team leader in managing the cultural differences in your team?
ED: I don't think there are steps being taken by our manager at all because we are given empowerment to do things in our way, which is sometimes useful.

Alex; What problems/difficulties do you think your leader faces in managing cultural differences in your team, and why do you think, so no steps are taken?
ED: I think the main challenges include lack of time and limited knowledge about the issues on the ground and even failed to recognise the existence of problems created by cultural differences.

Alex; Based on your experience with regards to cultural differences in your team, would you kindly describe the impact of cultural differences on your performance and the team in general?
ED: Well, I think this problematic. First, I need to see the outcome: and then examine the influence of culture on that. I believe positively; we are able to obtain various degrees of viewpoints from individual team members from the diverse culture team. We have various forms of communication and structures in the team and are thinking of how to deal with issues in the team, but I think we are also able to give our students more diversity approaches.

With regards to the negative influence, the other side effect is that there are some confusions with regards to response to certain situations. A typical case is where a team member might respond yes where the yes might mean something different like normal, and another person may say this is an interesting idea but in this case might have a different way of interpreting it. The British in the team have a different interpretation for this.

Alex; How satisfied are you with regards to the roles of your leader in managing the cultural differences to improve the performance of your team
ED: I am pretty satisfied with a scale of 6.5-7.

Alex; How would you expect your leader to manage the cultural differences in your team to improve your performance?
ED: I have no idea, but my expectation is that she will be able to organise a team-building day where the team will be highly developed through training in cultural differences, but unfortunately the problem is about time because we don't have time and time is a significant factor here.

Alex; As a team member, what do you think is your level of knowledge and skills in understanding your personal cultural self- awareness (that is; the cultural values, beliefs and perceptions which help you to identify cultural differences in your team?
ED: I was partly raised in Britain and the Netherlands, but I think that these are related to Western culture. While I'm aware that there are differences, I respect other people irrespective of where they come from and can say I am pretty good here.

Alex; Being a member of a culturally diverse work team, would you please describe your level of experience and skills in identifying culture-general knowledge (that is; the values, beliefs, and behaviours in your team)?
ED: I don't have that.

Alex; Suppose you have observed in your team the members who have high knowledge about cultural differences (that is, those who are highly culturally sensitive and aware), would you be kind to describe their attitudes, behaviour and qualities in the team?
ED; Yes, some of the five team members have been very open, while those who don't have are very closed. The 5 team members also accept and respect people in the team, and I can

imagine that here because the Japanese people in our team are sociable, but they show that in a different way.

Alex; Suppose you have observed in your team, the members who lack knowledge about cultural differences (that is, those who are not culturally sensitive and aware), would you be kind to describe their attitudes, behaviour and qualities in the team?
ED: There are other people in the team who misbehave, but I don't blame them anyway. An Italian writer once said that it's always for the most educated person to find a way to ensure respect today than the less educated since the less educated person knows that she is less educated. Here I mean ignorance is their problem. If you don't know you don't care about what is always good and for that matter, those who know should gently help those who don't know.

Alex: Suppose you have observed in your team members those who have average knowledge about cultural differences (their cultural sensitivity and awareness is average), would you be kind to describe their attitudes, behaviour and qualities in the team?
ED: There are some team members who believe that you must flow with those who are easy to move with. Such people can also accept some team members well, and are also a bit sociable.

Alex; What skills and knowledge do you have to identify culture-specific knowledge (that is the ability to develop more in-depth and precise interpretations of cultural patterns among your team members)?
ED: I have some knowledge about cultural awareness, and I do understand the views and opinions of people.

Alex; In what ways do you think your team leader shows signs of worry when he or she discovers the problems created by cultural differences in your team?
ED: I can see that from her facial expression, and you can see all is not well.

Alex; To what extent do you think your team leader can identify the differences in communication styles and patterns among your team members?
ED: She can invite team members who don't get along well due to communication issues and try to resolve them.

Alex; How would the acquisition of the knowledge and skills of intercultural competence skills benefit you and your team members?

ED: We could be able to recognise differences in the team, which is very good so that we can be able to pinpoint where people are wrong in the team. When this takes place, we could know how different we are and can, therefore, move better towards a common goal. We can also explore the best way of dealing with each other and be more aware of our usefulness. I think our leader will get the tools to manage effectively, and the team will improve.

Alex; Based on your experience you have gained in working with a culturally diverse work team, what advice would you like to give to members working in culturally diverse work teams as well as their leaders in multinational companies in the Netherlands?

ED: If you manage an intercultural team I think it is essential to accept ideas and listen very well, we should also integrate into the team, For example, my father-in-law is a Polish, but he has been able to live in the Netherlands for 30 years, has both Polish and Dutch passports, and though he is not Dutch his language is so good, and you can't even know he is a foreigner, thus integration is good in multicultural teams. I think for managers, it is good to be aware that people come from different cultures and so no one has a significant influence on the team. The team members are also converging as well, where for instance, I think the new people in the team should be trained on intercultural differences since some do struggle a lot in their new teams.

APPENDIX E: Sample Coding and Analysis foe Interview for a Team Leader.

Appendix E: Sample Coding and Analysis of Interview for a Team leader

Date:16/02/2016; Time:12:00-12:46 = 46 Minutes

Gender: Male

Age group: 51- 60

Nationality/Ethnicity: European

Type of company: Manufacturing company

Team Member/Leader: Managing Director

Professional Experience: 37-38 Years

Education: Master's degree

Alex: Being a leader of culturally diverse work team, what do you think are some of the challenges/problems/difficulties you have encountered as a result of cultural differences in your team?

FI: The challenges we have in the team are communication problems, hierarchical issues, time factors, attitude and behavior such as facial expressions, body language, handshakes, different work processes which create conflicts and disagreement. I encountered my major cultural shock at work when one of my team members failed to informed the entire team about his inability to finish an important task on time due to some technical error he failed to solve which caused the team some huge financial cost because of his cultural background. When I confronted him, he also refused to explain the main reasons to me until he explained his motives to another team member that it was against his beliefs to let known of his weaknesses since I was the boss.

> **Commented [AA1]:** List of cultural factors confronting leadership as a result of cultural differences

Alex; To what extent do you think the problems of cultural differences are a major concern to you as a leader and your team?

FI: They are a major concerns to me and my team because it affect our performance and output

> **Commented [AA2]:** Performance and output concerns

Alex: How do you manage these differences in your team?

FI: We do cultural differences training. The cultural difference trainings provide some awareness about the roles of culture in the team and this sensitises the members on how these differences could benefit the team positively.

> **Commented [AA3]:** Cross cultural management training and it's impacts

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Alex: In trying to manage these differences and the problems in the team, what difficulties or problems do you encounter and why do you face them?

FT: Because I do not have much skills in cultural differences, I have to invite experts but still we do encounter the problems. Another hindrance is the attitude and behavior of some team members who are unwilling to change because it has become a habit. I think limited attention is paid to the issues concerning cultural differences and for that matter we need more awareness about the problems.

> **Commented [AA4]:** Leadership's lack of skills and knowledge in cultural differences and attitudinal problems of team members.

Alex; What do you think are the impacts of these differences on the performance of the team?

FI: Output is sometimes very low, some team members who could not contain some of the problems do leave, trust is also reduced, managing the team becomes very difficult. It also affect our efficiency, miscommunication also makes some team members lose focus and they become inactive in the team and this affect me as a leader. Unfortunately, we do encounter conflicts situations. Conflict in the team spread like a striking fire in the forest, because you usually come across some opposing and supporting team members who even make the situation difficult to solve. As a team leader, you need good information and the cooperation of the people involved to resolve them for the benefit of the team.

> **Commented [AA5]:** The negative effects of cultural differences on output, high employee turnover, trust, communication and intercultural conflicts

Alex: I can see that you have problems with cultural differences in your team, so with regards to the impacts of cultural differences on your team, what kind of help do you think you would need as a leader to manage your team to improve their performance?

FI: I need adequate knowledge about how to create effective cultural awareness in the team, how to prevent conflicts and its effects so that members can agree to disagree.

> **Commented [AA6]:** Leadership's need for knowledge and skills about cultural awareness and preventing conflicts

Alex: What is your level of knowledge and skills in understanding your personal cultural self- awareness (that is; the cultural values, beliefs and perceptions to identify cultural differences in your team in order to manage them?

FI: Very limited.

> **Commented [AA7]:** Limited knowledge on personal cultural self-awareness

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Alex: As a leader of culturally diverse worked team, would you please describe your level of experience and skills in culture-general knowledge (that is; the values, beliefs, and behaviours in any culture)?

FI: It is somehow good because I know my values, beliefs and I can also understand some of these from my members.

Alex: Based on your experience in your team, how do you identify culture-specific knowledge (that is; the ability to develop deeper and clear interpretations of cultural patterns among your team members)?

FI: My skills in doing that is not strong so I need some training here.

Alex: Suppose you have observed in your team members those who are highly culturally sensitive, would you be kind to describe some of their characteristics with regards to their attitudes and behavior towards their fellow teams members?

FI: That's of course there are people whose knowledge are very high in the team because they can cope very well with those who create troubles in the team, they have patience, they understand the weaknesses of their team members, and they are very understanding because they are very open to new ideas.

Alex: Again, suppose you have observed in your team the members who lack knowledge about cultural differences (that is, those who are not culturally sensitive and aware), would you be kind to describe their attitudes, behaviour and qualities in the team?

FI: They lack patience, they can't team up well with fellow colleagues, they complain a lot about their fellow team members, they don't tolerate others at all.

Alex: Suppose you have observed in your team members those who have average knowledge about cultural differences (their cultural sensitivity and awareness is average), would you be kind to describe their attitudes, behaviour and qualities in the team?

FI: They can cooperate a bit and they are also acceptable sometimes. They don't complain too much but sometimes you can see that they have some weaknesses which can affect their team

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members. But its uncommon.

Alex, now based on your experience as a leader in your team, in what ways do you think the acquisition of the skills and knowledge of the culture competencies would help you and your team members?

FI: Team members would learn how to accept and accommodate each other. Members would be proactive because they would understand the attitudes and behavior of their colleagues. As I leader, it would make my work very easier since I will not leave other important jobs to resolve problems in the team, I can also manage effectively, trust would improve and the over all performance in the team would be high.

Alex: Working with such a dynamic team, what sort of advice would you give to leaders leading such teams and their team members?

FI: Cultural differences are very important for any multicultural team, therefore respect each other cultures, understand the differences in your team, you should understand peoples attitude and, we should be able to plan together as a team and be more patient. As leaders, we have to give some consideration to all team members irrespective of attitudes and behavior.

APPENDIX F: Screenshots for Sample Codes for Team Leaders

NVivo Pro — PhD Project (Team Leaders).nvp

Name	Sources	References	Created O	Created By	Modified	Modified B
Q6. Strategies to induce feedback from team members	2	3	19/03/201	AE	19/03/201	AE
Q6. Team building skills	5	5	19/03/201	AE	19/03/201	AE
Q7. Not conscious of self awareness (pitfall)	3	4	20/03/201	AE	04/09/201	AE
Q7. Personal cultural self awareness is average	13	13	20/03/201	AE	20/03/201	AE
Q7. Personal cultural Self awareness is high	12	12	20/03/201	AE	21/03/201	AE
Q8. Experience and skills in cultural general knowledge is good	9	9	20/03/201	AE	20/03/201	AE
Q8. Experience and skills in cultural general knowledge is medium	15	15	20/03/201	AE	20/03/201	AE
Q8. Experience and skills in cultural general knowledge is very high	4	4	20/03/201	AE	20/03/201	AE
Q9. By identifying how team members communicate and react to issues	3	3	20/03/201	AE	21/03/201	AE
Q9. By undertsanding their attitudes and behaviour	18	18	20/03/201	AE	20/03/201	AE
Q9. No skills and experience	6	7	20/03/201	AE	21/03/201	AE
Q9. Open minded and team spirit	7	7	20/03/201	AE	20/03/201	AE
Q9. Sociable and undertsands personal culture	5	5	20/03/201	AE	20/03/201	AE
Q9. They are more accepting irrespective of race	4	4	20/03/201	AE	20/03/201	AE
Race differences	1	1	17/03/201	AE	17/03/201	AE
Roles of management	3	3	17/03/201	AE	17/03/201	AE
Skills and knowledge to organise cultural differences training	1	1	19/03/201	AE	19/03/201	AE
The importance of cultural differences	1	1	18/03/201	AE	18/03/201	AE
Trust and risk taking	3	4	17/03/201	AE	21/03/201	AE
Work ethics	3	3	17/03/201	AE	17/03/201	AE

Coding for team leaders

APPENDIX G: Screenshots for Sample Codes for Team Members

APPENDIX H: The Application of Consolidated Criteria to Report Qualitative Research (COREQ)

No	Item	Guide Questions/Description
Domain 1: Research team and reflexivity		
Personal Features		
1	Interviewer/facilitator	Alex E. Asampong
2	Credentials	Doctoral candidate
3	Occupation	Lecturer and consultant (International HRM and Cross-Cultural Management
4	Gender	Male
5	Experience and training	Ten years +
Relationship with participants		
6	Relationship established	Yes! through internship supervision/training
7	Participant knowledge of the interviewer	Research goals/reasons
8	Interviewer characteristics	Sociable, open-minded and professional
Domain 2: study design		
Theoretical framework		
9	Methodological orientation and Theory	The social constructionist theory, the basic interpretive design and thematic data analysis
Participant selection		
10	Sampling	The snowball and self - selection sampling
11	Method of approach	Face-to-face, Skype, WhatsApp, telephone and email
12	Sample size	68
13	Non-participation	5 dropped due to busy schedules
Setting		
14	Setting of data collection	Workplace
15	Presence of non-participants	No. Only participants and myself
16	Description of sample	Important demographic features like race, age, gender, experience, education and etc
Data collection		

17	Interview guide	I used four interview guides for the face-to-face, skype/WhatsApp, observation, email and telephone interviews. I did a pilot study too.
18	Repeat interviews	No repeated interviews
19	Audio/visual recording	Philips Voice Tracer DVT4000/00 Digital Voice Recorder'
20	Field notes	I took field notes
21	Duration	Longest time = 80 minutes and minimum time = 30 minutes
22	Data saturation	Yes (Morse and Richards, 2002)
23	Transcripts returned	Not yet. I agreed to provide them detailed information after study.
Domain 3: analysis and findings		
Data analysis		
24	Number of data coders	Many codes were done by NVivo 11 pro software
25	Description of the coding tree	The NVivo 11 pro software provided detailed knowledge for that
26	Derivation of themes	Some few themes were identified in advance during the transcribing process, but most of them were derived from the thematic data analysis
27	Software	Dragon software transcribed the voice recorded messages into written documents and NVivo 11 Pro for coding
28	Participant checking	Some participants have provided some feedback to the findings, but a detailed report would be shared finally
Reporting		
29	Quotations presented	Participant quotations were used to report the findings and staged names were used to represent them
30	Data and findings consistent	There was a consistency between the data presented and the findings
31	Clarity of major themes	I reported key themes for the findings
32	Clarity of minor themes	I reported the minor themes to support the major ones