FINNISH AND VIETNAMESE TEAMS

How to Improve International Teamwork and Management Practices Through Cooperation

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Title

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Abstract

This research focuses on interaction and cooperation between Vietnamese and Finnish individuals and teams through lenses of cultural theory, including values orientations, intercultural communication and cross-cultural business behaviors. Additional perspective is generated through theories pertaining to teamwork theory and practices. The researchers set out to discover and report on cooperation challenges faced by Vietnamese and Finnish individuals and teams, and to develop ideas for future cooperation between people from these two nations.

The research employed a mixed-methods approach in which desk research helped to inform the creation of a survey that included both closed and open-ended questions. The survey was conducted with Vietnamese and Finnish students (N=98) in fifteen Finnish universities of applied sciences, with the purpose of exploring intercultural interactions between individuals representing the two nationalities. Additional data were gathered from interviews conducted face-to-face and through electronic means between other Finnish and Vietnamese individuals.

The research illuminated many differences in cultural characteristics and teamwork styles between Finnish and Vietnamese people. These differences have the potential for creating barriers, but perhaps more importantly, these differences clearly can also become advantages in the workplace depending on the intercultural awareness, competence and reflexivity toward new ideas and perspectives of the involved individuals. The researchers concluded that individuals and teams, both Finnish and Vietnamese, should pursue a course of attaining a broader and deeper understanding of the other culture with the goal of focusing on improving cooperative interaction between individuals. The researchers provide concrete ideas and approaches to achieve collaborative success, and the future of Vietnamese-Finnish teamwork shows much promise for future cooperation.

Keywords: Vietnam, Finland, Cooperation potential, Culture, Values Orientations, Cultural dimensions, Cross cultural business behaviors, Teamwork style.

Miscellaneous

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1 INTRODUCTION

Teamwork has been demonstrated by both theory and practice to be a good method to improve the performance of organizations, offering many advantages that managers need to organize and direct workers efficiently. With the development of globalization processes, there is increased cooperation between and within international organizations that can be seen when teamwork.

Vietnam today is known as a potential opportunity in Asia for foreigner investors in both business and education areas. However, Finns have not yet been active investors in Vietnamese businesses. Recently, however, there are an increasing number of Finnish business investors choosing Vietnam as their next destination and there are more and more Vietnamese seeing Finns as a viable choice for a business partnership. As new and more open economic policies of Vietnam develop, the possibilities of cooperation between Finland and Vietnam are increasing more and more, which leads to the need for both sides to increase knowledge about their new partners' culture and working styles.

The main purpose of this thesis is to illuminate existing practices in teamwork between Vietnamese and Finnish organizations by exploring the experiences reported by Vietnamese and Finnish participants, and then analyzing those experiences through the lens of culture theory. The results will then inform the creation of concrete ideas and approaches to improve teamwork betweens citizens of the two nations. Between an Asian country and a Nordic country there will be many differences in cultural characteristics. These differences can emerge as either advantages or disadvantages when the teams cooperate. They can support the establishment of benficial cross-team values, or they may also cause difficulties based on the distinct working styles, behaviors and habits occurring in each group.

However, "culture" is a complex and abstract concept. Therefore, to compare similar and distinctive cultural aspects between Vietnamese and Finnish people, cultural-level dimensions and cross-cultural behaviors are used. In addition, working styles and

concepts of teamwork of Vietnamese and Finns are also explored. Secondary research is also employed to establish a base of research pertaining to Finnish and Vietnamese history, culture, business management and teaming styles.

2 OVERVIEW ABOUT FINLAND AND VIETNAM

This chapter provides some background knowledge about Vietnam and Finland through a review and examination of their histories, and provides some of general cultural chracteristics.

2.1 Finland

Finland is a Western European country and a neighbor of Russia and Sweden. Finland is often considered as a member of the Scandinavian group of countries but more correctly belongs to the Nordic group of Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Finland. Foster (2000) affirms "Finland is not a part of Scandinavia".

Finland stands clearly apart from its neighbors, Sweden and Russia. Adolf Ivan Arwidsson (1791-1858), a famous Finnish nationalist, said that "We do not want to be Russian, we cannot be Swedish, so let us be Finnish" (in Finnish, "Ruotsalaisia emme ole, venäläisiksi emme tule, olkaamme siis suomalaisia")

2.1.1   History of Finland

To better understand the people in a given country, an examination of its history helps to explain both ingroup and external relationships. It also provides insight into the nature and cultural characteristics of people in the community. In the case of Finland the year 1155 is an important milestone, marking the start of Finland being controlled by its neighbor Sweden. Finland was completely ruled by the Swedes from 1249 until 1809, a period of more than five hundred years. During this time, Swedish was the official language and was used in all administration and education activities. However, Finnish remained the major spoken language, and the written form of Finnish was officially first published in the 16th century by Mikael Agricola, the "father" of the written Finnish language (Lammervo, 2007). In spite of Swedish rule, the strong national pride of the Finns showed through.

Beginning in 1809, the Swedish era began to collapse in Finland, only to be replaced by Russian rule after the Swedes were unable to defeat the attacking Russians. Finland remained under the control of Russia as a Grande Duchey until 1917.

Even during the years as a Grande Duchey of Russia there were many important milestones that would lead Finland to liberty and independence. During 1866 a famine killed fifteen percent of the Finnish population. However, this dramatic loss also brought about the loosening of Russian control of the budget and well as more investment from Russia to Finland. This helped Finland to improve its economy and gradually stabalize its society. Here might be seen the early nationalization that encouraged Finns to seek freedom and independence. As the Czarist system in Russia collapsed, Finland declared independence on December 6th, 1917. Furthermore, despite this second period of outside domination the Finns still maintained and developed their own language.

Finland's first constitution was ratified in July 1919 (Leney, 2009). Two years after the declaration of its independence Finland became a Republic.

During the period from 1929 to 1944 the relationship between Finland and Soviet Union declined, especially in the Winter War (1939 to 1940) when Soviet forces attacked and tried to occupy Helsinki and Turku. Despite the sudden attack, the Finns were determined to protect the freedom of the nation bravely. The second war, known as the Continuation War, began in 1941 and ended in 1944. Overall the Finns lost the Karelia province in the far eastern part of the country (Aura Korppi-Tommola, 2008). However, the Finns proudly tried their best to protect their country, and today's Finns are proud of their achievement during the Winter and Continuation wars. As a Finnish citizen, Hannu Sivonen, said, "The Finns did not lose the war, but arrived at goal 'as good second' as they say." (Swallow, 2008)

After going through these difficult times, Finland continued to develop its political and economic structures. Finland joined the United Nations in 1995, the Council of Europe in 1989 and the European Union in 1995. Nowadays, Finland is one of the highest living standard countries in the world, and recently has been rated as the most competitive economy according to the result of World Economic Forum 2011 and

2012 (Yle Uutiset, 2012). Moreover, Finland was ranked as the world's most peaceful country according to the Global Peace Index in 2007.

As we examined these pages from history, what we can see is the Finnish love and desire for peace. There is one Finnish word that nowadays is used to describe the characteristicly strong determination of Finns – "SISU," demontrating a "uniquely Finnish quality" and "Finnish spirit". Words which are often used to describe this natural characteristic of Finns include courage, stubbornness, intestinal fortitude, stamina, gumption, obstinate spirit, persistency, perseverance, and pride (Leney, 2009). The reaction and strong determination of Finns to keep their country, their own culture and their language are clear evidence for "SISU."

2.1.2 Distinctive characteristics of Finland

A voyage of discovery lies not in finding new landscapes, but having new eyes – Marcel Proust

The Nordic countries include Finland, Norway, Iceland, Sweden and Denmark. This group was established in some measure based on geographic closeness, leading to a shared nature, history, and some common traits in society and business manners. However, in many cases authors focus a separate chapter about Finnish culture but rarely combine it with others. For instance, Foster (2000) used one chapter to describe the culture of Finland but then combined Norwegian - Danish cultures in one long chapter, and introduced Swedish one as general theme to understand Scandinavian culture in his book.

Language is one of the most obvious distinctions of Finland compared to the other Nordic countries. While Sweden, Norway and Denmark share the same root of language, and Viking culture spread to Germany and England, the Finnish language has Finno-Ugric origins which originate in central Asia (The Global Etiquette Guide to Europe, 2000). Finnish is one of the official languages of the European Union (European commission language, 2011). Over ninety precent of the population in Finland use Finnish as their first language, while the rest use Swedish, English or Sami. Finns are pound of their language but they understand it is not easy for foreigners to learn.

Finland is also known as a sauna country. In most Finnish homes saunas appear as an inevitable part and when Finns built their houses, the sauna is the first part to be completed, according to the proverb "First build the sauna, then the house." The sauna has its own name day –the second Saturday in June. Finns use the sauna during all the times of the year and often even choose the sauna as a business discussion place.

Finnish nature is considered to be quite distinctive, and seventy percent of the land is covered by trees. Finland was cited as Europe's most forested country (FINFO, 2009). Finns love and protect their nature no matter how harsh the weather can be. Living in what can be difficult winters, Finns have had to adapt, and this also leads to some unique traits in the communication styles and habits of the people.

In Finland as other Nordic countries, women's roles in society is highly appreciated and considered to be more equal compared to men than they are in many other cultures (Economist, 2003). Finland recently had a woman president, Tarja Halonen from 2000 to 2012. This let the world know that the position of Finnish women in their society is highly valued. Deborah Swallow – an English cross-cultural communications consultant and trainer even said "…but it would be all too easy for one to mistakenly assume that Finnish women have the same role as most other women in Western society" (Swallow, 2008). Finns hold free democratic elections and enjoy the freedom of choosing and voting for their preferred political party. As well, the Finnish Constitution that came into effect in 1919 promised to guarantee the equity, freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, freedom of assembly, freedom of movement, freedom of speech and democratic elections.

Finns value their own private space and respect the privacy of others. For this reason some foreigners may conclude that it is difficult to get to know Finns at a personal level. However, there is a saying that when a Finn becomes your friends he or she is a friend for life.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Finland is not a familiar country to the Vietnamese people. In the past, to Vietnamese people, Finland was a country in Europe many thousands of kilometers from Vietnam. It is a place where Nokia phones come from, and a land of thousands of lakes and forest. However, nowadays the number of Vietnamese visiting

Finland has increased rapidly. One-hundred Vietnamese moved to Finland as refugees in 1979, and this increased to 2,300 in 1994 (Huynh, 2010), and in 2008 around 5,000 Vietnamese people visited or immigrated to Finland (Huynh 2010).

2.2 Vietnam

Vietnam is a Southeast Asian country sharing its borders with the Peoples Republic of China, Laos, and Cambodia. Lying right next to China, Vietnam shares some similar cultural features with China. Vietnam was under the dominance of Chinese dynasties for more than one thousand years, so there should be no surprise to see some similar cultural characteristics. However, the Vietnamese people are extremely proud of their own culture, national spirit and desire for independence and freedom. Like the Finns, Vietnamese people have tried their best to maintain their unique cultural heritage which is distinctive from other Asian cultures, particularly China.

In the past, Vietnam, a small and poor country, had to endeavor hard to become an independent nation – the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, first from China, and then France and the United States and its allies. The characteristics of Vietnamese there are thus affected by these conflicts throughout their history. Moreover, as mentioned above, Vietnamese are proud of their history and are keen to help foreigners to have agood impression and communication with Vietnamese people.

2.2.1   History of Vietnam

The Bach Dang victory in the year 938 was one of the most important milestones in the history of Vietnam. It opened a new era of independence from China, and no longer would Vietnam be a Chinese province. When talking about this glorious victory, Vietnamese people remember their talented leader –Ngo Quyen, the person who commanded this battle to help a nation escape from a life of slavery. With his understanding of the terrain, and with the consensus and determination of the whole nation, Quyen took advantage of ocean tides to knock down the military boats of China. Nowadays, his name is still memorialized as a district in the city where the battle happened.

From 1009 to 1527, Vietnam went through a renaissance of development under the administration of four dynasties including the Ly (1009-1226), Tran (1226-1400), Ho (1400-1407) and Le So (1428-1527) dynasties. Vietnamese people still kept their

typical cultural features – "village culture" that says that the rules of the nation cannot come before the rules of the small village. People who raised in this land should always remember the "Vietnamese villages that have nurtured and fostered the quintessence of the traditional culture." (Pham, 2012) It is the traditional spirit which helped the country to pass through the periods of domination.

During these times, at first, Vietnamese had to use the *Han,* the symbolic hand writing of Chinese. Furthermore, Han literacy deeply affected the speaking and literature of Vietnamese people. However, right after achieving their liberty, the Vietnamese created their own symbolic hand-writing called "Chu Nom" starting during the early tenth century (De Francis 1977: 21). Although this kind of writing script had some similar features as the Han, developing a national form of writing was obvious evidence for the desire to be independent. This was one of the first steps in a long process of creating their own culture. During these periods the first Vietnamese university- Quoc Tu Giam, was established and the first Vietnam history book appeared.

During the 19th century, for the first time Vietnam had to cope with an invasion by a Western country- France. Although some of the intellectuals at that time realized the necessity of reforming and suggested many valuable proposals to save the nation's independence, the Nguyen dynasty nonetheless rejected all of them, leading the country under the control of France for around one hundred years, from 1858 to 1945. Vietnam officially became a semi – feudal country. French colonialists not only controlled the Vietnamese economy but also society. In Vietnam at the time, the distance between the classes in society was quite large. Consequently, the struggle led to the forming of two parties representing two major classes in the society, the working class (Communist Party of Viet Nam) and the bourgeois (Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang).

With the strength of the working class union and with the traditional village culture, under the leadership of the Communist Party headed by Nguyen Ai Quoc (known as Ho Chi Minh later) a general uprising to seize power was successfully launched on September 2nd, 1945. The Democratic Republic of VietNam was born. In May 1945, the victory in the Dien Bien Phu battle generated global attention and helped to

produce the Genève Accord of July 1945 marking the end of the French – colonist period in Vietnam. However, the country was separated into two parts; the North was under the rule of socialism by the communist party of Vietnam. Meanwhile the north was temporarily under the control of France according to the Genève Accord.

Vietnam entered another war with another powerful Western country – the United States. The war between United States and Vietnam lasted from 1954 to 1975. Although there were many difficulties including an unbalance in military forces and materials when compared to the United States – one of the most powerful countries at that time compared to Vietnam- a poor Asian country, all Vietnamese from North to South with their love of nation, their stubborn and desire for freedom, independence still tenaciously fought against it. With the leadership of Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam officially united and achieved freedom in 1975.

After freedom and independence came to this land, people here started to build up and develop the country from the ruins of two wars. The changes in policy focusing on economic issues opened a new era to Vietnam in 1986. It did not only raise the livelihoods of Vietnamese people but also began to raise the profile of Vietnam around the world. Vietnam has been known as the second largest rice exporter and achieved other successes. Nowadays, Vietnam is known as a peaceful country that has the fastest growing economy in the South East Asian region. The economy is more open, and especially welcoming of foreign investment. The decision to join the WTO in 2006 produced even more opportunities to develop the nation.

During a long period of struggle to have freedom from two powerful Western countries, the Vietnamese people still maintained their traditional features, especially their love of nation, their self-reliance and unity spirit. It is the answer that all Vietnamese will offer when they are asked how their ancestors could win the wars with two powerful nations.

In the 17th century, the transition in the official writing from Symbol scripts to Latin using international alphabet was one of the biggest breakthroughs in the cultural history of the Vietnamese, helping the next Vietnamese generations have a better chance to study and integrate with global friends.

2.2.2 Distinctive characteristic of Vietnam

From appearances, almost all Vietnamese people might be thought to be Chinese at first glance. In the past when the number of Vietnamese in Finland was still small, Finnish people might not even realize that people are Vietnamese when they speak in their language, and not Chinese. However, recently when the number is increasing rapidly, Vietnam is more known in Finland. From only 100 Vietnamese immigrated in 1979, this number reached 4,645 in 2007 (Statistics Finland, 2008).

Generally, Vietnam shares many common cultural features with Asian countries, especially South East Asian ones. However it would be wrong to conclude that Vietnamese culture is the same as other Asian countries such as China or Thailand. The Vietnamese built and developed their own cultural features on the base of Chinese cultural aspects, and then opened received and benefited from some Western thinking and living styles. This has helped to make Vietnamese cultural nowadays very distinctive and special.

Vietnam is famous as a rice-exporting nation, where rice has been grown in water fields for centuries. Many Vietnamese derive a sort of familial name based on their proximity to two of the largest rivers in the country: "Hong" –"Red river "in the North and "Cuu Long" in the South. However, for those Vietnamese living near the South China Seaare in some cases specialists in fishing and making salt. At the top of the north and in the central areas, where there are a lot of mountains, many ethnic minorities live their lives in forests. In each part of this country the local culture will appear more crystal clear. Actually, local cultures affect deeply the lives of Vietnamese people. For instance, despite living in the same country, citizens living in the North have cultures closer to the Chinese, where life can be more formal, involve more rules and are stricter than in the South. In the south of Vietnam, peoples' minds are more open and closer to a western cultural norm. Fishermen or those who live at the edge of the sea are usually speaking in a more straightforward manner and express their pride more so than others might do. As well, different weather characteristics from the North to the South also create differences in culture. While in the north, there are four clear seasons, in the south there are only two with the sun shining all the times in a year.

Almost all Vietnamese are familiar with the thought of the community being at the center of living and working life. This produces a group working spirit that was necessary to help a long dominated country endure and survive the difficulties of the early post-war period. Nowadays, when Vietnamese go abroad, it is rare to find them being alone; they usually have had contact and shared experiences before, and form Vietnamese communities to help each other living far from their home country. However, at work, teamwork is not a familiar concept to Vietnamese people. Some have said that one Vietnamese person working individually may prevail over a Japanese person in a competition, but a team of Japanese would win for sure against a Vietnamese team.

For Vietnamese, family and the happiness of family is considered to be more important than all kinds of wealth or property. Usually, in one family's home there are three generations living together and the younger one's have to respect and be responsible for the aged ones. Furthermore, Vietnamese are always drawn towards "Benevolence" and "Righteousness". So far, all Vietnamese generations have supported and sustained these traditions.

In conclusion, three layers of Vietnamese culture formed over time: a strong local culture; the cultural influence of China, and more recently the one that interacted with Western cultures. These layers intertwine and form a unique and distinctive whole.

2.2.3   Budism, Confucian and Taoism philosophies in Vietnam

The Vietnamese are strongly influenced by religion in cultures and every concept of life. Although there is mixture of religions such as Chrsitian, Roman Catholic, Hindu, etc. the attitudes toward life and world are based on Buddism, Confucian and Taoism, three main religions which have long exsiting history in Vietnam.

Buddhism is the predominant religion in Vietnam. It was introduced to Vietnam during the dominant period of China in the second century B.C. Most of Vietnamese identified themselves as Buddism. The effects of Buddism are obvious in the traditions, cultures and everyday life of Vietnamese. The Buddhist population in the world is more than three hundred million, while in Vietnam of eight million people there are seven million Buddhists (Hoang, 2005).

Buddhist philosophy strongly affects the behaviors and morals of Vietnamese people. The core lessons of Buddhist teaching are about the eight "right" ways to live virtuously, the so-called "noble eightfold path," including: the right view, the right thought, the right conduct, the right speech, the right livelihood, the right effort, the right mindfulness and the right meditation (Naval history and heritage, United states). This helps to explain the gentle manners and righteousness in actions of Vietnamese people. The second important lesson is about "karma": the cause and effect rule in which an individual's fate is determined by what he or she has done in his/ her previous life.

Confucianism also spread to Vietnam through China, and Confucian philosophy has continued to influence ethics in Vietnamese ever since. The lessons from Confucianism regulate the relations between humans and define the social orders as well as rituals and obedience. The rules from Confucian lessons not only help to improve the individual but also can be considered as rules for the standards in human relations. In Vietnam, people follow five main obligations and ordinary rules, including:

- "Nhan: love and humility".
- "Nghia: right actions in expressing love and humanity".
- "Le: observation of the rites or rules of ceremony and courtesy".
- "Tri: the duty to be educated".
- "Tin: self-confidence and fidelity towards others" (Navy department library, United States).

Taosim is another religion that continues to influence the Vietnamese people. The Taosim philosophy addresses harmony between humans and nature. To have happiness and to reach a harmonious state, humans should avoid confrontation by keeping calm. The "basic doctrine of Taosim" which is considered to lead humans to the "right path" of life includes:

- The universe, including the nature of the physical and spiritual worlds, is supreme.
- For every positive factor in the universe there is an opposing negative factor.

- All these factors exert influence on all facets of the Taoist's life.

- The positive and negative factors are as they are and cannot be changed; however, through the application of astrology and divining a Taoist priest can forecast which factor can be in greater power at a give day, month, or year.

- The universe is controlled by a mystical, almost mythical supreme being from whom occasional mandates are communicated to rulers or priests.

- The elements-metal, wood, water, fire, and earth, form the basis for the religious rites of Taoism. (Naval history and heritage, United States)

3 CULTURE

3.1 Definition of culture

Culture is a complex concept that has become a popular focus of many researchers. According to Thomas (2008), there are more than 160 definitions of culture. One of the most classic definitions was created by Edwards B. Taylor in 1871: "That complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law and customs and any other capabilities and habits acquires by man as a part of society" (Taylor, 1889). In this definition culture is seen broadly, covering many angles of humanity and found in both internal - mentally and outside-actions and behaviors. Yet, as society changes, there are more and more definitions of cultures created using the same core ideas, but varying to suit within the field and situation. According to Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988), no consensus has been achieved when it comes to formulating an interdisciplinary definition that can be accepted across the diverse fields of study.

Another definition describes culture as "…subjective perception of human-made part of the environment" (Thomas 2008: 27). In this definition, the author was focused on the psychology and cognition of humans that leads to thinking inside and reaction outside to people about their surrounding environment. This approach of defining culture is supported by one of the classic models of culture, the "Iceberg" developed by Selfridge and Sokolik, 1975 and W.L. French and C.H. Bell in 1979. Three layers of the iceberg illustrate three components of culture including artifacts that are exposed outside, norms- the internal human behaviors and the invisible part for example relationships, expectations, and beliefs. The last layer is also the reason to explain for two above layers. This model also connects to Hofstede's definition of

culture, "the collective software of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others" (Hofstede 2005: 3).

The term "culture", in the Vietnamese language- "Van hoa" can be understood in many different ways. Vietnam is a South West Asian country, and neighbor of China- a country with strong historical influences on the history and ideological systems of Vietnamese people. The definition of culture in Vietnam also shows the effects of Confucius. In the book "Vietnam van hoa su cuong"- "Historical Vietnam culture basic" first published by author Dao in 1938, p 10- 11 "culture" was described as: " Van hoa la cach sinh hoat cua nguoi" –"culture is the lifestyle of people."

There are some other definitions of "culture" from Vietnamese authors, however, they are not considered as fully expressive of the characteristics and dimensions of cultures; therefore they are not very wide spread. UNESCO Vietnam meeting 31st (11-2011) provided some suggestions about the concept of culture which was strongly connected to the definitions from Western mentioned earlier, taking the mental, materials and value systems as the cores to define the term "culture":

"Van hoa nen duoc xem la mot tap hop (the set) cac dac diem noi bat ve tinh than, vat chat, tri thuc va tinh cam cua xa hoi hay mot nhom xa hoi va ngoai van hoc nghe that, no con la bao gom loi song, cach thuc cung chung song, cac he thong gia tri, cac truyen thong vca tin nguong"

"Culture should be considered as a set of features about mental, material, perception and emotions of society or a group of societies, and literature and art, it also includes lifestyles, and the ways we are living together, the systems of values, traditions and beliefs."

Other Vietnamese authors also find other approaches to give clear understanding about culture. However, almost follow the literature aspect to explanation:

"Van la van chuong, van van va van xuoi. Van con co nghia la dep. Hoa la cam hoa, giao duong. Van hoa la ren rua, giao duc, cam hoa nguoi bang cai dep, de lam con nguoi tro nen dep va hoan thien. Nhung cai dep, hieu den cho cuu canh cua no, cung

dong thoi la cai chanm cai thien, chon en van hoa chinh la den cai dep cai thien de ren rua, giao duc con nguoi, khien nguoi tro nen hoan thien" (Minh Chi, 1976).

Culture means literature that also has meaning as the beauty. Culture is touched, educated, trained to bring people to beauty, make people also become more beautiful and perfect. However the beauty is also the good. Therefore, culture truly is bringing people to the beauty and the good to become perfect" (Minh Chi, 1976)

Comparing between the Vietnamese definition of culture and a Western one, they seem to be similar. However, to the new present in a newer way of examining and defining culture, the difference appears. While in the Western one, authors specifically concentrate more on two aspects to explain the behaviors and reacting of people to environment, the Eastern definitions are more focused on the humanity perspectives and education.

Professor Pham Xuan Nam pointed out the reason leading broad range of definitions for culture being the diversity in approaches to lifestyles (Pham, 2007). The history of Vietnam provides insights about the diverse understanding of "culture". Vietnam was dominated by China and colonized by the French and America. Therefore, in addition to the strong influences of Eastern cultures, Vietnamese are also in some ways quite Western.

3.2 Effect of culture to teamwork performance

The term "Globalization" has become prominent everywhere in the world; it is even considered as a trend and a major phenomenon during the last two decades, and it is recognized as a vital consequence of the world's economic development.

Scholte (20, January, 2003) in "Globalization: a critical introduction" demonstrated this phenomenon through five simple general concepts. Four of them including internationalization, liberalization, universalization and westernization, are mentioned as obvious and easy to observe. Meanwhile, the fifth concept – "deterritorialization- was identified as "a new, distinctive meaning". "The fifth idea identifies globalization as deterritorialization (or I would prefer to characterize it, a spread of supraterritoriality)". Following this interpretation, globalization entails a reconfiguration of geography so that the social space is no longer wholly mapped in term of territorial places, territorial distances and territorial borders" (Jan Aart

Scholte, Globalization: a critical introduction, 15). It is one of the cores of this phenomenon. People all over the world get connections in supraterritorial ways – no strange, uncomfortable or "shock" feelings to new cultures.

In business many managers know how to create advantages from differences in cultures between countries. They understand that people from different cultures with different histories and backgrounds will bring some unique and valuable skills for the work. Therefore, diversified cultural teamwork has become a more favorable approach nowadays. Cummings (March 2004, 360) adds support to this approach, "I argue that external knowledge sharing is more valuable when groups are more structurally diverse" in his research about teamwork and cultures.

However, according to Wilkins and Ouchi's discussion (1983, 469), there were many economists and organizational theorists believe that it was unnecessary to consider culture as one of the implements having strong effects to an organization's performance. That thinking is changing and expected to change with the processes of "globalization" continue. In fact, there are more and more managers of notable organizations taking serious consideration about this issue. For instance, in the case of Dell Inc. after the company's share price fell significantly, CEO Kevin Rollins realized the need to adjust the company's culture. In almost all business schools and education institutes in the world nowadays, foreign students are more open to active in international exchanges that allow them the chance to practice their skills for working in international environments. In Finland, the number of foreigner students is increasing. In 2009, there were 5.2% students in universities of apllied Sciences coming from abroad (studyinfinland.fi). In every higher education institution of Finland, including university and university of applied sciences, there are usually more than one departments teaching degree programs in English.

Almost everything in the world has some advantage or disadvantage, but multicultural teamwork, in spite of the challenges, offers many advantages. Teamwork as a management tool can become an important part of the organization, and a strategic element in global management. Thus there is a linkage between cultural groups to teamwork performance and productivity from the effect of intersecting cultures on people's behaviors, feelings, beliefs and values. To explain this relationship between

cultures and human behaviors, Edgar Schein created a model for organization cultures that includes three layers: Artifacts, Espoused values and Assumptions. The degree of visibility is decreased from the layer of artifacts to the layer of assumptions. While artifacts comprise the visible clothing, working structures, furniture, etc., outsiders cannot fully understand the root of these artifacts until they look deeper into the values and assumptions that are reflected in people's beliefs and attitudes.

Alfred Adler also created a framework about the effects of culture on behaviors and performance in work. Represented in Figure 1, Alder's factors that influence and drive human behaviors are seen.
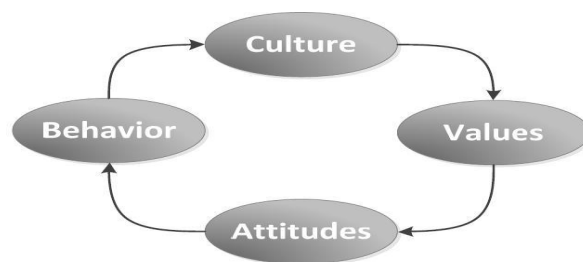
FIGURE 1: Influence of Culture on Behavior and Behavior on Culture (Adapted from Adler 2008: 19)

Culture, values, attitudes and behavior are arranged in a circle that shows the firm linkage among elements. The values that people from the same culture share in society effects attitudes and belief and will lead to the creation of behaviors. The process continues in a circular manner.

From the models presented above, culture and culture management in teamwork can be seen to be very important for multi-cultural teamwork, particularly for a company that is outsourcing or doing international business. Culture influences the development of employees' attitudes and behaviors at work as well as in some other dimensions of life and business, including for example power distances, relationships, gender roles, family, etc. Moreover, communication in the organization and in teamwork will somehow be affected by cultures and differences in cultures. Besides capabilities of using verbal language in working, non-verbal language is also an important variable in every country. David Victor writes about the importance of understanding culture as well as the negative consequences of ignoring culture: "Lack of understanding deriving from ethnocentrism or ignorance of culturally based assumptions erroneously believed to be universal can readily escalate to unproductive conflict among people of

differing cultural orientation. Still, in an increasingly competitive world economy, it is harder for the successful business venture (than it may have been in the past) to conduct business exclusively within the safe confines of a single domestic business environment" *(*Victor, 2012).

Understanding the importance and potential of culture offers many benefits for international managers to help build effective multi-cultural teamwork. Many managers even consider cross-cultural knowledge and skills as a core competence for working in global contexts. Papadopoulos (2008) pointed out three main benefits of cultures to individual and group work, including:

– The first benefit: "it organizes our life with daily, weekly and annual customs and traditions that bind us to our group". When managers know how to create values from differences between cultures and establish a hybrid organizational culture, people in the organization will share the same view of how to manage the enterprise.

– The second benefit: "it provides us with the face-to-face human interaction and tactile contact that are needed for our development and survival". Culture provides people a natural sense about the surrounding environment and a survival tool provided one has the ability to adapt and develop.

– The third benefit states that culture is a: "scientifically immeasurable characteristic known to all individuals who belong to strong and reaffirming groups: a sense of belonging to a group that is collectively wiser than any individual". As Maslow's hierarchy of needs shows, after the most basic requirements for surviving and safety, humans need to be loved and belong to a group, which can be seen as one of the benefits of culture. After the feeling of belonging, trust can be built up more easily.

3.3 Cultural-level values orientations

A child is born with innocent eyes seeing the world around him or her. Its mind is the same as a blank sheet of paper: there are no concepts, morals or ideas about good or bad existing in its brain. As children grow up, besides the development of the normal brain, they are also under the effects of family and social education. Consequently,

individuals evidence their own moral standards and attitudes about things surrounding them. However, to some extent, people from the same culture and society will share some of these common values.

According to Frey (1994, p19), "Values can be defined as learned, relatively enduring, emotionally charged, epistemologically grounded and represented moral conceptualizations that assist us in making judgments and in preparing us to act." As can be seen from this concept, cultural values are learned. Therefore, people in a society can share the same items but how to operationalize its content depending on the personal abilities, level and extents of education, etc. Consequently, people from the same cultures will own more common values based on the same sources inherited from the previous generations.

Hofstede defined values in "Cultures and organizations: Software of the Mind" (1994, p2) "Values are broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others. Values are feelings with an arrow to it: they have a plus and a minus side". As can be seen, the definition affirms that values are "feelings" and "emotions" of humans. It dominates and leads humans' external actions and behaviors. Schwartz (1992) also discussed cultural values in a more homogenous way, not any individual, but a society where cultural values are shared, making for "social actors" that select and choose their action, based on some standards for people in their community to follow and evaluate other. Based on shared values, societies also choose appropriate actions across a range of situations and possibilities. However, it is not that cultural values are unchangeable, although change generally occurs over time and rather slowly.

Moreover, Frey (1994), states that values can be transmitted and changed. People live with networks of family, society and communities; they do not live alone. Thus, they are influenced through many interactions with other people. From childhood, all people have to join some activities with their family, communities, and social agents such as schools, volunteer organizations, etc, in which they have chances to share their attitudes, to be taught about the values of others, to have discussions with others, and to learn some new things. All of these activities help people look and review again the values they own, to change the values they have achieved since they were small and add new ones as they develop over time. Thus, when a multicultural team is established, although each member in teamwork holds their own distinctive individual

and group values, they can create and update new ones that the team can share and operate by.

In every society, after each new generation, there are likely changes to morals and cultural values. Usually the previous generation will add some new ones in response to the changing environment and society that is then passed on to the next generation. There is nobody who owns exactly the same thinking, attitudes and behaviors even if they come from the same society. "Culture is learned, not inherited". To each person, cultural characteristics obtained depend on his or her ability to learn and absorb in both conscious and unconscious ways. Therefore, it is possible that under the same culture, people do not bring all similar values, beliefs, or only the majority of people bring the same cultural values.

In almost all definitions of culture, "value" is mentioned as a key phrase, it is also considered as a key in the cultural model of groups. Hofstede (1994) used an "onion" model to present the different layers of how culture manifests in a group.
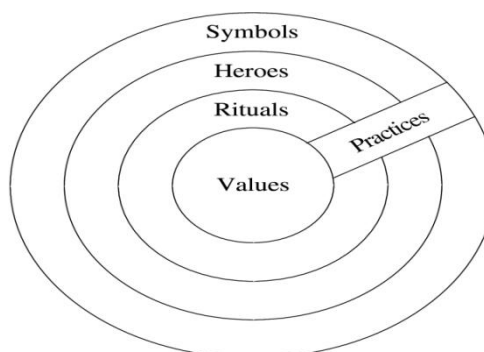
FIGURE 2 The "Onion Diagram": manifestations of culture at different levels of depth (Adapted from Hofstede, Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind (1994)

Deep inside the model, values affect human thinking and behaviors. As opposed to the outside layers that can be observed in practice, values are learned by people unconsciously. It is the arrow leading to how people behave and act in practice. Hofstede summed up seven items values deal with including:

- Evil vs. good
- Dirty vs. clean

- Ugly vs. beautiful
- Unnatural vs. natural
- Abnormal vs. normal
- Paradoxical vs. logical
- Irrational vs. rational

There are many differences between European versus Asian attitudes and cultural values that logically lead to the differences in characteristics analyzed in the cultural dimension chapter. To describe European cultural values, the research reported in the Special Euro-barometer in 2007 will be used as a source. This research pointed out one of the most general characteristics of European culture, "Diversity in itself is seen as a particular feature of European culture, along with an inherited shared history" (2007, p74). Besides values belonging to each nation, the European population holds some strong common cultural values said to evidence uniquely European characteristics. Moreover, to be called "European" cultural values, there should be some uniformity and similarity between each European nation. More than that, these key values are found in each European individually, "The values citizens would like to reinforce are also those which are seen as most European" (2007, p81). Three main key values in European culture to society contexts are: "Peace", "Respect for nature and the environment", "Social equality and solidarity". Finland is on top of the highest percentage results in two in three of them. For the Finnish population, along with three values above, "Freedom of opinion" is also important. It is a logical explanation for their behaviors and characteristics when examined from the cultural dimensions approach about power distance, individualism, etc.

In Southeast Asia generally, social and cultural values are more seen from religious perspectives. Additionally, there are some life principles that dominate many aspects of cultures. For Asian people, losing face, especially in public, is a disaster. "Saving face is a powerful force in most Asian cultures, affecting communication styles, conflict resolution, management styles, and much more" (Diversity council, 2007). In Asian cultures, people should show respect to others in variable situations in order to see things from a more positive side. In Vietnam, "Vietnamese cultural values emphasize the importance of family and community. Its core values which embrace the principles of Confucianism are harmony, duty, honor, respect, education and allegiance to the family" (Diversity council, 2007).

Overall, it is not difficult to recognize and understand the differences in cultural values between European and Asian societies, or more specifically in the case of this research, Finland and Vietnam. For Europeans, cultural values are more concentrated on activities with social communities, public and surrounding environment. Meanwhile, for Asians, cultural values are mainly oriented toward family and relations between individual and people in society. However, by understanding the cultures and core values of each region, it is possible to see the potential for success of international cooperation despite the differences. Values can be transmitted and created new ones synergystically; people can learn from each other and create more value for themselves at work and life.

4   VIETNAMESE AND FINNISH CULTURES COMPARED

"There remains a tendency for ethnic, linguistic and religious groups to fight for recognition of their own identity, if not for national independence" (Hofstede, 2005, p18). For Finns, it appears that the independence of their country is safe without any dangers at the moment, thus their behaviors are more likely to reflect their "own identity". Finns and Finnish cultures are different and unique even compared to other Nordic countries. They want to express their culture in their own ways and they are proud of them. For a developing country such as Vietnam, the way Vietnamese confirm their identity is different from that of Finns

Vietnamese and Finns cooperate and form teams to work together, which means they must accept differences in national identities and cultural characteristics-communication style, thinking, acting and feeling, in order to generate mutual working knowledge of shared values and cultural features. However, to have a successful multicultural project, "understanding a business community's behavior profile will tell you how they expect to be treated." (Tomalin & Nicks, 2007, p 55).

Humans have "different minds but common problems" (Hofstede, 2005, p2). The "common problems" which cultures share are sometimes decribed as cultural "dimensions" – which allow for comparisons between nations, regions and groups. To explore similarities and differences between Vietnamese and Finns, in this chapter

we employ the theories and model described by Geert H. Hofstede (2005). Hofstede's cultural-level dimensions include:

- Power distance (small to large)
- Collectivism versus individualism
- Femininity versus masculinity
- Uncertainty avoidance (weak to strong)
- Long term orientation

In addition to empirically derived dimensions of culture, we also employ theries pertaining to customs, traditions and working habits. Patterns pertaining to five categories about cross-cultural business behaviors described by Richard R. Gesteland (2002) will also be used to distinguish Vietnamese business behaviors as compared to Finns' behaviors. Gesteland's cross-cultural behaviors include:

- Deal focus versus relationship focus
- Direct versus indirect communication styles
- Informal (Egalitarian) versus formal (Hierarchical)
- Rigid time (Monochronic) versus fluid time (Polychronic) cultures
- Emotionally expressive versus emotionally reserved cultures

4.1 Cultural dimension – national level apply

"Culture is a group-level phenomenon, but it influences individuals' perceptions, values and behavior, especially with respect to social interaction" (Marth L. Maznevski, 2002). Each person will reflect in their choices and behaviors some of these group-level cultural characteristics in addition to their individual values and behaviors. However, "no one person should be expected to fit that average exactly. Indeed, to expect so would be stereotyping" (Jandt, 2006, 160). In a society, there are many individuals who behave outside of the prevailing norms of their cultural rules, and there are many values that are related to individual personalities (Maznevski, 2002, p276). Therefore, to maintain objectivity any critical attempt to study culture must include an analysis of cultural-level and individual aspects of culture.

Overall, the use of empirically derived cultural dimensions and typologies of culture as tools for studying group culture is suitable for primarily at the cultural level and not

for studying individuals, although each person reflects to some degree aspects of their group culture. In other words, the comparison of cultures is conducted between nations, regions and groups, and not between individuals. The molding over-theoretically will easily cause stereotypes which are considered as "threat" in cross – culture minded psychology.

4.2 The lenses of Greet Hofstede's cultural dimensions

Hofstede confirmed the earlier research of Inkeles and Levison in the fields of sociology and psychology through his research conducted in the international offices of the International Business Machines (IBM) Company. The IBM studies isolated a four-dimension model that has been used to study and understand culture at the group level.

Hofstede describes several levels of culture, including national, organizational and individual levels. The national level with associated with groups of people from the same country or nation as whole. Meanwhile, the organizational level pertains to the "organizations in the same countries or nations" (Hofstede, year and page number). According to Hofstede, culture studies focus on symbols, rituals, heroes, and values as the main research approaches. Yet Hofstede (2005) makes and important distinction between organizational and national perspectives, "National cultures belong to anthropology; organizational cultures to sociology".

4.2.1 Power distance

Power distance can be observed in many work places as well as in other institutions and organizations such as schools, and in social class systems, and education systems.

Generally, Power Distance is defined as "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede, 2005, 46). In each culture, there is a level of power distance in society that varies from small to large. The comparison of the power distance was made by measuring and describing the distance in power between a person who holds the power and one who is under the influences of this power. Samovar and Porter (2001), refined the definition of power distance, "What Hofstede

discovered was that in some cultures, those who hold power and the those who are affected by power are significantly far apart (high power distance) in many ways, while in other cultures the power holders and those affected by the power holders are significantly closer".

In large power distance societies, the subordinates usually do and follow exactly what the boss has ordered without any expected objection or speaking out their own ideas; in a small power distance society, the opinions of subordinates are considered to be more equal to that of their superiors. Even it is considered as one method to motivate employees. It is not that in large power distance countries, there is no right for an individual to speak out or discuss about his or her superiors' decisions. However, most people from large distance power countries have been educated with histories and traditions in families as well as observing the behaviors of other people to follow and respect their leaders' words. In their eyes, leaders have more rights and should be treated in different ways. Generally, while in small distance- power countries, the subordinates expect to be "consulted", in the larger one, they are expected to do as the words of their leaders (Hofstede, 2005, 59).

In Asia, a region that is predominated by large power distance societies, the subordinates at work have to always be careful with their words to guarantee the respect and of their higher leaders. It is hard for employees in Asia to consider their employers as friends or to communicate with them as friends particularly out of the offices. Between workers and superiors in Asia, the barriers of distance in power at the work place always exist.

Finland is rated as one of the smallest power distance countries (Samovar, 2001, p70) with an index ranking of 33, or 66th of 74 researched countries and regions in the IBM sample. For Vietnam, the score rises to 70 with the ranking 20-25 based on the Hofstede and Hofstede pertaining to the power distance index values for 74 countries and regions (2005). In conclusion, for the power distance dimension, Vietnam and Finland are quite far from each other.

4.2.2 Collectivism versus individualism

Collectivism and individualism can be seen in modern societies in the constructions of "I, We and They". There are some different approaches to identify to which side of the "collectivism" or "individualism" index a society belongs.

One of the most typical descriptions of the dimension comes from Realo et al (2008): "collectivism considers a group (e.g. Family, tribe, or state) as the primary unit of reality and requires that individuals sacrifice themselves for the alleged interests of the collective. Individualism in turn is a system of belief, attitudes, and values according to which a human being should think and judge independently, respecting nothing more than the sovereignty of his or her own interests and goals" (p. 448). Differing expectations between groups not only leads to differences in the pursuit of personal goals at work but also in the methods and speed of developing and implementing business strategies. Thus the diminsion is important to daily operational management particularly in international contexts because without understanding these differences, people coming from two different sides of the index may easily have difficulties in cooperating and working in one team. Another definition of collectivism states that generally, highly collectivist people are more committed (Kirkman & Shapiro, in press; Palich et al., 1995). They are eager to put aside their own interest for the group's interest (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; Triandis, 1995). This preference is opposite from those in individualistic groups.

Ramamoorthy (1998) described the differences of orientation goals in collectivist and individualist cultures, "One of the key defining characteristics of I/C is the emphasis placed on individual goals versus collective goals. Individualists place a greater emphasis on self-interest, personal goals and personal achievement compared to collectivist. Competition is considered to be key behavioral characteristic of an individualist to achieve his/her goals. Collectivists consider the subordination of one's personal goals for the sake of the lager collective to which one belongs and seek to achieve results though cooperation, Whenever individual goals and group goals are in conflict individualism places the right and goals of the individuals ahead of the rights and goals of group to which he/she belongs, whereas collectivism places the group's rights and goals ahead of the individual rights and goals". It is obvious from this analysis that there is a clear inequality when considering the rights and goals of the group and the individual when comparing two groups. This can be a barrier for team-work if conflicts related to collectivism and individualism affect the team.

 "Shared goals" is one of the necessary objectives in creating a well functioning team and is also one possible solution for managing the differences encountered when mixing collectivist and individualist oriented groups.

According to Hofstede, most Western cultures including European countries are generally individualistic whereas Asian cultures are collectivist (Hofstede, 2001, 2005). It is rare to find out a Western family having more than two generations living in the same house. Vice versa, it is hard to find less than three generations living together in one house in an extended Asian family. Actually, almost everybody is born to some structured family, and it is here that the thinking the individual or the group is formed. Hofstede also showed that, Collectivist societies are, "Societies in which the interest of the group prevails over the interest of the individual" (Hofstede, 2005). In Asian countries, children grow up influenced not only by parents but also grandparents, relatives and other people who may live in the same home. In childhood Asian children usually do not have to do anything alone, nor cope with difficulties and solve problems by themselves without the help and protection of their family; moreover, this protection will continue until they have their own family.

Collectivism and individualism are two opposite sides of the same dimension, however it may be difficult to tell whether one nation belongs naturally to one side, especially nowadays, when both working individually and teamwork exist in so many international enterprises. Hofstede's IBM study obtained valuable information about the scores of this index pertaining to the values of 74 nations and regions in the world. Although according to Hofstede (2005, pp78-79), this data bank cannot reveal completely about the distinction between individualism and collectivism nor can it identify all of the characteristics of these two groups. In this data bank, Finland scored 63rd and ranked 21st (individualistic) while Vietnam had scored 20 and ranked 56-61 (collectivist). Without doubts, both countries are at two opposite poles of this dimension.

For Finns, after seven or eight hours working, the remaining time is normally spent for family and other joys of life such as hobbies. Meanwhile in many Asian countries including Vietnam, staying late at the office to work is expected in all the work places; moreover, bringing some work home is also quite normal. Hofstede found that replacing the concept of "I", collectivists think in term of "we" (Cf. Hofstede, 2001, 2005). In Finland, people respect their privacy and also desire to prove themselves and

draw the attention of the crowd toward them individually. Yet for Vietnamese, "breaking the norm", becoming a "pioneer" or speaking out in the crowd are some of the biggest social taboos. Vietnamese feel more comfortable when being recognized as a member or one part of a group based on appearance and behaviors. Observing a lecture in school, it is easy to see the difference between two cultures. While Finns feel normal to ask the lecturer immediately the questions running through their brains, and answer the question of the lecturer if they know or express their thinking in class, Vietnamese students usually sit quietly taking notes and only speaking when they receive specific questions put to them.

Secondly, in the work place, after setting the objectives and tasks Finns have the choice of choosing the approach to reach this goal and then complete the tasks in freedom. However, it is different for Vietnamese. Besides sharing goals, usually the team leaders are expected tp show the suitable methods to reach the target, otherwise he is thought to be irresponsible or not to know how to manage teamwork. Moreover, in the Finnish environment, low-context communication prevails. As in the American proverb, they "say what they mean, and mean what they say". Any order, requirement or suggestion is straightly expressed by words or verbal messages. Whereas, in Vietnam - a high context communication culture, the receivers sometimes have to understand what the senders want outside of the verbal message. For instance, if the manager gives a small message that the boss will visit the working place, automatically; all the employees will understand they have to prepare all the paper and work smoothly, clean up the work place, etc., to welcome the boss. About the relationships between employers and employees, for Finland or other Western countries, people look at them simply as "a contract between parties on labor market" (Hofstede, 2005, p104). For Vietnamese, these relationships are more belonging to "moral" and appear more like "family links". They feel safer and more comfortable when working with people whom they have known beforehand as they think that it will produce more support and guidance.

Vietnam is a nation that is notable for its fights for independence from the hands of two empires. Almost the entire Vietnamese population at that time was obsolete, impovershed, and uneducated; thus to achieve independent success, the entire

Vietnamese nation had to stand up and work together to support each other with thinking as this famous traditional proverb says:

"Mot cay lam chang len non, ba cay chum lai nen hon nui cao –
A lone tree cannot make a forest; three trees gathered together form a high hill".

However, nowadays, as Vietnamese society has improved, people have become more open to welcoming new and positive ideas from other countries while still maintaining Vietnamese core values. Therefore, although collectivism dominates the thinking and behaviors of Vietnamese, they are also ready to learn more and become more flexible to adapt with world changes and globalization.

4.2.3 Femininity versus masculinity

Hofstede's Femininity vs. Masculinity dimension addresses the degree to which gender roles in society overlap. "Femininity and masculinity are not innate but are based upon social and cultural conditions" (Stets and Burke, 2000, p3).

This dimension drives the cultural values of two genders in society. A masculine society is typically, "driven by competition, achievement and success, with success being defined by the winner/best in field – a value system that starts in school and continues throughout organizational behavior" (Hofstede, 2004). In this society, the ideal images of male and female relating to social roles are obviously different. Males are described by these words: "tough", "material success focused", and "assertive". In contrast, females are said to be "modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life". In a feminine society the core values of life are not built around competitiveness or success. It is "one where quality of life is the sign of success and standing out from the crowd is not admirable" (Hofstede, 2005). The social roles of male and female in this society are similar and overlap, and they are more "tender", "caring" and oriented to "preservation".

From the Hofstede study, it can be simply put that the overlapping of gender role in society was the key element to classify whether a society is masculine or feminine. In the masculine societies gender roles are distinct, and what women and men are supposed to be and do in this society are clearly differentiated. In contrast, in a feminine society, gender roles clearly overlap. For example, in Japan, ranked highest in Hofstede's masculinity index, men are supposed to work outside the home, build a

career, and earn money; whereas, the woman's places is inside the house to take care of the family, give birth and care for children. However, it is not difficult to see a Finnish man taking care of his baby and going shopping for the family.

Hofstede (2005) points out that the main core issue of this dimension is to explain the motivation of people toward any of their daily activities. For masculinity, "wanting to be the best", people have more desire to show their identity to others, to have the attention and be recognized by society. For femininity, it more about "liking what you do." People in this society find their concentration on seeking a balance in life. From a career orientation perspective, people from masculine societies are said to "live to work", but in feminine cultures, people prefer to "live to work". It is easy to catch the image of a boss staying back late in the company to work after official hours in the United States, or in Japan. However, in countries such as Sweden and Finland, people work to have basic materials to enjoy life and support their interests.

There are many stereotypes that emerge from beliefs about gender roles, especially pertaining to "inequalities" that may exists between women and men in a society. This inequality in society leads to some disadvantages in relationships between women and men in the family and the workplace, "Unequal power relationships negatively affect both men and women" (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2005). Yet, it is difficult to say whether Masculinity or Femininity, as described by Hofstede, is completely good or bad. In Japan, according to research research conducted at Osaka University in 2002, the grade for happiness of Japanese women (6.51) is higher than men (6.27), moreover in which the job which is supposed to be for only women in Japan- housewives has the highest grading (6.7). This result has not changed until now (Fumio Ohtake, 2012). In contrast, Vietnam, a feminine society in Hofstede's construct, men were happier than women according to research done by Nielsen (2008).

Gender roles have been changing gradually with the development of societies as well as economies. Yasemin Besen (2007) commented, "With the changing economy, the century long established gender roles regarding work and home started to transform rapidly". In the past, in Vietnam, the role of women and men differed, the positions in society of them also had far distance, and there was a big overlap in gender identity.

However, nowadays there are many changes in Vietnam; and particularly the image and role of modern women has has closed some of the gap between gender roles. Professor Trịnh Hòa Bình (2011) said: "Truoc đay, chung ta hay thay nguoi phu nu bi troi buoc boi nhung cong viec noi xo bep cua gia đinh nhung bay gio, đieu nay đa thay đoi kha nhieu"- "Before, it is usual to see the roles of Vietnamese women only being tied into housework, in the kitchen places. But now, the situation has been changing a lot".

As the research result of Hofstede (2005), the score of Masculinity of Finland is 26 and to Vietnam, this number is 40. Therefore, although both appear on the Feminine side the Vietnamese are comparatively more masculine than the Finns. In work, managers of feminine groups "strive for consensus, people value equality, solidarity and quality in their working lives", "an effective manager is a supportive one, and decision making is achieved through involvement". Overall, when Vietnamese and Finns are holding similar values and beliefs, it will make the work and communication go more smoothly when they understand each other clearly.

Vietnam and Finland can be grouped under the "feminine" countries, but there will be differences when going into the core of the issue. Moreover, as the "EuroAfricaCentral network" (2011) commented "Hofstede never meant to describe how gender empowerment differs in a culture but rather uses the term 'masculinity' to capture certain propensities. If one looks at the cultures with a low masculinity rating they will notice that many also have low gender equality, i.e. Middle East. The terms relate to nurturing (feminine) versus assertive (masculine) behaviors and ideals".

4.2.4 Uncertainty avoidance

The fourth cultural dimension Hofstede isolated was "uncertainty avoidance". This dimension used to describe "the degree to which the members of a society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity" (Hofstede 2005). "The fundamental issue involved here is how society deals with the fact that the time only run only one way, that is we are all caught in the reality of past, present and future and we have to live with uncertainty because the future is unknown and always will be" (Hofstede, 1983, p81).

According to Hofstede, people will lean toward either of two directions to handle this issue. The first is let the flow drift, in other words, to just "let it happen". People

following this direction would rather wait for problems in the future to come and deal with it than making preparations and putting forth the effort to control it. They may easily take others' opinions. Moreover, "People within these cultures are more phlegmatic and contemplative; their environment does not expect them to express emotions" (Hofstede and Bond, 1968). The society which involves these types of people is grouped into "weak uncertainty avoidance". On the contrary, there are some people who see the future and cannot "just let it go". They work hard to control and minimize the risk of the future. They have a strong belief in their opinions and go with it to the end. People in this group are also less tolerant of emotions and aggressiveness, due to their anxiety about future risks. Overall, the target of people in this group is to "beat the future" (Geert Hofstede, 1983, p81). These people are characteristic of a "strong Uncertainty avoidance" society. This cultural dimension is thought to have direct effects on work productivity.

It was found that there is a relationship between uncertainty avoidance and the economy, "the historical negative relationship between GDP per capita and the level of business ownership is substantially weaker for countries with lower uncertainty avoidance" (Sander Wennekers 2007). In teamwork, team members from polar sides of the dimension may hold certain opposite attitudes and working behaviors that might lead to conflicts and uncomfortable feelings when working together. For example, the theory of Uncertainty Reduction suggests that the quality of communication will improve if the amount of uncertainty avoidance individually is lower (Liu and Lee, 2008). Uncertainty avoidance is also said to be one in two major factors that have a strong influence on teamwork task outcomes (Narver, 2011). As with other cultural dimensions, uncertainty avoidance is also one particular element of people's belief and thinking. The research of Huib Wursten describes characteristics related to the dimension of uncertainty avoidance:

TABLE 1 Comparing high (strong) and low (weak) uncertainty avoidance way of thinking

Presented by Huib Wursten, Intercultural issues in recruiting, ITIM International
http://www.itim.org/articleonrecruitment.pdf, retrieved 8th April, 2012

Low(weak) uncertainty avoidance group way of thinking	High (strong) uncertainty avoidance group way of thinking
• "Focus on practices not on theories or philosophies"	• "Emphasis on defining principles for behavior or developing a philosophy before action"
• "High esteem for practitioner and less for expert"	• "Expert are given the highest esteem, they create framework for understanding"
• "Focus on empiricism"	
• "Prefer for any action above reflection"	
• Focus on being persuasive in communication	• "Focus on communication is on challenge and /or validating expertise"

As the research result of Hofstede (2005), Finland was listed in the group of medium high uncertainty avoidance with the score of 59. It means that mostly, Finns should "maintain their rigid code in their belief": they are hardworking, punctual and they prefer using principles, theories and philosophies in thinking and work. Meanwhile Vietnam only score 30 and was grouped in low preference avoidance certainty. Theoretically, people in this society enerally are more practical, are flexible with time, respect innovation

In the previous discussion about "Femininity and Masculinity", both Finnish and Vietnam societies are in the "feminine group". One of the characteristics of this group

mentioned was the balance between work and life; considering the quality of life was more important with the attitude "work to live". However, in this dimension, Hofstede (1983) pointed out that people in low uncertainty avoidance "will not work as hard" (p81) compared to the high uncertainty avoidance societies. In this case it is difficult for the researchers to reach a logical conclusion about the working habits of Finns when looking at the two dimensions. Besides this, hard working is one of the characteristics ascribed to Vietnamese people when working together: "Vietnam is well-known for a disciplined, hard-working, and fast-learning population" (Labor in Vietnam, 2008).

Hofstede also stated that people in lower uncertainty avoidance cultures are more comfortable with innovation. Yet, Finland is a country that is notable for innovation and Vietnam seeks to learn from Finns about innovation through various cooperations.

Hofstede used quantitative method for his research, which only isolates the common characteristics at the group level of cultures. Quantitative data somehow just expresses surface of the issue. It does not relfect the depth of understanding sought by many research objectives (Richard Tewksbury,2009).

4.2.5 Long term orientation

The fifth dimension was added later after Power distance (PDI), Individualism (IDV), Masculinity (MAS) and Uncertainty (UAI) in 1990s. This dimension was derived in a desire to distinguish Western and Eastern thinking. Linking strongly to Confucian philosophy in Eastern countries Hofstede and Bond (1991) elaborated the dimension of "Long term orientation" (LTO).

According to Hofstede (1991), this dimension deals with "time- orientation" and "virtue regardless of truth". As in the previous four dimensions, the two poles of this dimension, long-term orientation versus short-term orientation, also brings contrasting characteristics to each other. He also pointed out while the former is described to link the values:

- "Persistence",
- "Ordering relationships by status and observing this order"

- 'Thrift';
- 'Having a sense of shame"

The latter refers to traditional oriented values including

- "Personal steadiness and stability"
- "Protecting your face"
- "Respect for tradition"
- "Reciprocation of greetings favors and gifts".

Two poles of this time- orientation dimension bring both positive and negative values which can be found in Confucian philosophy. Carroll and Gannon (1997, p 73) commented that Hofstede and his colleagues acknowledged the two aspects of Confucianism including the "good" and "bad". By looking from two sides, the concept of Confucian ethic which related to Asian economic growth was established.

In Hofstede's research study, Vietnam scores 80 and is grouped into "Long-term orientation". Finland is listed in "short-term orientation" group with a score of 45. In one of Hofstede publications, he also demonstrated some specific norms of the two groups, especially as regards trade:

TABLE 2 A summary of relevant distinctions between norms in long term oriented and short term oriented societies
Presented by G. Hofstede, Cultures Consequences, Second Ed. (Sage Publications, 2001), p 367.

Short- term orientation	Long-term orientation
Immediate gratification of needs expected	Deferred gratification of needs accepted
Traditions are sacrosanct	Traditions adaptable to changed circumstances
Short-term virtues taught: social consumption	Long-term virtues taught: frugality, perseverance
Spending	Saving, investing

The bottom line	Building a strong market position
Analytical thinking	Synthetic thinking

Together with China, Korea and Japan, Vietnam is seen as one of the Southeast Asian nations pointing to a long- term orientation. Vietnamese society is characterized as being easy to adapt with changes from traditions to modern globalized perspectives. In addtion, Vietnamese are also respectful and search for virtue (Hofstede, 2005). Vietnamese are also patient and maintain long term relationships not only in life but also in business. Kohl (2007) had personal interview with C.Nguyen and stated that "Before Vietnamese do business; the first things they look at are trust and relationships". It is difficult to have good business with Vietnamese if the partners are looking for a short- time deal with straight objectives about profits and requirements in the first meeting. It can become a problem for short- term orientation societies such as Finland to do business with Vietnamese without understanding and taking this issue into consideration. With the desire to reach a business agreement or building a good team work for any cooperation and projects, the first thing to do is to build relationships and trust.

In general, through Hofstede's five cultural dimension concepts, people can have knowledge about some cultural beliefs, values, and behaviors between countries. Furthermore, it is easy to make a comparison to know some difficulties and challenges when people in two different cultures cooperate. The comparison for Vietnam and Finland is summarized in the figure below:
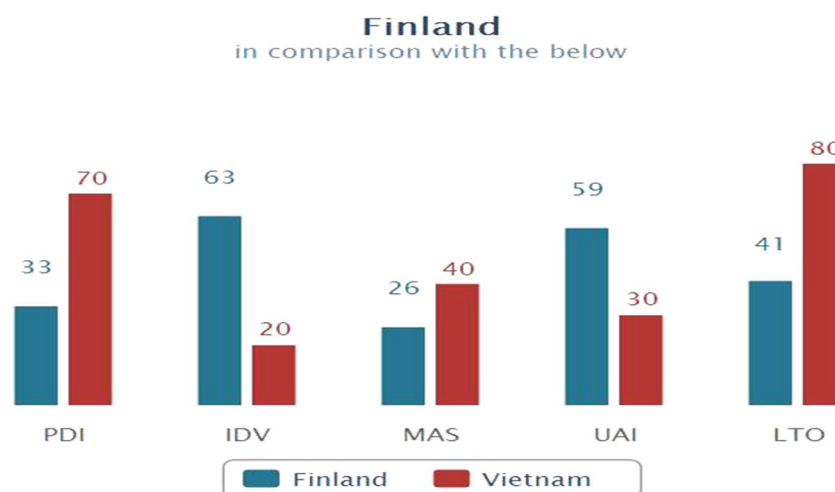
FIGURE 3: Finland in comparison with Vietnam

Presented by Geert Hofstede, National cultures, retrieved 8th April 2012
http://geert-hofstede.com/finland.html

4.3 Business behaviors: the lenses of Richard Gesteland

Richard R. Gesteland identified up five cultural characteristics that have strongly affects international business negotiation and management. Cebuc and Iosif (2008) compared Gesteland's and Hofstede's studies as "a different approach yet same outcome". The study of Gesteland about business behaviors is based on the main ideas that "the seller adapts to the buyer" and "in International Business the Visitor Is Expected to Observe Local Customs" (Cebuc, 2008, p25). Conflicts may arise when people have different beliefs and values which are found in these cultural characteristics.

4.3.1 Deal focused versus relationship focused cultures

This cultural characteristic is considered to be the "great divide" of the international business world (Sebenius, 2009, p6). Most people in the world belong to a "relationship focus" group except for North America, Northern European and Australian (Finn Steffens, 2008).

Park Myung-Seok (2005) provides some specific characteristics of each group in business behavior including:

TABLE 3 Specific chracteristics compared between deal-focus group and relationship focus group, adapted from Park Myung- Seok, 2005.

Deal- focus group	Relationship focus group
• More "task- orientation"	• More "people- orientation"
• Work plan: precise and concerns measurable and reproductive outcomes.	• Work plan: flexible, taking various possible situations and changes into account
• People in these areas are quite used to doing business with strangers	• Relationship with business partners comes before principles or rules. • People in this culture prioritize their family above the rest of society.

People from deal focused groups try to solve the work itself and are more "work oriented". In contrast, people from relationship focused groups consider "people-orientation" to be more important. They try to build relationships before doing business and work. These differences in values lead to the formation of different concepts between the groups. Deal focus groups are said to think about relationship groups as "dilatory", "vague and inscrutable" .Vice versa, in the minds of relationship people, deal focus groups are called "pushy, aggressive and offensively blunt" (Richard R. Gesteland, 2001). Generally, this cultural characteristic somehow refers to the issue in business culture as "time- orientation" of Hofstede.

Vietnam- a South East Asian country belongs to "relationship focus" and Finland- a Northern Europe country is in the group of "deal focus".

4.3.2   Direct versus indirect communication styles

Direct/ indirect communication styles can also be referred to as low/high context. The word "context" can be understood as "the information that surrounds an event; it is

inextricably bound up with the meaning of the event" (J Johnson, 1986, p 64). In other words, it refers to the unconscious understanding of hiding ideas in particular communicating situations. People using a more direct communication style prefer more direct verbal language and go directly to the core of issues with the belief that "information is the goal of most information exchange" (Peace Corps Information Collection and Exchange, p78). Most people from "Deal focus" groups employ direct communication because their thinking in working, negotiation, to save time and achieve results exactly as expected, and there should be clear and direct speaking (Park, 2005).

In indirect communication or high context groups, people usually use "indirect language", "polite words" (Steffens, 2008). Moreover, the word "no" is avoided; instead of "no," they use sentences with slightly negative meaning such as "let me think about it again", "Do you have another ideas "or "It seems difficult". This communication style is said to be popular in "relationship focus" countries that spend more time caring for and maintaining relationship and building trust before action.

Misunderstandings can easily happen in communication processes between the two groups. Meanwhile high context people try hiding the ideas in implicitness, while low context communicators understand information via "bare" words. It is easy to categorize to which group people belong to depending on the ways they express their words, ideas, or also writing. Vietnamese people employ indirect communication yet Finns prefer short, plain communication and proceed directly to the problem. Looking from this cultural angel, the barriers of difference in communication between Vietnamese and Finns could seem to be difficult.

4.3.3   Informal (egalitarian) versus formal cultures (hierarchical)

In informal (egalitarian) societies, people believe that "inequality and social status or class should be minimized", whereas, "in a formal culture people are treated differently in accordance with their social status, class or age" (Myung-seok, 2005). This business behavior characteristic seems similar to the "power distance" dimension of Hofstede.

Compared to Vietnam, Finland is an informal business behavior society. The regions that are said to have informal business behavior are only a "handful of nations", especially the Nordic countries which include Finland (Finn Steffens, 2008).

However, compared to some countries in the same Nordic group such as Sweden, Finland is described as being more formal and difficult to approach Moreover, in Finnish leaders' views "informal management style is not necessarily, however, only good"(Tuija Lämsä, 2010, p8). Gesteland described Finland as a moderately formal country.

4.3.4   Monochronic versus polychronic cultures

This business behavior characteristic is about time management and structuring. Rigid time (Monochronic) culture means "doing one thing at a time", carefully following and sticking with schedules. In contrast,in Fluid time (Polychronic) societies, "human interaction is valued over time and material things, leading to a lesser concern for "getting things done" – they do get done, but more in their own time" (Suntsova E.N, 2009). Generally, people from fluid time cultures are more flexible regarding time and schedule. Stephan Dahl (2006) summed up some specific characteristics of the two groups in the figure of table below:

Monochronic and Polychronic Cultures

	Monochronic Culture	Polychronic Culture
Interpersonal Relations	Interpersonal relations are subordinate to present schedule	Present schedule is subordinate to Interpersonal relations
Activity Co-ordination	Schedule co-ordinates activity; appointment time is rigid.	Interpersonal relations co-ordinate activity; appointment time is flexible
Task Handling	One task at a time	Many tasks are handled simultaneously
Breaks and Personal Time	Breaks and personal time are sacrosanct regardless of personal ties.	Breaks and personal time are subordinate to personal ties.
Temporal Structure	Time is inflexible; time is tangible	Time is flexible; time is fluid
Work/personal time separability	Work time is clearly separable from personal time	Work time is not clearly separable from personal time
Organizational Perception	Activities are isolated from organization as a whole; tasks are measured by output in time (activity per hour or minute)	Activities are integrated into organization as a whole; tasks are measured as part of overall organizational goal

FIGURE 4 Monochronic and Polychronic cultures

 (Presented by Stephan Dahl, 2006, in "An overview of Intercultural Research", Middlesex University Business School)

Nordic nations are listed as very monochronic cultures, yet Southwest Asian nations are mostly polychronic. Moreover, Finland is famous for punctuality in meetings and important events. Therefore people who are working or doing business with Finns should know and respect this issue if they want to avoid misunderstanding, conflicts and problems.

4.3.5 Emotionally expressive versus emotionally reserved cultures

To maintain the business relationship, the sharing and expressing of feelings cannot be missed. However, depending on the cultures; people have different ways to do it. In Emotionally reserved cultures, people would rather hold their feelings inside and avoid physical contact whereas in Expressive cultures people express freely through words, clear actions, eye contact and body language (Myung-seok, 2005).

As research indicates, people from Nordic and Asian countries are more emotionally reserved. According to Gesteland (2002, 308−310), Finns are "Deal-Focused − Moderately Formal − Monochronic − Reserved".

4.4 The Richard Lewis business culture model

In addition to the cultural dimensions of Hofstede and the business behaviors of Gesteland, Richard Lewis also created a model for understanding how culture influences international business. Lewis divides the world business culture into three categories: Scheduled, flexible and listening. This model was said to be complimentary to Gesteland's study and it also provided a deeper look into different business culture performances (Barry Tomalin & Mike Nicks, 2007).
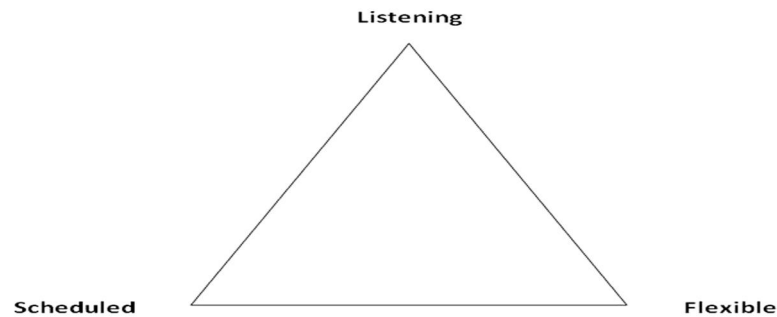
FIGURE 5 Lewis three cultures categorize model

(Presented Barry Tomalin, Mike Nicks, 2007, the worlds' business cultures and how to unlock them, Ashford Color press, p 54**.)**

4.4.1   Scheduled cultures (linear time)

"A schedule culture does things by clock"- Barry Tomali, Mike Nicks 2007

People in scheduled cultures respect the clock and prefer following plans and timetables strictly. They feel secure and comfortable with written language. All decisions should be based on the facts and figures.

Finland is also listed as a country which is conforming to this type of culture. Finns are noted for being punctual and following set times. For Vietnam, it seems that people understand the importance of formal agreements, especially in business. Vietnamese idioms express the strength of written communication in making any deal or doing business as spoken words cannot be trusted.

"Giay trang muc den" – "paper is white, ink is black"
"Loi noi gio bay"- "spoken words fly with the winds"

However, as in Gesteland's study about "rigid time vs fluid time", Vietnamese culture generally does not strictly follow the schedule and time.

4.4.2   Listening cultures (reactive)

"A listening culture is one that is comfortable with silence"- Barry Tomali, Mike Nicks 2007

Listening cultures was defined by Richard Lewis (2005) as "those cultures that prioritize courtesy and respect, listening quietly and calmly to their interlocutors and reacting carefully to the other side's proposals. Chinese, Japanese and Finns are in this group". Listening cultures prefer silence. Their responses depend on the circumstances. Most of the time they use in discussions and negotiation is for listening. Although Finns and other South East Asian countries including Vietnam are grouped in the same group of "listening cultures", the reasons for keeping their silence differ.

Finland is in the same case with Singapore, Taiwan and Japan- Asian high technology countries. This group of countries keeps their silence for with "a natural tendency to listen well and enter into sympathetic dialogue" (Richard Lewis, 2005, p76). Moreover, for Finns, the author explained that one of their reasons for silence was for careful consideration of other parties' wishes. For Vietnam, China and some other Asian countries, the beliefs leading their actions are "respect and face" (Barry Tomali & Mike Nicks, 2007) with the ultimate objective to remain harmony and a long-term relationship. Vietnamese people are described as "good listeners and expect speakers to be clear and logical. They are well versed in French-style debate" (Richard Lewis, 2005, p507).

4.4.3   Flexible cultures (multi-active)

Overall, people from this culture bring opposed characteristics from Scheduled cultures (Barry Tomali, Mike Nicks, 2007). People from this group are flexible in time and punctuality is not a priority. As the relationship is mostly important to this group, they believe that "completing human transaction is the best way investing they can invest their time" (Lewis, 2005, p80).

However, according to Lewis (2005), Vietnam does not completely belong to this group, but is rather "Cyclic"- the combination of both Scheduled (multi- active) and Flexible culture (multi- active). It results from the colonization of Vietnam by the French.

5   TEAMWORK AND MANAGEMENT STYLES

5.1   Teamwork and management theories

Humans in the ancient world used to live and hunt in groups appears to be the most popular. To gather and go to hunt together actually raised their productivity and, as one of the most intelligent species in the world, they were very quick to realize the importance of co-operation. Together, they started to build up the societies where people lived in with very strong connections with each other. However, the co-operation among individuals to increase the final result of work has just been some source of human's natural instinct because there have not been such theories about teamwork management until Eric Trist and K.W. Bamforth in the 1940s developed the concept of the sociotechnical system and it was actually realized by Tavistock consultants in their work in the 1950s (Mueller, Proctor and Buchanan, 2000) Also, according to Buchanan, teamwork at the very early stage was due to very simple purposes and aims such as to gather the skills and knowledge of workers, one of the most fundamental functions (Martin Hoegl and Hans Georg Gemuenden, 2001). Mostly, the groups were self-selective and not supposed to have an official leader. Through time, teamwork has become a more powerful tool with the increasing need of communication among the classes of employees within the companies' structures that used to be ineffective and inefficient hierarchies (Minssen, 2006).

Nowadays teamwork is a very popular term known in almost every organization. Glenn M. Parker (1994) seemes to agree, "And finally, teams need resources of all types to increase their chances of success and to provide another bit of evidence that the organization is committed to as a serious business strategy". It is true. Teamwork is used not only in business environment but also in many other contexts of working and studying. It can be so important to become a package sold to the companies (Mueller, Proctor and Buchanan, 2000), "To admit to not being a 'team player' is a disqualification for many positions – from shop- or office-floor to senior management". In fact, teamwork has been academically developed by many theorists. So, in the modern society, what is really teamwork?

There are many ways to describe the definition of teamwork. In one article team is defined as "a group of people working together with a common goal" (Team technology, 1995-2006) while according to Hoegl and Gemuenden (2001), "Following the literature, a team can be defined as a social system of three or more people, which is embedded in an organization (context), whose members perceive themselves as such and are perceived as members by others (identity), and who collaborate on a common task (teamwork)" (Hoegl and Gemuenden, 2001). Another definition can is provided by Xyrichis and Ream named Teamwork: a concept analysis. After reviewing the word "team" and "work" separately through many materials, they led to the meaning of teamwork as "that work which is done by a group of people who possess individual expertise, who are responsible for making individual decisions, who hold a common purpose and who meet together to communicate, share and consolidate knowledge from which plans are made, future decisions are influenced and actions determined". The concept of teamwork is different in various books and articles, in various dates. It can be very detailed or simple, or even vague (Xyrichis and Ream, 2007). However, teamwork management theories, from another aspect of approach, have been recently discussed and developed more strongly.

Probably, the most popular theory about teamwork was described by Bruce W. Tuckman (1965) when he claimed that teams in general went through stages of development: forming, storming, norming, and performing. However, in 1977, together with Mary Ann Jensen, he added one more termination stage which they called "adjourning" (Sandor P. Schuman, 2001). Consequently, there are five stages of team development in Tuckman's theory. Each stage has different types of characteristics that were described in the figure of table below:

	Group Structure The pattern of interpersonal relationships; the way members act and relate to one another.	**Task Activity** The content of interaction as related to the task at hand.
Forming: orientation, testing and dependence	Testing and dependence	Orientation to the task
Storming: resistance to group influence and task requirements	Intragroup conflict	Emotional response to task demands
Norming: openness to other group members	Ingroup feeling and cohesiveness develop; new standards evolve and new roles are adopted	Open exchange of relevant interpretations; intimate, personal opinions are expressed
Performing: constructive action	Roles become flexible and functional; structural issues have been resolved; structure can support task performance	Interpersonal structure becomes the tool of task activities; group energy is channeled into the task; solutions can emerge
Adjourning: disengagement	Anxiety about separation and termination; sadness; feelings toward leader and group members	Self-evaluation

FIGURE 6 Stages of Group Development

(Copyright 1965 by the American Psychological Association. This article appeared in Psychological Bulletin, Volume 63, Number 6, pages 384-99.)

The more frequently teamwork is applied on reality, the more purposes, aims, problems and solutions are found through the history of people working in all kinds of industries in the world. Therefore, many researchers have developed theories, such as those about team roles, team's challenges, etc.

5.1.1 Finnish style of teamwork management

In the western part of the world, teamwork has quickly come into the common knowledge of many people who worked in business fields related to production. In the 1990s, the presence of teamwork in Europe started an augment generally (Benders, F. Huijgen, and U. Pekruhl 2002). Moreover, in fact, the most common theories of teamwork may rather come from the western countries than from Asian ones. As a result of this, the point of view of western people on teamwork is strictly following what the theorists have analyzed so far.

The objective of this report is to concentrate on smaller scales of European countries in order to offer as accurate information as possible when Finnish teamwork management styles were compared to those from Vietnam. Related to the strict connection between western countries' practical teamwork management styles and western popular teamwork management theories as mentioned above, if the scale of research about teamwork management in Europe was set to be smaller, the differences among the European countries and regions would have been more visible. Smitha, Andersenb, Ekelundc, Graversend and Ropoe (2003), state that Nordic countries had specific differences in management styles than other countries of Europe and mostly those from the south. They claimed that in Nordic countries, the employees were consistently reported as individualistic but also more 'feminine' than southern countries. Besides, "Nordic managers reported relying more on subordinates and peers and less on formal rules and superiors than did other European managers". Peter, Jon, Bjorn, Gert and Arja also stated that specially, for Finns, who were a focus in this research, "it may be more important to adhere to tacit understandings with their immediate work group".

Marko Mäkilouko (2004) from Tampere Polytechnic presented a table listing the indicated comparative dimensions of teams containing Finns and Europeans, and Finns and Chinese, which was mostly known to be representing Asian styles.

TABLE 4 Leadership style dimensions of the synergistic project leader, presented by Marko Mäkilouko in 2004.

Dimension	Finnish–European	Finnish–Chinese
Maintaining good relationships	+	+
Flexible decision making	+	
Autonomy delegation	+	
Interaction facilitation	+	+
Moral character (equality)	+	
Internal negotiation	+	
Circuitous approach		+
Controlling (reporting discipline)	+	
Role clarification	+	

In this article, more study on Finnish teamwork management styles were analyzed specifically. According to the table, Finns had many dimensions at working in a team. Finns would like to maintain a good relationship with the team leader and with each other. Flexible decision making and autonomy delegation were also taken into account besides other factors. However, the adaptation in the team with Finns and Chinese people regarding those dimensions was not good. Only three out of nine dimensions

actually worked. The article also stated that "the project team (including Finnish members) interaction was often based on informal and direct interaction between team members rather than formal negotiations between two cultural groups".

Eventually, cultural factors based on Hofstede's dimensions might be generating most impacts on how Finns reacted in teamwork settings. As analyzed in the previous sections about cultures, Finland was characterized as one of the minimized power distance countries. This might cause the flexibility in decision making of Finns in teamwork. Moreover, short power distance might help Finnish members in teams reach each other more easily despite of the roles and positions. By this way, the chance to maintain good relationships could be enhanced because they had more friendly ways to do it. However, from another of Hofstede's dimensions named "Individualism/Collectivism", Finns were significantly leaning toward Individualism. This meant in teamwork, Finnish members might be working independently from how good the relationship was. Also related to relationship and decision making, based on Hofstede's research, Finns might care less about building good relationships because they were short-term oriented and quite clearly differentiating their personal and professional worlds. Besides, the objective of Finnish team members' decisions might be to avoid risks and uncertainty due to the score they gained in "Uncertainty Avoidance" dimension. According to the score of Finland in the "Masculinity/Femininity" at 26, women had nearly equal chances of performance in teamwork compared to men.

5.1.2   Vietnamese styles of teamwork management

As stated above, early teamwork theories might be mostly coming from the western world. Consequently, it is very hard to define deeply how Asian regions have had a perspective of teamwork right from the beginning of people's co-operation in society. Lately, Asian teamwork has been reviewed by some western theorists and mostly based on western frames of teamwork theory. However, the value of how theorists conducted their research in the eastern regions could not be underestimated due to their practical experiences with Asian people.

Hofstede has also conducted research on Vietnam based on his dimensions in culture. In the previous part of this report, the cultural factors of Vietnam from the perspective of Hofstede's dimensions were already analyzed clearly. In this part, only the factors

that might have impact on the way of people working in team should be reviewed very accordingly.

In term of Power Distance and Individualism/Collectivism, of which the scores were 70 and 20, Vietnam is on the opposite side of Finland. In Vietnam, according to Hofstede, the power distance between people in different positions is very large. Related to this, the behavior of team members could be very related to roles and positions. Important decisions should be carefully made through a hierarchy system and people should work very dependently on each other. This could lead to the fact that personal competition among team members could be more aggressive and the productivity should be very much based on the contributions of all members. The productivity of an individual could even be up to others. According to a study by Quang, Swierczek, and Chi (1998), Vietnamese managers were not willing to share their power. Their analysis proved the point that Vietnam was in the range of "high power distance" cultures. If this point was reviewed from the perspective of teamwork, it could mean that Vietnamese group members highly appreciated their positions in teams and expected others to have the same attitude.

For Uncertainty Avoidance and Short/Long –term Orientation, Vietnam scored in turn 30 and 80. This means Vietnamese people nowadays do not so seriously care about safety in making decisions and the most part of the teamwork is very much based on long-term relationships instead of temporary joint benefit projects. According to Quang, Swierczek, and Chi (1998), expatriate managers with verifiable successful experience in Vietnam said: "it takes three years to acquire the necessary knowledge of local conditions, to build up trust and to develop the right kind of relationships". They also stated that there were a type of mentality so called "we-they" existing between Vietnamese and their foreign partners. Based on this analysis of Vietnamese working style, before jumping into the real tasks, Vietnamese preferred to use the official time of work to build relationship first and productivity would follow.

On the other hand, the score of Masculinity/Femininity of Vietnam was 40, not so faraway compared to Finland. Vietnam with its very fast speed of development has given more chances for women to prove their abilities while taking what are

traditionally men's jobs. In this point, female team members in their groups could be responsible for any position roughly equal in status and responsiblity to males.

Based on the review of Vietnamese styles of working regarding to Hofstede's dimensions, Vietnam seemed to be a country with a lot of traditions and different cultural values compared to western countries, which had the point of view towards teamwork quite following the development of teamwork theories. However, it was fortunate to notice that Vietnamese people demonstrated the inclination to change. According to Quang and Vuong (2002), younger generations were "keen to learn from their foreign business partners on how to manage business in a market economy" and "more willing to encourage horizontal coordination and cooperation, to build an open communication system, and allow subordinates to participate in decision-making processes".

5.1.3   The potential value of Finnish and Vietnamese cooperation

After reviewing the theoretical analysis of the two cultures, Finland and Vietnam, there were several conclusions that could be drawn out as values in co-operation between the two countries. These points can also serve to build a good base for further practical researches on Finns and Vietnamese people's opinions towards their co-operations.

Firstly, there was one value identified from the only similar aspect of Hofstede's dimensions in evidence between Finland and Vietnam, which is related to the dimension of Masculinity versus Femininity. According to his research, the score of this dimension of Vietnam was 40; and of Finland- 26. Based on this point, it can be inferred that when working together, Finns and Vietnamese would be very comfortable to see how women and men taking alternative roles. As long as people work well, they can completely trust each other in every position.

Secondly, from the difference in Individual versus Collectivism, although it might sound negative that Vietnamese worked relying on each other while Finnsworked too individually, there was also a positive value that could be taken. To be working individually, Finnish members in a group can have very good self-motivation to complete the tasks and perhaps then transfer that spirit to the Vietnamese as well. This can enhance the productivity of the whole group in general because when Vietnamese are motivated, they work well and unconsciously in accordance with their

Finnish partners. Basically, this can be considered as a supplementing factor instead of a difference.

Thirdly, in term of Uncertainty Avoidance, although Finns in Hofstede's research are risk avoiders they are generally open to sharing the power of making decisions with their colleagues. Vietnamese, on the other hand, are willing to take risks. If the balance in a group of Finns and Vietnamese people is good, Vietnamese can actually take benefits from those decisions that Finnish members are likely to miss. Another supplementation is reviewed here as a value of their co-operation because to be not so adventurous and so careful, group members can make appropriate decisions in different situations.

Value number four is from the perspective of relationship. One of the dimensions by Marko Mäkilouko (2004) listed above to identify the important factors for Finns in teamwork was that Finns had tendency to maintain good relationships. If they can be open to the culture of Vietnamese, who are looking for long-term relationships, both countries can have enjoy good conditions for cooperation through the stages of group development though their strong personal connections.

The only thing left which might generate significant difficulties to the co-operation between Finns and Vietnamese is about Power Distance. Vietnamese may have confusion in deciding how to interact with higher-position people when working with Finns and they may end up acting according to their cultural values, which is to maintain silence. Finns may have the same difficulty in trying to contact higher-position people when working with Vietnamese to get their work done. They may lose motivation through the complicated hierarchy and do not understand their Vietnamese leaders' decisions. However, there were two factors rising against the negativity of this point. The first one is that Vietnamese younger generations, according to the research of Quang and Vuong (2002), have been changing attitude to learn from their foreign partners. The second one is that Vietnamese people in "Effective leadership in joint ventures in Vietnam: a cross-cultural perspective" (Quang, Vuong, 2002) were said to have a "we-they" (Quang, Vuong, 2002) mentality. This means they would not be casual in applying their cultural values on every person that they worked with. If the Finnish style of decentralizing power is good for the entire work, Vietnamese,

especially among the young generations, are willing to see Finns differently and learn from them.

6 METHODS

This research project employed a mixed-methods approach in which data was classified into two types: qualitative and quantitative, an approach to classification described by Kananen (2011). According to Kananen (2011), quantitative research deals with numbers and how they are related to each other, and from a basic perspective it only measures and illuminates the objects that were researched. Meanwhile, qualitative research is more likely to support deeper specification of what those objects was about.

The primary focus of this research is on the described practical experiences of interaction between Vietnamese and Finns. All data collected with specific purposes were reviewed and analyzed to draw some conclusions concerning the co-operation between Vietnamese and Finns in order to support future possible co-operations between the two cultures. Accordingly, the inquiry can be divided into two main objectives. One is to identify the phenomena and the other is to dig deeper into the meaning of them in order to answer the research questions.

Initially, in this part of the report, it is important to specify the reasons why both quantitative and qualitative approaches were applied. At the beginning of this research, the knowledge of how Finnish and Vietnamese cultures have interacted and cooperated was vague. Some researches on different theories of teamwork and management styles pertaining to Eastern and Western cultures were conducted. Consequently, it would be helpful to know more about how Finns and Vietnamese work with each other from a practical perspective. This is why both quantitative and qualitative research methods were applied, in order to identify the common aspects of their interaction and and subsequently to understand more deeply about what happens from emotional and cultural perspectives.

Kananen (2011) described the reasons why qualitative methods are applied in accordance with the classification made by Trochim and Donelly in 2008. One of those important reasons was to "acquire a precise description of the phenomenon." This is quite accurate for the purpose of using qualitative methods in this research.
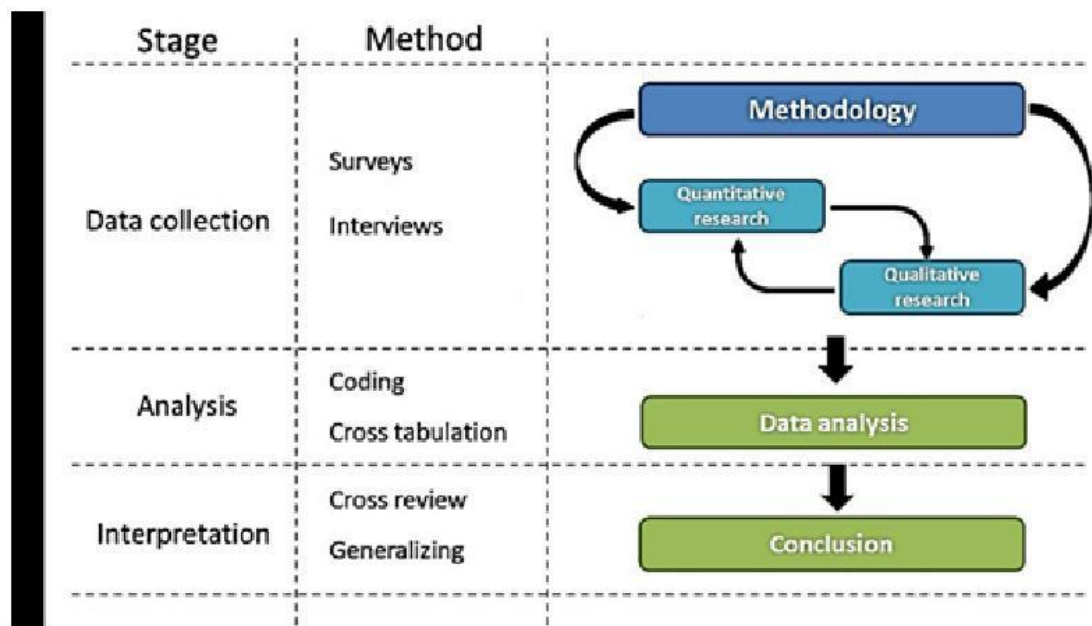
Map of methodology

FIGURE 7 Map of methodology

 (Jorma Kananen, 2001)

Mostly based on Jorma Kananen's approach, the above structure was created in order to generate a big picture of how the data was processed during the research.

There are three stages: data collection, analysis and interpretation. Secondary data was also taken into account because of reviewing other research related to the topic could offer wider range of knowledge in the field, and some of them could offer additional empirical results. In reviewing background literature, the researchers mostly focused on theories and cases that might help to explain the phenomena evident in the present study more clearly.

In term of reliability, a structure of in-flow secondary data was created before any data collection according to the purpose of this collecting stage and based on the classified types of data described by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009: p. 259):

- Documentary: This was due to the fact that the research was mostly conducted within the specific organizations and target groups of participants and cases and the largest part of the data was taken from documents provided by the participating organizations and groups. In addition, several interviews were

conducted to collect qualitative data from participants who had previously or currently been working under the co-operation arrangements between Vietnamese and Finns.

- Multiple sources: According to the limited and practical requirements for this bachelor-level thesis, those sources of information would not be significantly wieghted because the range of information were too wide and may have distracted the researchers from the research purposes.

- Survey: For this type of secondary data collecting, the resulting information could exceed the scope of this particular research.

Formation of surveys and interviews

Generally, the literature review supported the researchers in creating the research approach at a fundamental level. To the researchers' knowledge, there has not been any study about cooperation between Finns and Vietnamese so far. Same conclusions were given by Finnish embassy in Ha Noi and other Finnish organizations which have been holding business events between Vietnamese and Finns.

As mentioned previously in the literature review, the nature and characteristics of cultures vary greatly, and such is the case between Finns and Vietnamese. Understanding these characteristics, the researchers chose cultural lenses as the primary cultural theories employed in establishing appropriate research questions.

Initially, the researchers employed a qualitative based on cultural characteristics identified in the theoretical cultural lenses studied in the literarture review. After the analysis of the results, the researchers were able to generate informed survey questions for quanititative data collection. Even so, open-ended questions were also employed in the questionnaire to enrich the information collected.

The principle methods used in the data collection stage was surveys and interviews in English. From the surveys method, the results were mostly collected quantitatively. However, there several open-ended questions were also imposed, and the answers provided in these could be considered to be qualitative data. From the results of the survey, the researchers started to form and organize the suitable questions for interviews. In this way, the inflowing information was clearer and focused on the research objectives. Obviously, the researcher in some cases can always be the leader

of the inflowing information and flexible to explore some fields more deeply than others. To have a good structure of interviews in the beginning also helps to easily code and analyze the information in the next steps (Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss, 1990) and the experiences collected from the interviewees will be used as real cases to analyze. The interviews were conducted not only face-to-face but also via emails and Skype due to the fact that the geographic distance between the researchers and the interviewees was significantly large.

For quantitative data collection, the researchers identified the participants and then provided the questionnaire to the Finnish and Vietnamese interviewees. The survey questions were arranged in wider fields of information but more focused content than interview questions and very much based on the common structure for inflowing information. The sample size was not determined strictly at the beginning. The researchers sought to utilize the maximum number of participants in the case organizations and target groups so that the outcome of the information analysis could be more reliable.

After collecting data, analysis was conducted with coding techniques (Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss, 1990) to provide results of creating some innital knowledge about copperation between Finns and Vietnamese.Quantitative data analyzing methods such as cross tabulation to assemble the final big picture of the facts and their elements of the co-operation among Finns and Vietnamese. However, to use professional Nvivo software was not taken into consideration because according to the researchers' experiences, the best benefit of this software was to support coding with videos and audios. In this case, qualitative data collected was directly written down without video or audio recording, so the researchers decided to manually tabulate based on Nvivo coding knowledge.Especially, the qualitative data was examined through many different levels so that the final result could be as condensed as possible. Additionally, in this stage, the data is divided into two perspectives, the Finns and Vietnamese points of view. The quantitative perspectives were collected according to the dimensions of:

- Competitiveness
- Creativeness

- Independence
- Effectiveness
- Confidence to communicate ideas
- Punctuality in time
- Willingness to share concerns and feelings

Based on this picture, many ways of answering the research questions need to be drawn out effectively.

Finally, according to the knowledge learned during the process of the research, the researchers drew the most meaningful conclusions out of the data by cross reviewing the results of the very final levels of the analyzing process and meaningfully connecting the points of different research's results. By this way, the answers for the research questions were step-by-step answered in a logic way.

Data evaluation

There are several methods of data evaluation that were applied to this research. One of the methods is to have a very strict and clear structure for in-flow information right at the beginning so that unsuitable data will have minimum chance to flow into the research in general. For precise suitability (Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, Adrian Thornhill, 2009, p 279), all standards for the data collected are set in advance such as for date, time, sources, etc. Additionally, the researcher tries to create at least some standards for the content of the data that suits the research objectives.

Another aspect is a cost versus benefit evaluation (Mark Saunders, Philip Lewis, Adrian Thornhill, 2009, 280). As mentioned before, the project does not have a specific monetary budget. However, other factors can also be considered as costs such as consumed time. Regarding to this evaluation, a table of costs versus benefit can be created at every stage based on the plan and the target information toward objectives to compare and determine the rate of effectiveness.

7   RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

7.1 Data overview

An overview of the data collected is presented now, and some initial conclusions can be identified.

The data was collected via surveys and interviews conducted either online or face-to-face. Later in this report, the quantitative and qualitative data are analyzed separately but alternatively. The number of respondents reached 98 validly with mixed answers for quantitative and qualitative questions. The respondents are mostly university students from 15 schools in Finland plus several other people who previously had experience working in co-operation between Vietnamese and Finns.

The age of the respondents ranges from 18 to 30 years of age with most of them between the ages of 20 to 23. This range of age can be considered to represent neither the next nor the previous but the current generations, who are perhaps more open to acquiring new things and yet mature enough in terms of facing life circumstances. There are 30 male and 65 female respondents. Three of the respondents did not specify their gender.
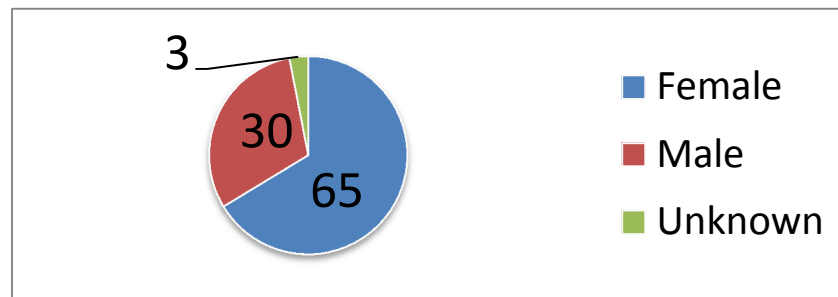

FIGURE 8 Number of the respondents by gender

As stated in the Methods section, the size of the research was targeted to reach as many respondents, both from Vietnam and Finland, as possible in Finland within a two week period, so the sample was quite randomly taken within the group of Finns and Vietnamese people who had experiences working under the co-operation between the two countries. However, it can be inferred that because of the nationality of the researchers, which is Vietnamese, the researchers were more successful in identifying

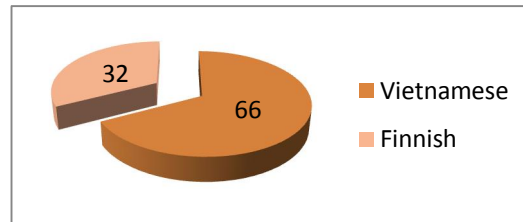Vietnames participants. The Figure 7 show the number of Finns respondents compared to Vietnamese respondents.

FIGURE 9 Number of the respondents by nationality

However, the quality of the research could probably be assured because most of the respondents expressed that they had more than three times working in teams containing both Finns and Vietnamese. Only three out of 98 respondents had only one chance to work under co-operation between Finns and Vietnamese and another other five people had two times of experience. Those who answered "unknown" might have more than one or two times because mostly they specified that they could not remember exactly.
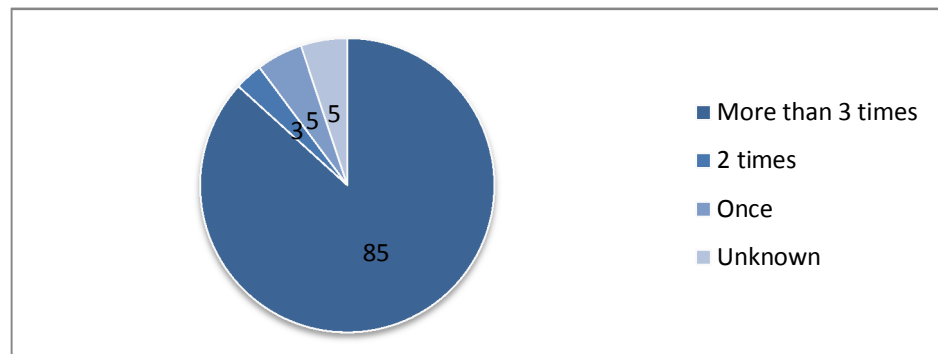
FIGURE 10 Number of the respondents by experience working under the co-operation betweetFinland and Vietnam

When asked to share their feelings about how strong cultural effects influenced the teamwork, most of the female respondents expressed lighter concerns by the answers of "neutral" and "weak," while men considered national culture as a strong factor. However, in general, most of the respondents felt that cultural differences had some effects on their work but not really significantly.

FIGURE 11 Effects of cultures on teamwork rated by gender

7.2 Perspective Analysis

For the qualitative data analysis, the researchers mostly gave interpretation based on the method of Kananen (2011: p. 60), in which levels of analysis are generated. 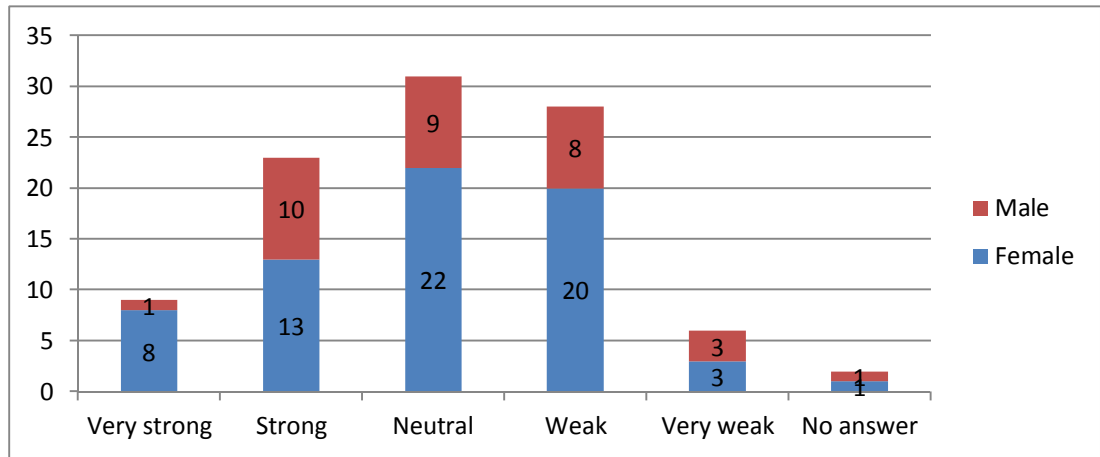However, because of the simple nature and the shortness of the answers given in the data, there are a maximum of two levels of interpretation created in some parts. Some answers for the other questions were simply analyzed at a single level.

VIETNAMESE FROM THE FINNISH PERSPECTIVE

From the Finnish point of view, respondents were asked to rate the ability of Finns regarding to the previously listed dimensions. As stated above, the total number of Finnish respondents was 32. The results from their answers were recorded as following:

Competitiveness: In this dimension, Finns tend to think that Vietnamese were competitive. There were 18 out of 32 respondents, which represented over 50% of the Finnish sample, saying that Vietnamese were from competitive to very competitive at work. Only 20 percent of the Finnish respondents stated that Vietnamese were less competitive and the rest were not sure.

Creativeness: Most of the Finns responding to the research believed that Vietnamese were creative people. There were Twenty-five out of 32 Finnish respondents said that Vietnamese were from creative to very creative in teamwork. Only two people saw

Vietnamese to be less creative. The other Finnish respondents expressed that they were not sure about Vietnamese in this dimension.

Independence: Vietnamese team members also scored highly in this dimension. Among 32 Finnish respondents, twenty-seven ones answered that Vietnamese were independent in teamwork, while according to theories about Asian cultures Vietnam is often described as being a collectivistic culture. This could be influenced by two factors. One is that Vietnamese studying abroad may act differently from those in their home country. Another factor is that maybe Finnish respondents do not have enough opportunities to work with Vietnamese people, so they may not see their true cultural values as regards this dimension. More likely the answer is that Vietnamese are able to work independently in group settings but maintain an overall concern for the group's welfare. However, to be more objective over the data collected, Vietnamese can also be interpreted to own an appearance of individually well-working but being collectivistic in minds regarding to overall concern for the group's welfare.

Effectiveness: Over 80 percent of Finnish respondents (twenty eight people) answered that Vietnamese worked effectively, making this dimension the strongest ranking of the Vietnamese by the Finns. There were Seventeen out of this twenty eight said that Vietnamese were strongly effective at work.

Confidence to communicate ideas: For this dimension, around fifty percent of the Finnish respondents thought that Vietnamese were confident in their communication skills, while twenty five percent believed that Vietnamese were not, and the last 25 percent answered that they were not sure. However, in the qualitative data that would be reviewed later, the Vietnamese were described by the Finns as being very shy.

Punctuality in time: This is a very important characteristic of teamwork. Most of the Finnish respondents (more than fifty percent) thought that Vietnamese were quite punctual. However, from some Finns' perspective, Vietnamese were not as punctual as the Finns. Nearly twenty five percent of Finnish respondents said that Vietnamese were not punctual. Another twenty five percent were not sure.

Willingness to share concerns and feelings: Vietnamese were viewed by Finns as being less likely to share feelings. Fifteen out of thirty two Finnish respondents said that Vietnamese were not willing to express feelings. Five were unsure and twelve believed that Vietnamese were willing to share.
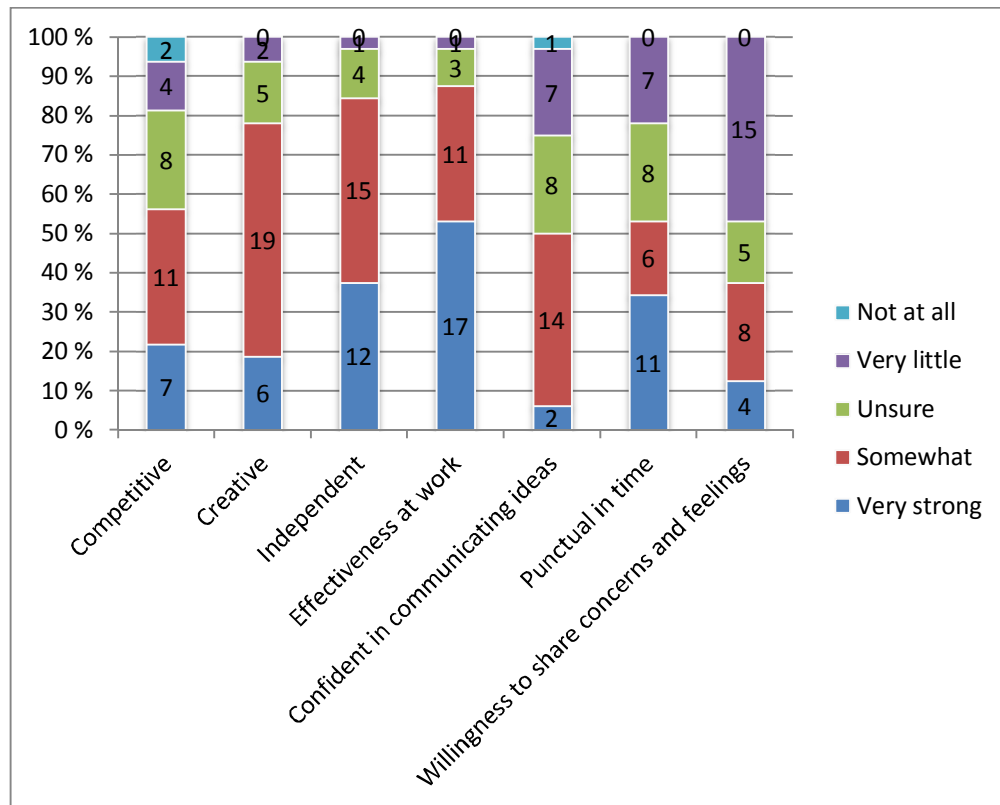
FIGURE 12 Vietnamese behaviors at work from Finnish perspective

The data analysis above shows the big picture of how Finns described Vietnamese characteristics at work. The following pages go deeper in detail during the review and analysis of qualitative data. The structure of the qualitative data analysis was informed by the specific questions given in the surveys and interviews. Additionally, as stated above, the answers would be interpreted in one or two levels depending on their nature of simplicity.

Challenges in working with Vietnamese

The Finnish participants described differences between the Finns and Vietnamese team members in many of their responses, and it appears that this created challenges in working together. Language problems were also mentioned very much. Finnish respondents s stated that Vietnamese English accents were "heavy" and they faced many difficulties in understanding the Vietnamese, at least initially. Another challenge to Finns when working with Vietnamese is to actually know what Vietnamese truly want. They claimed that Vietnamese were shy to express ideas and feelings. This caused Finns difficulties in understanding their Vietnamese partners. In addition, some

Finns expressed that Vietnamese required too much from the results but it does not seem to be a common situation and a major problem.

Typical answers and interpretation:

TABLE 5 Questionaire responses of Vietnamese and two levels of interpretations

Original Text	Interpretation Level 1	Interpretation Level 2
One Vietnamese student with whom I worked was worried about me cause I wasn't smiling all the time. It wasn't actually a bad thing, vice versa. It was kind of good for me to realize, because I had never thought about it because it's so normal for Finns to be not smiling all the time.	- Vietnamese do not understand Finnish smiles. - Finns smile a lot causing worries to Vietnamese.	Vietnamese may not understand Finnish cultural behavior that comes naturally.
It depends on the person, sometimes I can be extremely outgoing witch I tried to easy down because I felt it could make the shy person uncomfortable. It's is not necessarily culture depended though.	Sometimes Finns behave very interactively. Sometimes they care about their shy Vietnamese teammates' feelings.	Vietnamese behaviors are variable. Acting according to the type of Vietnamese behavior encountered makes sense.
Language barrier was sometimes high, but Vietnamese people are very determined so in the end it was no problem	- Language problems at first. - Vietnamese are determined. - Better in the end.	Vietnamese speaking English may be hard for Finns to understand at first but it's not a problem later.

Finnish people tell if they do not understand but I realized Vietnamese do not, but will try to figure out, but do not ask for help really easily. As Finnish people do ask if they do not understand.	- Vietnamese are shy to ask questions. - Vietnamese have a tendency to figure things out without help. - Finns are on another hand willing to ask about things that they do not understand.	Vietnamese are shy and try to figure things out without asking for help, while Finns are more direct.
Language issues and not understanding what the other party means. To overcome these, one just has to get to know the person better.	- Language problems. - Relationship helps to understand Vietnamese.	Vietnamese speaking English may be hard for Finns to understand. Only when knowing them personally will one understand them.
They aim to be best of the best. Usually they do the last checking and modifying in the projects. I usually let them do the last modifying to projects, but sometimes it hurts the feelings of other persons whose text will be modified totally looking like the original writer wouldn't have even wrote the text.	Vietnamese do not respect others' work because they are too extreme with their expectations and results.	For the end results, Vietnamese may act disrespectfully to others by completely modifying or deleting others' work.

Vietnamese people are very polite, so they keep smiling and nod even though they don't understand. By behaving that way Finnish people think that message is understood. Ask the Vietnamese, whether they really understand it and it worked.	- Vietnamese are shy to express that they do not understand. - Asked strongly and directly, Vietnamese will tell the truth.	"Do you really understand?" is a good question to ask of the Vietnamese members' true opinions. Otherwise, they are shy to admit their confusion.

Advantages of Vietnamese team members

Under this question, the answers seem to be interesting because different points of view among Finns and Vietnamese team members were mentioned again positively. Some Finnish respondents realized that different viewpoints could actually generate various solutions for the work and they admitted that this was not only a challenge but also an advantage. Other common advantages that Finnish respondents saw from their Vietnamese partners are some good Vietnamese characteristics such as hardworking and high levels of efficiency. Some found that Vietnamese were friendly and trustful.

Typical answers and interpretation:

TABLE 6 Questionnaire responses and advantages of Vietnamese team member analyszed interpretation

Original Text	Interpretation
Wider perspective to any kind of issues	- Various points of view and problem solving from Vietnamese help to deal with problems.
Here it also the same thing. The different view and take on problems and tasks, this has definitely been good thing after	

acknowledged. First weakness of confusion turned into strength.	
Vietnamese students are in my experience extremely nice, friendly and hardworking, which makes it nice and easy to work with them	- Friendly, nice. - Hardworking.
well good grades are guaranteed when Vietnamese person is in your group	- Trustful. - Effective.
The Vietnamese students I have worked with have had quite high motivation and they have been very conscientious workers.	- Motivated - Conscientious
All of the Vietnamese students I've worked with have been good team players and have worked very hard.	- Hardworking - Friendly
Efficiency. What needed to be done within deadline was always done in time and with good quality.	- Efficient - Quality oriented

Disadvantages of Vietnamese team members

For disadvantages, most Finnish respondents found that Vietnamese did not have good English speaking skills and this might lead to ineffective communication. Some of them claimed that Vietnamese were shy and too extreme in working process and results. The least mentioned disadvantages were laziness, carelessness and less entertaining nature.

Typical answers and interpretation:

TABLE 7 Questionnaire responses and disadvantages of Vietnamese team member analyzed interpretation

Original Text	Interpretation
Lack of communication related as I mentioned before. Sometimes the pronunciation isn't so fluent but easily understandable (written English on the other hand is really good)	- Bad English speaking skills. - Good English writing skills.
Language barriers in some cases and the general issues that come from cultural differences, for example not always speaking out if there is an issue (won't object)	- Bad English skills. - Shyness.
Sometimes I feel like Vietnamese are careless and less willing in doing work	- Careless, Lazy.
They're sometimes shy and may have problems expressing their opinions clearly. I would also hope to see them more in free time, in parties and such.	- Shyness. - Less entertaining.

Lessons learned from Vietnamese team members

When asked about lessons learned from the co-operation, most Finnish respondents expressed that they highly appreciated the chances to work in a multi-cultural environment because they could learn about new culture, for example the Vietnamese working styles. In a deeper scale, some Finns found Vietnamese characteristics to vary among individuals, so it was not right to judge Vietnamese by the behavior of some individuals. Additionally, some improvement of communication skills was mentioned.

Typical answers and interpretation:

TABLE 8 Questionnaire responses and lesson learned fromVietnamese team member analyzed interpretation

Original Text	Interpretation Level 1	Interpretation Level 2
All of the Vietnamese I worked with were very different from each other. It made me realize that you really can't trust those stereotypes.	- There are many types of Vietnamese people, so do not generalize.	Vietnamese are varied and should not be judged based on a few individuals.
The skill to use other questions to see what the Vietnamese students are really thinking	- How to ask for Vietnamese' opinions.	Method to approach the Vietnamese about their opinions.
2 years ago I didn't know much about Vietnamese students, but today I can say from the bottom of my heart that it's a real pleasure to work with such friendly people	- Vietnamese are friendly to work with.	Although there are culture differences between Vietnamese and Finns, Vietnamese are found to be friendly and easy to work with.
Cultural differences and that Vietnamese can be extremely friendly people.	- Cultural differences. - Vietnamese are friendly to work with.	
How people work and communicate in different cultures. The differences were sometimes quite big and it has been a great learning experience and	- How to work in multi-culture environment.	Experiences working in a multi-cultural environment are gained and giving

an eye opener. I have learned new ways of perceiving things.	- New perspective.	new values to Finnish individuals.
To respect and listen, be observant and be polite rather than saying out loud bad ideas right away.	- How to assess things rightly.	A more informed attitude in assessing situations in teamwork is developed.
I have learned to work better with Asians, I think.	- How to work with Asians effectively.	Experiences and skills in working with Asians effectively are gained.

Advice for Finns who may have chances to work with Vietnamese

To conclude, Finnish respondents were asked to give advice to their Finnish friends if they had the opportunity to work with Vietnamese people. The most given advice was to be aware of Vietnamese shyness because it might prevent the opinions of Vietnamese from coming out. Finns should ask Vietnamese to actively contribute. Some suggested that good personal relationship with one or more Vietnamese people might be helpful in encouraging deeper understanding among Finnish and Vietnamese team members. Other advice included suggesting Finns to be open and patient and to to expect some language difficulties when communicating with Vietnamese team members.

Typical answers and interpretation:

TABLE 9 Questionnaire responses and advice for Finns who potentially copperate with Vietnamese team member analyzed interpretation

Original Text	Interpretation

Get to know them at least somehow earlier as possible and ask their opinion if they won't give it directly. I don't see much difference between us after all.	- Personal relationship is helpful.
Remember that Vietnamese people aren't straightforward in communication but they always do the work what they're supposed to do.	- Be aware of Vietnamese shyness in communication and effectiveness at work.
take care of the silent ones try to involve them in projects as well in my opinion they have lots to offer for successful project work	- Try to involve Vietnamese in work because they are good workers.
Try and understand from what background the other person comes from. This will make the understanding of the meaning behind their words easier.	- Knowledge of cultural background helps to improve understanding.
Don't get frustrated if the language causes some problems. If you are friendly and open, they will share their opinions and feelings. Aggressive behavior is not good with them, because they are but shy sometimes and might get frightened.	- Friendly attitude works better than an aggressive one for working with Vietnamese.

FINNS FROM THE VIETNAMESE PERSPECTIVE

From the Vietnamese point of view, respondents were asked to rate the ability of Finns regarding to special dimensions.

The results were recorded as following:

Competitiveness: The perspectives of Vietnamese towards Finns at this point are greatly varied. The number of Vietnamese respondents who considered Finns to be competitive is nearly equal to those who saw Finns to be not competitive. The rest of them felt unsure. This could be very much dependent on the characteristic of the individual Finns they had been working with. The reasons can be seen more clearly in the qualitative data.

Creativeness: In the eyes of Vietnamese, Finnish team members are quite creative. According to the data collected from the surveys, over fifty percent of Vietnamese respondents think that Finns were creative in teamwork. Twenty-one Vietnamese respondents out of sixty one believed that Finns were less creative and one of the Vietnamese answered "not at all" for the question. On the other hand, there are two Vietnamese respondents who saw Finns to be very creative.

Independence: For this dimension, Vietnamese respondents overall sensed that Finns were very independent. Fifty-five out of sixty one respondents said that Finns ranged from independent to very independent in their teamwork activities. This is quite the same as what has been reviewed previously in the theoretical part of this report, in which Finland scored high on Hoftede's individualism dimension.

Effectiveness: According to the experiences of Vietnamese respondents working with Finns, they see Finnish teamwork to be quite effective. Over sixty percent of Vietnamese respondents, which are fourty seven of them, appreciated the effectiveness of Finns. Among those, fourteen respondents say that Finns were very effective at work.

Confidence to communicate ideas: Also Finns were perceived by Vietnamese to be quite confident in expressing their ideas. Over sixty percent of Vietnamese respondents agreed that Finns did not hesitate to speak out about their ideas.

Punctuality in time: This can also be considered as a significant strong point of the Finns. Fifty-six out of sixty one Vietnamese respondents said that Finns were punctual in time and thirty eight of them think that Finns were very punctual.

Willingness to share concerns and feelings: About sisty one percent of Vietnamese respondents agree that Finns were open to share their concerns and feelings at work.

Nearly 40% believe that Finns were not that willing but no one answered "not at all" when asked to rate Finns in this dimension.
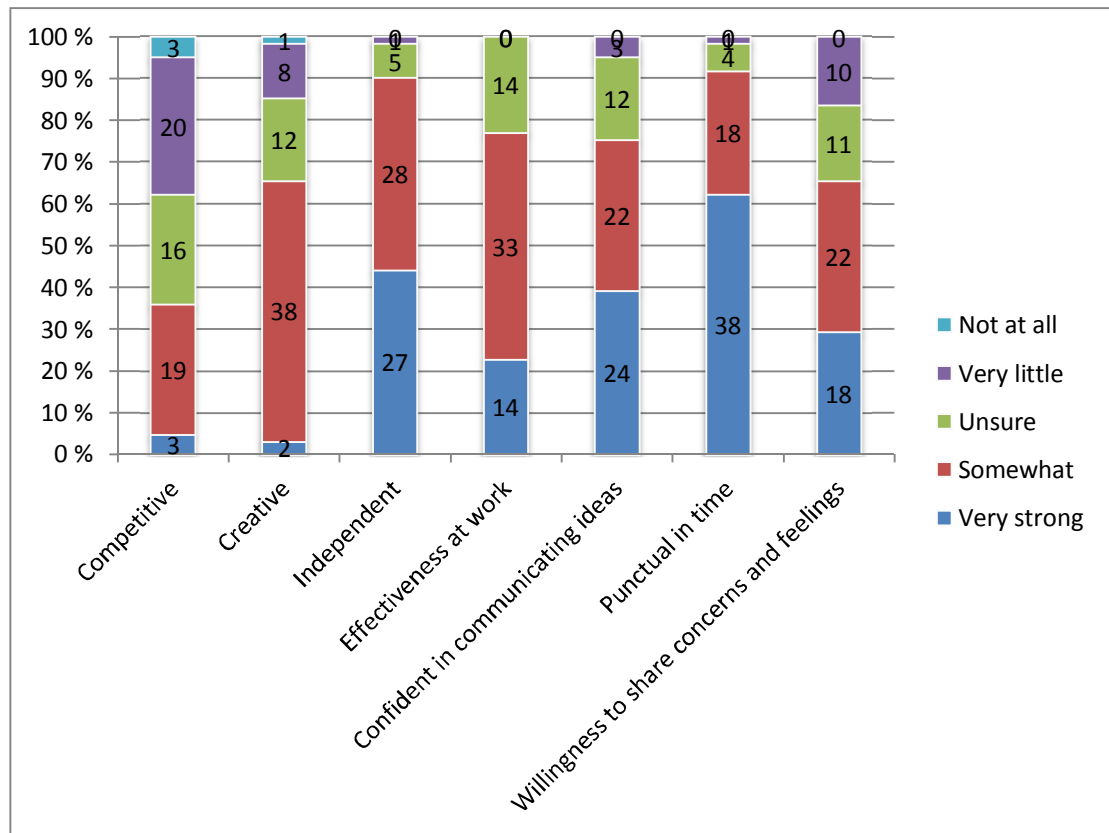

FIGURE 13 Finnish behaviors at work from Vietnamese perspective

Challenges in working with Finns

To begin with the questions about Vietnamese perspectives towards Finnish teamwork styles, the Vietnamese respondents were asked about the challenges when working with Finnish teammates. There are many ideas about this topic. To make a summary of Vietnamese respondents' opinions, the challenges were categorized and presented in the scale of most mentioned to the least mentioned.

To most of Vietnamese, Finns appeared very introverted. They kept rather silent than actively contributing new ideas, so it was a challenge for Vietnamese to make Finns speak out. As well, the Finns, in the eyes of the Vietnamese respondents, were perceived as being passive in teamwork. Some Vietnamese claimed that they had to take the lead and plan everything including meetings. It was challenging to keep good motivation and results. On the other hand, one very interesting point also mentioned

quite frequently by the Vietnamese respondents was that Finns sometimes acted dictatorially and this challenged the Vietnamese to argue for their opinions. In another aspect, Finns were seen to care less about the outcome so it was hard for Vietnamese, who wanted the best results, to control the outcome of the teams. The two points that were least mentioned by the Vietnamese respondents were language problems and that the Finns were too direct. However, some Vietnamese still considered those as challenges to have to overcome.

Typical answers and interpretation:

TABLE 10 Questionnaire responses and disadvantages of Vietnamese team member analyzed interpretation

Original Text	Interpretation Level 1	Interpretation Level 2
Work division is not clear sometimes and I chose to adapt the Finnish working style. That's fine for me.	- Unclear work division.	Finnish style is not to clearly divide the work.
Finns think quite simple and try to make everything as simple as possible; while Vietnamese have a habit of making things became outstanding. That results in new ideas hardly accepted by Finns. They keep "traditional".	- Uncertainty avoidance.	Finns are not adventurous so they miss some outstanding ideas while favoring safer approaches.
Some Finnish students tend to keep their ideas and do not want foreigners to have a voice in the conference. It is quite difficult to work with them. But some Finnish students are quite out-going, as they accept other idea and respect foreigners. I have worked with	- Finns are stubborn and dictatorial.	Finns sometimes express that they are not open to ideas from foreigners.

a Finnish student, she always keeps her idea and never let us join the project.		
Some don't seem to have their own opinions when discussing which might cause difficulty for the others. Some seem to say yes with almost every circumstance which caused confusion and uncomfortable feeling for the rest of the group. However, quite a lot Finns have good communication skills and working experiences, plus responsibility so I always feel good when I am in the same group with them.	- Finns are passive in teamwork and expressing ideas.	Finns are passive in teamwork and do not usually contribute ideas.
Vietnamese people work hard to get the highest result from any work, especially in study while Finnish people only care about passing. For that reason, when I do group work with Finnish people, it is very important for me to express all my opinion which I consider to be good for the work. Also, I would choose the position of overview the whole report (if they have) or checking the result so that I can fix all possible mistakes to bring the best result for the work.	- Finns accept minimum grades to pass the courses.	Finns care less about the outcome and make mistakes while Vietnamese want the best results.
Finnish students often do not care	- Finns accept	Finns care less

about the grade, but Vietnamese students always want to get the highest grade, so it is quite hard to combine 2 different purposes. I used to do Finns' part to meet the deadline	minimum grades to pass the courses and miss deadlines.	about the outcome and are not punctual while Vietnamese want best results.
1) Finns are more into the practicality side of things; meanwhile Vietnamese are more likely to be theoretical. I think this is resulted from earlier educational experiences -> i learnt from my Finn friends to be more practical, it did work. 2) Language differences (both verbal and nonverbal), if considered as a part of culture, were challenging -> i tried to improve mine in order to fit in Finn settings, but i still had problems with it. 3) whenever there is a group of Finn or Viet, it is always more difficult to mix in because people generally tend to stick with their group -> tried to work with a group which is as much as international as possible and it worked	- Differences in working styles. - Language problems. - Different cultural behaviors. - Tendency to work with same nationality group.	Finns are more practical than the Vietnamese and tend to work with other Finns in the group. It is hard to understand Finnish-English and Finnish behaviors.

Advantages of Finnish team members

The ideas about the advantages of having Finnish team members are quite varied due to the different experiences of Vietnamese respondents. However, there is a very strong agreement among the Vietnamese respondents in some of the Finnish characteristics. The first thing that is very much worth mentioning about Finnish team

members is that the Finns were perceived to be very punctual and responsible. Most of the Vietnamese respondents felt and mentioned this characteristic from their Finns partners. Together with the idea that the Finns have a very wide range of knowledge about things, and are confident and honest, the Vietnamese respondents sensed that Finns were quite trustful to work with. Another good point about Finns in the eyes of Vietnamese is that Finns were simple and quick in making decision. This has made the teamwork between Vietnamese and Finns much easier. One more outstanding point about Finns that most Vietnamese respondents appreciated is that the Finns were perceived to be very friendly.

Typical answers and interpretation:

TABLE 11 Questionnaire responses and advantages of Finnish team member analyzed interpretation

Original Text	Interpretation
Finnish students have a very simple and creative way to approach the solution, wide area of knowledge in various fields	- Wide knowledge. - Simple but creative.
We have different traits and cultures which will be great at making up for what one lacks	- Complementary characteristics.
Generally speaking, the Vietnamese and Finnish are quite good listeners therefore shared ideas would be appreciated.	- Finns and Vietnamese demonstrated "common sense" when sharing ideas.
As I mentioned above, I think Finnish students are good in general. If they are good students in class, they study hard, respect deadline, on time for meeting etc.	- Hardworking and responsible - Punctual.

Finish student i worked with are quite friendly. We work with each other in a cooperative way. Open to share idea, receive feedback. Moreover, finish students are punctual, and also organized. So it's very nice when they always on time , and willing to finish the job responsibly	- Friendly / Open. - Punctual / Responsible. - Organized.
Finnish people are really creative with topics they like. They are also very respects different opinions and they also have a high sense of responsibility towards work. These characteristics make Finnish people nice mate to work with	- Creative and Responsible. - Open and respectful. - Easy to work with.
Once I have to study a Finnish company about their supply chain, Finnish students play an important role in negotiating with that company.	- Good at negotiating.
1) Learning from differences 2) Finn, in general comparison to other students of other nationalities, are easy to work with in the sense that they are highly responsible and reliable	- Easy to work with. - Worth learning. - Responsible. - Trustful.

Disadvantages of Finnish team members

For disadvantages, Finns were said to have fewer disadvantages than advantages. The most mentioned disadvantage of Finns is that they were not good in English writing skills. Some Vietnamese respondents even said that Finns were careless in completing their task of writing reports. Another disadvantage is that Fins were mostly passive in contributing ideas and sometimes lazy to work. From this, some

Vietnamese inferred that Finns were not creative. Discrimination was also mentioned but fortunately only once.

Typical answers and interpretations:

TABLE 12 Questionnaire responses and disadvantages of Vietnamese team member analyzed interpretation

Original Text	Interpretation
Academic writing, jobs that need to be detail and time-consuming	- Bad English writing skills. - Time consuming.
I myself do not have any problems with my Finnish partners; however, I heard some of my Vietnamese friends have experienced quite much about that. There are some Finnish students who maybe look down on foreign students and not willing to work together.	- Discriminative.
Finnish students are rigid, inflexible in time schedule and certain emotional situation. This rises the conflict with Vietnamese students who value the emotion and friendship more than work and task completion	- Inflexible. - Unfriendly.
For me, most of the time it happened in a way that Finns perceived group work as the whole group going to school, sit together somewhere and start making a	- Unnecessary meetings. - Different working styles. - Ineffective.

report or a power point presentation together while it can be done individually (at least that is how I do it and I am a Vietnamese). In my opinion, group work is a contribution of individuals, as brainstorming and group planning or other idea-generating meeting should have the whole group. And I usually get frustrated if I have to come to a meeting just to write the report or power point together while it can be done faster if we split the work.	
Consider about writing report, some of the Fins I worked with are quite irresponsible about the content of their writing, There are a lot of obvious mistakes in the text. They can sometimes accept all the opinions as long as it makes the work done faster, which is not always provide better results	- Careless for details. - Bad English writing skills.
The differences attitudes and beliefs make some difficulties in work. Some Finnish are high demanding, however the work they want to do is more about practice meanwhile Vietnamese somehow are not good at that. Finns are serious in work however their demanding is not as much as Vietnamese which leading to the conflict about the objectives	- Different working styles and points of view. - Too practical.
The fact that some Finnish students are working and studying at the same time	- Ineffective.

may prevent them from totally focusing on school projects.	- Disorganized.
Finnish students sometimes use their mother language only. That makes other international students can't understand and they stand outside the conversation.	- Too much Finnish language used in group work settings.

Lessons learned from Finnish team members

When asked about the lessons that Vietnamese respondents actually learned from their Finnish partners, their answers were varied much in details. However, from a general perspective, most Vietnamese learned from the perceived good characteristics of Finns such as punctuality, responsibility and confidence to improve their personal abilities. Some Vietnamese claimed that their English improved after working with Finns. Several Vietnamese respondents said that they learned much about Finnish styles and how to adapt to make better work. After all, they learned that Finns were trustful and also varied.

Typical answers and interpretations:

Advice for Vietnamese who may have chances to work with Finns

To advise Vietnamese who may have chances to work with Finns in the future, the Vietnamese respondents said that Vietnamese should be more confident in expressing their ideas and should try to be persistent. They also said that Vietnamese respect punctuality and responsibility, which were also important to the Finns, and whenever possible small talk would help to facilitate conversation and interaction.

Typical answers and interpretations:

TABLE 13 Questionnaire responses and advice for Vietnamese who potentially copperate with Finnish team member analyzed interpretation

Original Text	Interpretation
I feel safe working with Finnish students because they have a sense of responsibility at least	Finns can be trusted.
I learn from their attitude, working style and appreciation to every individualities.	Finnish attitudes and individualistic working styles are appreciated and learned.
I learn the way Finn start discussion with a tiny funny story	How to start a conversation in a Finnish way.
The punctuality and responsibility of Finish student. Be on time. And if you do anything, do it responsibly.	To work with Finns, punctuality and responsibility are important.
Learning from different cultures is always good. The point is that do we dare to adapt it or not. So, after all the time I worked with Finns, I learnt quite a lot from them and I appreciated that.	New cultural perspectives.
Working with Finnish people has taught me a lot about balancing between studying and living. In fact, I used to mainly focus on study, with theory and stuffs; yet, after coming to study in Finland, I have more chances to see myself and learn more about the world and people around me. Now, I appreciate practical knowledge and I also have time for other activities like having parties, etc.	Personal value increases. Lessons about how to be more open and reflexive.

It depends, because each Finnish student has their own personalities. With some, I find it easy and comfortable to work with, but with some, I do feel the discrimination very strongly from them. So, I look down on them. But in general, I don't feel much uncomfortable, because learning in international environment requires the flexibility and adaptability. So, that's not a big deal of how I feel.	Finns are quite varied in their characteristics and behaviors. Adaptability is important to work in international environments.

7.3 Vietnamese and Finnish teamwork

To conclude the analysis of the practical data, there are several ideas about the productivity of the co-operation among Finns and Vietnamese that should be reviewed but firstly, a big picture of the main nodes from the coding process needed to be noticed in order to generate an over view on the data analysis.
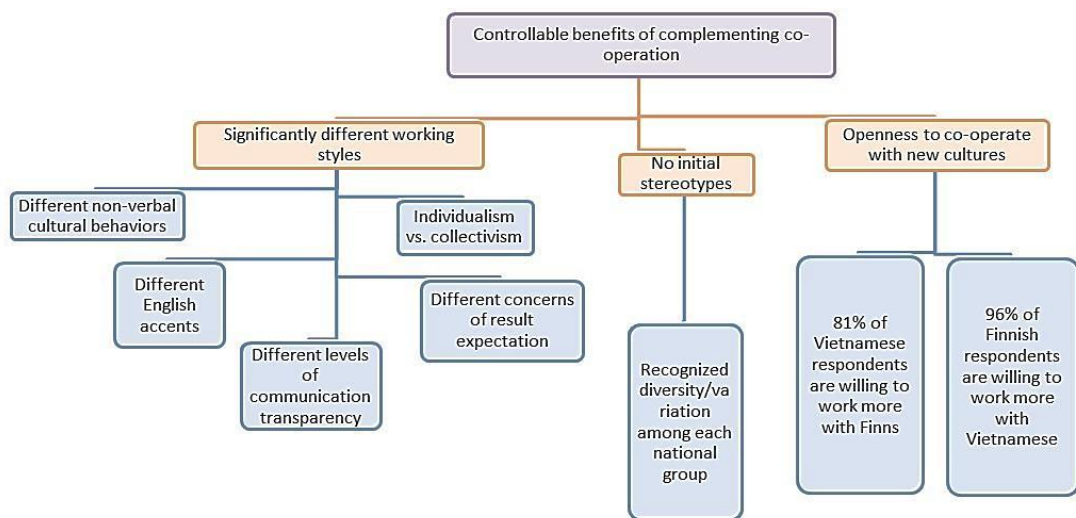

FIGURE 14 Main nodes from the coding process

In general, from the qualitative and quantitative data analysis, it was clearl that the working styles of Vietnamese and Finns were differed significantly. Fortunately, these variations were also percieved by the participants, so there were no initial stereotypes

formed between them. Most of the participants were willing to continue in the future to work with the other national group in order to understand better their culture.
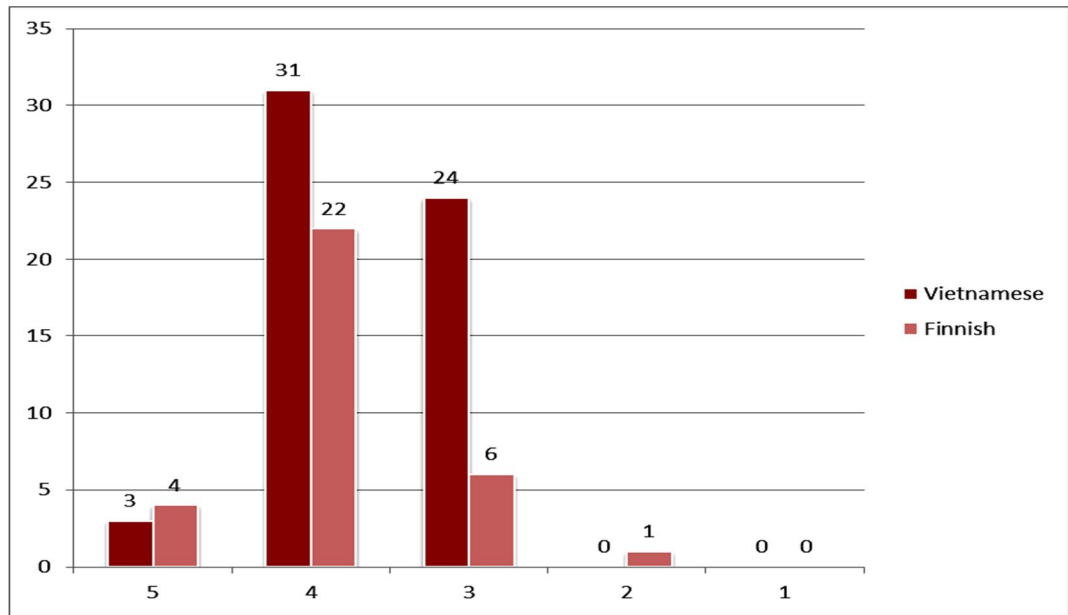

FIGURE 15 Productivity of the co-operation among Finnish and Vietnamese rated by the respondents

Figure 15 shows the chart of how the respondents of this research rate the level of productivity of the co-operation among Finns and Vietnamese. Most Finns and Vietnamese rate the co-operation from three to four. This means they really appreciate the outcome of the teamwork between Finnish and Vietnamese. When asked to specify the reason why the score rated for the co-operation was high, most of the respondents replied that the outcome of the work was very satisfactory. Some Finns claimed that "I have experiences of very good and very bad interactions. In general outcomes have been good and I have enjoyed working with the Vietnamese students". Some expressed a clearer idea that "Because of the ways of the people of these two countries think so differently, the work gains more depth and has more ways of perceiving for those reading it". However, due to the barriers of differences in working styles and of language, very few of the respondents were confident to rate the co-operation at five. Only five percent of the Vietnamese respondents and twelve percent of the Finnish respondents believed that the co-operation was very productive. In the qualitative data, Vietnamese made less compliments in the end. They tended to figure out the reasons why they still felt insecure with mostly good results. Many of Vietnamese respondents rephrased the difficulties in understanding English among team members. However, in the end they were still satisfied.

Related to language, the respondents were asked to rate the importance of English in their interactions between Finns and Vietnamese. The results show in Figure 13, in that while over sixty percent of Vietnamese considered English as the key factor in teamwork with Finns by rating the importance of English from four to five, over sixty percent of Finns thought the other way. There were twenty Finnish respondents rating the important of English for the interaction from one to two. This probably indicates that Finnish respondents through the teamwork with Vietnamese were expressing their ideas effectively and were satified with the results. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese still wanted to be more effective in speaking English to express their ideas. One characteristic of the Vietnamese in the co-operation can be inferred from this, which is the desire to improve their English skills.
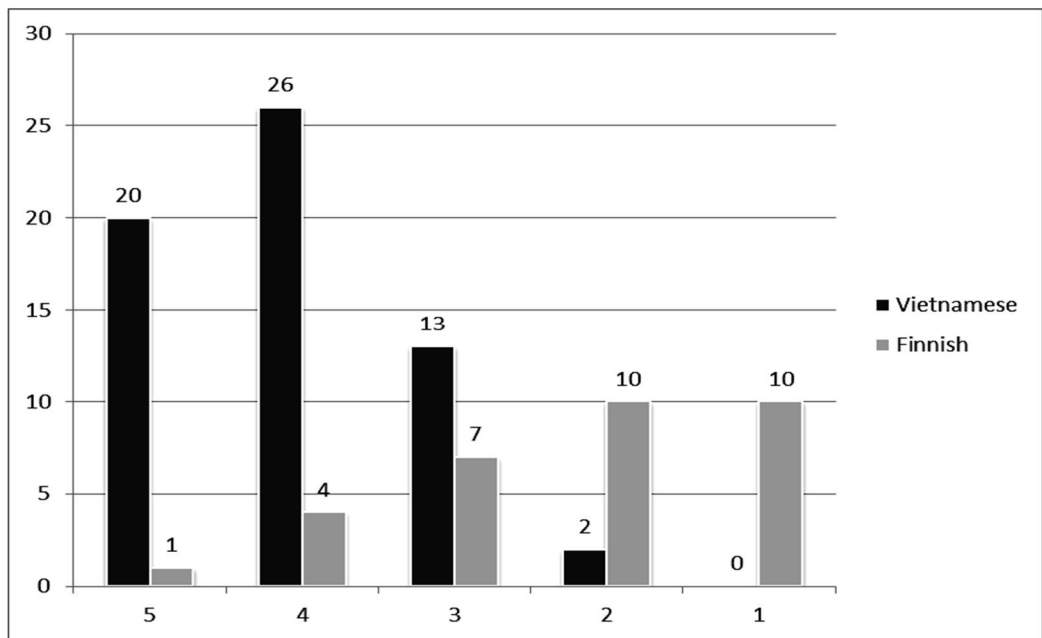
FIGURE 16 The importance of English in interactions among Finnish and Vietnamese rated by the respondents

The last question of the surveys and interviews is "Will you choose to work with Finnish/Vietnamese again?" The results showing in Figure 14 are quite positive when fourty four out of fifty four Vietnamese respondents and twenty nine out of thirty Finnish respondents answered "Yes". Only one person did not show a positive attitude towards the future co-operation. The rest of the respondents answered "Maybe".

FIGURE 17 Answers to the question "Will you choose to work with Finnish/Vietnamese again?"

8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND UNIVERSAL THEORIES PERTAINING TO CULTURE

Some particular challenges were encountered in completing this research project, and are discussed in this section so that future researchers will benefit.

8.1. The universal application of theories

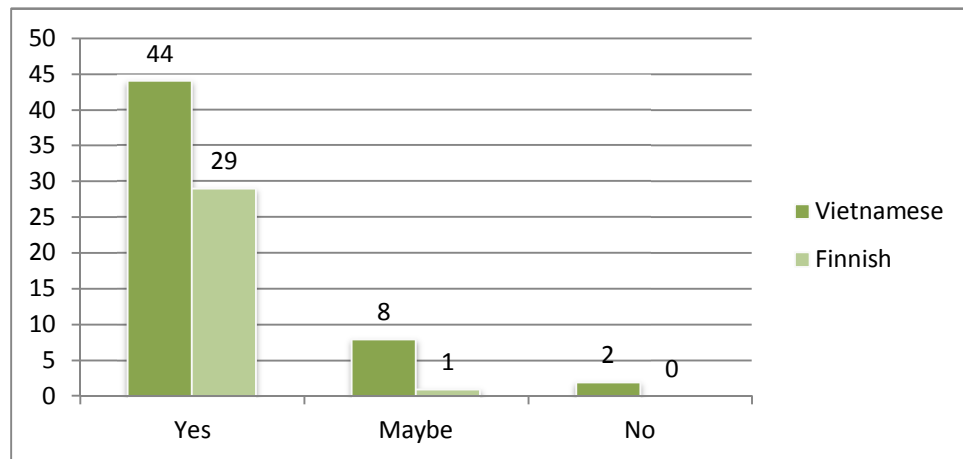*" Knowledge comes from learning, Wisdom comes from practice"- old saying*

Globalization facilitates the exchange of knowledge and thinking from West to East and vise versa, which leads to a question about the universal application of cultural theories. "Each theory has a universal part which transcends time and location" (Nguyen, 2011). However, it is typical to employ only etic- imposed theories that originate in Western contexts as a general theme and approach to understand and describe the existing social practices, especially in Asian contexts where rapid changes include the adoption of Western business management approaches. It is necessary to construct new and different cultural studies approaches that will reduce the East- West dichotomy and serve to advance new theories and practices in particular (Nguyen, 2011). In other words, research sush as the present one that contains both Asian and European contexts needs to include some measure of Eastern-based theories at the cultural level.

Nguyen (2011) introduced a "cultural theory to practice transfer" which describes three layers of theory development based on practice. The practice part forms the largest layer that is also the foundation for moving toward the resulting theories. Theories should be viewed in variable perspectives to ascertain applicability to Westerner or Easterner settings or a mixture of both. The users of theories are required to "used the foundation of his/her knowledge to customize, produce a tailor- made solution answering each particular problem with a specific particular solution" (Nguyen, 2011). Furthermore, to produce approaches and tools suitable for cross-cultural application of theories, the use of theory produced in one cultural environment is not enough. There should be a synthesizig of Western- Eastern based perspectives where such opportunities and applications are able to find cohensive cross cultural meaning and application.
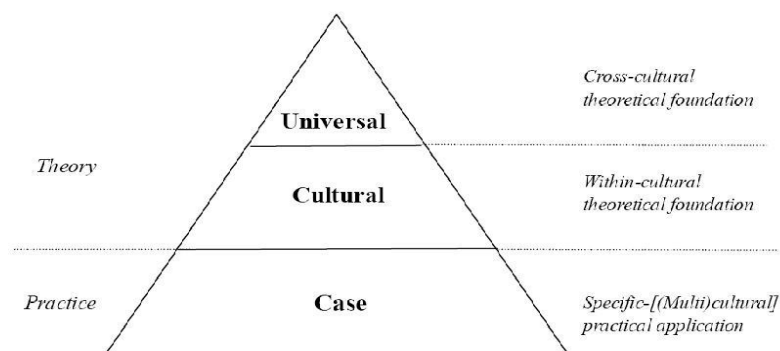
FIGURE 18 Phuong Mai Nguyen's model of cultural Theory and Practice transfer (Source: Are Theories Universal, ELLTA book, 2011)

8.2 Stereotypes

Larry S. Samovar & Richard E. Porter (2001: p267) describe stereotyping as a "complex form of categorization that mentally organizes your experiences and guides your behavior toward a particular group of people". Stereotypes are often employed in intercultural interactions especially due to increased mobility in comtemporary global social contexts. However, since 1922 this practice was identified for attention by Lippmann (1997, p68) and stereotypes are still seen as one source of "potential problems in intercultural communications" (Samovar Larry A. and E. Porter Richard, 2001). Human psychology is complicated and to understand and predict a person's

values behaviors is difficult. Therefore, to simplify an approach, individuals sometimes rely on the images they have learned from others that pertain to people from other cultures and then apply these ascriptions to all members inside the target groups. Stereotypes are said to cause problems in communication processes particularly in cross- and intercultural applications by causing distractions, producing narrow perspectives, ethnocentrism, and reducing enthusiasm for interacting (Baumeister, 1984). Therefore, awareness of how stereotypes are formed and applied is necessary when conducting research between cultures.

Regarding the data collected for this research, the stereotype-related limitations are divided into two parts: methodology and validity.

Methodology

It is acknowledged that identifying and treating stereotypes embedded in the data is difficult and the researchers have recognized that there should be some means to isolate and understand how to deal with stereotypical views that appear in the data. Mostly, the respondents from both Finland and Vietnam have been working with each other more than three times and thus their use of stereotypes about their partners may dinimish through practical experience. Many respondents declared that they viewed the other group as evidencing cultural variability within their own group. These same participants expressed no unwillingness to work with the other based on any nagaetive experiences related to stereotypical ascriptions. Some were clear to note that their responses and stories focused on those specific persons they had worked with, and might not expect other partners from the same culture to be the same. However, the data was not clear and deep enough to explore the use of stereotypes fully.

Validity

The present study may itself support exsiting or even create new perspectives about Vietnamese and Finns that could in turn potentially be ascribed to all Vietnamese and Finns in either negative or positive ways, while in fact individuals in every group are varied and may change over time. Due to the fact that the surveys and interviews were conducted mostly in Jyväskylä, Finland and because of limited access by the

researchers to those who live far away the information produced cannot easily be generalized outside of the present pool of participants.

Individual human personality, chracteristics and values are unique (Coon, Dennis, 1989), which means that the reasons behind any idea, way of thinking and resulting actions of each person may very from other members of same society, therefore understanding about individual identity and value is neccessary when studying group culture.

9   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In short, the Finnish participants in this study benifited from expanding their points of view, to include views that were totally different from Finnish and Western perspectives and to complete tasks or solve problems in this mixed cultural environment; and for Vietnamese, that they can learn from the various characteristics of Finns people to improve their own international potential in business context.

Olson (2003) states that "the success of a mixed-culture team begins with the feelings people have about being members of a short-term team". Perhaps cultural factors are keys to consider after team members in a multicultural team form up, before they begin to produce work. That is why in this study, practical data collected from the participants from Finland and Vietnam, who describe their experiences working with each other in the past, is highly appreciated.

The present study can be divided into theoretical and practical parts. In the theoretical part, the literature reviews and theories about teamwork and cultures including information pertaining to Finland and Vietnam provided some good bases for the practical part including the formulation of interviews and surveys that benefit from good foundation and structure. Then the interviews and surveys were designed and executed, focusing on Vietnamese and Finnish business students from fifteen universities all over Finland. Each participant in these two target groups were required to have prior experiences working in Vietnamese and Finnish partnered teams.

The resulting analyses benifited from the studies theories, and the primary findings and conculsions of this research can now be described:

a) Both Finnish and Vietnamese respondents described the differences between the two cultures as being quite large. Different points of view were in envidence many times in their description of the teamwork and co-operation. If Finnish and Vietnamese do not learn about each other, these differences may cause the teamwork considerable damage. On the other hand, if they do learn more about the other cultures it will likely facilitate the productivity and effectiveness of the team.

b) However, the respondents also emphasized that Vietnamese and Finns varied within their native groups considerably. Some of the respondents took part in different situations with different personalities of their teammates during their cooperation. Consequently, stereotypes have not been formed as the result of the teamwork among the Finnish and Vietnamese respondents of this research.

c) Despite the difficulties in co-operating, most Finns and Vietnamese looked forward to the co-operation because most of them were openminded and reflexive toward learning about and working with other cultures. This attitude can encourage and facilitate the creation of new co-cultural groups when two cultures are mixed in teamwork settings.

Recommendations

According to the results of this research, some recommendations are offered specifically to further co-operation between Vietnamese and Finns.

Firstly, the results show very clearly that cultural differences did affect the combined Finnish and Vietnamese teams, particularly when considering the distinctive working styles of the Finnish and Vietnamese participants. That is why the first recommendation concerns the need for intercultural communication training, which we believe should be conducted among the members of multicultural teams so that they could understand more deeply who they will be, or are working with, and learn how to react to possible problems stemming from cultural differences. Management could build a database of cultural knowlege including any documented intercultural incidents, and these examples could be made available to present and future team members through ongoing training. As well, the training program should include

ongoing feedback sections for each of the team development stages described by Bruce W. Tuckman and Mary Ann Jensen.

In addition to this point, in the training process, individual profiles of each of the members of multicultural teams can supplement the cultural-level training. This was actually suggested by some repondents of this research when they realized that to know about their teammates' backgrounds helped a lot in overcoming the negative effects of differences. From another professional point of view, culture-specific knowledge will increase visibly among the members after the training, and there should be efforts made to measure the outcomes of such training activities.

According to research that focused on the contribution of cross-cultural training in the workplace that was conducted on vocational education and training (VET) graduates (Robert Bean, 2008), "the most commonly reported delivery styles of cross-cultural training were a combination of lecturing and interactive discussions and exercises and a combination of field or project work and lecturing". Bean's research indicated a significantly large number of participants that were employers highly valued the cross-cultureal training and were satisfied with the performance of the graduates from VET. In the same article showing the results of his research, some training approaches and resources were also listed in ranked order: case studies, simulation exercises, models for understanding cultures, role plays, intensive group exercises, checklists and tip sheets, instruments that profile groups or individuals, and assessments of cultural competence. Especially, intensive group exercises and case studies were reported to be the most effective tools for cross-cultural training.

Also related to trainings, some participants raised the issue of language and communication. English language skills and accents varied considerably within the teams and sometimes this caused problems in team function and production. Therefore it seems that language training and support would support team performance in multicultural group work. As an example of how team members might improve understanding and thus develop group cohesion, members of each national group in the team could create a short play or presentation about any interesting or relevant topic in whatever the working language used is,for a certain period of time in the team development stages so that the other members in the team can get used to the

accents of their foreign partners. Together with some educational audio files for improving listening skills, this would improve the working processes. Besides, members of an international project should frequently engage in bonding activities that include various activities and interactive games that also help them get used to each other's accent. One example activity from the intercultural training field is the game called Diversophy. This type of card game can enhance the understanding of different cultural factors via questions, answers and discussion. (More infomation can be found on the official website of Diversophy: http://www.diversophy.com)

Secondly, from a managerial perspective, the leader of a multicultural team should be able to identify potential and actual problems. This means leaders should be themselves trained and interculturally competent, and acquire for themselves an increased awareness of the cultural backgrounds of their team members. A channel of communication between every individual team member and the manager should be established so that all of the team members can have chances to express their cultural difficulties with their manager so that he or she can arrange solutions for any cultural conflicts that develop within the team.

Thirdly, according to the responses of the interviewees, personal engagment is really important to teamwork success. Each of the group members should be active themselves or encouraged to actively contribute to improve operations and results. Whether the concerns and problems that develop are related to the cultural or personal issues, as long as they can contribute to the final outcome of the group, the team members must be free to communicate their experiences and to express their needs. This can easily be done when the team forms as a cohesive group. Moreover, the creation of a special position to facilitate intercultural relations will certainly benefit the function and results of any multicultural team.

Finally, from the perspective of researchers in this field, future research should continue to focus on the underlying cultural aspects that can enhance the effectiveness of the group work between Finns and Vietnamese people, as well as to identify and mitigate the potential negative developments related to culture that may occur in co-operation between members of these two distinctive national groups.

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APPENDICES

Interview question:

As students at JAMK University of Applied Sciences, this questionnaire is a vital part of our thesis project. Our research focuses on teamwork and cooperation between Vietnamese and Finnish students.

Your participation in this research is anonymous. Only the researchers will have access to your answers, and your personal information will remain confidential. We will not use either your name or your company name for any purposes outside of our thesis project. We may wish to contact you again in the future, in the event that we need to follow up this survey, and so we request that you provide your email address. Although it is not mandatory to provide either your name or email address, we would be particularly grateful if we can contact you again in the future.

WE HIGHLY APPRECIATE YOUR TIME AND EFFORT TO HELP.

Part 1: Experiences

1. How often have you worked in international teamwork? And with Vietnamese/Finnish colleagues?

2. Did your organization have some preparation for you before working with Vietnamese/Finnish colleagues?

3. What is your most general opinion about cooperating between Vietnamese and Finnish teamwork?

Part2: Opinions

1. Do you feel that cultural differences had a strong effect on your interaction with Vietnamese/Finnish colleagues? Can you please provide some specific examples of cultural differences that you found challenging in your work with Finnish/ Vietnamese colleagues. What did you do in response to those challenges and how did your responses work?

2. What do you think about the behavior of your Finnish/Vietnamese colleagues in these issues?

3. Can you please explain your answer to the question in more detail, and use specific examples where appropriate

4. Distance between boss and employee (what are their behaviors with the boss, do they usually feel comfortable to discuss with boss?):

5. Enthusiasm to talk and speak out the ideas in the team to contribute:

6. Competence in the teamwork, do you feel Vietnamese/Finnish colleagues are more/less competitiveness?

7. What have they usually behavior and reaction when they get mistake? How do you think about it?

8. What advantages, if any, did you discover when working with Vietnamese/ Finnish colleagues?

9. What disadvantages, if any, did you experience when working with Vietnamese colleagues?

Part 3: Suggestions

1. Do you have any suggestion or plan to:

2. Deals with disadvantages related to culture that affect the work common performance?

3. Create more shared value in cooperation?

4. Please tell us what you feel that you learned from your experiences working with Vietnamese/ Finnish colleagues?

5. How do you see the future of cooperation between Vietnamese and Finnish?

Survey questions

As students at JAMK University of Applied Sciences, this questionnaire is a vital part of our thesis project. Our research focuses on teamwork and cooperation between Vietnamese and Finnish students.

Your participation in this research is anonymous. Only the researchers will have access to your answers, and your personal information will remain confidential. We will not use either your name or your company name for any purposes outside of our thesis project. We may wish to contact you again in the future, in the event that we need to follow up this survey, and so we request that you provide your email address. Although it is not mandatory to provide either your name or email address, we would be particularly grateful if we can contact you again in the future.

WE HIGHLY APPRECIATE YOUR TIME AND EFFORT TO HELP!

1. Nationality: Vietnamese/ Finnish

Name

Age

Sex (M/F)

School you attend

Email address

Degree program of study

2. How many times have you worked with Finnish/Vietnamese students?

- Once

- Twice

- Three times

- More than three times

3. Please tell us the number of Vietnamese students that you have worked with directly:

Males ____ Females _____

4. Do you feel that cultural differences had a strong effect on your interaction with Vietnamese students?

Not at all   very little   unsure   somewhat   very much so

Can you please provide some specific examples of cultural differences that you found challenging in your work with Finnish students. What did you do in response to those challenges and how did your responses work?

5. What advantages, if any, did you discover when working with Vietnamese students?

6. What disadvantages, if any, did you experience when working with Vietnamese students?

7. Please rate the behaviors of the Vietnamese students you have worked with at school. If you have specific examples you would like to share, please use the box below each question.

(1: not at all, 5: very strong)

•   Competitive at work (1,2,3,4,5)

•   Creative at work (1,2,3,4,5)

•   Independent at work (1,2,3,4,5)

•   Effectiveness in work (1,2,3,4,5)

•   Confidence in communicating ideas (1,2,3,4,5)

•   Punctual in time (1,2,3,4,5)

•   Willingness to share concerns and feelings (1,2,3,4,5)

8. In your opinion, how strongly did your own English language skills affect your interactions with Vietnamese students? (1: Not at all, 5: Very strong)

9. In your opinion, how strongly did the English language skills of the Vietnamese students affect your working relationship? (1: Not at all, 5: Very strong)

10. When reflecting on your experiences with Vietnamese students, how productive do you think that your Finnish-Vietnamese interactions were overall?

Not at all   very little   somewhat   very much so   extremely so

Can you please explain your answer to the above question in more detail, and use specific examples where appropriate.

11. Please tell us what you feel that you learned from your experiences working with Vietnamese students?

12. Can you offer any advice for your fellow Finn who may work with Vietnamese students in the future?

13. If given the chance, would you choose to work with Vietnamese students again?

Thank you for taking our survey! We may contact you again in the future if we have any additional questions. – The researchers