Exploring the Effects of Cultural Values and Beliefs on Cross-Cultural Training

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This article seeks to develop a framework for assessing the impacts of cultural values and beliefs on cross-cultural training (CCT). It argues that culture affects CCT processes including the use of training methods, trainers' selection, and trainees' learning style. The article also reasons that the congruence between parent and host cultures tends to have influences on trainees' attitudes and motivation regarding the training and host culture. Implications for CCT are discussed.

Keywords: Cross-Cultural Training, Culture, Learning Style

Cross-cultural training (CCT) has become an increasingly important human resource development activity due to the surge of globalization (DeSimone, Werner & Harris, 2002). The need for cross-cultural capabilities has become crucial to conduct international business. Organizations are challenged to compete in global market. Often, corporations have to provide appropriate cross-cultural training for expatriates and their families for foreign assignments. The concept of cross-cultural training has been evolved in several stages (Bhawuk & Brislin, 2000).

While the literature on cross-cultural training has been evolving steadily, the field tends to lack of sophisticated conceptual frameworks that can be used to adequately explain this unique training activity and guide the practice. Many scholars suggested that major empirical studies and field practices do not have a clear theoretical foundation (Adler, 1983; Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Brislin, 1981). In addition, most of the existing conceptual frameworks and models of cross-cultural training do not incorporate cultural factors. For example, Black and Mendenhall (1990) developed a model of CCT based on Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. However, no cultural factor has been considered in this model. Like many other models of cross-cultural training, this model treats individual performance and adjustment as dependent variables. The core of this model consists of a linear sequential learning process starting from cross-cultural training, to attention, retention, reproduction and skill development. Selmer, Torbiön and de Leon (1998) proposed a sequential cross-cultural training model, which suggests that trainees' applicability of new behavior in host culture gradually increases in relation to the clarity of operant frame of reference. CCT involves at least two different cultures, parent and host cultures, and the cultural differences surely will have impacts on the CCT process and outcomes. Despite their potential influences on CCT process and outcomes, culture and cultural difference have not been featured prominently in the literature.

In order to overcome the deficiency of sophisticated theories of cross-cultural training, this paper identifies major cultural factors that influence the CCT activities. The purpose of this paper is to develop a conceptual framework of cross-cultural training and to suggest several propositions for future research. The premise of this paper is established on a view that CCT is a learning process in which learners (or trainees) adapt to a new culture.

Theoretical Framework of Culture and Cross-Cultural Training

Because cross-cultural training involves at least two cultures (parent and host cultures), it is inevitable to define culture and examine its impact on cross-cultural training. We first define culture and identify its major dimensions in relation to individual learning across cultures. We then develop a conceptual framework of cross-cultural training including the effects of cultural factors.

Culture as Collectively Shared Social Knowledge

We view learning is not only an individual intellectual activity but also a social process. Most individual learning activities take place in certain social and cultural contexts. We follow the conventional view that regards culture with two layers—manifest and latent culture (Sathe, 1985). Manifest culture refers to all of those visible artifacts and behaviors identified from a group of people. Latent culture is the invisible cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, and meanings acquired by a group of people. In the field of management and organizational studies, it is more interesting to study latent culture and its impacts in individual

behavior. Therefore, culture is viewed as a system of knowledge shared by a relatively large group of people. We define *culture as collectively shared social knowledge and understanding that reflected in values, beliefs and habitual social norms within a group of individuals*. Here culture is regarded as a complex system with three interrelated sub-systems: values, beliefs and social norms.

The above view suggests that culture can be viewed as social knowledge shared by a group of people and manifested as a group or social level of learning. Cultural change involves learning of technical, social, and political dimensions of a group of individuals. Trainees' learning process in CCT is a special learning activity and it tends to be influenced by immediate cultural factors such as shared beliefs and assumptions, acquiescent social norms, and dominant values.

Dimensions of Cultural Values and Beliefs

Triandis (1995) suggested that there are potentially many definitions of culture and that each of which is valid in its own terms. One of the major contributions to cross-cultural study has been made by Hofstede (1980, 1991). We use the above mentioned definition and regard culture as collectively shared social knowledge and understanding that reflected in values, beliefs and habitual social norms within a group of individuals. Among three subsystems, values and beliefs (or assumptions) are the core elements of a culture. Hofstede's (1980) initial study identified four dimensions of cultural variation: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) developed a value orientation framework that was derived from logic. Different cultural groups have different preferences for dealing with similar sets of problems. In this paper we differentiate values and beliefs and combine the cultural dimensions suggested by Hofstede (1980, 1991) and Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961). Table 1 lists major cultural dimensions that may have effects on CCT process and outcomes.

Table 1. *Cultural Dimensions Influencing Cross-Cultural Training (CCT)*

Cultural Dimensions	Definition
Dominant Values	
Relation to Nature (Masculinity/Femininity)	How important are human beings in relation to the natural world? Is the desirable goal to achieve mastery over nature, live in harmony with it, or be subjugated to it? Does a culture value on achievement over nurturance?
Relation Among People (Individualism/Collectivism, Power Distance)	How important is individual versus group accomplishment? Is it desirable to be responsible for others or should one primarily look after oneself? How equally should power be distributed and how should decisions of the power holders be treated by subordinates?
Activity Orientation	Which of the basic mode of human activity contributes to accomplishment the most, thinking, feeling or doing? Is it desirable to have a doing as opposed to a being orientation?
Basis of Moral Standard	Where and how do human beings establish moral standard? Or should moral standard be based on reasoning or feeling?
Time Orientation (Long-Term Orientation)	What is most important for a culture in terms of time, past, present or future?
Risk Orientation (Uncertainty Avoidance)	What is the attitude toward risk and uncertainty? To what extent the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations?
Shared Assumptions	
Nature of Human Beings	How do human beings establish moral standard? Or should moral standard be based on human logic/reasoning or emotion/feeling?
Nature of Knowledge	What is the nature of knowledge in terms of epistemological belief, objective or subjective?
Nature of Change	What is the nature of change around human beings, linear or cycle?

Impacts of Cultural Factors on Cross-Cultural Training

In this section, we are going to analyze how cultural factors influence three major aspects of training: training contents and methods, selection of trainers/instructors, and trainees' learning styles. We choose to discuss these main domains in training because training motivation (i.e., affect status), training methods and contents have been regarded as the major predictors for training outcomes (Campbell, 1988; Kozma & McKeachie, 1986; Tannenbaum & Yukl, 1992). Although the literature on CCT has studied trainees' general cognitive ability as an important

predictor for the outcome (e.g., Ree & Earles, 1991), we are not going to discuss this because our focus is the impacts of cultural factors. Figure 1 present a model of impacts of cultural factors on CCT process. Utilizing system theory, we view CCT as a process that transforms trainees' previous knowledge, skill, and attitude before the training into a desirable state for the purpose of enhancing cross-cultural adjustment and work performance. It is posited that trainees' parent cultures have impacts on CCT process and trainees' exiting knowledge, skill, and attitude related to training contents. The congruence between parent and host cultures tends to have impacts on trainees' existing state, particularly their attitudes or motivational states toward the training program and host culture. The model further posits that training outcomes, indicated by cultural adjustment and work performance, is influenced by the knowledge, skill, and attitude acquired after the training. To be succinct, the rest of the paper will explore the influences of parent culture on CCT process and possible impacts of the relationship between parent and host culture on trainees' effect prior to the CCT process.
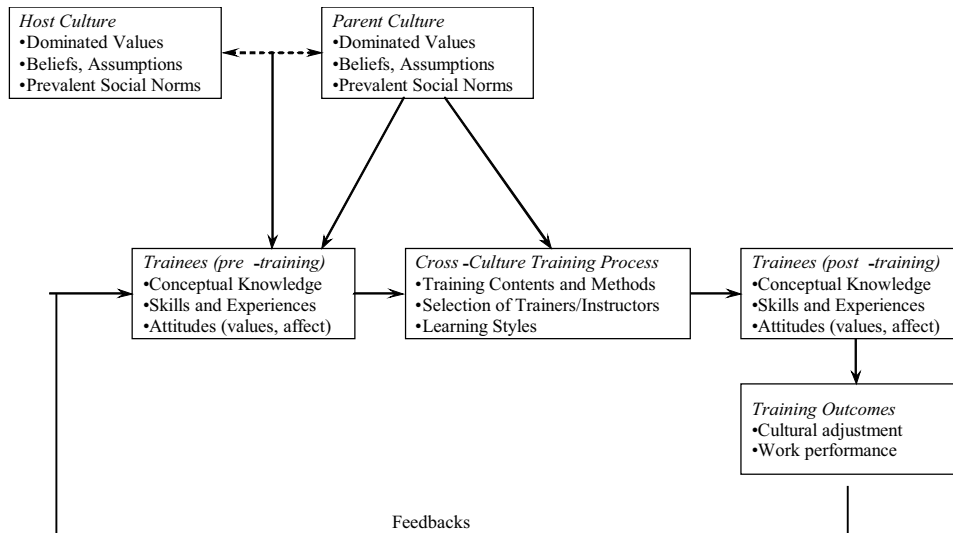
Figure 1. *A Model of Cross-Cultural Training*

Impacts of Parent Culture on CCT

    Training Methods. Social hierarchy is a powerful factor influencing how training method is adopted. In cultures with hierarchical characteristics, people are more likely to accept inequality as norms rather than exceptions. They show excessive respect and loyalty to people who are in higher positions. Additionally, they hesitate to express different opinions on training methods or do things without full approvals from people in higher positions. Hence, trainees are likely to follow the instructions and are constrained from expressing different opinions provided by trainers who are in higher positions. Therefore, top-down training method such as presentations and lectures will be more applicable and effective in such cultures. On the contrary, people in less hierarchical cultures tend to diminish the inequality of power distribution; egalitarianism is more valued by both supervisors and subordinates. In such cultures, decisions are more likely to be notified to and discussed with subordinates. Thus training methods that emphasize on participation will be more adopted in such cultures. Hence, the following proposition is raised.

    Proposition 1a. CCT in a culture with hierarchical characteristics such as high power distance and strong collectivism is more likely to use non-participatory training methods such as presentations and lectures. CCT in a culture with less hierarchical characteristics such as low power distance and strong individualism is more likely to use participatory instructional method such as group building.

    The basic mode (thinking, doing and feeling) that contributes to people's accomplishment the most is another powerful factor in determining training method as well. In thinking oriented culture, people's thinking contributes to accomplishment the most and they typically learn by thinking. They believe that one can only grasp knowledge, skills, and attitudes through thinking thoroughly and clearly. On the other hand, in doing oriented culture, people believe that only through practicing a person can grasp the things they want to learn. In feeling oriented culture, people tend to deem the feeling of wanting to learn is the most important factor in learning. Therefore, the method of which an atmosphere is created to make people want to learn, for example, group-building method, will be more effective in feeling-oriented culture. Hence, the following propositions are proposed.

Proposition 1b. CCT in a thinking-oriented culture is more likely to use presentation methods. CCT in a doing-oriented culture is more likely to use hands-on training methods. CCT in a feeling-oriented culture is more likely to use group-building methods.

Proposition 1c. CCT in a culture where knowledge is believed to be objective is more likely to use presentation methods. CCT in a culture where knowledge is believed to be subjective is more likely to use hands-on training and group-building methods.

Training Contents. Culture value of activity orientation tends to have impacts on training contents. In thinking-oriented culture, people tend to value cognitive training contents that require thinking thoroughly to accomplish the learning goal. In doing-oriented culture, people tend to focus on doing and practicing in order to accomplish learning, so skill-based contents that are more useful for practice are more appropriate. In feeling-oriented culture, people believe that the most important thing in learning is to have a proper attitude, therefore, affective contents are more likely to be used. Consequently, the following proposition is raised.

Proposition 2a. CCT in a thinking-oriented culture is more likely to focus on cognitive contents. CCT in a doing-oriented culture is more likely to focus on skill-based contents. CCT in a feeling-oriented culture is more likely to focus on affective contents.

The beliefs about the nature of knowledge may also be related to training contents. In a culture where knowledge is believed to be objective, people assume that they will be able to accomplish things as long as they can grasp the objective reasoning behind the phenomenon that is more cognitive. In a culture where knowledge is believed to be subjective, people believe knowledge should be accumulated through experience and attitude rather than through thinking and reasoning, as a result, they need skill-based content to facilitate their experience in order to accomplish learning. Hence, the following proposition is constructed.

Proposition 2b. CCT in a culture where knowledge is believed to be objective is more likely to focus on cognitive contents. CCT in a culture where knowledge is believed to be subjective is more likely to focus on skill-based and affective contents.

Selection of Trainers/Instructors. We argue that cultural factors influence the selection of CCT trainers and instructors. Hierarchical characteristics such as high power distance and strong collectivism have powerful influence on selections of trainers. Trainees in such cultures tend to show excessive respect to the trainers and training is used to reinforce the social order. In high power distance cultures, people accept inequality as norms rather than exceptions. They show excessive respect and loyalty to people who are in high power positions. In addition, they hesitate to express different opinions or do things without full approvals from people in higher positions; conversely, people in higher positions are normally unable to tolerate opposite views and unapproved behaviors from the subordinates. Centralized decision making rather than democratic decision making is viewed as common in these cultures. On the contrary, people in low power distance cultures tend to diminish the inequality of power distribution and both supervisors and subordinates normally put more value on egalitarianism. In these cultures, it is more expected that the decisions are to be notified to or discussed with the subordinates.

Proposition 3. CCT in a culture with hierarchical characteristics such as high power distance and strong collectivism is more likely to use experts as trainers/instructors.

Impacts on Trainees. We reason that cultural value of human relation is a powerful factor influencing trainees' learning motivation. We also assume that the culture value of hierarchical relation among people is largely reflected by power distance and individualism/collectivism. 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, 1994, p. 28). In high power distance cultures, people tend to be constrained by the explicit or implicit attitudes from the higher level. Without top level's approval and support, it is not likely for a training program to be successful. But if the top level expresses support strongly and widely for the training program, the employees will recognize much more valence. This is largely due to the trainees' prioritization of building up strong relationships with their bosses as the major intention to participate in training. Jones, Blunt and Sharma (1996) found that African managers who are in high power distance cultures were more focused on this intention rather than on striving to reach organizational effectiveness. Conversely, in low power distance cultures, egalitarianism can make people less constrained and require more decision making rights. In terms of learning motivation, they feel that training is more desirable when they can participate in the decision making process of the training. If training is implemented only by top-down approach, it can result in unsatisfactory consequences. Baldwin, Magjuka and Loher (1991) reported that trainees who had choices of training exhibited greater motivation to learn. Thus, the following propositions are proposed.

Proposition 4a: In high power distance cultures, trainees will show strong motivation to learning when training is implemented using a top-down approach.

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Proposition 4b: In low power distance cultures learning motivation will be enhanced by increased trainees' participation in the decision making process of training.

The above propositions can be further supported by comparing two interesting studies on training motivation: one was conducted in France which scores high on power distance dimension (60), and the other in the United States which scores relatively low (40) on power distance (Guerrero & Sire, 2001). It was found that only a minor part of the success in the training program in France can be explained by voluntary participation, which was demonstrated by participation in decision making or consideration of requests. An important result of Guerrero and Sire's investigation is that "voluntary action is important only if it allows selection of training that meets personal interests and compensates for professional insufficiency" (Guerrero & Sire, 2001). Since France values individualism, this is consistent with proposition stating that in individualistic cultures, valence can be enhanced when training is perceived to improve individuals' competencies.

Applying Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs to cultures, one can logically argue that human needs tend to have different priorities in different cultures (Shaw, 1998). Often, personal ambitions such as "develop my career" or "to help other people" are more of characteristics in individualistic cultures than in collective cultures. The satisfaction of affiliated needs such as "making a living" or "social recognition" takes precedence over satisfaction derived from job objectives (Mendonca and Kanungo, 1994). An empirical research in US supports these propositions as intrinsic incentives tend to have higher correlation with pre-training motivation (0.73) than extrinsic incentives (0.30) (Facteau et al., 1995). People in less economically secured environment, which is often associated with collectivism, may concern basic needs over the higher level needs. Thus, the following proposition is proposed.

Proposition 5a: Trainees in collective cultures tend to have more extrinsic motivations than intrinsic motivation in CCT.

Proposition 5b: Trainees in individualistic cultures tend to have more intrinsic motivations than extrinsic motivation in CCT .

In individualistic cultures, people value autonomy and self-achievement. They typically place individual benefits above the group benefits, whereas in collective cultures, people seek resources, status, and reward from their groups by seeking approval and maintaining their loyalty to the group where they belong. In individualistic cultures, people generally tend to emphasize their benefits over the group's collective goodness. Only when the trainees have the perception that the training program will enhance their own competency that such perception can influence the training valence and hence improve the training motivation. For example, research found that compliance, which means the extent to which trainees attended training for organizational requirements, is significantly negatively related to pre-training motivation (Facteau et al., 1995). In collective cultures, however, stressing training program is of the interest of the trainees' group or company may improve the trainees' motivation. Conversely, in collective cultures, seeking training to just improve one's self-competency may be discouraged by the supervisors and the co-workers, even if the person's contribution to the organization is the same before or after receiving training, because people may perceive this behavior as not putting the group's goal ahead of individual's benefits. Thus, the following propositions are proposed.

Proposition 6a: In individualistic cultures, trainees' valence and learning motivation will be increased when training is perceived to enhance the competencies of individuals.

Proposition 6b: In collectivist cultures, trainees' valence and learning motivation will be increased when training is perceived to benefit the group and organizations.

We also reason that the cultural value of risk orientation or uncertainty avoidance tends to have some impacts on CCT. Hofstede (1991) defines uncertainty avoidance as "the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations" (p. 113). People in cultures that are high in uncertainty avoidance tend to be uncomfortable and hesitant when facing ambiguity. Clear rules, structures and standard operation procedures are more preferred by people in order to avoid uncertainty. On the other hand, people in cultures that are low in uncertainty avoidance are more willing to accept novel things and support changes. In these cultures, people are more tolerant and more at ease with each other in undefined situations that are not familiar to them. In the meantime, perception of ambiguity and uncertainty will arise if the situation is novel. In high uncertainty avoidance culture, when novel training program is introduced, trainees tend to have doubt about the training program's effectiveness and their capacity to do well in the new program. Additionally, if any new challenges are involved in training, the trainees typically deem it's too risky to take chances so that they will be reluctant to take the tasks. For example, Bruton, Ahlstrom and Chan (2000) describe that workers tend to be risk averse in China and they are unaccustomed to doing things other than what is on the exact job description. Two ways can probably adjust the trainees' valence toward training when it is newly introduced. One is to show the training can benefit employees in terms of what they should improve or how to prevent mistakes from occurring; and the other is to update the job

descriptions regularly and include as much of training requirement as possible. Moreover, it should be emphasized that the training design is well established and proved to be useful to improve trainees' valence.

> *Proposition 7a: In high uncertainty avoidance cultures, trainees will be more reluctant to participate in high challenging training tasks.*

> *Proposition 7b: In high uncertainty avoidance cultures, training tactics that show established and proven training effectiveness will be associated with higher level of valence.*

We think that cultural value of time orientation influences trainees' characteristics in CCT. In long-term oriented cultures, perseverance is valued and sacrifices of the short-term benefits are typically justified by the long term rewards. As for change, people in long-term-oriented cultures are more conservative and embracive to values and practices of the past and are not as responsive to changes. Cultures maintaining short-term orientation, on the other hand, tend to value immediate benefits, and to be more adaptive to changes that have been proved to be useful in the past. Long-term versus short-term orientation dimension can have important influence on valence. In long-term oriented cultures, future needs will be more emphasized while in short-term oriented cultures, more immediate work benefit will be concentrated.

> *Proposition 8a: In short-term oriented cultures, perceived relationships between the CCT training program and immediate benefit will be associated with increased levels of valence.*

> *Proposition 8b: In long-term oriented cultures, perceived relationships between the CCT training program and future work needs will be associated with higher levels of valence.*

Culture and Learning Styles. We argue that trainees' learning styles are associated with their parent cultures. Specifically, cultural values and beliefs influence the development of individual learning preferences. Oxford and Anderson (1995) reviewed a number of major cross-cultural studies of learning styles and identified six interrelated aspects. In terms of preferred patterns of mental functioning, they concluded that the Chinese learners are more of the field-dependent learners who prefer classrooms where rules are emphasized and learning is inductive. In contrast, field-independent learners enjoy greater personal autonomy and deductive learning, and are not readily accept other people's views before making a judgment. Based on Kolb's theory of learning style, Barmeyer (2004) conducted a study investigating the cultural differences of learning styles in the aspects of feeling, thinking, doing, and watching. The study revealed that French and Quebecois students scored higher on concrete experience (feeling) than German learners. Nevertheless, The German students scored higher than the French and the Quebecois on abstract conceptualization (thinking) and active experimentation (doing).

> *Proposition 9a. Trainees from a feeling-oriented culture are more likely to use a receptive, experience-based approach to learning. Trainees from a thinking-oriented culture are more likely to use an analytical and conceptual approach to learning. Trainees from a doing-oriented culture are more likely to use an active and experiential approach to learning.*

We also reason that collective culture is associated with field dependent learning while individualistic culture is associated with field independent learning. Research has shown that Chinese learners seldom work in small groups in class but co-operate readily in groups outside the classroom (Su, 1995). This may be explained that learners tend to check with each other in order to comply with some social norms. In a culture with individualistic and less hierarchical characteristics, learners enjoy greater personal autonomy and can engage in deductive learning where they do not have to accept other people's views before making a judgment (Kennedy, 2002).

> *Proposition 9b. Trainees from a hierarchical culture are more likely to adopt a concrete, intuitive, and inductive learning style. Trainees from a less hierarchical culture are more likely to adopt an abstract, thinking, and deductive learning style.*

We also argue that cultural attitude towards knowledge acquisition or trainees' epistemological beliefs influence the way in which they are taught in a culture. Epistemological beliefs are fundamental assumptions about the nature of knowledge and learning. These beliefs reflect learners' thinking about the source, certainty, and organization of knowledge as well as control and speed of learning (Schommer, 1994). In a study of Hong Kong students' epistemological beliefs, Chan and Elliott (2002) identified different dimensions concerning authority/expert knowledge that have been confirmed in the North American context. The difference was explained by value differences between Western and Eastern (Hong Kong Chinese) cultures.

> *Proposition 9c. Trainees from a hierarchical culture are more likely to hold a view that knowledge comes from authority is certain and can be obtained by mastering subject contents. Trainers from a less hierarchical culture are more likely to hold a view that knowledge is uncertain, constructed in a social process, and can be best acquired by personal reflection.*

Impacts of Cultural Congruence on CCT

We reason that both parent and host cultures influence trainees' acquisition of new knowledge during cross-cultural training. When the host culture is similar to the parent culture, trainees are likely to have less anxiety and

have greater confidence to learn. In exploring the impacts of cultural values on employee resistance to learning, Kirkman and Shapiro (1997) hypothesize that the less congruence of perceived change between their own and the change agent's values, the more they will resist the change agent's communication. They also emphasize that the importance of the congruence of cultural values in building global self-managing work team. Naumann (1992) suggests that the cultural and environmental similarities of parent and host countries have a positive influence on expatriate satisfaction, commitment, and involvement. Several CCT conceptual frameworks have included cultural difference between parent and host cultures as a determinant for the success of CCT programs and oversea assignments (Ghagat & Prien, 1992; Zakaria, 2000). Based on the previously mentioned holistic theory, we define cultural congruence as the extent to which two cultures hold similar values and visions, beliefs and assumptions, and social norms.

> *Proposition 10a. When the host culture is similar to the parent culture, trainees tend to show positive attitude toward new cultural elements, higher self-efficacy, and less anxiety and resistance; trainees will be more likely to accept factual information and knowledge about new culture; and it will be easier for them to acquire surviving skills such as language and other communication skill in new culture.*

We also reason that both parent and host cultures influence the CCT outcomes. Trainees will achieve high performance when the training contents are highly relevant to their prior knowledge and skills. Studies have shown that previous cross-culture experiences and language proficiency in the host country impact expatriates' adjustment and learning (Shaffer, Harrison & Gilley, 1999; Shim & Paprock, 2002). Consequently, we propose the following propositions:

> *Proposition 10b. The effectiveness of CCT (as indicated by trainees' acquired new knowledge and skills, cultural adjustment, and work performance) is positively associated with the relevance of training contents to both parent and host cultures.*

The theory of transformative learning has stimulated much discussion and application in adult education and HRD since it was proposed by Mezirow (1978). He defines transformational learning as "the social process of construing and appropriating a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience as a guide to action" (Mezirow, 1994, p. 222-3). Studies have also found the relationship between intercultural competency and perspective transformation (Taylor, 1994). Shim and Paprock (2002) found that American expatriates learned the host culture through reflective learning where they examined their own behaviors and assumptions that gained from the parent culture or own experiences. We reason that transformational learning is associated with reflective learning such as questioning of one's own cultural values and beliefs when trainees face cultural disequilibrium (e.g., culture shock).

> *Proposition 10c. When the host culture is significantly different from the parent culture, trainees are likely to alter the framework of reference (basic values, beliefs, and habitual behaviors) and will likely to experience transformational learning as the result of CCT and subsequently field experiences.*

Contributions to HRD Research and Practice

This paper proposed a conceptual framework of CCT and several propositions for further study. The paper contributes to the HRD research and practice in several ways. We have pointed out the lack of theoretically grounded work examining the cultural effects on CCT. Attempted to fill the void, we have proposed a framework of CCT that takes account of the impacts of both parent and host cultures. Further, we have suggested several propositions for future research. Consequently, the above work lays out a foundation for rigorous empirical studies. More importantly, the proposed model offers a comprehensive view of CCT and opens up new lines of investigation.

The conceptual framework proposed in this paper can also provide HRD practitioners a guide to development effective CCT programs. Firstly, human resource managers should be fully aware of the cultural differences between parent and host cultures in selecting candidates for international assignments. They can select those individuals whose framework of references (values, beliefs, and habits) show a close fit with the host culture. They can also select those employees with great openness to different cultures. Secondly, trainers not only should be aware of the cultural differences between parent and host cultures, but also explain such differences in a meaningful way that the trainees can effectively acquire and accept the training content. Filipczak (1997) points out that training design should take cultural dimensions into account. In order to enhance the acceptance of new culture by trainees, training content should be linked to the cultural frameworks of both parent and host cultures. Thirdly, the proposed conceptual model implies that an effective CCT depends on a match between instructional method and training content. It can be postulated that technical knowledge (i.e., factual information and knowledge about each culture) may be effectively delivered through those instructional methods that require more cognitive activities such as lectures, briefings, factual booklets. Meanwhile, practical knowledge such as skills of language, communication,

stress management, and adjustment may be more effectively delivered via experiential and interactive instructional methods. Such instructional methods include analytical case studies, interactive language training, simulations, field trips, role plays, behavioral modification training, cultural assimilator training, and multimedia materials such as CDs and videos. By the same token, those experiential and interactive instructional methods may be effective in cross-cultural training used to improve trainees' critical knowledge such as cultural awareness, attitudes to different culture, self-efficacy and confidence.

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