Global Leadership: The Growing Necessity of Intercultural Skills

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Abstract

Globalization is a phenomenon of transformative change that affects corporate, leaders and individuals dramatically and swiftly. The position of the global corporate leader has, in turn, become highly complicated and Fortune 500 companies are struggling to meet today's corporate leadership demands. A special technique for producing global business leaders with the development of intercultural competences in response to this problem. Once global corporate leaders are strongly multicultural, they may transfer their expertise on to rising generations of leaders through a range of maneuvers and practices that have demonstrated their ability to navigate the global business field. In semi-structured interviews with global corporate leaders, this research employed a qualitative method to acquire a fuller sense of the problems in building its intercultural competences.

Keywords: Corporate Leadership, Intercultural Competences, Global Leadership, Emotional Intelligence, Globalization

I. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has been more a galvanizing force in the world, appearing as an important event around 2000 (Goldsmith, Greenberg, Robertson & Hu-Chan, 2003). Globalization is still striving to transform in many areas, particularly in international trade. Global corporates have seen profound organizational shifts, notably in Fortune 500 companies, while seeking further profit in the outside world. Global transformation produces a significant pull on the business, pushing it to move from reactive to proactive business strategies. According to Sanchez (2000), the corporate strategy, structure, design, processes and systems may need a modification since they expand their limits to foreign locations so the corporate can adapt to new worldwide surroundings. Such business transformations are multifaceted and necessitate an extensive, quick and evolutionary shift.

Background of Problem

Global leaders and their teams have myriad possibilities to benefit, develop and grow. But the challenging dilemma of how to better absorb and adapt to the combined calculus of change for cultural, generational, technologically, economically, linguistically and virtually managed problems characteristic of globalisation, stymies many leaders. Providentially, global leaders with ongoing learning behaviors may have uncovered an essential differentiation. Pusch (2009) stresses the importance of global leadership as leaders who love to learn. Global leaders who use learning may in many situations build excellent change management competences, a vital element for effective global leadership (Subrahmanyam, 2019).

The criteria used to advance corporate leaders into global leadership roles differ from industry to industry and from business to business. Often the mastery of technical skills such as marketing

or finance is the main reason why corporate leaders with extended responsibilities are promoted to regional or global roles. However, with such a promotion, global corporate leaders might rapidly learn that technical competences may not suffice to meet the complexity of their new duties. As stated, both by the booming leading literature and the development business, global leaders are aware of the important approach to boost professional performance by building intercultural competences.

Statement of the Problem

In contemporary global leadership development initiatives, the notion and practice of intercultural competences are of great importance. Jenkins (2006) has asserted that intercultural and international management capabilities become essential tools of leadership – in particular efficient intercultural competences that include or can cultivate corporate leaders' strategies and practices to achieve positive and impactful communication with global audiences (Subrahmanyam, 2017).

There are several reasons why intercultural competences are developed. The continued merging of cultures, people and businesses will continue quickly with globalization. Effective co-operation is essential for every corporate leader to undertake the profound globalization transition and impact productivity and diversity at work. A research by the United States American Management Association (2012) indicated that cross-cultural innovation will be at the center of global leadership in the next years.

Purpose of the Study

First, this research attempted to identify the major problems facing global leaders in the development of intercultural competences. Given the increasingly complicated global positions, the research sought to identify what kinds of leadership tasks hinder their effective navigation across cultures to achieve goals, drive change, manage relations and develop talent. Global leaders may better contextualize and comprehend the reasons behind the need of the development of intercultural competences with these problems explained. The research then attempted to establish the most prevalent strategies and approaches global leaders use to improve intercultural competences, defined by these global leadership challenges.

Four essential assumptions are made: showing intercultural competence gives the greatest way to prosper rising global corporates and no leader even achieves intercultural competences completely functioning.

The objective of this research was to find a unique combination of strategies and behaviors which stimulate and encourage the continued efforts of global leaders to build intercultural competences.

Third, the research clarified guidelines for global leaders to gauge their progress in the development of intercultural competences. It is difficult to quantify the efficacy of leadership in any field of expertise, particularly intercultural competence. Nonetheless, the research aimed to point out some of the global leaders' macro and micro dimensions to identify their intercultural competences.

Finally, it involves the ability to train others a shared notion of mastery. To this purpose, global leaders with excellent intercultural competences should be able to train others in this field. With years of experience possibly growing their intercultural competences, global leaders are able to make suggestions a top priority for a new generation of leaders, who have developed their own intercultural competences early on.

Significance of the Study

At dizzying speed, globalization advances. Many scholarly and practicing groups will have a lasting interest in how global leaders achieve best in the work environment. This research is predicted to be useful to intercultural groups, world leaders, internal global staff and talent management and external international consultants and coaches and mentors who create global leadership.

Research Questions

- In establishing intercultural competences, what obstacle do global leaders face?
- How do global leaders use common techniques and practices to improve intercultural competences?
- How can global leaders evaluate their intercultural competences successfully?
- What are global leaders' advices for emerging leaders wanting to build intercultural competences?

Defining Terms

Globalisation – Globalization is a global move towards the integration of corporations, counties and individuals into economic, financial, trade and communications.

Intercultural Skills – refers to a constellation of strategies and experiences that global leaders can or do have to build in order to accomplish goals by having a positive and effective engagement, influence and communication.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Global corporate leaders are inevitably facing extraordinary changes as a result of globalization's preeminence and its revolutionary impact on business. The concept of effective global leadership so quickly becomes more complicated. This research suggested that leaders focused on acquiring intercultural competences have a good chance of being effective in their constantly increasing global business protagonists.

Leadership

Leadership comes in numerous ways. Theoreticians in the unavoidable argument as to whether or not leaders are born favor the conclusion that they are born as a more accurate stance to support the traits theory. Zaccaro (2007) described leadership qualities as persistent patterns of attributes that contribute to efficient leadership in business and team contexts. A leader as conflict resolver in certain leadership situations is inherent in this description and can differ considerably dependent upon the daily routine of a leader.

Theories of leadership have informed leadership effectiveness methods and practices. Burns

(1978) recognized that learning apropos is designed to shape good leaders. In other words, leaders who reflect on their experiences regularly might obtain an important insight into their personal efficacy. But for each leader, this path is a personal one. Burns noted that each leader's learning experience is so unique that it becomes impossible. Each leader possesses a certain way of thinking, skills and expertise – notably among senior positions – which is individually specific.

Mikkelsen and Jarche (2015) concentrated their attention on competences and proposed that, because competences appear to have a shelf life of around five years, they now have to expand comfortably. The notion that it becomes reflects the external swiftness of change and consequently shapes today's leaders' internal expectations. Global leaders should therefore work both in themselves and elsewhere on encouraging learning. While personal leadership learning has a universal understanding of the factors that impact leaders across the cultures, Burns nevertheless endorsed. Globalization provides a plenty of scope to further determine the efficacy of leadership.

III. LEADERSHIP INTELLIGENCE

Emotional Intelligence

There are two aspects, the interpersonal and the intrapersonal, both essential elements of the emotional intelligence. The research carried out by Goleman (1995) prominently highlighted leaders' work. If leadership does not really mean dominating, but rather the competence of convincing others to cooperate for a shared objective (Goleman, 1995), the focus on raising good sentiments while reducing negative team emotion is a feasible way to develop transformative leadership.

Instances of a multifarious of emotional intelligence that benefits people and teams but also helps inform business approaches to excellence in operational matters and leadership. While business is naturally complicated, cooperation is the human aspect and eventually changes have a profound influence (Goleman, 1998). The difficulty consists of establishing

expectations and modeling leadership roles that show the tenets of emotional intelligence. In order to feel the effect of emotional intelligence, both aspects must be present (Subrahmanyam, 2018). Like an informed strategy to lead, inspired leadership practices may be found in teams that impact the larger corporate culture.

Social Intelligence

Researchers have also found that social intelligence was one of the first differentiators in the exploration of the field of general intelligence. Investigators validated the distinction between EI and SI and noted that social intelligence is linked to predictive behaviours (Kobe, Reiter-Palmon & Rickers, 2001). For the practitioner, SI is comprised of two components: social awareness and social facility. The sine qua non of social awareness is the internal ability to read situations and feelings and innately understanding complex social situations. The application of SI awareness creates a bridge to effectiveness, where global leaders may apply SI skills. Taking into account social awareness, global leaders can work toward ensuring smooth social interactions by demonstrating care and concern (Goleman, 2006) among colleagues and teams.

Researchers have made links between SI and cultural intelligence. Typically, global leaders competent in Cultural Intelligence may be high in SI as well (Crowne, 2013). Further, Crowne (2013) determined that CI is subsumed under SI because CI is typically unnecessary for global leaders if they operate within a domestic context. Expanding on Crowne's research, Wawra (2009) found that global leaders may leverage the superordinate emotional component of SI to enhance intercultural interpersonal connectivity through nuanced communication. Global leaders who care for others and demonstrate empathy elements through different cultural lenses effectively bridge SI and CI (Dong, Koper & Collaco, 2008).

Cultural Intelligence

A relatively new body of research and application postdates social intelligence and emotional intelligence and offers a strong construct to arrive at effective practices of global leaders developing intercultural skills (Ng, Van Dyne & Ang, 2012). While CI is a broad term, Earley and Ang (2003) clarified it as a person's capability to adapt effectively to new cultural contexts. To expand it CI also can be viewed as a complementary level of intelligence that determines the extent to which an individual successfully copes with diversity (Ang & Van Dyne, 2015).

To be skilled in cultural adaptation – the measure of effective CI – requires recognizing the confluence of cognitive, motivational and behavioural skills (Earley & Ang, 2003). Acknowledging that global leaders need all three elements to demonstrate CI, this study focused on this particular behaviour ability in global leaders. However, the cognitive element of CI is important and Earley and Ang (2003) posited that it begins with using knowledge of the self, knowledge of the social environment and knowledge of information handling. Reinforcing this position, Earley and Mosakowski (2004) noted that while there is a connection between CI and Ei, CI expands the realm of the effectiveness of intercultural contexts.

Globalisation

Among many manifestations, globalization has created a new type of interconnectedness driven by its sine qua non – the search for more profit outside of a country's national borders. It is observed that over 40% of the earnings of American S&P corporate now originate their profits from outside the country (Earley and Mosakowski (2004). This profit search enables access to new resources that promote linkages, learning and revenues, all compelling in their own right. Further, advances in technology, big data and communication all buttress globalization, allowing it to continue apace.

Expanding on Levitt (1983) and Zeiler and Eckes's (2002) research, it can be argued that the world has entered a new phase of globalization. It is shrinking the world from a size small to size tiny and flattening the playing field at the same

time (Freidman, 2005). At this stage, the focus in on the individual. Confirming Friedman's assertion, Charan (2013) noted that the world is now tilting toward developing countries including China, India, Indonesia and Brazil. Some global corporate has already recognized this shift, whereas others still need more time to appreciate the scope of this transformation and its market implications.

Irrespective of global conglomerate success in the new marketplace, globalization affects the inner workings of corporate differently. Often, as Ghemawat (2012) noted, more visible evidence such as travel creates a perception that a firm is more global than it really may be. Strategies, structures and processes may still be more internationally focused rather than globally integrated. Ghemawat explained that audit may include a combination of hard data on economics, politics and market footprint. Such an audit is a necessary activity to ensure internal hard and soft assets are in alignment with the broader market strategies of global corporate. Corporate human assets are the most notable and they are certainly not immune to globalizing phenomena.

Global Leadership

Whether in public or private corporate, leadership remains the linchpin of long-term success. However, given the contextual complexity of today's rapidly changing world, the previous paradigms of how to lead in an increasingly global world are undergoing a profound test. Subrahmanyam (2020) argues that leadership traits, skills and acumen easily translate to the global arena, obviating any distinction between the national and international. In contrast, Osland and Bird (2006) noted that global leadership differs from domestic leadership in degree… relating to connectedness, boundary spanning, complexity… and building learning environments and teams large-scale change efforts across diverse cultures. Mendenhall et al., (2013) asserted that global corporate leadership work is transformative in itself, netting new mental models through the process

of becoming more competent with global complexity. Globalization and leadership conspire to create global leadership that more researchers claim merits further study.

It is evident that global leaders can be made in ways that complement their innate skills to increase their effectiveness. However, becoming an effective global leader is a process that may take years; this includes building up the reputation that one seeks both internally and potentially, in the perception of the external marketplace. Global leaders who embrace intercultural relating through the notion of mindfulness may well be better poised to be more effective (Thomas, 2006; Thomas et al., 2008). Tuleja (2014) noted that mindfulness is an effective bridge between knowledge and behaviour for global leaders involves reflective practice.

GLOBE Study

Based on Hofstede's (1993) work and interest in charismatic leadership theory, House et al, (2004) conceived, developed and launched a definitive intercultural study named the Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness Research program (GLOBE)The study was designed to explore the fascinating the complex effects of culture on leadership, organizational effectiveness, economic competitiveness of societies and the human condition of members of the societies studied (House et al., 2004). The study took an ethnic-relativist approach to culture and leadership. Ultimately, House et al., identified nine major global cultural attributes and six major global leadership themes emanating from the 62 societies that were under study. The global leadership dimensions are charismatic/value-based leadership, team-oriented leadership, participative leadership, humane oriented leadership, autonomous leadership and self-protective leadership.

Next Generation Global Leadership

Emerging global leaders associated with the Millennial Generation and their unique wants and needs are expanding the boundaries of

effective global leadership. Millennial Generation leadership looks different than any other previous generation, albeit with promising possibilities to fill corporate ranks with globally skilled leaders. Culturally and generationally, there is another significant gravitational pull affecting corporate and the global corporate leaders at their helm – a higher focus on universal norms and values, in essence, doing good to do well. This is a clear priority for the Millennial Generation. Shawn (2015) noted that the current social good movement is driven by the Millennial Generation and that this is having a distinct economic impact. Witness global corporate and their leaders taking notice of this trend; it is becoming a key metric of global corporate perception and efficacy.

Intercultural Skills

The global corporate leaders are facing complexity in their roles that defy traditional and repeatable leadership strategies and practices. Through the identification and development of finely nuanced intercultural skills, global corporate leaders may find the strongest return on investment in their efforts to become more effective in their roles. Earley and Ang (2003) offered a model for cross-cultural competencies germinating from a foundation where competence in cross-cultural functioning means learning new patterns of behaviour and effectively applying them to appropriate settings. Here, it is not only to know what is appropriate but also to apply knowledge to intercultural interactions. The application may be more or less successful, the determination of which requires the ability to reflect upon past actions. To perform this task effectively, global corporate leaders will need to draw on their ability to learn and relearn, since cultural competence is not static.

IV. METHODOLOGY

In response to globalization, corporate are approaching leadership and leader development more urgently than ever before. Corporate that have enjoyed success in developing a cadre of successful global leaders realize it is a challenge that requires an ongoing focus on the changes in the global market presence and the ensuring talent wars. Insightful corporate have already begun to leverage intercultural skill building to develop global leaders as a means of accelerating business success. This study sought to reveal key practices for intercultural skill building among global corporate leaders. Using their roles as context, global leaders first diagnose principal challenges to developing intercultural skills.

Contextually, it may be helpful to identify the philosophical constructs underpinning this study. Of the four predominant knowledge claim philosophies, this study was rooted in the social constructivism domain. Creswell (2003) noted that the assumptions behind the proponents of social constructivism hold that individuals week understanding of the world in which they live and work. Based on the philosophical grounding in social constructivism and its knowledge claims, it is now important to consider appropriate approaches to research. This study employed a qualitative methodological approach. According to Creswell (2003), a qualitative inquiry bases knowledge claims on constructive, as described previously.

Participant Selection

Participant selection for any study must be purposeful, or purposive, in the case of a qualitative research study. In purposive sampling, the setting, actors, events and process are expressly considered to ensure that the data gathered and analysed are of highest quality (Creswell, 2003). The population selected for this study was a Fortune 500 corporate with significant revenue sources and specific focus on its entire global functional leadership. Ultimately, the population interviewed numbered 15 global leaders to ensure the study was representative, reliable and valid – meaning global leaders were selected according to the selection criteria. The size of the sample yielded a group of global corporate leaders from different business functions, representing the variant demographics.

Data Collection

The collection took the form of semi-structured interviews lasting up to one hour in length. The instrument to collect data from participants was a semi-structured interview. Throughout the interview, nuanced communication techniques were employed to ensure that the interview reflected and recounted his / her experiences in developing intercultural skills. Open-ended questions were asked and adequate response time allowed, so interviewees could comprehensively respond without any hint of leading. Each of the participants noted the value of this study and demonstrated an eagerness to participate in the opportunity to share their global leader experience.

V. ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Global corporate leadership is being redefined by the speed of external transformation with which global corporate leaders must contend. As a result, transformation begets internal complexity that risks impeding corporate leaders' professional effectiveness. A critical assumption validated by research-based evidence purports that developing intercultural skills provides the most fruitful opportunity for global corporate leaders to be effective.

Upon the review of the data, it was surmised that global corporate leaders offered manifold strategies and practices that determined their intercultural effectiveness. The data revealed a focus on three key areas that determined global corporate leader effectiveness. Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) cite three areas in the Deardorff pyramid model of intercultural competence comprised of foundational attitudinal, knowledge and skills. This trio drives the desired internal and external outcomes among corporate leaders operating within the global context. According to Saldana (2016), descriptive coding assigns labels to data to summarize in a word or short phrase, most often as a noun, the basic topic of a qualitative data. For each participant response to the particular interview question, certain essential concepts emerged naturally. These numbered anywhere from a few to several per interview question per participant.

The purpose of this study focused on identifying among a sample of global corporate leadership the strategies and practices used to develop their intercultural skills…

Common challenges global corporate leaders face developing intercultural skills. Global corporate leaders recognize that becoming effective in their corporate roles requires a commitment to acknowledge and address the challenges in developing intercultural skills. The findings of this study validate that all 15 participants demonstrated this commitment through their subsequent articulation of myriad challenges that were then identified as the most salient.

Overcoming intercultural complexities as evidenced by global corporate leaders:
➢ Striving to achieve intercultural understanding,
➢ Connecting appropriately with culturally diverse people,
➢ Working to overcome intercultural communication challenges, and
➢ Developing more agility with intercultural navigation.

Cultivating global corporate leadership effectiveness with an emphasis on:
➢ Advancing their ongoing technical and human skill development abilities,
➢ Managing expectations and conflict between global and local stakeholders,
➢ Coping with the day-to-day stress of being or travelling overseas, and
➢ Advancing team strength.

Common strategies and practices global corporate leaders engage in to develop intercultural skills. The sine qua non of this study focused on strategies and practices in which global corporate leaders engaged to develop intercultural skills. A rich and thick description was achieved with the depth.

Executing finely tuned global, intercultural practices:
➢ Practicing nuanced communication skills,

> ➢ Demonstrating awareness and sensitivity and
> ➢ Influencing appropriately with different audiences.

Committing to personal leadership effectiveness:
> ➢ Reflecting and learning continuously,
> ➢ Developing emotional intelligence skills within an intercultural context, and
> ➢ Building stronger relationships.

Common success measures of global corporate leaders in developing intercultural skills. In today's busy world, an opportunity for reflection may be one of the first occasions global corporate leaders have to assess their success in developing intercultural skills. This study provided them with this opportunity. The findings for their success measures are listed subsequently, interestingly coinciding with some challenges and many strategies and practices for developing intercultural skills.

Team Health:
> ➢ Qualitative – team morale, satisfaction, productivity and cohesion, and
> ➢ Quantitative – retention and promotion levels.

Personal transformation as evidenced by:
> ➢ Higher efficacy,
> ➢ Better adaptability,
> ➢ Mindset expansion,
> ➢ Skill-set improvement,
> ➢ Career satisfaction, and
> ➢ Stronger global relationships

Common recommendations global corporate leaders have for emerging leaders who wish to develop intercultural skills. The millennial generation already occupies a not insignificant percentage of global corporate leadership roles; this number will only increase in the next decade to well over 50%. Global corporate leaders enjoyed the opportunity to share recommendations and advice in the course of this study.

- Obtaining global assignments or travel early in one's career

- Leveraging early life global travel, multi-cultural learning and foreign language abilities
- Committing to ongoing development of technical and leadership skills
- Managing actively a globally focused career
- Remaining positive attitudes that exemplify openness, curiosity and expansiveness.

VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The findings of this research validate previous findings of notable intercultural researchers. Deardorff model of intercultural competence, which presents a unique constellation of attitudes, knowledge and skills that drive global corporate leaders' overall effectiveness (Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009). Being an effective global corporate leader working effectively in the intercultural domain provides for manifold intrinsic and extrinsic benefits. For many, it is a lifelong pursuit that begins with intercultural exposure to the new and different, inciting the curiosity, openness and learning inherent to their current success on the global stage. At whatever point global corporate leaders discover and engage in intercultural skill development, professional and personal transformations ensue. The corporate leaders' own reflective accounts of their intercultural skill development and effectiveness in the global space contribute to a current and unique constellation of mindsets, skills and toolsets needed for them to succeed (Subrahmanyam, 2018). Ultimately, global corporate leaders with highly developed intercultural skills can make a lasting positive impact on their corporate, their teams, individual team members and most importantly themselves.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest to declare for this publication.

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