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Abstract

The intention of this research was to investigate the factors attributed to successful joint ventures, paying particular attention to cultural variances, in the Irish infrastructure operation and maintenance sector. Culture is an important aspect of international business partnerships; culture and communication are inseparably linked, so much so that most communicative behaviour is governed by the person's culture. With the growth of international joint ventures in the recent years there are more foreign partnerships forming and this in turn demands that different cultures must work together to make the venture successful.

The aim of this research was to explore the experiences and perceptions of seven senior managers, comprising Irish and foreign managers, who had experience employed in or managing joint venture organisations. Semi structured interviews were used to gather the data from the participating managers. The data was then analysed to identify key themes in relation to what effects joint venture success and how culture plays a role in its business cycle. The research has highlighted the importance of being culturally aware, how differences can present themselves and if not understood or managed appropriately how they can manifest as negative influences on the venture.

By means of a qualitative research approach, the researcher has documented the experiences and perceptions of the senior managers and used the data uncovered to develop some findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research on attributing factors to create a successful joint venture and how different cultures act on its success.

Declaration

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

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Chapter I

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to investigate and identify the mechanisms required to develop successful joint venture alliances in the Irish/European infrastructure sector, with particular attention on the impact of different cultures brought by the parents of joint ventures. There have been many case studies on successful international joint ventures (Severn Trent Services, 2014; Seeds, 2012; O'Reilly, 1998; Fey, 1996; Chan, 1996; Lawerence & Vlachoutsicos, 1993; Weiss, 1987) among larger corporations, typically between US and European/Asian/Russian joint ventures. However, in contrast, there have also been a high number of joint venture failures (Damanpour, et al., 2012), often because one of the parents takes a dominant role in the venture (Gomes, et al., 2011). The majority of the peer reviewed articles are based on joint venture studies of the 80's, 90's and 00's with less recent research in this field. There are existing articles available and several on the cultural element of the ventures. However, this research attempts to establish the success factors for Irish joint ventures with a foreign parent/s and how the opposing cultures can integrate to make the venture successful or unsuccessful, as the case may be. The research investigates the cultural differences among Irish firms partnering with European associates – predominantly British and French – and seeks to discover the cultural differences experienced by the partners through a series of qualitative interviews and subsequent analysis.

This area was worthy of research; for understanding the unique beliefs and perspectives of each parent is an essential component of the ideal operation and longevity of the joint venture. This research has identified some of the key areas, including identification of the cultural differences that potential joint venture partners should consider prior to forming a strategic alliance. It finally proposes a framework of vital topics that ought to be considered by organisations when entering an alliance. To date, research (Severn Trent Services, 2014; Seeds, 2012; O'Reilly, 1998; Fey, 1996; Chan, 1996; Lawerence & Vlachoutsicos, 1993; Weiss, 1987) has been focused on strategic alliances of large corporations. There is a gap in the literature and current research when examining Irish - European partnerships, and how the different cultures have to be managed and understood. The author wanted to examine specifically how Irish organisations interact with foreign partners and how differing cultures add to the complexity of the joint venture and through the study it ultimately seeks to address this gap.

For the purpose of this study, managers were interviewed in order to capture their experiences of working in joint ventures of different parent nationalities. The data was gathered and analysed. It was then organised using a thematic based approach in order to examine the interactions between multiple views and opinions. While the author is employed by a French company and working with many different foreign managers, he took the opportunity to reflect on the numerous challenges and disparities faced by cultural differences in joint ventures. None of his personal experiences were captured in this study.

A large amount of joint venture success and indeed its sustainability depends on key fundamental reasons for the joint venture formation and the basis on which they are formed – strategic fit, reliability of partners, political environment and management authority and responsibility (Valentine, et al., 1990). According to a report by KPMG in 2009, describing joint ventures as a tool for economic growth during a downturn, they cited the main reasons for forming a joint venture were:

- Gaining access to markets in the same industry;
- Reducing costs; and
- Gaining access to new markets in foreign countries.

Another important reason cited was reducing risk; joint ventures can share or spread risk between parents better than alternative forms of corporate strategies (KPMG International, 2009). In addition, economies of scale can be utilised, new products developed faster or with fewer defects than organisations could accomplish alone, and new skills and technologies learned (Beamish & Lupton, 2009). In addition to reducing risk and leveraging off economies of scale, one of the fundamental requirements of any organisation is to sustain the business to yield adequate returns for the shareholders.

Motivation for forming a joint venture

Due to the aforementioned reasons, joint ventures are becoming more common, particularly in the recent economic downturn, although according to Farrell et al. (2008) they have, however, failure rates of approximately thirty percent. This topic is worthy of research, in particular the cultural implications on the success of the joint venture. In addition, over the previous ten years in Ireland during the governmental capital infrastructure projects, there have been many joint ventures formed between infrastructure companies – M50 Concessions, M6 Concession, M3 & M4 Eurolink, the Motorway Maintenance and Renewal Contracts (Egis Lagan Services; Colas Roadbridge Joint Venture and Globalvia Sacyr Jons) - this demonstrates the increase in joint venture formation in this industry sector. It makes sense therefore, according to a Business Week article (2000) that in the modern economy, people will become one of the key assets a business can develop. In the 21st century, corporations understand that creativity is the sole source of growth and wealth and by combining successful partnerships together to create sustainability can only provide stability and longevity (Business Week, 2000).

Joint venture activity over the past years has increased and shows signs of continuous increased activity (KPMG International, 2009; Beamish & Lupton, 2009). The driving factors of the downturn and lack of credit is a primary driver for increased joint venture activity. Access to specific capabilities and intellectual property, getting closer to the customer and winning contracts in new markets are other key drivers. In addition, in the modern global business environment many organisations are pursuing a strategy of cooperation and alliance in the belief that survival and sustainability can be enhanced through collaborative alliances, mergers and joint ventures (Bailey & Shenkar, 2003). With the increasing cost of developing new technologies and the downturn in the world economy many organisations have realised that alliances of some description are essential vehicles to enter new markets. All suggest an enhanced role for joint ventures and other types of strategic alliances (Deans & Kane, 1992).

According to Peter Drucker (2001) joint ventures are likely to increase in importance over the coming century:

> "Multinationals now tend to be organised globally along product or service lines. But like the multinationals of 1913, they are held together and controlled by ownership. By contrast, the multinationals of 2025 are likely to be held together and controlled by strategy. There will still be ownership, of course, but alliances, joint ventures, minority stakes, know-how agreements and contracts will increasingly be the building blocks of a confederation" (Drucker, 2001, p. 1).

Context & background

Joint venture alliances originated as maritime enterprises used as trading vehicles by merchants of ancient Egypt, Babylon and Syria. In the United States, joint ventures date back to the late nineteenth century when railroad companies used them for large scale projects where the risk or capital investment could not be borne by one company alone. In the early twentieth century joint ventures were increasingly used to decrease the risk - financial or otherwise - involved in large projects primarily in the shipping and gold exploration sectors. More recently joint ventures have become increasingly common as a result of technological and economic changes from deregulation, globalisation and technology innovations (Beauchamp & Kleiner, 1995).

In essence and in the simplest of terms a joint venture is the formation of a cooperative business agreement between two or more firms that want to achieve similar objectives. This agreement usually involves the creation of a new corporate entity to satisfy the mutual needs of the entities involved and the avenue to progress the business objectives (Schillaci, 1987). This high level definition is further developed on a cultural basis by Schuler et al. (2004), where they claim that it provides firms with a quick and efficient vehicle for managers to acquire the managerial skills necessary to manage joint ventures; these skills cannot be bought in the marketplace. They conclude that foreign and local companies can benefit from complementary managerial expertise they absorb through the venture but ultimate success is based on the 'organisational culture' of the venture. According to Gomes et al. (2011) in essence, all businesses are made up of people, processes and systems. These combine to create an organisational culture or the 'way we work'. Businesses operating in identical markets will have different cultures – people are different and the businesses will run different processes and systems. It is then inevitable that the organisational cultures and the national culture of the two different parents will play a key role in the success of the integration of the joint venture (Gomes, et al., 2011).

Justification for this research

This area of research was undertaken by the researcher as he has a particular interest in the joint venture and strategic alliance area. He is employed by an organisation that primarily enters new markets and countries by selecting a suitable local partner and then forming a joint venture alliance. The researcher has worked in a joint venture between Irish and a foreign parent, therefore has first-hand experience in managing the success of the alliance while also managing the cultural differences of the parent.

In addition to the researcher's own personal experience in the field of joint ventures, further research into the perception of satisfaction with the relationships created between partners was recommended in an article by Carmen Saorin-Iborra. In particular, she suggested focusing on the organisational culture of the venture as key determinants of the perception of satisfaction with the relationship from the parent organisations (Saorin-Iborra, 2006).

Chapter II

Literature Review

Designing successful joint ventures

Strategic alliances are a growing trend both in Ireland and worldwide (KPMG International, 2009; Gomes, et al., 2011). As suggested by Schillaci (1987) the properly designed joint venture can be a source of growth in economic downturns and uncertainty.

When the parents form a joint venture and they then transfer their resources, such as, knowledge, personnel and assets into the new venture it is considered that the new partnership will be more competitive than if the parties had worked independent of each other (National Development Plan, 2004). In return for transferring resources into the joint venture these parties get a shareholding in the new company and ultimately a share of the joint venture's profits. The National Development Plan (2004) further defines the joint venture company as "an entity in which the reporting entity holds an interest on a long term basis and is jointly controlled by the reporting entity and one or more other ventures under a contractual arrangement" (National Development Plan, 2004).

In the forties and fifties companies tended to grow internally, in the sixties, seventies and eighties companies grew externally through mergers and acquisitions. More recently however the growth of joint ventures has become more popular, due to lack of credit and risk adverse business practices, but in addition, operating in offshore markets in order to remain competitive has become a necessity for survival (Farrell, et al., 2008). This reason is further developed by Yeniyurt et al. (2005) for the expansion of joint ventures when they claim that having a global orientation is no longer a luxury, but has become a necessity for economic survival in a large number of industries due to globalisation and fierce competition for existing and new business (Yeniyurt, et al., 2005). According to Schillaci (1987) the growth of strategic alliances has particularly increased in the computer industries (for example AT&T/Olivetti, Google and Nokia), the telecommunications industry (for example LM Erickson/Honeywell), the pharmaceuticals industry (for example Abbot/Takeda), the automobile industry (for example GM/Toyota) and the infrastructure industry (for example John Sisk & Son/Dragados, Global Via Infrastructures/DIF and Irish firm PJ Hegarty & Sons). In Ireland, according to Technical Note 4 published by the National Development Plan (2004), joint ventures are usually formed because the parties have complementary objectives. By joining their strengths in a joint venture there is a greater chance of success than if the parties worked independently.

In general, Schillaci (1987) contends that joint ventures can be considered less rigid than an acquisition or merger and can be simplified to make the operation more manageable by the parents. The venture can be specifically targeted to achieve the strategic business outcome desired by the parents and they are ultimately a less costly option than the merger or acquisition route (Schillaci, 1987). However, Lorange and Probst (1987) argue that joint ventures become too complex at the inception and that complexity - multiple unclear strategies, many previous autonomous cultures are put together and how they must interact – is a force of the business that must be managed and paid respect too. Consequently, ‘respect’ for, and sensitivity to, complexity is critical.

Cultural fluency, as defined by Scott (1999), encourages the development of joint ventures that infiltrate new markets through working relationships with parents from multiple cultures. The joint venture’s strategies have to be designed to cope with this complex environment. To build sufficient flexibility into the venture is crucial so that the organisation can execute its strategy and cope with its environment. The conclusion recommended by Lorange and Probst (1987) is to make the joint venture complex enough to deliver on the strategy and the business environment but simple enough to be managed effectively on the day to day operations.

Selecting a partner

The overall success of the venture relies heavily on the partner selection, and the strategic and cultural fit of the partners (Beauchamp & Kleiner, 1995). They further develop this point by posing three questions that should be satisfied prior to moving forward:

1. Does the organisation possess the correct resources and cultural characteristics?
2. Is the potential partners business compatible with their own business or targets?
3. Do the potential partners have adequate motivation and commitment to making the venture successful?

The schematic below highlights the five C's of partner selection (Schuler, et al., 2004, p. 41).

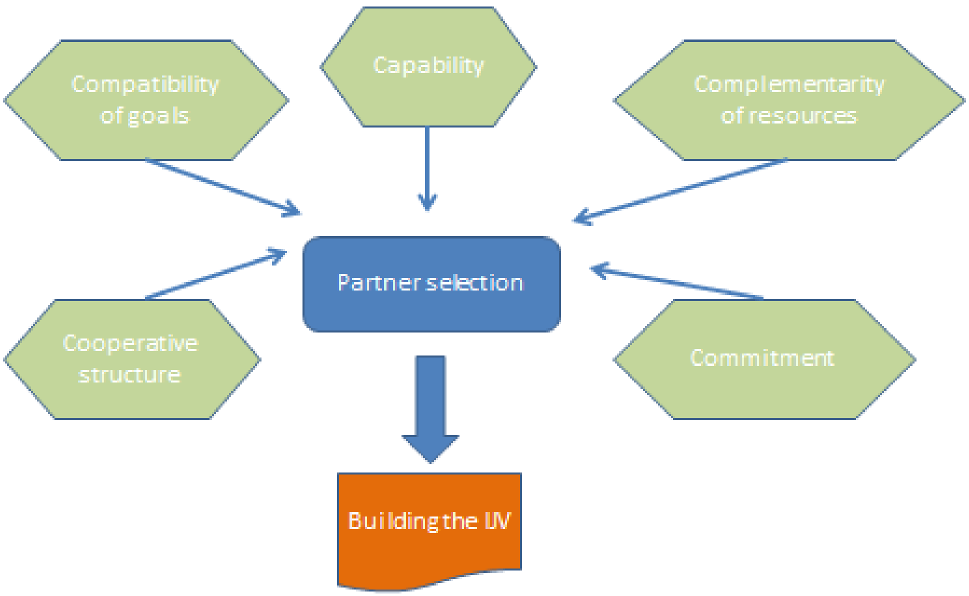

Figure 1

Valentine et al. (1990) state that once a partner has been selected and the decision has been made to form a joint venture the next step is to design the agreement between the partners, such as a legal form of agreement (limited liability partnership, limited partnership, standard partnership or cooperation agreement), equity division (symmetric or asymmetric) and management division (dominant or shared).

Despite due diligence in selecting the best fit joint venture partner, the venture may still fail. Two, or more, organisations with differing strategies can lead to antitrust problems, sovereignty conflicts, loss of autonomy and control and strategic inflexibility. For example, Beauchamp and Kleiner (1995) provide the example of the General Motors (GM) joint venture with Daewoo to manufacture cars in South Korea. GM had disputes with the Daewoo South Korean government. In this case GM were supposed to implement modern technologies and superior plants as their contribution to the venture but instead used 'mediocre' equipment and GM was subsequently accused of exploiting their cheap labour force - the venture was ultimately abandoned (Beauchamp & Kleiner, 1995).

In contrast to the GM example of a failed joint venture, for seemingly obvious strategic differences, Drozdow and Schleif (2009) propose through the example of Day & Zimmermann – a 107 year old firm that provides engineering and construction management services with over $2 billion of annual revenues and 24,000 employees - that with the right conditions joint ventures will yield significant stability and long term growth. They contend that the joint venture has to have clear-cut governance guidelines and power structures, all the way down to manpower. Questions will arise such as: will the parent companies lend personnel, who will be the CEO and what financial commitments will be provided. They further elaborate, touching on the importance of the relationships between the partners; complementary cultures and values being of the utmost importance. Although the partners fit may make sense on paper or on a balance sheet, the culture should be an additional filter, one that warrants a high degree of due diligence (Drozdow & Schleif, 2009).

Drozdow and Schleif (2009) conclude by suggesting that the longevity of the venture is reinforced through the cultural fit of the parents; the partners get the chance to see how they work together and potentially set the stage for future ventures. This long-term rationale can generate long term value, as joint ventures can produce benefits beyond the lifetime of the initial venture (Drozdow & Schleif, 2009).

Among the need for increased focus on communication, strategic fit of the partners, complementary goals and commitment as defined by Schuler (2004), trust is a critical element of the initial joint venture formation and the ongoing success (Currall & Inkpen, 2002). The research over the past decades on joint ventures and alliances (Buckley & Casson, 1998; Yan & Gray, 1994; Inkpen & Beamish, 1997; Vaidya, 2012) have argued that trust is one of the most important variables that affect alliance success. The trust has to be realised at the initial stages of the joint venture and this can lead to effective social relationships between the partners leading to a far more profitable organisation than one without (Vaidya, 2012). In the absence of trust, Currall and Inkpen (2002) conclude that the stability of the joint venture is impacted. They also contend that trust operates over many levels of the venture, and lack of trust in one managerial level may spread to the other managerial or staffing levels. Trust at one level may not imply that trust exists at another level. As the joint venture evolves, personal-level trust may lead to trust at the managers levels and higher up the venture, eventually reaching the top management levels, or vice versa.

Currall and Inkpen (2002) suggest that from the individuals to groups of managers, the more staff that engage in trusting actions increases the pervasive trust at multiple levels of the venture. They conclude that in relation to international joint ventures, research to date has not dealt empirically with the cross cultural differences and measurement issues surrounding trust.

Joint venture cultures

Culture is considered as a powerful, enduring and persuasive influence on human behaviour. Through the socialisation process, employees in an organisation learn the norms and expectation of membership of that organisation, the right and wrong ways of doing things, acceptable and unacceptable ways of behaviour. It is through culture, society, and indeed businesses, maintain regularity and order (Cartwright & Cooper, 1992). National cultures are shaped by traditions, and reflect economic and social histories as well as the climate and other demographic conditions. For example, in the US it is common at introductory meetings for the members to be on first name terms, whereas in Japan they are invariably formal. In the US, it is common to ask a colleague about a family member whereas in Japan mixing business and personal lives are kept separate and asking such a question is considered taboo (Cartwright & Cooper, 1992).

Cartwright and Cooper (1992) further suggest that in organisations, culture is not merely a set of shared values but an ethos in the 'way we do things around here'. This is reflected not only in the structure and managerial style but also in the way in which the organisation conducts its business in the wider sense. They conclude (and supported up by Gomes et al., 2011) that each organisation, although operating in similar industries and demographics, can have different cultures. This difference is an important factor in joint organisation ventures; the managerial challenge is for the parents to integrate the culture to enable the child to operate efficiently (Cartwright & Cooper, 1992).

Hennart and Zeng (2002) cited cross cultural differences as reasons – from previous studies cited in Hennart & Zang; Coopers and Lybrand (1986), Koguy's (1989) sample, Harrigan (1998) and Millington and Bayliss (1997) – why joint ventures had such high dissolution rates. They suggest that while there is much anecdotal support for this claim statistical evidence is limited and often contradictory. They conclude that the cultural differences of the partners can have a negative impact on the longevity of the venture. This finding is further supported by Damanpour et al.

(2012) who claim that the inherent cultural differences increase the cooperative arrangements necessary to sustain the joint venture success.

Hennart & Zang (2002) put forward the case study of Japanese- Japanese joint ventures in contrast to US - Japanese joint ventures. The US - Japanese ventures have the added difficulty of coping with the two very different cultures; these variances are also enforced by Cartwright and Cooper (1992). In addition to the business cultures that exist – first name basis, mixing general conversations of family with business, Japanese cultures place importance on unwritten or implicit contracts (‘annoku no ryokai’) whereas US and Western cultures place importance on legal documents and the formal written approach. Hennart and Zeng (2002) further suggest that differing cultural organisations forming joint ventures should experience shorter live spans.

In addition to observing the cultural differences Scott (1999) contents that businesses also need to be aware of the concept of ‘cultural fluency’. He defines this as the ability to identify, understand and apply cultural variables that influence the communication behaviors of the partners so that the ‘receivers’ and ‘senders’ understand the messages being communicated. Businesses that understand the cultural differences employ special strategies to allow the employees to effectively promote culture specific knowledges, skills and attitudes. Scott concludes that international partnerships need to develop this cultural fluency as a goal to enable successful partnerships within different national joint ventures (Scott, 1999).

For a joint venture to survive the parents need to find a way to work together, to agree on the goals, policies, governance and strategy. There are many reasons to believe this will be harder if the parents are from opposing and different cultures (Doz, 1996). Hofstede (1997) has shown that people living in the same country share similar cultural values, and they transfer these values into the organisational culture they are employed in. Hence a firm’s organisational culture is largely a reflection of the national culture, and joint venture parents based in different countries will tend to have different values.

Hofstede (1997) furthermore suggests that these different values will in turn create problems that arise and be harder to overcome if the parents have similar cultures where they would have shared some commonality. In addition Hennart and Zeng (2002), and Hofstead (1997) believe that if two parents have different mother tongues it is expected that this will create a communication barrier. For example in Japan, there are many words used to say "no" without saying so. In the West communication is more vocal; the nonverbal clues of Asian cultures can sometimes be ignored by Western parents. These are all idiosyncrasies that need to be discovered and understood at the inception or early stages of the joint venture formation (Hennart & Zeng, 2002). Scott (1999) postulated in his article surrounding cultural fluency that communication factors had to be considered when dealing with different cultures. Email, for example, would not be an appropriate medium to convey information about a complex problem to a foreign manager. A rich communication channel such as face to face meetings would be a more appropriate channel that could address the complex problem, but also, cultural differences may be exaggerated if face to face meetings were not scheduled.

In conclusion, Hennart and Zeng (2002) claim that ventures are potentially more challenging to manage than that of wholly owned entities and because parents must agree on common goals, they must learn to work with each other, albeit they may have different strategies and cultures. If the parents are from different cultural backgrounds then it stands to reason that the management will potentially be even more difficult as their styles are influenced by their home countries. As a result parents from different countries should have greater experience of conflicts and therefore have shorter life spans. This finding is further supported in a case study by Mead (1994).

In contrast to Hennart and Zeng (2002), Hofstede (1997) and Mead (1994), Zhang et al. (2008) argue that cultural differences have been used to explain the success rate of joint ventures, particularly in the Chinese-foreign ventures. They explain this success as both parents are especially keen for the venture to work – their long term strategic goals are intertwined.

The Chinese parents want to earn foreign exchange through new distribution channels, learn advance management and technologies and obtain independent manufacturing ability without import, as quickly as possible. The foreign parents what to access the China market and increase market share (Zhang, et al., 2008). They propose that 'cultural distance' is the key determinant of the venture's success – the distance is not limited to cultural differences but also encompasses background of individuals in the joint venture management group. In conclusion they present the findings that, in a Chinese joint venture study, if there is a higher proportion of the venture owned by the Chinese parent the venture will lean towards an export strategy. The more the venture is controlled by a monopoly based ownership, the better its general success will be. Zhang et al. (2008) conclude in their study that since cultural heterogeneity is good for decision quality the greater the cultural distance, the better the business success of a Chinese-foreign joint venture.

Damanpour et al. (2012) claim that partners with dissimilar cultures differ in communication methods and power structures, and this, therefore, lends itself to different types of job roles and expectations. The self-categorisation theory suggests that people arrange themselves into psychological groups and communicate differently with members of other groups than members of their own group. These differences are exacerbated, according to Damanpour et al. (2012) in international joint ventures where the communication channels become strained leading to differing parental expectations causing a mismatch of the internal process that are vital for the venture's success. Scott (1999) similarly contends and supports this increased communication commitment where cultural fluency needs to be understood to reduce the misunderstandings that can occur.

Damanpour et al. conclude that joint venture parents with a similar culture have a higher probability of success because an organisational culture difference makes the management more complicated. Cultural differences increase the potential for conflict, and the cost of managing the conflict, at a level where the joint venture functions according to the strategy. Cultural similarities facilitate communication and reduce conflict and cooperation costs. Increased parent interaction can alleviate the effects of cultural differences on venture performance, and these differences can be mitigated by effective communication, cooperation and conflict resolution (Damanpour, et al., 2012).

Gomes et al. (2011) have categorised the difference of cultural beliefs and assumptions into seven categories. These categories, they suggest, define the basis on which the joint venture cultures can differ. By defining and the identification of these categories by the parents will provide a valuable evaluation tool in assessing the fundamental fit of the parents and they have empirically demonstrated that these assumptions have the power to predict the success or failure of a joint venture. The Gomes evaluation tool for categorising the cultural beliefs and assumptions will be used as a foundation to measure this construct among the participants interviewed in this current thesis.

The seven areas that constitute the dimensions of the management culture:

- Approach to innovation and activity

  Rapid response to changes in competition to exploit opportunities versus stability and intensive planning, they do not want to grasp every opportunity due to the risk potential of the unknown.

- Approach to risk

  Is the main factors that differentiates organisations; they can be risk adverse due to their cultural perspective or risk tolerant due to their capitalistic nature.

- Horizontal relationship

  Different approaches to the internal cooperation and its importance; or internal cooperation versus the encouragement of competition, to increase competition and effort.

- Vertical hierarchical contact

  Management beliefs to subordinates – support, understanding and encouragement. These beliefs concern human nature in organisations using the X and Y theories. It assumes that people become lazy and avoid responsibility as in theory X whereas in theory Y people have the opposite manner. This leads management to hold different beliefs depending on its leaning towards either theory and treat people differently.

- Autonomy and decision making

  Beliefs on the level of autonomy granted to people to make decisions. This ultimately leads to the form of the organisation structure.

- Approach to performance

  The need to achieve constant improvements and to achieve targets, or other beliefs, to address the importance of the requirement that managers share the responsibility for performance of staff.

- Approach to reward

  Management culture is expressed in the manner of reward. Reward fairly and competitively in relation to other organisations in the industry.

In summary it is evident from the literature that there are keys to the success of a joint venture - strategic fit of the parents, aligned goals and if the parents poses a good understanding of the different organisational cultures. By identifying and understanding the differences, this can lead to smoother joint venture operation, or at least conflicts that arise can be managed more effectively and controlled without jeopardising the joint venture.

Culture plays an important, if sometimes overlooked, aspect to the success of the joint venture. If the parent organisations have differing cultures but the strategies are aligned, then the overall success of the venture is more often positive. When conflicts arise between the parents, the difference in cultures can make the resolution more difficult and time consuming. Managers have to be aware of the cultural differences and access to, or knowledge of, the tools required to overcome the conflict is essential for the joint venture success and longevity.

Chapter IV

Methodology

Overall Research Question

What are the experiences of the managers' perspectives on the success factors and how cultural differences, if any, have been anticipated, understood and managed to ease the operation of the joint venture and parental collaboration in the Irish Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance sector?

Introduction and Research Design

This chapter describes the methodology and strategy employed to undertake this research work. A qualitative approach was used to explore the perceptions of several managers working in Irish joint venture organisations, where multi-cultural partnerships are common, and thus the study intends to show how the differing cultures affected the operation of the joint venture and the perceived satisfaction. The chapter further justifies the research design methodology selected; to include the sample group, the research instrument, the analysis of the sample groups' responses and key findings and the ethical considerations relevant to this research design.

The qualitative process employed will predominantly follow a discovery oriented approach. This research will follow previous research in this area, such as (Chan, 1996; Sovannara, et al., 2012; Lawerence & Vlachoutsicos, 1993; Weiss, 1987) who also utilised the qualitative process. The qualitative process via the interview technique is the best fit for this type of research as it will provide unambiguous access to the managers involved in the joint ventures who have insight and operational knowledge of managing joint ventures. The methodology throughout the literature articles reviewed has been based on a combination of both surveys and interviews; however, the interview methodology seems to be more commonplace as the format can lead to an open dialogue and areas can be developed as the interview progresses. Please see Appendix C for a sample summary of previous literature and the methodologies utilised. This will provide greater opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of the relationship between success and the cultural difference that are experienced by the managers, and how they overcome or manage this difference.

According to QRAC (Qualitative Research Consultants Association, 2014) the process of qualitative research is by definition exploratory, and can be utilised when the answers are not exactly known. An interview process in this research provides the best avenue of identifying and defining a problem. In addition, it can be used to investigate particular areas of interest to the researcher as the data collection occurs, and allows some semi-structured freedom to change direction over the course of an interview; to ask further questions that would not normally be possible through a survey, for example. Denzin and Linoll (2000) further suggest that qualitative research can be thought of as an umbrella approach of methodologies, the object of which is to understand how particular events and experiences interface with the subjects and the meaning they attach to these experiences.

Essentially, the objective of using qualitative research is to provide a 'methodology for understanding the complex worlds of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it' (Schwandt, 1994). By using qualitative research, with a defined list of question and themes (see Appendix A), it enabled the researcher to ask the questions important to the discovery of the research and also prompt questions in other interesting areas as they present themselves. Through the interview process it provided the researcher with a valuable understanding of the experience of the managers and hence enables a detailed analysis and discussion of the research topic.

Interviews will be used to gain an understanding of the managers' perspectives on the success factors and how the cultural differences, if any, have been anticipated and understood to simplify the operation of the joint venture and the joint venture parent involvement. Examining this subject is a complex task involving people's perspectives and experiences. This complexity within the individual organisational partnerships lends itself more easily to narrative - qualitative - rather than statistical – quantitative research and analysis.

The interviews will follow a semi-structured format as different interviews may tend in different directions, and this format may add new interesting perceptions by allowing the researcher to discuss topics not originally considered by them; as this often proves effective in gaining additional knowledge and evidence (Johnson, et al., 2002). As suggested by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2003) when conducting semi-structured interviews the researcher may have themes and topic areas to be captured but these may vary from interview to interview. In addition, the "insider's" perspective, as suggested by Deshpande (1983) will provide perspectives of the managers who work in the joint venture on a daily basis, and provide their "real life" experiences of the cultural differences encountered.

It was believed that by using the semi-structured interview approach as opposed to other methodologies, such as questionnaires or surveys, the researcher could explore in-depth, the opinions and experiences of the participants, without having any influence over data that may have been collected in tandem or to supplement the interviews (Cohen, et al., 2007).

Research Sample

The target population for this research was senior managers with experience working in joint ventures, either past or present. The managers comprised both Irish and foreign nationalities. From the target population, the sample population - through convenience non-probability sampling - was derived. The approach utilised was to identify seven managers from the target population involved in joint venture organisations; either employed directly by the joint venture or seconded from a parent organisation into the joint venture. Table 1 below establishes the criteria required for participant selection - the aim of the research was to gain managers experiences of successful joint venture operation and cultural differences, therefore one of the key requirements of the participants was to have experience in joint ventures, and experience of different cultures in these ventures. Particular focus was placed in sourcing managers from Irish-foreign joint ventures.

Access to the managers came from contacts the researcher had within the Irish infrastructure operation and maintenance sector. The managers were requested to participate initially either face to face or through phone conversations, and then the researcher followed up the conversations with an email to confirm the time, date, and venue and outline questions for discussion. The preference was to hold face to face interviews where the researcher could gain the non-verbal communication which would add to the richness of the interviews that may be lost in conference calls. However, due to the geographical spread in Ireland and internationally, namely France, the second option was to hold the interview via a conference call. The conference calls worked well; as the researcher was familiar with the participants, therefore**,** there was an element of comfort on both sides prior to the conference call taking place.

One disadvantage with the conference call was that if a word or phrase was not understood, and not clarified at the time of the interview then the point could be lost

- during audio playback if the word or phrase could not be verified this was lost; this occurred on one occasion when interviewing a French participant.

Appendix A, details the preliminary questions that the researcher sent to the participants. The aim of this was to allow the participants' time to read and consider their responses to enable them to draw on their own experiences and provide examples of how they could support their answers. Providing advance questions or themes yielded several advantages to the interview:

- allowed the researcher to ensure that the participants were prepared and not surprised by a question;

- speed up the interview process as answers could have been semi prepared/considered prior to the interview, and

- allowed the participants feel more relaxed as they had foresight of the general questions to be asked, this had a double benefit – a relaxed participant which led to a more open interview.

Criteria	Measure
Management experience	To have held a management position, ideally senior management experience, where interaction with other organisations' senior managers.
Culture experience	To have worked with colleagues or employees in other organisations from outside Ireland.
Joint venture experience	To have worked in, at minimum, one joint venture for longer than five years.

Table 1

Sample Characteristics

A detailed profile of the managers interviewed is provided below; the managers selected met the interview criteria of Table 1.

Interview A

Manager A, is a British national with over thirty years' experience in tolling and road infrastructure operations. He is currently Chief Executive Officer of a French company that has the responsibility of maintaining one of Ireland's largest infrastructure projects. He has worked in the United Kingdom, France and Ireland with many nationalities in several joint venture and consortium organisations. He is also fluent in French having worked in France, predominantly with French people for fifteen years.

The interview with Manager A took place on the 18th July 2014 at his company premises in Dublin.

Interview B

Manager B, is an Irish national with over forty years' experience in the supply and installation of electro-mechanical equipment. Manager B is the Managing Director and owner of his company employing over two hundred staff. They have offices in Dublin, Lisburn, Britain and Germany. He has worked predominantly in Ireland and has partnerships with several foreign organisations, including French, Swiss, Chinese, Japanese, Germans and Italians.

The interview with Manager B took place on the 21st July 2014 at his company premises in Dublin.

Interview C

Manager C, is an Irish national with twenty years' experience in tolling and road infrastructure operations. Manager C is the Chief Operating Officer of a French company responsible for operating Public/Private Partnership road schemes in Ireland. Manager C has worked in multinational companies operating in the UK, France, Belgium and Germany.

The interview with Manager C took place on the 23rd July 2014 at his company premises in Dublin.

Interview D

Manager D, is an Irish national with five years' experience in speed enforcement operations. Prior to this**,** Manager D worked for large multinationals in the information technology sector in the UK, France and Spain. Manager D is the Operations Director of an Irish joint venture contracted to operate a network of mobile safety cameras. The joint venture is made up of Irish, French and Australian parents.

The interview with Manager D took place on the 24th July 2014 through a conference call.

Interview E

Manager E, is a British national with ten years' experience in tolling and road infrastructure operations. Prior to this Manager E worked in airport operations for over twenty years in various UK and Irish airports. Manager E is the Managing Director of a French company responsible for operating tolling infrastructure projects, Public/Private Partnership road schemes in Ireland and the UK.

The interview with Manager E took place on the 11th August 2014 at his company premises in Dublin.

Interview F

Manager F, is a French national with fifteen years' experience in tolling and road infrastructure operations. Prior to this Manager F worked in the French engineering sector. Manager F is the General Manager of a road project in central France. He spent six years working in Ireland on road infrastructure projects before moving back to France to take up his current role.

The interview with Manager E took place on the 1st August 2014 through a conference call.

Interview G

Manager G, is a French national with eight years' experience in tolling and road infrastructure bid management, and mobilising projects with extensive experience in joint venture projects especially with partners in the local countries. Prior to this, Manager G worked in the French engineering sector. Manager G is currently the Project Director who heads up the international bid and tender team. She is a board member of several Irish operations; wholly owned and joint ventures.

The interview with Manager G took place on the 14th August 2014 through a conference call.

Data collection and analysis

Data Collection

The interviews were conducted in private, in the respective manager's office with the exception of Manager D, F and G, who due to their location outside of Dublin were interviewed via a conference call facility. One drawback of the conference call interview method was the loss of face to face, non-verbal communication; this was understood and accepted by the researcher. The duration of the interviews was between thirty and forty five minutes each and this was notified to the participants in advance of the interview via the Informed Consent Form for Individual Interviews (Appendix D). Semi- structured open ended questions were used (Appendix A) during the interview process.

The interview consisted of two sections: the first section was a question to gain an understanding of the participant's background and their experience in the industry and experience with other nationalities. The second section consisted of thirteen questions - these interview questions were derived from the literature. The opening questions, in the second section of the interview, were aimed at identifying the participant's high level perception of what is involved to develop a successful joint venture and how/why joint ventures can become overly complex. The interview then progressed to specific questions, again derived from the literature, surrounding how culture impacts the joint venture – different languages and different understanding or perception of meanings and cultural differences.

The main body of questions is derived from Gomes, et al (2011), who proposed a seven point framework for identifying where a partner sits in terms of identifying partner suitability. The final section probes to identify if the participants realise that cultural differences impact the joint venture operation, do they employ or recognise any special strategies to overcome the cultural differences, and if the time taken to manage the cultural differences is measured. The final question was suggested by

Saorin-Iborra (2006) as a recommendation for further research into the perception of satisfaction with the relationships created between partners. In particular, she suggested focusing on the organisational culture of the venture as key determinants of the perception of satisfaction with the relationship from the parent organisations.

The open ended style interview allows the participants to answer on their own terms rather than using a standardised structured plan (May, 2001). During the interviews a further prompt question was used if the answer was unclear or if the researcher wanted the participant to repeat and answer or elaborate further. This method of prompt questioning worked well and by using this method the researcher was able to keep to the itinerary of prepared questions while also making the interview less formal.

Although the semi-structured interview method was used for this research one noted disadvantage of this method of data collection is that, according to Robson (2002), areas outside the question range may not be forthcoming. Hence the researcher prompted the participants to elaborate, expand or be more specific on key areas.

Data gathering was completed by use of an audio recorder; this was highlighted to the participants at the invitation stage and through the Informed Consent Form for Individual Interview (Appendix D). It was understood by the researcher that recording the interviews could lead the participants to hold back on answers or inhibit a full or honest answer. To counteract this, the researcher provided the participants with the questions in advance of the interview so they were familiar with the subject material. This also allowed the participants the opportunity to consider their answers and not to be caught ‘off guard’ with surprise or difficult questions. The intention for this was to reduce interview anxiety. In addition, the researcher purposely began the interview with general conversation to put the participants at ease before the interview began. This strategy was utilised to make the participants feel more comfortable at the interview with the use of the audio recorder.

It was also acknowledged by the researcher that the target sample was from senior managers who would be accustomed to public speaking and fielding spontaneous questions, therefore, the researcher considered that interviewing and the use of audio devices would be more normal to this sample group.

In advance of the interviews, the researcher notified the participants of the intention to use an audio recorder; if they were not comfortable with this option the researcher would not record the interview and observational notes would be taken as an alternative. All participants agreed to the use of an audio recorder. The interviews were not transcribed directly, summary notes were written up following each interview (see Appendix B for a sample of the summary notes) and supplemented by listening to the audio recording repeatedly to derive the key themes from the interviews. In addition, by complementing the written summary notes with the audio recordings this provided additional value as the researcher could pick up on nuances and tones used by the participants that would not be available if transcription alone was used. Short notes of the interviews with the full audio recordings were securely saved for analysis. Data security and the protection of the managers' identities is developed further in the Ethics section below.

Data analysis

Cohen (2007) suggests that data analysis by use of the qualitative methods is interpretive by its nature, due to the fact that written or audio data has to be analysed and specific answers are not always available. Hence the researcher has to make some decisions on the data collected and to link interesting areas together.

There are two main forms of qualitative data analysis – content analysis and grounded theory. Content analysis is the summary and review of the collected data with the aim to reduce the data in such a way that the essential contents are preserved and a manageable shortened text is produced. Whereas grounded theory tends to focus on theory developing from the data gathered that was not present before. The concept of data analysis involves sorting and arranging information into manageable sections, with the researcher concentrating on commonality of emerging themes and ideas (Berg, 2004). For this research the concept of analysing the data and building themes from the interviews was utilised, relating the themes to the literature was made easier due to the interview questions being derived from the literature review in the first instance.

Figure 2 shows the flow of procedures for qualitative content analysis with the example of inductive category formation, taken from (Flick, et al., 2004, p. 266).

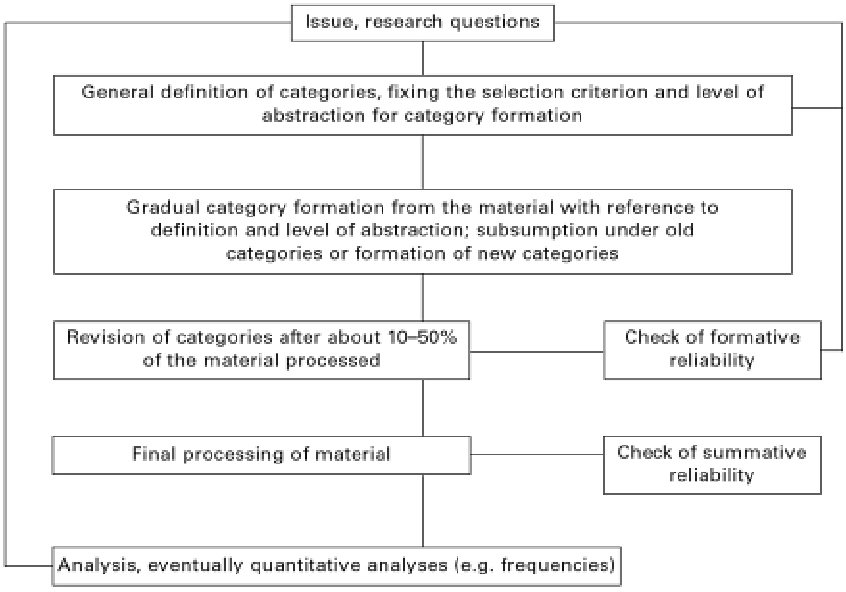

Figure 2

Following the interviews the data gathered was collated and documented into summarised categories where several participants discussed similar themes or have similar or otherwise, views on a particular theme. Each interview was initially examined in order to extract closely matching phrases or ideas which conveyed one particular theme. Themes not relevant to the data collection were excluded from the analysis. Once the crucial information was identified it was then compiled into themes associated with the relevant questions from the interview; thematic headings. From these thematic heading the cultural differences were contrasted and examined to identify the cultural differences observed and the cultural perception of how a joint venture may be successful.

Ethics

It was not considered that there were any major ethical considerations, but nevertheless, the researcher provided in advance of the interviews, an explanation to the purpose of the research and the expected interview duration. The researcher clarified to the participants in advance of the interviews that confidentiality would be maintained at all times and the data collected was for research purposes only. The candidates were free to stop the interview, at any stage, and were given the right to opt not to provide an answer to any question. In addition, all necessary ethical administration from the National Colleague of Ireland was completed, including each participant completing an 'Informed Consent Form For Individual Interview' (Appendix D) which the researcher provided to explain the reason for the interview and assure the participants of data security protection measures that would be applied. The researcher asked the participants to read and sign the form to acknowledge that they agreed to the terms of the research study.

For discretion the participants' names were not revealed or identified within the study. To aid this, participants were referred to as 'Manager A, Manager B' et cetera. The audio recordings of the interviews were stored under lock and key in the office of the researcher until completion of the interview analysis.

Upon completion of the dissertation the audio recordings would be destroyed. It is possible that specific comments will be reported if they illuminate a particular theme. Real names will not be tied to these comments. If, at any point, the manager was concerned about a comment that he or she made the researcher provided their contact details so the area of concern could be addressed. Finally the researcher confirmed that there were no foreseeable risks to participation in the interviews.

Discussion

It was considered that sufficient data was collected to analyse the cultural differences that exist between Irish and French/United Kingdom joint ventures in this sample. It was also considered that the sample of participants provided a valuable insight into the important aspects of a joint venture that contribute to its initial start-up success and its general longevity through their vast business experience. Had the researcher additional time supplementary interviews could have been conducted, possibly follow up interviews as suggested by Colaizzi (1978), and possibly a survey completed to complement the qualitative data gathered during the interview process. Should further studies be conducted in this area it is recommended that both qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys are completed.

Limitations of the research methodology was that the researcher knew the participants. By knowing the participants eased access to the managers, who were senior managers in their organisations but it should be recognised that the researcher was biases, to some extent:

- Two companies analysed, i.e. participants were employed through two companies
- The sample size was relatively small
- The researcher is employed by one of the participating companies
- The researcher interviewed two of their superiors; this could have led to the participants not providing full or honest answers due to the inherent power imbalance or autonomy from the participation – researcher relationship
- It was recognised by the researcher that the conference call interview method could reduce the non-verbal communication medium.

Chapter V

'While Western managers would define culture as beliefs, values, and a way of thinking, most Asians would first mention history and tradition, to which Arabs would add religion.'

(Bailey & Shenkar, 2003)

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the data collected by way of interviewing seven senior managers in the Irish infrastructure operations sector. The pre-requisite for participation was to meet the requirements of Table 1. A total of seven interviews occurred – four face to face interviews and three through a conference call facility. The conference call facility was used due to the location of the participants being outside of Dublin. Each interview lasted between thirty and forty five minutes, were recorded on an audio recording device for which permission was granted in advance by each participant. The interviews consisted of individual semi structured interviews with questions provided in advance of the interview.

Emerging themes were identified from the interviews. The main themes identified were: culture does play a role in the success and longevity of the joint venture, complementary partnerships, strategic fit along with trust, transparency and honesty. The participants gave their individual responses on the questions asked. This revealed their opinion on the important aspect from forming the joint venture, to its implementation and the on-going daily operation, including, the differences that can be experienced by having different nationalities as the parents. Through the emerging themes common elements were identified; common elements to a certain culture were identified from the interviews, however, in addition the interviews also revealed some unexpected comments that led the researcher to gain a deeper understand of the managers' thought process. The themes of the interviews were taken from Table 2, summarising the interviews. The questions and literature references were identified and then the themes were extracted from the interviews and grouped into the main codes or categories as outlined in the Analysis and Findings section of this chapter.

Question	Emerging themes	Literature reference	Manager A (MgrA)	Manager B (MgrB)	Manager C (MgrC)	Manager D (MgrD)	Manager E (MgrE)	Manager F (MgrF)	Manager G (MgrG)
Background: years in the industry - nationality - other nationalities worked with	**n/a**	**n/a2**	**30 yrs. + - British - worked with French, Australian, British, Irish, Italian**	**40 yrs. - Irish - worked with Asian, Swiss, French, Italian, British, German, USA & Australian**	**15 years - Irish - UK, Germany, France, Belgium, USA**	**5 years - Irish - UK, Spanish, Irish**	**8 years, prior 20 yrs. in aviation -British - worked in UK, USA, Ireland, Africa, France, Middle East.**	**9 years experience in Infra industry, 4 yrs. in Ireland + 1 travelling from France/Ireland - French - British with a French utility company, British, Irish, Australian.**	**8 years - French - worked with British, Irish, Middle East, Netherlands, Germany, Austrian, Polish.**
Main key success factors in forming a successful joint venture	**Good fit/common goals for your business and similar culture and complementary partner to your business, start on level playing field to have larger shareholding, honesty and trust, robust agreements, staff 100% in JV?, shared understanding of how JV will operate, low level way of solving problems**	Severn Trent Services, (2014), Seeds, (2012), O'Reilly, (1998), Fey, (1996), Chan, (1996), Lawerence & Vlachoutsicos, (1993) & Weiss, (1987)	Equal partnership holding, good fit and similar cultures from similar industries helps. Majority shareholder has advantage to influence the decisions. To start on a level playing field is impossible if the JV is unbalanced. For smaller shareholders it's difficult to impose their opinions. If different culture then it makes it even more difficult, also different cultures in the companies from the same country and their industry; one coming from a financial industry has a different culture to one coming from a tolling and operation industry, there are notable differences in the cultures.	Honesty, can I work with them, are they open and honest, now more careful than he was in the past. Far more cautions of partners. 'If you do not select a goof fit partner it could be damaging to your business and your reputation.'	Get all agreements, robust shareholder agreement, lawyers add many conditions - prepare for situations that may never occur, get a good set of rules in place but lawyers add complexity. People have to be 100% seconded to the project, if not 100% then they are torn between different objectives. If larger shareholding then it becomes easier to manage, 50 50 JVs add complexity as you only have half of all decisions and then decisions have to be negotiated.	Shared understanding of objectives and understanding of the way the JV will operate and shared understanding of the exit strategy. 'What you are going to be doing, what I am going to be doing and what we are going to deliver' All has to be clearly documented and 'big challenge is developing trust because no matter how good a job you do of developing methodologies you will miss a whole pile of things so this trust business is very important'. Have a low level way of dealing with problems 'be comfortable working with each other'. Does not agree that staff have to be fully seconded into the venture, as a consultant in the past has worked on several projects at one time and once this is understood does not make a difference., 100% adds cost to the project that may not be possible.	Good fit and where does the partner fit in with your objectives, have to complement each other. If there is a complementary fit then any minor issues can be worked around. Give recent example about choosing partner, choose a smaller company but they has similar track record and methodologies as his company therefore this was a closer fit to his organisation. Looked for similarities; same shared clients, same operations and were from Northern Ireland so this would be a similar cultural fit with southern Irish company.	Key aspects are common goal of parents, 'strict minimum of the partnership if both parties do not have a common goal it will not go anywhere.' Partners have to have to compliment each other. Each partner needs to bring something to the JV and each partner should recognise this, partners would give a certain amount of autonomy to the JV by allowing the partners to get on with what they are good at. Trust definitely needs to be there, its a given that you have to trust your partnership.	Key area for success factors are to have the interests aligned of the partners and the same view to manage the project by the partners, the Project Director has to have the same fit and target and the same way to manage the process.
Success factors implemented	**Know your partner, time taken to manage JV, ensuring transparency and trust, implemented shareholders agreements, achieving common goals, is partnership working?**	Gomes, et al., (2011)	n/a	Getting to know partner, wearing you our mentally if it's a difficult partnership and damaging your business.	How much management time to measure the JV, easy if only one monthly report, returns are good etc. If you have to micro manage the venture then this means the JV is not operating as it should.	Answered above	Obtaining mutual consensus from both parties, lay out 'how they want to develop in the future and making sure transparency it there.'	Implement they have to be verbalised and translated to shareholders agreement, seconding people or giving specific works to a partner. Trust is hard to formalise this, this is at lower levels of the human being. Common goals is easier to implement and formalise.	Project that has been the most structured, very heavy in terms of setup with many people involved, all the partners in the same line which worked very well but in the Netherlands it was tried the same but was a mess. Less transparency, with the British there seemed to be more trust and quite fair, with the Dutch there was no trust and less transparency. Difficult to say why, it was for her a matter of the right project director for the project 'the one that has to make sure the partnership was going in the right direction'. In different partnerships the objectives are different and Project Director is aware of the objectives and he has to find
JV complexity	**Complex contracts puts cultural complexities, need clear JV strategy and objectives and not to get too tied up in shareholders agreements, different cultures expect different forms of complexities (USA KPI driven…), over complication leads to mistrust and fallout**	Lorange and Probst (1987)	JV is not more complex than the above industry differences plus another layer of cultural differences, if you are not clear about the JV strategy then this adds to the complexity of the operation. You have to have a clear understanding of the complexity of the contracts that were put in place by the grantors.	At negotiations too complex, at X company, got too complex so they said no and walked away, one side had overcomplicated this process, the French side.	Yes has experienced this complexity. Partner brings something you don't have therefore it adds to the partnership, different partners from different industries bring different cultures. USA culture from X US company are all measurement driven and KPIs, in the UK it was different - who has the high office, name on the car park space, from French culture is very different more flat and more of a support network, USA and UK very target driven and management by exception. Irish are quite innovative and have a hard working ethos and not liking so much rules. French are good and UK most restrictive.	Has experience, but hard to say on the last 5 years, because of the contract complexity of the mobilisation all staff were working to the same goals. The owners were very clear on the schedule and objectives, very clear communication. Complex structure that was suitable for the contract 'there was a good alignment of strategic targets for the business' . 'Took some time for me to get my head around the complexity of the venture structure, some was necessary for the partners of the venture'.	Yes completely, if you look at mergers in the aviation industry, at first objectives were clearly defined but as it progressed difficulties ensued. Commitments were then being dropped, eventually everything become overcomplicated. Did not want to be equals, both wanted to be the dominant partner.	Two examples in mind; X Irish company and the way on of the partners came in, X Australian company, became a partner and that was not expected, they had 16% of shareholding but without any voting rights made it complicated. It was creating frustration as they saw all of the documents but could not have any influence on this. They were having a look at all decisions but did not have a say on what was going on, it added complexity. To improve this complexity they tried to involve them in a physical way, also on the other side of the world, but involved a local guy in Holland to de-complicate this process. 'Tried to show him he was part of the family and put value on his involvement which resulted in them working better'. 'He felt part of the family'. Yes to a cultural difference, hard to say if Australian in general or the actual company. X Australian company extremely interested in earning a lot of money without any risk, even with the French side who are risk adverse they were even more risk adverse and protecting their profits. They were very far from the operation therefore they tried extra.	Two complex JVs, X UK operation - clearly leader in the concession and the leader made it work. In the Netherlands they took many advisors and made it too complicated, as it became too complicated they withdrew, the tender submitted the tender and lost ' they spent too much time discussion on doing and nobody was delivering'. Strong leadership with a good organisation with people who know what they were doing. 'In the X UK operation the staff had a limited scope and they were taking of their scope, this was a little surprising for me as in France we like to take care of our scope and also others scope'. It worked in the end as the complex governance was applied in the Netherlands they did not apply the governance, also in the Netherlands they relied on many advisors.
Cultures contributed to the complexity	**Makeup of JV should be its strength, culture comes from the top managers, is it company culture or national culture?, KPI driven of hierarchical driven, culture has to be worked around, people tend to complicate the process, has the British history negatively affected their ability to form joint ventures of equal standing?, Irish employees are more eager to get involved, French/British like to ponder**	Lorange and Probst (1987); Scott (1999)	Parents bring a different competency to the table; reason why the consortium won the bid in general. Makeup of JV should be its strength but often a weakness if the issues are not thought about from the start, at the start the cultural complexities also need to be resolved which adds to workload and time.	Not sure if its culture or company culture, cultures make a difference, Japanese don't say no, Swiss are honest, Germans are straight, the culture has to come from the top and if this is not right then this sets up the JV culture. If ethics are not right then this spreads through venture and can ruin the business. If dishonest at the top of the company then this leads to a dishonest JV partner.	Left X US company and only then looked back on this - get used to filling in reports and sending and measuring performance. Very goal driven. USA measure success on the KPIs driven on KPI performance. Complex culture in this organisation. Worst culture was UK, reports every week very detailed and always focused on the negatives rather then the positives.	He thinks that a group of Irish starting up share a similar focus, if its different cultures then this adds to the complexity. Has worked in multicultural organisations and has had to understand the differences and expectations, it adds an additional layer of complexity.	They do become too complicated but they have to be worked around, not just the bottom line but also on the exposure and what benefit can be gained from the future, work around the complexity. Only when you know minor things crop up all of the time then you know its not working out - humans come into the equation and there are power struggles, you may need to walk away. British find it more difficult to JV than other European companies as the British seem to think they know the best way to do a job and want to be the dominate partner.	Yes certainly, if they are not realised they do then if not they must realise this. In X Irish JV and Y Irish JV in general terms each partner provided its own strengths. With these there was a cultural difference. 'Without falling into clichés, French versus Irish differences, with this JV it was the Irish can do attitude and the willingness to explore new businesses, the curiosity whereas the French were much more cautions, not saying they were dragging their heals but more cautions'. In Ireland people are mush more eager to roll up their sleeves and the French/British like to ponder and think on strategies, which may prove useless at the end but that's how it is I suppose.'	Difficult to say as only experience is Netherlands and UK, 'in the Netherlands they say people are here to manage and not to deliver by themselves'
Complementary cultures being of the upmost importance	**Larger shareholder forces their culture on smaller, 50:50 ventures you are obliged to be cooperative, from differences ideas grow, overall yes to this question**	Scott (1999), Schuler (2004)	Very important, but the structures he worked in they were not allowed to influence as they were the minority – large was trying and mostly succeeding to force their culture on the other shareholders.	Agrees - yes	50 50 obliged to be collaborative, its very hard to find complementary culture, if JV partners bringing different experiences therefore they have their strength and this leveraged to push their decision.	From differences you get new ideas, and this can lead to a different way of thinking and gives rise to interesting ways of looking at things'. Outcomes from this are worth pursuing. 'You can't surf if there are no waves'	Yes, very much so, likeminded companies the JV should go on and get stronger.	As above	Yes they have to complement each other or they will not be setting out on the right path.
Cultural fit add to the longevity	**Overall a positive answer to this question: yes. Good fit leads to long term partnerships, balance has to be found - partners strengths and weaknesses understood, continue to build trust**	Business Week, (2000), Drozdow and Schleif (2009), Coopers and Lybrand (1986), Koguy's (1989) sample, Harrigan (1998) & Millington and Bayliss (1997)	Agreed, cultural fit can add to the longevity.	Yes, like marriage if two partners have fit and each respect the other then this can lead to long term partnerships. Has 30 plus partnerships with Japanese and Swiss, good cultural fits, he generally stays with them if they have a good fit.	Yes, but the partners have to find a balance to work from.	Yes it can, as above.	As above.	Yes he thinks so provided each partner is conscious of the each partners strengths and the basis of the JV is the formation of the partnership, each partner needs to be given the right scope and then can add to the longevity. Start on the right footing the trust is built in but also a learning curve, after a couple of years it easier then when you have first landed in the country.	Yes I think so. In Hungary we are with may shareholders who's goals are not aligned, we are the only French in this venture. In the Emirates we worked with 5 nationalities and a good partnership and everyone worked together for the one goal.

Cultural differences have a negative effect on the longevity of the JV	**Ethos of the company, maybe not the culture, direct communications, right fits adds to the longevity, a good balance of nationalities can add to the longevity.**	Business Week, (2000), Drozdow and Schleif (2009), Coopers and Lybrand (1986), Koguy's (1989) sample, Harrigan (1998) & Millington and Bayliss (1997)	JVs are created to win a bid; it is not though at the start how the cultures will fit together, often not considered, JVs he has worked in were long term contracts of 30 years + and although culture fit was not considered he believes that for long term contracts consideration should be given at the inception to the cultural differences.	Stresses the culture of the company and not so much the national identity - ethos of the company.	Find a mechanism to make it work, clear reporting lines communications, more direct communication in terms of conf calls etc.	Not too much, if the fit is right then this adds to the longevity.	As above	As above	A good balance of nationalities can have a good effect on the longevity.
Differing mother tongues	**Misunderstanding in language meanings, agree to something not fully understood, different mother tongues does not impact the JV, subtle differences in national cultures in terms of working hours, different ways of approaching different nationalities, have to have good command of the language, colloquial codes**	Hennart and Zeng (2002) & Hofstead (1997)	Remembers in a meeting in his first JV with Dutch, Italian, British and French, all speaking English agreeing on things but all walked out of the meeting with a different understand of what was agreed, For ex a French person agrees they will deliver at a certain date, the British person will expect that delivery date. The French person commits to a date and uses best endeavours to meet this but if they do not deliver on this date and it's not such a big deal, whereas the British person expect this date as the delivery date. French company had not done much business outside of France and were not aware of committing to the exact date, for example Anglo Saxon culture delivery dates mean the delivery on the date given, in continental Europe dates are more flexible: we are happy to deliver on the date but don't believe that we are not capable to delivery but if it slips it's no big deal. In the UK it is the date and this is the delivery date.	Nature of manufacturing companies - all companies have problems in manufacturing. Does not agree from a business point of view, down to the trust of the people you partner with, down to culture of organisation not to the nationality.	Yes, the differences need to be understood and then built on. Between French, their English is excellent and this works out well, they grasp the concepts in business very well. French most difficult to communicate with; after 3.30pm and 12pm on Friday difficult to get in touch and no emails after 6pm. Spanish (X company), not sure what the issue was, they moved the programme if dropped behind and did not grasp the fact that the lost time had to be made up. Paperwork very poor on submitting certification, manuals not delivered at the end of the project. Dates of commitment not as fixed as Irish commitments, size of the order has to be recognised, our order was a couple of hundred whereas other orders may be in the millions and this affects the commitment to the order. Irish would be relatively honourable if providing dates would hold to these dates. Spanish/French - 'take with a pinch of salt when providing dates'.	Yes it inevitable can. 'Language is a hook on which culture hangs.' For Irish you have to ask about them personally and then lead into this is what I want to do….Americans would be very direct, depending on the answer they take a different approach. 'Out of difference you get lots of ideas and growth'. Some native English speakers have no perception of the colloquial forms of English and they doe not consider this when speaking to foreign people.	Yes, the French have a different way of communicating than us. 'The old expression of read between the lines', you have to have an understanding of where they are coming from. Their staff, their outlook tells you their driving factors. Easier if you both have the same mother tongue, only communicate if different languages to about 80% effectively. Even with the same language the different cultures can have different meanings, one example he gave was in Ireland in his first week here was given the answer that it will 'be grand' - in Ireland it will be fine but he understood by this it will be taken care of.	He thinks that its not about the mother tongue but if you have a command of the language, there may be subtleties in the understanding behind the words. Once you have a command of the language then you have a good starting point. Not about the language itself but its more about the codes and the little habits that are specific about the language.	Does not create a communication barrier can create misunderstandings, in Hungary they were very direct and strong, in France if they want o say no they do not say this exactly but the Hungarians said no straight out. This was difficult as it created misunderstandings and a negative mind set o the project because people acting tough. Its more creating a difficult situation.
Approach to innovation and activity	**Irish are innovative, British/French are more tentative**	Gomes, et al., (2011)	JVs cannot move rapidly as there are many shareholders who may want to do different thing. JV's are used to de-risk a bid.	Innovative, but with other partnerships, for example with Chinese need to improve their quality and consistency of their products.	Irish - would be innovative and creative	He would sit in the middle.	British are wait and see, tentative	Differences are French would be more prone to keep a certain status quo whereas the Irish can be more can do attitude	Can't say if its French or X French company - we are more on the stability side.
Approach to risk	**Irish are risk tolerant, British/French are risk adverse**	Gomes, et al., (2011)	Anglo Saxon's are more risk adverse.	Risk tolerant to a point, today has to measure risk. Japanese very conservative, French risk adverse.	Irish - risk tolerant, don't always follow the rules, not too cautions, 'end justifies the means'.	More risk tolerant, close to the USA risk tolerance. Depends on the age of the persona and their experiences over their past work history. Experience adds to the calculation of the risk involved. Gave e.g. of 20 yrs. ago said you to implementing a project in 3 months without thinking of the consequences, whereas now would probably give the same answer but would think of the background support structure more.	British are risk adverse, rather not take on too much risk, once someone has taken risk on a product they are good at making it better. Irish are better at taking risks.	French are risk adverse.	French/X company are risk adverse.
Horizontal relationship	**Appears horizontal across the participants**	Gomes, et al., (2011)	First JV everyone all came fresh to JV, not seconded. In second JV people were seconded from the parents but as each brought expertise then they tended to work alone in their silos. He commented it seemed like an intelligent way of working.	Yes of his partnerships, most difficult at times has been with the French.	Back to point about people seconded, you should be 100% committed to project, if clear reporting lines and 100% committed then this works easier.	Both, have silos but employees work together well.	From the latest JV working horizontally, senior team have to represent the parent but the also have to make sure the JV works together. Has also seen in the past (Cuba) example of where the cultures were completely different and this was disastrous and both cultures expected things done differently. It lead to training courses on what was expected of either partner to iron out the difficulties. 'had its own challenges, a) different tongue, b) different background in terms of culture, and c) expectation of what was the normal in each country and an understanding of same.'	Mention, difference with French and Irish - French are a little bit too emotional about the job and their own work, Irish have a little bit more distance from their work. French invest more in their work and there is a horizontal relationship - example - Irish JV there was misunderstanding as to why he (GM) was not more involved in the company, they (French managers) sometimes could not understand why he was distant sometimes.	Would try to organise cooperation in the venture.
Vertical hierarchical contact	**UK hierarchical, French flatter and theory Y and Irish have a flatter structure, managers interact with staff more**	Gomes, et al., (2011)	He did not think this was an issue in the, in the first JV all staff were more or less equal and in the second JV it was very complex and there were bosses from different JV at different levels in the organization.	French company he deals with seems to have secrecy between the different levels of the managers.	UK very hierarchal, in French its less obvious the hierarchical relationships. 'More flat structure, not guys who have a name on the door or own parking space'. For integration meeting remembers French managers sat anywhere and X staff were more used to a hierarchical relationship and tables mapped of managers and their position. In Ireland introduce themselves by name in the UK they introduce by name and title in case you do not understand their seniority.	Theory Y and some are theory X. French would be theory Y.	Communicate at different levels, danger of the message being diluted so you have to have a mechanism of checking the message.	Depends on the context, blue collar context in France they seem to be more formal and in his company they call him Mister. Close managers to him call him by his first name but use the formal version in French - Tu or Vous, Tu is more formal and this is used in his company. 'Noticed Irish managers tend to be a little closer to their employees in that context. In France, in head office, there is less formality with the more senior managers'.	Theory Y.
Autonomy and decision making	**Mostly autonomy to a point**	Gomes, et al., (2011)	In theory his experience the JV did allow autonomy but unfortunately the differences were always resolved by the larger shareholder making a decision. Over time this level of autonomy was eroded due to the knowledge that the minority would be eventually overruled by the majority parent and eventually didn't try to argue anymore.	Some autonomy with decisions, if decisions were made bad he would pull the decisions back and more micromanage the business, if the managers are competent then he would back of and let the business manage itself.	Depends on the shareholding, if its not clear on guidelines then you run into difficulties on sign off. If somebody is managing a 5m project then he has to be given the power to make autonomous decisions, not to micromanage the business. 'Opposite of micromanage, set boundaries other wise you will undermine his authority'.	Provide a lot of autonomy.	Looking at Irish JVs the parent company empowers the managers into the JV to make the decisions, there are checks like the Project Board and assignment letter to check the performance.	Its more down to people rather than the culture,' not a real differentiating point.'	Provide a lot of autonomy.
Approach to performances	**Varies from complex intellectual performance targets to majority of rewarding fairly for all.**	Gomes, et al., (2011)	Larger parent was from construction industry, managed as a construction contract but was an O&M contract. The French make complex intellectual performance targets (gave ex of Assignment Letter) with a noble objective whereas Anglo Saxon take it more at face value. French cultures make things complex.	Depends on the manager, most JVs allow the business to run but if we see the warning signs then he intervenes.	Can be very simple or complex, client satisfaction is important, if client is unhappy then nothing else matters. The French/X model of Assignment Letter is good as it gives weighted performance targets. V good way to remind you of the targets.	Slightly toward the staff managing and getting on with it.	Like to empower people to act on their own autonomy. If he feels they are struggling the can talk to him or he will talk to them.	The Irish are much better at rewarding the whole team and getting them involved, the French seem to be less team players.	Allow the staff to manage their performance but if things go wrong then you have to intervene.

Approach to rewards	**Mostly rewarded fairly based on performance, is money a real motivator?**	Gomes, et al., (2011)	No real difference from French and Anglo Saxon rewards.	Yes, would reward equally.	Money is not a motivator', deliver targets for nothing (no bonus) to drive his career, development and progression, 'financial thing does not do it for me'.	JV owners reward fairly and the exact way they reward their own staff is not openly shared. He would not discuss the objectives of his parent openly.	Fairly reward based on performance and targets achieved.	As above.	Reward everyone fairly.
Culture difference have a negative impact on joint venture performance	**It shouldn't be but can be, can become a negative influence, if complementary are recognised it won't become negative**	Gomes, et al., (2011)	It shouldn't, it should be a positive effect if managed to provide value. Culture not taken into account at the start and therefore it becomes a negative when you have to manage the contract requirements as well as the cultural differences.	It can but depends on the ethos of the actual company, if you are comfortable and trust the company then there are no limits, difficult if two partners have different cultures - like a marriage, every relationship has difficulties.	N/a	N/a	Yes it can have a negative effect.	No if complementary is recognised it does not have a negative effect.	As above
Are there recognized cultural differences with your partners and how do you combat these, special strategies used	**In general yes, improved communication - face to face at the beginning, have to have different strategies for dealing with different people, establish common ground, understand (their culture) is the key**	Lorange and Probst (1987), Scott, (1999),Gomes, et al (2011)	Not easy to say how it manifests itself but he must have certain pathways he uses when talking to French people and something different when talking to British people. He knows how to interpret the different cultures, mentioned the delivery date example, he knows when a date is given: it's not black and white it's more grey.	Yes , communication you have to work harder at this aspect.	Personality styles, very low level on how to deal with different people. 'With an MBA resonated with him that one styles is not enough, you have to have more then one style, if one does not work you have to have A,B,C..strategies to make it work.' At the end of the day all the issues are to do with managing people and people management is the key to making the business work. Being able to manage people is the bottom line and you have to be able to manage people.	Other partners have different opinions and their theory would be to pay the lowest amount based on their experience, what is the smallest amount that can be paid, the French approach would be what is the right rate for the job, objectively, his strategy is to emphasise the quality for the person and the benefits from them rather than looking at the bottom rate to get the person. 'Net contribution of the person is the overall goal, I focus on the overall best balance of the person'.	Yes, your approach is different with different cultures, once its understood then you can make allowances for the partnership. For ex we know the Spanish and how their culture operates, you have to understand this and then you can work with them once understanding this.	As above	As above
Cultural difference necessitate a strategy of increased communication, cooperation and conflict resolution	**Adaptation to the country you are in, avoid conflict and don't spend too much time focusing on this, honest communication, French prefer formalised documents**	Lorange and Probst (1987), Scott, (1999),Gomes, et al (2011)	Yes, if they are open and honest they will also need to increase communication.	Yes, you need to work harder to communicate to the partners.	X company have recognised this, e.g. X company integration recognised cultural differences, speaking and managing people, as operating in many countries they have recognised the differences. Not something he has flagged up but have to look at the background, strengths and how then can integrate with the new company. 'Greater awareness of how you do it'.	No, however communication with French has to be different, Australian is straight forward. With French they can be surprisingly straightforward but in general they can be complex and more communication has to be used - at a meeting a direct question was asked and as he was new he was only getting familiar with the contract and French person said when he did not know the answer that he should have known the answer whereas a Irish person would not have phrased the answer like this, they may have suggested that he become familiar and not so direct, maybe after the meeting go and find out and then get back to them. Direct communication from the French is sometimes surprisingly.	If dealing with different cultures 'try to limit your emails, you have to have more face to face contact, emails can be interpreted in several ways'. Get to know your partner and then when both parties are known to each other then email can be used for example.	On the first point, communication, says yes, things have to be said and formalised in documents to be assets for the JV, and cooperation is the same. 'My own approach would be to try to avoided the conflict in the first place, if you spend too much time in defining how to respond to conflicts if they occur then you are not starting on the right foot'. There is a need for a minimum but it tends to make people nervous if all these clauses are being drafted at the onset, lets focus our efforts to try and they the best from the JV first.	With UK we think we have to adapt ourselves to their culture, you have to adapt to the country where the bid is lodged'. We will adapt the team accordingly to react in an appropriate manner - we are more in an adaptation manner in other countries, this culture issue is underestimated' In France we have never worked with foreign partners in France so I don't know how this would work. Yes it would be good to anticipate the problems before they occur. From past experience knows how to work with them in different ways.
Differences in cultures increase the cost of cooperation, as parents need to spend greater time and effort to work with each other	**Day to day differences are absorbed, it is a recognised time and financial cost (more face to face meetings)**	N/a	Don't believe they do but a JV with different cultural parents inherently does have additional time to spend on the differences in culture. The longer you take to resolve the cultures the more time and cost you have to spend on the differences.	Depends on the relationship, some yes, some not so much. He doesn't attribute a cost or a time against the differences but there is a cost. They had a bad run at the start with X, different cultures of this partners, Australians, French and Irish, we were forced into a mixed marriage of different cultures as we were subcontractors to one partner as a local agent.	Cost has not been factored in and should be, have to throw additional resources at the project, more meetings face to face and not meeting over the phone for ex in Australian projects.	It does, there is an expectation that communication occurs frequently and theisadd costs of face to face meeting needs to be considered and built in.	No there is not value but its an important part, perhaps we should put a cost on the efforts. 'As a company you are limiting your growth by not taking on joint ventures with different cultures.'	His experience it that at day to day manager level is absorbed, its part of the job basically, a bit easier to quantify at the senior manager level if you know at the onset and at the start of one JV (X Irish company) one shareholder and Manager F worked on behalf of their companies trying the bridge the gaps. 'Very true learning curve at the start, the more you get to know a culture the easier it is to build an organisation without a partnership, at the start you do but as you understand the culture and the more you know of a country the less you have to reply on partners'. If you don't have enough experience then you have to use a local partnership arrangement.	Don't think so, experience it too much a type of (could not understand the rest) Which should not. There is no time dedicated to this. There was something done (pre induction) in the Emirates as it's a very different culture but for Western cultures we should know each other or the gaps are not too big that cannot be over come.
Organisational cultural differences negatively effect the interaction process	**Slows decisions and in turn slow reaction to the environment, impacts trust, is it national culture or industry culture?**	Damanpour, et al., (2012)	There is an impact, in terms of time and then associated cost the parents doesn't necessarily recognise or actively manage. The conflicts can be detrimental to decisions and the wider environment of operating the contract. The impact is that the contract may not be operated as efficiently as it should and the ultimate delivery of the contract to the client may suffer.	It can in between the decisions, you should say exactly what you want, tell the truth and be honest and the decisions will be faster.	N/a	Yes he has seen at one point it did but it comes down to trust and motivation of the partners. When it comes to monetary decisions resistance from the shareholders is strong, if one parent is proposing to keep an seconded employee on and if its very expensive they decided not to keep the staff member, there was a perception that the incentive was for one parent to make money off the seconded fee.	Difficulties - slow decisions, reduces the life of the contract, impacts on the staff in the JV, slow reaction to the environment.	Definitely does, JVs in general, from a managers point of view to only have one shareholder. Several shareholders makes the process much more complex and the different strategies of the shareholders. In France they send people oversees if they have some experience of oversees , companies understand that there is a cultural learning experience that they have to undergo.	Yes I think this does, I am wondering if it was cultural or not - in French projects with only French the partners they have their own goals, in two companies in different industries they can have different cultures which can lead to issues. Not a different culture between two companies in the same industry X company and Y company (French companies) - yes for sure they have different cultures in different industries in the same country.
Perception of satisfaction with the relationship from the parent organizations	**Cultural analysis - the case - JV formed to succeed, satisfaction is important, to be conscious of the culture is important, profitability is ultimately the real measurement**	Saorin-Iborra, (2006)	No they don't think of this, the JVs are created to add to the bottom line of the respective businesses and the culture (industry or nationality) but if they paid more attention to the culture there must be an untapped advantage they could access the bottom line. You could train for the differences, like Finance, Operation training you could in advance give each an understanding of the different cultures to ready the parents for the different cultures. A cultural analysis of each patent there is a case to complete this at the beginning, maybe train them, so when parents make a decision it is understood why they make a decision.	You do think about the culture, you want the company to succeed, to be number one. X culture is less honest, you have to be aware of the operation of the culture and the perception is important, gave example of a bad manager that was 'out of control' and he had to be let go.	Day to day operation is part of the on-going operations, new business and new operations present new challenges. Satisfaction is important, 'necessity is the reason that brings the JV together and the profits are the glue that hold the JV together.'	He thinks that is all comes down to profitability and if the objectives are being met then they do not worry about the cultural differences. If revenue is positive then it tells you that the cultural differences and others are managed successfully. 'Different cultures are difficult problems to solve, and if he was replaced by a French person for example this would add complexity to the venture.' One partner added a new GM and did not ask for input from partners, no consultation was taken and this did not add to the trust of the venture.	Key determinant is a fit of the partners. Its your perception on how you think of the other partner. You have an informed opinion on the potential partner, you then have to validate your opinion and this is a key determinant.	They do, they would be even more conscious of the cultural difference if they have little knowledge of the cultures.	I think its more the bottom line, they do not care some much about the satisfaction of the strategic fit, culture is a day to day part of the operation.

Table 2

Analysis and Findings

Beginning a joint venture partnership

The managers were asked what they considered were the main key success factors to be considered when forming a successful joint venture. This was the first question asked but responses on the success factors also came through other questions.

A good fit, common goal and trust with the partner that is being considered was the most common response from the participants.

> *'If you do not select a good fit partner it could be damaging to your business and your reputation.'(MgrB)*
>
> *'What you are going to be doing, what I am going to be doing and what we are going to deliver.'(MgrD)*
>
> *'Strict minimum of the partnership - if both parties do not have a common goal it will not go anywhere.'(MgrF)*

One manager considered that if the business had a similar culture to theirs then this would add to the fit. He regularly considered the partnerships, and how his organisation might work with a potential partner.

> *'We looked at the fact that they were already operating in Ireland, their client is our client and they are from Northern Ireland, so I had a good understanding on how their thought processes work.'(MgrE)*

It was important for the managers to know their partners prior to the venture and this leads to a shared understanding of how they expect the joint venture to operate. This understanding leads to a shared common goal.

> *'How they want to develop in the future and making sure transparency is there.'(MgrE)*

Trust, honesty and transparency in their partner resonated from all managers. They believed these characteristics, naturally, were the foundation of a good partnership and added to the ease of the operations. Moreover, if difficulties arose then having trust and transparency in the partner helped resolve the difficulty more easily. Manager B further emphasised that if he selected a partner that did not portray honesty this could affect his business reputation, this added weight to his statement as he was looking at the bigger 'reputational' picture.

> *'Honesty, is probably the main issue, can I work with them, are they open and honest, and can I work with them? - If you don't select a good fit partner it could be damaging to your business and your reputation.'(MgrB)*
>
> *'I should have mentioned from the outset, you have to trust your partner.'(MgrF)*
>
> *'Lay out how they want to develop in the future and making sure transparency is there.'(MgrE)*
>
> *'Big challenge is developing trust because no matter how good a job you do of developing methodologies you will miss a whole pile of things so this trust business is very important.'(MgrD)*

Following this the managers paid importance to getting the strategy and objectives aligned with each other; not to get too fixated with shareholders' agreements or governance at the outset, although this did have import. The Irish and British managers recommended not getting too close to agreement at the outset. This was recognised as a trigger to create complexity and this may lead to mistrust. One manager mentioned if the lawyers get involved this definitely can add to the complexity, and lawyers try to establish clauses for something that may never occur.

> *'The experience that we had is that - you know, it involves the lawyers who, kind of, bring in so many conditions, and you know, belt and braces and preparing for situations that might never occur but they are prepared to have it in.'(MgrC)*
>
> *'It had at the start, at negotiations, as you are aware, we walked away - I think - a number of times before we signed the contract, it was getting far too complex.'(MgrB)*

It transpired through the interviews that different cultures expected, or tolerated different levels of complexities.

> *'Took some time for me to get my head around the complexity of the venture structure, some was necessary for the partners of the venture.'(MgrD)*
>
> *'Different partners from different industries bring different cultures. USA culture from (named USA company) are all measurement driven and KPIs, in the UK it was different - who has the high office, name on the car park space, from French culture is very different, more flat and more of a support network, USA and UK very target driven and management by exception.'(MgrC)*

It was not just about the national culture, one manager explained that ethics has to be internal to the company also, it had to come from the top management in the company and this should filter to all employees.

'This is where I make a difference with you, primarily I think cultures are different – the culture of the company is more important, that's the ethics of the company and that has to come from the top.'(MgrB)

'In the cases I'm talking about there was not only a national cultural difference but also a cultural difference from the industries that the companies came from.'(MgrA)

Findings – beginning a joint venture

In order to begin a joint venture, and begin on the right foot, a good fit of the companies was important, in addition if the companies complemented each other this inherently solidified the fit. Other crucial items identified, seemingly obvious but none the less important, were that trust was the foundation of any partnership and then transparency and honesty could to be built on. This finding is consistent with the literature, most notably recognised by the National Development Plan (2004), Beauchamp & Kleiner (1995) and Schuler, et al (2004). One manager also contended that if the fit of the partner was not good then this could lead to wider reputational damage for his business; the manager was cognisant of his other business being affected by a bad partnership.

Complexity leads to mistrust and damages the initiation process, having lawyers involved generally complicates the process and in turn affects the venture foundation. While Schillaci (1987) argues that joint ventures can be a less rigid structure to succeed in business, complexity, according to Lorange and Probst (1987) can be a divisive characteristic of joint ventures. The complexity phenomenon was interesting, Irish and British managers recommended not getting too absorbed on the formal structures too soon at the beginning, whereas the French managers seemed to prefer more structured agreements.

One interesting observation was that some managers identified that there was cultural differences in the same nationality but hailing from different industries. This could lead to differing strategic objectives, and importantly if the major shareholder – who was not the expert in the area – would force their decision on the minor shareholder regardless of the 'correct' decision.

Finally, regardless of the culture of the parents, ethics of the company was a significant factor. Ethics comes from the top management and filters throughout the venture, having an ethical partner leads to a successful venture through a cascade affect. Cartwright and Cooper (1992) support this point.

Key aspects

The key aspect theme identified in this section follows the commencement process of the joint venture partnership. This theme identifies the key aspects that the participants considered were necessary for the joint venture to operate successfully. Additionally, they revealed key areas they considered for the joint venture to operate in their favour - key areas that would permit them to have greater control of the venture. This finding was surprising as they also discussed how to build trust and maintaining transparency but in the background they had ideas of tilting the advantage in their favour.

The participants suggested that if the venture did not start on a level playing field then this automatically leads to issues. The larger shareholder automatically has the final say on any decisions; they can be advised or influenced but ultimately due to their larger shareholding they have the final say. To this end, they suggested that you should aim for a larger shareholder so they make the decisions.

> *'In both of the joint ventures where I've had experience with international partners there was not an equality in the partnership, and I think that, from the start creates an overbearing influence of the majority shareholder – so I think that is from the start is an issue that needs to be resolved.'(MgrA)*
>
> *'At the end of the day, the easiest joint ventures we've had to manage were the ones we had the majority shareholding – the 50 50 joint venture which seems fine, you know, that both contribute equally, is the most difficult to manage.'(MgrC)*
>
> *'You've only got half of the decision making rights – you've only got half of the authorisation rights – no authority really to make a decision on behalf of the other party, and that's what brings out – I suppose – the cultural differences then between two companies.'(MgrC)*

It was identified that the makeup of the joint venture should be its strength but this can often backfire because of differences in the shareholding weighting. Manager A cites an example where their organisation was the expert in one particular field but as they were the lesser shareholder their opinions were generally not considered or accepted.

> *'Difficult for the minority shareholder to have any real influence – in - in – decisions.'(MgrA)*
>
> *'The makeup of JV should be a strength, and that is why often it's a joint venture rather than one company going on its own – it should be a strength but often it's a weakness if these issues (cultural) are not thought about from the start then they are being resolved as you go along.'(MgrA)*

Manager G, a French manager, who heads up her company's international operations, considered that when operating in a foreign country they had to adapt to the country they are operating in.

> *'With UK we think we have to adapt ourselves to their culture, you have to adapt to the country where the bid is lodged.' (MgrG).*

Throughout the interviews all managers agreed that the reason for forming a joint venture was to be successful, win a bid and capitalise on the contract award through profits returned to the shareholders. All managers were aware and recognised that satisfaction was to be considered but ultimately profits were the real goal of the joint venture, day to day issues were somewhat incidental if the profit returns were acceptable.

‘I think it’s more the bottom line, they do not care some much about the satisfaction of the strategic fit, culture is a day to day part of the operation.’(MgrG)

'Necessity is the reason that brings the JV together and the profits are the glue that hold the JV together.'(MgrC)

‘Ultimately the joint venture is created to enhance the revenue of the parent company, the way – the fact that - you know – maybe because of the cultural differences there is a loss of potential revenue because time being wasted – ultimately I think only the bottom line counts generally. I do believe and I think that’s the conclusion that if these things are thought out from the start, and agreed and revisited from time to time you could probably enhance the bottom line - if you were able to bridge these issues - whether it be industry culture or a national culture.’(MgrA)

Findings – key aspects

The makeup of the joint venture should be its strength but this can often not be the case because of differences in the shareholding. The participants agreed that a level playing field was a primary concern – if not this automatically leads to issues. The larger shareholder will automatically have the final say on decisions; they can be advised or influenced but ultimately due to their larger shareholding they have the final say. To this end, the participants suggested that being the larger shareholder was the optimum goal. This revelation although in practical terms makes sense, was surprising as they talked about building trust and transparency, but behind these words the researcher considered that their main aim could be to become the larger shareholder, therefore the trust and transparency they spoke about was of lesser importance, if they were the majority.

One of the French managers described that they employ an adaptive approach when operating in a foreign country. This is contrary to what one of the Irish mangers revealed where in his experience a foreign partner attempted to tie them up in legal clauses, so much so that he walked away several times during the shareholder negotiation process. This complex condition is also backed up by the research of Lorange and Prost (1987).

Throughout the interviews all managers agreed that the reason for forming a joint venture was to be successful, win a bid and capitalise on the contract award through returned profits to the shareholders. All managers were aware and recognised that satisfaction was to be considered but ultimately profits were the real goal of the joint venture and day to day issues were somewhat incidental if the profit return was acceptable. This finding is in line with the core reasons for joint venture formation, according to the majority of researchers, particularly by National Development Plan (2004), KPMG International (2009) and Gomes, et al. (2011). This research has added to the recommendation by Schillaci (1987), who suggested further research should be conducted to focus on the determining factors of the perception of satisfaction with the relationship created between partners – from this research satisfaction was key but the overarching key determinant was profitability.

Governance

All of the managers discussed to some extent the need for robust shareholder agreements and other formal documents to set out how the venture should be managed and governed.

> *'What you are going to be doing, what I am going to be doing and what we are going to deliver - all has to be clearly documented.'(MgrD)*

The French managers were particularly focused on the need for formal agreements in place to identify the operation of the venture and how conflicts should be resolved.

> *'They (daily governance) have to be verbalised and translated into the shareholders agreements – definitely when it comes to seconding people or giving specific works to certain people this has to be clear.'(MgrF)*

There was, however, a resounding agreement that complex contracts, backed with complex shareholder agreements adds to the complexity of the joint venture operation. One manager walked away from the shareholder and legal agreements necessary to formalise the venture as they were becoming too complex, ultimately they resolved their issues but at the time he felt that it was too complex and he wanted to walk away.

> *'It had at the start, at negotiations, as you are aware, we walked away - I think - a number of times before we signed the contract, it was getting far too complex.' (MgrB)*

'There was a good alignment of strategic targets for the business. Took some time for me to get my head around the complexity of the venture structure, some was necessary for the partners of the venture.'(MgrD)

'If you look at mergers in the aviation industry, at first objectives were clearly defined but as it progressed difficulties came up. Commitments were then being dropped, eventually everything became over complicated. Did not want to be equals, both wanted to be the dominant partner.'(MgrE)

There was a difference of opinion on the governance rules surrounding the staff from two of the participants - one managers thought that the staff employed in the joint venture should be 100% committed to the joint venture where the other manager thought it was acceptable for the staff to be less than 100% committed to the venture.

'The principle of seconded staff (referring to a particular joint venture company) – where they set up joint ventures they don't allow seconded staff, so people go in 100% to the project – they sink or swim with the project – their answerable to whoever is heading up that project. You know, where its seconded staff they are half in half out of the project, their direct line manager sits outside of the project – so you know that's a mistake, but at the end of the day, they have to have some skin in the game.'(MgrC)

'I wouldn't agree about that (regarding 100% seconded staff) my personal experience has been – you know, I've worked as a contractor, and consultant and things like that over the years and you would be working - you know, two days a week in one place and three days a week in another place and maybe working on five different projects at the same time, but you were – what is commitment – there was an understanding by the partners that you could have been – had they wanted you for five days a week, they could have had you for five days a week but that would have been additional cost.'(MgrD)

Findings – governance

Robust shareholder agreements were a key theme, all of the managers discussed to some extent this requirement and other formal documents to define the management and governance. Drozdow and Schleif (2009) contend that joint ventures have to have clear-cut governance, guidelines and power structures, all the way down to manpower. It appears through the interview process that the French managers were particularly focused on the need for formal agreements in place to define daily operation, and to some extent conflict management.

There was categorical agreement that complex contracts, backed with complex shareholder agreements adds to the complexity of the joint venture operation.

There was a difference of opinion on the governance rules surrounding the staff from two participants - one manager thought that staff employed in the joint venture should be 100% committed where the other manager thought it was acceptable for the staff to be less than 100% committed to the venture. This question on commitment was addressed by Drozdow and Schleif (2009) in their research; however they did not provide a judgement either way but agreed that commitment had to be clearly defined and agreed to avoid misunderstandings.

Day to day operations

There was a need to resolve day to day issues at a lower level; aside from the shareholders agreement and the other formal legalistic measures of governance. The managers identified this requirement and the time taken to manage these daily operational issues.

> *'There needs to be a way to resolve low level issues, this is where trust comes into it – you have to become comfortable with working together and you have to employ people who are, eh, you have to develop mechanisms that allow people to develop trust in the other shareholders or venture partners.'(MgrD)*
>
> *'If they are open and honest and even say amongst themselves – you know - we are the major shareholder therefore this will be the consequence, those are things that should be observed daily and after a while I can't see what the problem is saying that and explaining that's the way it is - if that is the intention why pretend it's going to be different?'(MgrA)*

There was agreement that there is additional time and costs required to manage the differences. It could be their cultural differences, it could be their different company cultures or industry cultures but there is time required to manage these aspects that is not always recognised by the shareholders.

> *'One of the success factors would be how much management time does it take to measure them, you know so – the successful joint venture are the ones where we just have a monthly report, a quarterly board, everything is agreed, the returns are good, there is no arguments, I think it's the key measurement of day to day operations.'(MgrC)*

In parallel with this theme there was also recognition by the participants that the culture had to be worked around, and to some extent the day to day differences had to be absorbed into operations. One manager stated that people complicate the process; it was a fact of human nature that people have different goals, whether personal or company strategic goals.

> *'Without falling into clichés, French versus Irish differences, with this JV it was the Irish can do attitude and the willingness to explore new businesses, the curiosity, whereas the French were much more cautions, not saying they were dragging their heals but more cautions. In Ireland people are much more eager to roll up their sleeves, and the French/British - like to ponder and think on strategies, which may prove useless at the end but that's how it is - I suppose.'(MgrF)*

> *'You always try to work around the differences, straight away you don't walk away from it, you try and work with it, it's only when you know that the silliest of things start coming up - I hate to say it but human beings get involved with their own personal goals and strengths – do you need to act.'(MgrE)*

> *'At the end of the day all the issues are to do with managing people and people management is the key to making the business work. Being able to manage people is the bottom line and you have to be able to manage people.'(MgrC)*

Findings – day to day operations

Again, trust and honesty came into this theme, building trust allowed the day to day operations to occur with less friction; trust enabled low level issues to be resolved. Mechanisms to build trust were identified and used to build on the trust element. All managers agreed that additional time was required to manage the cultural differences but they did not attribute a cost against this; the added costs involved more frequent face to face meetings, more time dedicated to direct communications. Scott (1999) and Damanpour, et al. (2012) pay particular importance to the 'receivers' and 'senders' understanding the messages being communicated, this they contend has to be through direct forms of communication at the initial stages and until the partners understand each other or become 'culturally fluent'.

There was agreement by the participants that there is additional time and costs required to manage the differences. The participants suggested it could be cultural differences, it could be different company cultures or industry cultures but there is additional time required to manage these aspects that is not recognised at the shareholder level.

In parallel with this theme there was also recognition by the participants that cultural differences were a daily part of the operations that had to be worked around, and to some extent the day to day differences had to be absorbed. One manager stated that people complicate the process - it was a fact of human nature that people have different goals, whether personal or company strategic goals. This is supported by Vaidya (2012) who suggests that effective social relationships between the partners, managing differences locally, leads to a far more profitable organisation

Language barriers

The recognised business language for the participant managers was English. They all agreed that their foreign partners had a good understanding, some excellent, of the English language. The non-native English speaking managers considered this was not a burden but it could lead to misunderstandings in interpretation of what was being discussed. Manager A cited an example of non-native English speaking partners agreeing to something but not fully understanding what they were agreeing to.

> *'People's translation of their own words into English doesn't always relate to what a native English speaker, would – would mean…I remember sitting around a table where there were Dutch consultants, someone from the Italian shareholder, British people obviously and French suppliers and they were all talking the same language, which was my language, but they weren't really understanding each other – seemingly agreeing on things which I'm sure, not deviously, walked out of the room with a different understanding of what had been said.'(MgrA)*
>
> *'Yes, the French have a different way of communicating than us. The old expression of read between the lines - you have to have an understanding of where they are coming from.'(MgrE)*

It was evident from the two French managers that they both had an excellent understanding of English; they admitted this, however, they did suggest that the subtle differences in the colloquial terms and national cultures they found difficult to grasp at the beginning, the meaning behind the words. They agreed that as they gained more experience they could better understand the meaning in the colloquial context. On the converse side of this the native English speaking managers said that the continental Europeans – French and Spanish particularly - had different working patterns that had to be understood. Manager A and C identified that a delivery date in the UK and Ireland is the delivery date, whereas in continental Europe the delivery date is a fixed date but could move easily without concern.

> *'I'm always ashamed that we haven't got very good French, but their English is excellent, and it's like business English, it's not kind of, eh, school English. So they have a very good grasp of concepts.'(MgrC)*
>
> *'I suppose going back to (named US company) again we found the French most difficult to deal with because you could never get anybody after about half three - you know what I mean – or you never get anybody after about twelve o'clock on a Friday. I know they have a very short working week and kind of a keen awareness of work life balance whatever, you see the latest thing about no emails after six o'clock or whatever.'*(MgrC)
>
> *'I don't know if its Spanish thing or (Spanish company named) but they didn't do the project management very well, where they had the Gant chart there's the first two items they were to be delivered by this date – they haven't been delivered they would just move the whole chart by two weeks or whatever, they wouldn't grasp the fact that they had to recover the lost time.'(MgrC)*

Communication

The participants all agreed that communication was vital to the operation of the joint venture, especially when different nationalities were involved. They thought a strategy of increased face to face meetings was required, particularly at the beginning of the venture. Getting to know each other was also important to build the trust, this could only happen face to face.

> *'Spend time getting to know your partner.'(MgrB)*
>
> *'If dealing with different cultures - try to limit your emails, you have to have more face to face contact, emails can be interpreted in several ways. Get to know your partner and then when both parties are known to each other, then email can be used.'(MgrE)*
>
> *'With UK we think we have to adapt ourselves to their communication, you have to adapt to the country where the bid is lodged. We will adapt the team accordingly to react in an appropriate manner - we are more in an adaptation manner in other countries, this culture issue is underestimated.'(MgrG)*

A common ground needs to be established to communicate off, direct communication is best at the onset and an understanding of the partner's culture is vital.

Findings – language barriers and communication

Hennart and Zeng (2002) and Hofstede (1997) both argue that if two parents have different mother tongues it is expected that this will create a communication barrier. From this research it appears that the language barrier could affect the joint venture. While both French managers had an excellent command of English and they did not think that language was an issue they did admit that in the beginning (being in the foreign) country the colloquial terms and meanings could confuse them. To counteract this, the foreign parents pro-actively managed the problem by selecting staff with previous experience in foreign countries for new ventures.

There was a definite difference, according to the Irish and English managers, between Irish and British and the continent, particularly French and Spanish, surrounding the flexibility of target dates – the Irish and British expected delivery on the agreed date, while the French and Spanish were very flexible and to the move a target date was relatively easy.

The participants all agreed that communication was vital to the operation of the joint venture, especially when different nationalities were involved. They thought a strategy of increased face to face meetings was required, particularly at the beginning of the venture. Getting to know each other was also important to build the trust, this could only happen face to face and through the involvement of all staff. This is supported in the research, most notably by Scott (1999) and Beauchamp and Kleiner (1995).

The Irish managers confirmed that communication had to be undertaken differently with their French partners as emails could be interpreted differently. In addition, one manager commented that his partners seemed to have a different work life balance and this proved difficult to communicate at times. Manager G, a French manager, considered that they adapted to the country where they were operating and it appears they pro-actively adapt the team to the country they operate in. This leads the researcher to believe that they do prepare for the differences in culture and actively try to reduce the differences by adaptation, robust agreements and formalities at the onset to protect them or reduce conflict escalation. This preparing mechanism can be considered as cultural fluency, as established by Scott (1999).

Gomes dimensions of organisational culture

The seven areas categorised by Gomes, et al. (2011) was proposed to the participants to identify the different beliefs and assumptions of the managers in relation to the categories. Table 2 below summarises their responses.

Gomes dimensions of organisational culture	Irish Managers	British Managers	French Managers
Approach to innovation and activity	Innovative	Less innovative	Less innovative
Approach to risk	Risk tolerant	Risk adverse	Risk adverse
Horizontal relationship	Appears horizontal across all participants		
Vertical hierarchical contact	Flatter structure	Hierarchical	Flat structure
Autonomy and decision making	Appears similar across all participants - provide autonomy to a point		
Approach to performances	Less complex	Key performance driven	Complex performance targets
Approach to rewards	Appears that all participants reward fairly to staff		

Table 3

Findings - Gomes dimensions of organisational culture

Gomes, et al (2011) recommends carrying out this cultural evaluation through the seven categories as part of the integration planning process or during the inception. He admits this evaluation process is a complicated task and other references should be used, such as, published mission and vision statements and company websites, published articles and interviews in the press, public speeches by the management, conversations –informal - and interviews - formal - with the managers et cetera.

The responses from the participants suggested that the Irish seem to be innovative in some respects, with the French and British being less innovative. In terms of risk tolerance the Irish seem to tolerate more risk than the French and British. These are characteristic of an entrepreneur as described by Blanchard (2013) and in line with the perception of the Irish people being of an entrepreneurial nature. All of the managers confirmed that they operate in more of a horizontal joint venture structure; this can be related to the need for open and transparent communication and the involvement of all staff in the venture. In terms of the hierarchy of the venture structure, the French and Irish managers leaned to a flatter structure and the British leaned to a more traditional hierarchical structure.

The managers all seemed to provide autonomy to the staff in the joint venture, however, they all discussed to some extent that the autonomy was the ideal operation of the venture under the premise that if the contract was operating efficiently - returns were positive. If the contract was not operating as it should they would reduce the autonomy and become more involved.

It transpired from the participants that their reward structures varied. The French, having complex mechanisms, to very much target or Key Performance Indicator driven by the British, to less complex mechanisms by the Irish participants.

Negative cultural influences

The managers all recognised that being involved in joint ventures can lead to having negative influences. This is particularly true if the venture encounters substantial issues and the partnership breaks down – it may leave a bad taste in the partner's mouth. Manager F stated that if the complementary fit is respected then the chances of the different cultures negatively influencing the venture can be minimised. He also suggested that the partners have to limit the time spent on the negative aspects

> *'My own approach would be to try to avoided the conflict in the first place, if you spend too much time in defining how to respond to conflicts - if they occur then you are not starting on the right foot.'(MgrF)*

The negative aspects of the combined partners can ultimately lead to slower decisions and the ability to react to the wider environment, more complexity to manage the operations and this can be detrimental to the relationship and the client they are attempting to serve.

> *'Difficulties it can cause, eh, slow decision making, it can slow reaction to the environment, it can have a negative impact on the boys and girls actually in the role itself and basically reduces the life of the contract.'(MgrE)*
>
> *'It shouldn't - it shouldn't - it should have a positive effect if its managed to provide a, eh, value but unfortunately as I said earlier it's not, eh, taken into account in the beginning and therefore it becomes a negative thing - the issues surrounding the differences are having to be managed at the same times that other things are being managed, so it does tend to generally have a negative effect, where in theory it should have a positive effect.'(MgrA)*

Findings – negative cultural influences

The ultimate goal of a joint venture is to operate successfully and provide the expected returns to the shareholders; in addition, the joint venture should provide longevity (Drozdow & Schleif, 2009). There are negative influences that have to be managed on a daily basis. The participants revealed that the negative aspects could slow decisions, slow reaction to the environment, staff morale is affected and ultimately leads to an unsatisfied client. Damanpour et al., (2012) claim that the inherent cultural differences increase the cooperative arrangements necessary to sustain the joint venture and the communication channels become strained leading to differing parental expectations causing a mismatch of the internal process that are vital for the venture's success.

A large aspect in reducing the negative cultural influences was keeping the venture operating efficiently through honesty with the partner. One manager stated that 'if you are up front and honest the decisions will be faster'. The negative influences can come from the financial standing of the partners - one having greater expectations than the other. It is recognised by the researcher that this can be a cultural difference, a national industry culture difference or just a differing of expectations, but these differing expectation should have been resolved at the joint venture inception through the strategic fit and 'getting to know your partner' aspect.

Data analysis and findings conclusion

From the themes identified in this research analysis it is clear that cultural differences do play a role in the efficient operation and ongoing success of joint ventures. In general the findings of this research have been consistent with the literature reviewed. One of the most important aspects that came through the literature, and this was reflected in the participants' responses, was the necessity to have trust with the partner. Without this key element, from the beginning, the partnership was destined to encounter difficulties (Schuler, et al., 2004; Buckley & Casson, 1998; Yan & Gray, 1994; Inkpen & Beamish, 1997; Vaidya, 2012). In parallel with building and developing the trust element, the participants expressed opinions that being the dominant partner they could make uninterrupted decisions and this was the easiest way to have a successful venture. This, in some respects ran contrary to the need to build the trust relationship.

Clear structures from the beginning through legal agreements was important and in line with the literature, however it seems that the French participitants preferred the more rigorous complex agreements from the beginning. The researcher believes this is one mechanism the non-native English partners use to formalise the sturcture, so if conflict or differences occur they have an agreed format to refer to without having to enter into complex dialogue unless necessary – this could be a defence approach of a differing mother tongue partner. Communciation has to be direct at the beginning so as to avoid misunderstanding; all participitante were particularly aware of this and the prospect of misunderstanding by a culturally different partner.

Schillaci (1987) recommendation for further research into the determining factors of the perception of satisfaction with the relationship created between partners has been considered in this research – from this research satisfaction was key but the overarching key determinant was profitability.

Cultural differences were observed as important aspects that have to be managed, becoming culturally fluent (Scott, 1999) with the partner assistance in the relationship and the success of the joint venture. Communication was recognised as requiring more direct communication at the beginning as electronic communication could be misunderstood. The French and Spanish have a different understanding on commitment dates and this can lead to frustration with Irish/British partners as they expect target dates provide to be delivered on.

In conclusion the fit, complementary organisations, trust, transparency, honesty and arrangements for working with partners of different cultures on a day to day basis have to be developed and implemented to ensure the success of the venture. With the relative growth of joint ventures in Ireland (KPMG International, 2009; Gomes, et al., 2011) and the propensity for risk of failure (Beauchamp & Kleiner, 1995) one manager's comment resonated with the researcher. It suggested that joint ventures were necessary to gain access to the country but once the contacts and structures were established then the partnerships were the less favourable option. This inherently suggests that there are issues on numerous levels, including cultural differences to be managed and overcome with joint ventures.

> *'The more you get to know, eh, the more you get to know, eh, a specific culture the less you actually need to build a joint venture…….basically the more you know a country the less you need partners…….(named company) at the time didn't have enough experience of the country to go in alone.'(MgrF)*

Chapter VI

Discussion

How well did the research answer the question?

This qualitative research study attempted to understand the perspectives and experiences of managers on the success factors and how cultural differences, if any, have been anticipated, understood and managed to ease the operation of the joint venture and parental collaboration in the Irish Infrastructure Operation and Maintenance sector. Through the participant interview process several themes emerged relating to the key elements of a successful joint venture design and the cultural differences that have to be acknowledged by management to ensure they do not adversely affect the venture.

Of the seven themes identified, the key findings that emerged were:

1. Cultural differences is an important factor in the efficient operation and ongoing success of joint ventures;

2. Having trust and a good fit with the partner was a key requirement. In parallel, transparency and honesty were also vital;

3. Being the dominant partner and hence making the uninterrupted decisions was the easiest way to have a successful venture;

4. Clear governance structures from the beginning through legal agreements was important. French participitants preferred more rigorous complex agreements;

5. Communciation has to be direct so as to avoid misunderstanding; all participitants were particularly aware of this and the chance of misunderstanding by a culturally different partner. Becoming 'culturally fluent' assists in the relationship and the success of the joint venture;

6. Schillaci's (1987) recommendation for further research into the determining factors of the perception of satisfaction with the relationship created between partners has been considered in this research and from this, satisfaction was key but the overarching key determinant was profitability;

7. French and Spanish companies take a different view on commitment dates and this can lead to frustration with Irish/British partners as they expect target dates provided to be delivered on;

8. Joint ventures were necessary to gain access to the country but once the contact and structure was established then the partnership choice was the less favourable option. This inherently suggests that there are issues on numerous levels, including cultural differences to be managed and overcome with joint ventures.

Cultural differences

Cultural differences can negatively affect the joint venture performance. There have been recommendations made in this study to cope with this complex relationship. While the dominant parent type is generally preferable according to the participants, shared management can be successful too; this is reflected in the literature, most notably by Killing (1982). A key theme recognised to cope with the complexity was to firstly establish a good fit of the partners, both having complementary assets to bring to the venture and the alignment of their strategic goals. Trust is a key foundation of any joint venture which can lead to transparency and honesty being built upon (Schuler, et al., 2004; Currall & Inkpen, 2002; Buckley & Casson, 1998; Yan & Gray, 1994; Inkpen & Beamish, 1997; Vaidya, 2012). Methods to build these features stem from established shareholder agreements – however not being too complex or reliant on legal clauses for every eventuality – but they must satisfy both parents' needs in terms of complexity. The French appear to prefer a more complex agreement whereas the British and Irish appear to prefer a more straightforward, less complex, agreement; both parties have to find a happy medium.

These cultural differences have to be recognised at the shareholder level through the right partner selection and alignment of the strategic goals to the managers employed in the joint venture. The managers need to have low level mechanisms of resolving cultural differences, or better still, mechanisms to avoid these differences surfacing in the first place by having a firm understanding of the expectations of both partners. One of the main issues with joint ventures is the confusion, frustration and lethargy in making decisions which can result from shared management. On occasion, straight forward decisions become long and complex (Killing, 1982). Therefore, strong management and clear cut responsibilities are essential; this is echoed by Drozdow and Schleif (2009).

By completing the seven stage cultural evaluation proposed by Gomes, et al (2011) during the integration planning process, this can help identify 'fit' issues.

Language and communication

While some researchers (Hennart & Zeng, 2002; Damanpour, et al., 2012; Hofstede, 1997) are adamant that language barriers create confusion and a natural barrier, this finding has not been established entirely through this research. In general the participitants have admited that the differing mother tongues can create misunderstandings, but they do not consider these to be a particularly large barrier - one that can be worked around with time and effort by the parties. The key to overcoming the communication differnces is to become culturally fluent, as postulated by Scott (1999), where both parties understand the communciation of each other, this comes with time, patience and experience in the new country. This is reinforced by one of the French managers, affirming that experience with Irish people and businesses was a prerequisite for any French staff moving to Ireland.

Communication types was recognised as requiring more direct communication at the beginning as electronic communication could be misunderstood, this requirment was re-iterated in the literature by Beauchamp and Kleiner (1995). It transpired that French and Spanish businesses have a different understanding on commitment dates and this can lead to frustration with Irish/British partners, as they expect target dates provided to be delivered on.

In recognition of the communication differences faced by French staff in English speaking countries, over the past 20 years at a French management school - ESC Clermont Graduate School of Management - culturally based learning activities in foreign language classrooms have been used. Through debates, role play, and discussion, this module attempts to improve students' communication skills and enhance their comprehension in English. A secondary benefit of this is that it develops their cultural awareness in the business setting adding to their cultural fluency so they can operate more effectively (Vigier & Smoller Le Floch, 2011).

Internal cultures

It was observed that there are cultural differences within one nationality between two business sectors. One manager cited an example where the majority shareholder was not from the tolling infrastructure operations sector, but were mainly in the construction design and consultancy sector. This represented issues, as not only being the dominant partner they also possessed a different culture from the minor shareholder - the expert. This led to difficulties when decisions were being taken as the minor shareholder, who was the expert, was being domineered in the decision making process. The cultural difference that emerged was that the major shareholder was used to being dominant and had less experience and the flexibility required to operate in such an industry. These internal cultural differences between two business sectors was reverberated by all participants - this did occur and added another level of complexity to the venture. Differing business cultures have divergent tolerances to risk, approach to innovation, rewards, autonomy and other factors that can in turn effect the daily operation of the joint venture.

Ethics

Ethics has been described by Davis (1960) as a set of moral principles that defines the person's tolerance to right and wrong actions. Davis further suggested that ethical behaviour contributes to the development and increase in value of the company and its reputation. Therefore inversely, he claims avoiding social responsibility reduces economic opportunities. Ethics has to be part of the culture of the company, the ethics cascade from the top management to all levels of staff in the company. It is an important aspect that one of the participants considered when entering into a new venture. He stated that 'if the ethics are not right in the company then that culture spreads throughout the company……if you are dealing with a dishonest company from the top then no matter what agreement you come to, you know it will be a dishonest agreement because the culture is dishonest'. The participants agreed that negative cultural differences, in the guise of ethics can not only damage the joint venture but have further reputational consequences.

Gomes

Gomes, et al (2011) evaluation tool was used to evaluate the different participant's response to the seven categories of the tool. By using the evaluation tool the responses provided align with general expectations - Irish companies appear to be more innovative with French and British companies being less innovative. Irish companies appear to tolerate more risk than French and British companies. These are characteristic of an entrepreneur as described by Blanchard (2013) and in line with the perception of the Irish people being of an entrepreneurial nature. All of the managers confirmed that they operate in more of a horizontal joint venture structure. In terms of the hierarchy of the venture structure, the French and Irish managers leaned to a flatter structure and the British leaned to a more traditional hierarchical structure.

The managers all seemed to provide autonomy to the staff in the joint venture, however, they all discussed to some extent that the autonomy was the ideal operation of the venture under the premise that if the contract was operating efficiently - returns were positive. If the contract was not operating as it should, they would reduce the autonomy and become more involved.

By testing this evaluation tool at a high level it was possible for the researcher to gain an understanding of the use of this tool. The analysis of the responses could be used, with further secondary information, to produce a table that can rank the target companies in the different dimensions. The collected data could then be cross checked so as to create reliability on the ranking of the dimensions. According to Gomes (2011) many joint ventures fail because of the lack of methodical and thorough measurement of the cultural differences. By using this type of evaluation tool and developing the responses into the aforementioned table would increase the success and longevity of the venture. For example it could help identify the level of challenges to be anticipated in the implementation process and this can lead to certain approaches being required to realise the synergies (Gomes, et al., 2011).

Unexpected findings

Most of the managers agreed that it was easier to not form a joint venture; joint ventures can be complicated and do require more time to manager and agree on the strategy. While there are many examples from the literature of successful joint ventures (Severn Trent Services, 2014; Seeds, 2012; O'Reilly, 1998; Fey, 1996; Chan, 1996; Lawerence & Vlachoutsicos, 1993; Weiss, 1987) there are also examples of their failures (Damanpour, et al., 2012). There is no doubt that managing a joint venture adds an additional level of complexity to a service, if cultural differences are added, this then adds another layer of complexity to the process.

A joint venture could be seen as marriage of convenience until one partner extracts the experience, client base, resources to go it alone. One manager said during the interview that if you do not have the entry points into the country, the easiest way is to find a local partner and form a venture with it. He said that this was how they entered one market initially. Since they are now established they go for contracts without any partner. This was a surprising revelation, as the literature (Farrell, et al., 2008; Yeniyurt et al. 2005) suggests that joint ventures are an avenue to improve competitiveness through global expansion and therby the parents complementing each other. This occurs to a point of necessity and once the right entry points or resources become available the incentive may be for one organisation to go it alone. A marirage of convenience!

An interesting question arose from the interview process – are the British less willing to form partnerships of an even split or one of less dominance? This surfaced in one interview from a British participatant where he claimed due to the past history of the British, they liked to be dominant and were not good at being the minor shareholder. They prefered to be the dominant partner and this therefore limited them in their businesses.

This question is worthy of further research.

Chapter VII

Study Limitations

This qualitative research sought to explore the factors that affect joint venture operation when the parents hail from different nationalities. However, there are several inherent limitations in this study.

Firstly, the study was limited to participant interviews from seven managers employed through two organisations, therefore the results cannot be generalised across all joint ventures. As seven managers were interviewed the sample size was relatively small.

A second limitation of this study was that the participants worked with the researcher and this may have led to the participants not providing full or honest answers due to the inherent power imbalance or autonomy from the participation – researcher relationship. Although this is noted as a limitation the researcher believes this added to the overall findings as he had direct access to senior managers from the organisations and he believes the information gathered during the interviews was open and honest. It is also recognised as some of the interviews occurred through a conference call which could reduce the non-verbal communication medium.

A third limitation of this study was that the participants were interviewed over a single interview. A second interview could have allowed expansion of certain themes to a greater extent. Second interviews were not possible due to the researcher and the participants work load.

Chapter VIII

Further research - implications and recommendations

The findings from this research have implications on the following areas.

- Stakeholders of the companies participating in this research can utilise this research to identify the success factors of joint ventures, the cultural differences observed and identify ways to minimise the culture clash, thereby increasing the efficiency of the partnership;

- Stakeholders of non-participating companies – for the reasons outlined above;

- Researchers and academic leaders in this area – this research further adds to the existing knowledge, it complements the existing literature and has considered the perception of satisfaction as suggested by Saorin-Iborra (2006).

Further research is recommended into this area with a greater number of companies from the Irish – foreign joint venture operations in order to establish if the findings of this research are in line with experiences of other managers with joint venture experience. This will further validate this study and provide more conclusive evidence on the issues encountered by parents and staff working in joint ventures.

As the growth of joint ventures continues in the Irish infrastructure sector, according to KPMG International (2009) and as outlined in the National Development Plan (2004), it is important to increase the knowledge of operations with foreign parents to increase the effectiveness of the venture and administer the contract according to the contractual obligations. Effective operation will not only increase the longevity of the venture but will also improve the general view of joint ventures and further establish the mechanisms that can reduce the negative effects of their inherent operation.

Several recommendations have been determined from this research.

- Complete further qualitative research in this industry sector through a collaborative research programme by major companies in sector, to include qualitative and quantitative research to further validate and complement this research findings and core themes;

- During the partner selection period, complete a robust programme – Gomes, et al. (2011) evaluation process - for the venture parties outlining the strategic fit and goals, the cultural differences, codes of conduct expected and communication mechanisms;

- Hold cultural training/awareness for possible joint venture staff to establish the key determinants – cultural differences and ways to mitigate those differences;

- Continuous assessment by the members of the management teams of the joint ventures to ensure that staff have the appropriate knowledge and skills to deal with the cultural complexities, that managers are cognisant of the differences and that they possess the mechanisms to deal with these differences;

- Do the British limit business opportunities, since they are unwilling to be involved in joint ventures if they are not to be the dominant partner? Further research into this area would be recommended.

Chapter IX

Conclusion

In summary, the findings of this research have highlighted, and reinforced existing literature, by representing the key areas that contribute to the success and longevity of joint ventures and that cultural differences do have an effect on the venture's performance. This study has allowed the researcher to gain a unique understanding of joint venture operation in the Irish infrastructure sector through the experiences of several managers with direct connections to joint ventures. The study also revealed their perceptions on the key success factors and the importance of recognising cultural differences. While this research has in many ways validated the existing research of academics in this area (Beamish & Lupton, 2009; Cartwright & Cooper, 1992; Currall & Inkpen; Gomes, et al., 2011; Scott, 1999; Schuler, et al., 2004) it has in addition not reinforced, to some respect, other academics findings (Schillaci, 1987; Damanpour, et al., 2012; Saorin-Iborra, 2006). It should be considered that the non validated findings with the aforementioned academics could be due to the small sample size and the relative cultural similiarity of the three nationalities consideed in this research.

The main themes that arose, and supported by the literature, were to have trust and honesty as the key ingreedients as a corner stone of the joint venture. In addition to this, the strategic fit and selecting complementary partners is important. Ultimately, the participitants agreed that the simplest joint venture to manage was one of dominance thereby allowing relative unrestricted decision making.

Hennart & Zang (2002) discuss understanding the different communication levels; different cultures place different values on these aspects. Communicationa and culture was described by Scott (1999) as cultural fluency, through this study the need to be culturally fluent with your partner has been validated as an important factor; knowing your partner and them knowing you to reduce misunderstandings, increase trust and partnership longevity.

This research has added to the recommendation by Schillaci (1987), who suggested further research should be conducted to focus on the determining factors of the perception of satisfaction with the relationship created between partners – from this research satisfaction was key but the overarching key determinant was profitability.

It appears that trust, honesty and transparency are key determinants in a joint venture, however cultural also plays a key role in this relationship. This inherently suggests that there are issues on numerous levels, including cultural differences to be managed and overcome in joint ventures.

In addition to the findings of this research, that have reinforced the existing literature, there have also been some interesting discoveries. Are joint ventures just a marriage of convenience whereby once a foreign partner has built the network and reputation with a partner at some stage they will separate, being satisfied that they no longer need their partner? A question arose about the suitability of the British to form equal or less dominant joint ventures, which should be further investigated.

Joint venture employees and managers require a more informed understanding of the different cultures they work with, to include the cultural beliefs, expectations, and traditions of their partners to ensure the joint venture has the best chance of successful operation; without the negative influences that can slow decisions and reduce trust among the partners. According to a report by Davy Stockbrokers in the Irish Times (Irish Times, 2014) newspaper Davy have increased their predicted growth prospects for the Irish economy by +3.5% in 2014 and by +3% in 2015. This fact, coupled with the increase in joint venture formations (KPMG International, 2009; Gomes, et al., 2011) it is particularly important for the Irish economic recovery and in the strategic interest of the organisations to ensure that joint ventures operate effectively and provide adequate returns for their expectant shareholders.

Appendix

Appendix A

1. Research Questions

From literature, it is evident that a cultural difference in joint ventures plays a role in the ultimate success and longevity of the partnership. It is also evident that the cultural differences are not recognised as importantly as they should and therefore when conflicts occur they cannot be managed effectively. When forming the partnership, if the cultural differences are known a conflict resolution process can be built into the joint venture to mitigate the conflicts that can occur, and the venture will stand a better chance of resolving the differences as they occur. If the parents can agree on the strategy and goals this will ease the operation of the venture by enabling the parties to be focused on a clear unified strategy and lessen the impact of the cultural differences, as they have clear goals and the method of achieving its success can become part of the organisational approach to its strategic achievement.

General background.

1. Years working as in this industry, what is your nationality, what countries have you previously worked in and with what other nationalities?

The objectives of the research will be to answer the following questions:

1. What are the main key success factors in forming a successful joint venture?
2. How are the success factors implemented and measured?
3. In the literature it has been suggested that many JVs become too complex at the inception (multiple unclear strategies, previous autonomous cultures) and they have to be managed and respected. The JVs have to be designed to cope with complex environments but should not become too complex.
    a. Have you experienced over complex JVs and how has this effected the JV performance?

b. Was this complexity realised and managed to reduce the complexity?

c. Do you think the differing cultures contributed to the complexity?

4. In the literature again it has been suggested that the relationship between the partners, complimentary cultures being of the upmost importance. Would you agree with this statement?

    a. Do you think that cultural fit can add to the longevity of the JV, why?

5. Some authors contend that cultural differences can have a negative effect on the longevity of the JV whereas this is countered by other authors who believe that the right fit of culture will yield a long relationship?

6. Does differing mother tongues create an additional communication barrier? For example in Japan there are many ways to say no without saying no. In Western languages the verbal communication is more direct and, for example, with Asian languages these idiosyncrasies may be lost.

7. A leading author on JVs categorised the difference of cultural beliefs and assumptions into seven categories. These categories, they suggest, define the basis on which the joint venture cultures can differ. By defining and the identification of these categories by the parents will provides a valuable tool in assessing the fundamental fit of the parents. What side would you tend towards on the following:

- Approach to innovation and activity

  Rapid response to changes in competition to exploit opportunities versus stability and intensive planning - they do not want to grasp every opportunity due to the risk potential of the unknown.

- Approach to risk

  Is the main factors that differentiates organisations; they can be risk adverse due to their cultural perspective or risk tolerant due to their capitalistic nature.

- Horizontal relationship

  Different approaches to the internal cooperation among staff on similar levels and its importance; or internal cooperation versus the encouragement of competition, to increase competition and effort.

- Vertical hierarchical contact

  Management beliefs to subordinates – support, understanding and encouragement. These beliefs concern human nature in organisations using the X and Y theories. It assumes that people become lazy and avoid responsibility as in theory X whereas in theory Y people have the opposite manner. This leads management to hold different beliefs depending on its leaning towards either theory and treat people differently.

- Autonomy and decision making

  Beliefs on the level of autonomy granted to people to make decisions. This ultimately leads to the form of the organisation structure.

- The approach to performances

  The need to achieve constant improvements and to achieve targets, or other beliefs, to address the importance of the requirement that managers share the responsibility for performance of staff.

- Approach to rewards

  Management culture is expressed in the manner of reward. Reward fairly and competitively in relation to other organisations in the industry.

8. Does a culture difference have a negative impact on joint venture performance?
9. Are there recognised cultural differences with your partners (list) and how do you combat these, do you have any special strategy that you employ to counteract this?
10. Does a cultural difference necessitate a strategy of increased communication, cooperation and conflict resolution?
11. Do you think differences in cultures increase the cost of cooperation, as parents need to spend greater time and effort to work with each other?
    a. Do the parents or managers of the venture attribute a cost to the management of the cultural differences; is it measured in cost or time.
12. Do you believe organisational cultural differences negatively affect the interaction process in international joint ventures?
    a. What are the impacts on the venture, can conflict be managed effectively, and does this lead to prolonged decisions or other aspects that negatively affect the performance.
13. What is the perception of satisfaction with the relationship from the parent organisations in relation to culture of the venture as a key determinant?

Appendix B

Interview Summary Manager A_18.07.2014

General background

Years working in this industry, what is your nationality, what countries have you previously worked in and with what other nationalities?

Response: 30 + years in infrastructure Operation and Maintenance, British by nationality, worked in France with French people predominantly, in the UK for a French company; consortium French/Italian/Australian and worked in Ireland for French company in an Irish context and then back to the UK working for a French company in an JV with UK and French parents.

The objectives of the research are to answer the following questions:

1. What are the main key success factors in forming a successful joint venture?

Response: Both his JV experiences not an equal partnership which presents difficulties for the minority shareholders. Majority shareholder has advantage to influence the decisions. To start on a level playing field is impossible if the JV is unbalanced. For smaller shareholders it's difficult to impose their opinions. If different culture then it makes it even more difficult, also different cultures in the companies from the same country and their industry; one coming from a financial industry has a different culture to one coming from a tolling and operation industry, and one coming from a construction industry versus one coming from a tolling industry there are notable differences in the cultures. Even in the same nationality he believes that there are cultural differences in the different industries.

~~2. How are the successes factors implemented and measured? Not asked.~~

3. In the literature it has been suggested that many JVs become too complex at the inception (multiple unclear strategies, previous autonomous cultures) and they have to be managed and respected. The JVs have to be designed to cope with complex environments but should not become too complex.

a. Have you experienced over complex JVs and how has this affected the JV performance?

Response: JV is not more complex than the above industry differences plus another layer of cultural differences, JV was working in a complex industry, if you are not clear about the JV strategy then this adds to the complexity of the operation. You have to have a clear understanding of the complexity of the contracts that were put in place by the grantors.

b. Was this complexity realized and managed to reduce the complexity?

c. Do you think the differing cultures contributed to the complexity?

Response: In theory parents bring a different competency to the table, reason why the consortium won the bid in general. In his experience the majority shareholder was not the most experience in the industry. The smaller parent brought the experiences and more often were not allowed to express this experience. Makeup of JV should be its strength but often a weakness if the issues are not thought about from the start, so while you are starting up a complex contract the cultural complexities need also to be resolved which adds to the time and workload of the JV.

4. In the literature again it has been suggested that the relationship between the partners, complimentary cultures being of the upmost importance. Would you agree with this statement?

Response: Very important, but the structures he worked in they were not allowed to influence as they were the minority – large was trying and mostly succeeding to force their culture on the other shareholders.

a. Do you think that cultural fit can add to the longevity of the JV, why?

Response: In an ideal world it can but in his experience he has not seen this happen.

5. Some authors contend that cultural differences can have a negative effect on the longevity of the JV whereas this is countered by other authors who believe that the right fit of culture will yield a long relationship?

Response: He believes that JVs are created to win a bid; it is not though at the start how the cultures will fit together, often not considered. Parents brought in to fulfill role to win the business targets. The JVs he has worked in were long term contracts of 30 years + and although culture fit was not considered he believes that for long term contracts consideration should be given at the inception to the cultural differences. He believes if it is it would be a benefit and commented that the larger shareholder must have thought if it did not work they would have the last word anyway.

6. Does differing mother tongues create an additional communication barrier? For example in Japan there are many ways to say no without saying no. In Western languages the verbal communication is more direct and, for example, with Asian languages these idiosyncrasies may be lost.

Response: As an English speaking native but also speaking French, remembers in a meeting in his first JV with Dutch, Italian, British and French, all speaking English agreeing on things but all walked out of the meeting with a different understand of what was agreed. For ex a French person agrees they will deliver at a certain date, the British person will expect that delivery date. The French person commits to a date and uses best endeavors to meet this but if they do not deliver on this date then it's not such a big deal whereas the British person expect this date as the delivery date. For this example he said the French company had not done much business outside of France and were not aware of committing to the exact date. He further elaborates that in the Anglo Saxon culture delivery dates mean the delivery on the date given, in continental Europe dates are more flexible: we are happy to deliver on the date but don't believe that we are not capable to delivery but if it slips it's no big deal. Two French companies will give dates, approximate, but will deliver. In the UK it is the date and this is the delivery date.

7. A leading author on JVs categorized the difference of cultural beliefs and assumptions into seven categories. These categories, they suggest, define the basis on which the joint venture cultures can differ. By defining and the identification of these categories by the parents will provides a valuable tool in assessing the fundamental fit of the parents. What side would you tend towards on the following:

- Approach to innovation and activity

  Rapid response to changes in competition to exploit opportunities versus stability and intensive planning - they do not want to grasp every opportunity due to the risk potential of the unknown.

  Response: By definition JVs cannot move rapidly as there are many shareholders who may want to do different thing. JV's are used to de-risk a bid.

- Approach to risk

  Is the main factors that differentiates organizations; they can be risk adverse due to their cultural perspective or risk tolerant due to their capitalistic nature.

  Response: Anglo Saxon's are more risk adverse.

- Horizontal relationship

  Different approaches to the internal cooperation among staff on similar levels and its importance; or internal cooperation versus the encouragement of competition, to increase competition and effort.

  Response: First JV everyone all came fresh to JV, not seconded. In second JV people were seconded from the parents but as each brought expertise then they tended to work alone in their silos. He commented it seemed like an intelligent way of working.

- Vertical hierarchical contact

  Management beliefs to subordinates – support, understanding and encouragement. These beliefs concern human nature in organizations using the X and Y theories. It assumes that people become lazy and avoid responsibility as in theory X whereas in theory Y people have the opposite manner. This leads management to hold different beliefs depending on its leaning towards either theory and treat people differently.

Response: He did not think this was an issue in the, in the first JV all staff were more or less equal and in the second JV it was very complex and there were bosses from different JV at different levels in the organization.

- Autonomy and decision making

Beliefs on the level of autonomy granted to people to make decisions. This ultimately leads to the form of the organization structure.

Response: In theory his experience the JV did allow autonomy but unfortunately the differences were always finished by the larger shareholder making a decision. Over time this level of autonomy was eroded due to the knowledge that the minority would be eventually overruled by the majority parent and eventually don't try to argue anymore.

- The approach to performances

The need to achieve constant improvements and to achieve targets, or other beliefs, to address the importance of the requirement that managers share the responsibility for performance of staff.

Response: Larger parent was form construction industry, managed as a construction contract but was an O&M contract. The French make complex intellectual performance targets (gave ex of Assignment letter) with a noble objective whereas Anglo Saxon take it more at face value. French cultures make things complex.

- Approach to rewards

Management culture is expressed in the manner of reward. Reward fairly and competitively in relation to other organizations in the industry.

Response: No real difference from French and Anglo Saxon rewards.

8. Does a culture difference have a negative impact on joint venture performance?

Response: It shouldn't, it should be a positive effect if managed to provide value. Culture not taken into account at the start and therefore it becomes a negative when you have to manage the contract requirements as well as the cultural differences.

9. Are there recognized cultural differences with your partners and how do you combat these, do you have any special strategy that you employ to counteract this?

Response: I do, not easy to say how it manifests itself but I must have certain pathways I use when talking to French people and something different when talking to British people. He knows how to interpret the different cultures, mentioned the delivery date example, he know when a date is given it's not black and white it's more grey.

10. Does a cultural difference necessitate a strategy of increased communication, cooperation and conflict resolution?

Response: Yes, if they are open and honest they will also need to increase communication.

11. Do you think differences in cultures increase the cost of cooperation, as parents need to spend greater time and effort to work with each other?
    a. Do the parents or managers of the venture attribute a cost to the management of the cultural differences; is it measured in cost or time.

Response: Don't believe they do but a JV with different cultural parents inherently does have additional time to spend on the differences in culture. The longer you take to resolve the cultures the more time and cost you have to spend on the differences.

12. Do you believe organizational cultural differences negatively affect the interaction process in international joint ventures?
    a. What are the impacts on the venture, can conflict be managed effectively, and does this lead to prolonged decisions or other aspects that negatively affect the performance.

Response: There is an impact, in terms of time and then associated cost the parents doesn't necessarily recognize or actively manage. The conflicts can be detrimental to decisions and the wider environment of operating the contract. The impact is they that contract may not be operated as efficiently as it should and the ultimate delivery of the contract to the client may suffer.

13. What is the perception of satisfaction with the relationship from the parent organizations in relation to culture of the venture as a key determinant?

Response: No they don't think of this, the JVs are created to add to the bottom line of the respective businesses and the culture (industry or nationality) but if they paid more attention to the culture there must be an untapped advantage they could access the bottom line. You could train for the differences, like Finance, Operation training you could in advance give each an understanding of the different cultures to ready the parents for the different cultures. A cultural analysis of each patent there is a case to complete this at the beginning, maybe train them, so when parents make a decision it is understood why they make a decision.

Appendix C

Sample summary of previous research methodologies

Source: Saorin-Iborra (2006, pp. 239-241)

Table 1
Negotiation Outcome Measurement Criteria Applied in the Empirical Studies

Negotiation type	Author(s) (year)	Study type	Study characteristics
		Outcome concept: Agreement/Non-Agreement	
Interorganizational: Joint venture	Weiss (1987)	Qualitative	Case: • GM-Toyota Interviews to key participants in the negotiation process
Interorganizational: Joint venture	Weiss (1997)	Qualitative	Cases: • GM-Toyota • Ford-Toyota Interviews to key participants in the negotiation process
Interorganizational: Acquisition	Commons (1985)	Qualitative	Case: • Natomas-Diamond Interviews to key participants in the negotiation process
Interorganizational: Acquisition	Sebenius (1998)	Qualitative	Cases: • Acquisition negotiations by SMI Interview to the Board manager of SMI
		Outcome concept: Profit	
Laboratory experiment: commercial negotiation	Graham (1983)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Simulation of bilateral negotiations between 44 Japanese businessmen, 50 Brazilian and 38 American – Correlations, Variance, Regression
Laboratory experiment: commercial negotiation	Brett & Okumura (1998)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Simulation of bilateral negotiations: 30 negotiations USA/Japan, 47 USA/USA and 18 Japan/Japan – Anova, Manova, Correlations
		Outcome concept: Profit + Satisfaction	
Laboratory experiment: commercial negotiation	Campbell, Graham, Jolibert & Meissner (1988)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Simulation of bilateral negotiations between 48 French businessmen, 44 German, 44 British and 138 American – Correlations, Means
Laboratory experiment: commercial negotiation	Graham, Kim, Lin & Robinson (1988)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Simulation of bilateral negotiations with 138 American businessmen, 54 Chinese, 42 Japanese and 38 Korean – Anova, Correlations
Laboratory experiment: commercial negotiation	Adler, Brahm & Graham (1992)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Simulations of bilateral negotiations between 40 Chinese businessmen and American – Correlations
Laboratory experiment: commercial negotiation	Graham, Mintu & Rodgers (1994)	Qualitative / Quantitative	— Simulations of bilateral commercial negotiations between 700 businessmen from 11 cultures – Correlations, PLS, Regression

Table 1 — *continued*

Negotiation type	Author(s) (year)	Study type	Study characteristics
		Outcome concept: Profit + Satisfaction — *continued*	
Laboratory experiment: Sales distribution negotiation	Pinkley & Northcraft (1994)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Simulation of bilateral commercial negotiations between 150 MBA students – Manova, Anova, Regression
Laboratory experiment: commercial negotiation	Maxwell, Nye & Maxwell (1999)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Simulation of bilateral commercial negotiations between students – Correlations, Anova
Interorganizational : a takeover Laboratory experiment: take overs	Kristensen (2000)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Interviews with two head negotiators for a buying and selling company in a Swedish takeover – Simulation of takeovers with 88 graduate students of business administration – Anova, Regression
Interorganizational : Exporter-Importer	Shankarmahesh, Ford & LaTour (2004)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Interviews with export sales executives and importers – Questionnaires (121 respondents) – Correlation, Factor analysis
Laboratory experiment: commercial negotiation	Novemsky & Schweitzer (2004)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– 5 simulations of bilateral commercial negotiations with undergraduate and MBA students – Anova, Regression
		Outcome concept: Satisfaction	
Interorganizational: Joint venture	Walsh, Wang & Xin (1999)	Qualitative	Interviews to managers of joint ventures USA/China
		Outcome concept: Satisfaction of Interests	
Interorganizational	Tung (1982)	Quantitative	– Survey to managers from 138 American companies with businesses in China – T-Tests, Factorial, Regression
Interorganizational	Weiss (1990)	Qualitative	Case: • IBM-Mexican government Interviews to key participants in the negotiation process
Interorganizational	Brouthers & Bamossy (1997)	Qualitative	8 Cases Interviews to managers from West Europe companies and Eastern and Central Europe companies
Interorganizational	Yuan (1998)	Qualitative	Case: • SC-CC Interviews to key participants in the negotiation process

Table 1 — *continued*

Negotiation type	Author(s) (year)	Study type	Study characteristics
		Outcome concept: Satisfaction of Interests — *continued*	
Interorganizational: Joint ventures	Yan & Gray (1994)	Qualitative	Cases: • 4 joint ventures USA/China Interviews to key participants in the negotiation process
Intraorganizational (interdepartmental)	Xie, Song & Stringfellow (1998)	Quantitative	– Survey to 300 companies from Hong- Kong and 500 companies from Japan, USA and United Kingdom – Multiple Regression multiple (OLS)
Intraorganizational	Kozan & Ergin (1999)	Quantitative	– Survey to HHRR manager and all the personnel from 40 public and private companies from Ankara (26) and other cities (the rest) – Means
		Outcome concept: Satisfaction	
Interorganizational: Collaboration agreements	Anderson & Narus (1990)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Initial interviews to Board managers for the survey design sent to 730 distributors and 635 manufacturers – LISREL
Laboratory experiment: Labour negotiation	Stuhlmacher & Champagne (2000)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Simulation with 116 students from the North-eastern and Midwestern university – Correlations, Means, Typical deviations
Laboratory experiment: Labour negotiation	O'Connor & Arnold (2001)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Simulation of a bilateral negotiation with students – Correlations, Regressions, Chow Test
Intraorganizational	Ury, Brett & Goldberg (1988)	Qualitative	Case: • Mines Caney Creek Interviews to managers and trade unions
Intraorganizational	Dyer & Song (1997)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Interviews to some managers for the survey design (sample of 290 American managers and 653 Japanese) – Manova, Duncan Test
Intraorganizational	Tjosvold, Morishima & Belsheim (1999)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Interviews to 39 managers and 29 workers who were members of a trade union of a forestry products company from Canada – Regressions
		Outcome concept: Interests Satisfaction ± Relationship Satisfaction	
Interorganizational: Joint venture	Yan & Gray (2001)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Interviews for the survey design sent to 90 joint ventures USA/China – Frequencies, Correlations, Multivariable analysis, Manova
Laboratory experiment: Resources distribution negotiation	Butler (1999)	Qualitative / Quantitative	– Simulation of bilateral negotiations with 324 students – Logic, Regression

Table 4

Appendix D

Informed Consent Forms – signed by participants

National College of Ireland

Joint Venture Success and the Cultural Differences in the Irish Infrastructure Industry

Informed Consent Form for Individual Interviews

Dear C[redacted]

Introduction

I, Derek Lydon, as part of my masters' thesis of an MBA in national Colleague of Ireland am undertaking a study of cultural differences between joint venture parents. My thesis supervisor is Dr Colette Darcy.

Description:

In the next 30 minutes to 45 minutes you will be asked questions regarding your perceptions of joint venture success and its relationship with its parent's culture. Your comments will be recorded to maintain the utmost accuracy in your statements. Your name as a participant in this interview will be held in strict confidence by the investigator. Comments will not be attributed to any one individual. The recordings will be stored under lock and key in the office of the researcher until completion of the interview analysis. Upon completion of analysis recordings will be destroyed. Recordings will be used to clarify and illuminate the notes. It is possible that specific comments will be reported if they illuminate a particular theme. Real names will not be tied to these comments. If, at any point, you are concerned about a comment that you have made please contact me at +353 87 [redacted]or e-mail Derek.lydon@student.ncil.ie and your comment will be erased from all records if you so choose. There are no foreseeable risks to your participation in this interview.

Please Note

1. I understand that the Human Participants Ethical Review Application Form in the National Colleague of Ireland has been submitted and approved for this research.
2. I understand the scope, aims, and purposes of this research project and the procedures to be followed and the expected duration of my participation.
3. I understand that if I consent to participate in this research, I may decline to answer any question or discontinue my participation at any time.
4. I confirm that no coercion of any kind was used in seeking my participation in this research project.
5. I understand that if I have any questions pertaining to the research you can call Mr Derek Lydon (+353 87[redacted]r e-mail Derek.lydon@student.ncil.ie).
6. I certify that I have read and fully understand the purpose of this research thesis and the risks and benefits it presents to me as stated above.

Please sign below:

I CONSENT/AGREE to participate in this research project [redacted]

~~I REFUSE/DO NOT AGREE to participate in this research project~~ ____________

Date 01 . 08 . 14

Derek Lydon

From:	[redacted]
Sent:	28 July 2014 17:50
To:	Derek Lydon
Subject:	RE: Interview

Hi, Derek,
I consent and agree to participate in the research project and associated interview as outlined in the text below.
Regards,
Gerard

National College of Ireland

Joint Venture Success and the Cultural Differences in the Irish Infrastructure Industry

Informed Consent Form for Individual Interviews

Dear [redacted]

Introduction

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National
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In the next 30 minutes to 45 minutes you will be asked questions regarding your perceptions of joint venture success and its relationship with its parent's culture. Your comments will be recorded to maintain the utmost accuracy in your statements. Your name as a participant in this interview will be held in strict confidence by the investigator. Comments will not be attributed to any one individual. The recordings will be stored under lock and key in the office of the researcher until completion of the interview analysis. Upon completion of analysis recordings will be destroyed. Recordings will be used to clarify and illuminate the notes. It is possible that specific comments will be reported if they illuminate a particular theme. Real names will not be tied to these comments. If, at any point, you are concerned about a comment that you have made please contact me at +353 87 [redacted] or e-mail Derek.lydon@student.ncil.ie and your comment will be erased from all records if you so choose. There are no foreseeable risks to your participation in this interview.

Please Note

1. I understand that the Human Participants Ethical Review Application Form in the National Colleague of Ireland has been submitted and approved for this research.
2. I understand the scope, aims, and purposes of this research project and the procedures to be followed and the expected duration of my participation.
3. I understand that if I consent to participate in this research, I may decline to answer any question or discontinue my participation at any time.
4. I confirm that no coercion of any kind was used in seeking my participation in this research project.
5. I understand that if I have any questions pertaining to the research you can call Mr Derek Lydon (+353 87 [redacted] or e-mail Derek.lydon@student.ncil.ie).
6. I certify that I have read and fully understand the purpose of this research thesis and the risks and benefits it presents to me as stated above.

Please sign below:

I CONSENT/AGREE to participate in this research project [redacted]

I REFUSE/DO NOT AGREE to participate in this research project ____________

Date 23 \ 7 \ 14

National
College of
Ireland

Joint Venture Success and the Cultural Differences in the Irish Infrastructure Industry

Informed Consent Form for Individual Interviews

Dear P[redacted]

Introduction

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Please sign below:

I CONSENT/AGREE to participate in this research project [redacted]

I REFUSE/DO NOT AGREE to participate in this research project ____________

Date 21. 7. 19

National College of Ireland

Joint Venture Success and the Cultural Differences in the Irish Infrastructure Industry

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Please sign below:

I CONSENT/AGREE to participate in this research project [redacted]

I REFUSE/DO NOT AGREE to participate in this research project ____________

Date 18/7/14

National College of Ireland

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Please sign below:

I CONSENT/AGREE to participate in this research project [redacted]

I REFUSE/DO NOT AGREE to participate in this research project ____________________

Date 11/8/2014

National College of Ireland

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~~I REFUSE/DO NOT AGREE~~ to participate in this research project ____________________

Date 14 August 2014

[redacted]

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