**CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Research Overview**

The purpose of the research was to determine if the cultural intelligence of Business as Mission and Business for Transformation practitioners impacted the conflict management, relationship building, and/or the effective business exchange with employees, customers, and/or suppliers. The research was conducted in collaboration with the OPEN/B4T Network, whose practitioners were part of the larger movement known as Business as Mission. Practitioners were people intentional about using for-profit and non-profit businesses to affect change cross-culturally in peoples’ lives who live in countries in the 10/40 window.

Three hypotheses and eight corollaries for each hypothesis or a total of 24 corollaries were developed to examine if cultural intelligence impacted business interaction with employees, customers, and/or suppliers. The review of literature focused on: (a) Business as Mission background, methodology, measurements, networks, and participants; (b) Business for Transformation background, network, and participants; and (c) cultural intelligence development, measurement, and testing. There was a reasonable amount of cultural intelligence research data, but limited current research related to Business as Mission and Business for Transformation and related issues.

The population for the research was Business for Transformation (OPEN/B4T Network) participants. Three instruments, Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS), Social Impact Self-Report (SISR), and a Demographic Survey were administered through a survey made available in PDF copy and by an online survey (www.Survio.com) link sent to the network leader of the practitioner network. The electronic version was chosen by the administrator and a link sent out to practitioners in the Open/B4T Network. The completed data was organized on six spreadsheets and analyzed by four statistical procedures including Frequencies Analysis, Mann-Whitney Two-Sample Test, Cronbach’s Alpha, and a Correlation Analysis. The 24 corollaries were analyzed with the Mann-Whitney Two-Sample Test; the three null hypotheses were rejected or failed to reject based upon the findings of the related corollaries. If one or more of the eight corollaries related to a hypothesis was statistically significant, the null hypothesis was rejected, which was the case for all three hypotheses.

Forty-six respondents in the Open/B4T Network completed the three instruments in the research, by completing the online survey. Of the 46 respondents eight were women and 38 were men. Three respondents had no formal education and one earned an Associate’s degree; the other 42 respondents had either a Bachelor’s, Master’s, or doctoral degree. Four respondents were single, 14 were married, and 28 were married with children. Six respondents had been in business for 11 or more years; 20 respondents had been in business for 6 to 10 years. Fifteen respondents reported they were involved in education and training that excluded medical and health prevention training; ten were involved in computer software development, web design, information technology, and/or data security. Forty respondents reported that they employed between one and five expatriates.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

Conclusion One: There was a relationship between Cultural Intelligence Behavioral summary values and the Social Impact Conflict Management summary values (Mann-Whitney U’ p-Value was <.001). In reverse, the Social Impact Conflict Management summary values were similarly related to Cultural Intelligence Behavioral summary values (Mann-Whitney U’ p-Value was .017). The Behavioral subscale items reflected verbal and non-verbal communication, including the verbal behaviors of accent and tone, pause and silence, rate of speech, change in non-verbal behavior and facial expressions. The Conflict Management subscale items reflected recognition, respect for, and communication of different cultural values. Language mastery and cultural awareness were related and were worthy skills for Business for Transformation practitioners, particularly in dealing with conflict management.

Implication One: Respondents with greater verbal and non-verbal skills also had the ability to communicate recognition and respect for different cultural values. This finding suggested that practitioner training should focus on understanding non-verbal communication, including body language and hand gestures. Language training should include how to reproduce mood, tone, pitch and other vocal cues.

Conclusion Two: There was a relationship between Cultural Intelligence Behavioral summary values and the Social Impact Relationship Building summary values (Mann-Whitney U’ p-Value was .002). In addition to the discussion above about verbal and non-verbal skills, Relationship Building was enhanced as it pertained to the critical role of interactions with a spouse, employees, suppliers, customers, and/or team members. The establishment of new relationships with nationals benefitted whether inside and outside the business. Both business success and opportunity for Christian ministry were grounded in creating and deepening relationships with nationals. Most Business for Transformation practitioners were directly interacting with people.

Implication Two: Deeping relationships was possible only through mastery and skill in the language of the target community. Language mastery included expressive modes of communication that extend beyond grammar and syntax. Classroom language instruction is important, but conversation through interaction with a variety of native speakers with different accents in different situations and contexts are equally important. Language acquisition comes in many forms. In some cases, where time necessitates a more intensive plan for language learning, a tutor may be helpful. The cost of a tutor, offset by the speed of language acquisition, results in new opportunities for relationships. The research indicated that individuals with high scores in the Cultural Intelligence Behavioral subscale will have greater social impact by dealing better with conflict, building relationships, and having greater success in business.

Business success and Christian ministry were both dependent upon creating and deepening relationships. Establishing new relationships and the maturation of existing relationships each held unique challenges. Getting beyond learning a person’s name and where they lived required time, patients, and a willingness many times to go the second mile.

Conclusion Three: There was a strong relationship between the Cultural Intelligence Behavioral summary values and the Social Impact Effective Business Exchange summary values (Mann-Whitney U’ p-Value was <.001). There was an equally strong relationship when Social Impact Effective Business Exchange summary values were compared with Cultural Intelligence summary values (Mann-Whitney U’ p-value was .007). The verbal and nonverbal issues discussed above were in play with this relationship, as was true in Conflict Management and Relationship Building. Feedback from others, within and outside a business, were critical to the success of the business. Feedback included receiving, internalizing, and acting upon the criticism in a constructive way. Acting in a positive way suggested making changes to deal with criticism, which was always welcomed and appreciated. Effective Business Exchange issues related more to the Business for Transformation participants more than to employees, suppliers, or customers.

Implication Three: A business owner realized more financial success and business performance with the aid of customers, suppliers, employees, and consultants than alone. Financial success and business performance depended on listening, communicating, and reflective resulting in transformation.

Conclusion Four: There was a strong relationship between Social Impact Conflict Management summary values and the Cultural Intelligence Cognitive summary values (Mann-Whitney U’ p-Value <.001). The Social Impact Conflict Management subscale items reflected recognition, respect for, and communication of different cultural values. Cultural Intelligence Cognitive items centered on knowledge of other legal, economic, language, cultural values, marriage systems, aesthetic expression, and non-verbal behaviors. There was a definite link between the internalization and respect of the values of another’s culture and the maintenance of a Business for Transformation participant’s own cultural values.

Implication Four: Business for Transformation participants had a clear understanding of who they were, which values they embraced, the goals of their business, their expectation of their employees in order to interface effectively with people from another culture. Over time a participant must set a goal to acquire an increased understanding of the native culture with as much clarity as they were able. The culture of respect created by a business owner gave employees clarity and contentment in the work environment, leading to a high level of achievement.

Conclusion Five: There was no relationships between the Cultural Intelligence Metacognitive summary values and (a) the Social Impact Conflict Management summary values (Mann-Whitney U’ p-values of .29 & .947), (b) the Social Impact Relationship Building summary values (Mann-Whitney U’ p-values of .581 & .947), and/or (c) the Social Impact Effective Business Exchange summary values subscales (Mann-Whitney U’ p-value of .178 & .26. The lack of correlation between Metacognitive subscale and SISR subscales might have encouraged practitioners, who thought their ability to have social impact, depended on what they knew about the culture of others. This research suggested that cultural knowledge did not have an impact on social impact.

Implication Five: The implication of the lack of relationship between Cultural Intelligence Metacognitive summary values and the three Social Impact subscale summary value was that the social impact a business had did not depend on how much he or she knew about cultural interaction. Social impact was possible regardless of how much a business participant knew about cultural interaction.

Conclusion Six: There was no relationships between the Cultural Intelligence Motivational summary values and (a) the Social Impact Conflict Management summary values (Mann-Whitney U’ p-values of .702 & .944), (b) the Social Impact Relationship Building summary values (Mann-Whitney U’ p-values of .514 & .877), and/or (c) the Social Impact Effective Business Exchange summary values subscales (Mann-Whitney U’ p-value of .514 & .693. The lack of correlation between Motivational subscale and SISR subscales might encouraged practitioners, who think their ability to have social impact, depended on what they knew about the culture of others. This research suggested that cultural knowledge did not have affect social impact.

Implication Six: The implication of the lack of relationship between Cultural Intelligence Metacognitive summary values and the three Social Impact subscale summary value was that the social impact a business had did not depend on how he or she felt about cultural interaction. Social impact was possible regardless of how confident a business participant felt about their abilities for cultural interaction.

Conclusion Seven: Over half of respondents answered that they receive some compensation from charitable donations (Item 15) and most respondents said they were running for-profit businesses (Item 13), which seemed to say that many businesses were not profitable enough to cover all business-related expenses. There were legitimate reasons why a business was not making a profit. For instance, a new business that was in the process of starting the business could potentially depend on outside contributions to get the business established. The lack of a profit margin in a business could potentially signal that for some reason the business was not and would not be viable. Some would say that those in religiously related vocations were not temperamentally suited to manage a successful business.

Implication Seven: Business starts should begin with a plan and a time frame to achieve profitability. Companies that were not profitable required the input from a reputable consultant or an insightful business adviser to determine if there was a possibility of profit in the future.

Conclusion Eight: At the time of the research, few church denominations (Item 26) appeared to have accepted the Business as Mission and Business for Transformation model. If a denomination had a Business as Mission approach to mission work, the organization was usually in an infant stage and had yet to make a significant impact in mission outreach. The reason for denomination to be slow to adopt the Business as Missions model was the manner in which most denomination were organizations for outreach and the structures that were in place for long periods of time. Most of the denominational mission efforts were financed through contributions from congregants.

Implication Eight: If Business as Mission proponents wanted to see more denomination involvement, it might potentially be a good investment of time to provide more information and be willing to dialogue with denomination leaders. There were Christian universities that were developing classes and other types of academic programs to give young people an opportunity to learn about the philosophy and some of the barrier that must be crossed to be successful in establishing Business as Mission organizations.

Conclusion Nine: It was observed in the research findings that there was a limited number of expatriate employees (Item 20), which suggested that a small number of Business for Transformation practitioners were working as teams. Business for Transformation teams have had the benefits of added support in all areas of impact. Daily spiritual, fiscal, and relational accountability with peers to the Business for Transformation model and vision helped with effectiveness, even if the roles in the business were hierarchical.

Implications Nine: Practitioners faced many challenges in managing the tensions of the Business for Transformation model to achieve successful outcomes. There was no rule written that those challenges must be faced alone. Expatriate Business for Transformation partners provided operational, spiritual, financial, and moral support for missional business.

Conclusion Ten: The largest industry involvement (Item 12) by Business for Transformation practitioners at the time of the survey showed that education and training, and computer software development; the next largest group of industries were food service industry, agricultural production/farming, manufacturing, and clothing and wearables. The breakdown of industry involvement showed that the dominant industries were informational and technological.

Implication Ten: The high level of involvement in informational and technological services in the economic and social environments of developing countries at the time of the survey were thriving. The high level of involvement in education, training, and computer software development provided insight into who Business for Transformation leaders were attracting as potential participants. However, to avoid an unbalanced portfolio of businesses, should the demand for such services change in the future, the research suggested that Business for Transformation leaders explore ways to attract and enlist new practitioners from a broader range of industries.

Conclusion Eleven: Though most practitioners showed a higher level of education (Item 2), many practitioner language mastery levels were low at the start of their overseas businesses (Item 4). There was significant improvement by practitioners in language mastery over a time while engaging in business operations overseas (Item 6).

Implication Eleven: Many practitioners began their businesses with low language competency. Both language mastery and businesses startups were intensive and time consuming. Future research might look into the relationship between language learning and business startups in light of time commitment and spiritual, social, and economic impact.

Conclusion Twelve: Research about time spent with employees, suppliers, and customers coupled with the proximity of employees (Item 8 & 21), suppliers (Item 24, Item 25), and customers (Item 22) to practitioners demonstrated the challenge of balancing the variety of impact goals with the availability and context of each encounter.

Implication Twelve: Proximity, time, and context were determinative of the most fundamental target relationships (*i.e.*, employees, customers, and suppliers) involved in a Business for Transformation venture. Almost half of practitioners had a satellite office, a branch office, or a franchise. The prioritization of relationships with employees to achieve business, social, and spiritual impact in limited time with varying proximity suggests future research.