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Business Culture Impact on the Individuals Involved in the International Business Negotiation Process.

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Title

Business culture impact upon the individual involving in the international business negotiation

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Abstract

Research in the field of culture is increasing, and it is considered to be a sensitive topic. The impact of cultural diversity on international business has recently been the focus in the field. On the other hand, this research looks into the business culture impact on individuals involved in international business negotiation.

The *purpose* of the thesis is to investigate how business culture can have an influence on the individual in a negotiation process when doing international business negotiation. The method was qualitative by conducting interviews with eighth individual cases, which was dividing into two settings; therefore, four participants for each setting.

The *findings and conclusion* illustrate that the difference in business culture does indeed affect the international business negotiation process in this particular multi-case study of this thesis. Moreover, the finding also shows the impacts on the participants involving in this research on their ways of preparing and planning their strategy before negotiating internationally. Also, the study shows, being flexible and adaptable is a quite powerful solution for companies, as well as individuals. Since being open to new information and methods of thinking help in reducing the risk of failure and raise the opportunity of success.

Keywords

International business, business culture, culture, culture in negotiation, negotiation, negotiation process, employee's adaptability, and diversity.

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1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the research area, followed by the problematization discussion of the selected topic, as well as the research purpose and research questions. Furthermore, the outline of the paper is presented at the end of the chapter.

1.1 Background

Global small and medium enterprises, multinational companies, and global public enterprises are examples of International Business (IB) firms (Chibba, 2014). Globalization and IB have old roots stating back to the period between the fifteenth century to the nineteenth century, many events and changes took place, which was the start of globalization and IB (Chibba, 2014). Nowadays, globalization is having a significant impact on many countries around the world in all aspects, such as living, culture, and politics (Wahab & Rashid, 2016). Nevertheless, globalization has created an opportunity for firms to formulate some sort of competitive advantage and bring value to their business (Moitra, 2004). Furthermore, Chibba (2014) expressed that “globalization is a multifaceted and multidisciplinary concept in terms of meaning, scope, and usage” (p. 477). Whereas IB is defined as “any business with a significant international dimension that views the world as its business territory” (Chibba, 2017, p. 477).

Moreover, it can be said that culture is one very key component in business and play a role in the strategic direction of businesses (Peleckis, 2014). Not only does culture influences the management, but it also affects the decisions and everything in business functions from the non-production sector to the production of the products (Passport to trade, 2019). According to Hofstede (2013) culture can be defined as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one human group from another (as cited in Chmielecki & Sulkowski, 2017, p.554). Therefore, culture cannot be declared, as it is a pair of the lens which everyone conflict, hence it is not possible to leave it behind especially when looking through the process (Chmielecki & Sulkowski, 2017). On the other hand, Ma & Marquis (2016) argue that culture can be defined differently, in which it can be given a broad or narrow definition, while North (1990) defines culture as “an informal constraint that provides a language-based conceptual framework for encoding and interpreting the information that the senses are presenting to the brain.” (as cited in Ma & Marquis, 2016, p.2). In related to culture, the business culture is, however, more its unique dimension, which includes meeting, formalities, negotiation, and work placement, for instance. Nevertheless, business culture is related to

behavior, ethics, etiquette and more which business culture will then encompass as an organization's values, visions, working style, beliefs and habits (Passport to trade, 2019).

Nowadays, companies tend to extend their products and operations beyond national boundaries, which not only it creates a need for understanding a different culture but also the necessity to do some form of cross-culture negotiation. Therefore, when dealing between two parties from different countries, this may highly be dependent on the ability to understand the culture from both sides, which will result in a success or failure of a business deal (Yadav & Shankar, 2016). For this reason, it is essential to take into account different business culture in an international business setting. Moreover, Agndal (2017) defined negotiation as a process where more than two parties try to influence each other for achieving their goals. Whereas, Agndal, Åge & Eklinder-Frick (2017) have expressed that negotiation is one of the essential elements in a business exchange, as negotiation can take place with either newly formed or well-established relationship (Åge, Herbst & Hedberg, 2017). Furthermore, according to Åge et al. (2017) negotiation can be defined as “interpersonal decision-making processes in which at least two parties with at least partly different interests try to come to a joint agreement, play a crucial role in industrial markets” (p. 485). Moreover, Brett & Thompson (2016) claims that negation will affect the nature of the interaction between parties in a negotiation process. Adding on Walton & McKersie (1965) expressed that there are two different negotiation strategies; distributive strategy, where the negotiators focus on claiming as much value as possible for themselves and integrative approach, this is when both firms focus on creating value and claiming benefit (as cited in Brett & Thompson, 2016).

Subsequently, as the world has become more globalized, resulting in the increase in global trading, leading to the vast amount of cross-culture business negotiations and deal to occur as well (Paliwoda 2012: Yusuf, 2003). Subsequently, negotiations within an international business setting have grown more in recent years but are certainly not something new and can be dated back to the Romans and Egyptians (Imai & Gelfand, 2010). Then again, the increase in cultural exchanges has become more open as countries have become more dependent on each other (Lecodia, 2015). Besides the argument stating above, negotiation is also defined by many researchers, as the process between buyer and seller that wish to conduct business to reach an agreement over a current disagreement/new business deal in order to result in both parties being satisfied (Raiffa, 1982: Lukasz & Nowak, 2010). However, today, many studies in regard to

cultural differences within the business aspect and the markets are point mainly towards Asian businesses (Fang 2006; Terwatanayong & Quazi 2006; Sajid et al. 2009).

1.2 Problematization

Nowadays, globalization has influenced how firms conduct business with each other, as it is becoming more common for businesses to work internationally and frequently encounter different business cultures (Wang, Wang & Ma., 2016). Therefore, understanding the different business cultures that exist today since businesses in every country have different business cultures and work differently is becoming more important. If a firm is unaware of certain business cultures, this could have a negative impact on their business when meeting or negotiating with the company. Meetings and negotiations may be handled entirely differently; therefore, if a firm is unaware of this, the outcome of the business meeting could be significantly affected (Wang et al., 2016). This is a growing issue and is one that must be further researched in order to identify what differences exist today to help better prepare firms when conducting business with international clients.

Additionally, when touching upon the subject of cultural diversity, Hofstede (1980) research are one of the most well-known to be the first empirical research to describe cultural differences. Nevertheless, the empirical findings of Hofstede's dimensions have been widely used to support other research (Gupta, 2012). Moreover, Hofstede's studies have received a lot of criticism, questioning of the claims and methods used to gather the information (Hunt, 1981 as cite in Gupta 2012; Shackleton & Ali, 1990). Dimensions conducted by Hofstede (1980) such as; Power distance, Individualism, Masculinity, Uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation, Indulgence have been used as a starting point to gain a deeper understanding of culture value (Gupta, 2012; Pantelic & Pinter, 2016). However, Hofstede's (1980) cultural values showed a more dearth of explanatory power in culture research (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006). Instead, the writers are focusing on the empirical-based evidence and the explanation of cultural differences and effectiveness of the negotiation process.

Moreover, various studies on culture and negotiation have used different formulate to cultural differences with a limit success on it, this can be due to that the traditional cultural constructs (individualism vs. collectivism) have limited explanatory power (Kirkman et al., 2006 as cited in Brett, Gunia & Teucher, 2017) and lack of theoretically grounded framework that links the cultural constructs to the context of negotiation (Brett et al., 2017). Anyhow, it was suggested by Brett et al. (2017) that the two psychological constructs which are very systematical in

culture and are also significant in the context of negotiation are trust and cultural tightness-looseness.

In international business negotiations, several factors influence the success of the negotiation or even to achieve the goal of the business with culture to be one of the most important factors to consider when planning a negotiation strategy, as Yu-xian (2013) argues that culture will always influence international business negotiations. This can be due to the facts that when doing international business, the lifestyle, thinking mode, and action patterns are different from that country to another (Yu-xian, 2013). Therefore, understanding the cultures difference before planning a business negotiation strategy can be crucial. Chmielecki & Sukowski (2017) also argue that the effect of culture on business negotiations is enormous and expressed that culture affects communication, which eventually leads to misunderstanding, and conflicts will arise when doing negotiations. Another important factor which may influence business negotiations is the individual negotiation skill, including their cross-cultural negotiation skills (Bachkirov, Rajasekar, Da Silva, 2016).

Nevertheless, in an international firm's setting, the culture diversity must also be consider as the individual that is responsible for doing the business negotiation for the firm might not have the same cultural background as to the firm's business culture, also that the counterpart that the firm is facing could also have a different way of handling and doing business negotiation. Therefore, to understand how the individual behaves and handle an international business negotiation, one must consider not only the business culture of the firm but also the cultural background of the individual, as well as the business culture of the counterpart that the firm's representative will be counted. As Hurn (2007a) claims that culture is not the only factor that could influence international business negotiations strategy, there are other factors such as, different languages, legal systems, tax regimes, labor laws, different business practices, for example, which needed to further look into before planning an international business negotiation strategy. Nevertheless, Brett et al. (2017) highlighted trust, the tightness-looseness of the cultural aspect, as well as the mindset, to explain the cultural differences in the used of negotiation strategies and the relationship of the strategy used and the negotiation outcomes.

Furthermore, the writers have created a model (Figure 1) in which is believed to be the influence of the firm's business culture that will have the impact on the individual who is responsible for the international business negotiation and together this will then lead to the negotiation process and/or outcomes with the counterpart. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned that the individual

must also be looked into as to what culture background can have influenced the way they behave, their mindset, as well as their strategic planning for the negotiation.

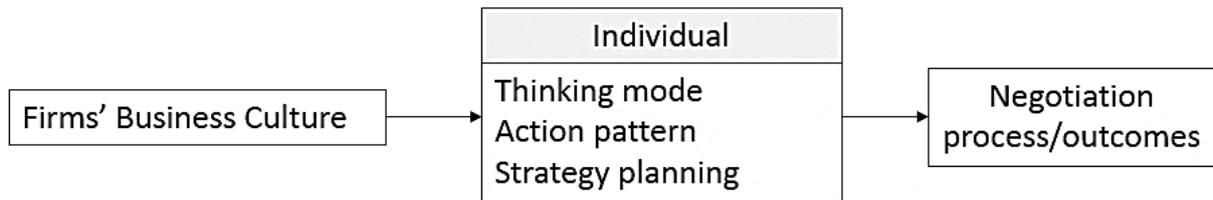


Figure 1: Firms' business culture impacts the individual in the negotiation process

1.3 Research purpose

The purpose of this research is to investigate how business culture can have an influence on the individual in a negotiation process when doing international business negotiation.

1.4 Research question

- RQ1: Does the business culture of the firm and/or counterpart play a role in international business negotiation?
- RQ2: How the individual with different culture background and experience can influence the way of planning international business negotiation?
 - Can a firm's business culture have influenced the way the individual performs in a negotiation process?

1.5 Outline of the thesis

This paper is divided into six chapters. Firstly, introducing the topic area of this specific research, as well as the problematization and research purpose, and the limitations. Secondly, the literature review chapter will be discussing the various theories chosen for this research. Thirdly, is the methodology chapter, which explains the research approach and data collection for this research. Fourthly, the empirical analysis, which presents the empirical findings of the study, as well as analysis the findings with the theory used in the research. Fifth, the discussion chapter, showing the overall cases finding in common themes which were drawn from the previous chapter sand analyzed with the theories. Lastly, the conclusion will be presenting the overall research finding of this study, as well as the practical implications, limitations, and further research of the paper.

2. Literature review

This chapter will present relevant theories and concepts concerning the chosen subject, and it will work as the theoretical foundation throughout this thesis.

2.1 Cultural theory

Hofstede culture dimensions became one of the most known culture theories in the academic world. This was when he published his first book *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values* in 1980. The model was generated from a study that was conducted on IBM employees. A survey and questionnaire were made and analyzed on 116,000 employees in seventy-two countries (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). The Hofstede model consists of five dimensions: Power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term/short-term orientation. Each dimension has a scale from 0 to 100 (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010).

Power Distance can be defined as “the extent to which less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally” (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010, p.88). This shows the hierarchy between the people living in the country and the powerful people in the country. Individualism/collectivism is defined as “people looking after themselves and their immediate family only, versus people belonging to in-groups that look after them in exchange for loyalty” (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010, p.88). People using “I” are more of individualist, whereas people using “We” are having collectivism culture. The third dimension is masculinity/femininity which can be defined as “The dominant values in a masculine society are achievement and success; the dominant values in a feminine society are caring for others and quality of life” (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010, p.89). In masculine society, achievement and performance are of importance. Uncertainty avoidance can be defined as “the extent to which people feel threatened by uncertainty and ambiguity and try to avoid these situations” (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010, p.89). Countries with high uncertainty avoidance mean there are strong rules and structure. The final dimension is short-term vs. long-term orientation and can be defined as “the extent to which a society exhibits a pragmatic future-orientated perspective rather than a conventional historic or short-term point of view” (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010, p.90). The values of short-term orientation include personal steadiness and stability, while long-term values are perseverance and ordering relationships (De Mooij & Hofstede, 2010).

As it was presented above, Hofstede's (1980) model is the most known in the culture field (Portugal Ferreira, Li, Rosa Reis & Ribeiro Serra, 2014). However, it is not the only culture

model. Hall (1976) proposed two culture dimensions: high-end low-context cultures. In a high-context culture, there are several contextual elements. In those cultures, there are several “unwritten” rules and norms which have a direct influence on how things work. Whereas in low-context cultures, communication is clearer. Additionally, in low-context cultures, they rely less on situational factors, non-verbal communication, and signs. One of the common culture models that are known in the field was made by Trompenaars (1993) differently. However, in some way, the Trompenaars (1993) overlaps Hofstede’s (1980) culture, model. Trompenaars (1993) presented seven cultural dimensions such as time, inter-personal relations, relation with nature, rules, and affections. Universalism vs. Particularism is the first dimension that deals with the relation of people have with rules and laws of the country. The second dimension is individualism vs. communitarianism, and it is the relation of people with others. The third dimension is effective vs. neutral; this is about how people deal with their emotions and whether they reveal it or not. Specific vs. diffuse is the fourth dimension, and this is about how people see their own lives. Achievement vs. ascription is how people deal with accomplishment. Perception of time, this is how people deal with time orientation. If they think about the past, present, or the future. The final dimension of Trompenaars (1993) culture model is a relation to nature, which refers to people related to the environment. One more cultural dimension that focused on leadership behavior and identified nine cultural dimensions (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman & Gupta, 2004). The nine cultural dimensions are performance orientation, assertiveness orientation, future orientation, humane orientation, institutional collectivism, family collectivism, gender egalitarianism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance.

2.2 Culture in international business

Culture plays an important role when doing business internationally. This especially happens when you are doing business with a company from a country that speaks a different language. Since you must take into consideration what can you say and what you should not say. As it may be understood in a wrong manner (Mitchell 2000). According to Mitchell (2000), the three most important culture components relate to business transactions. To begin with, language is considered one of the three most important component. However, language is not only what you speak and write. It includes non-verbal communication, such as gestures, body language, and facial expression. All of those deliver a strong message to the other person. Without understanding the culture of the person on the other side, there is a high chance of failing to deliver verbal and non-verbal communication. Instead of sending a positive message, you will be sending negative messages without knowing. The second component is religion, as it is seen

as a key component in business transactions. Religion can have a high impact on individual approach to business. This may happen even if the person is not religious. When doing business in the Arab world, there is the use of the term “Inshallala,” which refers to if God wills. By using this phrase, it is giving the decision to a higher power and lack of control what could happen. The third component is the different attitudes. Culture values have a role in the way business made. Understanding the different party culture is crucial. The consequence of failing to understand the culture is failing in making a deal; this could happen even before the negotiation stage begin. Therefore, understanding culture when doing business is one of the main factors that could either have a successful or failure (Mitchell 2000).

Mitchell (2000) also mention other components which are of relevance when conducting business internationally, which is important to keep in mind when doing business internationally. In which it could influence the success or failure of a business transaction. Manners and Customers are considered as one of the components that could have an impact. It is important to keep in mind the level of physical contact accepted and the space that people expect. Additionally, how formal or informal the greeting could be. The second component is art. Drama, music, literature, and architecture are manifestations of culture. In which it allows the person to get an insight into the culture and society. Hence, providing a clue of what can be tolerated and accepted within a specific culture. In some cultures, education is valued compared to other countries. Taking into consideration the academic level, degrees, and designing business cards in some countries, it is highly respected. On the other hand, in some cultures, this could be taken as an insult. Understanding how the people from specific culture value education, would help to understand how the business partner process information and knowledge. In this way, you would conduct the presentation differently as you have a person that is very educated and knowledgeable, where knowledge and education are something important to have in a specific society. Moreover, humor is another component that could play a role when business is conducted. Some societies have a high capacity of humor, whereas other societies do not accept humor and could be considered offensive. The final components are essential in a business transaction in social organizations. The organization chart of a corporation, the ability of an individual to join a group and how the groups are led can tell us a lot about the decision making the process. This helps to understand how the decision is made in a business process. Furthermore, it presents how much autonomy another party has in negotiation. A highly structured culture means a longer time in making decisions (Mitchell, 2000).

Carmen Lario de Oñate & Amador (2013) emphasize the importance of language and culture, by expressing that language and culture are two components that intertwine and cannot be separated, which when looking into globalization, the intercultural component has become part of learning a second language. Moreover, in international business, English is the main language of communication. This is also relevant in most social, cultural, and professional areas. Since the teaching and learning of business English have expanded since the 1990s especially through Europe. Since that time, there has been growth towards intercultural language learning; this helps to create awareness of cultural difference. Therefore, it is also important to be aware of cultural difference when doing business in English and generally doing business internationally. Hence, there is a need for intercultural and linguistic competence, which helps in learning how to interact with international professionals (Carmen Lario de Oñate & Amador, 2013). Additionally, Carmen Lario de Oñate & Amador (2013) in their study mention other key components to look into when doing business internationally such as working hours, behavior in the workplace, appropriate gifts, dressing and exchange of business cards. Furthermore, trust is looked into as an important concept in a business relationship (Jiang, Henneberg & Naudé, 2011). Since trust plays a crucial role in building relationships and maintaining relationships in a business transaction. Non-verbal communication is one of the components relates to the business transaction within a language. A gesture can mean good in some countries, whereas in other countries, it can be an insult (Tipton, 2008). According to Cullen & Parboteeah (2005), “The thumbs-up gesture means everything is going well for North Americans and many Europeans but is a rude gesture in Australia and West Africa” (as cited in Tipton, 2008, p.8).

2.3 Business culture

As previously mentioned, culture is a very key component in business, which has an impact on the strategic business direction. Thus, when managers operating internationally in a foreign country must have minimum knowledge over the rules and behaviors that a specific country must acquire professional relationships. People behave differently due to traditions and culture the country has (Nam, 2015). If international managers are unaware of this and fail to adapt to business culture differences, it can jeopardize the negotiation and have negative results (Budak, Rajh, & Stubbs, 2013). The following Figure 2 is a dynamic process of top-down-bottom-up across levels of culture by Leung, Bhagat, Buchan, Erez & Gibson, (2005). Moreover, the figure proposes a multi-level cultural approach, which views culture as various levels from macro-level (global culture and national culture) and micro level (organizational culture, group culture,

and individual behavior values assumptions). However, national culture, together with organizational culture are the two aspects which form business culture (Budak et al., 2013). Therefore, to understanding the business culture, one must look into and understand the core of national culture, as well as organizational culture.

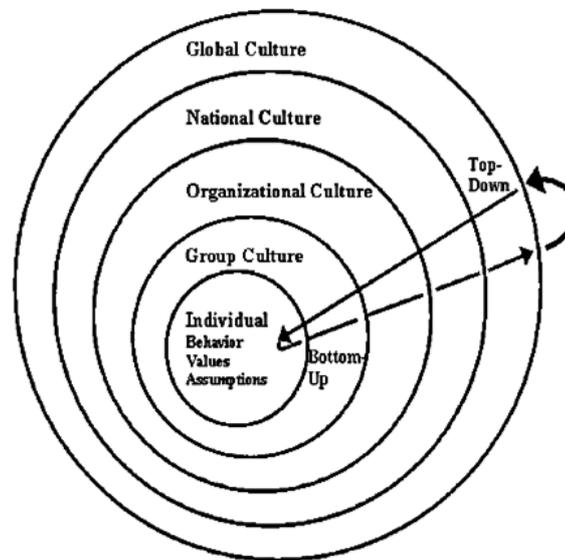


Figure 2: The dynamic of top-down-bottom-up processes across levels of culture

National culture has been explored by Hofstede as early as 1980 as to how culture different might have an influence on the business with the four original dimensions of national culture: *power distance*, *individualism vs. collectivism*, *masculinity vs. femininity*, and *uncertainty avoidance* (Budak et al., 2013) which was previously described. While in an organizational culture which was described by Brown (1995) “as a set of coded, rules and understandings about what is acceptable within a business and what is not” (as cited in Budak et al., 2013, p.91). According to Gupta & Govindarajan (2000), organizational culture consists of six major categories: information systems, people, process, leadership, reward system, and organization structure. (as cited in Ismail Al-Alawi, Yousif Al-Marzooqi & Fraidoon Mohammed, 2007). However, as Budak et al. (2013) have stated that business culture is commonly formed by both national and organizational culture with the consideration as a ”set of explicit and implicit rules that facilitate business interactions in a society”(Vaiman, Sigurjonsson and Davidsson, 2011 as cited in Budak et al., 2013, p.93)

Additionally, two kind of business culture can be distinguished: low-context culture (LCC) in which the partners clearly say what they mean: the language is direct and clear, and there is no ambiguity and high-context culture (HCC) in which attitudes and circumstances are more important than what is actually said (Nam, 2015). Moreover, Nam (2015) have discussed that

both LCC and HCC have a key role in the cross-cultural relationship of a business agreement, as in LCC it is considered to be an essential factor to have a written and sign contracts. On the other, in the traditional HCC, people are assumed to honor agreements made verbally resulting in less legal documents being conducted, in result some HCC it can be received and consider as a sign of disrespect if a written contract with a personal signature is requested, which can lead to the harming relationship. Moreover, in Table 1, shows the different characteristic between low-context culture and high-context culture style of communication, which was described by Nam (2015).

| High-context communication | Low-context communication |
|---|---|
| Less information is in the verbal message and more in the context; nonverbal communication (eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, the color of the envelope, etc.) matters more | Most of the information is in the verbal message (spoken words, written notes, legal documents, etc.) and less in the context |
| Important to read between the lines and consider the rank, age, gender, and class of the communicator. “Hear one and understand ten,” “Silence is golden.” | Direct message: “Get to the point.” “I mean what I say, and I say what I mean.” “Give me the bottom line.” |
| How the message is delivered is more important; what (content) is secondary. | <i>What</i> (content) is said is more important; <i>how</i> is secondary. |
| Circular writing style; topic sentence and key message often come at the end of the paragraph | Linear writing style; topic sentence and key message often come at the beginning of the paragraph |
| Building relationships is primary | Task-oriented |
| Conflict avoidance; frequent use of third parties to resolve problems; therefore, conflict resolution takes more time | Conflicts can be resolved relatively quickly |

Table 1: Low-Context/High-Context Communication by Nam (2015)

2.3.1 Diversity within the Firm

The increased of corporation depending on the firm diversity have become more common, as Dahlin, Weingart & Hinds (2005) expressed that with firm diversity benefits in terms of creating the efficiency environment in the workplace. In contrast to this, Østergaard, Timmermans, & Kristinsson (2011) suggested that firms with employees diversity can benefit in various ways such as the competence gained from the variety of skills, experience, and knowledge which comes along with the employees, and allowing the corporation to broaden their search activities and other routines, as well as encourage the firm to have a higher

absorptive capacity in exploring both external and internal knowledge through the interaction within the firms.

Nevertheless, Østergaard et al. (2011) argued that as employees within the firm have different education, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, resulting as the firm knowledge base to also become more diverse. Moreover, in the study conducted by Nathan & Lee (2013) suggested that employees diversity within a firm are particularly significant when considering exploring international market place, as the variety of knowledge, skill set and experience from the employees can help increase the firm competence (Dahlin et al., 2005; Østergaard et al., 2011). Subsequently, having diversity in the workforce can be considered positive, as it may create a broader space which helps firms to be more open to ideas and become more creative (Østergaard et al., 2011)

2.4 Culture in negotiation

Culture can greatly influence the way the individual communicates, think, and behave (Salacuse, 2004). Then again, the international business does not only deal with cross borders but also having to correlate with the cross-culture. Nevertheless, cultural differences between the firm's top management teams and the counterpart can create barriers which disrupt or smoothen the negotiation process. Salacuse (2004) has proposed ten elements that arise in the complexity of intercultural negotiations; negotiating goal, negotiating attitude, personal styles, communications, time sensitivity, emotionalism, agreement form, agreement building, team organization, and risk taking. These elements mentioned above can also be seen as the framework for identifying the differences between the culture that could emerge in the negotiation process. Therefore, Salacuse (2004) suggested firms or/and management team adopt some sort of framework into the international business negotiation before heading further into the process, which could help enable the firms/terms to better understand their counterpart, as well as to avoid any anticipate misunderstandings. Moreover, there has been widespread recognition of the impacts of cross-cultural differences on international negotiations (Metcalf, Bird, Peterson, Shankarmahesh & Lituchy, 2007). According to Cohen (1997) notes that cultural factors can end up making negotiations complicated, prolonged, and frustrated (as cited in Metcalf et al., 2007).

2.4.1 Negotiation process

According to Khakhar & Rammal (2013), the success of international settings negotiations requires the ability of managers to communicate their message in different cultural settings,

which require managers to adapt to the business environment that differs across countries and companies. In order to do that managers, need to be aware of the contextual factors influencing the negotiation process (Khakhar & Rammal, 2013).

The negotiation process is divided into three stages, which are the pre-negotiation phase, the face-to-face negotiation phase, and the post-negotiation phase (Ghauri, 2003). The pre-negotiation stage began with the first contact between the parties where interest in doing business together is shown. Some negotiations are taking place during this stage, and preliminary offers are being made. In this stage, both parties start to understand each other needs and the benefits of getting into the negotiation process. Moreover, both parties try to gather as much information as possible on each other. Such as the operating environment, the involvement of other third parties, influencers, competitors, and the infrastructure. Hence, at this stage, informal meetings take place. The perceived level of cooperation or conflict, power or dependence, and the expected benefits of the relationship, are the factors that decide if the parties will continue to the next stage. The pre-negotiation stage is considered more important than the formal negotiation in an international business relationship. Finally, at this stage, the parties get to formulate their strategy for face-to-face negotiation. The second stage of the negotiation process is the face-to-face stage. At this stage, the two parties evaluate the presented offer from each side and select the one that most suit their expectation. At this stage, each one views the situation the way they want it to be. Therefore, the outcome of this stage is unpredictable, which makes it important for each party to be open mind and to have several alternatives (Ghauri, 2003).

Moreover, Ghauri (2003) argues that studies show that the negotiation process is controlled by the partner who arranges the agenda as he can highlight his strengths and the weaknesses of the other party, thereby putting the other party on the defensive. The agenda may, however, reveal the position of the preparing party in advance and thus allow the other side to prepare its counterarguments on conflicting issues. It is also common for the perceiving party of higher relative power to make fewer concessions and for the weaker party to yield more, often to create a better atmosphere. Maintaining flexibility between parties and issues at this stage is of great importance. The final stage in a negotiation process is the post-negotiation. When a negotiation reaches this stage, it means all terms have been agreed upon. In which the contract is being made and ready to be signed (Ghauri, 2003). According to Ghauri (2003), writing the contract and the language used can be a stage in a negotiation process itself. Hence, the post-negotiation

stage can go back to face-to-face negotiation. Therefore, after exchanging concessions and holding discussions, both parties should read the agreed terms by keeping minutes of meetings. If the parties are too eager to reach an agreement and do not pay sufficient attention to details, problems may arise later during the execution of the contract. Thus, the best way to fix the problem is to clarify that both sides fully understand what they agreed before they leave the negotiating table (Ghauri, 2003).

According to Ghauri (2003), the above-presented negotiation process is influenced by four main factors, which are the background factors, the atmosphere factor, strategic factors, and cultural factors. The background factor includes the objective of the negotiation, location of the negotiation or the environment, the involvement of third parties such as government and the individual negotiators. The atmosphere factor focuses on if the negotiation is conducted in an environment of conflict, the power of the relationship between the parties, and expectation about how long the deal will be. The strategic factor includes knowing whether the style of negotiation is formal or informal, the strategy used by the negotiator, the decision-making process, and if an agent should be used in the negotiation process. The final factor is the cultural factor, which includes the use of time by the parties, the preference of the negotiating party for individualism or collectivism, the high or low contextual pattern of communication, and the importance of personal relations between the negotiators.

Furthermore, according to Brett & Gelfand (2005), there are five factors that are of importance to be considered in the negotiation process (as cited in Khakhar & Rammal, 2013). Judgment and concession making, this looks into whether the negotiators aim to persuade using rationality or emotionality. The second factor is motivation, which is the motivation to achieve economic capital or social capital. The third factor is attribution, are the traits of the negotiator's dispositional attribution or situational attribution. The fourth factor is communication; do the negotiators use direct information or indirect information sharing. The final factor is a confrontation, are the negotiators talking directly, or they have avoidance and indirectness.

2.4.2 The importance of negotiating the environment

It can be assumed that negotiation is a standardized process, such as the phases of the negotiation process, hierarchies of goals and objectives that would take place in a negotiation meeting (Lewis, 2006). However, as soon as different cultures are involved, there will be different approaches to how the negotiation will take place. This will be based on the characteristics of the culture. Hence, the culture will have an impact on the negotiation process and the

negotiation social environment (Lewis, 2006). For instance, the German will ask difficult questions from the beginning of the negotiation. As for Germans, the quality, efficiency, and service are of importance when doing business with any country. On the other hand, the French people tend to move very fast, but they might withdraw the deal fast. Whereas the Spanish people focus more on the person than on the deal. They study the person more than the deal and investigate whether you are honorable. This is the same case when it comes to Japanese; they must like you and build trust to have a successful deal. When doing business with Finns and Swedes, they expect to have modernity, efficiency, and new ideas. The American business approach is to get quick with the deal. It is important to discuss investments, budget, and profit. Nations with a long tradition of trading, such as the Netherlands and Portugal, are friendly and adaptable. Moreover, they are known to be good negotiators (Lewis, 2006).

Sofer, Sarne & Hassidim (2016) expressed that the nature of negotiation can be very costly and time-consuming. Nevertheless, the time consumed within the negotiation process may be the effect of something that is far more complex. Moreover, as the negotiation progresses, Sofer et al. (2016) stated that “the environment (and consequently the issues being negotiated) may change, as the agents learn more about the world” (p.725). According to Lewis (2006), in some culture’s negotiation is taken as a social event, and the environment plays a role in the success of the deal. The French, Spanish, Latin American, and the Japanese regards negotiation as the social ceremony. This includes participation and hospitality, which is a start for the negotiation process. However, the Americans, Australians, Britons, and Scandinavians are less concern about the social aspect of the negotiation meeting, whereas the Germans and Swiss people are in between. Since the US companies prefer to focus on the negotiation than on the social aspect, they want to get things quickly and discuss mutual profit and the objective of the negotiation. The Spanish culture and heritage which make them view the meeting as a social occasion and show great respect for it. The Japanese view the negotiation session as a way to know each other and to confirm the decision that was previously approved on. The French take the negotiation session as a social event; this comes from the history of French international trading. Therefore, the negotiation environment and the social aspect behind it plays a role when doing business internationally, which could either lead to a successful or frailer deal (Lewis, 2006).

2.4.3 Qualities of international negotiation

Business negotiation is conducted between two parties which aim at reaching an agreement. This is done through means of communication, such as face-to-face, telephone, or through

email. Therefore, communication is a crucial mediator in a business negotiation (Schoop, Köhne & Ostertag, 2010). According to Schoop et al. (2010) in a business negotiation process, there are two essential factors in negotiation quality. The two main factors in negotiation quality are effectiveness and efficiency. Therefore, communicative, strategic, and interaction of the negotiators determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the negotiation process outcome. Additionally, the quality of communication influences long-term business relationship (Schoop et al., 2010). Hence, communication acts as an important variable in negotiation quality, in which it impacts the negotiation process. This creates the need for means of communication since without means of communication negotiation cannot take place (Schoop et al., 2010). Peleckis (2014) claims that communication becomes more challenging when business is conducted globally, and the distance between two parties does not allow them to fully negotiate and take advantage of the negotiation process.

| American Negotiators | Japanese Negotiators | Chinese (Taiwan) Negotiators | Brazilian Negotiators |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Preparing and planning skill | Dedication to job | Persistence and determination | Preparation and planning skill |
| Thinking under pressure | Perceive and exploit the power | Win respect and confidence | Thinking under pressure |
| Judgment and intelligence | Win respect and confidence | Preparation and planning skill | Judgment and intelligence |
| Verbal expressiveness | Integrity | Product knowledge | Verbal expressiveness |
| Product knowledge | Demonstrate listening skills | Interesting | Product knowledge |
| Perceive and exploit the power | Broad perspective | Judgment and intelligence | Perceive and exploit the power |
| Integrity | Verbal expressiveness | | Competitiveness |

Table 2: Individual characteristics of negotiators by Adler (2002)

According to Adler (2002), there are qualities that a negotiator should have in an international business negotiation. Moreover, it is important to take into consideration the culture difference. As it is dependent on the country culture in an international business negotiation context. However, it depends on the culture that is involved in the negotiation process. For instead, in table 2, Adler (2002) presents the individual characteristics which negotiators see as most important for negotiating successfully. However, this can be seen as a stereotype of those specific countries. Nevertheless, it is clear that different cultures have different crucial characteristics which are expected in a negotiation. For example, American managers believe that effective negotiators act highly rationally. The Brazilian managers have almost similar characteristics to the Americans. However, they are only different in replacing integrity with competitiveness as one of the seven important qualities of effective negotiators.

2.4.4 Preparation of culture review & Training to prepare managers for negotiating across cultures

Hurn (2007a) refers to the importance of being knowledgeable about the culture of the opponent when doing business negotiation internationally. This will help in minimizing sensitivity that would happen without culture knowledge in advance. According to Cohen (1999), it is helpful to conduct a culture review or a cultural audit of the other country. This will increase the success rate of the negotiation deal. Preparing a culture review or cultural audit will create a better understanding of the culture (as cited in Hurn, 2007a). Culture review may consist of cultural sensitivities, communication style, relationship building, attitude to time, and non-verbal signals (Hurn, 2007a). Furthermore, Peleckis (2014) claim that to prepare for a negotiation, it is significantly important to form an effective negotiation team. With their analytical work and skills, they help to achieve the most outcome of the negotiation. This is especially relevant in the context of preparing for intercultural negotiations that require an understanding of several other cultures, other languages, knowledge of the negotiating context (Peleckis, 2014).

According to Hurn (2007b), it is important to conduct pre-departure training for the negotiation team. This can include nine different types of training methods such as cross-cultural awareness, cross-cultural communication skills, specific country/regional briefing, business etiquette and procedures, international negotiating skills, building and sustaining multinational teams, language training, transfer of skills and knowledge across culture and repatriation.

2.5 Employee's adaptability

Nowadays, the characteristic of the business environment is not only fast moving but also full of unexpected changes (Almahamid, Mcadams, & Al Kalaldehy, 2010: Ployhart and Bliese, 2015). Consequently, the increase of new customers, competitors, as well as technology, can create a global competition alter and completely change the industries in unexpected manners. Therefore, being a fast and adaptive learner, as well as having a high performance in the sense of the traditional business style is vastly required in managers and individual involving in international business (Karaevli & Hall, 2006: Almahamid et al., 2010)

Business managers ability to adapt and handle unexpected difficulties within the business environment comes from their learning commitments and adaptability (Karaevli & Hall, 2006). Changes within the work environment and daily activities result in organizations needing to promote continuous learning and knowledge sharing within the firm (Almahamid et al., 2010). Ployhart & Bliese (2006) expressed that the individual's adaptability characterizes the "ability,

skills, disposition, willingness, and/or innovation, to change or to fit different tasks, social, and environmental features” (as cited in Almahamid et al., 2010, p. 333) which are also related to the individual adaptability performance (Ployhart & Bliese, 2015).

Adaptability is referred by Moyers & Coleman (2004) as a function that is impacted by workers personal traits such as age, work tasks or environmental tasks, these traits impact the workers function and interaction within the firm (as cited in Almahamid et al., 2010) which is further argued that working tasks, personal traits, and environments represent can be challenges for a worker's adaptive capacity, especially for elders employees. Moreover, adaptive capacity is referred by Moyers & Coleman (2004) and Almahamid et al. (2010) as to the ability the employer possesses on the behavioral repertoire to act, as well as the capability to modify both the existing behavior and to produce new behavior in order to achieve certain goal or situation in the business meeting and negotiation. Almahamid et al. (2010) suggested that flexibility is one of the personal characteristics which refer to how new ideas and knowledge are created by the individual flexibility way of thinking and personality. Additionally, there are complementary approaches that must be considered in order to improve the flexibility in the individual level which includes “altering the work organization, changing a person’s rigid attitudes and developing a person’s flexibility” (Almahamid, 2010, p.333).

Therefore, employees who engage in learning new knowledge and improving their skill are more likely to become adaptable and responsive to the changes of the business environment, as well as, the likely of the stress which might occur from both the internal and external changes will become less to the individuals who are highly adaptive (Almahamad et al., 2010). Consequently, the willingness to learn and acquire knowledge help employees to gain the ability in solving any type of issues which might occur during any type of situation in an international business environment (Almahamid et al., 2010). Additionally, this can lead to employees being up to date with both knowledge and skill needed to enable them to deal with any changes or differences in the business environment (Almahamid et al., 2010: Ployhart & Bliese, 2015) from effectively incorporated their previous skill and mindset into an emphasizes model that continuous with the adaptability of new and different environment in business culture (Pulakos, 2000: Almahamid, 2010).

3. Method

The methodology chapter will present various definitions and explanations of the methods used in this paper. That is to provide the reader with an insight into how this paper was conducted and also to explain why the used methods were chosen.

3.1 Research approach

There are various ways for research to be conducted according to Bryman & Bell (2015). However, the research approach in general, there are three main approaches which are often used: deductive, inductive (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill., 2016), and abduction (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The section below will present how are the different ways that can be used, as well as giving a detailed explanation of the research approach chosen for this particular research.

The key aspect during the process of conducting research, researchers can choose an inductive, deductive, or even abductive approach that is most suitable for their research. Bryman & Bell (2015) have described an inductive approach as an approach by which the process starts with the observations where generalizable implications are drawn from, and in which the outcome of the research is the theory, on the other hand, a deductive approach was described as the process beginning with the considerations of the theory and the existing information that are within the specific area deducing a hypothesis or hypotheses which later must be subjected to the empirical findings by the researchers (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Moreover, the main difference between inductive and deductive is that in the inductive approach, merging from the data found; it can lead to generating new theory, while, the deductive approach is more of tests theory. However, an abductive approach has become more popular in business research among qualitative researchers (Bryman & Bell, 2015), as it is an alternative approach to lower the risk which arises in both inductive and deductive approach by combining them (Saunders et al., 2016). Bryman & Bell (2015) expressed that in the inductive approach the difficulty arises from the criticism that no amount of empirical data will necessarily enable theory-building, while the problem arises in the deductive approach are relating to the selection of the theory to be tested can be unclear.

Considering the description of the three approaches above, it can be concluded that this research will be using the abduction approach. Nevertheless, the cultural topic is not a new topic in the area of international business, but due to the time changes influence the change in the business

culture, as well as increasing in the adaptation of culture diversity. Moreover, as a based to back up the research topic, the existing literature was chosen, which will be more explained in the choice of theory section. Therefore, neither an inductive approach nor deductive approach can be applied, as the aim of this research is not to test how strongly the theoretical model is defined but this research is leaning more to the abductive approach which combines the features of both inductive and deductive approaches. The abductive approach reflects on the use of previous research together with the empirical data to help possibly developing new theories.

3.2 Choice of method

Sogunro (2001) claim that there is no accurate method for doing research, as the choosing research methods have been discussed widely within researchers. Bryman & Bell (2015) and Sogunro (2001) presented that various research methods are required depending on the research purposes. Moreover, this research is focusing on the field of business, which often uses either qualitative or quantitative methods. Therefore, the different characteristics of these two methods are defined and shown in table 1 by Sogunro (2001).

| A different characteristic of qualitative and quantitative research methods | | |
|--|---|--|
| Factor | Qualitative | Quantitative |
| Data Collected | Soft data | Hard data |
| Data Collection Techniques | Active interaction with sample population (Observation by active participation) | Passive interaction through questionnaire and/or experimental design |
| Sample population | Small population | Large population |
| Research variables | Large number | Small number |
| Data collection | Ongoing observation and interview | Before and after training or experiment |
| Research context | Uncontrolled | Controlled |
| Data analysis | Content/interpretive analyses through themes | Statistical analyses (e.g., descriptive, inferential statistics) |
| Research findings | Inductive through creativity and critical reflection | Deductive through inferences from data |

Table 3: Different characteristic of qualitative and quantitative research methods (Sogunro, 2001, p.5-6).

Qualitative research is usually seen more as primarily exploratory research with an inductive point of view on the relationship between theory and research which is used to gain a deeper understanding of reasons, opinion, and motivation (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Moreover, qualitative data collection methods are often focus group, individual interview, or/and

observations depending on the preferences of the researchers, using either unstructured or semi-structured interview techniques. Nevertheless, qualitative has a much smaller sample size, unlike quantitative research, which has a much larger number. (Sogunro, 2001; Bryman and Bell, 2011). In comparison, quantitative research is perceived as a way to quantify problems by generating numeral data or statistics data. Moreover, data collection methods in quantitative research are more structured and include any forms of survey, such as systematic observations, online surveys, or longitudinal studies (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

As for this research, with the focus in the international business negotiation as well as the influences culture have, the writers have chosen to use the qualitative method as this method will help to gather a more in-depth information from the participants. As previously mentioned above, this method will help the writers gathering a deeper understanding of the reason, opinion, and motivations that each participant has regarding this topic of research.

3.3 Choice of theory

The literature review of this thesis is based on culture theory as a ground theory. Additionally, the literature review is divided into the culture in international business, business culture, culture in negotiation, and adaptability performance. Each of the following section has theories and concepts from highly cited articles. Culture theory presents culture models from a different author such as Hofstede (1980) culture dimensions. Hall (1976) presented other culture dimensions as well as Trompenaars (1993) and House et al. (2004).

Furthermore, culture in the international business discusses the influence of culture on international business and components that impact international business transaction (Mitchell, 200). Business culture introduces the concept and present high and low context communication (Nam, 2015). Culture in negotiation present the negotiation process, the impact of negotiation environment, qualities of international negotiation, and culture review & training pre-negotiation. The theories and concepts presented in the literature review are derived from the purpose of the study, which is to investigate how business culture can have an influence on the individual in a negotiation process when doing international business negotiation.

3.4 Sources critique

In this research, the scientific articles and literature used are originated from peer-reviewed articles which mainly searched through the academic computerized data library, as in addition to Google Scholar, and books from Kristianstad University library. The writers used the

academic journal guide, which was provided by the Association of Business Schools (ABS) as an indication of the scientific article's quality. The ABS ranking list is based on various factors such as the evaluation of content, the peer review process, and publications of the journal. Moreover, for this research, the ranking system from 2015 by ABS guide was used with the five rating grades, which are described and shown below in Table 3.

| Ranking grade meaning of the quality rating | |
|--|---|
| 4* | Journals of distinction (elite world journal). Their high status is acknowledged by their inclusion in several well-regarded international journal quality lists. |
| 4 | Best-executed research (top journal). As top journals in their field, these journals typically have high submission and low acceptance rates. |
| 3 | Well-executed research (highly regarded journal). These journals typically have good submission rates and are very selective in what they publish. |
| 2 | Acceptable standards (well-regarded journal). A well-regarded journal in its field, papers are fully refereed according to accepted standards and conventions. |
| 1 | Modest standard (recognized journal). These journals, in general, publish research of a recognized, but more modest standard in their field. |

Table 4: the ranking system and definitions of the journal ratings by 'ABS Academic Journal Guide' p.7.

Nevertheless, some articles might not be covered by ABS; this could be due to either the articles are either from journals by which did not meet the standard qualification of ABS or it is unknown journals which have just recently been published.

3.5 Time horizon

Research is divided into two main time horizon dimensions as discussed by Saunders et al. (2016); cross-sectional studies and longitudinal studies. Cross-sectional studies usually involve a study of certain phenomenon in a specific period which is mostly for academic researches, since there is time pressure (Saunders et al., 2016; Bryman & Bell, 2015). Nevertheless, cross-sectional studies are more known to associating with quantitative research but Bryman & Bell (2015) noted that qualitative research often involves some form of cross-sectional design with “a fairly typical form of such research is when the researchers employ unstructured interview or semi-structured interview with a number of people”(Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.66). In comparison, longitudinal studies which have the capacity that the study can change and develop with time (Saunders et al., 2016). Moreover, Pettigrew (1990) have emphasized that a longitudinal study is a way to help provide an understanding of the organizational changes that happen over time (as a site in Bryman & Bell, 2015). Therefore, with the time and cost involving

in the longitudinal studies costing it to be used very little in the business and management research (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

The research was conducted in the time frame of the 1st of April to the 7th of June 2019. Therefore, within the nine and a half weeks of conducting the research, the usage of cross-sectional studies are seem to be most suitable, as it is conducted under a strict time frame which is less than three month and provides a precise time shot of the current situation, as well as the use of semi-structured interview for the qualitative research approach. For this reason, a cross-sectional study is more practical than a longitudinal study.

3.6 Research strategy

A case study design is described by Bryman & Bell (2015) as a thorough analysis of one single case which is being researched, with the case being researched can be either a single person, location, organization or an event. Therefore, this research approach became one of the most common approaches in business research, and various well-known business studies have based on this design (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007). On the contrary, a case study research does not have to be limited to just single case, using multiple case studies have been a growing interest in business and management research in the recent years (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Considering the purpose of multiple case studies to be a comparing case which is within the research, therefore, it is counted as a part of comparative research design.

Additionally, the comparative design is used to understand better the social phenomena when compare the finding of two or more cases which will allow the researchers to discover the common and unique finding across each case (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Yin, 2018). Moreover, when conducting a comparative study, it is common to compare between two or more organizations for the benefit in the theory building of business research. As Bryman and Bell (2015) state “by comparing two or more cases, the researcher is in a better position to establish the circumstances in which theory will or will not hold” (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.74).

As a research strategy for this research will be a multi-case study, with careful consideration, it was concluded that for this research, to use the comparative design approach as it seems to be the most appropriate. This method was used in this research resulted in the transformation of the design into a multiple-case study, as Bryman & Bell (2015) expressed that in a qualitative research strategy, using the comparative design to compare different setting which will be Eaton Bussmann corporation as setting I and Mineral Circles Bearings as setting II. Therefore, under

each setting, there will be four different cases which will be studied by the writers, which then becomes a multiple-case study of the two-setting presented by the writers. By using this method, in the multiple cases, allowing the same methods to be applied which were used in this research as well as for each case to be carefully analyzed to see whether there are any common grounds in each case. Therefore, comparing multiple cases by using this method will allow relevant concepts to be discovered for the finding.

3.7 Data collection

In every research project, data collection is claimed to be a crucial step, as it is the approach researchers used to gather and measure information from different sources to understand the area which the individual interests, which will help answer the aim of the research (Bryman & Bell, 2015). For the primary data which will be collected through eight interviews within the selected sample group and the secondary data was mainly collected through the academic computerized data library in addition to Google Scholar, and books. In the process of searching for literature, a variety of keywords were used to find suitable and valid literature. The key words used during the searching process; international negotiation, business negotiation, culture influence negotiation, business culture, for instance. Moreover, when deciding for any specific articles and books to use for this research, the writers take the sources, and the authors into consideration before selecting to ensure that the data are reliable and accurate.

In a qualitative study, the interview can vary depending on the topic researchers are focusing and what they want to accomplish (Bryman & Bell, 2015) Therefore, the section below will be describing the different state of interviews that can be used, as well as the information to why a specific interview was chosen for this research.

3.7.1 Interview

When conducting in interviewing in qualitative research, it can vary greatly. The main approaches are structured, semi-structured, or unstructured interviews (Bryman & Bell 2015). Every method has its unique ways for the interviews to be conducted. Unstructured interviews are an approach that research can use to ask single questions to the interviewee and having very limited structure. The interviews are close to conversations, and the researcher uses aid memory to help throughout the interview (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Semi-structured interviews are slightly more structured than unstructured interviews. Therefore, this method allows the researcher to have a set of questions for a specific topic that will be covered throughout the interview. This

method not only allows the researcher to steer the interview in the direction they desire but also allows a leeway for certain questions to be answered that may not be a part of the interview structure (Bryman & Bell, 2015). This method allows new ideas to arise from the interviewee, and the interview is not bound to a strict, predetermined structure. Structured interviews aim to provide the same questions to every interviewee thought any leeway that the other methods provide. This ensures that every interview was conducted the same way without any changes (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The questions tend to offer a limited range of answers and are very specific, usually being a part of a research survey, according to Bryman & Bell (2015).

In result, after consideration, semi-structured interviews were chosen for this research. This method not only allowed the interviewers to follow the main questions listed for every interviewee in this research but also to adapt for each interview being conducted. Nevertheless, the objective was to gather data on what the interviewee thought about how culture has influenced the negotiation strategy with an aim to deeper to understand the business culture environment that the participants are experiencing. Further questions will be asked and elaborated on depending on the significance of the replies received.

3.7.2 Interview guide/operationalization

As previously discussed, semi-structured interviews were used for this study. An interview guide can be made up by a list of questions which will be used in every interview and allow the interviewer and interviewee the possibility to adapt to various topics that are brought up (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Yin, 2018). The flexibility that semi-structured interviews provide encouraged interviewees to explain patterns and concepts they felt as being important based on the main questions. This resulted in a more conclusive data that was used to help answer the research question

The main questions that will be presented to the participants were constructed based on previous knowledge and studies in the area of culture influence a negotiation strategy. More importantly, when conducting an interview, warming up questions must be first used as the aim to make the interviewee feel comfortable, as well as not blind-side the individual with a difficult question of topic. Nevertheless, the aim of the listed questions was created in order to the topic and the flow between the interesting subjects. As semi-structured interviews were used for this research, participants who began to discuss any important concepts that are vital for the research, to help to gain more and deeper information out of the participants, various types of questions were used which can be seen in table 4.

| Questions | Examples |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Introducing (warming up) questions | ‘Tell me about when your interest in X began?’ |
| Follow-up questions | Direct questions specifying what has just been said. ‘Could you say some more about that?’ |
| Probing questions | Could you elaborate more about it? Give an example, perhaps?’ |
| Interpreting questions | So, you mean that...? Is it fair to say...? |
| Why-questions | How do you mean? What do you mean? |

Table 5: Question guide (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.490)

3.7.3 Validation of questions

Pretesting the interview question is important, as this is allowing the researchers to reduce the risk of spelling errors, irrelevant questions to the research area, and informal worded sentences (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Therefore, before conducting the interviews, allowing a consulted academic to pre-test and approved the questions is extremely important. Moreover, after approval on the questions from the academic, having one additional person to present the questions to would be wise as to help to make sure that the questions were easy to follow and understood. The additional individual chosen for pre-testing the questions must know within the international business negotiation setting, in order to get relevant feedback which will be provided from this individual.

3.8 Participants selection

Sampling is a crucial part of any research study, and there are a variety of methods that can be used. Bryman & Bell (2015) discuss two ways, one for quantitative research being probability sampling and one for qualitative research being purposive sampling. Probability sampling can be described as randomly selecting people that will be used for the study. This method minimizes sampling errors since it allows anyone in the population to have a chance to be selected. A disadvantage with this method is the time that is required and must have a large population base to select individuals from. Since this study uses a qualitative approach, purpose sampling was chosen and will be discussed below.

3.8.1 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling as defined by Bryman & Bell (2015) as an objective way for researchers to sample case participants strategically to help to select participants that are most applicable to the research, which will provide the most relevant data for the research. By using this method,

this will allow the researchers to create criteria by which the participants must meet, giving the change to the researchers to choose the most suitable participants.

In this research, purposive sampling was chosen to use as it is most suitable, allowing the highest probability to the researchers to gather both detailed and valid information from the participants. More importantly, purposive sampling gives the possibility for the researcher to carefully choose every single participant which are most relevant to the area that the research is conducted in. Additionally, for this research, to help to find relevant participants to interview, various criteria were developed to help narrowing down the search. Therefore, for an individual to qualify for this research, the following criteria must be met.

- *Minimum five years of experience with business negotiation process in an international setting.*
- *Understanding of business culture.*
- *Managerial position in an international company.*

Moreover, as previously mentioned in the 3.6 research strategy, the participants are from two different settings which from each setting there will be four participants with the qualification that was discussed above. Nevertheless, this will be further discussed in chapter 4 in more details.

3.9 Data analysis

In the data analysis process, data collected throughout the interviews which were audio recorded by the writers, a transcript of all the interviews were made in order to provide a reliable, in-depth data which will be further use to analysis later on. As the interviews were audio recorded, thus allowing the researchers to focus on the information which is needed to extract from the participant instead of making notes on what the participants are saying (Bryman & Bell, 2015) which also help the researcher to become more focus and connected to the conversation. Further on, in this research, the coding technique is used to help breaking down the data from the transcripts into specific themes, by having a specific label or code for the important issues mentioned by the participants. The codes are typically based on the research model from the theoretical framework. Saunders et al. (2009) suggested that by using the coding technique as a data analysis method, this can help drawing out conclusions.

3.10 Quality criteria

Any finding which was retrieved from any types of research that have been conducted, it is very important to reflect over those findings. Bryman and Bell (2011) expressed that the three criteria which are most prominent to reflect upon the findings are: reliability, replication, and validity. However, the writers are also focusing on the issue of trustworthiness. The four criteria will be further discussed below, as to why it is important to consider when conducting qualitative research.

3.10.1 Reliability

Reliability is important in any study and can be defined if results from a particular can be repeatable. However, reliability is usually an issue for quantitative studies in order to see if the results are stable or not (Saunders et al., 2009). If there are drastic changes in the results of a quantitative study, it can result in the study being unreliable. For this study, steps have been so that this study can be repeated by others if they wish to do so. However, this particular study involves interviewing human participants to repeat this study depends highly on the participants that will be involved due to their actions and personal characteristics.

3.10.2 Validity

Byrman & Bell (2015) argue that validity is the level of integrity that a study's conclusion and data has. To further increase the validity of this study, the writers re-evaluated the interview questions multiple times in order to ensure that the questions were easily understood and would guide the interviewee to gather data on the relative topics for the study. The questions were presented to business individuals that do not have an academic background in order to ensure that the questions were not too academic, which could have resulted in the participants not understanding the question.

3.10.3 Trustworthiness

Nevertheless, some authors have argued that the concepts used to measure quantitative studies can be inapplicable and inappropriate for a qualitative study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Kirk & Miller, 1986). Therefore, as this research is a qualitative study, as stated earlier; therefore, it is crucial to examine the concepts used to authenticate a qualitative study. Trustworthiness has been proposed by Lincoln & Guba (1985) as a measure to see how legitimate the qualitative study is. Moreover, there are four concepts that are apart of trustworthiness; I) credibility which referred to the trustworthiness of whether the study being conducted is credible or not, II)

transferability by which the objective is to see whether the results that were acquired from a qualitative method can be applied to similar circumstances or individuals (Bryman & Bell, 2015), III) dependability was describe by Lincoln & Guba (1985)as to be an important part as it ensures that the findings from the study are dependable and consistent, and IV) confirmability as expressed by Bryman & Bell (2015) that researchers must illustration act in goodwill and not allowing theoretical inclinations or personal feelings influence the outcome of the research.

3.12 Ethical considerations

When conducting any type of research, it is extremely important for the researchers to follow the rules and ethics involved, more importantly, in the qualitative study, when interviewing participants for their research. As for data collection can consist of any sort of sensitive information about companies or individuals. Therefore, researchers must ensure that the collected data follows ethical standards. Moreover, this research is following the four main ethical categories which were described by Diener and Crandall (1978) to be as follow: no harm to participants, obtain informed consent, no invasion of privacy, and no deception involved.

Furthermore, if the participant or company wish to remain anonymous for this research, the writers will then refer to that company as company A or participant as to participant A, as well as any information that could lead back to the participant or company would not disclose. However, all participants involving in this research are willing to take part and have their personal information within the research.

4. Empirical analysis

In this chapter, the writers will be analyzing the cases in two different settings, which are Eaton and MCB. In each setting there are four cases that will be discussed how the firm's business culture has influenced the individual in an international business negotiation, as well as the impact or influence the counterpart's business negotiation play a role in the negotiation process.

4.1 Setting I: Eaton Bussmann Corporation

Eaton Bussmann corporation is an American origin multinational corporation. Eaton began back in 1911 by being the very first in the gear-driven truck (Eaton, 2019a). As Eaton has over 100 years of experience in the high-tech industry, therefore, they identified themselves to be highly innovative and by integrating the abilities of some world's respected companies into Eaton, they are committing to expand their expertise and range of service, products, and systems to create better the brand a customer can trust and help the customer meet a power challenge's solution (Eaton, 2019a). Moreover, Eaton develops and manufactures various products in high-tech complex products and service to a simple use product for other businesses and markets.

Nevertheless, with the large size corporation like Eaton, one might ask how the company can improve its performance and accelerate growth? Eaton has developed a shared culture and unified practices by making sure that everyone is not only connected but also by having mobilizing power of the enterprise, as well as various courses and training for all level employees (Eaton, 2019b). Additionally, Eaton has introduced the Eaton Business System (EBS) as their culture in action by having a foundation vision and to share not only the business value but also a common philosophy. According to Eaton (2019b), EBS is based on Eaton's belief in "standard processes and a teachable point of view" by providing the best practices and knowledge across the corporation which encourage the firms to be continually improvement. Moreover, this result to be one of their competitive advantages which comes from an effective deployed, leading the firms to have superior performance. The processes that Eaton have set helps them be more efficient and let them work as one to support the planning, operational excellence, functional excellence, assessment, learning, and growth (Eaton, 2019b)

More importantly, this shows that Eaton has invested largely to make sure that everyone is understanding the business culture within the corporation and having the training needed for the working life. However, with the secondary data gave by the company web-based might be not as accurate or miss leading to the reader. Therefore, the writer has chosen to do an in-depth

interview to gather more information upon the issue with employees from various departments and different culture background from the corporation.

4.1.1 cases analysis

In this section, the writers will be presenting the empirical data of the four cases within this specific setting, as well as analyzing every individual case in-depth. The following table 6, are the description of each individual participant by showing their responsibility within the company, as well as years of experience and the other relevant information to help with the data analyzing process, as this will help the reader have an easier time to follow when describing and analysis the cases in this section. Therefore, the writers decided to include the table into this part.

| Participant | Position of the participant | Country of origin | Years of experience | Interview duration | Date and location | Interview method |
|-------------|--|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| A | Product line sales manager: Baltics and Nordics | USA | 29 years | 42 mins | 10/05/19 Ronneby | Face-to-face |
| B | International sales and marketing manager: Scandinavia | Sweden | 31 years | 37 mins | 17/05/19 Malmo | Face-to-face |
| C | Product manager | Finland | 13 years | 35 mins | 21/05/19 | Skype |
| D | Norwegian product manager | Norway | 5 years | 38 mins | 21/05/19 | Skype |

Table 6: Eaton Bussmann Corporation; participants

As this research main focus is to see how business culture have influence the way individual within the company do an international business negotiation no matter whether they are from the same country as the corporation’s origin or from a different countries, as well as seeing whether the counterpart’s business culture can also have an impact in the international business negotiation.

4.1.1.1 Case I

Firstly, when interviewing participant A, who is not only from the United States of America but have also started working with the company in the U.S.A before the individual got transfer to the division in Europe. Therefore, with the firsthand experience participant A have from starting with the corporation in the U.S.A. giving him the benefit to having a strong mindset on how business culture work and are within the firms. As Budak et al., (2013) have argued that it is extremely crucial for the managers to be aware of not only their firm’s business culture but also to know the different business culture which the individual might be facing. If fail to adapt,

this could jeopardize the negotiation process or even lead to having negative results. As previously mentioned, that participant A has worked in the U.S.A. with Eaton before moving to Europe. Therefore, the ability for the participant in adapting is very high, as the business environment and culture are completely different from what he was used to.

“yea there were differences. You know, the pace of work is a little different. Depending on the customer you are dealing with because I deal with customers in Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, etc. even between the Scandinavian countries, there are some differences. I have noticed that some of the direct customers we have today, especially here in Europe. Maybe that is the way they are but they it’s hard to develop a relationship other than a strict business relationship.” (Participant A, personal communication, 2019)

In the U.S.A., it is more common to socialize with the customers outside the business hours, such as going on a sporting event which is less common than the business culture and environment in Europe as mentioned by participant A.

Nevertheless, Eaton has provided multiple external courses and training needed for the employees to grow and is up to date with the changes and business environment in everyday working life. As Mayer & Coleman (2004) suggested that adaptation is the ability by which the employer possesses both the way to act and the capability to modify the existing behavior and new behavior produced to help certain situation in the business meeting or during the negotiation process. As mentioned by participant A, this also depends on the level and position of the individual are responsible for, Eaton will have a mandatory course which the employees must attend.

“The management level, we have to take a course once a year on cultural diversity within the company to get us thinking that people are from different backgrounds and religions, countries, different languages speaking...It is a part of ours; I guess you can say concept with the company.”(Participant A, personal communication, 2019)

Moreover, the importance of the counterpart which the individual will be facing also play a role in the negotiation process, therefore, considering the counterpart’s business culture are also a crucial subject which participant A has stated. Nevertheless, participants A have mentioned that most of the business culture impact usually happen when meeting or negotiating with new customers or suppliers. One main challenge which have impact the international business negotiation mentioned by the participant A in the interview is the inner conflict within the

people involving from the counterpart's company, which can lead to longer negotiation process as the counterpart have to solve their issue before, and this can also impact the relationship between the two firms.

4.1.1.2 Case II

As Eaton is a worldwide multination corporation, employees within the firms are also from worldwide. Participant B is originally from Sweden and have been working with the Eaton for quite a long time. Therefore, with the long experience working with the firm, participant B has learned the business culture of the firm not only from the years working with the firm but also from the training and coaching which was provided for all the employees. Moreover, an interesting fact during the interview, which participant B has mentioned was how diversity could improve the firm's competence in negotiating internationally without facing major issues. In Almahamid (2010) study, suggested that for new ideas and knowledge to emerge depending on the flexibility of the person and way of thinking. In result, thus creating a competitive advantage as well as help increase both the firm and employee's capability to adapt to the different business culture and environment.

"I think it is widely explained within the organization. We all individual and all have a good and bad side and I think we have a big or quite nice diversity between the various type of competence within the company and that is also part of being successful and being able to live as well as to adapt" (Participant B, personal communication, 2019).

Moreover, the additional knowledge that participant B have to gain is from the courses and training providing by Eaton, as well as the shared knowledge from colleagues from a different department. Participant B has been assigned to focus on the Scandinavian client. However, he has involved client from Asian countries such as Japan which then the challenge occurs. As participant B have been describing the difference between working with a counterpart from North Europe to be more direct which can be quite easy to handle, unlike Japan where the negotiation process is very time consuming which can be frustrating as participant B have stated. Therefore, the biggest challenge was with people involving in the negotiation process.

"You can still be straight forward, but it takes much longer time because it seems to be very hieratic organization...as I work quite a lot with a product that customer design which means it would include data sheet as to describe the product and European customers read it through every carefully and say 'yes, this will fit.' It seems like the Japanese customers have at least four to five people reading the same thing, double, triple, quadruple check it before they approved it" (Participant B, personal communication, 2019).

Additionally, working with counterparts that have a similar business culture will help the negotiation process goes both smoother and faster for both parties, as Carmen Lario de Oñate & Amador (2013) and Mitchell (2000) have suggested that there are various factors which include in the every business culture and must be considered in order to create a good and strong business relationship. However as participant B suggested that everyday life is a learning process, so being able to adapt into the different culture will help the individual be more understanding of the situation and be more patient which also help it the increased chance of having a positive international business negotiation outcome.

4.1.1.3 Case III

Understanding and being adaptable is a very important thing an efficient employee must have as stated by participant C. As a Finnish employee working for an American firm, is it very crucial for the participant to learn the business culture of the firm which related to the study of employee's adaptability by Almahamid et al. (2010), Ployhart & Bliese (2015) and Pulakos (2000). Participant C has his own business culture developed from years of experience working with Finnish firm before joining Eaton. Therefore, it was mentioned by the participant that the need to learn and adapt is very high. Moreover, as participant C is responsible for the product in of a specific line in Eaton, the involvement in the international business deal negotiation is so by a part of his daily work. As mentioned by two previous participants, participant C also agreed on the training and coursed Eaton provide to be a very useful thing for employees, since it not only help the new employee learn the way the firm business culture is but this also help remind the individual what is appropriate to do or to behave. However, in this case, participant C saw it be important always to take an additional external course which can also be useful in term of cultural perspective and sustainability to keep the knowledge up to date (Ployhart & Bliese, 2015).

“I have taken some extra lesson in the university about just like how to behave when we have dinner together with them, what can I do over there, also how to eat with them” (Participant C, personal communication, 2019).

Additionally, understanding the counterpart' business culture is also crucial, as participant C stated that by showing the interest you have put into understanding the way they work and what is acceptable and appropriate will give you a competitive advantage as well as the benefit in building trust. As the study by Hurn (2007a) refers to the importance of being knowledgeable about different when doing business negotiation internationally which can help to minimize challenges that might occur without having an understanding or knowledge of the counterpart's

business culture. This also increases the possibility of facing any challenges of the issue in term of misunderstanding or miscommunication.

“We have a little prepare for something to show your interest in their country or the company and what happens over there...we used Linkin and connection point, so it is quite easy to check a little bit on the people involving in the negotiation process...Just like headhunting is doing today”(Participant C, personal communication, 2019)

Nevertheless, there are will challenges which cannot be avoided when doing international business negotiation and one of the challenges faces by the participant is that in some business culture, the business is done more verbally, but this goes against the business culture of Eaton. Thus, participant C mentioned that in the negotiation process of some countries like Sweden, the process could take much longer than in Finland or Norway due to the involvement of people in the meeting. Therefore, s participant C have mentioned during the interview that every day is a lesson and you can gain, not only from the daily business meeting but also from the international business negotiation.

4.1.1.4 Case IV

Structure guideline provided by the firm is a very essential and crucial part in creating a wide understanding of the firm business culture throughout the corporation, as participant D has stated during the interview. Participant D has only started working with Eaton for five years, and by being a Norwegian native, he is mainly responsible for Eaton customer in Norway and some additional neighboring countries. Similar to participant C, participant D also have to adapt their personal experience and way of thinking in term of business culture to fit into Eaton’s way of their business culture. As participant D have described that in Norway, it is highly common for a business to be done verbally due to the honor and trust for the counterpart to keep their words. However, with the business culture of Eaton, a written contract is an essential part when doing international business negotiation. Participant C has developed a strategy in order to adapt into the two different business culture by creating a written document of what has been stated or discussed during the negotiation process and later send the written document to the counterpart as to confirm the agreement. Showing that the individual capability to modify and adapt from the existing experience and new knowledge which help the individual to achieve the goal in this situation was argued by Mayer & Coleman (2004) and Almahamid et al. (2010) as the adaptive capability and flexibility. Moreover, participant D also added that this help with having some sort of trail to trace back in cases of any issue in the future.

“In general Norwegian are happy enough just over the phone or over the table and they see this as a contract and that is a bit back to one of the good things which have come out of Eaton being an American company that you have to have a written contract” (Participant D, personal communication, 2019).

Subsequently, as previously mentioned by participant A, regarding, the training course which is mandatory for employees to attend depending on the level of responsibility. Participant D has been attending between two to three training per year, which Eaton has created multiple setting that the individual will then plan a strategy and how to handle counterpart from different countries and situation. Moreover, challenges that participant D have encountered is when negotiating with a counterpart from countries that have a high level of the hierarchy. An example provided by participant D was when negotiating is when discussing with the individuals from the counterpart that involve in the negotiation. Therefore, knowing the right person to talk to in order to have a faster decision-making process can be a challenge.

“When we see a problem, we start trying to correct the problem but in some places in the world you still see that ‘Oh, here is a problem, can’t do anything about it until I notify my supervisor’ and if this is something that the supervisor isn’t also allowed to do anything with, he has to take it step-up and a step-up and step-up...so we can cross some bottleneck that type of structure” (Participant D, personal communication, 2019)

4.1.2 setting I result

Starting with the understanding of the firm’s business culture, with all the interviewed participants in this research, working with the firm are from different countries and cultures background. The ability for the participants to adapt into the firm’s business culture are very crucial (Almahamid et al, 2010: Ployhart and Bliese, 2015), as it was mentioned by all the participants that Eaton has a very structured way of working and doing business, meaning that the participants are highly required to follow the structure. However, with Eaton being a multinational corporation at the same time, this result into the firm becoming more flexible and open as previously mentioned in section 4.1 by the corporation. Moreover, in the international business, it is essential to have a clear structure form by the organization to help as a guideline for the employees, but employee’s adaptation can be a very crucial part with working in a multinational corporation like Eaton. Depending on the business culture, in some company, the written contract does not always seem like an important thing to the counterpart (Nam, 2015).

As for instead, taking one's word can be considered good enough; however, in other countries like Italy, France, or the U.S.A., it is essential to have a written contract between both parties.

Additionally, Eaton has committed to the EBS to help with providing the training and knowledge that are needed to the employees for the daily working life, which might change with time. As all the participants have agreed on the benefits of gaining from the extra internal training and courses that were provided by Eaton, some participants still think it is important to take external class to help to acquire some more information and knowledge on the cultural aspect, as well as additional knowledge that the individual could gain from wine tasting for instead. Nevertheless, as it was strongly stated by all the interviewed participants that the training and additional courses providing by Eaton are mandatory for the employees to take at least once or twice per year, depending on the level of the position the individual is working with. Whereas some participants such as C, and D thought that the training could sometimes be a time-wasting situation as they already know from the years of experience but as participant D then later say was that it could help to make you think out of your routine and help to make the working life less boring.

More importantly, when doing international business negotiation, the individual involved in the process must consider the counterpart's business culture. As the counterpart's business culture can have an impact on the negotiation process; therefore, understanding and preparing ahead of time will give the participant both benefits and advantages. As participant A and B expressed that entering a negotiation, the participants would find out who all will be present during the meeting and do research on them via LinkedIn or through their network. This is to discover what type of personality the individuals have and to help prepare what tactics to use during the negotiation process.

In summary, all the participants still have their own national business culture as an influence on how they operate and plan a strategy for the business negotiation, but the structure provided by Eaton is still very important. Therefore, all the participants have the firm's business culture and structure in their mind when adapting into their strategies and plan for the international business negotiation with the addition of fitting it to the counterpart as well. Moreover, it is important for every individual to be able to adapt into every situation, as well as doing extra research on the counterpart as it was mentioned by all the participants to be very crucial thing, as it can both help the starting conversation but also showing the counterpart the effort the individual has put in which help with creating a stronger long-term relationship between the

two parties. Additionally, the business culture is more likely to impact Eaton when meeting or negotiating with new customers or suppliers. Therefore, in this specific setting, it shows that business culture can have both negative and positive impact on the international business negotiation when doing it with new counterparts. Hence, most of Eaton customers and suppliers have developed a long-term relationship which over the time both parties have progressed a common ground to work under, resulting in having a good relationship and understanding of each other's business culture.

4.2 Setting II: Mineral Circles Bearings

In setting II, the case of Mineral Circles Bearings (MCB) and its four individual participants will be presented. As each participant have a different perspective on business culture and the impact it has on the international negotiation process.

MCB is a bearing manufacturer company and one of the Middle East & Africa, leading distributors of aftermarket products from multiple leading global brands (Mineral Circles Bearings, 2019a). Moreover, MCB provides automotive & industrial maintenance, repair, and operations. The company founded in 1984 by Amar Ridha, with current clients from around 65 countries. MCB branches and subsidiaries are located in the Middle East, Africa, East Asia, and Europe, with headquarters in Jafza Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). The company aims to be the best technical service distributor for the automotive and industrial aftermarket in the Middle East and Africa (Mineral Circles Bearings, 2019b). MCB is a diverse company with people from different culture and background. MCB has clients from approximately 65 countries, in which the focus of their business is more into export. Additionally, all the participants agree that the business culture of the company is considered to be multicultural, multinational, and multilingual. For instead as participant E mentioned

“We have around 19 different nationalities that speak around 15 different languages.... mixed traditional family business with corporate governance” (Participant E, personal communication, 2019).

MCB has three core values that they work on achieving and maintain it within the business culture. Ensuring customer satisfaction is what the company drive for by building a relationship with the customer. The second core value is to ensure business longevity through a mutually beneficial long-term relationship with our customers, suppliers, and members of the team. The

final core value that MCB has is the belief in the richness that difference in the employees can bring such as nationality, gender, ethnicity, age, and religion (Mineral Circles Bearings, 2019c).

4.2.1 cases analysis

This section will be presenting the individual case and analyzing the result from the participants in the interviews, which was conducted with MCB. Furthermore, Table 7 present the four participants with their position, country of origin, years of experience, duration of the interview, date, and the interview method. This table helps the reader to easily refer to it for more information about the participant during the individual case presenting and analysis. The findings and analysis of each participant will be presented in the order, as seen in table x below.

| Participant | Position of the participant | Country of origin | Years of experience | Interview duration | Date and location | Interview method |
|-------------|------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| E | Managing Director | Irag | 10 years | 45 mins | 14/05/19 Stockholm | Face-to-face |
| F | Brand Manager | France | 5 years | 30 mins | 15/05/19 | Skype |
| G | Department Head | Irag | 9 years | 39 mins | 19/05/19 | Skype |
| H | Business development manager | India | 19 years | 29 mins | 22/05/19 | Skype |

Table 7: Mineral Circles Bearings; participants

4.2.1.1 Case I

During the interview with participant E, an interesting example was brought up in regard to how having employees with a different culture, background, or religion could be of a challenge. An organization such as MCB that is considered to be multicultural, where individuals have a different interpretation of things. In which it could create some conflicts and miscommunication. The individuals who participated in the interview are from different cultural backgrounds; the way information is perceived could be influenced by their own culture. According to Hofstede model, which consists of five dimensions: Power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long-term/short-term orientation (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). In which it can be argued that people behavior is influenced by whether they are from a culture with high/low power distance or a culture that is individualist or collective. Moreover, Hall (1976) proposes high and low context cultures. In which people could behave differently based on their cultural background. Participant E mentioned that the challenges they face when having employees from different cultures and backgrounds.

“For example, when you say I will send you soon. Soon means for different culture different time. Some people will expect soon like in one day, somebody will expect in an hour or sometime soon is never or even one day in the future” (Participant E, personal communication, 2019).

According to participant E, in an international negotiation process preparation is a very crucial step before starting the negotiation process. In which each party must do his homework, and this will make the meeting effective and efficient. Additionally, the participant claims that the communication channels used during the negotiation could make it more complex. This especially happens when the digital communication channel is used, such as Skype. Therefore, having face to face negotiation make things simpler. Finally, it's important to have a summary after the meeting to conclude the discussion and to make sure the things that were agreed upon.

“I always say face to face is king in terms of negotiation” (Participant E, personal communication, 2019).

As it was mentioned in the chapter literature review, the negotiation process is divided into three stages, which are the pre-negotiation phase, the face-to-face negotiation phase, and the post-negotiation phase (Ghauri, 2003). To a certain extent, it is supporting the participant point of view, as in the pre-negotiation phase each party must be prepared and study the deal and the benefits gained from this business. Ghauri (2003) also emphasizes the importance of a summary after the meeting to go through the points that were agreed or disagreed on. This will erase any misunderstanding that could place during the negotiation meeting. On the other hand, the participant brought up several challenges they face when negotiating internationally with different business culture. It was also argued on how failing to understand the difference in business culture can result in misunderstanding, which could mean no deal. As participant E mentioned, countries such as Korea and Japan, seating is very important. Therefore, knowing the business culture will help to prevent the individual from sitting in the wrong place, which might give a wrong message that could be disrespectful. Once you disrespect someone, there is a high chance that it could impact the success of the business transaction.

“Let's say the other day meeting that we had in Japan. Where a colleague of mine almost sit on the wrong chair and by me understanding the Japanese culture I was avoiding this by really asking them where I should sit” (Participant E, personal communication, 2019)

Therefore, Mitchell (2000) strongly emphasize the importance of having good knowledge about the culture before negotiating internationally. Mitchell (2000) believe understanding culture

when doing business internationally is one of the main factors that decide whether the business succeed or fail. Another example, that participants E also discussed the challenges they face when doing business with countries from Africa is time management. When scheduling a business meeting with clients from this region, it is difficult to have a precise conformation on the specific time. Thus, if confirmation was made, there is a high possibility that the clients will postpone or cancel the meeting. It is more spontaneously when it comes to confirming the meetings.

“They usually tell you, ‘I think in June I am there so that you can come anytime’ he would not conform to you a specific day and time” (Participant E, personal communication, 2019)

When it comes to training and preparation before international negotiation meeting, one of the ways MCB use is coaching on the field. It is part of the business culture to coach negotiators by making them go with an expert for a particular region (Participant E, 2019). This is very much dependent on the country of the client and whether MCB has someone that can help the negotiator understand the business culture of the clients. Such as the branches in that region or the local team (Participant E, 2019). Furthermore, the participant stated that business culture has an impact on lifestyle and behavior. This happens especially when there are new employees joining the company or when the individual is forced to work on a specific pace of the customer.

4.2.1.2 Case II

Individuals within an organization have different perceptions argued by participant F, which is due to the different culture and background when working with a multicultural organization; it is essential to understand the different cultures. As the culture and background are one of the factors that influence individual interpretation and perception (Mitchell, 2000). Furthermore, the participant argues that the difference in business culture makes the business process different which is due to the difference in the culture and the way of doing business in that country (Participant F, 2019). One of the main core values MCB have is the diversity in the business culture (Mineral Circles Bearings, 2019c). This could explain the emphasis on understanding the different culture within the organization. According to participant F, it is important to understand the difference in the culture of the employees in order to understand how the person think and work. Without understanding the different cultures, it will be hard to manage through the organization. Participant F claim even though the employee is doing something wrong, it’s important to understand it and try to change it to the correct way.

“For example, in France, we go with the processes. It is very clear for everyone; we do not have to explain or remind this I think, is the main difference between France and here. Plus,

in France in the company everyone is French, so there is only one process. But here its different culture people come from all around the world, and they are working to present the image of Dubai.” (Participant F, personal communication, 2019)

According to participant F, the negotiation process starts with a prospect. Such as finding the right clients, gathering information, studying the market, and the customer. The next step will be contacting the customer or as Ghauri (2003) call it the face-to-face negotiation phase. Where you meet the client, get to know the needs, the client situation in the market, and start with building the relationship. As for the final step, stated by participant F would be to offer the client the product, feedback, follow up to close the deal, and signing the contract. The difference in business culture and the challenges faced during the negotiation process with the client from a different culture was brought up several times during the interview session. Based on the experience, participant F argues that the difference in business culture plays a huge role when negotiating internationally.

“Culture plays a big role. Like for example, Chinese people negotiate differently with Chinese people and with foreigners. If our office in China is putting pressure on the supplier, play an impact than if I do that myself.” (Participant F, personal, communication, 2019).

It seems to be that training and preparation for the international negotiation process are done differently by the individual negotiators, as it can be obtained from previous experience or training provided by MCB. The participant referred to the course during the studies in which it helped how to negotiate internationally. Furthermore, previous experience gained from work played a big role stated participant F, as the participant was responsible for international clients from a different market. This contributes and adds value to the business culture of MCB. Moreover, having a good understanding of the counterpart’s business culture helps have a positive influence on the negotiation process in the way for making things easier for both parties. As it was suggested by participant F, that understanding and having knowledge about the culture could highly influence the ability to do business internationally. Doing business with China was an example mentioned during the interview, where participant F faces challenges, which create complexity and misunderstanding. Additionally, stated by participant F that when having a lunch meeting and you refuse to eat what the client offer, it can be perceived as a sign of disrespect.

“For example, while working with our office in China. In the beginning, I was trying to put some processes. But for them, they do not see the interest of this process. So, they did not

want to apply this process. I have difficulty in making them understand the interest of the process, and while we are putting this process, it makes things easier and quicker.”

(Participant F, personal communication, 2019).

Furthermore, there would be a different approach to the negotiation process based on the business culture of the client and the culture of the country. As the negotiation process that would take have to be adapted to business culture and the environment. Therefore, as participant F have expressed that it would not be possible to standardize the approach and strategy, you take to negotiate.

“For example, negotiating with French people is very difficult, so you have to have a different process when you negotiate...You will not be able to give the same approach to the French customer and the Chinese customer” (Participant F, personal communication, 2019).

Therefore, it can be concluded that for participant F, business culture has an influence on how individuals behave, as it affects the way of thinking, lifestyle, and attitude. Furthermore, how familiar the individual is with the country and the culture you live helps in integrating with the organization culture. The participant was able to conclude that business culture has an impact on their behavior and thinking, as it was more elaborated when there was a comparison between the business culture in France and at MCB.

4.2.1.3 Case III

The business culture is influenced by the management, rules, and the individual cultures within an organization as to what participant G claim. Additionally, the participant added that MCB is a medium size company; therefore, the business culture is influenced by the management personality, which can be both in a positive and negative way. Moreover, Participant G believes that nowadays, negotiation is very much based on the overall package you provide, as what are the services you provide apart from the product you are selling. At the pre-negotiation stage, it is crucial to have a good knowledge and understanding of both the market and the competitors in the region of the client, as it can be beneficial before moving into the face-to-face negotiation phase. As for the final stage of the negotiation process is important to follow up with the client, for instead an example mentioned by participant G such as going through the contract and clarifying any misunderstanding in the agreement as writing the contract and language used is a very complex process. In which it can be a stage alone in the negotiation process (Ghauri, 2003). According to Participant G training and preparation before negotiating internationally is important. Without preparation, it will be almost not possible to close a deal. However, it seems

to be that the company does not provide a specific training program to prepare the negotiator. As it was noted by participant G when referring to what he does before going into international negotiation. This could mean that MCB is relying on the individual experience and expect the negotiator to be well prepared and to learn from their mistakes.

“I have a written structure to prepare myself and to inform the client about why we are doing this meeting. So, I will prepare myself completely and preparing my colleagues who will be involved in this and what they will do in the negotiation and who will play which role in the negotiation” (Participant G, personal communication, 2019)

A challenge that participant G mentioned when negotiating internationally is the difference in the business culture, an example that was given is when doing business with a client from Ethiopia. The negotiation process is very long, complex, and business culture is completely different. Moreover, the participant claims that without traveling to the client and understanding their business culture, doing business with them will be impossible. Since there is a difference in the culture and the way business is done in that region. Therefore, negotiating internationally is often time consuming and the negotiation process takes must longer time depending on the business culture differences claimed by Participant G. subsequently, the participant expressed that business culture has an influence on how the individual behaves, as it affects the personality, the way you solve problems, how you treat people and of course how you behave.

“Doing business with this company or factory was very complicated, and it is still complicated in a matter of negotiation, supplying, and the complete sales process. A lot of administration, negotiation, and a lot of risk taking” (Participant G, personal communication, 2019).

4.2.1.4 Case IV

In an international business negotiation, participant H claim that it is crucial to take into consideration the region and culture of the client that you are doing business with. As it is important to treat clients differently based on the business culture the client is based in. As the mentality is distant from one business culture to another. This is induced by the experience of participant H from working in international business negotiation and interacting with clients from different business culture.

“You have to treat each one as per his mentality, a culture so on. Meanwhile, the business culture when you treat European customer is different when you treat Arabic or African customer. The way you convince and the way you are writing the email and so it is different.”
(Participant H, personal communication, 2019).

Furthermore, participant H have added that by having a multicultural employee within MCB allows the exchange of information and experience internally. As the participant claim that with this diversity, it allows the individuals to learn new things. In this way, there is a value that is created within the business culture of MCB, as everyone has the possibility to exchange culture information in which can be helpful to have when negotiating internationally. In order to serve the client in the best manner, participant H stated that it is important to be knowledgeable about the different business culture. Additionally, this will influence the negotiation process, as the more the individual knows their customer, the higher the chance they have in reaching an agreement. Therefore, it can be seen that understanding the client's business culture play a big role in the negotiation, which will lead to a smooth transaction between the two parties. It was stated by participant H that one of the challenges faced when doing business internationally is the culture and the language barrier, An example that was provided from the experience of participant H when negotiating with Nigeria, where the business culture is different, and it is taught to do business with them. One of the reasons that it is a tough and competitive market is because the business culture there is very relationship orientation business environment. Therefore, building a relationship and friendship, it seems to be more important than the business itself. In order to gain a client from such a region, participant H suggested that it is crucial to show commitment and interest in the clients.

On the other hand, it appears that before going into an international negotiation, the individual involving must go through an internal meeting to prepare for negotiating. This is also done with some training from time to time to support the negotiator and add cross-cultural negotiation skill. Moreover, it was mentioned during the interview with Participant H that business culture influences a positive way on how the individual behaves, as the participant believes it helps to learn new things and change the way the individual thinks.

4.2.2 setting II result

In this section, a summary of the findings from the different participant mentioned in the previous section will be illustrated. It will include the common and main findings from the interviewees conducted with the four participants from MCB.

All the participants working with the firm are from different countries and cultures background. Therefore, it's critical for individuals from different cultures to have the ability to integrate and adapt to the business culture of the company. It was mentioned by participant F, it is important

to understand the different cultures of the employees as it helps to make communication easier. Referring to participant H, he stated that MCB had written policies that everyone in the company follows, and there is no hierarchy between the management and the employees. Furthermore, the business culture and environment within MCB is considered flexible and innovative by the eye of the employees that participated in this research.

Another point that was brought up and discussed by all the four participants in the challenges they face when doing business and negotiating internationally. Each participant talked about the challenges they face based on the region they are responsible for doing business with. It was found that there is a difference in the business culture, mentality, and way of thinking, which allow room for misunderstanding and miscommunication. Moreover, the culture difference plays a big role when negotiating internationally. It was stated by most of the participant, the most difficult area to do business with is Africa. The main reason is that there is a vast gap in business culture. Additionally, the way of thinking is very much different, and to a certain extent for them, business relationship and cost is the most important things within a business transaction. Furthermore, it was agreed by all the participants the importance of understanding the counterpart's business culture. Since they claim without it will not be possible to do business with them. It is also essential to treat your clients based on their mentality and the way how they do business. Therefore, adapting to the business culture is necessary.

In addition, it was agreed by all participants from this setting that business culture influences their behavior, especially when the individual is new in the company or when the individual is forced to divert and work or behave based on the client's pace. On the other hand, business culture could impact positively. As one of the participants believes the diversity in a business culture provides an opportunity to learn from others. It helps to improve individual competence when negotiating internationally. Finally, it was agreed by all participants the diversity in MCB is beneficial. This makes the company able to reach clients from all around the work and learn new things from a different culture. Therefore, it is important to be open-minded and understand the culture of the employees. This will reduce misunderstanding and miscommunication.

4.3 summary

As the two-setting presented in this study is from different business culture and environment, the findings are still very similar when it comes to international business negotiation and how business culture can have an influence on the individual involving in the negotiation process. In conclusion, there are three main aspects that were drawn out from both setting analyses as to

be the most important and crucial factors for the individual involved in the international business negotiation. Firstly, Business culture value which refers to both the firm's business culture, counterpart's business culture and how can the training add value to the individual who later results in a positive manner of the international business negotiation process. Second, international negotiation challenges refer to the difficulties faced by the individuals within the firms when doing business with a client that is from a different business environment and have a different business culture. Lastly, the individual's adaptation ability as to how the individual from different cultures and backgrounds can adapt to the firm business culture and the client business culture in order to help with the negotiation process.

4 Discussion

In this chapter, the writers will be presenting the common theme which was drawn out from the analysis of the empirical cases in the previous chapter. Firstly, the business culture value will be discussed. Afterward, presenting and analyzing the challenges faced when doing business internationally for individuals within Eaton and MCB. Lastly, the individual adaptation ability as it was one of the essential parts mentioning by all the participant from both Eaton and MCB.

4.1 Business culture value

The importance of understanding the business culture either if it is of the firm or the counterpart plays a significant role in international business negotiation which was also supported by previous research such as Budak et al. (2013) and by all the participants that were interviewed for this research. Nevertheless, participant A, B, C, and D strongly expressed that the internal training and courses provided by the firm have a part in increasing the understanding and common ground throughout the corporation of the firm business culture and values. However, unlike how the four participant from Eaton described that the firm's ways of having a structure for employees to have a common understanding of the business culture, MCB is rather relying on the experience of the employees and for them to learn from doing which was mentioned by the four participants from MCB. Therefore, this allows MCB to be open when it comes to facing counterpart from different business culture, as they are so diversified within the company and there is no actual structure that the employees must follow but rather allowing the employees to adapt and grow from their own experiences. Complementary to this, participant E, state that if the risk of failure is low, firm will let the employees learning from doing the negotiation process, whereas, the risk is high the firm will either provided some sort of coaching or seeking out internal researches from the branches which are operating in that specific business culture and environment to prepare the individual before doing business negotiation. Supporting this finding, Hurn (2007b) and Cohen (1999) have strongly expressed regarding to the benefit of the firms or top management team to have any sort of training providing to the individual ahead of time before entering the negotiation internationally, to ensure the individual to have an understanding of the different cultures, as well as preparing the individual to have an efficient way of handling different situations which might occur.

Another essential point, regarding the additional knowledge of the business culture, participant C and F have mentioned that they seek external courses such as a university to help them gain new knowledge which might not be provided by the firms training or coaching and staying up

to date with what is changing in the business world. In contrast to what Carmen Lario de Oñate & Amador (2013) stated that the expansion of education in teaching and learning of international business have become essential especially in Europe since the 1990s, hence, the competence in intercultural not only help but also assist the individual who interacts with any type of international profession. Equally as important to the factors mentioned above is the diversity within the firm, which is highly beneficial as business culture values adding, as well as providing both the firm and employees an additional knowledge which is gained from interacting with other employees from different countries and culture within the corporation. In contrast to Dahlin et al., (2005) and Østergaard et al. (2011) studies which suggested that diversity within the firm can increase the firm competencies as the internal set of knowledge, skills, and experience from the employees are wildly different but beneficial for exploring the international market. In result to the diversity of the firms, this also help with increasing the understanding different business culture which provide the individual involving in the international business negotiation an insight on how to behave or what is appropriate and acceptable in those specific business environment and culture, as this was mentioned by participants from both Eaton and MCB (Participant A, C, B, and H).

4.2 International business challenges

It was acknowledged by all the participants in the interview from Eaton and MCB on the importance of understanding the business culture of the client when doing business internationally. As it is a crucial step within the international negotiation process, to be aware of the counterparty business culture. This is because there is a difference in the mentality and way of thinking. In this way, the company will be able to conduct a business transaction in an efficient way, and the rate of success will be higher. On the other hand, the challenges faced when doing business internationally is based on the client business culture or the region you are doing business with. Since each client or region has a different way of doing business. Therefore, the challenges faced my Eaton and MCB is based on the area the company target and where they have most of their clients from. Referring to the findings from the individual participants in the interviews, it was noticed that doing business with China/Japan and Norway is of challenge. Whereas MCB was facing difficulty and challenge when doing business with Africa mostly. As it appears to be, most of MCB customers are from Africa. However, two of the participants mentioned some challenges they face when doing business with China, Japan, and Korea. Doing business with each of the countries mentioned above have different business culture, mentality, and its way of negotiating deals. Therefore, all interviews participated in the

interview referred to the importance of adapting and understanding their culture. On the other hand, it's also important to keep in mind Eaton or MCB business culture and policies in mind.

According to the participants in the interview from Eaton and MCB, it seems to be doing business with Asia is difficult and challenging as the business culture is very different in Asia and specifically in China, Japan, and Korea. One of the challenges faced by Eaton when doing business with China and Japan is the process. The business transaction process is a very long process as many people are involved in decision making, which makes the negotiation process stretched. As many people are involved in the decision making and the negotiation process, signing contract takes more time than it usually does. Furthermore, there is a high hierarchy within the organization. This also could be a reason for having a long negotiation process with China and Japan.

Eaton as a corporation that over the years, several small companies merged to create Eaton Bussmann Corporation. Eaton business focuses on clients from Europe and America. In this way, Eaton does not face many clients where they have a different business culture. According to Hofstede's (1980) and House et al. (2004) model of culture dimension, one of the dimensions is power distance. As Eaton referred to China and Japan have a high hierarchy, it can be concluded that they have high power distance. This means there is a gap between a normal employee and manager or CEO within an organization, which makes it more difficult to reach the decision maker. This result in having a long and complex process when negotiating with cultures that have high power distance as China, Japan, and other Asian countries. Additionally, according to Nam (2015) description of high and low context communication. Therefore, when doing business with China, it means doing business with high context culture. On the other hand, Eaton business culture is considered to be a mix of both high and low context. Another challenge faced by Eaton is when doing business with Norway. As in the business culture, there is based on verbal communication. Business transaction and agreement between the two parties is done verbal, and there is no written contract. However, this is against Eaton business culture as they must have everything written. Since Eaton is an American corporation having everything written is part of the business culture, and Norway business culture is contradicting Eaton rules.

The company also referred to some preparation that is done before negotiating and meeting the client. Such as studying the business culture and the individual who will be responsible for negotiating the deal, for example through LinkedIn. Which is helpful to understand the business

culture of the counterparty. Moreover, the culture difference between the firms and the top management team can disrupt the negotiation process (Salausa, 2004). Negotiating goal, negotiating attitude, personal styles, communications, time sensitivity, emotionalism, agreement form, agreement building, team organization, and risk-taking are elements arise in the complexity of intercultural negotiation (Salausa, 2004). Therefore, it is critical to keep in mind of such elements which could impact the success of an international negotiation with a counterparty that has a different business culture. According to the individual participant in the interview with Eaton, the negotiation process is different based on the client business culture. The negotiation process is divided into three phases, which are pre-negotiation, face-to-face negotiation, and post-negotiation phase (Ghauri, 2013). The negotiation process is influenced by four main factors, which are background factors, the atmosphere factor, strategic factors, and cultural factor. The presented factor must be taken into consideration when negotiating internationally to support the success of the negotiation process. As a negotiator, it is also important to adapt to the culture of the international client when negotiating. Adler (2002) present example of cultures and its characteristics which a negotiator might follow in order to adapt to the business culture of the client and have a successful negotiation.

The common topic discussed by all the participants in the interview with MCB is the challenges and difficulties faced by the individuals when doing business internationally. It appears to be most of MCB clients are from Africa region. Since it was discussed by three of the participants, their experience and challenges faced when negotiating with a client from an African country. The first point that was discussed is the difficulty in getting confirmations in advance from the client to meet and negotiate. It shows that communication with them is challenging and reaching to an agreement can take longer than usual. Scheduling meeting with them does not have a specific date, place, or time. The client will provide the month without even sure that he will be there eve. This is because they are unaware of the future and cannot plan ahead. The solution would be calling them before a week of the “scheduled meeting” to get the confirmation. In some situations, the client will not be able to attend the meeting. Therefore, according to Nam (2015) high and low context communication, it can be argued that clients in Africa are categorized under high context communication. Additionally, referring to Hofstede’s (1980) culture dimensions, long and short-term orientation is one of the dimensions. Based on the case provided above, clients in Africa have short term orientation. Furthermore, Carmen Lario de Oñate & Amador (2013) mention key components which are of importance to look into when doing business internationally. One of the components is the working hours as each business

culture have different working hours which is important to take into consideration in an earlier stage of the negotiation process so negotiation will be done in a more effective manner. Hence, it is essential to study the country party business culture in order to prepare for the negotiation to make a successful deal.

It is also necessary to be able to adapt to the client mentality and way of doing business. As mentioned from one of the participants, without adapting to their mentality, way of thinking, and business culture, it will not be possible to do business with clients from this particular region. According to Lewis (2006), the difference in culture has an impact on the negotiation process and the negotiation social environment. As different cultures perceive negotiation differently. Another example was provided from one of the participants the challenges they faced when doing business with one client from Africa. As discussed, it is an important client, and the negotiation process was very complicated. There was a lot of issues, such as administration, misunderstanding, and miscommunication. To solve this problem, the individual had to travel to the client with a lot of costs. This is to understand the business culture and the mentality of the customer, the interviewee claimed without traveling, understanding the business culture and adapting it will never be possible to do business with the client. According to Brett & Gelfand (2005), there are five factors that are of importance to be considered in the negotiation process (as cited in Khakhar & Rammal, 2013). Judgment & concession making, motivation, attribution, communication, and confrontation. Although the negotiation process took very long and many challenges faced with this client, there should be motivation in order to have a successful deal.

On the other hand, Ghauri (2003) argue that cultural factor is one of the factors that influence the negotiation process. Therefore, culture difference is an obstacle which you can overcome it by preparing and understanding the country party. By doing this, the individual can understand the client thoughts and make him see you understand his business culture. It was stated by one of the participants that with the diversity in MCB it is possible to do business all over the world, learn new things and can gain knowledge of client business culture internally with the support of the employees, as the company has nineteen different nationalities. Finally, an interesting point that was mentioned by one of the participants regarding the importance of relationship and friendship with clients from Africa. It seems to be in Africa business is very much based on building a relationship for long term business. Trust plays a critical role in building relationships and maintaining relationships in a business transaction (Jiang et al., 2011).

Therefore, in order to build a relationship with a client and maintain this relationship, there must be trust between the two parties. As soon as the client trusts doing business with MCB then gradually, there will be a business relationship which will last long.

4.3 Individual's adaptation ability

The adaptive capability of the employees to the firm's business culture, regarding the participants from Eaton is highly important. As the participants are able to adapt to Eaton business culture from the firm providing a structured way of working and doing business, however, the flexibility for the individual to adapt and improvise the structure are part of Eaton business culture concept. Therefore, employees within the firm have a structure to follow as a guideline, but at the same time, they can also improvise in order to synchronize with the business culture of the firm and the counterpart. Furthermore, it is argued by Karaevli & Hall (2006) and Almahamid et al., (2006) as a manager and individual dealing with the international business it is required to be a fast and adaptive learner. As well as being able to perform at a pace in terms of the firm's business culture. As mentioned by participant C, it is essential to be flexible when it comes to different environment and culture, which can be gained from every business experience and business negotiation meetings. Moreover, participant C and D from Eaton have provided some example relating to the adaptability and flexibility in terms of compromising the business culture of the firm and counterpart, as in Norway it is common for clients to conduct agreements verbally and do not rely on a written contract. However, within Eaton being an American firm, it is a must to have written a contract, as this is part of the firm business culture. Resulting, as the individual that is responsible for this negotiation process with Norway to have a verbal agreement but at the same time making sure to follow the protocol of Eaton by writing some form of document to confirm the agreement with the counterpart, which also means that the counterpart must also adapt to the business culture of Eaton.

On the other hand, all participants within MCB agreed that to have a successful negotiation process, it is important to adapt to the counterpart business culture. As it was mentioned in the study by Mitchell (2000) that understanding the counterpart's culture is crucial and failing in understanding the culture could mean failing in a business deal. However, one of the challenges of having employees from a different culture is how the individual interpreted information, as an example provided by participants E on how the term "sending soon" can have different meanings from one culture to another. Whereas, participant H mentioned that the employees working at MCB have certain policies which was provided for everyone in the firm to follow.

Therefore, employees must have the ability to adapt to the business culture of the firm. Although, when working with the counterpart, MCB is promoting the employees to work and adapt into the counterpart's business culture and treat them according to their business culture, environment, and mentality more, in order to increase the successful outcomes.

Moreover, in a multicultural corporation like Eaton and MCB, it is important to understand the cultural diversity within the firm, as this helps with the knowledge sharing as well as understanding how individuals from different backgrounds think and behave, as Østergaard et al. (2011) argued that different education, ethnic and cultural background of the employees in the firm could result to the firm knowledge becoming diverse. Furthermore, participant F argues that employees could be doing things in the wrong manner. However, participant F stated that it is important to understand individual behavior and work on helping them adjusting and aligning it with the firm business culture, as each individual has a different perception.

5 Conclusion

In this chapter will be presenting the overall summary of the research, as well as answering the research question in brief. Moreover, the practical implication will be presenting in this section, as well as the limitation which occurred when conducting this research. Additionally, a suggestion for future research is also included in this chapter for the reader who is interested in this area of study.

Studying international business negotiation and how business culture influences the individual involving in the negotiation process has been an interest of the writers. Reading about different culture theories, international business, business culture, and negotiation allowed the writers to investigate and study the topics in depth, as well as to see the relation of firm diversity and individual adaptability and how it is highly connected when it comes to improving capability of the firm. Furthermore, it was noticed through reading articles the relationship between the difference in business culture and negotiation, and how could the difference in business culture influence the international negotiation process. Conducting a qualitative case study with Eaton and MCB provided the writers with a different insight into the business culture and international business negotiation field in action. After going through the findings from the interviews and analyzing the participant's respondents, it was further noticed that the individuals have different perceptions into business culture and international business negotiation. Furthermore, with the empirical findings and analysis, the writers were able to come up with three common themes, which are: Business culture value, International business challenges, and Individuals adaptation ability. The themes were further studied in the discussion, and it was interesting to find out the difference in the business culture impact the negotiation process.

When it comes to business culture value, it was found through all the eight participants in this study, understanding the business culture of the firm and counterpart play an important role in international business negotiation. Moreover, the four participants from Eaton agreed on the importance of the courses and training provided that adds value to the company business culture and when negotiating internationally. Whereas from the four participants working with MCB, it appears that MCB relies on 'learning by doing' concept more depending on whether the risk of failure is high or not, in case of high risk, additional coaching and training will then be provided as the region; employees are provided. On the other hand, some of the participants from this interview in both Eaton and MCB rely on previous work experience and course taken outside the company. Regarding international business challenges, since there is a difference in

the business culture and mentality, doing business internationally is challenging. Challenges are different based on the region, which can be seen from the finding of this research that the participants from MCB have difficulty when doing business with countries from Africa and East Asia whereas participants from Eaton found it challenging when doing business with some Scandinavian countries and East Asia. Finally, in regard to individual's adaptation ability, it appears to be that the participants from Eaton have the ability to adapt to the firm business culture and the counterpart business culture as it was explained in section 5.3. Whereas it was interesting to see that the participants from MCB have more challenges when it comes to adapting to the business culture or working in a standardized process, as a company that believes in diversity and have nineteen different nationalities making the individuals adapt to the business culture is difficult.

Moreover, as to answer the research question, *does the business culture of the firm and/or counterpart play a role in international business negotiation?* The result was extraordinary clear for this particular study that not only do firm business culture play a role when coming to the negotiation process, but also the counterparts business culture must also be considered in order to help the process and transaction go smoother for both parties, nevertheless, the counterpart must also consider the firm's business culture and what is appropriate and acceptable. Therefore, the individual involving in the international business negotiation from both parties must have a strong knowledge base of business culture. Additionally, as it was mentioned previously in both chapter 4 and 5, that courses and training can provide the information needed for the individual to understand and planning suitable strategy for an international business negotiation, however, in some cases years of experience and knowledge gained from colleagues can also support with new knowledge for both the individual and the firms, which this is also related to answering the second research question on *how the individual with different culture background and experience can influence the way of planning international business negotiation?* Although, the individuals working for both Eaton and MCB are all cultural diversity and have different previous experience and skill set, therefore, the importance for employees being able to adapt is very much required. As evident from the empirical finding shows, all the participants in this research must in a way, learn the business culture of the firm and the counterpart to adapt a strategy as see fit for both parties and help the negotiation run smoother without conflict or challenges.

Therefore, it can be concluded that for this multi-case study of this research, the business culture not only have an impact on the international business negotiation process but also influence the way the individual prepare and plan their strategy before negotiating internationally by considering both the firm and counterpart. Furthermore, being flexible and adaptable is a very strong suit for both the businesses and the individual as in terms of being open to new knowledge and ways of thinking to help decrease the risk of failure and increase the chance of success. In result, based on the finding of this research, a new figure (Figure 3) has been created as to show the correlation of how business culture influences the individual involving in an international business negotiation. Moreover, this figure is an update with the changes the writers have found and supported by the data collected in this research, in contrast to the previous figure (Figure 1), which was mention in chapter1 under problematization, the additional counterpart’s business culture was added.

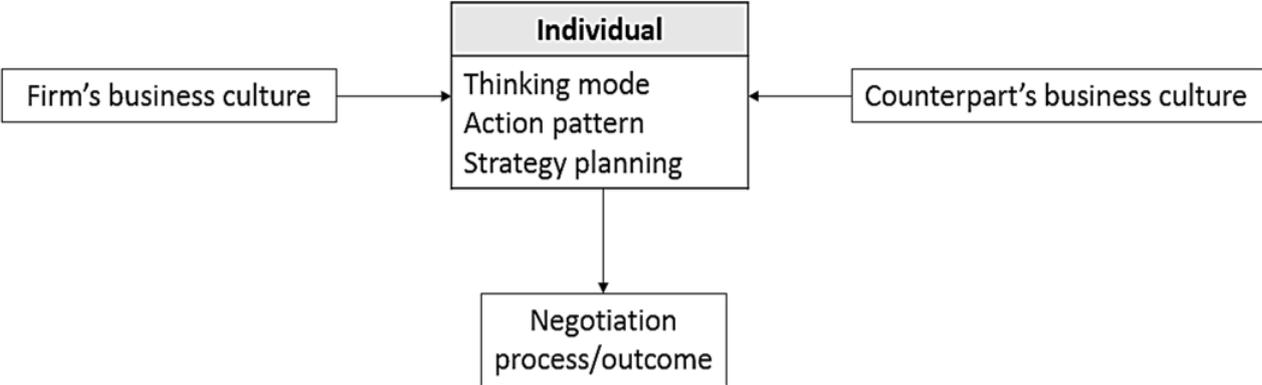


Figure 3: Business culture impacts the individual in the negotiation process.

5.1 Practical implication

According to the empirical findings and analysis were done on the individuals from Eaton and MCB, the writers believe there is always room for improvement. Additional suggestions to the firms such as MCB by improving and providing the resources within the firm to help to support the employees dealing with international business negotiation, as this not only help improving the individual's competence in negotiating internationally but also creating a competitive advantage. Moreover, as both Eaton and MCB is a diverse corporation, one of the challenges that could encounter is how individuals perceive things differently. Therefore, it will be beneficial to have the training to ensure that employees are aware of the importance of adapting to firm business and creating a common ground within the firms. By doing so, this helps to reduce the challenges and to have all employees on the same mindset of the firm business culture. Furthermore, as mentioned by Mitchell (2000), cultural differences play a significant

role when doing business internationally. Therefore, the author believes that the difference in business culture must be taken into consideration to have a successful business transaction internationally. As there are components that could affect the business transaction, such as language, religion, and conflicting attitude which comes from culture believes (Mitchell, 2000). Hence, it's important for Eaton to take into consideration those factors when doing business with Asia, which then can help to reduce the challenges the firms might face, as well as avoiding the feeling of being frustrated and irritated toward the counterpart.

5.2 Limitation

As mentioned in the problematization section, many researchers have based their studies on Hofstede dimension. Nevertheless, this can be out of date as Hofstede dimension is nearly over four decades. Moreover, researchers within the cultural differences and international business negotiation strategy tend to focus on an Asian culture setting (Fang, 2006; Terwatanayong & Quazi, 2006; Sajid et al., 2009) which this can be seen as a limitation in the field of study, as not many have studied the different within European countries. However, the biggest challenges for the writers in doing this research is the time constraint, as the cultural topic can be very sensitive and difficult to generalize. Therefore, additional time and research are needed. Additionally, this also impacts on the ability for the writers to gather more information or follow-up interview, as the time is something very limit for the participants as well as the period of conducting this research. Furthermore, with the geographical distance, also limit the possibility of conducting some of the interview face-to-face, resulting in using a connection media such as Skype instead.

5.3 Future research

For future research, the writers would recommend a mixed method approach as it will then let the research targeting any specific area of interest, alongside with allowing the researchers to gather a more in-depth data if needed to support the result or finding as to why it is like it is. Using this method will also allow future researchers to gather data from many participants from different cultures. Also, future studies can focus on gathering research from one specific culture in order to discover how that culture behaves within a negotiation process. This will contribute to providing an accurate description of specific cultures and not just a generalization. Moreover, an additional recommendation the writers would recommend is to conduct the research with focusing on firms within the same industry or businesses area, as this could help making the study more narrowed for better and interesting findings.

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Appendix

Interview guideline

phase 1: demographic questions

- what is your name?
- what is your nationality?
- what is your profession?
- years of experiences?

phase 2: research topic questions

- What comes to mind when you hear the term business culture? could you elaborate on that?
- How would you describe your company business culture?
- What do you think form a business culture within a firm?
- Is there any form of course or training by the firm to help understanding the business culture within?
- How often you encounter client from different culture and environment background?
- Does business culture of your counterpart play a role? Please elaborate?
- How would you describe an international negotiations process?
 - requirement of time and resources before/after the negotiation process
- How would you describe a good negotiator?
 - what qualities/skill do you think the negotiator must obtain in order to negotiating internationally
- Do you have any type of training or preparation before negotiating internationally? If yes, what do you do?
- Are there any trainings you must go through before being a part of the negotiating team? when going into the international negotiation process, what challenges do you face?
 - Are there a big business culture differences? if yes, please elaborate.
- Does the negotiation process differ when negotiating with local client and international clients? if yes, please elaborate
 - Does the company create its own personal strategy depending on the international client or is that up to you to decide what to do?
- What are the challenges in the negotiating process when negotiate with international clients compared?