

Cross-national Research Collaboration in Human Resource Development

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HRD Research

Cross-national research collaboration has received increasing attention among researchers in organizational studies, including HRD, where external environments affect overall organizational and individual performance. In this paper, the nature of cross-national research collaboration, effectiveness of cross-national collaboration for knowledge advancement, and some emerging characteristics of cross-national research collaboration for HRD are discussed.

Key Words: International Human Resource Development, Collaboration/Teaming, & Researching HRD

Over the decades, research collaboration has been of great interest among scientific communities. Recent research collaboration has been heavily involved in information technology and scientific research, which has taken place across different industries as well as between industries and academia (Government-Universities Industrial Research Roundtable, 2000; Knoke, Yang, & Granadas, 2002). Such research activities have contributed to innovation and technological advancements (Carayannis & Laget, 2004; Katz & Martin, 1997). In addition, cross-national research collaboration has gained increasing attention from scholars in various disciplines, as global business activities have expanded (Nason & Pillutla, 1998; Stead & Harrington, 2000). Globalization is the inevitable trend in business and academies, particularly; researchers in organizational studies where external environments are critical variables in determining effectiveness and performance of organizations are interested in international issues (Cheng, 1984; Punnett & Shenkar, 1996). These opportunities have led human resource development (HRD) professionals to be involved in international activities through not only business organizations and institutions in home countries, but also with their foreign counterparts. In this regard, international HRD issues have become important to the HRD community.

Problem Statement

The field of HRD is multidimensional in nature. HRD has two distinctive fields; academy and practice. The academic side of HRD concentrates on increasing the body of knowledge, building an HRD theory, and bridging the theory to practices. HRD practices focus on performance improvement of organizations and individuals, and deal with performance at different levels in the organization.

Recent international activities among educational institutions have been accelerated and have become into global. Therefore, globalization relates to intellectual processes in knowledge production, which has an impact on both the academy and the practice fields of HRD. However, while HRD practices have been involved in international activities as business becomes global, the academic side of HRD is behind, in terms of knowledge production to apply in real world practices. Unlike other organizational studies, such as international business and management, not as much international and cross-national research collaboration has been done among the HRD community. For instance, many international issues appear in HRD journals and magazines; yet, the majority of authors are from the United States (U.S.) or foreign professionals working in the U.S., but little from foreign authors. Cross-national research studies, based on collaborative work, tend to appear less frequently than discussion papers. For instance, in the HRD International journal, many HRD issues deal with a single country and are written by home national authors. Other studies deal with a single country with international coauthors, and still other studies look at a single country or two countries, on the basis of comparative studies by a single author. Only a few studies have applied international (among countries) and cross-national (between two countries) research collaboration. In this regard, characteristics of international and cross-national HRD research are somewhat limited, in terms of the number of research studies done, countries involved, and authorships. These limitations result in limited findings and knowledge, which in turn limit the opportunity to create new knowledge in international HRD.

Research, defined as a systematic scientific inquiry, is an essential activity in any science. The aim of science is discovery and knowledge production, which are provided in general statements as theories to explain and predict phenomena (Cheng, 1994). It is true that research provides us opportunities to gain knowledge in subject areas of interest, accumulate a body of knowledge, create new knowledge, and acquire skills in research methodology. These

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aspects of research can be viewed as leading to knowledge production (Golden-Biddle, Reay, Petz, Witt, Casebeer, Pablo, & Hinings, 2003). Ettore (2000) states that social scientific research has become involved in globalization, which has led social scientists to be involved in a quest for knowledge to understand the world as a whole. At the same time, social science researchers are interested in generalization of their research findings, based on logical deductions. They try to develop theories that are not limited to certain conditions, such as nations and societal settings (Cheng, 1994). This type of research is very critical in organizational studies, including HRD, where environmental factors are directly related to the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization and to the performance of the organizational members. Therefore, not only an understanding of international issues, but also producing the body of HRD knowledge is very important for the HRD professionals.

Like any science, the goal of HRD is to develop a theory and accumulate the body of knowledge, relating to performance improvement for an organization and its members in various international organizational and social settings. However, the academic side of HRD, in terms of knowledge production in international areas has lagged behind while HRD practices have been involved in international activities. Responding to the needs for new knowledge from human resource research in the international area, cross-national research efforts have been gaining attention among scholars in organizational studies (Cheng, 1994; Punnett & Shenkar, 1996; Usunier, 1998). Cross-national research effort can be made in the form of research collaboration; that is, cross-national research collaboration. Cross-national research collaboration involves researchers from different countries who are knowledgeable about social issues in their countries and understand cultural differences between countries. This knowledge is integrated into research studies. Particularly, when data are analyzed, their knowledge provides in-depth interpretation of phenomena. Therefore, cross-national research collaboration is critical to increase knowledge. In addition, globalization of HRD is an on-going process and areas of HRD studies have been expanding.

If gaining and creating knowledge is critical to the HRD community, and if cross-national research collaboration provides us the opportunity for knowledge production, it is important to investigate characteristics of cross-national research collaboration that can be taken into consideration by the HRD community. The purpose of this paper is to enhance the understanding of cross-national research collaboration in relation to knowledge production and to provide some emerging characteristics of research collaboration. The following discussion questions are provided: #1. What is cross-national research collaboration?, #2. Is cross-national research collaboration effective, regarding knowledge production in HRD?, and #3. What are some emerging characteristics of cross-national research collaboration for HRD?

Discussions

To enhance understanding about cross-national research collaboration, the discussions are organized, based on the study questions. The first section focuses on discussions on what cross-national research collaboration is. The second section focuses on whether cross-national research collaboration can be effective in producing HRD knowledge and the third section describes emerging characteristics of cross-national research collaboration for the HRD community.

Study question 1. What is cross-national research collaboration?

A paper done by multiple authors is a practical example of collaborative work. However, several issues related to research collaboration should be taken into consideration to define the term, cross-national research collaboration.

Multiple authorships. The concept of research collaboration is based on the assumption of multiple authorship, where a study involves two or more individuals, groups, organizations and/or nations in the research (Smith, 2001). This definition is measured by the number of authors. However, research collaboration often depends on the nature of the collaboration, such as the motives for collaboration, who the collaborators are, and how a piece of work is shared among the researchers. Collaborative activities and forms of collaboration also vary from providing general advice, or taking a specific piece of the research study, to engaging in the entire research process (Daniel, Hemple, & Srinivasan, 2002; Katz & Martin, 1997; Knoke, Yang, & Gramados, 2002).

There has been discussion on whether multiple authors indicate a sign of research collaboration. There is the case where having multiple authors sometimes does not indicate research collaboration. For instance, even though some research studies listed multiple authors, they are listed for social reasons (Katz & Martin, 1997). Katz and Martin state that the precise description of collaboration, in terms of the nature and level of involvement, may not be sufficiently determined by multiple-authorships. They argue that intangible aspects of collaboration, such as sharing of ideas, knowledge, and creativity through interactions among researchers over the period of time could play a significant role in research collaboration and outcomes. Also, both the nature and level of collaboration is changeable over the course of a research project. In particular, cross-national research collaboration could involve intangible aspects in collaborative activities, due to language barriers. In this case, a lot of communications are

required. If this is the case, researchers may need to engage in casual conversations with other researchers and/or peers who have some knowledge about international issues, to ask them for some assistance or information. In this regard, use of multiple-authorships in creating the definition contains some limitations, relating to the level of individual involvement while also creating some partial collaborative research activities at least.

A research example can be seen between faculty and international graduate students, which often takes place while writing a dissertation. Throughout the dissertation research process, the faculty collaborates on the students' dissertations research and provides assistance necessary for students to complete their dissertations. As a result, often the faculty member's name appears on the papers, based on the dissertation. However, it may not be recognized as research collaboration in the scientific community. In addition, often international graduate assistants are assigned research projects for their language ability and knowledge of their countries. In this regard, cross-national research collaboration is formed; however, they often obtain acknowledgement, but not co-authorships. When all of these discussions are taken together, multiple authorship could limit defining cross-national research collaboration.

Other factors and issues. Issues in multiple authorships have been discussed. Apparently, multiple authorships are not sufficient to define research collaboration. There are other critical issues to be looked into in order to define it. One of these critical issues relates to factors leading to collaboration. Why are researchers interested in collaboration and what might be a difference between research collaboration and cross-national collaboration? There are several factors contributing to research collaborative activities. (Amabile, Patterson, Mueller, Wojcik, Odomirok, Marsh, Kramer, 2001; Link, Paton, & Siegel, 2002). One of the factors is cost and research funding because of the cost associated with research, particularly, basic science research and technology-related research, which requires a large facility and a lot of equipment. This type of research collaboration can be seen between academia and industries, as well as across sectors of different industries (Government-Universities Industrial Research Roundtable, 2000; Knoke, Yang, & Granados, 2002).

Another factor relates to the productivity and professional credibility of individual researchers (Katz & Martin, 1997). One role of research collaboration is production of new knowledge (Smith, 2001). Research involves a number of tasks requiring knowledge and skills to carry out the research. It also requires a lot of administrative work. Collaboration allows researchers to share responsibilities and tasks. Consequently, it reduces workload and stress, which in turn increases productivity, measured by the number of publications. As such, engaging in research collaboration can help the individual researchers gain knowledge and earn their reputations in their scientific and professional communities. Knowledge production has been commonly seen among the scientific communities. This type of research collaboration tends to form with colleagues in the workplace and/or the same department in the same country, even though a study deals with international issues. Consequently, new knowledge tends to be limited.

The third factor relating to cross-national research collaboration can be seen in those who are not only interested in increasing research productivity, but also who seek a different perspective and new knowledge. Cross-national research collaboration consists of researchers from different countries who bring different social and cultural perspectives to the research. Such different perspectives contribute to increasing the understanding of constructs in phenomena under the investigation. As such, the productivity of cross-national research collaboration tends to gain new knowledge (Luo, 2002). Recently, significant scientific advancement has been increasing, in areas such as nanotechnology and human genome mapping. Researchers and scholars are expected to have highly specialized knowledge to make significant advancements and create value (Oliveira, Souza, & Strauch, 2003). To meet such scientific demands, social interactions among researchers and scholars with various scientific backgrounds is very crucial (Kuhn, 1970). Research collaboration allows a group of scientists or researchers to share common interests. At the same time, there is the growing importance of multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research approaches, which involve collaboration across disciplinary boundaries to meet scientific demands.

An additional factor in research collaboration results from close social distance, such as among peers in the similar research domain and faculty in similar disciplines. This type of research collaboration is commonly used, due to its convenience and familiarity among collaborators, in terms of a level of knowledge and shared mutual knowledge (Cramton, 2001). Also, cross-national research collaboration is often seen when researchers look for different data from overseas. Particularly, the use of the internet makes it relatively easy to find what, who, and where research might be. Its use will become inevitable for all researchers to access the most recent research information.

The unit of collaboration is the critical factor. There are mainly four units of collaboration; ranging from the individual to the nation. The individual is a basic unit of collaboration, followed by (a) group/ department, (b) institution and industrial sectors, and (c) nation (Government-Universities Industrial Research Roundtable, 2000; Katz & Martin, 1997). The nation relates to cross-national research, applying one or more of the other three units. As such, the other three types of collaboration units can form three cross-national collaborations units. For instance,

a unit of collaboration can be researchers from different countries and another unit can be a group of researchers who engage with a research group in foreign countries, and so forth. Consequently, in terms of knowledge production, different levels of cross-national research collaboration units relate to different levels of knowledge production.

Definition. All discussions are taken into consideration in defining what cross-national research collaboration is about. The term, collaboration, suggests that individuals and/or organizations work together to attain a common research goal; that is, creating new scientific knowledge. An issue is how closely two or more researchers and/or units of collaborations work for the common goal. Close working relationships result in collaborative activities, such as providing and exchanging ideas, and assisting with some research tasks during ones' spare time. In other words, whoever provides some inputs can be thought of as collaborating in the research. However, what does research collaboration mean for researchers who wish to contribute to the body of knowledge in a certain discipline with international perspectives? The following issues are also taken into consideration in defining cross-national research collaboration: (a) being involved in the entire process, (b) taking responsibilities for the outcomes, (c) providing frequent inputs and contributions throughout the process, (d) names appearing on an original proposal and published papers, and (e) providing knowledge, skills, abilities, competencies, and experiences to carry out the research. In addition, cross-national research collaboration should include the following characteristics; (f) being willing to communicate with other people from other countries, (g) understanding cultural differences and similarities, yet, not overemphasizing cultural issues, (h) having knowledge in social systems of other countries, (i) having competencies in managing conflicts, and (j) being persistent, patient, focused, and flexible. Cross-national research collaboration can be defined as a research work form, involving two or more individuals and/or organizations from different countries who share their work and responsibilities in the research process, who provide critical inputs throughout the research, who share not only their cultural backgrounds, but also their knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences in their expertise, and who will work for each other's benefits for the purpose of creating new scientific knowledge.

Study question #2. Is cross-national research collaboration effective, regarding knowledge production in HRD?

Research collaboration has been recognized as a way to increase knowledge. Cross-national research in HRD broadens research perspectives by involving different countries, topics, researchers, and data. As such, research findings and information provide additional knowledge. The following section discusses about whether cross-national research collaboration contributes to HRD knowledge production.

HRD has been involved in international issues, as business firms and various other organizations (e.g., institutions and universities) are engaged in international activities (Baden-Fuller & Ang, 2001). Involvement in international activities requires the organizations to deal with various managerial issues, characterized by national and societal differences. In particular, business organizations have been challenged by those differences in optimizing management practices in overseas operations (Punnett & Shankar, 1996). Consequently, needs for HRD efforts have been highlighted and have become important. For instance, Petranek (2004) states that global HRD provides organizational members necessary skills to meet the challenges of job demands in both current and future multinational work environments. This notion relates to HRD practice, providing interventions for those who prepare for working in multinational work settings. However, HRD practices differ, depending on countries, regions, characteristics of society, and even the nationality of the company, whether they are indigenous or foreign companies in the country (Bartlett, Lawler, Bae, Chen, & Wan, 2002; Yadapadithaya & Stewart, 2003). In this regard, cross-national research collaboration provides knowledge in international HRD.

The nature of the HRD discipline should be taken into consideration. As stated previously, HRD contains two distinctive aspects: (a) academy and (b) practice. The academic side of internationalization of HRD is relatively new and is an on-going process. Consequently, accumulating the body of HRD knowledge is also an on-going process as well. The academic aspect concentrates on increasing and accumulating the body of knowledge and developing a theory in HRD for the purpose of new scientific knowledge creation. On the other hand, the practice aspect concentrates on applying and implementing HRD interventions for performance improvement. These two distinct aspects are important; HRD interventions to make sure performance improvement is occurring, are grounded by theoretical foundations. At the same time, HRD interventions bring about changes to performance improvement by examining the theoretical foundations. This mutual and synergistic interaction is extremely critical for an applied social science, like HRD, to increase the body of knowledge. However, internationalization in HRD knowledge is in the developmental process. More research needs to be done to provide the practitioners with "country specific" research findings to help the HRD professionals' practice. HRD cross-national research collaboration relates to the organizational studies (e.g., management, human resource development, and organizational behavior). In these studies, cross-national research has been imperative for increasing understanding of organizational phenomena (Punnett & Shankar, 1997). Scholars have emphasized the importance of external environments as critical variables,

determining organizational functioning and effectiveness within cross-national settings. According to Cheng (1984), cross-national research in organizational studies can be categorized into three types; (a) to identify and document differences among countries through systematic international comparison, (b) to identify and document similarity among countries through replication of studies in different societal settings, and (c) to identify some social regularities in social behaviors to create universal knowledge. The first approach focuses on descriptive comparisons and the second approach tends to be accumulating existing knowledge. The third approach creates new knowledge, which can be applicable to other nations. These three approaches can be applicable in the cross-national HRD research study frame, which in turn increases the body of knowledge.

The critical variables in cross-national research include the social and economic systems of a nation. In the social systems, one of the external variables is culture that affects various aspects of human minds and behaviors, which in turn become critical variables for individual and organizational performance improvement (Arvey, Bhagat, & Salas, 1991; Cheng, 1984). More importantly, cross-national variables, such as the social systems (e.g., politics and education) and culture (norms and values) have an impact on HRD practices. Because HRD is relatively [a] new to the scientific community, accumulating the body of HRD knowledge is an on-going process as well. In organizational studies with international settings, culture is often used as the explanatory variable in the phenomena investigated. However, culture does not sufficiently provide explanations of the phenomena, but provides one aspect of the phenomena. This is because there are other social systems interfering with the outcome of the study. In particular, the foundation of HRD is multidimensional in nature, including economics, psychology, education, sociology, and organizational behaviors. The cross-national variables in these disciplines are embodied in a country where researchers are doing their studies (Cheng, 1994). Therefore, investigating cross-national variables, relating to HRD issues in cross-national settings will provide a depth of knowledge, which contributes to knowledge production.

Internationalization of organizational studies has been imperative to test theories and concepts that have been developed in certain countries. For instance, there are many discussions on whether a theory developed in one country can apply to another country where social systems, including cultural values and management practices are different (Punnett & Shankar, 1996; Usumier, 1998). Cross-national research collaboration is one way to provide insights and information about this issue, through collaboration among researchers who are willing to share their cultural backgrounds and knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences in their area of expertise. Furthermore, cross-national collaboration allows researchers from different countries to bring national characteristics and cultural backgrounds into the research. Such rich context provides in-depth analyses and interpretations, which leads to new knowledge creation. Furthermore, such new knowledge can be used through application of HRD practices. Therefore, cross-national research collaboration also benefits in increasing the effectiveness of HRD practices by applying findings, information, and sharing cross-national collaborative experiences among the cross-national researchers. HRD practitioners working in international work environments can integrate these results into their practices (Frayne & Geringer, 1993; Jenkins, 1993).

The effectiveness of cross-national research collaboration results from changes in academic research. Recently, the demand for technological advancement requires researchers to have highly specialized knowledge and wide ranges of knowledge and skills in different disciplines. Meeting such expectations can be attained by interactions among researchers and scholars with various scientific backgrounds. This challenge has allowed research to be expanded from a single research discipline to multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research methodologies. These methodologies are used to describe the level of interactions among disciplines. The multidisciplinary approach allows inquiry into a single phenomenon from different angles, applying different disciplinary perspectives. Interdisciplinary is often used to describe cross-disciplinary research, which leads to theoretical, conceptual and methodological advancement as a result of integration and coherent results from different disciplines (Morillo, Bordons, Gomez, 2003). Crossing discipline boundaries contributes to increasing the understanding of phenomena through different perspectives. In particular, the theoretical foundation of HRD is derived from different disciplines, such as educational psychology, organizational behavior, economics, and industrial psychology. Multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research methods applied in HRD bring researchers from different disciplines, with their expertise, from other countries, into a single cross-national study, collaborating together for new knowledge through interactions. In this regard, cross-national research collaboration leads to HRD efforts in these disciplines with international perspectives. According to Morillo, et al. (2003), interdisciplinary research where interactions among disciplines are high, contributes to creation of new knowledge and development of theories. Based on this notion, international collaboration contributes to the advancement of HRD knowledge.

As this discussion on the effectiveness of cross-national research collaboration has shown, cross-national collaboration provides rich context in HRD research by integrating international perspectives into the HRD body of knowledge. Also cross-national HRD research collaboration is effective in the development and building of theories

in HRD by applying multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research methods that involve researchers from different backgrounds, including different nationalities. Such activities contribute to HRD knowledge advancement.

Study question #3. What are some emerging characteristics of cross-national research collaboration for HRD?

Various issues in cross-national research collaboration have been discussed, with regards to the nature of cross-national research collaboration. The discussion also included how cross-national research collaboration contributes to knowledge production in HRD. While globalization is imperative for HRD to stay at the cutting edge in the academic community, cross-national research collaboration is still in a developmental process. This section describes emerging characteristics of cross-national research collaboration forms that can be applied to the HRD community. There are three types of partnerships that can be formed in cross-national research collaboration. These include: (a) international graduate students and faculty, (b) principal researchers who initiate a research study and seek collaborators from among colleagues in the same disciplines or who share similar research interests in foreign countries, and (c) principal researchers and foreign counterparts who are interested in a topic and/or who are interested in the development of a theoretical frame. The following section is organized, based on these three collaborative forms, to discuss emerging characteristics of collaboration.

First, international graduate students and faculty, including their advisors, often form collaboration (Bryan, Negretti, Christensen, & Stokes, 2002). With this collaboration form, the faculty initiates the research when international graduate students work as research assistants; consequently, the power of authority is with the faculty. The research topic is often in the research areas of the faculty (Tom, 1997). However, international graduate students can take the initiative for their dissertation with faculty approval. At that time, graduate students are able to choose their research topic independently while others may choose a research topic in their faculty's research area. The level of involvement in collaboration varies. For instance, the faculty is asked to be involved with their advisees through feedback and research skills in the dissertation process. On the other hand, for international graduate students as research assistants for faculty, collaboration ranges from collecting data and getting information from the students' countries, translation and interpretation of results. Apparently, the focus of research with this collaboration is learning and training graduate students and transferring knowledge from faculty to graduate students, rather than knowledge production. Faculty and international graduate students are often in the same department, and a single discipline study is often applied, unless the faculty uses multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary methods in their research. With this type of cross-national research collaboration, both faculty and students gain knowledge as a result of collaboration as the faculty provides specialized knowledge in the subject matter areas while the students provide social and cultural perspectives (Brayan, et al, 2002). HRD is a relatively new discipline in the scientific community. Therefore, building the HRD community and producing new knowledge are very critical. To build the HRD community, faculty has been working with their students to provide scholarship and professional development by helping in preparing academic papers. As such, collaboration between international graduate students and faculty has been seen frequently in cross-national research in HRD. At the same time, international students often bring HRD issues from their countries into their dissertations. Such research interests are sometimes integrated into areas of the faculty's research interests. This type of research collaboration often deals with a single country and the interest is in transferability of a concept or an instrument that is developed in the faculty's county, mostly in the U.S. In this regard, cross-national collaboration contributes to increase the body of HRD knowledge.

The second cross-national research collaboration form is between a principal researcher and (a) foreign colleagues in the same or similar disciplines who are interested in similar topics and are in their countries or (b) foreign collaborators in the same or similar disciplines who are interested in the same topic. The principal researcher is the one who initiates the research and seeks other researchers to collaborate in the inquiry. Consequently, the principal researcher determines the research topic and has the power for decision-making in critical aspects of the research process (Miller, 1992). On the other hand, the roles of research collaborators are assisting in the research process and providing inputs for the research outcomes (Cheng, 1994). The primary foci include expanding research domains, getting publications, gaining knowledge, and networking. In this case, the level of involvement of the research collaborators is often data collection, providing country information, interpretation and translation. As a result, while the principal researcher is responsible for the entire research, cross-national collaborators have limited responsibilities. Because collaborators are from the same discipline or a [the] similar discipline, the research approach tends to be a single disciplinary or at most a multidisciplinary, with the similar disciplines, research approach. This type of research approach contributes to increasing the depth of knowledge by sharing expertise and knowledge of subjects in the foreign countries. It also contributes to professional development in their scientific communities (Cheng, 1984). However, there is relatively limited new knowledge creation.

The third cross-national research collaboration form is between the principal researcher and (a) foreign counterparts in the similar discipline who are interested in similar topics in foreign countries and/or (b) foreign counterparts in different disciplines who are interested in theory building or new knowledge creation. The

methodological approach tends to be interdisciplinary. This type of research requires collaborators to have highly specialized knowledge and skills in their disciplines, as well as in research (Cheng, 1994; Jeffrey, 2003). In this regard, there is a sense of mutuality between the groups, based on the assumption that the parties can form mutual partnerships and they can come to mutual agreement on the cross-national collaboration. Therefore, the authority and power to make decisions tends to be equally shared by the two groups. In this case, the principal researcher initiates the research by forming equal partnerships with research collaborators, and the research topic can be determined by mutual agreement. The emphasis of this research collaboration is more on knowledge acquisition from different disciplines, producing the body of knowledge and building a theory. The level of involvement throughout the research is quite high (Morillo, Bodons, & Gomez, 2003). Foreign researchers are involved in the entire research process from conceptual development, literature review, data collection and analyses, to interpretations of results (Cheng, 1984). As a result, the principal and foreign researchers share equal responsibilities in the process and outcomes of the research. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the inquiry, involving a high level of interactions among researchers, knowledge flows among them and in-depth learning occurs simultaneously at any phase of the research process. The theoretical foundation of HRD is multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary in nature because HRD applies to different disciplines. In this regard, this type of cross-national research collaboration form can best fit to HRD research to build HRD theory. For instance, a theoretical framework from adult education emphasizes learning and education. Learning and education varies, depending on the social systems in a certain country. In contrast, learning and educational issues in HRD, emphasizing performance improvement, are embodied into an organizational context where people work. Therefore, taking an interdisciplinary approach, including educational aspects and organizational behavior aspects within cross-national settings, contributes to increasing the body of HRD knowledge. However, more of this type of cross-national research collaboration is needed.

Contributions to HRD

The focus of the discussions has been on cross-national research collaboration and has explained how this research will help the body of HRD knowledge. Throughout the discussions, the following possible contributions emerged;

1. Introducing other research paths to the HRD community, which include research collaboration, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research.
2. Providing information about characteristics of cross-national research collaboration, which can be beneficial for the HRD community.
3. Describing research collaboration relative to the level of involvement in activities, which can benefit researchers in determining how deeply one can be involved with tasks and responsibilities in the research.

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