

Cross-cultural team challenges and coping strategies in multinational companies in China

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Abstract

This study examines the challenges faced by cross-cultural teams in multinational companies operating in China and identifies effective coping strategies to enhance team performance. Key challenges identified include work ethics, unconscious bias, and leadership style, with unconscious bias emerging as the most consistently experienced issue. A composite mean of 3.57 for these challenges indicates their frequent impact on team dynamics. Coping strategies commonly employed include communication, collaboration, and trust-building, each ranked with a weighted mean of 3.49, indicating regular but not universal usage. Analysis of the relationships between these challenges and coping strategies reveals several significant correlations: work ethics positively correlates with collaboration ($r = 0.114, p = .025$), while unconscious bias is significantly associated with both communication ($r = -0.117, p = .022$) and trust ($r = 0.117, p = .021$). Leadership style demonstrates a notable relationship with collaboration ($r = -0.201, p = .000$) and trust ($r = 0.195, p = .000$), suggesting that these strategies play a key role in addressing leadership challenges in cross-cultural settings. Conclusions highlight the consistent nature of cross-cultural challenges and the need for enhanced coping strategies. Recommendations include implementing cultural competency training, adaptive leadership styles, and mentorship programs to foster a more inclusive team environment. Further research should explore the cultural factors impacting team performance and the effectiveness of coping strategies in addressing these challenges over time. This study provides actionable insights for multinational companies aiming to strengthen cross-cultural team cohesion and performance in China.

Keywords: cross-cultural teams, coping strategies, unconscious bias, team performance, cultural competency

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1. Introduction

Today, managing cross-cultural teams in multinational companies operating in China is a very challenging affair in the globalized economy. Diverse nationalities and backgrounds with various work cultures usually found within such teams give an excellent opportunity along with enormous challenges. Thus, recognizing and dealing effectively with these challenges are very crucial for the success and sustainability of MNCs in the Chinese market.

The Spires et al. (2019) investigates the dynamics of cross-cultural collaboration among students from China and the US in educational environments. It highlights how cross-cultural understanding is important in developing effective teamwork. Similarly, for multinational companies looking to operate in China, cross-cultural understanding and respect are important in achieving successful collaboration. This diversity may hugely enhance the effectiveness of teams but also presents challenges in which effective communication strategies are needed. In this regard, Spires et al present how differently cultural backgrounds influence collaboration, negotiation, and team dynamics and how intricate it is for multinational teams operating within China. Coping strategies such as building trust, training on culture sensitivity, and proper conflict resolution provide decisive answers to such challenges in making the environment work friendly. The results of this study provide useful recommendations for firms with a mission to strengthen the cultural capability and performance of their teams in cross-cultural settings through training and other strategic interventions. Other literature discusses conflict resolution issues in cross-cultural teams. The inability of teams to resolve conflicts due to cultural differences in management and control often leads to misunderstandings or unresolved conflict issues that affect team productivity and morale (Meng et al.,2018). There is also much detail in adapting leadership styles in different cultural contexts. There has been evidence that cross-cultural team leaders need to have elements of cultural intelligence, and adaptation of styles help to create inclusions and leverage teamwork (Paiuc, 2021).

In response to these challenges, various coping strategies have been proposed and studied. These strategies include cultural training and education programs for employees to enhance cross-cultural competence, the establishment of clear communication protocols and conflict resolution mechanisms, and the promotion of inclusive leadership practices that accommodate diverse cultural perspectives (Li & Wang, 2019). Different coping strategies that have been proposed and studied include; cultural training and education programs for employees to enhance cross-cultural competence, clear communication protocols, and mechanisms for resolving conflicts with the promotion of different leadership practices for accommodating diverse cultural perspectives (Li & Wang, 2019).

These insights aside, there is still the existence of a knowledge gap in finding out whether specific coping strategies work and how to apply them to the specific environment of MNCs in China (Zhao & Liu, 2020). This paper attempts to contribute to the existing literature with observations regarding the expatriate teams operating in a Chinese context and the incidence of possible problems that teams are likely to face, thereby assessing the effectiveness of coping strategies. The deficits addressed by this study yield prospects of great value for informing managerial practices and contributing to cross-cultural team success within MNCs in China, thus enhancing organizational effectiveness and creating a harmonious work environment across cultural boundaries.

The following reasons support this argument: First, with China taking an increasingly central stage in the global economy, the need to integrate local and expatriate personnel into cross-cultural teams poses a major challenge for MNCs. Optimizing their operational efficiency and market competitiveness further depends on effective handling of cultural differences. These teams make a huge difference in organizational results; thus, cultural disparities which are not managed properly may cause communication problems, conflicts, lower productivity, and higher turnover rates, whereas well-managed teams may make a big difference through the

diversity by encouraging innovation and achieving strategic goals. China, therefore would present certain kinds of cultural, political, and economic challenges that manifest within teams, regarding communication style, decision-making process, and power preferences. This tailoring of research may inform effective integration strategies and even team aggregate performance as it attempts to respond to the complexities involved. Empirical evidence, coupled with the critical evaluation of practical coping mechanisms, can help to further theoretical understanding and inform managerial practices, training initiatives, and policy frameworks intended to enhance cross-cultural management in multinational settings in China and more broadly.

This paper on Cross-Cultural Team Challenges and Coping Strategies in Multinational Companies in China is important because the step of globalization increases the necessity for cross-cultural teams as drivers of innovation, productivity, and competitive advantage. The cradle of global economic activity, China, has been dealing with cultural diversity both as an opportunity and a challenge, yet there is still a gap in terms of specific dynamics and coping strategies in this context. Through an examination of these aspects, this study will elucidate some barriers and facilitators of cross-cultural collaboration, provide evidence-based recommendations to nourish inclusive leadership, enhance communication, and create a cultural competency while bridging theory and practice as it equips multinational organizations in China to practice beyond the confines of an interconnected world.

Objectives of the Study - This study aimed to determine the cross-cultural team challenges in multinational companies operating in China and identify effective coping strategies to enhance team performance. Specifically, it described the challenges encountered by cross-cultural teams in terms of work ethics, unconscious bias and leadership style; assessed the coping strategies employed in terms of communication, collaboration, trust and relationship; tested the significant relationship between cross-cultural team challenges and the coping strategies; and came up with plan of action to improve the coping strategies to enhance team performance.

2. Methods

Research Design - This research adopted a descriptive study that was designed to establish a description of existing conditions. It was appropriate for this research since it aimed at making a statistical description and correlation of various constructs (Bhandari, 2023). The study aimed at establishing the existence of problems and coping mechanisms within cross-cultural teams within multinational companies located in China. Quantitative methods provide objectivity for the measurability of variables such as work ethics, unconscious bias, leadership style, communication, collaboration, trust, and relationships towards precise data collection and analysis. The core objective of this study was testing the significant relationship that prevails between cross-cultural team challenges and the coping strategies used. In correlational research, variables are identified and quantified precisely, making it even more relevant in investigating how diverse challenges were related to multiple coping strategies. With the use of quantitative approaches, data collection from a large sample number can be made for generalization of the results, an even more critical feature in establishing cross-cultural team dynamics in a variety of multinational companies. The use of statistical tools in the quantitative method helped in computing on the data. Strong evidence then emanated on how relationships were connecting problems and coping strategies. This helped identify which strategies are actually more effective to improve performance in teams. It made it possible to compare different constructs, such as work ethics, style of leadership, across different teams and multiple cultural contexts. This was important in learning what specific problems to expect from cross-cultural teams and how effectively these teams can cope with strategies that manage these problems. Correlational quantitative research findings guided an action plan aimed to upgrade coping strategies and thereupon team performance. With empirical evidence of what works and what does not, it is possible for the study to provide practical recommendations to multinational companies.

Respondents of the Study - The respondents were employees of Tech Companies such as Huawei, Lenovo and DJI from China. The sample size of the study was computed using Raosoft Online Sample Size calculator. The researcher considered 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error, 50% response distribution, and the total population. The calculated sample size was 384. Stratified random sampling was used as the sampling method. Stratified sampling was necessary for representation in terms of subgroups including company, department, type

of job and level of seniority. Hence a sample was generated which reflected all the differences present in the population in general. Hence, having calculated the sample size as 384, stratified sampling ensured that samples were furthermore representative by having all that should be proportionally in particular strata, for instance, differing companies or departments that made the study results reliable. Increasing the chances of findings generalized into the whole population with a stratified sampling at a 95% confidence level and an error margin of 5%. Its adoption of allowance for variations across key employee demographics or organizational attributes cut down sampling error.

Instruments - A researcher-designed, self-constructed questionnaire was created by the researcher to collect the data. This was based on prior literature and studies conducted in the field. The researcher properly validated and tested the instrument. The questionnaire is divided into two sections. Section 1 identified the problems faced by cross-cultural teams. It was divided into three sub-domains (work ethics, unconscious bias, leadership style). Each sub-domain had five items. Hence, in this part, the respondents were asked to answer 15 questions in total. Part II elicited the respondent's assessment on coping strategies. It was divided in three sub-domains (communication, collaboration, trust and relationship). Each had five items. Hence, in this section, another 15 items were answered by them. To ensure validity in terms of relevance, clarity, and suitability, the data-gathering instruments were presented to a panel of three experts for face and content validation. These experts were selected based on their expertise in the field. Feedback from the jurors, including comments, suggestions, and recommendations were incorporated into the final draft of the instruments.

Table 1

Summary of Reliability Test

Indicators	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient	Verbal Interpretation
Works Ethics		
Item 1	0.831	Good
Item 2	0.793	Acceptable
Item 3	0.836	Good
Item 4	0.805	Good
Item 5	0.815	Good
Unconscious Bias		
Item 1	0.824	Good
Item 2	0.804	Good
Item 3	0.788	Acceptable
Item 4	0.822	Good
Item 5	0.803	Good
Leadership Style		
Item 1	0.828	Good
Item 2	0.834	Good
Item 3	0.808	Good
Item 4	0.813	Good
Item 5	0.832	Good
Communication		
Item 1	0.807	Good
Item 2	0.800	Good
Item 3	0.819	Good
Item 4	0.797	Acceptable
Item 5	0.792	Acceptable
Collaboration		
Item 1	0.797	Acceptable
Item 2	0.819	Good
Item 3	0.816	Good
Item 4	0.817	Good
Item 5	0.823	Good
Trust and Relationship		
Item 1	0.817	Good
Item 2	0.823	Good
Item 3	0.797	Acceptable
Item 4	0.801	Good
Item 5	0.815	Good

Having been recommended on by the research adviser and committee, the final draft was pilot-tested on 30 employees not included in the actual study to establish the reliability of the indicators. Indicators reached a Cronbach's Alpha between 0.7 and 0.9, so the questionnaire was reliable. A summary of the results is seen above.

Data Gathering Procedure - Electronic questionnaires were requested through "Questionnaire Star" via WeChat. The pilot test of 30 respondents was conducted after a written request was made officially to the company. As soon as possible, the return questionnaires were coded in an Excel format and sent to the University research center for analysis via SPSS. Once the questionnaire achieved internal consistency, it was finalized and reproduced for distribution. The researcher had distributed the questionnaire through "Questionnaire Star," with responses gathered over two weeks. The sample size was achieved within that time frame, and then follow-up emails and other electronic messages were sent to extend appreciation and gratitude for having completed the survey.

Data Analysis - The following statistical tools were used: **Weighted Mean**. This is the measure of central tendency known as the weighted mean which computes an average value of a set of values, taking into consideration the fact that every value may have assigned to it a specific weight due to either its importance or frequency. Each item in the sub-domains will be rated on a Likert scale (1 to 4, where 1 = Never, 4 = Always). Moreover, to assess respondents' assessment on coping strategies aspects, each with five items. The respondents will use the same Likert scale format (1 to 4), where 1 = No Extent, 4 = Very Great Extent). **Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)**. This measured the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables. In this study, it was employed to ascertain the relationship between relationship between cross-cultural team challenges and the coping strategies.

Ethical Considerations - Therefore, all the information gathered will be used only for research purposes to uphold the quality and integrity of the study. Formal letters and communications were given to the respondent to seek informed consent in readiness to answer all the necessary questions. Names are not collected from respondents to preserve confidentiality and anonymity. Participation was completely voluntary. The participants responded to their own free will to the questionnaires. Finally, the researcher respected the safety and security of all respondents. Thus, no form of harm is brought to them during the course of the study.

3. Results and Discussions

Table 2
Summary Table on Challenges Encountered by Cross-Cultural

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Work Ethics	3.58	Always	2
Unconscious Bias	3.62	Always	1
Leadership Style	3.52	Always	3
Composite Mean	3.57	Always	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Always; 2.50 – 3.49 = Often; 1.50 – 2.49 = Rarely; 1.00 – 1.49 = Never

The table 2 outlines the overview across three key challenges for cross-cultural teams, namely work ethics, unconscious bias, and leadership style. All three are ranked as "Always" in the summary table where weighted means are between 3.50 and 4.00. That is, it goes without saying that these challenges always arise within cross-cultural teams. The composite mean of 3.57 indicates that these challenges are a significant concern for cross-cultural teams, demanding attention and proactive management strategies to improve team dynamics and performance.

The highest-ranked challenge is unconscious bias, with a mean score of 3.62. This suggests that unconscious biases are a pervasive problem and regularly affect cross-cultural teams. In the case of ethnicity, gender, or cultural practices, such biases affect the communication, decision-making, and cooperation within teams. Typically, these biases often do not wear overt faces but instead allow people to influence interaction, yet can still serve as a barrier to inclusion and sources of workplace inequality. Several studies treat unconscious bias as a theme, especially in global teams. Kyaw and Pruetipibultham (2023) explored how cultural biases, particularly those regarding conflict management styles, influence communication and decision-making in Thai and Myanmar teams. In the same vein,

unconscious biases about the primacy of cultural norms, gender, or ethnicity have impacts on the interactions of members and silencing or making people more minor background noise. Unconscious bias affects all aspects of teamwork, from the distribution of tasks to the recognition of contributions, and its pervasive nature makes it the most pressing issue for cross-cultural teams.

The second-ranked challenge is work ethics, with a mean score of 3.58. Divergence in work ethics, for example, may entail differences in punctuality expectations, priority of tasks, and maintenance of work-life balance that may cause friction in cross-cultural teams. For example, punctually oriented cultures grow impatient with teams that belong to cultures where time is used more loosely. These varieties may lead to misunderstandings; reduce the level of coherence among the teams; thus, the overall production is strangled. Actually, work ethics have always been a significant topic in cross-cultural management literature, with Pradana et al. (2024) being among those who researched accommodation strategies of cross-cultural virtual teams between Indonesia and Taiwan. Different cultures often have different expectations about deadlines, cooperation styles, and the overall approach to tasks. Such differences are even more acute in virtual teams where cultural cues are less apparent. The second-ranked challenge in the summary table suggests that inconsistent work ethics can cause misunderstandings, affect productivity, and damage team cohesion if not well dealt with.

The third-ranked challenge is leadership style with a mean score of 3.52. As explained earlier, cross-cultural team leadership can be quite diverse. The manner in which the authority is exercised, the decisions are made, and feedback is delivered could create confusion and conflict in the team. A participative style would do well in one culture, while it may violate the more traditional approach of the other culture so that the clear expectations are not set, and team management is ineffective. Cross-cultural teams' differences in leadership styles are assessed in various settings. For example, Choi (2024) presented the leadership styles of Finland and illustrated how the non-Finnish members in a team perceive and adapt to the changing styles. Leadership styles can be closely related to the cultural norms. If such styles happen to be inconsistent between teams of two cultures, then this could lead to inefficiency, confusion, and may even lead to conflict. The third challenge in ranking in the summary table indicates that effective leadership requires that leaders should be responsive, culturally sensitive, and sometimes more flexible and sensitive to multiple expectations about authority and communication.

Issues about unconscious bias, work ethics, and leadership style as brought about by cross-cultural teams are intertwined with a contributing function to the overarching issue of team dysfunction and performance barriers. The studies documented illustrate the significance of such issues in actual cross-cultural settings. Elimination of unconscious bias plays a crucial role in developing inclusiveness besides ensuring equal opportunities for contribution by all members of a team. Work ethics and leadership styles should be harmonized to improve teamwork, communication, and overall team output. Therefore, cross-cultural teams have to learn and develop continuously with a strong focus on cultural competence, flexibility, and open communication. Through such training programs in an organization, the members of teams will become well aware of cultural differences that might work against each other. This means cross-cultural collaboration should not be challenged in its very core for success to be delivered.

Table 3

Summary Table on Coping Strategies

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Communication	3.49	Often	2
Collaboration	3.49	Often	2
Trust and Relationship	3.49	Often	2
Composite Mean	3.49	Often	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Always; 2.50 – 3.49 = Often; 1.50 – 2.49 = Rarely; 1.00 – 1.49 = Never

As can be evidenced by the table 3, summary indicators for the use of coping strategies are represented through three: Communication, Collaboration, and Trust and Relationship, with each of them carrying a weighted mean score of 3.49. Using the interpretation legend, such a score falls in the “Often” category of indicators, meaning that the said strategies are usually brought into the context of cross-cultural challenges. All three indicators lead to

the second rank.

This “Often” rating is again revealed by the Composite Mean score of 3.49, focusing on the consistent application of these strategies across the indicators. It means that these communication, collaboration, and trust building practices are not ad-hoc exercises but part of effective management cross-culture and hence constitute an integral function of bringing down differences between two cultures. Communication: Communication ranked on the second step with a score of 3.49 constitutes the basis of successful cross-cultural interaction. It is most often personal or professional and effective communication stands paramount while trying to bridge cultural issues, decreases misunderstandings, and increases clarity. The cross-cultural research of Kilic (2024) states the ethical and methodological problems to monitor the communication in a cross-cultural research context, language difficulties, varying norms of communication, and cultural sensitivities. In the same line, Choi (2024) considers how the non-Finns view cultural management in Finland whereby the practicing of communication between the cultures yields significant effects for leadership and management outcomes. The communication strategies which are used regularly signify the need for clear and culturally aware communication to encourage cross-cultural understanding.

Collaboration: Cooperation: Thirdly, at a rating score of 3.49, cooperation is another essential coping strategy that would be rampant in cross-cultural settings. This will then be needed as the world becomes more multiculturally prolific and becomes multifaceted, ensuring the effective delivery of tasks and activities among multicultural groups. Anglani et al. (2023) underscored the aptness of cultural intelligence in project management contexts-an aspect that could be fully realized in working cohesively with different backgrounds. In addition to achievement of the project objectives, collaborative practice builds respect for and an understanding of diverse cultural backgrounds. The predominance of collaborative strategies gives the message that cross-cultural collaboration is indeed crucial for problem-solving and innovation in a world setting.

In Trust and Relationship, again, a score of 3.49 is recorded, which expresses that trust building and relationship management are more frequently used. Trust in most cases usually serves as the basis for effective leadership and management in cross-cultural environments, which is often characterized with numerous cultural norms that create initial misunderstandings or aversion. Kilic (2024) discussed challenges in cross-cultural research wherein it becomes essential for the researchers to develop trust in the face of different ethical expectations and methodologies. Choi (2024) talked about the perception of non-Finns toward the concept of leadership and management in Finland portraying how relationships, grounded in mutual trust, impact the managerial success in a cross-cultural environment. Overreliance on trust and relationship building often strongly indicates the need for a tool to ensure the development of long-term connections and break through cultural barriers.

Table 4

Relationship Between Cross-Cultural Team Challenges and the Coping Strategies

Work Ethics	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
Communication	-0.055	0.280	Not Significant
Collaboration	0.114*	0.025	Significant
Trust and Relationship	-0.037	0.469	Not Significant
Unconscious Bias			
Communication	-0.117*	0.022	Significant
Collaboration	0.100	0.050	Not Significant
Trust and Relationship	0.117*	0.021	Significant
Leadership Style			
Communication	0.089	0.083	Not Significant
Collaboration	-0.201**	0.000	Significant
Trust and Relationship	0.195**	0.00	Significant

Legend: * Significant at p-value < 0.05; ** Significant at p-value < 0.01

The table 4 displays the association between cross-cultural team challenges and coping strategies. It can be seen in the table that there is a direct significant relationship between cross-cultural team challenges in terms of work ethics and their coping strategy in terms of collaboration since the computed p-value is less than the alpha level. This implies that collaboration is an effective coping strategy to address the challenges encountered

regarding work ethics. Similar to challenges faced in terms of unconscious bias and leadership style there is also a direct relationship to trust and relationship. This means that trust and relationships are effective coping strategies to address the challenges on cross-cultural teams regarding unconscious bias and leadership style.

However, there is an indirect relationship between the challenges on the cross-cultural teams regarding unconscious bias and communication as their coping strategy since the r-value is negative and the computed p-value is less than the alpha level. The result means that communication is not an effective strategy to address the challenges on cross-cultural teams regarding unconscious bias. It further implies that using communication as a coping strategy might worsen the concern. This is similar to addressing the challenges on cross-cultural teams regarding leadership style. There is an indirect relationship to collaboration as a coping strategy since the r-value is negative and its computed p-value is less than the alpha level. The table presents the cross-cultural team challenges relationship with coping strategies. Collaboration and trust/relationship-building were most significantly affected. Work ethics correlates positively with collaboration but not with communication or trust. It thus suggests that shared work values enhance teamwork. Communication is negatively affected by unconscious bias, but has a slight positive effect on trust/relationship-building. Bias would then hinder communication at the same time as it shapes relationships. Leadership style strongly affects collaboration (negatively) while having a positive effect on trust/relationship building thus making trust-offering leadership reinforce team cohesion while distrustful leadership shuns teamwork. Generally speaking, collaboration and trust are the predominant strategies that fall prey to these influences, while communication is relatively less affected. Jiang (2023) has proved that work ethics, unconscious bias, and leadership style influence communication, collaboration and trust/relationship in a cross-cultural team. Supporting this, Table 4 herein shows common work ethics foster collaboration, but unconscious bias affects communication negatively while facilitating trust/relationship positively. Again, leadership style affects cooperation (negative) and trust/relationship (positive), which shows how leadership influences the dynamics of the team. This study and table show that a successful leadership, value alignment at work, and working with unconscious bias are important to prevail over these issues and produce productive cross-cultural teamwork.

Table 5

Proposed Action Plan to Mitigate Cross-Cultural Challenges, Improve the Coping Strategies to Enhance Team Performance

KEY RESULTS AREA	STRATEGIES OR ACTIVITIES	OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OUTCOME	RESPONSIBLE PERSONS OR PERSONS INVOLVED
Cross Cultural Team Challenges: Leadership Style	Conduct cross-cultural leadership training and workshops	Enhance cross-cultural leadership effectiveness	80% of leaders report improved cultural awareness and adaptability	HR/Training Manager
	Implement a mentorship program pairing leaders with culturally diverse mentors or advisors.		85% of leaders report increased confidence in navigating cultural nuances in their leadership approach.	
Cross Cultural Team Challenges: Work Ethics	Create a forum for discussing work ethics differences and best practices	Foster mutual understanding of work ethics	90% adherence to guidelines in team interactions	HR/Training Manager
	Organize regular forums or discussions for employees to share work ethics perspectives and best practices		75% of team members report greater clarity and respect for diverse work ethics	

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Cross Cultural Team Challenges: Unconscious Bias	Develop a “Work Ethics Guidelines” document addressing cultural norms	Minimize impact of unconscious biases	90% adherence to guidelines in team interactions and project collaboration	HR/Training Manager
	Implement an anonymous feedback system to allow team members to report bias-related experiences		70% improvement in inclusivity scores in team feedback surveys	
Coping Strategies: Communication	Provide cultural sensitivity training and workshops focus on understanding and adapting to different cultural communication styles	Improve cross-cultural communication	90% of employees report improved understanding of cultural communication differences, leading to better communication in cross-cultural teams.	HR/Training Manager Team Leaders External Trainers Department Heads
	Establish Regular Cross-Cultural Communication Check-Ins		Responsible Persons: HR/Training Manager, Team Leaders 80% of team members feel more confident in expressing ideas and providing feedback across cultures, improving overall team communication. Responsible Persons: HR/Training Manager, Department Heads	Team Members
Coping Strategies: Collaboration	Implement Cross-Cultural Team-Building Activities (include problem-solving exercises, role-playing, and collaborative tasks that require participants to navigate cultural differences. By encouraging team members to work together in a structured, yet informal setting, the aim is to break down communication barriers, improve interpersonal relationships, and build a stronger sense of unity within the team.)	Strengthen cross-cultural collaboration	85% of team members report improved teamwork and collaboration, with increased mutual respect and understanding. 80% of participants report enhanced collaboration and better working relationships across cultures.	Team Leaders HR/Training Manager, Mentors, Mentees

	Create Cross-Cultural Mentoring Programs (By pairing an experienced mentor with a mentee from another culture, the program helps both individuals gain insights into different cultural perspectives, enhancing their collaborative skills. The mentoring relationship also provides a platform for mentees to receive guidance on navigating workplace dynamics and improving their cultural competencies. Over time, this program helps build stronger, more inclusive, and collaborative teams across cultures.)			
Coping Strategies: Trust and Relationship	Foster Transparent Communication Practices Encourage Regular Relationship-Building Activities	Enhance trust and relationship-building in teams	85% of team members report greater trust in leadership and colleagues, leading to improved collaboration and reduced misunderstandings. 80% of employees feel more comfortable and connected to their colleagues, enhancing mutual trust and cooperation.	HR/Training Manager, Team Leaders, Department Heads

The proposed action plan to improve coping strategies for cross-cultural teams addresses specific challenges of unconscious bias, work ethics, and leadership style that affect team dynamics and performance in multinational companies. In order to enhance team performance in a cross-cultural context, specific strategies are needed that can promote open communication, cultural awareness, and collaboration. Implementation of cultural competency training, leadership development programs, and structured communication protocols will help team members navigate and decrease the reoccurrence of conflicts due to cultural differences. Mentorship programs that will expose team members to mentors with culturally different backgrounds will enhance better understanding and adaptability to different work ethics and leadership approaches. This action plan aims at improving coping skills but also addressing an environment of inclusivity and supportiveness in the team. Consequently, these efforts are expected to improve the performance of teams in terms of integrating disparate opinions through building trust and, consequently, raising overall cohesion within the team across cultures.

4. Conclusions

- Cross-cultural teams consistently face challenges related to unconscious bias, work ethics, and

leadership styles.

- Coping strategies related to communication, collaboration, and trust are often applied.
- There is a direct significant relationship between cross-cultural team challenges in terms of work ethics and their coping strategy in terms of collaboration.
- Implementing cultural competency training, leadership development, communication enhancement, and team-building activities will improve coping strategies and enhance cross-cultural team performance.

Recommendations

- Multinational companies in China may promote an inclusive and adaptable leadership style to address cross-cultural challenges effectively.
- Company managers and HR personnel may implement strategic coping strategies focusing on communication, collaboration and trust and relationship to enhance team collaboration and cultural synergy.
- Multinational companies in China should be encouraged adopt the proposed action plan for improved cross-cultural team management.
- Future researchers may expand this study to explore evolving cross-cultural dynamics in multinational settings.

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