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Why Knowing How to "Engage" Cross-Culturally Matters: Kenyan Principals' Experiences In Cross-Cultural Collaboration

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**Why Knowing How to “Engage” Cross-Culturally Matters: Kenyan
Principals’ Experiences In Cross-Cultural Collaboration**

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Dissertation

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“WHY KNOWING HOW TO ‘ENGAGE’ CROSS-CULTURALLY MATTERS: KENYAN PRINCIPALS’ EXPERIENCES IN CROSS-CULTURAL COLLABORATION,” a Doctoral research project prepared by ANDREA NELSON in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in the Educational Foundations and Leadership Department.

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Abstract

How Kenyan principals engage cross-culturally may provide applicable approaches for others in education. This study sought to examine how Kenyan principals navigate the complexities of working in such a diverse country as Kenya, with over 40 native tribes. Through the interview process the principals shared their many challenges working cross-culturally, but more importantly, what strategies and approaches they use to navigate these complex relationships. This study also examined how these strategies and approaches align with the current cultural frameworks; cultural competence, cultural intelligence and cultural humility. The findings show that Kenyan principals use multiple approaches that align with all three of the frameworks, but most notably with cultural humility. This finding highlights the importance of more research in the study of cross-cultural collaboration and the cultural frameworks.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In the dimly lit classroom, Kenyan educators were eagerly taking notes and asking questions about educational leadership. The professors leading the discussion had been invited to present a workshop on differing leadership styles and collaboration amongst Kenyan staff. As a Doctor of Education student from George Fox University I was there to observe, learn and assist in whatever capacity was needed. Coming from all over the region in northwest Kenya, these teachers and administrators had gathered at Moi Secondary School Kaptama for a rare professional development opportunity. The teachers volunteered to share insights with little or no hesitation; they passionately shared opinions with their tablemates, and appeared to be exclusively absorbed in the content of the workshop. Many questions ran through my mind about their level of engagement. It seemed that their willingness to collaborate and become a part of the process of learning was at an elevated level. They seemed fairly at ease to share their ideas with the presenters, Dr. Eloise Hockett and Dr. Linda Samek, and I wondered what led to this level of trust and vulnerability. Turning my attention to the presenters, I began to observe how they interacted with the teachers and administrators through spoken word and body language. Did Hockett's and Samek's style or way they approached their role in this specific teaching environment allow for this ethos of collaboration? With these questions circling through my thoughts I returned home to my own classroom, with my own students, where I continued to ponder what made that workshop day in Western Kenya seem so effective.

There appeared to be three distinct themes at play during that workshop. One, the Kenyan educators seemed to be effectively collaborating with each other. Two, it appeared that

there was cross-cultural collaboration between the Kenyan teachers and the western educators. Both the Kenyan teachers and the western educators were fully engaged in dialogue with each other that was centered on their teaching experiences. Lastly, the western educators projected both competence and humility, by listening to the teachers and adjusting their delivery of the content to meet the needs of all the individuals present. As another western educator and an observer in the room, I perceived that the workshop was successful for all parties involved. However, that may not have been the view of the Kenyan educators. This one sided viewpoint has led me to wonder how Kenyan educators perceive and engage in cross-cultural collaboration with other cultures within Kenya and with cultures outside of Kenya, primarily western-based cultures. To gain a deeper understanding of cross-cultural collaboration I wanted to examine the perceptions of Kenyan principals through the lens of effective cultural approaches, especially that of cultural humility and cultural competence.

Evolving cultural frameworks have been emerging in scholarship over the last two decades. Primarily the focus has been in health care and the social services where there has been discussion on three facets of cultural knowledge: 1) cultural competence; 2) cultural intelligence, and 3) cultural humility (Earley & Ang, 2003; Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). As individual components these are not adequate, and it seems to be difficult to establish fixed lines between them. The frameworks that are described are from a cluster of closely related concepts. Even though there are differences amongst them they appear to derive from a similar root, sharing many of the same principles. These frameworks may help individuals develop knowledge and skills that will help them work across cultures, but may inherently continue to simplify the individual uniqueness of differing racial and ethnic groups.

Even though these varying frameworks are valuable, they may not provide enough insight or information to meet the needs of culturally diverse educators trying to work collaboratively. For example, cultural competency assumes the end of learning and growth. Whereas when comparing cultural competence and cultural humility, Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) emphasized that while intercultural competence has focused on building knowledge, cultural humility is based on self-evaluation and self-awareness that asks an individual to continually check their own biases and stereotypes. Within the field of psychology, studies have shown that clients' perceptions of their therapist's cultural humility are positively associated with progress in developing a working alliance and improvement in their overall therapy (Hook, Davis, Owen, Worthington, & Utsey, 2013). If cultural humility is shown to improve working alliances between patients and therapists, there may be indications that it could be a necessary prerequisite skill when working within other professions.

The application of cultural humility in the educational setting is especially essential when working with both local and global cultures. Often when individuals from different cultures are working together there is miscommunication and a lack of understanding due to cultural differences. Adopting an attitude of cultural humility allows educators to recognize how their own cultural identities shape the way they perceive individuals and situations and challenges them to reflect inward before making judgments. Cultural humility involves being actively present in the situation, listening, asking questions, as well as having an openness toward new ways of thinking and doing (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). Educators have the opportunity to serve others within the framework of cultural humility through the biblical message of *love thy neighbor* (Mark 12:31), which entails taking on an attitude that intentionally places others' needs

at the center of our own. It also requires a suspension of judgment and to humbly evaluate our own attitudes and beliefs.

In the book, *Learning from the stranger: Christian faith and cultural diversity*, David Smith (2009) challenges readers to depart from the tourist mode and learn to interact with people on a multi-dimensional level. He writes that, “travel in itself is no guarantee of significant intercultural learning or neighborly love” (p. 86). To have meaningful relationships with people from other cultures requires educators to be purposeful in their interactions and seek out new understandings. Having successful cross-cultural interactions requires collaborating with others. Collaboration is the act of working toward common goals, listening to all stakeholders, valuing each person’s unique background and perspective, and compromising for the betterment of the project (Smith, 2009). Working within the framework of cultural humility versus other cultural frameworks may lead to more effective cross-cultural collaboration.

With globalization, the ever-increasing international network of economic systems and concepts, the reality of working with people from differing cultures is inevitable. How these cross-cultural relationships work will depend on the willingness of each party to seek out ways of effective collaboration. Thus far those relationships have been explored primarily in the business world and missions, however there is little discussion in the literature on cross-cultural collaboration in education from a global perspective. Working with the concept of cultural humility, cross-cultural partnerships have the potential to be a positive experience for all stakeholders. The way in which people approach cross-cultural collaboration should be fundamental in understanding cross-cultural partnerships. I was curious to learn what approaches Kenyan principals use to work cross-culturally and whether or not these approaches can be tied to either cultural competence or cultural humility.

Statement of Problem

Currently, there is little, if any, formal data on how cross-cultural educational collaboration between culturally diverse educators is perceived from the perspective of Kenyan educators. After visiting and collaborating with Kenyan educators I have a personal connection to my study's objective and strive to shed more light on educational partnerships between culturally diverse educators such as myself and Kenyan educators. Also, I intend that this work will aid in the continued efforts of George Fox University and their cross-cultural collaborations, professional development and continued teaching of the peace curriculum in Kenyan schools. The purpose of this study is to examine how Kenyan principals perceive effective collaboration with culturally diverse communities within Kenya. In order to understand the complexities of cross-cultural collaboration for Kenyan principals, it is important to conduct a study using phenomenological methods, including personal interviews. An objective of the investigation is to explore how the frameworks of cultural humility and cultural competence can be used to analyze Kenyan principals' approaches to cross-cultural collaboration. Another objective is to understand why knowing how to *engage* cross-culturally is important to collaboration efforts.

Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to further the inquiry on cross-cultural collaboration between Kenyan principals and culturally diverse communities within Kenya. The research questions that this study aims to answer are:

- 1) What challenges do Kenyan principals identify when working with diverse cultures in Kenya?
- 2) Which approaches do Kenyan principals identify as useful when navigating diverse cultures within Kenya?

- 3) In what ways do these approaches align with specific cultural frameworks as stated in the research literature?

Definitions of Key Terms

Cross-cultural collaboration: For the purpose of this study, cross-cultural collaboration is the working partnership between individuals from differing cultures. Within this study, the participants will have already worked with individuals from diverse backgrounds within Kenya and many have also worked cross-culturally outside of Kenya, including the western world. Collaboration will be used as a synonym for partnership, relationship, and teamwork.

Approach: For the purpose of this study, the term approach will refer to a way of dealing with something: a way of doing or thinking about something (Merriam Webster, 2014).

Western world: For the purpose of this study, the term western world will refer to North America, Europe, and Australia (Merriam Webster, 2014).

Cultural humility: Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) have developed a definition of cultural humility that emphasizes that there is no end point to gaining cultural competence. Cultural humility is based on self-evaluation and self-awareness that asks an individual to continually check their own biases and stereotypes.

Cultural intelligence: An individual's capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings (Earley and Ang, 2003).

Intercultural competence: As defined by Fantini and Tirmizi (2006), intercultural competence is a set of complex abilities required to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself.

Cultural competence: As defined by Portera (2014) cultural competence is a set of abilities, knowledge, attitudes, and skills that allow one to appropriately and effectively manage relations with persons of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations to this research include: time constraints, lack of generalizability, and distance. Due to the distance separating myself and my participants, the time available to conduct personal interviews is limited to time frame that I was in Kenya. Also, another limitation is the lack of generalizability due to the small sample size. The participants were chosen based on the specific criteria of working with diverse populations, so they may or may not be the best participants for this specific study. One key concern is that participants who chose to participate in the study might already possess a greater interest in cross-cultural collaboration than those who decline to participate. This would influence my findings and must be a consideration when discussing my results. Another concern is that participants may give answers that they think we want to hear. Some participants may know professor Hockett from her previous work in Kenya or other George Fox faculty, which makes this concern even more plausible.

The main delimitation to my research is that I am only conducting a qualitative study that will limit its generalizability. Also my literature review does not examine the complexity of the Kenyan education system and how it influences principals, rather I examined cultural frameworks, cross-cultural collaboration, and globalization.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

My objective in this review is to present an overview of the current knowledge regarding cross-cultural collaboration and cultural frameworks as applicable to education, specifically in East Africa. I will begin by examining the varying models associated with working cross-culturally: cultural competence, cultural intelligence and cultural humility. I will then discuss the current literature on global partnerships and collaboration, again with an emphasis on educational partnerships, primarily in East Africa and the significant role that principals play. Lastly, I will examine why cross-cultural engagement is important, particularly why knowing how to *engage* cross-culturally is vital. In order to understand the complexities of cross-cultural collaboration in education, it is important that each of these facets are explored and discussed. *Figure 1* highlights key aspects of each cultural framework and demonstrates how cultural competence naturally leads to cultural intelligence and ultimately cultural humility.

Cultural Frameworks: Why knowing how to "engage" or "approach" working cross-culturally is important

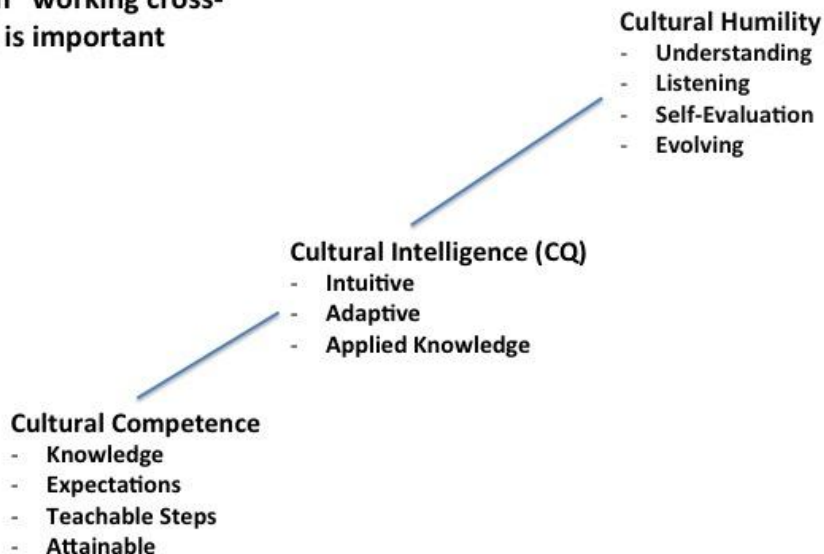


Figure 1. Ways to approach working cross-culturally.

Cultural Competence Framework

As Portera (2014) points out, there are a number of varying definitions of what it means to be culturally competent. However, Portera attempts to provide more concrete definitions of what it means to be culturally competent in the fields of education, counseling and psychotherapy. Portera's article is a comprehensive review of the literature on cultural competence, which eventually defines cultural competence as "a set of abilities, knowledge, attitudes, and skills that allow one to appropriately and effectively manage relations with persons of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds" (p.159), helping the individual manage diversity in a way that respects themselves and others. Even through this attempt at defining what it means to be culturally competent, there is vagueness. Portera, as well as those discussed later in this review, advocates for more professional training in cultural competence.

Even though there may be challenges to gaining competence working cross-culturally, there are strategies and key factors that can help people find success in their efforts. In a long-term ethnographic study, Schadewitz (2009) sought to identify cross-cultural differences that arose during international collaboration, and strove to identify patterns that could support the development of courses and interactive technologies. Not surprisingly after identifying reoccurring themes in the data, the study found that solutions for supporting collaborative activities differ across cultures, and that these small differences require the use of different methods to support collaboration. This study demonstrated that having basic competencies in another culture is extremely helpful when working cross-culturally (Schadewitz 2009).

How does a person become fully competent in another culture, let alone multiple cultures? The cultural competence research of Anucha (2008) points out the importance of not relying on the western world's ideas and strategies when working in the developing world. Anucha stresses that it is imperative that organizations do not commit cultural imperialism. Cultural imperialism is defined as western values, knowledge and skills are considered to be superior to those of non-western cultures. Each culture around the world has unique cultural characteristics and issues, and too often the western world fails to address these differences. Anucha notes that not much has been done to address cultural imperialism and other cultural differences, which leads to frustration on the part of local stakeholders. This only highlights further the need for going beyond cultural competence when working cross culturally and the need for more training in competence and beyond (Anucha, 2008; Bozalek, et al., 2014; Johnson and Miller, 2002; Samuel, 2014).

There is debate amongst the literature on cultural competence training in a professional development scenario. Li (2013) proposes a three stage cultural approach to professional

learning for teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students. For teachers to learn about their students' cultural practices and how these practices come to play in the classroom environment, there needs to be professional learning programs in place that support these educators. Li outlines the three stages of the cultural approach to professional learning: 1) cultural reconciliation, which means knowing oneself as well as others; 2) cultural translation, which helps teachers develop skills in the competence to bridge differences in instruction; 3) cultural transformation, which is the final step in becoming change agents and skilled cultural workers. According to Li, if the three stages of cultural professional learning take place, educators will be better prepared to face the needs of their culturally diverse students.

Cultural competence focuses on gaining important skills that help people interact with other cultures. Unfortunately, having a specific skill set in one culture may not translate to having the correct skill set for another culture.

Cultural Intelligence Framework

Where cultural competence ends at mastering a skill set, cultural intelligence begins broadening what it takes to interact successfully with others. According to Ang, Van Dyne and Koh (2006), cultural intelligence is the capability of the person to adapt to new cultural contexts and also their ability to manage people from different cultural backgrounds. Ang et al. also note that cultural intelligence (CQ) is crucial in managing teams with high cultural diversity. Moon (2013) used this concept of cultural intelligence to study how team members' CQ on multicultural teams, affected collective performance over time. Through a two-year quantitative study, Moon found that the rate of change in team performance was positively associated with both cultural diversity and cultural intelligence, meaning that the longer teams worked together, the better they performed on given tasks. Another key result was that teams who had both cultural intelligence and who were culturally diverse performed better and improved more quickly.

Kim and Van Dyne (2012) examined how cultural intelligence affects international leadership potential. They found the leaders with higher cultural intelligence perform better on intercultural tasks that are not cognitively related. Kim and Van Dyne (2012) also found that leaders who had prior intercultural contact scored higher on both self and observer ratings of cultural intelligence. One highlight of Ang and Van Dyne's findings was that prior intercultural contact is especially important for leaders from the western world. Ersoy (2014) also examined the role of cultural intelligence in cross-cultural leadership effectiveness. Similar to Kim and Van Dyne's work, Ersoy found that successful leaders established good relationships and were open to different cultures other than their own.

To further understand why cultural intelligence may not be sufficient as a cultural framework it is important to recognize the key components to developing cultural intelligence. According to Griffer and Perlis (2007), there are a number of factors contributing to the development of cultural intelligence. Some of these factors include the respect for the guiding principles of cultural intelligence, which are: the development of one's diversity consciousness and an understanding of the concepts of privilege and difference. One important point made by Griffer and Perlis is that cultural intelligence does not necessarily mean someone has an innate ability for cultural intelligence, but that cultural intelligence can be developed. Griffer and Perlis describe the development of cultural intelligence as a “study of self and the awareness that everyone has a multi-perspective identity” (Griffer & Perlis, 2007, p. 29). This description opens up the door to cultural humility, but does not quite go far enough in outlining key frames of mind, such as humility, when working in culturally diverse settings.

Tan (2004) also contemplates this concept of cultural intelligence regarding global partnerships. As individuals encounter new cultures and the workplace continues to globalize, people are often expected to be respectful towards different cultures and to interact appropriately. Tan asks how individuals are to develop capabilities to adapt across different cultures and why some people possess the capacity to work cross-culturally, while others do not. The concept of cultural intelligence requires both understanding the state of things as well as the knowledge of cultural procedures as highlighted in *Figure 1*. According to Tan, having knowledge about another culture is not sufficient to be considered culturally intelligent; being CQ also requires action. Based on Tan's assessment, competence in another culture is not sufficient, and that people must move past competence into cultural intelligence. However, as the framework of

cultural humility moves forward into research it must be examined as another way of engaging cross-culturally.

Cultural Humility Framework

The emerging concept of cultural humility may fill in the gaps of cultural intelligence and cultural competence. One predominant issue with cultural competence is that it goes about the process of understanding another culture by learning traits of that culture. Recently, scholars such as Jenks (2011) and Ortega and Faller (2011) have pushed against cultural competence in exchange for more open-minded approaches to cultural awareness. Jenks (2011) notes that in healthcare education there has been a shift from a 'list of traits' training approach to a more open-minded attitude, with emphasis on self-reflection. Cultural competence may lead to a false sense of knowledge about individuals and families (Ortega & Faller, 2011). Even though there has been an ever-increasing amount of cultural competence and cultural intelligence training, Ortega and Faller believe that these models are not sufficient for meeting the goal of successful cultural collaboration. Instead, they argue that cultural humility should be embraced as an alternative approach to working with families. One aspect of cultural humility that they stress is the importance of knowing oneself and undergoing critical self-reflection in regards to relationships with others.

Hollinsworth (2013) also emphasized self-reflection after teaching social work undergraduates who worked with Australian indigenous people. Like previous researchers, Hollinsworth also critiqued the current cultural competence theory. Primarily it was noted that cultural competence is too broad of a term, which can be confused with cultural sensitivity, cultural safety, cultural awareness, and cultural proficiency. Hollinsworth discussed that too many cross-cultural programs focus on providing generic knowledge rather than a

comprehensive method for working with other cultures. To establish positive relationships, Hollinsworth stresses that there needs to be: adequate time; flexibility; respectful listening; observation before judging or recommending; demonstration of humility; and critical reflection.

In her often-cited work, *The Myth of Cross-Cultural Competence*, Dean (2001) questions whether it is possible to be competent in someone else's culture. She argues that instead of trying to be competent in someone else's culture, individuals should adopt a model based on the acceptance of their lack of competence. If culture is continually changing and evolving it would be very difficult to learn a skill set that would give an individual enough competence to fully know another culture. Similar to Hollinsworth (2013), Dean also emphasizes the importance of being respectful, nonjudgmental, and interested in the exchange of beliefs and understanding. She also calls for humility to achieve understanding and a common set of goals and purposes between groups.

Due to cultural humility being a fairly new concept there has been very little research completed using it as a model. Research that has been conducted has been primarily in the areas of medicine and psychology. According to Hook et al. (2013), cultural humility can be defined as “the ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented, in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the client” (p. 354). In their study they found that clients’ perceptions of a caregiver’s cultural humility had a positive association with building a successful alliance between patient and provider. They highlight that cultural humility requires caregivers to be continually self-reflective, which leads to a positive experience for their clients (Hook et al., 2013).

Globalization and Cross-Cultural Collaboration

As the world continues to globalize there has been a significant rise in international collaboration across many professions. In a study on the impact of international collaboration, Sweeney, Weaven, and Herington (2008) looked at multicultural influences on group learning. The researchers collected their data from a total of 20 focus groups involving 107 students from postgraduate and undergraduate courses. The participants were primarily made up of international students enrolled in the Australian University of Queensland. The results of the study show that group work had a positive effect on fostering collaboration between people of different cultural backgrounds. Sweeney et al. also found that by intentionally grouping multicultural people together, people see others' perspectives. Even though Larsson, Boud, Dahlgren, Walters and Stork (2005) pointed out that there might be challenges and tensions in cross-cultural collaboration, Sweeney et al. (2008) found that these challenges could lead to positive outcomes for stakeholders.

Working cross culturally can and should be a positive experience for all stakeholders when all parties strive to communicate clearly. In his study on knowledge mobilization, Alcorn (2010) attempted to understand how knowledge mobilization takes place when stakeholders are from different cultures. Alcorn emphasized that relationship building is crucial to knowledge mobilization and relies heavily on Campbell and Fulford's (2009) stages of knowledge development. These stages of knowledge development as applied to building partnerships are: 1) generation of new knowledge; which draws on the experiences of each stakeholder and seeks to generate a new blended knowledge; 2) mobilization; an interactive phase based on forming a relationship of trust and respect that leads to discussion, debate and shared ideas; 3)

contextualization; designing a program that works in the local context and gives local ownership; 4) adaptation; the process of adapting program standards to meet the needs of the local partners; 5) application; “the process by which research directly informs or indirectly influences actions for practical outcomes” (p. 464); and 6) integration; the long term cumulative results of the program implementation (Campbell & Fulford, 2009). Alcorn used these stages to examine ways of incorporating research into practice while working cross-culturally.

The process of working collaboratively with other cultures is not a scripted process and takes time to form partnerships that will have lasting outcomes. Ramos and Chester (2010) presented how to establish a successful multicultural organizational development team, and how the team would look in action. The authors shared their own experiences as multicultural organizational development (MCO) leaders, and how they used their own team’s diversity to implement in MCO in other organizations. They pointed out that many organizations have a diverse workforce, but do not strive to be truly multicultural or inclusive. Ramos and Chester found through their own personal observations that there is strength in multicultural teams, and that trust and honesty are the foundations to successful MCO teams. Using the insights of Alcorn (2010), Bantz (2010), and Ramos and Chester (2010), the undertaking of working cross-culturally emerges as a sometimes difficult and long process that depends heavily on both parties desire to meet common goals and objectives.

There are many examples of international collaboration in the healthcare field. Conrad and Morton (2012) found that successful collaboration between students and faculty from a number of health professions was most evident through transcultural immersion. Transcultural immersion takes place when participants are placed into another culture different than their own. Participants are immersed in the culture by working directly with the people they are

collaborating with and serving. Conrad and Morton identified that students who had participated in this immersion style had given positive feedback about their experiences. Students felt that the opportunity gave them invaluable practice working in diverse cultures while also learning how to work collaboratively. Conrad and Morton also note that the program curriculum focuses on the principles of cultural humility such as: listening, seeking new perspectives, and self-reflection, and how these are foundational to creating relationships with individuals from other cultures. Similarly, Mayo (2014) noted that one key to successful collaboration was fostering trusting relationships and allowing time for stakeholders to experience each other's organizational culture.

Continuing the exploration on collaboration in international health care, Pastakia, Schelhase and Jakait (2009) examined a collaborative partnership between pharmaceutical students at Purdue University in the United States and pharmacy students at the University of Nairobi, Kenya. This collaboration has provided an educational exchange benefiting both sets of stakeholders. Pastakia et al. noted that the foundation of this collaboration was based on the "exchange of ideas" and had been a beneficial learning experience for both Kenyan and U.S. students. Through a buddy system, the U.S. students were partnered with Kenyan students to enhance their learning and enable them to be immersed in local culture. Collaboration was key to this partnership and helped prioritize the needs of the people being served over the needs of the individual students. This relationship served as a source of guidance as the Kenyans build their own health care infrastructure (Pastakia et al., 2009).

In the field of education there has been an increased interest in collaboration between western universities and non-western institutions. Even though universities are seeking out more opportunities to collaborate with schools from developed and developing countries, there are a

few important factors that need to be addressed for collaboration to be successful (Karin, 2009). Karin, similar to Alcorn (2010), emphasizes that it takes time to build good relationships and that there needs to be a mutual benefit to both institutions. It is also noted that for successful collaboration both institutions must have leaders that are dedicated to the collaborative process. These international relationships are dependent on the formation of mutual respect between educational partners (Bantz, 2010). However, it can be challenging to develop programs that meet the needs of all stakeholders. Tensions may rise between stakeholders when faced with challenges such as developing international programs. When programs are meant to be beneficial to multiple cultures and groups, it can be difficult to please all parties involved (Larsson, Boud, Dahlgren, Walters, & Sork, 2005).

Through a three and a half yearlong case study, Alcorn (2010) examined the partnership between the Solomon Islands College of higher education and the University of Waikato. Alcorn found that knowledge mobilization might be a precursor to knowledge generation, while working collaboratively. Moreover, one important aspect of Campbell and Fulford's six stages that Alcorn discusses is that they are not always sequential, but often happen simultaneously. Similar to Bantz (2010), Alcorn also highlighted that one key feature of success was the formation of respect and the importance for partners to learn about each other.

According to further research of Alcorn (2010) and Campbell and Fulford (2009), the method in which western world educators go about professional development in Africa is key to the success or failure of an educational program. As Alcorn (2010) and Bantz (2010) have both identified, the methods with which relationships are built and maintained are crucial. Much of the research conducted on intercultural competence, which is the possession of a set of complex abilities allowing individuals to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with

cultures other than their own (Fantini and Tirmizi, 2006), and cultural intelligence, the capability to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings (Earley and Ang, 2003), has been in the medical or social service fields. However, these similar concepts have slowly been percolating into education theory and practice. Students come from diverse backgrounds and teachers need to know how to meet the varying needs of their students. Multicultural education experiences are one way that cross-cultural competence may be fostered in educators (Keengwe, 2010).

Keengwe (2010) researched the cultural experiences gained by preservice teachers and English Language Learners during a semester at an American university. Through the course of the study it was found that the preservice teachers' cultural competence skills were enhanced through their cross-cultural experiences. At the end of the program, the preservice teachers came to understand the worth in cross-cultural experiences. Further, they indicated that their appreciation for all cultures grew, and that culture has a great influence on students. Based on the feedback from the preservice teachers, Keengwe emphasized the need for more training in cross-cultural partnerships to help the preservice teachers prepare to teach in culturally diverse settings. These professional learning opportunities not only help prepare western educators to work with students in their own country, but also prepare western educators to work cross-culturally in other non-western countries.

The importance of comparative research on how individuals engage cross-culturally, grounded in the diversity of local cultures and contexts cannot be over emphasized. In their study, Crossley, Chisholm and Holmes (2005) contend that research in education has dramatically increased with an ever growing global society. With that said, it is important that researchers keep in mind the local social context in which their research takes place. Jull,

Swaffield and MacBeath (2014) also contend that the local social context is key to successful teacher development. Providing on-site school based teacher development has the greatest impact on teacher practice. However, often cross-cultural collaboration does not take place in the local social context of the local culture. Hofstede (1980) discussed these intercultural encounters in his research. He noted that sometimes there are wide gaps in projected outcomes between aid or training donors and the local members of project teams. Sometimes the objectives of the trainer are in conflict with the need of the trainee. These difficulties often are due to the difference in cultures among the stakeholders and a lack of knowledge and trust between partners (Hofstede 1980).

An interesting study conducted by Edge, Frayman and Lawarie (2010) researched the influence of international school partnerships between schools in Africa, Asia and the U.K. One of Edge et al.'s research questions focused on the factors that support positive school partnerships. Edge et al. developed case studies to look more closely at 55 schools in 12 different countries and how partnerships influenced students, teachers, schools and communities. They found that some schools had what Edge et al. refer to as *high momentum partnerships*, which are partnerships that seemed to have the most influence on their leaders, teachers and students. Edge et al. found that there were key criteria that made these *high momentum partnerships*. These criteria can be described as: 1) early exchange experiences, 2) whole school involvement in the decision-making process, 3) having a clear purpose, 4) access to training for staff and students, 5) strong and sustainable leadership. These criteria emerged as the most important factors leading to successful collaboration and cross-cultural partnerships between the schools.

Collaboration through the self-reflecting lens of cultural humility may lead to a richer collaborative partnership. Hockett (2012) used the cultural humility framework while developing a new peace curriculum with Kenyan educators. Hockett's case study focused on how the peace curriculum was developed, which was through successful collaboration with Kenyan educators and western educators. The research highlights that having trusting relationships and practicing reflection helped the collaboration efforts move forward successfully. Understanding how the cultural frameworks and practices such as cultural humility may influence educational objectives and working relationships is important. For educators this means that learning how to engage with other cultures is important to meeting set outcomes (Hockett, 2012).

Researchers such as Gow and Morss (1988) and Wilson (2000) have found that much of the professional development in sub-Saharan Africa comes from top-down mandates dictated by national governments. According to Gow and Morss, and Wilson, there is a need for local ownership and teacher voice in educational professional development. Cultural collaboration training that utilizes local knowledge and that is encompassing enough to include multiple stakeholders is ideal (Gow & Morss, 1988). Unfortunately, there is often a lack of local organizational competence, and there is a shortage of suitably trained local personnel (Gow & Morss, 1988). Wilson (2000) examined the vital step of selecting suitable agencies to oversee projects, as well as designing projects so that they draw on local expertise. Her research on teacher development as an opportunity for cross-cultural collaboration in South Africa highlights the importance of ownership and local context, very similar to the work done by Jull et al., 2014. After a group of teachers from five regions in South Africa attended a part-time inservice training course, Wilson gathered feedback that led her to interesting results. She found that the

ownership over the training experience encouraged team cooperation across cultures. She also found that keeping the training in a local context was very valuable to the learning process. Through observing teachers' classes the program allowed teachers to apply what they learned directly to their context. Wilson also noted that agreeing to a well-defined task and having positive interpersonal relationships greatly aided in the professional development process. These insights into how educators want to be trained and why their voices are important is key to understanding the need for more research on how collaboration and training occurs.

Samuel (2014) examined teacher collaboration, the importance of continued professional development, teacher ownership and voice in his research on teacher development in South Africa. Like Wilson (2000), Samuel focused on South Africa and also concentrated on the need for high quality professional development in education. He believes in teacher voice, and that there is a vital need for collaboration and engagement for all stakeholders, at all levels, including institutional, regional, and national levels. He discussed how teacher education is a lifelong process that needs to be fostered by a number of different organizations. Ultimately, Samuel calls for deliberate action to reassert teacher voice in professional development in South Africa. This is yet another reason why recognizing how people collaborate and what approaches they use when working with other cultures is fundamental to successful cross-cultural collaboration.

Trust plays a vital role in teacher development and cross-cultural collaboration, which means it is an important component to successful professional development. Johnson and Miller (2002) discussed the importance of teacher immediacy, or the way teachers use verbal and non-verbal cues across cultures. Through cross-cultural study of immediacy, credibility and learning in the United States and Kenya, the researchers found that both cultures craved positive teacher immediacy. Using quantitative measures, the researchers explored the relationship between

verbal immediacy, nonverbal immediacy, credibility and cognitive learning. Johnson and Miller found that there is a significant positive correlation between verbal immediacy, nonverbal immediacy and credibility. Examples of verbal immediacy in professional development would be the trainer referring to teachers by name, asking for individual opinions, and using inclusive language with the group. Nonverbal immediacy could be making eye contact with the teachers, using positive body language and maintaining a relaxed physical stance. Johnson and Miller also found a positive relationship between immediacy and cognitive learning. Even though many African cultures display high immediate relationships, they also live in a culture of unequal power distribution. How this comes into play when working cross-culturally in a professional development setting needs to be further researched.

The importance of caring and immediate relationships in education was also discussed in the research of Bozalek et al. (2014). They analyzed the professional development of teaching and learning in South Africa from a political ethics of care perspective. They used Tronto's (1993) political ethics of care as a normative framework to evaluate a model of teaching and learning for teacher professional development. According to Tronto's political ethics of care, there are five moral elements: 1) attentiveness; 2) responsibility; 3) competence; 4) responsiveness; and 5) trust (Tronto, 1993). Bozalek and colleagues intended to use the model to improve current teaching practices in order to enhance student learning. Through reflective writing the participants explored teaching and learning professional development practices. Bozalek et al. revealed how vital it is to work collaboratively, the importance of relationships, and the need to be attentive to all stakeholders. Each of these elements must be in place for good care to take place. If one element is not achieved, it negatively affects the success of all the other elements. When these elements are in place and caring for each stakeholder is occurring,

professional development is more effective and can lead to academic improvement in student learning (Bozalek et al., 2014).

Role of the Principal in Cross-Cultural Collaboration

An effective school leader provides support, stability and is always working with the school's mission in mind. Ayiro and Sang (2010) introduced the characteristics of good leadership and wanted to change the traditional model of leadership in Kenya. They believed that school leaders needed to be embracing a mindset that includes: optimism, self-regulation, social judgment skills, empathy, international awareness, cognitive skills, and acceptance of complexity and its contradictions.

Mwangi (2009) gave an example of this mindset in his research on the role of school leadership in student achievement in Kenya. His findings suggest that principals' leadership and engagement, commitment, sensitivity and focus on improvement strongly impacts student performance. Through a qualitative study involving principals and staff of secondary schools with varying degrees of success, Mwangi investigated how school leadership is enacted and experienced in daily practices and how it affects student success in mathematics. The key findings of this research revolve around the discussion of similar themes. The first theme, principal's leadership behavior, looks at the principal's interest in math, sensitivity to failure and role modeling. What Mwangi found was that schools that perform higher in math have principals that demonstrate a higher commitment to ensuring mathematic achievement. One aspect of leadership that was explored was how sensitive teachers were to student problems and needs. Mwangi concludes that in better performing schools, teacher leaders reported a higher personal commitment to student achievement. Arap-Maritim (1983) originally discussed this idea by addressing how teachers and students who have not just personal commitment, but high

self-concept increase a schools overall performance. In his study, Arap-Maritim attempted to provide a cross-cultural perspective of the relationship between self-concept, teachers' perceptions and grade attainment. He concluded that school achievement is likely to be enhanced by favorable self-concept and significant others, such as teachers' perceptions. Mwangi also stated that higher performing schools nurture learning environments that stress a sense of community among staff and students. Mwangi's research supports the concept that leadership plays an important role in the success or failure of a school.

Along the same line of inquiry as that of Mwangi and Arap-Maritim, the research conducted by Thylefors, Persson, Thylefors, Agak, and Serem (2007) made connections between school success and teachers' perceptions. Thylefors and colleagues, however, looked at how head teachers perceive their leadership roles not just in Kenya, but also in Sweden in a comparative investigation. This study gave a unique comparison of head teachers' perceptions in both a developed and developing society. What they found was whereas Kenyan head teachers were more results oriented; the Swedish head teachers stressed staff concerns. The Kenyan teachers viewed staff concerns as more of an obstacle to successes such as higher student performance on national exams.

It is evident from the research that the role of school leadership may be an important contributing factor to the overall success or failure of a school. One theme that has risen from the research is the role of empathy, and perception of self and others in a teacher leader's ability to foster success. However, the studies that have been conducted on school leadership and professional development in Africa are limited.

Due to school leaders having such an important role within their educational setting it may be important that they are provided with professional development opportunities that will

help them engage positively with diverse groups. Researchers such as Wilson (2000), and Jull et al. (2014) point to the importance of local ownership and professional development for successful teaching practice. Even though the role of empathy and perception of self and others are characteristics of a teacher leader's ability to foster success, the availability of professional development could have an even larger impact on school success across Africa. Unfortunately, the studies that have been conducted on school leadership professional development in Africa are limited.

As more cross-cultural collaboration and professional development becomes available to school leaders throughout Africa it will be vital to understand how local context, culture and perceptions influence principals and their programs. Hardman, Abd-Kadir, Agg, Migwi, Ndambuku et al.'s (2009) mixed methods study examined changing pedagogical practices in Ghana and the impact of school-based training. Throughout their article they speculated on the successes and barriers to positive leadership and learning across the country. Through a three-week workshop, 125 head teachers focused on the improvement of pedagogy in professional development in school. In a mixed methods approach they were able to collect data on the views of participating teachers as the program progressed. They tracked how the participants viewed the principles of Leadership for Learning (LFL) by having them complete questionnaires and participate in interviews. The researchers found that the participants in the program benefited from the workshops and professional development, as indicated from their feedback. The head teachers gained insight on student-centered teaching practices that helped them move away from lecture-dominated class time to a more student-friendly environment. One key to LFL program was its foundation and embracement of the local cultural context, which helped the program sustain success and move forward. These participants were then able to go back to their schools

with a broader skill set to help lead their departments. Professional development for school leaders such as this could be extremely impactful for schools across Africa.

Conclusion

To fully understand the complexities of cross-cultural collaboration between people, I have attempted through the review of the literature to highlight relevant research on the topic. The frameworks in which society views cultural interactions are an important component to the larger picture of cross-cultural collaboration. Whereas some researchers rely on the concepts of intercultural competence and cultural intelligence, others go further to suggest that cultural interactions need cultural humility to be successful for all stakeholders. Even though there is little research on cultural humility, Hook et al. (2013) found that there was a positive association between a caregiver's cultural humility and a patient's trust in the caregiver.

As the world continues to globalize and work collaboratively in many professional fields, including education, stakeholders have had to develop ways of working across cultures. The literature reveals that there are a variety of strategies and key factors that can help international partners find success. Many of these strategies are based on one of the frameworks of cultural interactions. Griffer and Perlis (2007) highlight the ability to develop cultural intelligence as a method to work cross-culturally. Not only has the literature exposed strategies, but also the benefits of working cross-culturally. Moon (2013) found that teams who had both cultural intelligence and who were culturally diverse performed better and improved more quickly.

Examples of cross-cultural collaboration in education are limited in East Africa, but the research that has been conducted shows a positive relationship between cross-cultural collaboration opportunities and the success of programs (Edge et al., 2010). Occasionally cross-cultural collaboration involves partnerships between the western world and the non-western

world. Often these partnerships involve school principals, which makes their role in collaboration very important. Through professional learning opportunities these school principals both share and gain skills that they may implement at their schools.

However, there are differing theories on what skills, abilities or knowledge individuals need to work cross-culturally. Unfortunately, the cultural frameworks often fall short to give a comprehensive method of working with other cultures. The framework of cultural humility may help bring these differing concepts together in a way that helps people from diverse backgrounds work collaboratively. Nevertheless, there is a great need for more research in the area of cross-cultural partnerships in education, especially in East Africa. There is even less research on what frameworks Kenyan principals implement when working with other cultures within Kenya itself. This review presents what relevant work has been done in this emerging area of research, but recognizes the need for more research.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

Despite great efforts on the part of educators to effectively collaborate within diverse cultural settings, there are still many misconceptions and communication barriers that can potentially inhibit the success of these cross-cultural partnerships' important work. A possible cause of this problem is a lack of culturally appropriate approaches amongst those who are trying to collaborate. This study sought to better understand cross-cultural collaboration efforts between Kenyan principals, their schools and the communities where they work. In order to gain multiple perspectives in the area of cross-cultural collaboration this study used a phenomenological approach to research. By using personal interviews, and survey data, I intended to gain a clear picture of Kenyan principals' perceptions of cross-cultural collaboration approaches. To achieve a deeper understanding of the factors contributing to effective or ineffective collaboration, a number of principals from Kenyan Quaker secondary schools were recruited to participate in this study.

Research Question

The purpose of this research was to further the inquiry on cross-cultural collaboration between culturally diverse educators.

Research Questions:

- 1) What challenges do Kenyan principals identify when working with diverse cultures in Kenya?
- 2) Which approaches do Kenyan principals identify as useful when navigating diverse cultures within Kenya?

3) In what ways do these approaches align with specific cultural frameworks as stated in the research literature?

Setting

The interviews for this study took place in western Kenya at Kaimosi Girls Secondary School, a school sponsored by the Quaker church in Kenya. The region in which I conducted my research borders the east side of Lake Victoria, and continues north beyond the Kitale region. There are four counties within this area, which are: 1) Bungoma; 2) Busia; 3) Kakamega; 4) Vihiga. Each county independently manages its own offices of education and oversees its own schools. The schools where the participants from this study worked are sponsored by the Quakers, also known as the Friends denomination. Settling in the region in the early 1900s, the Quakers first focused on evangelism, and soon after on education. Their presence in western Kenyan education has grown steadily over the last century and continues to grow today.

There are over 250 Quaker sponsored secondary schools in Kenya, the majority of which are in the western region in which my study took place. Even though Kenya gained its independence from the British in the mid-1960s, they have maintained the traditional British colonial model of education, which requires rote learning and high stakes testing. Regardless of whether schools are government sponsored, private or sponsored by an organization, they must meet the strict government requirements. All teachers must adhere to the same national curriculum and students must all take the same national exam at the end of 8th grade and 12th grade.

Kenya is diverse, with 42 different tribes spread throughout the country. With a history of tribalism and tribal fighting, including post-election violence in 2007-2008, Kenyan schools

continually must find ways of meeting the needs of their diverse populations. Many of the Quaker schools serve multiple tribes.

Participants and Sampling Strategy

The participants for this study included principals from selected secondary Quaker sponsored schools. The secondary school leadership team, which is made up of heads (principals) of Quaker sponsored schools, nominated the principals who participated, as well as vetted them. The principals were nominated based on the criteria of working successfully with diverse cultures. There were no ties to promotion or reward for the principals' participation. These individuals were chosen for being leaders with experience in the classroom, and as principals and for holding education degrees. The sample size consisted of 10 principals who traveled to the interview site at Kaimosi Girls Secondary School over a two-day period. However, one participant was interviewed at their own school site, due to convenience. Access to these participants was made possible through the previous connections made by Professor Hockett and her colleagues from George Fox University and their work with the Quaker secondary schools in western Kenya.

About half of the principals involved did not have direct experience working with Professor Hockett, or other western educators. They did have experiences working with diverse communities outside of their ethnic background in Kenya. Through the joint collaboration of George Fox University and Friends United Meeting Africa Ministries office, some of the principals have had professional development experiences with non-Africans (see Table 1).

Table 1
Demographics of Participants

Participant	Gender	Job Title	School Location	Degrees earned
1	Female	Principal	Tigoi	B. Ed.
2	Female	Principal	Vihiga	M. Ed.
3	Male	Principal	Sirigoi	B. Ed.
4	Female	Principal	Kakamega	B. Ed.
5	Male	Principal	Matete	B. Ed.
6	Female	Principal	Behae	M. Ed.
7	Male	Principal	Kakamega	BSC
8	Male	Principal	Idakuo North	M. Ed.
9	Female	Principal	Kaimosi	M. Ed.
10	Male	Principal	Mbale	B. Ed.

Research Design, Data Collection and Analytical Procedures

In order to understand the complexities of cross-cultural collaboration in education, it was important that a qualitative study using personal interviews, as well as a simple Likert survey to collect data. I chose to collect qualitative data because I wanted rich descriptions that would tell each principal's story, yet at the same time capture a larger phenomenon shared by all the participants. A phenomenological study was most fitting to my qualitative research because phenomenology focuses on how the individual interprets their life experience (Creswell, 2013). I chose the method of phenomenology due to its holistic nature. This method allows participants to describe their experiences as they have lived them, and captures the uniqueness of each individual's life unlike any other methodology. Due to the openness of the interviews and lack of clearly defined steps, which are often a requirement of quantitative research, I was able to allow

my participants' experiences to fully define and shape the themes that arose from their narratives. In other words, I wanted to gain insight on how the participants experience the phenomenon of cross-cultural collaboration within their schools and local communities.

To begin my data collection, I gave a survey to the participants before they were interviewed (see Appendix B). The survey had 12 questions that were aligned to one of the three cultural frameworks; cultural competence, cultural intelligence and cultural humility. The questions highlighted the important differences in the frameworks and served as indicators as to which framework the participants' most closely aligned to. The survey also had questions about the participants' demographics and work experience. The survey not only provided me with more background information on my participants, but also gave me another way to look at my data as it related to the cultural frameworks.

Unfortunately, the survey failed as a valid instrument. There are a number of reasons why I believe the survey failed. The wording on the survey should not have included *strongly agree* and *strongly disagree*. The majority of the participants marked strongly agree on every question, which indicates that, the questions either were not read fully or that the participants wanted to be perceived as agreeing. Also, I did not have the survey instrument properly vetted by outside sources before I administered it to the participants. I should have consulted an expert on quantitative research and also had the survey questions reviewed by my Kenyan contacts. These mistakes lead to a survey instrument that was not useful nor reliable for gaining any insight into how the participants align with the cultural frameworks.

After the survey was administered, personal interviews were completed within a single day visitation lasting about 45 minutes to an hour with each participant (see Appendix A). I conducted the interviews in the library of Kaimosi Girls Secondary School at a library table with

the participants sitting across from me. Snacks were provided to the participants and each was given a George Fox University lanyard with a USB drive attached. They were also given 1000 shillings (about \$10.00) to pay for transportation to and from the interview. I used open-ended questioning to discuss the participants' views on cross-cultural collaboration and the challenges they had faced working outside of their ethnic communities. There were primary interview questions, but I also used follow-up questions to clarify participants' comments. I conducted audio-recorded interviews as well as took brief notes on the surroundings and my interpretations. Once the interviews were transcribed, I then began the process of reading through each one, carefully highlighting and notating any repeating themes or specifics relating back to my research questions. As Creswell (2013) recommends I began looking for common threads as I started to identify the essential of the phenomenon, working through the process of horizontalization and clusters of meaning. This process was completed over a number of weeks as I examined, read, and reread each transcript multiple times in order to narrow the data.

My third method of data collection was through the use of field notes. Using the observational protocol (Creswell 2013), I took descriptive notes of the setting, time and events in chronological order. I took brief notes while participants were completing the survey, as well as jotting down key observations during the interview process, primarily between interviews. The process of taking field notes helped me organize my information, provided supplementary information to the interviews, and helped me to review how I was processing the information at the time of observation. This allowed me to track necessary modifications and continue adjusting my procedures between interviews.

I heavily depended on the transcriptions as well as my field notes as I extracted themes, organized them for meaning and began recording my findings. Using an inductive approach to

data collection, I let the data *speak for themselves*, which helped guide me toward a final conceptualization that shed light on my research questions (Creswell, 2013).

Research Ethics

Before beginning the research study I gave a consent form to the participants to read (see Appendix C). The consent form explained all the details of the study and explained to potential participants that their participation was completely voluntary. I disclosed of my background and the purpose of this research in order to avoid any possible exploitation of the participants. No one under the age of 18 participated in this study. Confidentiality and privacy were maintained through rigorous protection of pseudonyms in all written documentation. Records are kept in a locked file box, where they will remain for three years and then will be destroyed.

Role of the Researcher

As an instrument of data collection I recorded and interpreted the qualitative data collected as objectively as possible. I approached this study as a middle-class, Caucasian woman from the United States. I only speak English and I have had very little experience with the target population. My culture is very different than the Kenyan culture and I am aware that I have biases due to my cultural differences. However, I was very interested in knowing how Kenyan principals engage cross-culturally with other Kenyans and other cultures. By using a variety of data collection tools I planned to negate some of the innate researcher bias that can come with qualitative research. I was an outsider coming in to observe and interview individuals pre-selected by others.

Potential Contributions of the Research

As a graduate student seeking my Doctor of Education degree, this research study not only adds to the literature on cross-cultural collaboration, but also helps me continue researching an area of interest that has not been researched enough. This specific research has also aided in my own understanding of cross-cultural collaboration and how I can be more effective when I am working not only with individuals from other countries, but also individuals within my community. As the researcher in this process I was not only invested in this study for academic purposes, but for my own personal growth in the area of cross-cultural collaboration. I plan to use this research as a stepping-stone toward more opportunities to research the concepts of cross-cultural partnerships, cultural humility and the globalization of education. This is an area of study that is open for much more in depth and rich research.

This research serves as another valuable insight into the process of cross-cultural collaboration. By exploring what cultural frameworks Kenyan principals use when engaging in diverse settings, cross-cultural collaboration can now be better analyzed to propel it toward a more successful process. This research has the potential to broaden the current knowledge of how we engage with others from different cultures. For instance, do educators change their approach depending on what culture they are working with? Do Kenyan principals use approaches from different cultural frameworks when collaborating with people from the same ethnic background compared to those from different tribes? Currently, there is a limited amount of research in the areas of cross-cultural collaboration and cultural frameworks, especially in East Africa. Whereas, there are a limited amount of data in medical and business literature, there are almost no data on how these concepts can be applied to education. With so many educators

working with other cultures around the world, this study is a significant contribution to this specific work.

Chapter 4

Introduction

Chapter four will present the themes that emerged within the data on how Kenyan principals perceive and engage in cross-cultural collaboration with other cultures within Kenya. In order to gain a deeper understanding of cross-cultural collaboration in Kenyan schools, I carried out personal interviews with 10 secondary school principals representing Quaker schools in western Kenya. Prior to the interviews each participant first completed a demographic survey about their job location, age, gender, education level and church affiliation. They also completed a Likert survey to gauge their attitudes toward three cultural approaches; cultural competence, cultural intelligence and cultural humility. The survey had 12 questions, with each question aligning to one of the cultural frameworks. The intent of the cultural attitudes survey was to gain additional information to the interviews in regards to working cross-culturally. However, when looking at the data collected, the surveys did not give me the feedback that I was anticipating. The interviews on the other hand were filled with rich detailed information on how the Kenyan principals perceive the challenges of working cross-culturally, how their role as a leader interplays in cultural interactions, and how they face and respond to challenges.

The purpose of this study was to examine how Kenyan principals perceive and engage in effective collaboration with other educators and the communities where they work. In order to understand the complexities of cross-cultural collaboration for Kenyan principals, it was important to conduct a study using phenomenological methods, including personal interviews (Creswell 2013). One objective of this investigation was to explore how the frameworks of cultural humility and cultural competence can be used to analyze Kenyan principals' approaches

to cross-cultural collaboration. Another objective was to understand why knowing how to *engage* cross-culturally is important to collaboration efforts. The themes presented have been grouped together according to their alignment with one of the three research questions. Each section of chapter four will present the data as it answers each of the three research questions. The participants will be identified as P1, P2, P3, etc.

The research questions that this study aimed to answer were:

- 1) What challenges do Kenyan principals identify when working with diverse cultures in Kenya?
- 2) Which approaches do Kenyan principals identify as useful when navigating diverse cultures within Kenya?
- 3) In what ways do these approaches align with specific cultural frameworks as stated in the research literature?

The participants for this study included 10 secondary school principals from selected Quaker sponsored schools in western Kenya. The Quaker secondary school leadership team nominated the principals that participated, as well as vetted them. The Quaker Secondary School Leadership Team is comprised of 6-8 Kenyan principals from the Quaker secondary schools. These leaders were nominated and voted into their positions by the Quaker secondary school principals across the country. The leadership team is responsible for planning educational workshops and for helping to manage national educational initiatives amongst the Quaker secondary schools. The principals were nominated for this study based on the following criteria: working successfully with diverse cultures as well as working at school sites outside of their own ethnic subculture. There were no ties to promotion or reward for the principal's' participation. These participants tended to have more teaching experience than general classroom teachers and

hold education degrees, with some holding advanced degrees. Out of the 10 participants five were female principals and five were male principals. Their ages range between 44 and 55 years old. (See Table 1).

Table 1
Demographics of Participants

Participant	Gender	Job Title	School Location	Degrees earned
1	Female	Principal	Tigoi	B. Ed.
2	Female	Principal	Vihiga	M. Ed.
3	Male	Principal	Sirigoi	B. Ed.
4	Female	Principal	Kakamega	B. Ed.
5	Male	Principal	Matete	B. Ed.
6	Female	Principal	Behae	M. Ed.
7	Male	Principal	Kakamega	BSC
8	Male	Principal	Idakuo North	M. Ed.
9	Female	Principal	Kaimosi	M. Ed.
10	Male	Principal	Mbale	B. Ed.

Research question #1: *What challenges do Kenyan principals identify when working with diverse cultures in Kenya?*

Tribalism and Ethnicity

Working with others is often a challenge, however, for Kenyan principals the challenges are even greater than I had imagined. Kenya is diverse, with 42 different tribes spread throughout the country. With a history of tribalism and tribal fighting, including the post-election violence in 2007-2008, Kenyans must find ways of meeting the needs of their diverse populations. Many of the schools these principals represented serve multiple tribes, which increases the need for effective cultural practices. The most dominating challenge for Kenyan principals is working with their local communities. Due to the great diversity of ethnic groups and sub-ethnic groups this was one of the most prominent themes that emerged from the data.

All of the principals in this study have worked outside their own tribal and ethnic groups, which has been very challenging at times for each one. Many of the participants were sent to communities from the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) with little warning of where they would be sent or whom they would be working with in those communities. Many were often apprehensive about taking on a new post. Often facing opposition from the community, as expressed by one participant, “The community was not receptive and tended to resent my posting” (P3). The principal reason behind apprehension around work placement is due to Kenya’s richly diverse population. This diversity means that even Kenyans who live in the same province may come from different ethnic groups, tribes, or sub-tribes. P8 explained how his tribe was different than the tribe that he worked with at his school, “One, the food we eat is different from the food they eat. Even the way they prepare the food is different. The way they

greet one another is different.” As Kenya moves forward into a new era many of these tribal traditions continue to shape how people interact with each other. Belonging to a particular tribe may come with benefits from that community, but also can be an obstacle for the outsider.

In Kenya we have a lot of ethnicity. People seem to think that if there is anything you can benefit, then you must belong, in fact there is a popular saying that you must be the daughter of the soil. Meaning you must be the owner of the place for you to even earn a salary justifiably, so you can get those kind of tribal chauvinism, but by in large it depends on how you endear yourself to that community. (P1)

The majority of the participants were very open about the varying cultural biases that they have experienced as a Kenyan and as a Kenyan principal. One interesting comment made by P8 involved Kenya’s colonial past:

I emphasize that sometimes we have stereotypes. In the beginning, we believed that the white are devils. They have come to eat us, the black. That is a stereotype. In Kenya, those stereotypes are also there. So when I went there (school site), I had to understand their culture, how they greet you, how they welcome you, and learn even the language. With people, once you speak their language, you become their own.

P8 recognized the importance of participating in cultural customs as a step to being accepted into the community. He also emphasized the importance of learning the local language, which was a recurring theme among many of the participants.

P2 told a story of a gathering crowd that was upset with a school decision, “It was not a good picture. When I took some time, they started making noise, they were moving around with

tools and shouting. I told them, no, I cannot talk their language. They come from a different tribe, so we don't talk the same language. It was like now what do I do?" This scenario from P2 illustrates how important it may be for Kenyan principals to have some understanding of the local language where they will be working.

However, as P7 noted, the language differences between the tribes are one way that tribes can continue to practice their own culture. "When you go to central Kenya, Kikuyu, they insist on mother tongue. The child just know Kikuyu. The child must know Maru. The child must know Kakamba, at a young age, so it doesn't not lose the culture" (P7). Nevertheless, the traditional tribal languages of Kenya are beginning to fade away as more and more children are educated in British English and Swahili. "That is what you find in western Kenya, people start more with English and Swahili. Our people, they would rather teach the child your language, English, and Swahili. This child reaches high school, he does know. I have my children and they don't talk my language" (P7). The other factor in tribal language loss is the ever increasing practice of intermarriage between ethnic groups. P7 shared his story:

Me, I married a different ethnic group. So when we are in the house, we talk English and Swahili. These kids now, their mother tongue is English and Swahili. We can talk with the mother, our own language, the dialect is different. So you find now that it is different with the kids. We are now seeing the kids will learn. For them, they say, for us, we are Kenyan. We don't need to know your language. We just need Swahili and English.

Even with the inevitable decline in local language as more and more ethnic groups intermarry and more and more Kenyans attend school, there are still more local customs, such as tribal

beliefs, bullfighting and circumcision ceremonies that have stayed strong and challenge today's Kenyan principals.

Language is a key component to any culture, but in Kenya tribal differences go far beyond language. Within the 42 tribes there are additional subcultures that influence how people in each community interact with each other and people from other communities. These local customs can be a challenge for school principals. One custom that was mentioned by multiple participants was bullfighting. This custom not only gleans much community support, but also pulls both students and staff away from academics. P5 related this story: "One of the things they like in that culture is bullfighting. When they are watching bullfighting, they are dancing, if you stay there, you have to support that. If you don't support what they are doing, then you are not supporting them then they have nothing to do with you. The moment we joined them and behave like one of them, they accept you very fast." P5 also emphasized the importance of recognizing the local culture as a way to be accepted by the community. Even though the participants did not agree with bullfighting, or other customs, they expressed how important it was to respect the customs of the local communities. Even when faced with possible drug use, P8 was hesitant to be anything but understanding and respectful of the local culture:

The kind of challenge I had was a cultural challenge where those people were chewing -- I don't know if you know what I'm talking about, Nura, a drug. They were chewing it. To me that is a drug. But to them, that is their culture. The moment I understood that that was their culture, then I accepted it, because mine was to impart knowledge, not to change the people's culture. (P8)

All the participants voiced this balancing act between academics and community support as a challenge. Even when making simple decisions about building on to the school, P2, faced

challenges from the community. “I wanted to expand the building. I called in the parents, and they were so hostile.” Kenyan community members expect results from their schools and when the scores come back low, they often turn the blame to the school principal and staff.

Assembling at the schools in protest is one way that the community expresses frustration with school leadership. “They went to the hall, making noise, ‘there are no results, there are no results! We want our own!’ I told them, parents, the only thing I need from you is trust” (P2).

The challenge of meeting community expectations is also compounded when dealing with a diverse staff and student population. Since both principals and staff are assigned to their school site by TSC, the schools often end up with a diverse population of staff from all over Kenya. This becomes a three-way challenge for principals to work within a local community, manage a diverse staff as well as a student population with children who also come from differing regions of the country. As P9 noted: “The teachers that I have here, they cut across different communities. They cut across different ethnic backgrounds.” With so much ethnic diversity it is difficult to meet the needs of all stakeholders all of the time.

One biggest challenge is sometimes we find it difficult running school programs, because some of the staff has culture, his culture. ‘My culture, we are not allowed to work on Saturday because I am a Muslim, it is part of my religion and my religion is part of my culture. So I can't come to school on Saturday for an academic meetings because I have to attend prayers.’ So you realize that it drags some of the programs that we really wish to have accomplished within some specific time. (P9)

Even when the participants express great flexibility when working with diverse populations, it is also clear that it is a frustration trying to *keep the peace* and accomplish academic goals. All the

participants in this study spoke to how they worked toward unity and sought to understand and respect the cultural diversity surrounding them.

Another challenge for Kenyan principals is meeting the needs of their diverse student population. Many of the principals work at sites where they have a mix of students from both ethnic and various economic backgrounds. These students often face challenges that are outside of the principal's power to take on. "My school is mixed, that means people who bring their children there are economically challenged and most of those children again could be lacking parents could be orphans" (P5). This lack of control over outside situations was not expressed so much as a frustration, but more of a naked reality. Many of the participants described difficult situations that their students had to face, from poverty to sexual assault. Keeping academic standards high while at the same time trying to provide support for these students is a tall order for any principal. One story told by P9 was especially eye opening to me as a westerner. "This is a girl who went through female genital mutilation because the culture dictated it. You know she is in school, but the mind is not in school, because she is reflecting on that when she is in school." These situations, which are dealt with on a frequent basis by the participants, seem like such huge challenges from a western perspective. Another common obstacle for many of the participants was student teacher sexual relationships. Something that is so taboo in the western world is somewhat common in Kenya. That being said, participants who spoke about these relationships only condemned them and discussed how they sought to keep them from happening. "... and that is quite a challenge and it's unacceptable, so if as a principal you are not really on the ground, you will be surprised that some of the pregnancy with these girls who dropped out would have been a result of the teachers. So you really must be very firm" (P1). The reality of young girls being sexually active and getting pregnant expands much farther out

into the community and is a nationwide challenge. Young Kenyan girls are especially at risk when they live off campus and must commute, often long distances back and forth to school each day. Participant five tells a common story of the struggle that Kenyan schoolgirls face often on a daily basis:

Whether they are walking or not, if they are girls, they are also exposed to men on the way. Those men, most of them are older boys. They have some little money, so they may offer to [inaudible], and in the process, they turn them into call girls, so they end up suffering from the problem of the men in that relationship, because they become sexually active and they easily can get STD. Two, again, they can suffer sexually transmitted infections, and then they can also have the danger of getting pregnant. This girl pregnant makes trouble at school at very early ages. If a girl gets pregnant and she becomes a mother, there is nobody to support her. How are they going to support the children? That becomes a challenge. (P5)

Outsider Status

Another obstacle faced by the participants goes back to tribalism. Again, Kenyan principals are assigned to their school sites, which means they may not be aware of the local traditions, language, or norms. This gives them somewhat of an outside status that they must overcome to gain the trust of the community and harness the support they need to effectively run the school. Often the whole staff is from outside of the local community, which furthers the view that the school is operated by outsiders; “I have two deputies, so according to them I am a foreigner. My deputies are from different groups too. They [the community] now look at it that

our school is now being taken over by foreigners” (P2). This sentiment was given over and over again during the interview process.

The key word with participants seemed to be *foreigner*. P5 said, “The challenges are quite a number. As a principal, if you are a foreigner, you may not collect fees. You really have to convince them to give you the money.” Working with the community while having outsider status can be a major challenge when it comes to collecting school fees and gaining support for school wide projects. When the participants first arrived at their school sites they were often met with a mix of curiosity and concern from the local community. “Of course, when you first arrive, they will ask you, from what ethnic community do you come? That is the first thing they will ask you, what is your clan, what is your clan, what is your sub-clan” (P6)? Participants shared that most often the local community first wanted to know where they were from and why had they come to the community. “The challenge is that they look at you as an outsider, outside meaning that they have their own, yet you come to work with them. They expect you to work in your own home. Those are the challenges. Some people feel they would rather have their own son working there” (P7). This seems to be a common sentiment, that the local community does not understand why the principals are not either working in their own ethnic communities or why they do not get principals that are from their own community.

Regardless, there seems to be a disconnect between how principals are assigned to job locations and what the local community’s interpretation of those assignments are. “But it can be a challenge if you are not from that particular group, because in Kenya today we have -- it is tribalism. People want their own to work in their places, especially when it involved money. They feel our resources should remain with our people” (P7). The ways in which these principals have overcome the challenges of an outsider is similar. Most spoke of reaching out to

the community, participating in community events, hiring from the local community and trying to understand the local culture. They are aware of how careful they must be when working with the community as to not make a negative impression. Even when trying to support the local community they must be cautious:

If you want to hire workers, where are you getting those workers? If you pick them from one particular area without knowing, other areas may be up in arms. When you discipline one of the workers, and this worker is from that region, they may not look at the reason why you disciplined him. Perhaps he has done something that demands that he be sacked, and you sack that person. You go back to the community and say, this foreigner sacked me, and they will just now look at this person came to us to sack our people. This person lost their job now. It is a challenge, when you discipline those students, when you discipline the workers, and even when you discipline the teachers. You have to be a bit careful and you make sure that all the others, all the stakeholders', understand the reason why those actions are being taken. Otherwise, somebody can turn around and say you are biased in your action. The outside, people pick it up and think the person is right when they are not right. The way we do our things, if you are a foreigner, you have to consult almost all the board members, the Board of Management, keep consulting all of them, before you take action. (P5)

Even though the participants shared many anecdotes of when they had to be cautious in their leadership, they also recognized that if they made efforts to include the community the community more often than not accepted them. "It depends majorly on how do you play your cards, how do you orientate yourself to your new station, whether it is the same ethnic

background or not. If it is different, then you have to be really, really careful. If it is the same, you will be well received” (P6). Most agreed that if they are getting good academic results and prove to be an effective school leader the local community would support them. “But if you are doing your work well, you don’t have a problem” (P7). Perhaps this need of local support may not seem as relevant to the western reader, but in Kenya gaining the trust and support from the local community is necessary to a successful school.

Research question #2: Which approaches do Kenyan principals identify as useful when navigating diverse cultures within Kenya?

Establishing Their Role as a Leader.

When asked about their role in the local community and school the participants recognized their position as being both powerful and demanding. They serve in a high position in Kenyan society and are looked up to as intellectuals and leaders. Their positions give them authority in their communities and allow them to be change agents for their school, students and staff. Many teachers aspire to one day be a principal. “First of all, truth be said it is quite enviable to be the principal. So, that alone and it is quite a prestigious position...” (P1). The participants I interviewed expressed not only how important their roles were, but also how much responsibility it entails. They voiced a desire to use their position of power in a way that would positively impact those around them:

Because we have that prestigious responsibility, on a personal level, is a desire to use it positively, to impact the community positively. You live a life that is emulating, and when you do that it is very easy for other people to copy, because you are acting like a role model for them, right to your own teachers, and your own students, and to the entire community. They want to see a role model in you, so you must really take care of everything that you do. You must be really be very careful how you handle issues, how you carry yourself around -- very, very crucial how you carry yourself around ...When you don't impress them, it comes out very clearly all over the place. When you impress them and they love the way you do your things, you actually impact on them positively. (P6)

This care in behavior was implied with each interviewee. They each seemed to realize that with their position came not only responsibility, but the possibility of failure. They spoke as though their relationships and role as a leader was always in a delicate state that they must be very careful not to break. “I would say that to be a leader, you must be a role model. You must be able to influence people positively” (P9). Many discussed this fragile balance as though it was something they reflected on often. They noted that they were very aware of their public perception and how they must model upstanding behavior. P6 shared her advice on how to be a role model as a principal:

The role model begins with you as the principal. So you try to be very, very careful in everything that you do, and try to do things right, by all means, try to do things right. When you make mistakes, own up and say, Yes, I did a mistake, forgive me, I won't repeat it again. I just like to be genuine and to be honest.

When I make blunders, I own up, even before students.

Knowing how important their roles are in Kenya, the principals I interviewed all shared how they use their leadership power to shape a more positive environment in their communities and most importantly at their schools.

As a school principal many found it to be their responsibility to also mentor the teachers that work below them. “If I am in this position and I cannot prepare people to take up after me, then I don't always have to be there. So I have to influence others” (P9). This attitude of responsibility to mentor the next generation of leaders was shared amongst the interviewees. They shared how they worked with the staff and encouraged their teachers to come to them with concerns and questions. A few even mentioned the importance of spending time with their staff

at meals and even attending retreats. Working with staff means effective communication, which P7 discussed as both listening and showing appreciation for a job well done.

If you want something to be done, talk to somebody. Let him understand, communication. So when he has done something, appreciate it. You will work with them without any problem. Saying thank you to that particular person. Some people may not want anything from you, but that word thank you, which is very hard for some of the bosses. Many of the people want to look down upon people, because they are down there. You build yourself an ivory tower and it becomes a problem. But learn to be a servant. Serve, when you serve, people just follow you. (P7)

Many of the participants, knowing their powerful positions, were very aware of their leadership style and how they used it to make a positive impact on their school. P1 said, “Yeah, there is a lot of power, but I think the idea is to be careful to use the power well and don’t misuse it.” To counteract this possible use of power, most spoke to the use of delegation and involvement of all stakeholders, including students. That word, delegate, was used repeatedly when asked about their role as a leader. “My leadership style is delegate and I also make sure that I am on the ground, to know what is going on” (P2).

They were very aware of the power of sharing responsibility with their staff. Having staff involved in decision-making and problem solving not only brings them together as educators, but also empowers those who work under them. “Teachers, teachers are okay, once you know the human resource, you have to know how to deal with them. Delegate, once you delegate, the people you have given the responsibility, you will not have a problem. But when you don't delegate, you want to know it all, then you will find problems” (P7). Sharing some of

the power seems to be a key strategy for most of the participants. “You mediate and at the same time you stand aside and let the people work out the problem themselves. You don't give them solutions. Allow them to generate solutions themselves” (P7). Allowing people to share responsibility and feel comfortable enough in their work environment express their ideas and be a part of a team is key.

Yes, it takes much more than one man or woman for it to be done. It is well; other people bring out the best in us, because on your own you may not. But other people bring out the best in us and we bring out in them. As we work, if we get to know that we are building one another, we will get this done -- I shine, you shine, we shine. It is a lot better. (P4)

Amongst these Kenyan principals I got a distinct impression of *process*. That is, they understood that working with others is a process and it takes time. None of them mentioned making quick decisions or having to show their leadership through statements of power.

Attitude and Willingness to Work.

Beyond delegation and leadership style many of the participants discussed how their attitudes and work ethic dictated their role as a principal. They shared how their attitude about education, working with others, and their faith has shaped them as leaders. Many spoke to the concept of fairness and how important it was to model fairness to their students and staff. “One secret to being a principal is being fair” (P1). Participant 3 repeated this sentiment: “Being impartial, fair and living an upright life as a role model.” Many also discussed their faith as a motivator and guide to their leadership role. According to the demographics survey all identified as being Christian (See Table 2).

Table 2

Church Affiliation of the Participants

Participant	Gender	Job Title	Church Affiliation
1	Female	Principal	Anglican
2	Female	Principal	Anglican
3	Male	Principal	Christian
4	Female	Principal	Quaker
5	Male	Principal	Protestant
6	Female	Principal	Quaker
7	Male	Principal	Protestant
8	Male	Principal	Quaker
9	Female	Principal	Christian
10	Male	Principal	S.D.A.

They often attested their attitudes and behaviors as a leader to their faith. Many credited God for their success and ability to lead:

I always put God first in everything. As I was telling you, sometimes the things you say, it is what it is, but all glory goes to God. It is not me, because at times we sit down and tell God, give me wisdom on how to go about. I just told you, from the word, to, that the leadership style is you involve others. (P2)

Their faith also seems to drive their purpose for working with students and staff. “You embrace and accept what has been put in your hands, not matter the size, do your best there, and you never know where else God will want you to serve” (P4). They believe God has entrusted them with the lives and futures of their students and they are there to serve His will.

God has given me children, but these ones the 950 that he has put in my hands to influence I think I must be special for God has chosen me from so many people to

be the one to direct and lead these children into their future. Even the teachers, because that is part of our role is to turn them around and bring them up.... The fact that you know you are also part of changing people's destiny and if guided by God, they end up well. (P1)

This sense that God has given them the distinct responsibility of working with youth and mentoring staff also seems to drive them to work harder. Participants described the importance of work ethic and how it serves a role in how they lead.

Being dedicated and committed to their jobs is important and they feel that God will bless them if they are working their hardest. Also, being fully committed to their work shows to the community that they are there to serve. "When you come and start to work, and you give your all in terms of work and service to that community, they definitely will accept you" (P6). The participants often give up personal time and freedoms in their efforts to serve their communities and the school. Many are moved to new locations with little warning and must be separated from their families often by many miles. Those who work at the boarding schools live on site and are on the premises seven days a week. They wake up early with their students, around 4:30 am and go to bed late, 11 pm, ensuring that everyone is cared for and safe. This leaves little time for a personal life, which can be very taxing on personal relationships and families:

I don't leave school as frequently as I am supposed to and go to my home. I am only free; in most cases when I can do my family things is when school is closed. So immediately I just leave school and go to my home, and go do my business there. But this time, I wouldn't go there. I don't even sleep there, just check around, do the work and come back. Because you know that if anything bad

happened, they don't even think that you have a family, that you are a married woman, you should be busy doing your own things. (P2)

It is uncommon for westerners to have this kind of dedication to their careers. However, these Kenyan principals are so devoted to their schools that they often go a full term, 12 weeks, without seeing their families. “The time spent at school was many, many hours, and very few hours with your family, very, very few hours with your family. The few hours you spend with your family is at night” (P6). This is especially challenging for the female principals who are torn between traditional roles of wife and mother and the distinct role of a school principal. Balancing work and family is difficult in any culture, in Kenya for these principals they have not known any other way, so they manage without much complaint.

Involving All Stakeholders.

Listening to the participants tell their stories of tribalism, poverty and hardship made me wonder how they deal with all of these challenges and still find so much success and positivity. What I found was that they all have a great outlook on building relationships. They build these relationships by inclusion and the simple task of listening. P4 shared one of her strategies for gaining staff support, “We have our meals together. I have not isolated myself as the principal. I don't have tea in my office, because then they will think I am eating better things. So we eat all our meals together as a staff.” P2 was also adamant about creating a culture of belonging and team amongst the staff. “I developed a culture whereby the teachers started feeling they belonged. There was that kind of feeling.” She continued on that as the teachers began feeling like they were valued that the whole school made improvements and their overall performance went up. As the school improved and staff and student attitudes changed it also began to change the community. Word got out about the positive changes and she began to receive the community support that she needed. “So the way the community treats you is a replica of the people inside, how are they talking inside, when they go, because they also go to the villages” (P2).

The other participants also shared this sentiment of gaining teacher support to further gain community support. They all felt that it was their job to create a welcoming environment for all, regardless of whether they were staff, students or community members. When it comes to the community many of the principals hire staff from the local area to further develop the good ties between the school and community:

For the community, I make them to feel part and parcel of the school. I let them know that that school is for us all. If we want building contract, I contracted people from the community. They make bricks and sell to the school, maybe a mason can come and construct something, a toilet or something. Most of the people in the village is employed in the school -- cooks, grounds men, so they own the school as their own. They can't destroy it. They can't say anything ill, because they benefit so much and they feel that ownership, a lot is theirs. That is what we have tried to do. (P4)

This community involvement helps the principals gain the trust of the local people and also provides jobs for area workers. This is a win-win situation that helps form strong bonds between the school and the community they serve. As P4 notes above, the community is part of the school, so therefore they can't condemn it. Much of working with the community has to do with, "being patient, understanding, accommodative, and appreciating their culture the way they are" (P3). This willingness to understand and listen to others from different backgrounds was shared by all the participants. "Just like I said, first and foremost, you participate in the activities with them -- cry with them when they are crying and be happy with them when they are happy" (P6). Often building these school/community relationships involves making allowances. Participants shared that even though bullfighting may get in the way of academics, they have worked around it or have slowly worked with the community to make it less of a distraction for their students. "You don't fight a community. You teach it, you go around their values, and you also look like you agree with them, but slowly advance the academic agenda, so that the two can work in harmony" (P4). By working with the community the principals have found that their academic goals are also more achievable.

The concept of listening to the concerns of their communities is important and goes toward building stronger relationships. “For me I talk to them, they can come with their issues, and I really don't chase them. They come to the office; I listen, even sometimes when they have some activities in the community. I say there is a funeral? What do we do? We make sure we play some role in that, even if I don't go there physically. I am able to organize” (P2). The principal's support for the community goes far in helping ease tensions that may arise due to ethnic differences. P6 explains, “Because Kenya has suffered a lot in terms of diversity, in terms of the ethnic background and practices. A lot of anger and hurt exists in the hearts of many.” With this history of tribal fighting, the principals that I spoke with were insistent on building relationships and being models of tolerance. As P6 eloquently says, “This diversity is not supposed to pull us apart, but is supposed to pull us together.” I sensed that each participant longed for a feeling of unity amongst their communities and their country. With so much violence in their history it is easy to know why they would be trying their best to build up communities and schools that can be harmonize.

Not only is it important for the principals to build relationships with the community, but also with their staff and students. Some of the principals have very diverse staff and are using different team building strategies to gain staff buy in. P9 has nine ethnic communities represented in her school, so she has taken proactive measures to ensure they can work together and build successful relationships. She explains one approach she has used, “I have allowed them to correct me, and they have allowed me to correct them. That is what we believe in the process of transforming each other.” When working with students, the principals apply many of the same methods of relationship building. They understand that the students should be at the

center of their academic goals and concerns. “The public, and more so the client, the student, want a present principal. They don't want an absentee principal” (P4).

Building relationships with their students opens up pathways of communication and creates an atmosphere of trust. P4 shared how she had a student that felt under appreciated and that was acting out often in class. She found out that he liked bread and made sure that he was given some extra bread, then talked to him about his behavior. The act of paying that special attention to him resonated with the student so much that he stopped acting out. He wanted attention and when he was given positive attention he began behaving in a positive manner. It is stories like these that demonstrate how dedicated these participants are to forming strong relationships with all stakeholders.

Often the principals have to work with parents in tense situations involving school fees, absenteeism and misbehavior. Just as they do when working with community members, staff, and students, the principals take their time to assess the situation and listen. P5 shared how being flexible is key to working with parents:

If you are not flexible, then you will conflict with them and they will not have trust in you. But when you are flexible, they say he is flexible, yes, when I am flexible, when you want this done. But they also come crying, so you have to be flexible to listen to them and allow -- like if you want money from parents, you are saying, they must pay, and then tomorrow they all come to tell you, we don't have that money, we can't pay now. So you have to be flexible. (P5)

Kenyan principals must be patient and flexible when so much of their success or failure depends on their relationships with outside parties. Much of their funding comes from school fees, which they have to get from parents. Having respectful relationship with parents is important, yet can

be difficult when trying to cover necessities. “As a principal, you listen to their problems, and you accept. If they tell you that they don't have money to pay fees for their children to learn, we shall pay later, you allow it.... They want to be respected and they want to see you respecting them” (P5). Being able to work with parents and gain their trust, not only for fees, but also that they will take care of their children can be tricky. “So that is what I'm doing, whether they are parents, whether they are not parents, I just greet all of them. We interact in a very friendly atmosphere” (P5). Creating a welcoming environment and building relationships also plays a pivotal role in the daily lives of these school principals. P5 continued to explain how being an outsider makes parents and community members view him as a foreigner. He works very hard to relate to them and be seen as being open and friendly. This extra effort goes a long way in forming the lasting relationships that make community/school relationships possible.

Research question #3: In what ways do these approaches align with specific cultural frameworks as stated in the research literature?

To help the reader make better sense of this section on the cultural frameworks, I have included another copy of Figure 1 used in chapter 2. This figure shows the main attributes of each of the frameworks as well as showing how cultural competence is a foundational framework that cultural intelligence and cultural humility build upon.

Cultural Frameworks: Why knowing how to "engage" or "approach" working cross-culturally is important

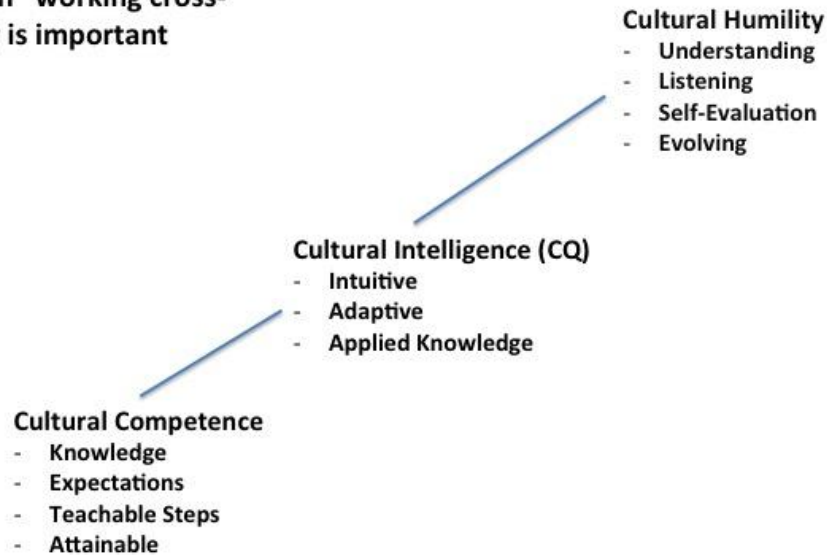


Figure 1. Ways to approach working cross-culturally.

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence can be defined as the ability to work with a culture through the acquisition of cultural knowledge. To be culturally competent a person must know what is expected on them in a particular culture and they must be willing to learn how to work with another culture. As Portera (2014) defines it, “cultural competence is a set of abilities, knowledge, attitudes and skills that allow one to appropriately and effectively manage relations with persons of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds” (p. 159). Many of the participants discussed the importance learning about the local community’s culture, including language.

Most expressed language acquisition as one of the most important elements in working with the local community. Moreover, one characteristic of cultural competence is language acquisition. P9 mentioned the importance of language multiple times throughout the interview,

“The first thing is just learn their language, speak to them in their language...If I am meeting the people I work with who have come from this community, I communicate with them in their language. That makes them really appreciate that I am living among them.” Others like P5 said that even an attempt to speak the local language was enough to be accepted by the community. P8 mentioned that even though the local language at first seemed strange, they worked at learning it and adapting to the local culture.

Beyond language acquisition the participants shared the importance of learning the local customs. As mentioned previously, participants acknowledged the importance of bullfighting in some of the communities and all that discussed it said that it was part of the local culture that they had to accept. “So when they are watching the bullfighting, I also joined and cheered them the way they do...You find out exactly what they want and then you appear like you are supporting it and then they accept you” (P5). Learning the cultural norms to better understand the local community is one way that participants approached working cross culturally. In this manner, many of them used the concept of cultural competence while interacting with their communities.

Cultural Intelligence

This attitude of acceptance and willingness to learn about a culture can be attributed to each of the frameworks in some fashion. However, cultural intelligence really hones in on the concept of adapting to another culture. The capability of a person to adapt to a new cultural context and work within that context is how Ang et al. (2006) define cultural intelligence. All the participants shared how they sought to work within their communities by trying to adapt to the local cultures. Most of them found that by applying attributes of cultural competence, such as gaining a basic knowledge of the culture, they then could move toward the framework of

cultural intelligence. They began focusing on how they themselves needed to adapt and apply their knowledge in order to work with the community. P6 found that working outside of her ethnic group took some adaptation, but was not difficult for her. “I just tried to blend in with them, tried to understand them, and tried to have a good personal relationship with them and respect them. You just find you are going along and they love you.” This could characterize part of the intuitive nature of cultural intelligence. The ability to intuitively know how to work with other people outside of your cultural group, and then as Griffer and Perlis (2007) discuss, develop this ability to further grow one’s cultural intelligence. P6 shared multiple examples of how she used her cultural intelligence to work with the community.

Like I said, when you intermingle with them, like myself, when I intermingle with them, their minds have changed. They actually change completely, and they change their way of thinking. If you are thinking in a particular direction, just by paying them a visit, just sitting with them and being with them, and giving them certain services that they don’t have, it changes their mentality; it changes their way of looking at things completely.

They become different people. Some of them even change their habits for the better, just by me being there with them and relating with them. (P6)

The participants also shared how they attended local functions such as funerals, weddings and circumcisions. Instead of an attitude of *they can take me as I am*, these principals really tried to adapt to their surroundings:

How do you understand their culture? By allowing yourself to get incorporated with them. Allow yourself to learn from them. Learning, you have to become a child to learn, the way you are learning, Kenyan, or whatever. You can talk and listen. Then after listening, you can now enter into them by participating. You

can participate in whatever they do. If they have a culture aspect, you go there, but respect. Contribute. Visit them, visit their homes and see what they do.

Appreciate what they do is very important. Even when their culture is not very good, it is annoying, but just do not show it on your face. (P7)

Again, this concept of coming down to the level of the people they are working with, being patient, listening and learning from the community is a common thread amongst the participants. Over and over again they emphasized the importance of appreciating the local culture and as cultural intelligence dictates, adapting to the local culture. Regardless of their personal views about a community, they took steps to work at the community's level. These concepts are all features of the cultural frameworks, primarily of cultural intelligence and cultural humility.

Cultural Humility

Besides language acquisition, which is mainly a characteristic of cultural competence, the participants primarily emphasized approaches that would be classified under cultural humility. According to Hook et al. (2013), cultural humility can be defined as “the ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented, in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the client” (p.354). This definition gives a good description of how the participants approached working outside of their ethnic communities. They know they must work with the community to have a successful school, and they accept the local community as a unique entity unto itself.

P8 also made a very interesting comment concerning his position versus those of the local community. “Because I was educated, I had to first learn their language and their food, and I adapt myself. I am one and they are many, so I had to adopt into their system.” This idea that he was the one who had to make adaptations because he was an individual and they were many

struck me as being very important to the cultural humility framework. Even though the official language of Kenya is British English and Swahili, it struck me that he valued the local culture enough to learn their language in order to build better relationships.

The concept of listening to others and showing appreciation was brought up by many of the participants. When working with their staff, students, and the broader community, the participants emphasized the importance of listening to all stakeholders and showing a clear appreciation for others' views and contributions. P3 listed what he thought was the most important attributes of being a school principal, "being patient, understanding, accommodative, and appreciating their culture the way they are." Again, the themes of cultural humility ring out: understanding, listening, and evolving.

When asked what strategies outsiders should use when working with a different culture many participants continued to emphasize what they were already doing themselves. P1 suggested a few strategies that incorporate qualities of cultural humility.

Be really flexible, listen, and see if the situation isn't working, then use another.

I think another is to really conform, because when you come in, and you don't conform and then you'll fight. You won't learn, you won't be accepted. So first of you need to come down to the ground and be accepted and from there you can roll out the agenda. You have to be diplomatic, and really, really flexible. And of course everybody likes people who are approachable and pleasant. (P1)

As the participants described their experiences it became clear that they used a variety of approaches when working with other cultures. Most notably however, was their acceptance of others' cultures without judgment or criticism. They did not mention any efforts on trying to change the local community or work around the community; instead they focused their efforts on

accepting what is in front of them and working with local groups. Even with such ethnic diversity, these participants have found that with the right attitude and behavior they can work quite well within their communities, even when they have foreigner status.

Conclusion

The participants in this study shared rich data on how they work with other cultures. From the struggle of working with various ethnic groups to being an outsider of the community, they shared their challenges. These challenges are rooted in Kenya's ethnic diversity and tribal heritage. With language barriers and deep cultural differences, each participant has had to find ways of working with a variety of stakeholders. Even though many of these challenges seem insurmountable, the participants have found strategies and approaches to overcome these trials with success. These approaches are partially possible due to their strong leadership skills and their prestigious role as a leader. In addition to leadership ability, all of the participants emphasized the importance of having a positive attitude and a strong work ethic. Possibly influencing their leadership style and attitude is their faith in God, and belief that they are doing His will.

One key strategy that each participant mentioned was the importance of involving all stakeholders, including, students, staff and the community. This involvement entails attending local events, such as funerals and weddings. Also, simply sharing meals with their staff and mentoring low performing students. These approaches, which seem to come quite naturally to this group of principals, align with many of the cultural frameworks. They shared strategies and approaches that could be attributed to many of the frameworks in unison, and a few that were specific to one framework on another. One of the most notable strategies for working with a local community was language acquisition, which aligns with cultural competence. They also

stressed learning about the local culture and adapting to the norms, such as local food choices and local customs. In the spirit of cultural humility, the importance of accepting others, listening and being flexible was reverberated amongst all of the participants. Through sharing their stories, the participants introduced me to multiple aspects of working cross culturally.

Chapter Five

Discussion

This study was designed to explore how Kenyan secondary school principals approached working cross-culturally within Kenya. Also, the study sought to understand how their approaches align with the cultural frameworks of cultural competence, cultural intelligence and cultural humility. Using phenomenological methods I interviewed 10 Kenyan secondary school principals over a two-day period. I asked the participants an initial set of questions and follow up questions, each intended to better understand the common experiences of the participants (Creswell 2013). Using this method I sought to understand how the participants worked with diverse communities in Kenya. The current literature on this subject and specifically in the context of east Africa is currently inconclusive. This research aimed to answer three questions:

1) What challenges do Kenyan principals identify when working with diverse cultures in Kenya?

2) Which approaches do Kenyan principals identify as useful when navigating diverse cultures within Kenya?

3) In what ways do these approaches align with specific cultural frameworks as stated in the research literature?

Challenges Faced by Kenyan Principals.

What challenges do Kenyan principals identify when working with diverse cultures in Kenya?

Research question # 1 was answered as participants described their main challenges. All the participants expressed the power that ethnicity and tribalism play within Kenya. With over 40 different tribes within the country, Kenya is extremely diverse. The participants in this study

all had the opportunity to work outside of their own ethnic community at some point during their educational careers. Each spoke to how a community's unique culture plays a role in how that community interacts with the principal of the local school. Some participants shared that the local community was very supportive of the school and them as a principal. However, most commented that they had to first gain the community's approval and trust before being accepted.

The participants also shared some of the challenges they faced working with other cultures. Many described times when they felt overwhelmed by their surroundings and had to learn to adapt to the people and situations around them. One of the challenges that many have faced is dealing with local cultural traditions, such as bullfighting. Bullfighting was mentioned by several of the participants and seems to be a common local pastime that takes students' focus off academics. Even though this was a problem for the participants, each dealt with the situation with tact and respect for the local community. Regardless of the situation, each participant emphasized the importance of working with the local community, not against it. This aligns with the research of Dean (2001) and Hollinsworth (2013), in the sense that they both emphasize working collaboratively with communities. Dean (2001) especially highlights that even if an individual cannot be fully competent in another culture that they can work with others by being non-judgmental and respectful of differences. It seems that the Kenyan principals are very respectful of cultural differences, even when they disagree with the local cultural traditions.

When first traveling to Kenya I read a brief history of the country and how over 40 tribes made up its indigenous ethnic landscape. However, I did not realize at the time how much tribalism still to this day impacts the country and its citizens. Even after learning about the post-election violence in 2007-2008, I still did not fully understand how significant ethnicity is to

Kenya. I do not claim to really understand tribalism in Kenya now either, but through this research process I have a much better understanding of it than I did previously.

As I interviewed and talked with the participants, their stories of facing cultural barriers struck me by surprise. I did not anticipate learning so much about the small differences that make each tribe distinct. From diversity of local dialects and languages, to food preparation, marriage rituals and dance, each ethnic community has its own way of living. This rich diversity makes working in Kenya a unique experience for both Kenyans and non-Kenyans.

Since I did not anticipate how much rich data I would gather about tribalism and its influence on my participants, I did not initially research much about it for my literature review. However, since analyzing my data and discovering that this was such a prominent piece of my findings I have conducted further research on the topic. In an article by Roberts (1999), he emphasized that even though many Africans have moved from rural settings into urban settings, they have maintained their ties to their rural homes and ethnic groups. He also noted that, “ethnicity has been a central element in the social and political landscapes of modern Africa” (Roberts, 1999, p.178). Considering how much ethnicity plays a role in the lives of Africans, and in this case Kenyans, I assumed that there would be a plethora of research on African tribalism in the modern world, but there is not. I was surprised to find that even though there are many articles that discuss aspects of African society, there were very few that solely focus on the concept of ethnicity or tribalism in a modern context.

Many in Kenya believe that understanding culture and ethnicity is important for the country as it moves forward toward unity. Modiba and Odhiambo (2009) explore this concept of ethnic identity and education in their qualitative research. They discovered that teachers giving lessons in Kenyan tribal history found that it was important for students to have an understanding

of their own ethnic origins. The teachers in their study struggled however to teach both ethnic pride and historical/political controversy surrounding tribalism (Modiba & Odhiambo, 2009). There seems to be a great deal of ambiguity around the concept of ethnicity in Kenya. The way in which tribalism/ethnicity has and continues to influence Kenyan society seems to be currently up for debate. After conducting my own research I am more aware of this struggle and would like to continue studying this complex issue.

Another theme that emerged through the interview process was that of *outsider status* faced by the participants. While working outside of their ethnic group each participant shared how they felt like they were outsiders and not always welcome within the local community. Many recounted how communities first would want to know what tribe they were from before even knowing their other credentials. Again, this emphasis on ethnicity reinforced how important one's tribe is to their identity.

As participants shared how their status as an outsider affected their relationships with the local community, many interesting similarities were shared amongst the principals. Most talked about how their outsider status could slowly be overcome through listening to stakeholders and building trust. However, they also agreed that they would not participate in some local happenings because of their status as an outsider and as a school principal. Most said that they did not socialize with community members as a private citizen and also stayed clear of local politics. Even those who shared positive experiences working outside of their ethnic group agreed that staying out of local politics was imperative.

This concept of *outsider* I believe can be adapted to many situations and work environments. However, for Kenyan principals it is especially linked to the theme of tribalism. For the principals to be sent to a new community with little or no choice on their part seems

unfair by my western standards. For them it is a normal part of the job and they have accepted it with little hesitation it seems. I find it interesting that they do not get a say in where they live or work and I do not understand the Kenyan education system well enough to agree or disagree with it. What I find most strange is the lack of awareness on the part of the local communities on the hiring practices of teachers and principals from the licensing sending body. This was an area that I wish I had explored more during the interviews.

Role of Principal and Approaches for Success.

Which approaches do Kenyan principals identify as useful when navigating diverse cultures within Kenya?

Kenyan principals understand that their role as a school and community leader is very important and prestigious. The participants keenly pointed out how they were chosen to become principals and how they all had worked their way up through the system. They highlighted that as leaders they are role models not only to students, but also to the staff and community at large. Many view their position as a blessing from God and have a strong sense of purpose and a can-do attitude.

As a leader they often play the part of mentor to younger teachers and feel that it is their duty to help these young educators find success. Many shared how their staff members had gone on to become head teachers and principals in other schools. Some of the participants have also played a more personal role in the lives of their students. They have arranged school fees and set up support groups for students who otherwise would not find success at school.

Going into the interviews I assumed that I would get rich feedback about how each participant viewed their role as a leader. However, I did not anticipate how the role of principal is regarded with so much prestige in Kenya. Not only is the role more prestigious in Kenya than

in the United States, it also comes with much more responsibility. Out of the 10 principals that I spoke with, the individuals who lead boarding schools spent most of their time at their school site. This comes at a cost to spending time with their children and spouses. Some of them work hours from their families and only see them on school breaks. I have a difficult time imagining school principals in the west making this type of sacrifice for their job.

Not once did a participant speak negatively about the amount of work and responsibility they were given. Each of them used language indicative of their positions being honorable, highly prized and worth the incredible amount of work. They remained positive even when discussing the challenges of balancing work and family. Many of the participants are separated from their families for long periods of time, but instead of expressing negativity, they continue to maintain an attitude of gratefulness and positivity.

This positive attitude seems to help these principals sustain endurance for work. They all spend most of their days and nights at the school working in some way or another. They are responsible for providing food, shelter and safety for their students and in some cases their staff. This does not even factor in their main role as a school principal, the functioning of academics. Their attitude often seems to mirror their faith and belief in God and his purpose for them. Even though they have what could be considered an overwhelming amount of responsibilities, they endure, are thankful and give a great deal of credit to God.

This emphasis on faith may be due to interviewing Kenyan principals that lead faith based schools, primarily Quaker. However, since many of the secondary schools in Kenya are sponsored by a church entity, this may not account for their attitudes towards faith. Without doing more research it is hard to say whether their vocation being at a Christian school has anything to do with their faith.

When working successfully with a local community the participants discussed using a number of approaches. They all shared how important it is to listen to all stakeholders and to respect the local culture and traditions. Similar to Smith (2009) they emphasized the importance of collaboration. Often they have had local community members share grievances with them, and then they have worked together to solve issues. Most of the participants hire workers from the community and try to provide the locals with opportunities to be involved with the school. Many open up their school grounds and building for local events and even allow groups to borrow their buses to attend funerals and such.

This attitude of respect and openness has allowed these principals to find success even when working with diverse cultures. Ramos and Chester (2010) found that when people work in diverse teams, success is often found partly due to the work it takes to build trust amongst team members. Building this trust can be accomplished through many simple acts. The Kenyan principals build trust by establishing relationships, listening and involving others. Some of them have even taken it upon themselves to learn the local language and learn about the local customs. They find ways to work around customs that take students out of the classroom and work with students to accommodate their culture. Even when they do not agree with the community's traditions, they are careful to be respectful and accept the community as it is.

Cultural Frameworks and Cross Cultural Approaches.

In what ways do these approaches align with specific cultural frameworks as stated in the research literature?

Through the interview process the participants revealed a great deal about how they approach working with other cultures. From their stories and narratives it is clear that many of these approaches align with one cultural framework or another, however the data are inconclusive as to the exact framework the principals used for one specific strategy or another. As Schadewitz (2009) discussed collaboration looks different between cultures and the differences between cultures may require the implementation of different frameworks or methods. Using cultural competence as a foundational framework, it is clear that the participants believe that having knowledge of the local culture is key. They mentioned the importance of trying the local foods and most importantly learning the local language. Even participants who admitted to not being able to speak the local dialect, emphasized that knowing the language was a useful skill. The skill of learning and using the local language fits in with the definition of cultural competence given by Portera (2014). Portera defines cultural competence as “a set of abilities, knowledge, attitudes and skills that allow one to appropriately and effectively manage relations with persons of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds” (p.159). However, since it is not possible for people to learn each language of the various cultures they encounter, it is even more important to learn about the other aspects of culture that make each community unique. Many participants discussed attending local events, such as funerals and weddings, as well as entertainments like bullfighting. They shared that showing the local community support

by simply showing up and being present was key to building strong relationships. Hockett (2012) found through her research that building trusting relationships aided in collaboration efforts. For the principals to collaborate effectively, they first had taken the time to build relationships of trust and understanding, even in the face of adversity. Many of the participants disagreed with some of the local customs, but said that it was important to show support to the community regardless.

This concept of accepting a local culture as they are was very interesting to me. On one hand participants are concerned how the community's customs are affecting the learning environment, yet they seem torn between respecting a culture and ensuring a safe and successful academic program. One participant shared how the custom of female circumcision was negatively affecting the student's academic success. P9 described how it affected the girl, "When the rest of them team is laughing and she is just there, a silent drop out." Even under these circumstances P9 sought to understand the girl's culture, even when disagreeing with its practices. "I would say that it is important to understand, especially the children you interact with. What cultures do they belong to" (P9)? This effort on the part of the participants moves them from the foundational cultural competence framework into the frameworks of cultural intelligence and cultural humility.

The principals are not just seeking to learn the base level of their stakeholders' culture, but are making a focused effort to understand the culture and work within the culture. They are applying their knowledge and adapting their behavior in order to work with people in such a way that opens up clear lines of communication. In a country that has so much diversity and ethnic tensions it is encouraging to meet such strong leaders who are willing to adapt in order to serve their communities.

Limitations

There were a few minor limitations influencing my research and data collection, as well as one larger limitation. The major limitation was my survey on cultural frameworks that each participant completed before the interview process. Even though I intended for the survey to help me analyze which cultural frameworks the participants aligned with most closely, it did not work out well. It appears that by using a Likert scale with the language of *strongly agree* and *strongly disagree*, participants primarily checked *strongly agree*. I do not think that the questions were even read through completely in some cases. Perhaps they were trying to please me or maybe to finish it more quickly they just chose *agree*, assuming that it would be the best answer. Due to the lack of good survey data, I was not able to use it to triangulate my data on cultural frameworks.

Another limitation was the small sample size of only 10 participants. Even though I intended for this to be a small phenomenological study, the small sample size means that I cannot generalize to a larger population, or from one region to another. These data speak of the experiences of these 10 specific participants only and does not necessarily represent other Kenyan principals.

Also, I did not personally choose my participants; instead the Quaker secondary team in Kenya chose them for me. I was not able to personally vet any of them nor did I have the chance to choose any other possible participants. I had to rely on the Quaker secondary team to find the participants and entrusted in them the responsibility of checking each participant to make sure they met my criteria. Beyond not personally choosing my participants, I also had to depend on members of the Quaker secondary team to arrange my interview locations and interview schedule.

Implications for Practice

The participants in this study make it clear how much the greater academic community could benefit from adopting many of the participants' approaches when working cross culturally. All of the participants interviewed shared common characteristics in how they approach the challenges of working in ethnically diverse settings. Each principal used strategies of relationship building that are found in the cultural frameworks of cultural competence, cultural intelligence and cultural humility. Some of these strategies include; involving stakeholders, learning the local cultural norms, and being flexible and adaptive. Educators working in any situation would benefit from implementing these strategies when working cross culturally.

Not only educators and academics should consider the implications of this research, but also any individual or group working cross culturally. This could be especially vital for groups working with communities in east Africa, especially in Kenya. Having knowledge of what challenges may be faced, what strategies are successful and what cultural approaches are acceptable and useful would be a major advance in knowing how to work cross culturally.

Implications for My Practice

The research data from this study will influence my own teaching and how I work with other cultures. Applying some of the strategies presented by the Kenyan principals will help me navigate the complex world of teaching in a diverse community. Even in areas that do not appear to have diversity on the surface, it is amazing how many different cultural norms are at play within these communities. Personally, I am using the strategy of involving all stakeholders into my classroom practice. Reaching out to parents from all backgrounds, listening to other

teachers, and involving my students in classroom decisions are all ways that I am changing my practice to better reflect what I have learned from these 10 principals.

Thinking back to my time on Mt. Elgon, and that teachers' workshop, I now know that there was more at play than a simple interest in the leadership and collaboration. At the time I had no concept of how diverse the group was, or how significant it was for them to all be in the same room together working towards a common goal. They were eager to be there and to collaborate, but I did not realize what a rare opportunity it was for them. Nor did I realize that many of them were from differing tribes and were currently working in places far from their ethnic roots. The westerners leading the workshop were actively aware of their role and how they modeled collaboration, listening and leadership. The Kenyan educators, on the other hand were engaged in what they knew was a rare opportunity for professional development. By having both sets fully engaged and open to learn and react to each other's needs, the workshop was successful for all stakeholders. My own role at that workshop was to be an observer, more than anything. Now, going forward, I feel like I could engage more actively and be more responsive to the needs of others at similar workshops.

Future Research

Based on the findings of this research there is more research needed on the subjects of cross-cultural partnerships, cultural frameworks, and how different cultures approach working cross culturally. Initially, I had difficulty finding relevant research on these topics and through my own research have concluded that these areas are understudied. Also, the way in which research is completed may need to be shifted in order to better fully understand the relationships involved in cross cultural partnerships. Researchers should spend a significant amount of time building relationships, listening and being open minded when working cross culturally. I would recommend that individuals who are members of the culture that is to be researched vet any measurement instrument. By emphasizing how groups work with sub cultures within their own culture may shed a light on areas that have not been fully studied as of yet.

The Kenyan licensing and sending board should take action to better prepare their principals to work cross-culturally. The participants noted that they had received very little training in conflict resolution or cultural diversity. There needs to be more training for principals who are sent away from their ethnic group, and who will undoubtedly be considered an outsider in their working communities. The strategies used by the participants in this study should be examined as possible approaches for other Kenyan principals to implement in their practice.

Conclusion

The findings in this study suggest that there are a number of approaches used by Kenyan principals when working cross culturally. These approaches are used when facing multiple challenges from within the school itself to working with the community at large. Involving stakeholders, adapting to the local culture and staying out of local politics can overcome challenges of tribalism and outsider status. Other approaches used by the principals involve flexibility, listening skills, and a superior work ethic. All the participants believed that they had an important role as a principal and chose to lead by example and be a mentor to others. They often gave credit to their success to God and were very humble about being considered successful leaders. These approaches and attributes can be identified in all three of the cultural frameworks, most notably cultural intelligence and cultural humility. The implications of these findings have the power to change the way individuals approach working cross-culturally in a multitude of settings. Furthermore, this study highlights the need for more research in the areas of cross cultural partnerships and the cultural frameworks.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Questions

- 1) Have you ever worked with people from different background/cultures?
 - a) If yes, describe your experience of working together with different cultural values and backgrounds?
- 2) Is being a principal influenced your relationships in working with people of different cultures?
 - a) If yes, describe how your role as a principal helped influence a relationship or changes within the community?
- 3) Have you ever encountered any type of challenges as you worked with people from different cultures?
 - a) If yes, describe the challenges you faced when working with them?
- 4) Have you ever experienced any successes as you worked with people of different cultures?
 - a) If yes, outline some of the success you achieved as you worked with these people?
- 4) Describe key approaches or strategies you use when working with people culturally different than you.
- 5) Have you had any special training in cultural diversity, conflict resolution or similar?
 - a) If yes, describe your training.
- 6) If you had the opportunity to partner with a non-African group, what would you recommend as important strategies or approaches for effective collaboration?

Appendix B

Survey Questions

1) I can adapt to a culture other than my own.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

2) When working with people from different backgrounds and cultures, I can adapt my responses to meet their needs.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

3) My understanding of others' cultures is evolving.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

4) I believe learning about someone else's culture is an important skill.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

5) I believe that people need to develop knowledge about other cultures before they work those from other backgrounds and cultures.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

6) I intuitively know how to work with people from cultures other than my own.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

7) I believe I am effective in working with others from different cultures.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

8) I prepare to work with other cultures by reflecting on my own biases.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

9) I believe that people are representatives of their culture.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

10) Working cross-culturally requires that I learn about others' cultures.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

11) I have set assumptions about other cultures.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

12) I make it a priority to learn about other cultures.

1	2	3	4	5
strongly agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	strongly disagree

Appendix C

Interview/Participant Consent Form

I, _____, understand that the purpose of this study is to uncover what components I find as important for successful cross-cultural partnerships. I have been informed that the researcher, Andrea Nelson, will interview me and that the information provided in the interview will be used for research purposes.

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I am able to withdraw from the interview and study at any time. My personal identity will remain anonymous and any information I contribute to the discussion will be kept confidential. I agree to answer questions in the interview only when I feel comfortable contributing. Any time I do not want to share information, I have the right to abstain from answering any questions.

I agree to participate in this study and affirm that all information provided by me is true and accurate.

Participant Name _____

Participant Signature _____

Date _____