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Editorial:
Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management challenges and opportunities for HRD

Introduction

This special issue of the *International Journal of HRD Practice, Policy and Research* brings together on-going work from the Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management3 (GETM3) project. GETM3 is a European Union Research Innovation and Staff Exchange (RISE) project investigating the HRD implications of the way existing and future talent can be managed at work, harnessing the entrepreneurial attitudes and skills of young people. The project is both interdisciplinary and international, exploring the key challenges of managing this entrepreneurial talent within organizations. The scope and content of the project align neatly with the intent of the *Journal of International Journal of HRD Practice, Policy and Research*, not least the emphasis on practical HRD implications. Indeed, at the heart of GETM3 is an appreciation that true understanding and impact can only come from engagement with multiple stakeholders. This editorial provides a brief contextual overview of GETM3, focusing on its relevance for HRD, before providing a brief review of the articles and opinion/forum pieces that make up the special issue. Such explorations are certainly timely. Deloitte's recent Global Human Capital survey highlights that organizations must re-invent their ability to learn. Indeed, the top rated trend for 2019, reflected by 86% of respondents, was the need to improve learning and development (Deloitte, 2019: 77). Related to this is the requirement for more dedicated evidence exploring the nature and impact of HRD (Gubbins, Harney, van der Werff, & Rousseau, 2018; Mackay, 2017), coupled with more directed attention to the process, rather than the content, of HRD interventions (Staats, 2019). The papers in this special issue certainly make a contribution to enhanced understanding and equally to bridging the seemingly ever widening theory-practice gap (Holden, 2019).

Overview of the Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management 3 Project

Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management 3 is a multi-disciplinary project bringing together research insights on entrepreneurial talent from 5 countries (UK, Ireland, Slovenia, Poland and South Korea) and 16 academic and industry partners. Under the auspices of the Horizon 2020 programme, the European Union allocated a substantive 6.16 billion euros to researcher training and development. The GETM3 project received over €1 million Euros from Horizon 2020 Marie-Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) specifically, Research Innovation and Staff Exchange (RISE), coupled with matched funding from the Korean Research Foundation. RISE programmes recognize the significance of fostering international training and continuous professional development. As per the stated RISE objectives, the intent of RISE funding is to create an infrastructure for individuals to work and research in other countries in order to 'make the whole world a learning environment' and 'break down barriers between academia, industry and business'. In the context of GETM3 this equates to over 100 staff (academics, employers, technicians and administrators) conducting over 270 month-long international 'mobility secondments' across academia and industry.

In terms of research, the aim of GETM3 is to improve employability and future global talent management to support socio-economic development. The project identifies key talent management issues of the future by engaging with and researching three stakeholder groups, namely: students and graduates (the future generations), employers (wealth-creators of the future), and higher education institutions (educators of the future). 'Entrepreneurial' in this instance is broadly understood as entrepreneurial skills as manifest in creativity, exploration, and positive change and the ability to 'turn ideas into action'. In the context of this special issue, an overview of GETM3 project initiatives provides particular value. First, a notable design feature of the GETM3 project is direct engagement with industry stakeholders. This ensures that GETM3 retains a focus on industry engagement and enhancing practice. Commercial partners have been involved in both the design and delivery of research activities. Second, a multi-level focus helps locate HRD discussion and trends in the context of a broader eco-system. Finally, the international and comparative dimensions of GETM3 reflects the global intensity of HRD challenges. Each of the papers contained in this special issue pick up on these aspects.

The GETM3 project is over half-way through its dedicated funding period. To date, the 16 partner GETM3 consortium has delivered eleven Research Sandpit events, which have been held in rotation across the UK, Slovenia, Poland, Ireland, and South Korea. The project Steering Committee has met nine times at partner universities across Europe. The project has organized some 14 conferences, 27 workshops and 4 exhibitions, with a further 30 conferences, 54 workshops, and 3 training events being attended by GETM3 members. All this activity has been enabled by a total of 125 months' worth of overseas Research Secondments. Overall, by facilitating collaboration between experienced and less-experienced researchers, older and younger employees, the project seeks to exchange knowledge, accelerate the accumulation of experience, and build research and entrepreneurial capacity. The project is on the cusp of developments exploring how learning, and learning expectations, are evolving. As the recent Deloitte Human Capital Trends report concluded "effective reinvention requires a culture that supports continuous learning" (2019: 7). This is certainly something facilitated and encouraged by the GETM3 project. We are pleased to have the opportunity to showcase our research in this special issue, with the intent of providing beneficial recommendations and reflections for HRD practitioners. We would like to thank all the reviewers for their constructive comments and timely feedback. We also wish to acknowledge Rick Holden for the initial idea, and thank Mark Loon, Sarah Minnis and the team at *Journal of International Journal of HRD Practice, Policy and Research* for working with us to see this Special Issue to fruition. Suzanne Crane at Northumbria University has been assiduous and effective in her co-ordination. In the next section we provide a summary of the Special Issue contributions.

Overview of the Special Issue Papers

The overarching aim of RISE funding is to develop research capacity at multiple levels and different sectors, both academic and commercial. As a contribution to this objective, the project team deliberately organizes for participants from different countries and sectors to collaborate. More and less experienced people work together, younger and older. In this issue, you will find articles authored internationally. Established academics have supported new researchers in their writing. Industry partners have been involved in research and writing for the first time. The result is a vibrant mix of approaches, styles and content drawn from diverse sources and focused on practical implications

The first paper *Designing a Design Thinking Approach to HRD* by Bailey, Harney, and Pearce explores the value of design thinking as applied to HRD. Taking up the theme of factors likely to impact the future of HRD (Gold, 2017), it reports on the design, development and delivery of a design thinking workshop which was created to develop ideas from students and recent graduates about the fundamental training and skills requirements of future employment. In showcasing the design of design thinking, including relevant processes and templates, the paper has direct import for HRD practitioners. Indeed, the author's note the huge potential to further apply ideas common in innovation and entrepreneurship directly to the HRD domain.

The second paper *Personal Career Success in the Eyes of Nascent Entrepreneurs Internationally* by Dziewanowska, Petrylaite, Rant, and Clegg takes as its focus young entrepreneurs and career trajectories. Specifically, the authors focus on experiential learning, meaning-making of the self, and self-efficacy to investigate and understand young entrepreneurs' career development choices and their definitions of career success. The paper draws on an extensive dataset of 20 young entrepreneurs, of different nationalities, all of whom have experience running their own business. Important for HRD are insights on enhancing self-awareness, and dedicated efforts to encourage reflection and learning. The authors usefully frame their recommendations for HRD to develop young talent, focus on the transition from the socialized to self-authoring mind.

The third paper moves the focus to the organizational level. Skoumpopoulou, Kohont, and Stalker explore *Talent Management in European SMEs: case analysis between Slovenia and Poland*. In their paper they take the conversation to the critical context of small and medium sized organizations, noting these organizations have been severely neglected from existing research. Reflecting the contextual diversity and the need to incorporate SME challenges and characteristics, the authors draw on case data from two SMEs from the post-socialist economies of Slovenia and Poland. The findings reveal varying approaches to the identification of talent, barriers to talent development and future steps for Talent Management. The authors recommend that individuals' needs and aspirations are foregrounded when designing and implementing TM practices in SMEs.

Building on the significance of context, the fourth paper by Booth, Shin, and Gomezel addresses the increasingly prevalent, but rarely examined, nature of social enterprises. Specifically, the authors provide insights from an in-depth case of a Slovenian social enterprise which provides jobs and training opportunities for refugee workers in the restaurant sector. The paper provides an interesting review of some of the dilemmas and paradoxes of social entrepreneurship, before demonstrating how these play out in the case at hand via a four–level conceptual framework. This framework directs attention to critical HRD domains in the form of strategic foresight, managing staff recruitment and develop in line with the overarching mission, coupled with managing the intensity of work as allied to personal and commercial objectives.

Our fifth paper returns to the individual level to explore some outcomes of learning. In their paper *Impactful learning: exploring the value of informal learning experiences to improve the learning potential of international research projects* Stalker, Skoumpopoulou, and Quan outline what constitutes learning and how this can be best captured. Drawing on the individual learning records of 19 project participants (including a pre-and post-secondment dimension) the authors highlight pertinent themes in the context of informal and unexpected learning. These are living in a host country (including communication, interpersonal competence, and building relationships); working with a host university (norms, planning, and conducting research) and developing an academic career (practice, networking, and reflection).

The final article, by Brückner and Mihelič, is titled *Reflections on Leading Young Talents: A Manager's Perspective*. Their paper is based on an in-depth interview and explores the challenges of managing young talent. The article usefully takes key insights and pieces them together with relevant literature to provide seven practical "ingredients" for successful Talent Management; (1) employee empowerment; (2) employee motivation as a long-term vision; (3) early investments; (4) cross-generational collaboration; (5) ensuring employee well-being; (6) transparent promotion criteria; and (7) leadership motivation. In so doing this article provides insights with direct relevance to organizations and HRD professionals.

Finally, the special issue also includes a conversation piece which draws on the experiences of three business professionals as they discuss their various experiences of life and career management totalling more than 100 years in China, France, Germany, Ireland, South Korea, the UK, and the USA. All are international managers who have moved between countries and industries. The conversation covers changing careers, dealing with culture, and ultimately, moving from survive to thrive. This is accompanied by an opinion piece, provocatively titled *Can working abroad ever be worthwhile?* which unpacks the realities, challenges, and learning from failure that are characteristic of international mobility assignments. They usefully question the assumption that such mobility automatically and universally creates value. We contribute to the HR Forum with a discussion of virtual teamworking in Korea and review Andy Portsmouth's recently published book *Beware Casual Leaders: Leadership Matters*, an interesting viewpoint after a 35 year career in business, enhanced by an array of theory and survey data.

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Designing a Design Thinking Approach to HRD

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Alison Pearce, *Northumbria University Newcastle*

This article considers the value of design thinking as applied to a HRD context, Specifically, it demonstrates how design thinking can be employed through a case study drawn from the GETM3 programme. It reports on the design, development, and delivery of a design thinking workshop which was created to draw out and develop ideas from students and recent graduates about the fundamental training and skills requirements of future employment. While design thinking has been widely deployed in innovation and entrepreneurship, its application to HRD is still very much embryonic. Our overview illustrates how the key characteristics of the design thinking process resonate with those required from HRD (e.g. focus on end user, problem solving, feedback, and innovation). Our contribution stems from illuminating a replicable application of design system thinking including both the process and the outcomes of this application. We conclude that design thinking is likely to serve as a critical mind-set, tool, and strategy to facilitate HRD practitioners and advance HRD practice.

Key Words: Design thinking, HRD, Future of work, co-creation, problem solving

Introduction

In recent times organizations have witnessed something of a 'design turn' (Schumacher & Mayer, 2018). Advocates stress the significance of fostering a design-driven culture, having design representation on corporate boards, and the merits of an overall 'design-index' (Sheppard, Kouyoumjian, Sarrazin, & Dore, 2018). Against this backdrop comes the claim that design thinking provides a basis to secure a sustainable competitive advantage (Martin, 2009). While subject to multiple interpretations, design thinking can be broadly defined as "a human-centred process that emphasizes observation, collaboration, fast learning, visualization of ideas, rapid concept prototyping, and concurrent business analysis which ultimately influences innovation and strategy" (Lockwood, 2010, p. 11). These characteristics mean that design thinking should have particular resonance for HRD practitioners. Both HRD and design thinking advocates share common characteristics of engaging participants, fostering learning, innovative problem solving, and constant feedback loops (Hill, 2004). Design thinking is a particularly valuable approach when addressing complex, ill-defined, and networked problems, or what Rittel & Webber (1973) refer to as "wicked problems". It is generally recognized that the future of work mandates new approaches to training and the cultivation of creative new skill-sets (World Economic Forum, 2018). Sarooghi and colleagues note the "growing need for a workforce equipped to face uncertainties and address problems not susceptible to inquiry based on pure analytical skills" (2019, p. 78).

Design thinking is therefore especially apt to facilitate HRD practitioners in dealing with the complex and ambiguous challenges related to the future of work. Ultimately, allowing for input, consultation, and engagement in exploring and creating probable futures is likely to contribute to a greater sense of employee justice, buy-in and engagement with firm activities and HRD objectives (Heffernan & Dundon, 2016; Liedtka & Kaplan, 2019).

The purpose of this paper is to outline and showcase an application of design thinking to explore the skills required for the world of work of tomorrow. Specifically, the article reports on the design, development and delivery of a workshop designed to generate and develop ideas from students and recent graduates about the fundamental training and skills requirements of future employment. Such workshops, designed for the co-creation and evolution of ideas, are often referred to as co-generative. Our contribution stems from illuminating a replicable application of design thinking, including both the process and outcomes. While the value and potential of design thinking has been explored in the context of innovation and entrepreneurship (Elsbach & Stigliani, 2018; Sarooghi et al., 2019) its application to the domain of HRD is still in its embryonic stage. Hence this paper offers an overview of a process and pathway for future explorations to further generate HRD insights and to benefit HRD practitioners.

The paper proceeds as follows. We first detail the significance of design thinking in addressing the challenges confronting HRD practitioners. We then outline the design thinking approach and provide some context for its application as part of the GETM3 project which explores entrepreneurial skills required for the future world of work. The latter half of the paper provides both content and process findings as related to a series of separate workshops conducted with multiple stakeholder groups. This involves a review of the workshop design, pilot, and associated resources. We conclude with the key implications and insights for HRD.

Setting the Context for Design Thinking in HRD

Headline statistics on the future of work highlight a landscape characterized by change and challenge. According to the Institute of the Future "85% of the jobs that today's students will do in 2030 do not yet exist", while PwC report that, even today, 79% of global CEOs express concern about the availability of skills (Caplan, 2018). What is less explored is how firms, and HRD professionals in particular, might seek to address the challenge of skill shortages and requirements for up-skilling. The Taylor report in the UK highlights a critical statistic; 65% of the 2030 workforce have already left full-time education (2017, p. 59). This means that the onus falls on employers to build the capacity and skills required for the future of work. The track record of organizations here is not encouraging. For example, research shows that while 70% of CEOs agree that their business model is under attack, a remarkable 90% believe they do not have the appropriate skill-sets to deal with such challenges (Bersin, 2017). Part of the problem is that traditional approaches focus on skills forecasting based on previous challenges, while failing to sufficiently engage with key stakeholders to inform explorations of future probabilities (Caza, Brower, & Wayne, 2015). It is in the context of such challenges, and as a means to better understand changing employee expectations, that design thinking approaches can have great utility for HRD professionals.

Following Zidulka and Kajzer Mitchell (2018) we can highlight specific benefits when design thinking is understood as either a mind-set, process, or strategy. With respect to mind-set, design

inspired approaches encourage empathy, prototyping, and exploration underpinned by a safe environment which acknowledges, and encourages, failure and learning. This learning, lean-start up or abductive philosophy privileges the incorporation of stakeholder input at the outset, while appreciating the value of real-time feedback and adjustment (Blank, 2013; Carlgren, Rauth, & Elmquist, 2016; Martin, 2009). In an era of transient advantages, a HRD mind-set founded on this philosophy is likely to avoid complacency and appropriately focus on exploration of skills for tomorrow, versus merely exploiting the skills of today (Harney, 2016). In terms of process, providing tools and an infrastructure to frame and reframe problems broadens the horizon of strategic opportunities (either at an organizational, HRD, or individual level). Explicit delineation of the problem solving effort is especially valuable for ill-structured, complex or wicked problems which match those confronted by business today. In this manner, design-led approaches may provide a vehicle for HRD professionals to demonstrate value added activities, and evidence around same, as part of the quest for strategic business partner status (Gubbins, Harney, van der Werff, & Rousseau, 2018; Hamlin, 2018). Finally, as a purposeful strategy, design thinking enables the co-evolution of problems with the development of solutions, thereby serving as a "frontier for the development of ideas/strategy formulation" (Liedtka & Kaplan, 2019). This allows for HRD solutions, in the form of new techniques, approaches or skill-set development of to emerge and co-evolve.

Design Thinking for HRD: Opportunity and Application

While product design has long been recognized as an aesthetic driver of innovation, it is only in more recent years that it has emerged as an holistic innovation management practice (Sarooghi et al., 2019). The origins of Design Thinking lie in the 1950s and 1960s work of scholars such as Arnold in 1959 (*Creative Engineering*) and Archer in 1965 (*Systematic Method for Designers*) who sought to define and develop principles and techniques for creative practice. The notion of design thinking and methods for applying the approach crystallized through the practice of David Kelley and his colleagues at IDEO and Stanford University. In part because of its interdisciplinary appeal, and readily applicable tools and logic, design thinking has quickly moved from a niche approach to something broadly desired (Martin, 2009; Sheppard et al., 2018). Accordingly, Dunne and Martin argue that managers and educators would be better served by exploring challenges and problems in the same manner as "designers approach design problems" (2006, p. 512). Design-led co-generative solutions allow for emergence of deep understanding concerning the user's situation, condition and, critically, needs (Bason & Austin, 2019). Phrased differently, design approaches enable a move "beyond understanding what customers want, to truly uncovering why they want it" (Kilian, Sarrazin, & Yeon, 2015, p. 2). As a result of providing an infrastructure and process of engagement, design thinking approaches are frequently put forward as a means to foster greater engagement (Sharma & Bansal, 2019). The opportunity of design thinking when applied to HRD involves the incorporation and accommodation of multidisciplinary teams to focus on stakeholder needs. By way of example, a deep understanding of employee training and development experience would help with the sense checking of proposed HRD questions and ensuring that an appropriate question is put forward to be answered, prior to embarking on solution generation (Liedtka & Kaplan, 2019). In this sense, design thinking offers a means to move away from traditional, top-down HRD decision making (e.g. top management selecting from predetermined solutions) towards a bottom-up, immersive and more inclusive design-creating logic (i.e., creating new opportunities and solutions) (Baker & Baker, 2012; Schumacher & Mayer, 2018).

While definitions of design thinking are increasingly contested, especially when applied directly in the business sphere, there is more of a consensus on the key characteristics of design approaches. Such key characteristics are said to include a user focus, problem framing, experimentation, visualization, and diversity (Schumacher & Mayer, 2018, p. 500). According to Brown (2008) design thinking traits can be grouped to represent a) a human centered perspective (stakeholder inclusion, empathy); b) focus on generative thinking and creativity; c) rapid learning and feedback (prototyping and continuous communication). Perhaps one of the most recognized manifestations of design thinking comes in the form of Stanford's Design Thinking Process model (Figure 1). This is helpful insofar as it highlights five key stages of design logic. Specifically, a) *empathize* captures the significance of understanding user needs through the means of ethnography, observation, immersive experience, and various forms of user interaction b) *define* builds on the first step, and involves a synthesis of users' points of view c) *ideate* centres on generative and creative processes, encouraging a divergence of perspectives so that as wide a range of solutions as possible are generated d) *prototype* — here the solutions are rendered into material and tangible artefacts enabling experimental interaction with users e) *test* where the most the prototypes with the most strategic potential are tested with users to enable targeted learnings and refinement. This continues and culminates in a final convergence and consensus. An adaptation of this model was adopted in the design of the GETM3 workshops presented in this article.
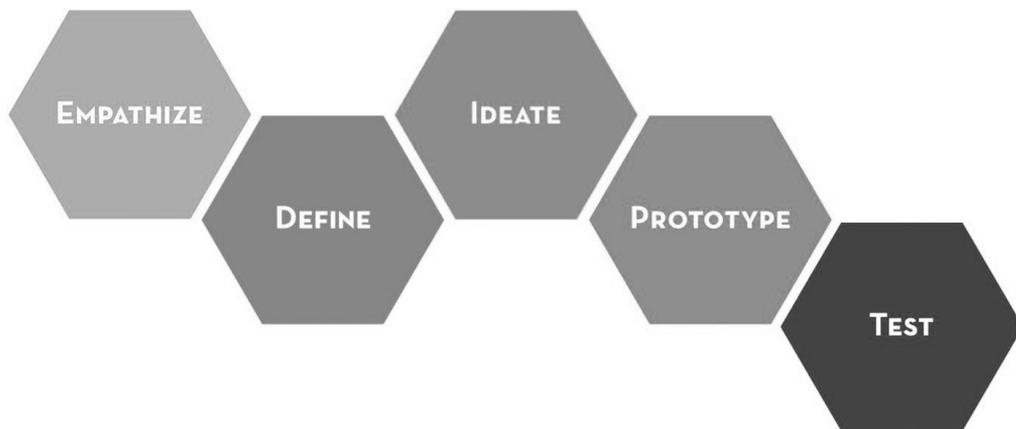
Figure 1. Stanford's 5-step Design Thinking Process (2011)

A notable value of design thinking models is that they are readily transferrable to 'non-designers', offering scaffolding and security to sceptical or hesitant participants. That said, a level of competence, experience, and ambidexterity is required of facilitators when using a design approach as an understanding of the problem co-evolves with development of solutions. It is, therefore, important to move back and forth iteratively between the various steps as understanding develops. Indeed there have been concerns that approaches such as the Stanford Design Thinking Process Model risks perpetuating a prescriptive, codified and linear logic. In recognition of this Brown importantly clarifies that the design process is "best described metaphorically as a system of spaces rather than a predefined series of orderly steps" (2008, p. 88). Over simplification of a design approach can also remove the agency of the designer and aspects of critique that they may encourage. In this sense, it is important that a design thinking informed approach does not gloss over complexities, but instead acknowledges the creative tensions that are inherent to any complex situation (Dorst & Cross, 2001).

In order to be truly effective, multidisciplinary teams using the approach should establish empathy with all stakeholders involved in the 'wicked problem'. An important aspect of design thinking is that it democratizes design activity, establishing hierarchy-free environments in which each stakeholder voice has equal weight. This has a twofold benefit: First, participants contribute knowledge and understanding from their own standpoint thereby enriching the collective development of the problem-space. Second, participants, invited to engage in co-creative design thinking activity become invested in solution development *and implementation*. This has significant potential in the realm of HRD where there is frequently a gap between espoused policies and practices and the realities experienced by HRD professionals or, indeed, employees (Gubbins et al., 2018). Empowering a workforce through design thinking can therefore establish creative functionality in an organization (Bailey et al., 2018). This capitalizes on an enterprise's latent capabilities in order to establish a more entrepreneurial organizational mind-set and organizational structure. In order to explore the utility of a design approach the next section highlights its application in the context of the GETM3 project.

Design Thinking in the Context of GETM3

Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management3 (GETM3) provides a perfect platform to explore and showcase the applicability of design thinking to key HRD related issues, namely the future of work and skills required for jobs that may not yet exist (Bailey et al., 2018) (see editorial for an overview of the GETM3 project). The inclusion of student, higher education and employer insights is a critical and recurrent theme across the entire GETM3 project. Wastell (2014) argues that design can form the basis of reform for management practice, but equally for higher education (e.g. curriculum design). In light of this promise, design-led, co-creative and generative approaches have been adopted by GETM3 partner institutions, allowing participants from diverse disciplinary and cultural backgrounds to collaborate in order both to frame a problem-space, and concurrently identify and explore solution opportunities (Bailey et al., 2018). In the example presented in this article, design thinking has been deployed with groups of students and graduate talent in order to explore curriculum design and future skills for talent development in an uncertain and rapidly changing labour-market.

The design of workshops and resources was conducted by academics from the GETM3 consortium, led by the Northumbria University Design team. Recent graduates with experience in design-thinking and workshop facilitation were also involved in the development and application of associated resources. For the purposes of the GETM3 programme, an adaptation of the simple 5-stage model was required, primarily because of time available to work with stakeholders within the project is very limited, and longer projects harder to establish. As a means to engage graduate talent in thinking expansively about the possibilities of future new educational models and paradigms, design thinking offered an activity-based approach that, through careful facilitation, would enable participants to view the complex situation from multiple perspectives; that of employers, students, the institutions, the disciplines, funders, policy-makers, and so forth. The approach offers a rapid way by which to generate understanding and multiple, innovative possibilities. It is critical that this occurs in a 'safe environment' where individuals are treated as equals. The philosophy informing the workshop followed that suggestion by Dunne and Martin whereby

> A traditional manager would take the options that have been presented and analyze them based on
> deductive reasoning. You typically get those options on the basis of what you have seen before —

that is, inductive logic. You then select the one that has highest net present value. Whereas a designer uses abductive reasoning to say, "What is something completely new that would be lovely if it existed but doesn't now? (2006, p. 514).

Keeping true to design logic we present details and process of the GETM3 design thinking workshops in a form similar to a pilot study (Spurlock, 2018). Morin (2013) highlights that pilot studies are especially useful in gathering evidence of intervention effectiveness. Similar to design thinking, proceeding on the basis of a pilot study enables the feasibility and acceptability of the proposed approach to be explored and refined.

GETM3 Design Thinking Workshops: Method and Design

The time for each GETM3 workshop was limited to two days. This called for an accelerated approach that took advantage of the most valuable aspects of both the Stanford Design-Thinking, and Google Design Sprint approaches. The delivery extended to four sessions namely: Unpack (problem- framing); Sketch (ideation); Decision & Revision; Communication. The first workshop was conducted in January 2018. The cohort who participated comprised 17 students representing eight different nationalities who between them had experience of studying 12 different subjects including mathematics, fine art, journalism, software engineering, sociology, and design in six different countries. They ranged in age from 22 years to 33 and had between zero and 10 years of professional employment experience. These students were studying for a Master's degree in Multidisciplinary Innovation (MDI) — a programme that is designed to enable graduates of different disciplines to learn cooperatively through creative, enquiry-based learning undertaken with external partner organizations (Bailey & Smith, 2010). As a pilot study, the facilitators (expert academics and Innovators in Residence) were simultaneously adopting the role of practitioner researchers. In this role they were conscious that the pilot was, in effect, a prototype which was being tested by the student participants. However, as this activity was being run as part of these students' studies, the facilitators were mindful of the need to ensure that this was a positive learning experience and to ensure alignment via "a dynamic prototyping approach" (Schon, 1995). The initial design for the workshop and resources was piloted at Northumbria University, with colleagues from Slovenia and South Korea in attendance. In addition to a reflection session by participants at the end of the workshop, colleagues from University of Ljubljana, Dublin City University, University of Warsaw, and Northumbria University were involved in the evaluation of the pilot (see Bailey et al., 2018).

Aligning with the workshop philosophy outlined previously, one critical tool used by facilitators involved "creative tensions" (Sterling et al., 2018). This is a device designed to accelerate the development of empathy amongst participants by synthesizing comprehensive stakeholder research data into a series of contextualized statements that set-up potential conflicts between the different parties' points of view (see Figure 2). These are derived from the central paradoxes of the situation, which have been identified by preparatory research conducted prior to the workshop. They provide different frames through which participants may view the situation from perspectives other than their own and thereby help to frame the problem space. Other tools that have been found to be useful include specially designed templates tailored to the topic under discussion. These prove a good way of providing scaffolding to participants who are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with creative practices and the inherent ambiguity that can exist in addressing 'wicked problems'. To this end, one useful approach involves adapting the Business Model Canvas

(Osterwalder, Pigneur, & Smith, 2010) to suit the situation at hand. In this case, that adaptation involved reconceptualizing the canvas as the 'Global Education Challenge Canvas' to incorporate fields of interest specific to the circumstance of Higher Education; What would students learn?, How would they learn it? Key Stakeholders, Funding Mechanism, etc. (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Examples of creative tension tools deployed in the workshops

Figure 3 Sample Global Education Challenge Canvas

GETM3 Design Thinking Workshops: Process

Two days prior to the event participants were provided with links to the various resources that the researchers within the GETM3 project had provided. These comprised predominantly articles from the popular press, specialist media, and TED talks. The purpose of providing this material in advance of the workshops is to allow participants to familiarize themselves with alternative points of view relating to the topic and to give them time to internalize these and start to consider their own positions.

Session 1 — Problem Framing

Problem framing and re-framing is an essential element in creative practice (Dorst & Cross, 2001) and it could be argued that it is the aspect of any creative design project that merits the greatest attention because it sets the scene for all that will follow. Essentially it is about identifying which challenge or opportunity, within a given situation, should be addressed; which question should be answered. Ideally it will involve input from all of the key stakeholders. Within the context of a rapid workshop design, tactics need to be employed that will accelerate the process whilst still endeavouring to keep opportunities open. Dorst and Cross (2001) identify that the problem-space and solution-space co-evolve, and we propose that it is, therefore, valuable to use solution-focused activities to help to stimulate exposure of the nature of the problem-frame.

The Problem Framing session comprised four activities and took three hours:

Activity 1: Briefing. The outline for the structure of the following two days was presented followed by a recap of the contextual material that had been shared prior to the event. In preparation for the workshop, the Northumbria Design team had prepared a series of Creative Tensions (Figure 2) that represented different educational themes that could be pursued and were constructed from the perspective of the three primary stakeholders; SME employers, New Talent employees, academia. These were presented to the overall group and then allocated to smaller groups of two or three. At this stage, no overarching question was presented beyond an informal "here is a situation, what might we do about it?"

Activity 2: Learning Journeys. In their small groups, the participants were first asked to think about the most meaningful educational experiences (formal or informal) that they could recall, discuss it and visually map this out as a learning journey; what was learned, how and where; how it was assessed and recognized etc. They were then asked to think about the scenario presented in the Creative Tension and consider how their own educational highlights might be adapted or adopted to help address this theme. They were required to create learning journeys relative to each theme. Learning Journeys in this context are akin to a customer journey map used in Service Design. They identify each of the touchpoints that a user has with the service and represent these along a timeline. In the case of the learning journeys required at this stage of the workshop, participants were required to imagine each intervention that would be required to happen in order for learning to take place in the way that they had envisaged.

Activity 3: Adapted World Cafe Approach. The World Cafe encourages diverse voices to converse around a given theme, building understanding and creative opportunities in the process (Brown, Isaacs, & Wheatley, 2005). In this case, the teams were required to rotate from theme to theme using the Creative Tension as a prompt to ask "what if universities did ...?" questions building upon the ideas of participants who had already contributed to the theme and record their creative responses on sticky notes for the next group. Each rotation was given 10 minutes.

Activity 4: Sum-up. This exercise represented an opportunity to review all of the thinking and ideas explored thus far and for individuals to identify, for themselves, which theme offered the greatest creative scope for them to contribute to developing proposals that would address the question "How might universities prepare graduates for jobs that don't yet exist?" At this point the participants were asked to form small teams (again of two or three), around their preferred theme.

Session 2 — Solution Development 1 — Global Education Challenge Canvas

The Solution Development 1 exercise comprised two activities and lasted two hours and the participants were advised that the teams should not discuss their emerging ideas with each other but should work in secret in order to stimulate some friendly competition, avoid 'group-think' and maintain the possibility of developing surprising, novel outcomes:

Activity 1: Synthesis. The teams were invited to review all of the ideas that had been generated around their theme through the Adapted World Cafe rounds, to identify the most promising and to generate new or refined ideas based on these. They were encouraged to use 'what if?' questioning and to consider whether new opportunities might emerge through combining apparently disparate idea pairs. They were given a period of time for unconstrained, freeform thinking before a structural device, The Global Educational Challenge Canvas, was introduced to help them start to refine their thinking. They were advised to use the different sections of the canvas as prompts to help them 'dig-deep' in their idea development.

Activity 2: Wildcards. Having been asked to start to commit their most compelling solutions to the canvas (they were not limited to just one solution at this point), wildcards were introduced, at random, to each team. These wildcards (two were presented to each team) introduced a significant contextual shift in the situation that the participants then had to consider and respond to in their proposal. Examples of wildcards were: "What if all companies had to gain a 'qualification' that enabled them to be licensed to employ graduates?", "What if gap years were a mandatory requirement before students could start degree programmes and they were arranged by universities?" and "What if all post-school research and education was funded by employers, not learners? How does this change the intervention?" The proposals had to revaluated and potentially adapted to address the wildcards and then committed to the canvas.

Session 3 — Solution Development 2 — Create, Test, Refine, Commit

Session 3 was designed with critique and subsequent iterative refinement very much in mind. Some have bemoaned the absence of critique in Design Thinking (Iskander, 2018). It is impractical in many workshop situations to fully prototype and accurately test designed concepts. Nonetheless, a degree of simulation can be employed to help in refining the proposal. This session comprised four Activities undertaken in three hours, in the small groups and still exclusively within their group

Activity 1: Create. The participants were asked to translate their preferred proposal from the outline presented on the previously completed canvas to a timeline representing the students' learning journey and combined with the corresponding timelines for employers, academia, and any other relevant stakeholders. Presented as a 'walk-through' from the perspective of different stakeholders, this sort of journey mapping enables participants to create a story which, whilst not as compelling a full prototype, nonetheless brings their ideas to life. For example, in one proposal where the participants were suggesting an education system where universities no longer existed but learners accessed knowledge through an online trading platform, they were required to produce a timeline that showed how this service would work from the perspective of the learner and the academics trading their expertise through the platform.

Activity 2: Test. Facilitators took on the role of different stakeholders and challenged the proposal through the use of 'devil's advocate' questioning seeking to test the validity of the proposal from multiple perspectives.

Activity 3: Refine. Based on feedback from the previous questioning, the participants were given a short time to refine and revise any aspects of their proposal that were found wanting.

Activity 4: Commit. Finally, in this session, the participants were required to translate their proposal into a short, five-minute 'pitch' to be shared with the other participants and GETM3 project academics.

Session 4 — Reveal, Combine, Communicate

The plan for this session was to have three discrete activities which would enable the separate teams to reveal their different proposals, combine the best elements of each and create and communicate a single, collective proposition. True to the dynamic prototyping, reflection-in-action stance that we had established as a principle for this pilot workshop, it quickly became apparent that this approach would not work as the different ideas, as they were revealed, were a) extremely different in scale and focus and b), could not readily be contrived into a meaningful and useful whole. Examples ranged from individual modules of study that brought together local charities and groups of students to address local challenges, to the wholesale, global disestablishment of the university system! For this reason, the individual teams were given an opportunity to incorporate feedback that they had received from the wider cohort into their pitches and re-present these as a finale to the creative workshop.

Session 5 — Reflection

The working practice of the Northumbria Design team is to formalise collective reflection at the end of any project and to consider three questions: What did we learn about the topic?, What did we learn from the approach? What can be done differently in the future? This approach helps to clarify and consolidate new knowledge acquisition, and captures, whilst fresh in the mind, any improvements that should be considered in the future. This approach was adopted in this case.

GETM3 Design Thinking Workshops: Insights

Based on the pilot workshops there were three key sources to consult in order to review and re-assess the design think process and tools as applied. The first involves the collective reflection of the participating students captured in Session 5. Secondly, the reflections of the participant researchers; the facilitators whose reflection-in-action allowed for modification of the workshop plan in real-time as the pilot was being delivered. Finally, the observations of visiting GETM3 academics who observed the workshops. Taken together, these reflections revealed a number of opportunities for improving the design thinking workshops:

1. Preparatory set-up: the participants failed to engage fully with supplied material prior to the workshops and would have preferred this summarized within the briefing at the start of the event. This is easily remedied in practical terms, but will be detrimental to their ability to internalize and form their own positions.

2. Creative Tensions: whilst these were seen as a positively helpful device in enabling the participants to see the situation from multiple perspectives, they felt that, they could have represented even more points of view. However, we have found that a balance needs to be struck.

3. Employers: graduate talent was well represented in the pilot, as was the university perspective (through the facilitators) but more authoritative employer perspectives were considered to be missing.

4. The introduction of Wildcards was seen as positive. However, they weren't universally helpful because they weren't disruptive enough. In many cases they aligned too easily with emerging propositions so it was easy to incorporate them.

5. The participants in this pilot were all studying for a Master's degree in innovation which uses design-led approaches as underpinning pedagogy. They are attuned to employing a creative mind-set and to an atypical educational setting. For this reason, the output of their work may not be very representative of what other graduate talents from other disciplinary backgrounds might seek.

6. When deployed in other GETM3 countries, cultural differences need to be borne in mind. For example, one of the overseas observers pointed out that in some cultures, an instruction to work in secret would have the polar opposite effect, encouraging participants to chatter about their ideas between sessions.

Taking into consideration the findings from the pilot study, a refined workshop design has been developed that addresses the points raised above. Additionally, the device of 'headline writing' has been introduced to assist participants when they are struggling to commit to the core benefit of their proposition. We employ this device within our projects in order to assist teams in teasing out what matters, to whom and why this is important. They are simply given a short amount of time to imagine that their new intervention has been launched and write the headline and first paragraph of a newspaper article that reported on it, or indeed a tweet that might best communicate it.

In terms of outcomes, three key themes that emerged from participants' proposals (revealed through this pilot and subsequent refined workshops run with different participants) were:

• The importance of soft-skill development e.g. insights gained from bringing together groups and teams from differing disciplines with different approaches and 'ways of looking' at and defining problems.

• The value of the design approach for fostering genuine, hands-on engagement with real-world challenges. The design thinking process offers real benefits in fostering deeper understanding of the challenges confronting HRD and expectations around same. Equally, through engaging with the process, participants develop a sense of shared understanding, sensitivity to multiple frames of reference enhancing the likelihood of buy-in to subsequent organizational efforts.

• The importance of insights from multiple stakeholders. In the context of the GETM3 project this includes the direct involvement of 'employers' in informing and engaging with the learners.

These are exemplified in proposals including the dissolution of universities as institutions and working with charities on real-world challenges. Other proposals emanating from the design workshops included a scheme for converting university buildings into open-innovation spaces where students and industry can work together developing new products, systems, and services, an online platform through which a safe space for industry/student collaboration is established, a

university/industry collaboration through which gap-years are delivered in a way that promotes and recognizes competency development, and the concept of the co-versity where ideas and solutions are generated in tandem as opposed to traditional hierarchical, top-down modes of learning in institutions (Schumacher & Mayer, 2018).

Conclusion

Design thinking has emerged as a significant concept in innovation and entrepreneurship (Sarooghi et al., 2019), but less so in people management and HRD where its application remains embryonic. In an effort to address this deficiency this paper has explored and showcased the effectiveness of a design informed approach to a 'wicked problem' of particular relevance to HRD. By so doing we illuminate both the application of design thinking, but equally, draw out some initial conclusions regarding its potential to explore education and skill-set future proofing. In fostering creative competence, design-led thinking nurtures and creates the active learning, exploration, and originality that the World Economic Forum (2018) deems critical as future work skills. The intuitive appeal of design thinking as a mind-set, process and/or strategy for HRD includes its pragmatic approach and alignment with core characteristics desired of HRD interventions. This an opportune time for experimentation, reflection, and application of design thinking to generate critical insights. While the future by definition will always be uncertain, the infrastructure available to explore and manage it need not be. Designing design thinking for HRD certainly offers a means to add to the HRD practitioner toolkit and advance HRD practice. Importantly, design thinking is a future-facing and strength-based approach (Allen & Simpson, 2019).

The workshop design presented aligns neatly with the need to move thinking in education away from linear, fixed, and progressive models of understanding towards a more dynamic, continuous, and eco-system informed approach. Notably, the value of the design thinking application for the GETM3 project was not simply related to content and appropriate stakeholder representation, but critically, in understanding and replicating the process of workshop delivery across GETM3 partners and contexts. Future research should explore the process of design thinking as applied to specific wicked HRD problems, including an assessment of the benefits of the approach, both content and process, from multiple stakeholder perspectives. A valuable application will come from bringing together multi-stakeholder teams e.g. managers, HRD professionals employees, clients, policy makers, young graduates. Innovations competitions can serve as a tangible output, ensuring that design thinking outputs are both realized and disseminated. The overall benefits of applying design thinking is ably captured by Rouse

> when people create together, they engage in intimate creative interactions, which, under certain circumstances, lead to the development of a shared interpersonal boundary (i.e., a sense of "we"). This shared interpersonal boundary influences creativity by circumscribing a closed, safe space in which [to] explore divergent ideas and manage the paradoxes of creativity (Rouse, 2019).

This was captured by a workshop participant who noted "it's not simply about what we need to learn, but also how to learn".

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**Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management
challenges and opportunities for HRD**

Personal Career Success in the Eyes of Nascent Entrepreneurs Internationally

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Entrepreneurship is of key importance to economies and societies around the globe, and knowledge about how to support and stimulate it is needed. The purpose of this paper is to review the concepts of experiential learning, meaning-making of the self, and self-efficacy theory to investigate and understand young entrepreneurs' career development choices and their definitions of career success. Findings draw attention to the complexity of the concept of a successful career, emerging from the shared experiences of the entrepreneurs from different parts of the world. It is clear that young entrepreneurs seek work-life balance and bring this concept into their vision of success. They are also driven by self-evolving forces that push them into domains of self-exploration and self-discovery. Given these findings, the study highlights the importance of supporting young people through the presentation of challenges, as well as inspiring role models and the opportunity to learn from them.

Key Words: entrepreneurs, success, career, experiential learning, personal development

Introduction

The importance of young entrepreneurs for the economy and society is growing. Not long ago, a job for life was a possibility, however nowadays the average job tenure is shrinking, and young people are joining an increasingly dynamic job market. According to the World Economic Forum (2016), more than six out of ten children entering primary schools today will work in jobs that do not currently exist and many of them will start their own businesses. Entrepreneurship is a propeller for the world economy. Entrepreneurs create new businesses, add to national income and create social change. Entrepreneurship can be both a disposition and a behaviour (Voss, Voss & Moorman, 2005) but most importantly it is a learnable skill that can be taught. By 2030 almost 50% of existing jobs will have become automated (Frey & Osborne 2017), and we will need a new generation of job creators and independent thinkers, therefore we need to find ways to facilitate their development through education and work experience. The prospect of success is undoubtedly one of the strongest motivations to undertake any activity (Ibid.). In this paper, we investigate how young entrepreneurs from five countries define a successful "career", who they perceive to be successful, and what they consider their biggest successes to date. We will

combine experiential learning theory with focus on the transformative learning, with related meaning-making of the self and self-efficacy theories to explain young people's perspectives on career development.

This paper investigates young, nascent entrepreneurs — individuals who are interested in starting, or have recently started an entrepreneurial journey. Whilst some of these start-up businesses will evolve into fully formed companies, many others will not succeed. In this instance, the young talent may enter the workforce through traditional employment in a full-time or part-time role, where HR Managers could benefit from being aware of their aspirations and interpretations of career success. Furthermore, these perceptions may not be unique to nascent entrepreneurs, and present young workers within existing businesses may share similar underlying motivations to varying degrees. The findings here may help HR managers to better understand the range of potential motivations and aspirations which may underpin employee behaviour within their workplace and to help young people maximize potential and achieve career success in both private and public sectors.

The paper is structured as follows: the first section presents a literature review around experiential learning, meaning-making of the self, and self-efficacy, before demonstrating how these concepts link together in the context of entrepreneurial success. In the second section, methods of the study are explained and in the third section results of a qualitative study of young entrepreneurs are presented, analysed and discussed. The final section of the paper presents conclusions and implications for Human Resource management professionals when working with young, entrepreneurial talent.

Literature Review

Career research highlights the importance of self-knowledge and a systematic and thorough career exploration for making successful career choices (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988). There are several theories that can be drawn upon for research on career planning and development and they include Krumboltz's (1976) social learning theory of career development, Super's (1957) developmental self-concept theory and Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory. In the context of career development, Kolb's theory is particularly relevant given that learning plays a key role in constructing one's career choices (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988).

Therefore, for this research, Kolb's experiential learning theory together with meaning-making of the self (Kegan, 1982; 1994) and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) theories will be used to explain career perceptions and career development of young people. The concepts of the meaning-making of the self and self-efficacy are closely linked to experiential learning. The choices individuals make regarding their career development require both a good self-knowledge, and a strong determination and belief in one's capability to achieve them. These concepts, reinforced through experiential learning, contribute to forming the perception of a successful career. This paper discusses career development and perceptions of success from the perspectives of young entrepreneurs building their careers in different parts of the world. The following sections discuss the concepts of experiential learning, meaning-making of the self, and self-efficacy in more detail to demonstrate their connection to successful careers.

Experiential learning

"Experiential learning is a process that enables learning through 'doing', 'learning while experiencing', and learning through 'hands on practice' and 'reflection'" (Hill, 2017, p. 934).

This type of learning plays a key role in personal and professional development for employees, however it is especially relevant within the context of young entrepreneurs who often have undefined career paths when initially starting their businesses.

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model comprises four stages of learning (see Figure 1) and is based on dual dialectics of action/reflection and experience/abstraction (Kolb, 2015). Atkinson and Murrell (1988) provide a useful insight into this model. The cyclical learning journey starts with concrete experience which is managed through intuitive and affective responses to a situation. This is followed by reflective observation, which requires "impartial perspective towards the learning situation" (Atkinson & Murrell, 1988, p. 375). Following this, abstract conceptualizations take place. Ideas for further actions are then created from logical thinking and rational evaluations of specific situations. Then the ideas are pragmatically tested during active experimentation, which requires action, participation and risk taking in learning. The cycle can then start anew, however usually with more complexity (Ibid.).
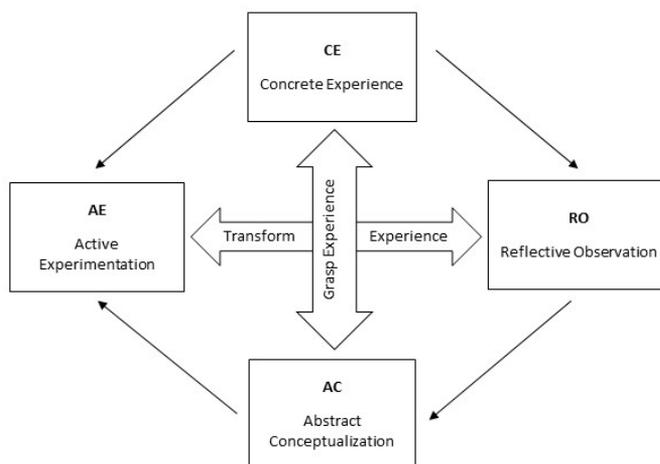
Figure 1: The experiential learning cycle. Adapted from Kolb, D. A. (2015).

Kolb (2015) views experiential learning as a process that creates knowledge through transformed experience which starts with grasping experience and transforming it through interpretation and new actions taken as a result of that interpretation. In other words, grasping is achieved through conceptualising a concrete experience (CE) whilst transformation derives from engaging in a reflective observation (RO) and active experimentation (AE). This suggests that learning is a holistic process and involves all four learning modes — experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting (Kolb, 2015).

Experiential learning theory describes an individual's learning process that can take place in various situations and areas of life (Kolb, 2015). Experiences are channelled into learning if they are "inferred by a process of learning that questions preconceptions of direct experience, tempers the vividness and emotion of experience with critical reflection, and extracts the correct lessons from the consequences of action" (Kolb, 2015, p. XXI). Thus, the outcomes of learning are linked to past experiences and knowledge rather than predictions of the future and demonstrate an adaptation process to the social and physical environment in which the learning takes place (Kolb, 2015).

The process of experiential learning is unique to each individual as it is shaped by firstly the learner's experience, and then their individual reflection of the experience (Hill, 2017; Kolb, 2015). According to Kolb (2015), experiential learning is a continuous process "whereby the learner will bring individual learning needs and experiences to their learning environment and learning communities" (Hill, 2017, p. 934). Thus, to benefit most from the learning, an individual must construct personal understanding based on previous experience and knowledge combined with reflections upon these (Hill, 2017).

Whilst experiential learning is clearly an important process in a wide range of work and career development settings, there is a particular relevance for young entrepreneurial talent. Entrepreneurship and innovative activities are inherently risky, as the outcome of such activity is not known at the start of the venture (Drucker, 1985). As there is no set path to follow, a process of "learning by doing and reflecting" (which is the essence of experiential learning) is the norm for many new start-ups (Gartner, 1988). This concept of experiential learning at a business level has been proposed in "learn start-up" theory, which encourages start-up entrepreneurs to test and redefine (pivot) their business based on first-hand experiences with customers (Blank, 2013). The "build, measure, learn" cycle of business development proposed by Ries (2011) has distinct similarities to Kolb's experiential learning cycle (1984), albeit relating to venture creation rather than personal development.

For individuals, the process of going through experiential learning cycles, specifically once they have reflected and analysed experiences, can also lead to transformational personal developments. An area of significant development can occur when individuals start to attach meaning to themselves and their situations.

Meaning-making of the self

Experiential learning not only leads to the individual having an enlarged fund of knowledge and expanded repertoire of skills, the process can also lead to extended cognitive structures. Kegan (2009) notes that such transformational changes can either occur within an established frame of reference (a short-term change), or outside a frame of reference which results in a higher-order change in the way the individual views the world. Such frames of reference relate to a way of knowing (an epistemology); which is how something is known, rather than what is known (Ibid.). When a person changes the way they construct meaning from an experience, it is referred to as an evolutionary truce (Kegan, 1982). These evolutionary truces occur when a person aims to find balance between themselves and either others or the external environment (Ibid.).

Each evolutionary truce is both an achievement of, and a constraint on, meaning-making, therefore they possess both strengths and limitations (Kegan, 1982). Each evolutionary truce presents a new solution to a life-long tension between integration (how people are connected, attached and included), and differentiation (how people are distinct and independent). Kegan (1982, 1994) argues that separation from the true self, others and nature causes psychological distress resulting in a sense of anxiety and depression. This feeling is triggered when an evolutionary truce requires renegotiation and a new self-system must ultimately emerge.

Kegan (1982, 1994) divided individuals into those that have a socialized-mind (3rd order of consciousness) and those with a self-authoring mind (4th order of consciousness). The meaning-making of individuals with a socialized-mind is shaped by the definitions and expectations of the surrounding environment and society. The socialized-mind individual is faithful to, and is

defined by, the expectations imposed onto them from their surroundings; their family, educational upbringing, companies, social norms, and regulatory requirements. Thus, the socialized-mind individual becomes more responsible and trustworthy to the wider community, which in itself is an achievement.

However, in modern society, there is an increasing demand on individuals to step back from the expectations of others (their surroundings), and to generate an internal 'set of judgments' with personal authority to evaluate and make choices based on their own, independent belief systems. The person who is able to self-author their own identity has progressed to a 4th order of consciousness and is referred to as a self-authoring mind. A self-authoring 'self' adheres to their own belief system, ideology or personal code; providing an ability to self-direct, take stands, set limits, create and regulate boundaries on behalf of their own voice.

It is important to understand the different orders of consciousness proposed by Kegan (1982) and how they may affect individuals. Firstly, individuals must undertake meaning-forming activity through drawing meaning from their raw experiences. By then changing their framework the individual can construct new ways of finding meaning (Kegan, 2009).

Meaning-forming is closely related to informational experiential learning, with meaning-construction being linked to transformation experiential learning. Transformational learning expands the horizon for the individual, allowing a more objective analysis of the self, which is ultimately important for career and personal development. Meaning-making of the self resulting in career or personal development will therefore impact on decisions and actions for many young entrepreneurs. The stages of human development are age dependent, and therefore meaning-making structures will also be shaped by age. Between 20- and 30-years old individuals mainly occupy socialized self, with only a minority of people at this age occupying the self-authoring stage (Kegan, 1994). In general, only 20%-30% of adults reach the stage of self-authoring self, usually later in life (Eriksen, 2006). Kegan (on his RSA Talk) and Zaytoun (2012) put forth a tentative proposition that the core evolutionary challenge of contemporary humanity is to get a greater portion of population moving from socialized self, to self-authoring self and even further to the self-transforming self.

Within the context of young entrepreneurial talent, it is important to consider this meaning-making activity to understand how individuals attach meaning to their experiences. It could be proposed that individuals with the socialized sense of self have distinctively different career meaning-making than people characterized by self-authoring sense of self. Similarly, their definitions of successful careers are likely to be different depending on their loyalty to socio-cultural reasoning. This theoretical framework provides an interesting backdrop when considering young talent, the career decisions they make, and their perceptions of success.

Self-efficacy

An individual's willingness to take entrepreneurial steps can relate to their self-efficacy and locus of control. Self-efficacy is an individual's belief that they themselves can perform at the required level to succeed in their endeavours (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy is seen as something which can be developed, rather than simply being innate.

Bandura (1994) proposes ways that self-efficacy can be built up within an individual. The most significant way to build self-efficacy is through 'mastery experiences', which relate closely to experiential learning. Mastery experiences occur when an individual carries out a task successfully themselves — understandably raising the individual's belief that they can accomplish this task on

subsequent attempts (Bandura, 1994). Although Bandura (1994) states that first-hand experience is the most effective for raising self-efficacy, seeing other people succeed also creates belief. Within a sub-culture where an individual simply observes another individual succeeding, the observer's belief in their own ability also rises (Ibid). These factors could be relevant when considering entrepreneurial activity and career decisions within young talent, as often within University settings or similar they are exposed to other successful entrepreneurs. Bandura (1994) further highlights "social persuasion", where individuals are verbally persuaded by others that they have the capabilities to succeed, and "reducing stress reactions", as the remaining two situations which enhance self-efficacy. It is interesting to note that whilst Bandura (1994) highlights the importance of mastery experiences for raising an individual's belief, there are instances where this is not the case. Bandura and Locke (2003) propose that for some individuals the pressure of duplicating a particularly challenging successful feat can cause self-doubt and lower self-efficacy.

An individual's motivation to pursue entrepreneurial activity can also be dependent on their perception of locus of control. Individuals either have an internal or external locus of control. An individual with an internal locus of control believes their own actions and behaviours alone contribute to the resultant outcome. Whereas, an individual with an external locus of control tends to believe that chance, luck or external factors are the biggest influence of resultant outcomes (Rotter, 1990). Rotter (1966) proposes that individuals with an internal locus of control, who believe their actions and attributes contribute to success, are likely to be more motivated and open to trying and learning new things. Individuals with an external locus of control, who are more likely to attribute success to luck, are often less likely to put in the required effort.

Through experiential learning and mastery experiences an individual's self-belief rises. For individuals deciding whether or not to pursue entrepreneurial activity, the culture they surround themselves with also needs to be considered. Bandura noted the impact of seeing other people succeed, and Nowiński & Haddoud (2019) and Abaho et al. (2015) further note the impact that role models can have on the individual. This may mean that the observation of success does not need to be first-hand but could be through watching role models at a distance. This could be important when analysing entrepreneurial talent's career choices.

This part of the paper reviewed experiential learning, self-meaning making, and self-efficacy theories within the context of individual career development and entrepreneurial activity. These different learning, understanding, and psychological concepts show a certain level of interconnectivity when applied to the development of entrepreneurs and their career choices. As the literature highlights, career development requires a complex process of actions to allow the individual to move from one stage to the next in both personal and professional development. This process involves undertaking experiences, reflections, and observations to create new conceptualizations and meaning-making. New sets of actions then need to be aligned with the new, more developed, self of the individual. Entrepreneurial activity can then be undertaken and monitored with the support of a strong inner sense of control and self-efficacy. Such characteristics are often required to counteract the perceived risks and challenges on the path to success.

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to achieve a deeper understanding of what success and the concept of a successful career means to young entrepreneurial talent. In order to achieve this objective, a qualitative approach was taken in the form of individual interviews which allowed in-depth

understanding of the complexity and multi-dimensionality of these phenomena (Miles & Huberman, 1994), and enabled the respondents to share their views and experiences freely (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

A semi-structured interview scenario was used. It was divided into 5 sections. For the purpose of this analysis this paper mainly focused on one of these sections; section 3 "understanding success and a successful career". This semi-structured interview provided a certain formality, helped build rapport with the respondents and allowed unexpected issues to emerge from the conversation (Seidman, 1998; Wengraf, 2001). The interviewers asked open-ended questions and encouraged the respondents to elaborate whenever possible (Lindlof, 1995). The interviews were conducted either face-to-face or via Skype and typically lasted between 50 and 90 minutes. The language of the interview depended on both the interviewers' and the interviewees' preferences and language proficiency, with most of them being conducted in English, and others in the national languages of the participants (e.g. Polish and Slovenian).

The sample selection procedure was based on convenience, however the respondents were considered 'knowledgeable agents' because they discussed their personal and work-related experiences (Gioia et al., 2013). The sample comprised 20 respondents of 5 nationalities (British, Irish, Korean, Polish and Slovenian) with 6 female and 14 male respondents. All respondents were 20-39 years old and had experience of running their own business. Detailed respondents' characteristics are presented in Table 1.

ID	Gender	Nationality	Age	Current occupation
R1	F	Korean	35-39	Business owner (private school of English language)
R2	M	Korean	35-39	Business owner (pet products)
R3	M	Korean	35-39	Company owner (protein production)
R4	F	Korean	35-39	Business owner (café)
R5	F	Korean	25-29	Private tutor (English)
R6	M	Korean	25-29	Business owner (guesthouse)
R7	M	Korean	35-39	Business owner (guesthouse)
R8	F	Korean	25-29	Works at a company, plans starting own business
R9	M	Irish	30-35	PhD student, owner of several businesses
R10	M	Irish	25-29	Business owner (apps)
R11	M	Irish	25-29	Family business (café)
R12	M	Irish	20-24	Digital engineer
R13	M	British	30-35	Business owner (marketing)
R14	F	Polish	30-35	Business owner (interior design)
R15	M	Polish	25-29	Works at a company, plans starting own business
R16	M	Slovenian	20-24	Starting own business (vending machines with healthy food)
R17	M	Slovenian	25-29	Employed at a company (marketing)
R18	F	Slovenian	30-35	Co-founder of a start-up (talent marketplace & matching platform)
R19	M	Slovenian	30-35	Co-founder of a start-up (talent marketplace & matching platform)
R20	M	Slovenian	20-24	Artist and artist liaison

Table 1: Respondent's characteristics

All interviews were recorded with participant consent and transcribed verbatim. Data was coded in an iterative manner to accommodate emerging themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The coding was performed by all authors and discussions led to identification of major themes. Table 2 presents how final concepts and categories emerged.

Codes in interviews with British and Irish entrepreneurs	Codes in interviews with Polish and Slovenian entrepreneurs	Codes in interviews with Korean entrepreneurs	1st order concepts	2nd order categories
Creation of something new	Time for family	Happy life	Happiness	
	Time for self	Work-life balance and money	Pride	Feelings
Being an expert	Growing business		Satisfaction	
Independence	Sustainable business	Money	Creation/ development	
Freedom		Material things		Actions
Achieving goals	Helping people	Good occupation	Contribution	
Doing something well	Profits	Being a specialist	Achieving goals	
	Pride		Balance	
Balance		Wealth and hierarchy	Respect	State
Money			Independence/ freedom	
Happiness			Money	
			Possessions	Material means

Table 2: Sample concepts and categories within a 'successful career'

Analysis of the Results

This part of the paper presents the findings that emerged from the analysis of the data gathered via in-depth semi-structured interviews. It discusses the young entrepreneurs' understanding of a successful career, their perceptions of successful people, and considerations of their greatest success so far. Analysis of collected data led to the identification of multiple constructs that have been combined into broader categories and themes. The results are presented in Figure 2 and discussed in subsequent sections of the paper.

Successful career

According to our respondents, a successful career can be associated with certain feelings, actions and states of mind, as well as material artefacts. Success also comes at a certain cost. In terms of actions, the respondents claimed that having a successful career means that certain goals have been achieved. This is a rather generic statement, but it implies subjectivity of this concept; when every person can set different goals and strive to achieve them. When discussing actual activities, the respondents mentioned two aspects here: making a contribution and creating and developing

something new. Contribution meant doing something worthwhile or being able to help others, e.g. one's family or employees. The latter concept was understood mainly as establishing one's own company, where the company is ultimately characterized as sustainable, innovative, and growing. This means that an endeavour has been positively verified by the market. A successful career was also associated with internal development that resulted in acquiring new skills and gaining knowledge that make a successful person stand out from the regular crowd. An interesting understanding of a successful career was reflected in the concept of contribution. According to some of the respondents this meant having a greater impact on society through helping others, supporting one's family and doing things that are worthwhile.
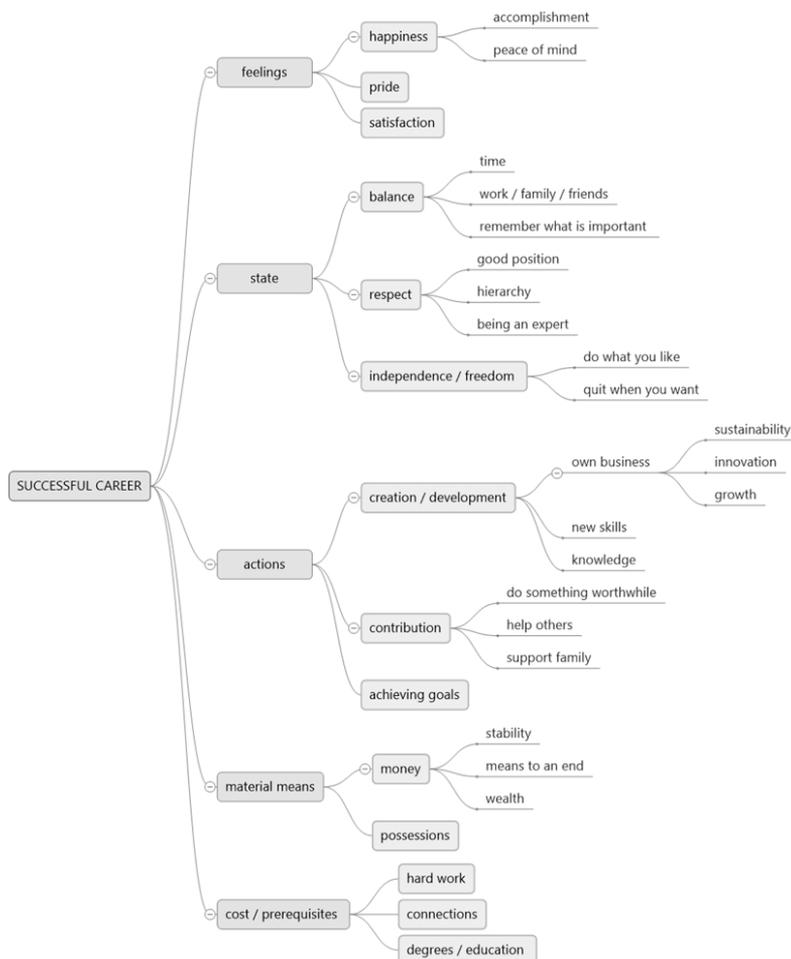
Figure 2: Themes within a 'successful career' concept

The respondents also associated a successful career with certain emotions and a state of mind. The emotions comprised happiness, satisfaction, and pride, which all resulted mainly from a job well-done and goal accomplishment. However, happiness seemed to mean more for the respondents — it was a general feeling of being happy with oneself, work, and life. It was directly connected with balance, a desirable state of mind accompanying a successful career, which meant being able to combine work, family, hobbies, etc. and to remember what is truly important.

> To me personally reaching goals and be happy at what I do. A lot of people measure success just in financial income. To some extent it is but, in the end, what you need, is both happiness and financial sustainability and a lot of people along the way forget that happiness is also something you need to have [R16]

> To be happy and satisfied with the things I'm doing [R17]

> A successful career as many people like to think is something that makes you happy [R5]

> I want to be proud of what I've created, of a company that I've created [R14]

> First for all of my twenties, successful career meant for me, even though I didn't buy expensive things, I didn't wear expensive clothes, success was money. And my now wife, spent years trying to convince me that that's not what success is. And she finally got through me. And I'm a lot happier ever since, to be able to say, no I'm not going to work Saturday and Sunday. I'm actually gonna go, we're gonna take the dog and go for a hike [R9]

A successful career was also viewed as one which gave the individual independence and freedom to do what they liked or to quit when they wanted, instead of being blindly loyal to a company or attached to an endeavour:

> Success is so strange, everyone has different measures … for me — being financially free; so I don't have to work if I don't want to, supporting my friends and family, and doing projects that I enjoy every single day [R13]

Our respondents also expressed an opinion that a successful career is associated with certain external respect resulting from one's expertise in a field or a position held in a company's hierarchy.

A successful career meant material benefits: possessions and money. While material possessions were mentioned by very few respondents, money received significantly more attention. Interestingly, wealth as such was considered an imperfect indicator of a successful career. What mattered more were the outcomes of having money such as achieving financial stability. Some respondents claimed that money is merely a means to an end, not an objective in itself.

> In Korea if someone is rich they think he is successful, like money ... I think it's the same everywhere. But then also like a nice company, reputation is really important R8

> Those successful careers, usually people who are working on very high positions and get a lot of salary [R4]

Our respondents were also aware that a successful career comes at a certain cost and one needs to meet certain prerequisites, such as having the right education and completing academic degrees. Hard work is definitely needed but occasionally the right connections can give one an extra push towards a career.

> But in order to be successful, you need to gain some experience; you need to work, you need to get in touch with things in different business positions and so on [R17]

Successful person

When discussing the perception of a successful person, the respondents' observations fell into two categories: internal characteristics of a successful person, such as their skills, personality

traits, attitude, and feelings; and external aspects, including achievements, status, inspiration, and support (see Figure 3). It can be observed that these concepts closely correspond with the concept of a successful career.
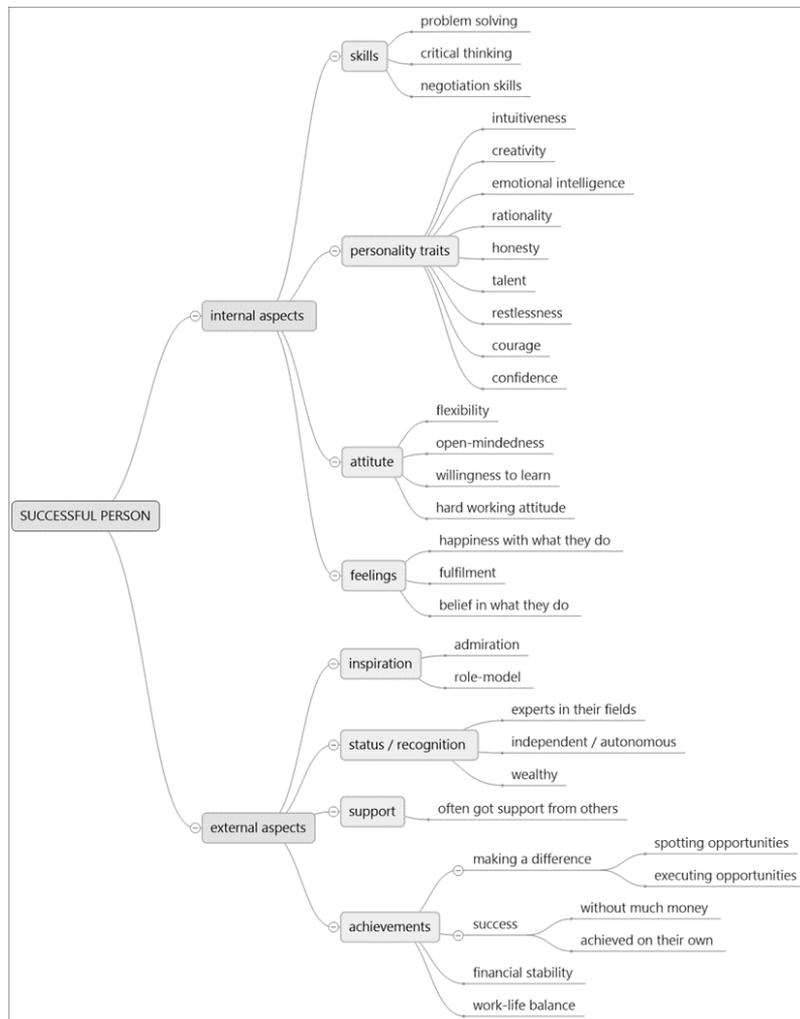
Figure 3: Themes within a 'successful person' concept

According to the respondents, a successful person should be a critical thinker, problem solver, have good negotiation skills, and be able to spot opportunities, exploit them and make sure other people follow and cooperate. In terms of personality traits, the list comprises many characteristics that sometimes seem to be contradictory; for example, being both rational and intuitive. In fact, given the variety of meanings of a successful career, various traits can be useful. The respondents emphasized a need for rationality, talent, and confidence in one's actions, as well as intuition, creativity, and emotional intelligence. A successful person is also perceived as someone who has the drive to achieve more and the courage to pursue their goals. They also need to be open-minded and willing to learn, as well as hard working. Most of these qualities are typical of good leaders and entrepreneurs. Finally, being a successful person comes with certain feelings — including

happiness with what they do, and confidence that it is the right thing to do. This can be accompanied by fulfilment resulting from being the right person in the right place and making a significant contribution.

The external aspects mentioned by the respondents referred to actual activities and perceptions of a successful person. Achievements included endeavours that actually made a difference, as well as financial stability. Some respondents mentioned that successful people achieve everything themselves, while others emphasized that they often receive significant support from others. The latter issue specifically was mentioned by women (Polish and Korean) when they talked about successful men. Recognition comes with success and successful people are considered to be experts in their fields, which in turn results in their perception as being an inspiration and worthy of admiration. The respondents also believed that truly successful people had independence to do what they wanted and at the same time were able to balance their work and family life well. These opinions are illustrated by the following quotes:

> Successful people have this vibe. I mean I don't like the people who are too self-confident, who brag about what they achieve. That's totally different. But you know someone who talks about business that make some impression and he does it every day, like it's so natural then I think that this person really is very far away. I have to catch up because that is this feeling of this natural being in the place, doing those things, knowing those people and … the scale of the enterprise, the money — when it becomes natural [R14]

> I admire people who are successful in general [R17]

> Successful people's financial conditions are really nice, or the educational, or the good family, nice car [R1]

> Successful [person] is a specialist in his field [R3]

> I think successful person would have would be in a role where you really enjoy your work and also have good life and work balance, yeah, and stable income, and working with good people with no politics. You're looking at the same aim, same vision you know everyone helping each other to solve same problem or achieve same goal. Because you get good energy from the people at work [R6]

Successful career and successful people are the two aspects of a definition of success to which entrepreneurial young people aspire for. We can see them as attractors which guide their future career choices. We can see that both the successful career and the successful people definitions provided by the entrepreneur interviewees expand beyond the narrow idea of success. Career success encompasses integration of work and life (not positioning them as two separate aspects), financial stability, and contribution to society, rationality and intuition, courage to pursue goals, capacity to stand out, be financially, and otherwise independent. Wealth (material abundance or money) is not a dominant identifier of success. Also, happiness is a building block of success, being the outcome when one manages to balance multiple domains well (work, family, creating greater good etc.).

These are the identifiers of the self-authoring mind (Kegan, 1982, 1994), where one is capable of liberating one's own value system separate from those socially constructed, of creating meaning and of living by one's own definition of success. This is what the entrepreneurs here are driving at or are in the process of becoming. Furthermore, the discussions also imply that the entrepreneurs believe that many successful people became so because of their inner power or

developed qualities/skills. This is associated with an internal locus of control, which again allows them to move away from socially defined conditions of success.

Success so far

When talking about their greatest success so far, the respondents referred to occurrences from the past, the present and the future (see Figure 4).
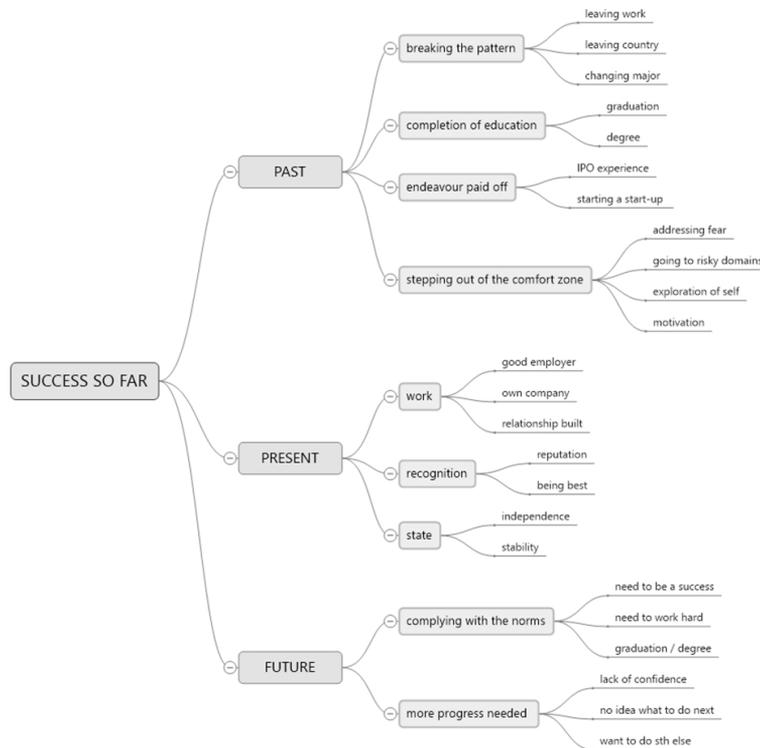
Figure 4: Themes within a 'success so far' concept.

When speaking about the past, they often evoked memories of important events such as a successful business endeavour, completion of an education level and obtaining an academic degree or introducing a major change (e.g. leaving work). Another reference to past successes was made when the respondents described significant experiences in their lives that included stepping out of their comfort zones and pushing their boundaries, which subsequently led to self-enhancement and self-exploration. These past successes are illustrated by the following quotes:

> I finished this study, masters, quite difficult masters with nice grades. This was a good achievement [R17]

> So instead of two exams, you get to write the thesis. I decided to do it, and probably not a lot of people decide to do this because obviously it's quite an effort. I would say that was a success for me [R18]

> I think that I wanted to do master's in marketing abroad and I did it and I feel satisfied. And I worked in Germany as well. I didn't intend to go there but then I got an opportunity ... I applied for

a job but without expectation because I didn't think to go to Berlin and then I got the offer and it was such a huge experience, short but still ... I am a Korean in a European country and it gave me confidence [R8]

The second theme referred to present accomplishments. Three major topics emerged from data analysis: work, recognition, and state of mind. Work-related successes mostly focused on running a company that was sustainable and allowed the respondent to make a living. One of the respondents named being a good employer as his major success, while another one spoke of establishing good relationships with business partners. In terms of recognition, the respondents listed having a good reputation and being the best in their fields. The last topic in this theme pointed towards a respondent's state of mind — success was linked with comfortable stability and the freedom to do what one wants.

> I haven't worked for anyone else for the last 4 years. Every penny I have is because of me. I've given 4 different people work. I've given people their first job — and it's been a good job. I've looked after them, because I remember what it was like having a first job that was really crummy. So, I'm proud that the first job that these people have on their CV was working for me, and they get me to write their references, and they go on to bigger and better things. No one can take that away. I've not relied on anyone else [R13]

> But I think that's the place I'm in right now, that I haven't looked for customer in months or if not longer … that I earn good money, I have very nice clients, nice co-workers, that I like to work with. I have interesting projects, so yeah, I think that everyday life now is the success that I was dreaming about [R14]

> My success is just my ability to be flexible [R3]

Interestingly, the third theme referring to the future was marked with some tension and uncertainty and the respondents focused on what they would need in order to be considered successful. They mentioned that achieving success requires compliance with certain social norms and expectations, such as completion of education and hard work, while others worried whether they would be able to accumulate enough money. Some respondents felt pressure to be successful but did not have full confidence in themselves. This could result from the fact that some people had a rather vague idea of what they wanted to do within their career, so success could not be clearly visualized.

> A lot of confusion. Probably also a lot of stress. A lot of unpredicted situations. But at the end of this tunnel, it should be one little spotlight, and that's it [R18]

> If I wanted to give myself some security for the future in case anything changes … then I would definitely have to do more formal education [R5]

> For example, even if I get my undergraduate degree I mean it was like "well okay", but I need to get my master's degree. I'm still thinking about more [R18]

> If you're not as confident with yourself and maybe even if you have an idea and you know how you want to do it, you are just afraid to do it [R19]

> For me it's very important to save some money for my future [R4]

The analysis of 'my success for far' reveals the reality of the career success the entrepreneurs actually live now. Thus, it implies their current way of living and being, as opposed to the previous which indicated their trajectory of becoming. Their current way of living, their 'successful

career', is dominated by the patterns compliant with socially dominant definitions of success as presented in the media, education, and the economic system (in general by modern society). Success is realized by complying with the definition of success in education (finishing master's degree, Ph.D.), media, and business (creating one's own start-up, being a good employee, having good relationships). Being one's relationships and one's attachment is the dominant paradigm of the 'socialized mind' (Kegan, 1982, 1994), implying that the analysed young entrepreneurs are situated in this order of consciousness.

Interestingly their underlying force for evolving their 'self' is also emphasized in this stage, where success is related to the willingness and courage to self-explore and step in to the unknown. This force being present in their immediate awareness postulates that their self-evolving power is strong and thus they try to live by it. Living self-exploration is the core indicator which makes the move into the higher-order of consciousness, the self-authoring mind which is signified by more independent definition of career success.

Another interesting pattern revealed by the data, shows the interviewees' concept of self-efficacy is in the process of construction. Self-efficacy and locus of control are considered key characteristics of people starting business ventures (the stage at which all our interviewees are). Further traits, including 'hope' and 'resilience', then become important in the ongoing running of the venture and resultant business success. On the one hand, they have belief in their own capacity to develop a successful company, which is elaborated enough that they are willing to set up their own business, yet on the other hand their immediate experience of business creation can also result in self-doubt.

Discussion and Implications

The interviews collected the viewpoints of success and successful careers from a range of Korean, Polish, Slovenian, Irish, and British self-identifying young entrepreneurs and business founders, and they helped to identify culturally engrained ideas pertaining to career success. For this study, all of the interviewees were in the early-stage or pre-start of their career paths. The opinions sought were based around their personal self-perceptions providing a primarily subjectivist set of responses where respondents themselves defined their own personal success criteria.

In the interviews, success emerged as a very subjective term, deeply shaped by individual learning experiences. Lifelong learning is inseparable from entrepreneurial journeys. It can be argued that entrepreneurial and career success in general can be determined by how much of that learning is used by entrepreneurs to shape their future careers. According to Kolb (2015), lifelong learning is controlled by the individual, therefore the outcomes of learning very much depend not solely on the experience but how much the individual is able to use their own learning in order to question "preconceptions of direct experience", "temper the vividness and emotion of experience with critical reflection", and extract "the correct lessons from the consequences of action" (p. xxi).

In this study, the shared experiences of the entrepreneurs from different parts of the world demonstrate that success is a complex concept. It cannot be achieved without making an effort to reflect and learn, to understand oneself, and believe in oneself. In theoretical terms, this relates to experiential learning, sense making of the world, and oneself and self-efficacy needed to push oneself to the next level of one's consciousness and career experiences. The interview

excerpts show that young people, who in Kegan's research line predominantly occupy the stage of socialized-minds (Kegan, 1994), deviate from societal definitions of success understood predominantly as a materialistic betterment, higher status and achievements.

Furthermore, the younger generation seeks work-life balance and happiness and brings these concepts into their vision of future success. Success requires sacrifice, devotion, and determination which can be achieved through self-control and self-efficacy. However, it equally depends on the individual's ability to reflect and learn from past experiences. The participants of this study proved to be constructing their new concepts and understandings of the world continuously given that their perceptions of success change from materialistic visions to more balanced ideas about success and successful careers. This happens as a result of reflecting on their primary experiences of earning income through their own entrepreneurial efforts and applying these experiences to the new ways of working and living.

These findings also show a certain level of self-authorship relating to which definition of success an individual uses. Whilst Kegan (1994) would state that individuals within this age-range (20 to 40 years old) would usually have a socialized-mind, many respondents appear to possess elements of a self-authoring mind regarding their meaning-making around the concept of 'a successful career' as the object of this study. The young, entrepreneurial subpopulation appears to have removed themselves from socially imposed expectations, and instead self-author their own ideas about what it means to have a successful career. The ability to subvert normal trends is often essential for entrepreneurs when starting a new business. The respondents in this study further rebel from the societal norm by seeing work (career) and life as one intertwined domain, rather than separate elements. This results in career choices not being made solely within the context of the individual's work career, however by also considering the impact choices will have on all aspects of their life.

Human Resource Managers intending to manage young entrepreneurial people should consider the implications of these findings relating to the meaning behind the concepts of success in career specifically and in life generally. Depending on the level of consciousness of the individual, the appropriateness of societally defined rewards will vary considerably. Understanding the intertwined nature of young talented people's work career with their wider life and ambitions could help to provide insight into their driving motives and corresponding behaviours. Furthermore, how a company positions itself in order to attract and retain such talent (how they support and reward their employees) could be shaped around enhancing well-being and life, rather than simply career progression within work.

Analysis of the results further demonstrates that the sample group of entrepreneurial young people are driven by a strong self-evolving force that pushes them into different domains of self-exploration and self-discovery. These developments occur through business creation, education, relationships, and the accumulations of other strong experiences including travel or working abroad. The transition from socialized-mind to self-authoring mind applies to all aspects of life, rather than just within a work career. Therefore, any structured assistance or coaching provided by the company that aims to develop their young talent from socialized to self-authoring mind would be beneficial and would serve as an attractor to talent with strong self-evolving forces. This developmental assistance is critical for all managers who are transitioning to more complex and dynamic organizational roles. However, we also propose that it would create improved job engagement and loyalty for young people (especially those with more entrepreneurial mind-set).

As proposed by Kegan and Lahey (2001), Human Resource Managers could look to implement coaching processes into their organizations; identifying hidden beliefs about career success, noticing the implications of these beliefs, looking for any countering evidence, charting how these beliefs change, and then testing the truth of these beliefs. Young, entrepreneurial talent within existing organizations would be a good testing ground for HRM practitioners to observe and test career success beliefs.

Within the research findings, there are multiple mentions of the confidence gained from undertaking entrepreneurial activity or observing others doing so. Bandura (1994) identified that learning by doing (experiential learning) and seeing other, relatable people succeed have a distinct impact on an individual's belief that entrepreneurship could be a viable career path. The impact of role models is clear, however sometimes these can simply be other individuals within a business incubator or shared work space. As self-efficacy is something that can be developed, this could be managed well by HRM practitioners to ensure that the development of all young talent is properly nurtured. Either through company-wide showcasing of successful employee activity, or more organized buddy/mentoring schemes, proactive, innovative behaviour could be fostered.

The career paths of the youngest generations differ from the previous generations significantly with modern career patterns being described as 'boundaryless', a term indicating transitions occurring more frequently. Such transitions may however be driven by a desire to remain employable, flexible, and maintain market value rather than the benefit of increased objective career success.

Limitations and Conclusions

Limitations of this study result from the method used. A qualitative method provides us with a variety of perspectives and opinions and presentation of the data with other context information is potentially insufficient to assess transferability (Herr & Anderson, 2005) and trans-contextual credibility (Greenwood & Levin, 2007) of the findings. Also, a quantitative study such as a survey could be conducted in order to find out what the actual distribution of the understanding of a success and successful career is among young entrepreneurs. Secondly, the data was collected mostly in English and in each interviewer-interviewee dyad at least one person was a non-native speaker. We are aware that this might create language bias resulting from various cultural accommodation and lack of participants' ability to express themselves in a non-native language (Harzing et al., 2005), thus more studies should be conducted in national languages of respondents. Also, there is a question of causality between the phenomena studies here. It would be worth exploring further whether the achievement of the 4th level of consciousness (self-authoring mind) (Kegan, 1994) is a result of undertaking entrepreneurial activity, or a pre-requisite for the individual to try entrepreneurship in the first place.

Entrepreneurial education has increased in prominence recently due to the impact new businesses have on employment and the economy globally (Cooper, Bottomley & Gordon, 2004). This has seen government drives resulting in more educational courses and focus from an academic and practitioner perspective (Ibid.). Policymakers may look to avoid their responsibility of good quality job creation and ensuring social equality by placing bigger emphasis on individual employability (Wilton, 2011). Such external conditions can force young individuals to build their business experiences not only through educational degrees but also through entrepreneurial endeavours which often involve a high level of risk and uncertainty.

For previous generations, the burdens and responsibility of family and home life (and specifically the costs involved in these) were often there from the start of one's career, making the risk of setting up an entrepreneurial venture extremely high for the individual and their family. With a current social trend for lower fertility rates (Zhu, 2018), later in life marriage and pregnancy, and the delayed entry on to the property ladder, some could argue that the young generation have a certain ability to pursue business ventures or career aspirations without the associated risks of previous generations should failure occur.

Young people regard entrepreneurship as a form of freedom leading to financial stability. Yet, such privilege is pricey. As the data from this study shows, young people from different parts of the world need to make an enormous effort to keep their businesses sustainable. To move to a different level, they need to engage in reflective actions that lead to personal and professional growth.

The rising popularity and awareness of entrepreneurship and the minimising risk involved in pursuing entrepreneurial activity, when combined with a socio-economic consideration of the young generation, may be an important factor regarding the career aspirations of young people in the workforce. Although this initially applies to young talent setting up business, it could be argued that this similarly affects many young people entering the workforce through usual employment; with the lack of financial responsibilities allowing workers to pursue careers which satisfy other, more 'high level' needs. It can be assumed that although most young people will enter regular employment at some point, their understanding of success will be consistent with the one of their entrepreneurial peers. Thus, HR staff may want to consider the diminishing enticing effect which money alone may therefore have on the new generation of workers.

Acknowledgements

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**Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management
challenges and opportunities for HRD**

Talent Management in European SMEs: Case Analysis Between Slovenia and Poland

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Organizations are investing significant efforts and resources into recruiting, developing, and retaining key talent with the potential to contribute significantly to performance. However, the talent management (TM) process is difficult and despite all the efforts, many organizations struggle to effectively manage these valuable people. The main objective of this research is to examine the implementation of TM in SMEs in Europe. Our research responds to calls for more evidence of how TM is implemented across different contexts and which approaches are more prevalent. Europe is a dynamic collective of countries with distinctive political, social and economic histories that frame the present context in which SMEs operate. We present the findings from two case organizations in post socialist economies, one in Slovenia and the other in Poland. This research shows that in these post socialist contexts there is a strong need to approach TM from the perspective of SMEs, where their size and contextualized knowledge of their internal and external environment elicits local solutions to TM challenges. Furthermore, this demonstrates the value of foregrounding the individual needs and aspirations of talent when designing and implementing TM practices in SMEs, in order to create a sustainable future for all stakeholders.

Key Words: talent management, SMEs, Poland, Slovenia, talent management practices

Introduction

In today's business environment, it is mostly employees — not technology, not factories, not capital — that are believed to create value for organizations, in that they are now the main determinant of organizational performance (Crain, 2009). Therefore, organizations are investing significant efforts and resources into recruiting, developing and retaining top talent with the potential to contribute significantly to organizational performance (Collings et al., 2018). However, the talent management (TM) process is difficult and despite all the efforts, many organizations struggle to effectively manage talent (Minbaeva & Collings, 2013).

Although a review of the literature by Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013) shows that TM is a growing field, the effectiveness of TM and its added value have still to be accurately stated or evidenced. Moreover, research on TM strategies and organizational performance is somewhat lacking; specifically, whether the right strategy would achieve the desired impact on organizational performance (Lawler, 2008).

Additionally, research on TM is still lacking in its theoretical foundation and the definitional clarity to explain what really constitutes talent, and how to manage it effectively (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Scullion & Collings, 2011; Tansley, 2011; Boselie & Fruytier, 2013; Festing and Schafer, 2014). Moreover, Collings et al. (2011) argue that with some notable exceptions (Vance & Vaiman, 2008; Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Farndale et al., 2010; Makela et al., 2010) much of the theoretical and empirical base upon which TM is premised is based on North American thinking and research. As a result, there is evidently a great need for empirical research to investigate the dynamics and impact of TM from different perspectives and outside of the North American context.

Collings et al. (2011) suggest that the context of Human Resource Management and Development (HRMD) is significantly different in the European context than in the US context, where much of the extant theorizing has emerged with exogenous factors playing a particularly significant role in influencing management behaviour with regard to the management of employees. For example the benefits (paid parental leave and mandated vacation time) that EU companies offer to their employees are distinctly different compared to the US which is the only advanced developed country who does not provide legislated vacation time.

There is also a consistent critique of human resource management and development literature that research and implications for policy and practice largely reflect the needs and resources of large organizations. This is in contrast with the disproportionate volume of SMEs prevalent in many countries and their impact on regional and national economies (Harney & Dundon 2006). Similarly, while government human resource development (HRD) policies often reflect the interests of large employers, there is some evidence of specific policy initiatives to stimulate HRD in SMEs (Berhad, 2018).

Therefore, the main objective of this research is to examine the implementation of TM in SMEs in post-socialist Europe with an in-depth case study approach involving the key individuals (HR Directors) of two SMEs from Slovenia and Poland. In doing so, our research will respond to calls for more evidence of how TM is implemented across different national contexts (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013). Furthermore, it contributes to the specific debates on how we can explore Human Resource Management and Development (HRMD) and specifically TM and development strategies within SMEs in a European post socialist context. The HRD literature has predominantly focused on both large firms and formal practices, and as a consequence HRD in SMEs is often considered deficient. Often large organizations have more resources and thus time to allocate for HRD practices which puts SMEs in a disadvantaged position. Therefore, it is argued that the current knowledge base is flawed as research has not moved beyond the deficiency model to explore and explain HRD in the SME setting (Nolan & Garavan, 2016a; Nolan & Garavan, 2016b).

Towards Understanding the Concept of TM

Effective TM is considered a critical determinant of organizational success (Beechler & Woodward, 2009; Iles, Chuai, & Preece, 2010), and imperative for the sustainability of organizations. However, in spite of its growing popularity and more than two decades of debate, the construct of TM suffers from conceptual confusion in that there is a serious lack of clarity regarding its definition, scope and overall goals (Lewis & Heckman, 2006; Tansley, 2011). It

has been argued that the lack of theoretical foundations and conceptual development in the TM literature can be attributed in part to the fact that most of the literature in this field is practitioner- or consultancy-based (Iles, Chuai & Preece, 2010). This latter finding also accounts for the literature's focus on practices (the 'how') rather than on 'who' is considered talented and 'why' (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013).

There are, ongoing controversies (Iles, Chuai, & Preece, 2010) about whether TM is about managing the talent of all employees (inclusive or strengths-based approach to TM), or whether it is about the talents of only high-potential or high performing employees (exclusive approach to TM). However, the questions we might need to ask is whether these two positions are mutually exclusive and whether there is value in standardizing practices across all organizations. How each company approaches the concept of TM is contingent (Collings & Mellahi, 2009) upon how they believe they should manage their particular talent in order to achieve their specific goals. Therefore, it is not about how to agree on what talent and TM is (or is not) but about how companies can use it to the best of their advantage when considering a number of factors that characterize their company and the environment in which they operate. The same applies to countries, in terms of managing their international skilled workforces (Turchick-Hakak & Al Ariss, 2013; World Economic Forum, 2011).

Moreover, Iles et al. (2010) believe that attracting and retaining talent are the two fundamental necessities, while Poorhosseinzadeh and Subramaniam (2013) do not consider the issue of retention. Consequently, talent is recruited at great expense but the organization fails to gain a return on their investment through neglect or misaligned policies and practices, resulting in the talent leaving their organization. Therefore, organizations need to understand why their talent leave the organization and implement practical solutions to mitigate against potential losses (Boštjančič & Slana, 2018). There is a diverse range of HRMD strategies adopted to retaining talent (Collings, Scullion & Caligiuri, 2018). According to Poorhosseinzadeh and Subramaniam, (2013) we can identify some dominant country specific TM trends:

- In Brazil, France and Netherland, they stimulate passion;

- In Japan, trust and respect are extremely important in nurturing relationships;

- In Italy, companies conduct effective performance assessments;

- In South Korea, organizations retain people by performance targets; and

- In Canada, it depends on employees' satisfaction, motivation, retirement benefit, long-term success of organization, and so on (Hughes & Rog, 2008).

It is essential to align TM practices and activities with the internal and external environment of the organization as the above trends might be observed as part of the institutional context of each country and they will be based on the individual national culture or the countries priorities, demands and aspirations. Al Ariss et al. (2014) urge researchers to understand TM as a multilevel relational construct between individual, organizational, institutional, and national/international contexts that shape the management of talent. The individual dynamic comprises the subjective experience of the individual. For example, this includes the perceptions of managers and employees about how their talent are being managed in their firms. A second feature of this perspective is the intermediary role of organizations where TM policy and practice takes place. A third is a country's institutional context that enables/constrains TM, such as norms, values, and regulations. Either consciously or unconsciously, these impact TM policies and practices. Finally,

the national/international and even sectoral contexts account for the potential transferability of TM process across business sectors and national boundaries (Al Ariss et al., 2014).

Joyce and Slocum (2012) identified four critical capabilities for successful TM implementation: in strategy, structure, culture, and execution. They argued that senior managers should manage talent in light of the strategic needs and opportunities of their firms where an innovative structure will enable firms to operate effectively. Linked to this, a supportive corporate culture will provide employees with a sense of cohesion and simultaneously deepen their understanding and practice of the norms/ideals of their organization. Finally, executing unique TM processes enables companies to gain a competitive edge, and allows them to meet or exceed their customers' expectations (Al Ariss et al., 2014).

From a different perspective, Schuler, Jackson, and Tarique (2011) identify several barriers to TM implementation. These include: time dedicated to TM by senior managers, organizational structures, lack of involvement by middle managers, lack of willingness to acknowledge performance variances among employed workers, lack of HR/D knowledge in how to properly address TM challenges and the discrepancy between knowledge and action that limits managerial ability to make the right TM decisions. Those barriers are important and overcoming them is key to any successful TM strategy (Sidani & Ariss, 2014). Although a great deal has been written about the virtues of TM from an employers' perspective, there is a scarcity of corresponding empirical research on the actual implementation and evaluation of TM in practice (Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2016).

This section has highlighted the weak theoretical foundations of TM, reflecting an emphasis on TM practices in the literature. Whether talent is understood as elite or egalitarian frames an organizations' TM practices which often focus on recruitment rather than retention and may lack integration with internal organizational structures and cultures and HR practices. Finally, the external environment is integral to developing effective TM practices, however, this has been explored and examined predominantly in the context of developed countries while research in a post-socialist context is limited.

TM in (Post-Socialist) Europe

Europe is a vast and diverse region covering an area of some 9,839 square kilometres (roughly equivalent in size to the USA), approximately 800 million inhabitants, 45 nation states and more than 70 languages (Mayrhofer and Holt Larsen, 2006). The region includes the 27 member states of the European Union (EU), which are working towards greater economic integration through reducing trade barriers and other policy interventions aimed at facilitating the free movement of people, goods, services and capital (Dicken, 2010).

One direct impact of membership of the EU is that the substantial legal and administrative requirements for foreign workers do not apply to transfers between EU countries and has led to strong talent flows between European countries (Collings et al., 2011), with some minor restrictions for some recent entrants. Collings et al. (2011) state that the former socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) represent a further important part of the region. While the boundaries of this region are open to question, it includes countries such as the Czech republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, and the countries constituting the former Yugoslavia, Soviet Union and countries formed after the break-up of the Soviet model (Vaiman & Holden, 2011).

Post-socialist countries have different endowments and show significant variations in preferred approaches to HRM as a result of distinct cultural and developmental trajectories (Kohont & Brewster, 2014; Kohont et al., 2015; Morley et al., 2018). Despite their common socialist legacy and subsequent Europeanization, their distinct heritage, culture, degree of industrialization, influence of religion, and post-socialist developmental paths make these countries rather disparate, which has also led to some divergence in their current HRM policies and practices (Morley et al., 2016).

Morley et al. (2016) suggest that there were at least three different traditions in the management of labour market dynamics framed by the prevailing controlling role of the state/party (Ignjatovič & Svetlik, 2006). First, the ex-Yugoslav tradition, which is marked by high unemployment, self-management, non-alliance movement, more open borders for travel and work and outward FDI, which contributed to more openness and direction to the Western markets (Pološki-Vokić et al., 2017). Second, the Orthodox Soviet System in Russia, Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia marked by a strong emphasis on rules and the absolute power of the Communist party. And, third, a moderate intervention model found in Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary. These labour market differences are reflected still in much stricter labour legislation in Slovenia and Russia as in Poland and Hungary (Groux, 2014).

In the socialist period, union membership was close to 100 per cent; however, unions performed a social and welfare role rather than dealt with employee relations (Sippola, 2009), and were unprepared for a new role. Therefore, reduced trade union density is an important characteristic of post-socialist countries (Groux, 2014; Psychogios et al., 2013). However, trade unions still have an important partnership role and significant power in organizations, for example in Slovenia, Czech Republic (Kazlauskaitė et al., 2013; Stanojević, 2017) and Croatia (Pološki Vokić et al., 2017).

Therefore, the research suggests that post-socialist countries demonstrate a cross vergence rather than a convergence with Western HRM practices, (Milikić et al., 2012; Psychogios et al., 2016), and can be characterized as combining both post-socialist and western features. Indeed, Horowitz et al. (2014) conclude in their analysis of TM and HRM practices in the post-socialist region that a simple import of Western solutions and HRM practices is unworkable and unproductive, therefore distinctive types of managing HR are needed. Vaiman et al. (2012) suggest that in Western Europe the talent supply will decline continuously, leading to "almost empty talent pipelines beyond 2020" (World Economic Forum, 2011), creating challenges for managing the labour force for example in Poland (Ward, 2011).

Similarly, Vaiman and Holden (2011) highlight that TM in CEE countries remains relatively underdeveloped in comparison to many western countries and still influenced by their socialist legacy. For example, the competencies and skills that are typically regarded as key in identifying high potentials in western organizations are not currently used in organizations in a post socialist country like Poland, particularly in domestically owned firms (Skuza et al., 2013).

Furthermore, this presents challenges for researchers due to the lack of knowledge of management practices and work relationships in post-socialist countries (Suutari, 1998). The convergence of Western and Eastern practices was widely assumed in the post transition period, yet while economic transition might be considerably advanced (Alam et al., 2008), the cultural processes influencing managerial practices are still in a period of change and believed to be far from converging with Western models (Vaiman & Holden, 2011; Skuza et al., 2012). This

supports Luthans et al. (2006) argument that there is an urgent need to empirically investigate the relevance and operation of constructs to critical organizational issues in non-Western cultures (Vaiman et al., 2012).

TM in SMEs

SMEs play an important role in the European economy, where more than 16 million companies, 99% of which are SMEs, account for more than two-thirds of the total workforce (Festing et al., 2013). Across the OECD, SMEs account for 99% of all businesses, in which almost one person out of three is employed in a micro firm with less than 10 employees and two out of three in an SME under 250 employees (OECD, 2019). SMEs also have an important role in the redistribution of income, which helps strengthen the economy and promote sustainable economic growth (Phoemphian et al., 2015).

The Bish and Jorgensen (2016) analysis of SMEs in Denmark suggests that employees are highly cognizant of the explicit external TM branding, in other words, descriptions of the TM programmes conveyed through, job announcements, and websites. Their findings suggest that a strong external TM message can be a highly effective way for SMEs to attract and recruit job candidates.

Skills development is a crucial element of any strategy to improve productivity and competitiveness within a firm. Lange et al. (2000) identified that the most significant barrier to skills development among SMEs was the prevailing culture and then issues of finance, access, and provision. However, these barriers are influenced by specific country level government strategies, which frame the difficulties and opportunities that SMEs face in deciding to advance the skills of their workforce (Berhad, 2018).

The problem for many SMEs is not learning itself, but their ability to allow staff already at stretched capacity to take part in formal training away from the workplace. Currently, micro SMEs and their owner/managers view training as something that happens when necessary and has an immediate impact and not as part of a continuous skills development process (Panagiotakopoulos, 2011). However, Nolan and Garavan (2016b) argue that the deficit model of HRD for SMEs in comparison to large employers, underplays the more effective emergent, informal approaches to learning often evidenced in SMEs.

Additionally, SME entrepreneurs are very often reluctant to invest in people, bearing in mind the possibility of skilled labour being ''poached'' (i.e. employees may move on, taking the value of any training investment too). In contrast, imperfect labour markets may encourage SMEs to ''buy in'' skilled employees rather than invest in developing their in-house competence base. The business strategy adopted by an organization can also act as a key barrier to workforce training. For example, if a small company is competing on the basis of low cost strategies with little emphasis on product innovation, then employers are likely to demand few labour skills. Therefore, they will have few incentives to offer their employees training and development opportunities (Hendry et al., 1995; Panagiotakopoulos, 2011). Consequently, our research will endeavour to gain a better understanding on aspects such as how organizations identify and develop talent, what barriers to TM are they currently facing and from there we will discuss a number of future steps for TM.

Methodology

The literature review highlighted that there is limited research of TM in the context of SMEs. Therefore, we considered a qualitative, interpretive, exploratory research model to be the most appropriate strategy to understand TM from the point of view of local managers of SMEs in the specific European contexts. This approach is also consistent with the recent call by Al Ariss, Vassilopoulou, Özbilgin, & Game (2013) to pay attention to societal contexts and multilevel factors at work in order to understand strategic TM. Therefore, we adopted the interpretive in-depth case study approach with key individuals to investigate TM in SMEs in a post-socialist European context. This research strategy provides rich understanding of the context in which phenomena take place (Eisenhardt, 1989; Stake, 1995). A case study can be classified as single case, multiple case, embedded case, or holistic case (e.g., Stake, 1995; Yin, 2013). The present study adopts the multiple-case strategy, using cross-case analysis. Cross case analysis is useful for understanding similarities and differences across cases (Eisenhardt, 1989). By doing so, a holistic picture was developed to understand TM in the post socialist European SMEs' point of view.

In order to understand TM practices it is important to capture the nuances of practitioners, therefore the use of semi structured interviews were chosen to elicit feedback from practitioners for this study. Interviews were conducted involving two senior human resource executives responsible for TM (one per SME) from SMEs in Poland and Slovenia. We recognize that the Polish case study does not have a perfect fit to all SME definitions, however, this case study offers a critical context for interpretation given the limited research/SME knowledge from a Polish perspective. Both respondents were asked to answer questions which derived from the literature, questions such as:

- How does the organization identify and develop talent — related questions: What do you think TM means? How do you identify and develop talent in your company? Who are considered to be talent in your company? How do you identify them? What makes them a talent? What impact does it have on them that they are considered talent? How do the other employees feel about that? Impact on them? How do you deal with any issues that might arise? Does your company have any TM schemes or particular HR practices in order to manage talent? If yes, what are they? If no, then why not? How effective are these schemes/HR practices? How do these help your company? Do they give you a competitive advantage? What do your competitors do? Do they do anything differently?

- What barriers to TM are they currently facing — related questions: What barriers do you currently face regarding TM? Individually, organizationally and country related? How do you overcome these barriers?

- Future steps for TM — related questions: What else do you need in order to be more successful with TM?

The data was collected as part of Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management (GETM3), Horizon 2020, Research and Innovation Staff Exchange (RISE) project (see guest editors introduction) and each interview lasted around one hour. The interviews were recorded and then later transcribed. Interview coding followed the theoretical concepts suggested by the data, an approach consistent with the inductive philosophy adopted by the researchers and in accordance with key academics in the field of management research (King, 2004). The approach to data

structuring and analysis, undertaken by means of a manual template analysis, involved the development of initial categories, grouping the data according to these categories, identifying patterns within the data and making comparisons across records to uncover shared elements and properties (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2011). Once the transcripts were available for analysis, the authors summarized the main themes that appeared in each interview, according to three main areas: how does the organization identify and develop talent, what barriers to TM are they currently facing and future steps for TM.

Findings

Slovenian SME — Company A Profile

The company was established in 1954 as a business, which specializes in the export of health related products. Twenty years later they became the largest health related product retailer in Yugoslavia. In 1991, the company lost 70% of its markets due to the breakup of Yugoslavia, however, by 1992 it transformed itself to become a stock corporation. The 1990s brought new opportunities for the company and they opened a new production line on alternative products which created new directions for the company. In 2007 they were awarded the Super brand title and two years later they expanding abroad becoming one of the leading niche companies in their sector. The company currently employs 150 people and as the company continued growing they realized that they had to make more strategic HR decisions. The HR department is currently very small consisting only of two people and getting support from other colleagues as and when needed.

Identifying and developing talent

TM is finding the right people and then nurturing them to become the best they can be. TM is considered a strategic function however, it is not yet incorporated formally in the organization but is definitely considered in the short term plan. For example "when we see certain talents we try to educate them or send them to different projects".

> We usually recognize one by their education but also there are other skills that one has that could be considered as talent i.e. one person can be really professional and have expert knowledge, but then the other person could have the soft skills to be a leader — it depends on the individual.

> So if we notice someone is highly educated we assume that they already have the knowledge required to perform the role and we try to encourage them to incorporate this knowledge into our processes and to transfer the knowledge to others.

However, usually talented people lack certain soft people skills

> so we try to support them to attend certain courses with soft managing skills. For example colleagues are reluctant to share their ideas sometimes — but here in this company they like to work as a team and they try to encourage communication and trust. Sometimes though some colleagues are more suspicious and they lack the skills to do this so they have to train them.

This highlights the importance to view TM at an individual basis and enable organizations and individuals to identify and develop unique skills and capabilities.

Barriers to TM

Currently they lack the expertise and the knowledge to introduce and implement TM but they hope they will get there with time. A major issue is that the culture of the future employees is changing: it used to be "you can be happy that you are working for us" but now you know it's the other way around, "what can you give me that I would come to work with you?" therefore the company is trying to change their mind-set to fit this new environment by putting things in place to attract the new young workforce. They ask themselves: What can we offer them? How will we help them grow? And this cultural shift can be challenging for some organizations till they find their footing. In the case of Company A they have a good reputation and this helps them as an employer. They have high standards and they look after their employees with various benefits such as a company tour event travelling around Europe, with additional health care and retirement/pension contribution systems in place.

Future steps for TM

"In the future we are thinking to introduce a performance review in order to see who stands out, who wants to progress and develop further". Not everybody wants to develop and progress, some colleagues are happy with what they are doing and they do not want to change that. For example the millennials usually are more interested in developing and improving. The older generation often is not bothered as much. "One of my aspirations is to establish a mentoring system, so that we have internal mentors that can then mentor younger colleagues and pass their knowledge, expertise, experiences to new talents coming in." TM is part of their strategic vision for 2025 because they started realizing that if they want their people to contribute to the maximum and engage in their organization, the organization must also nurture and support the employees appropriately. For example they have a number of colleagues that the company supports to complete their MBA degree. Their vision is to employ better performing individuals who can bring new ideas, who want to do and learn more, understand and appreciate how to work as a team for the benefit of the organization and not just for themselves. If they manage to implement a TM programme they will be the leader in their industry and they feel that this will give them a competitive advantage since it will improve the way that the company is operating as well as how it is perceived internally and externally.

The recruitment process will have to change. For example, right now a manager says I need a new employee and then we follow four steps for recruiting new people. First, they prepare an advertisement and it is the HR manager's job to check all the CVs and shortlist people for interviews. Then, at the interview, she sits with the relevant manager of the department and they interview the candidate in order to find out more about them and decide if they fit in their organization. The next step is to give them some tests to write and finally if they do well in all stages they make them an offer. If they are to implement a more thorough TM process they need to ask questions such as

> what exactly are we looking for? Are we looking for someone with these kind of skills or these kind of skills? Do we need someone who will just work with [technical] Excel or do you need someone who can talk to the clients? and so on.

Another important aspect is the job description. "I mean I will probably not apply for the job, if I saw a job description as it is now". For example the previous job descriptions were too basic, with no clear details of the role and the skills required while it was not providing an attractive

route for career progression and personal development. The last time we tried to employ someone we tried to improve that and we saw a lot of benefits. "For example our last few job descriptions were much better, more interactive, and more approachable for the younger crowd."

> We also need appropriate tests for the different roles for example we need to explore different skills for a strategic position in the company and we need different set of skills for a sales person … not for everyone of course but for more strategic positions in the company.

Importantly, they want employees open to change "when things work well then that is good but when some aspects do not work as well then somebody needs to tell you that so that you can take action."

Polish SME – Company B Profile

The company is a mix of a private-state-owned domestic SME established in 1952. The SME employs 230 people and is a part of a large Polish energy group. They represent a business centre of the group. The group produce electricity from coal, wind farms, hydropower plants, thermal energy production, and in biogas plants, and then transmit and sell it to homes and businesses. Their services are available to consumers all over Poland. Their transmission lines are located in the north-western part of the country. The company is listed on the Stock Exchange in Warsaw. Their mission is to build customer confidence and increase the value of the Group through the expansion and modernization of power plants and transmission lines, and for the development of green energy sources. Heat engineering is one of the directions of development of an innovative resource and energy group. They have their own HRM department and a member of the Board responsible for General affairs and HRM.

How do you identify and develop talent?

In this is organization 'expertise' is a valued talent. HR manager states

> Talents are the ones that are specialized, have important business position or have a big potential to get to a high position in the company. The people, who are very important for the company, who have operating features, the people who get quickly what I am talking about … These are the ones that are working for the special tasks, not for the simple ones.

The recruitment offer includes good salaries, promotion, and other financial and nonfinancial bonuses.

The company is clear on their selection criteria, first is "the appropriate education level and their prior study performance" and then second is "personal-organizational fit and orientation to employee competences development." They then have a three step TM on-boarding process. "We employ them for two months first, then for one year, after that we offer them a permanent contract." Each technical worker and engineer has a mentor in place. An important part of selection is the mentor's opinion about the worker. They also work with universities to identify talent by organizing competitions "for talented students and we offer them scholarships. Based on that we offer permanent positions to very prominent students". Furthermore, they also collaborate "with University of Technology at doctoral and MBA level and we agreed with them on the content of the study programmes". In this way the company is involved in the development of competencies aligned to their own needs. Within the company, there is a programme for exchanging knowledge

between old and young employees. The company offers additional money to employees who are close to retirement and are prepared to be mentors and exchange knowledge. Finally, they have a system "in which two people are always doing the same thing; they are interchangeable (in case of maternity leave, holidays, fluctuation, etc.). This programme also helps us in identifying talents for new positions and in cases of internal movements".

Barriers to TM

The company finds it very hard to recruit low-level skilled physical workers. Therefore, "Now we are thinking about cooperating with high-schools, technical high-schools to find the physical workers. Young people do not want to come, since they do not find physical work interesting." The company's average age of physical workers is 55 years, so they have to attract younger physical workers. Their approach to managing these employees is reflected in the following comment "our leaders have to motivate and to control workers, because they are used to work slowly, they are not oriented to efficiency, and there are too many employees (state owned company)." Another issue is that often there are concerns regarding uneven distribution of workload, which may result in performance and retention issues, "We had some cases, where talented employees, were stressed and overburdened, because they were helping others too much, and they were doing their co-workers workload."

Future steps for TM

There are actions the company is preparing to overcome these barriers and make new steps in TM. "First we have a bigger budget for employee attraction, and secondly, we want to offer them, not only money, but also extra payment for health care, and fourteen salaries pro year and financing the kindergarten". The extra '13' month salary is not mandated but customary for some employees in Poland e.g. government workers, so '14' months is perceived as an incentive above the norm. Furthermore, they are organizing social events to promote positive relations and worker engagement "two times a year in which we go to one lake on sailing, on kayaking, or on walking, and have some presentations there, and the »heater day« — special day celebrating electricians and heaters in the company."

They reorganized work in cases of overload and offered flexible working schemes and home-based work.

> In cases of overload and stress mentioned, I talked to employees and to talents, and explained their expected contributions, division of work and the workflow. Key employees now have much more time for their family, for free time

An illustrative example was cited

> In one case I offered one of the talents more money, a premium system. We agreed she'll work 8 hours daily and only on special tasks and I gave their ordinary tasks to someone else. And the situation is much better now.

They understand that they have TM issues but feel confident that "we have many interesting challenges and offerings for them".

Table 1 summarizes the main findings of our study and highlight the main barriers that organizations currently face. Our findings show that SMEs are challenged in their efforts to

identify talent and companies have a good awareness of what they need to do in the future to improve their TM. The next section will draw on these findings and synthesize them in line with the existing literature.

Case from	Slovenia	Poland
Company Overview	**150 employees**	**234 employees**
	SME	SME
	Private owned company & a stock corporation	Private-state owned company & a stock corporation
	bee-based products	a business-centre of a larger energy group
Respondent	HR manager	HR manager
Context	Post-socialistic, part of non-alliance movement (Groux, 2014)	Post-socialistic, moderate Soviet intervention model (Groux, 2014)
Identification of talent	Important but not formalized into HR policy but put into practice. Target initially education, or soft skills and develop leadership potential	Talent focus on small group, Target expertise qualifications, potential, then organizational fit. HR practice — special on-boarding, 3 step selection and mentor to identify talent. Incentivize older workers to mentor younger ones. Work with university to offer scholarships and shape MBA/Doctoral programmes.
Barriers to TM	They have a good employer brand and benefits package. However, changing younger employee requirements recquiring company to change recruitment strategy.	Ageing workforce — Hard to attract manual labour, not motivated to do physical work. Difficult to dismiss staff and uneven distribution of workloads left talent overburdened
Further steps for TM	Want to introduce a TM programme will give a competitive edge. Plan to overhaul selection process and introduce a performance review system to identify talent. Focus on younger employees assume more ambitious and motivated to progress. Desire to introduce a mentoring system, supporting colleagues development e.g to complete MBAs	Need to target younger workers. Increase budget to incentivize recruitment targets and employee benefits including flexible working, kindergarten, social events to support work life balance

Table 1: Summary table of findings

Discussion

The TM process is difficult (Turchick Hakak & Al Ariss, 2013) and requires the commitment of key organizational stakeholders in order to achieve strong vertical and horizontal alignment of TM practices and activities with the internal and external environment of the organization (Al

Ariss et al., 2014). As outlined in our case studies, SMEs struggle to manage talent effectively (Schuler, Jackson & Tarique, 2011), and neither followed a specific inclusive or exclusive approach to identifying talent (Iles, Chau & Preece, 2010), which reflected their focus on 'how' rather than 'who' or 'why' (Gallardo–Gallardo et al., 2013). This approach was often due to lack of expertise in TM and time (Lange et al., 2000). Although an explicit TM strategy may be absent, there is evidence of an emergent approach to TM in adopting specific TM practices to suit their specific requirements, "when we see certain talents we try to educate them or send them to different projects" (Slovenian company). This reflects a more 'contingent' approach (Collings & Mellahi, 2009), indeed, Nolan and Garavan (2016b) would argue that their emergent approach to TM is not a deficiency but reflects the contextual factors that facilitate more effective informal practices. The four critical capabilities for successful TM implementation identified by Joyce and Slocum (2012), i.e. strategy, structure, culture and execution resonated with the experiences of the case organizations. Both companies specifically mentioned the changing cultural shift required to accommodate the changing aspirations of talent. The Polish company were aware of an increasing issue in recruiting younger low-skilled physical employees but understood that "young people do not want to come, since they do not find physical work interesting". However, their current culture which understood the leaders role to "motivate and control workers, because they are used to work slowly, they are not orientated to efficiency", suggests that there would need to be accommodation by both parties. Recruits are not seen only as employees but rather as key stakeholders and a strong cultural fit was increasingly relevant between the case organizations and their talent (Collings et al., 2018). There is evidence in both case organizations of an appreciation of the multilevel relational framing of TM, however, there was evidence of a focus on the individual and to a lesser extent, and although still relevant the organizational, institutional and national level factors in framing and implementing their TM (Al Ariss et al., 2014).

The use of TM practices is highly dependent on the context, staffing needs and size of the organization. However, as illustrated in our case studies, employees' perspectives and aspirations have changed were previously companies could assume "you must be happy to work for us" (Company A, Slovenian) nowadays the stance is "what are you going to give me to come and work for you". This suggests that the labour dynamics have changed drastically from the socialist era and organizations are required to adapt quickly in order to remain competitive. As can be seen from Figure 1, there are diverse approaches to defining talent framed by their specific needs. However, they both, prioritise education and qualification requirements for selection criteria, and identify education institutions, as key sources for very different types of talent, and plan to work with these institutions to build their own talent pipelines. Both organizations financially sponsor employees or selected students to complete their studies. The Polish organization work closely with a local university contributing to curriculum development of the MBA and offer facilities for technical training for students. These discrete TM practices can be very helpful to SMEs, in designing appropriate, effective, context specific TM solutions (Nolan & Garvan, 2016a). They are acutely aware of the need to develop, attract and retain talent, however, their current TM practices are often not coherently aligned with other HRM/D practices and confirm the need for contextualization and a more coherent approach to TM (Boselie & Fruytier, 2013; Collings 2011).

A lifelong learning and training culture is critical to knowledge-based industries and to regional economic development (Lange et al., 2000), where a highly skilled and agile workforce is essential to economic development (Collings et al., 2018). Consistent with a dominant view in the literature, our study highlighted that planning for and providing training within SMEs can often be challenging, complicated by such factors as recruitment levels, lack of in-house training,

weakness of internal capabilities to plan and access to formal training (Panagiotopoulos, 2011). In the context of key talent shortages the case organizations have illustrated how they are shaping the development of their future talent pools in at least two key ways. Firstly, by influencing the formal education programmes offered by local education institutions to potential new employees. As discussed earlier they achieve this by forming close partnerships with the local universities, they request specific programmes tailored to their needs and future aspirations and then they sponsor their talented employees to attend these programmes. Secondly, by incentivizing an effective informal approach to upskilling by leveraging the existing knowledge of experienced employees, for example the Polish company offers additional money to employees near to retirement to mentor new and less experienced colleagues. This means that when new employees join the organization they closely work with existing employees with more experience and exposure to the organizations operations as mentors so they always have a point of contact in order to familiarize them with organizational norms and practices. Therefore, demonstrating how SMEs can leverage their internal organizational knowledge and local contextual knowledge to develop specific local solutions to remain competitive. In this context their familiarity and agility are distinct advantages (Noland & Garavan, 2016b)

Retaining talent is an area often given lower priority in both TM research and organizations (Boštjančič & Slana, 2018). Our findings show that on the one hand TM can include the various benefits and rewards that organizations can offer to their employees such as good pension, health insurance and holidays benefits. However, companies also have to realize that TM also needs to be approached on an individual basis, recognizing the broader needs, abilities and aspirations of employees in order to improve their chances of retaining their employees. Company B (Polish) introduced flexible and home-based working and provided an example of an individualized retention package for a female talent including premium pay, fixed hours and reallocation of workload to prioritize the special tasks she excelled at completing. At the end of the day, not everybody wants to progress, promoted and follow a career plan. SMEs can be more agile in considering the individual needs and circumstances of individual employees e.g. flexible hours and less constrained by corporate procedures, to offer more tailored solutions. As Gallardo–Gallardo et al. (2013) argued, it is not about how to implement TM practices but rather who is considered talented and why, and sometimes size for SMEs can be advantageous in providing novel solutions to the specific needs of key employees.

The European Union has also played a contributor factor in the rise of the TM need for organizations. While post-socialistic countries benefit from the free-trade area and the free movement of employees, consequently this has led to a strong talent flow between the member countries (Burrell, 2016). So that businesses experience higher competition for talent and employees are more mobile, change employers more frequently and negotiate and demand more benefits (Collings et al., 2011). This can have a detrimental impact on businesses who are more susceptible to losing skilled and knowledgeable employees (Skuza et al., 2012). Employees in post socialist economies now have to fund additional health, education and social services that were once offered for free or heavily subsidized by the state. Their employment in certain state sectors and enterprises may also have allowed them to leverage access to these services or other privileges. For example, it was a common practice in some post socialist countries in Europe to offer public sector employees a 13th month salary, however, while this is still mandated for public sector workers, private sector enterprises are not obliged to provide this extra payment (INFOR, 2014). Employees of the Polish organization, which was once a state enterprise in the energy sector, were able to leverage this privileged access and recruit top talent, however, they

are now experiencing talent shortages amongst highly skilled technical workers. Although now a private sector enterprise, they still offer the 13th month salary, and indeed are considering offering a 14th month salary in additional to extra payments to incentivize the recruitment and retention of talent. "First we have a bigger budget for employee attraction, and secondly, we want to offer them, not only money, but also extra payment for healthcare, and fourteen salaries per year and financing the kindergarten". Therefore, their plans for TM are framed by their understanding of historical, cultural, political and economic norms, which are prompting them to adopt a 'cross-vergent' approach to TM (Milikić et al., 2012; Psychogios et al., 2016).

Our research showed that having a good reputation can overcome some of the issues mentioned above and it can be a strength in attracting and retaining new employees (Bish & Jorgensen, 2016). Additionally, SMEs due to their size they have the flexibility to adapt quickly to environmental and economic changes as well as have the potential to grow and expand which again can be considered an attractive characteristic for some employees (Phoemphian et al., 2015).

For SMEs every appointment is critical and to improve their potential in attracting and retaining talent they need to reframe and realise a different relationship with their workforce, based on an appreciation of their reciprocal needs. Although the SMEs may lack a formal strategic TM approach, their size can be advantageous, their familiar knowledge of their own employees and their local contextual conditions, allows them to provide novel solutions to meet their specific requirements (Nolan & Garavan, 2016a). They can develop relationships with key sources of talent i.e. education institutions, incentivize knowledge productivity between colleagues and customize retention packages for individual key talent. For employees to be engaged and productive they also need to feel that they are valued and nurtured according to their individual needs and capabilities, an approach which may be more accessible to SMEs. Finally, in order for SMEs to create value through novel TM solutions, they need to ensure that their approach to TM is aligned to organizational structures and cultures and integrated with other HRMD practices.

Conclusions

TM is still in its infancy as a field of study and whilst the practitioner and academic community is recognizing its value, there is a slow progression in addressing the theoretical and practice gaps, particularly is specific contexts (Collings et al., 2018). Therefore, this paper analysed the TM practices of SMEs within a European post-socialist context. While, organizations increasingly appreciate the importance of recruiting, nurturing and retaining those with particular knowledge or attributes in their specific field as talent for the organization. There are still many organizations who do not have a clear TM programme in place. However, Noland and Garavan (2016 a, b) argue that size determinism is misleading, and that successful organizations are not determined by their large size and procedural formality. There was evidence to support this perspective, demonstrating that if SMEs can leverage their organizational and local contextual knowledge and respond quickly and creatively to their HRM/D challenges, their size can be their advantage.

Implications for research policy and practice

The conclusions from our study supports Nolan and Garavan (2016, a, b) argument that SMEs should not be framed as deficient by virtue of their size and lack of formal HRMD procedures. Therefore, further research should explore and seek to explain how SMEs are

leveraging their size, agility and informality to develop novel approaches to their specific TM challenges. Additionally, future research should endeavour to include the views and opinions from an employee perspective. This study supports further investigations into national policy interventions that reflect the historical, political, economic and cultural contextual dynamics of countries to support development of talent in the labour market through SMEs (Berhad, 2018). Finally, TM practices are often framed from the perspective of large and international organizations with grand TM strategies, corporate expertise and abundant resources, however, this study supports the development of our understanding of emergent TM practices in SMEs that are often localized, individualized and contingent upon a deep knowledge of their internal and external contexts.

Acknowledgements

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Human Resource Management Challenges in a Slovenian Social Enterprise: A Case Study

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There is a growing number of studies exploring social enterprise in order to increase the understanding of business sustainability and resilience in the social economy. However, little is known about how social enterprises or social entrepreneurs emerging from not-for-profit sectors have faced human resource management (HRM) challenges in practice. In this study, we focus on a hospitality social enterprise founded by social workers in Slovenia as a single case study. Through a series of combined interview and observation methods, we investigate the HRM challenges this social entrepreneur faced when pursuing sustainable social business. We uncovered four strategic and HRM challenges that contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the social enterprise literature. This study paves the way for future studies to focus on HRM in social enterprise.

Key Words: social enterprise, HRM, entrepreneurship, Slovenia

Introduction

Social enterprises are businesses that meet societal and business values simultaneously through a combination of entrepreneurial action (i.e. the pursuit of commercial market opportunities) and social mission (i.e. creation and enhancement of social and environmental outcomes that have the primacy over profit maximization) (Mair & Marti, 2006; Dees, 2001; Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009; Huybrechts & Nicholls, 2012). Social entrepreneurship has a significant impact on local and regional economic, societal, and environmental development (Saebi, Foss, & Linder, 2019). There is a growing body of literature on social enterprise (Borzaga & Defourney, 2001; Kerlin, 2010; Mair & Marti, 2006). Studies have investigated various institutional and organizational issues (Newman, Mayson, Teicher & Barrett; 2015; Peattie & Morley, 2008). Responding to a call for more scholarly attention to human resources management (HRM) issues in the context of social enterprises (Newman et al., 2015), we aim to discover key HRM-related challenges that social entrepreneurs face by investigating one social enterprise in Slovenia as a case study. Our research focuses on a restaurant/catering business in the capital city of Ljubljana. It was established in 2012 to support the employment of refugees and migrants who live in Slovenia and has overcome many challenges during its early years.

This paper aims to identify the HRM challenges that this business faces and to propose solutions to overcome them. In doing so, we contribute to the research into the challenges of social

enterprises (Smith, et al., 2013; Steyaert & Hjorth, 2006; Petrella & Richez-Battesti, 2014) with a specific focus on the HRM challenges that have rarely been researched before. We bridge two scholarly domains; the social entrepreneurship domain and the HRM domain, to shed light theoretically and practically on common challenges in social enterprises.

The paper is structured as follows: first, we review the relevant literature on challenges in social enterprises with a focus on HRM. Secondly, we describe the methodology used in this research, and we continue with the findings' section in the case we studied. Finally, we conclude our paper with a discussion of the implications for social entrepreneurship research, practice and a future agenda for dealing with HRM challenges.

Literature Review

Social enterprise and its HRM issues

Social enterprise has increasingly attracted attention as a distinctive sector of business (Steyaert & Hjorth, 2006; Petrella & Richez-Battesti, 2014) and a global movement (Borzaga & Defourney, 2001; Kerlin, 2010). There is no universal definition of social enterprise. However, it is widely accepted that the term describes commercial or trade activities that generate income in pursuit of social goals (Laville & Nyssens, 2001; Mair & Marti, 2006). Social enterprises use a hybrid business model where profit and social motivations sit symbiotically together (Emerson, 2006). In short, they strive to address a societal issue by creating social value (Certo & Miller, 2008) and achieving social goals through economic sustainability (Dorado, 2006).

The literature presents several economic positions of social enterprise, for example, as a better way of doing business (Amin, 2009) which balances "economic efficiency, ecological sustainability, and social equity" (p. 30). In recent years, the social enterprise model has been acknowledged as a force for change, redefining the relationship between business and the community (Spear, 2006), addressing social issues (Kerlin, 2010) and stimulating societal (Dey & Steyaert, 2010) or systemic (Bornstein, 2004) change. Many social enterprise studies have focused on the nature of the business and its institutional conditions and impact (Mair & Marti, 2006; Zahra et al., 2009; Huybrechts & Nicholls, 2012). HRM related issues have however been relatively neglected in the literature (Newman et al., 2015; Peattie & Morley 2008).

Many social enterprises are focused on service, working directly with members of the public with challenging needs. The effectiveness of human resources management is of vital importance (Bowman, 1998) in order to meet the social as well as commercial needs of the business. Typically, social enterprises rely on both paid (employees) and unpaid (volunteers) workforces, meaning that social entrepreneurs need to manage multiple stakeholder groups requiring different HRM approaches to meet diverse workforce needs (Doherty, Haugh & Lyon, 2014; Borzaga & Solari, 2001). HRM can therefore be a complex process (Peattie & Morley 2008, p. 100).

Studies have identified HRM-related issues in the context of social enterprise such as recruiting, training, and managing the workforce while balancing the complexities of the hybrid nature of social enterprise (Doherty et al., 2014; Ohana, Meyer, & Swaton, 2013). Social entrepreneurs often find themselves being pulled in opposing directions. For example, balancing the rising

demand of the social objective with an ongoing need to become more efficient in meeting commercial goals (Bowman, 1998). These challenges can result in tensions around internal business practices, processes (Smith, Gonin, & Besharov, 2013) and resources (Royce, 2007), such as in HRM. Moreover, the majority of social enterprises operate with sparse resources (Bridgstock, Lettice, Özbilgin, & Tatli, 2010) which can also result in HRM challenges. For example, 'making do' operational methods (Desa, 2012) and informal or novel approaches to HRM, can help to compensate for the lack of resource in social enterprises (Newman et al., 2015). HRM related challenges are fourfold as follows.

Leadership

Organizational success depends on a social entrepreneur's ability to balance in playing many roles requiring "skills and competencies in a number of specialist functional and process areas" (Hynes, 2009, p. 115). Like mainstream entrepreneurs (Cardon, Wincent, Singh, & Drnovsek, 2009) and senior managers in other sectors (Royce, 2007), social enterprise leaders play multiple roles within their organizations (Prabhu, 1999). Lyon & Ramsden (2006) identify entrepreneurial leaders' management practices that are related to HRM functions, including managing staff performance, quality assurance, employment relations, and workforce composition (Royce, 2007). In addition to those HRM-related management skills, entrepreneurs need to make strategic decisions, such as recognizing opportunities and acquiring appropriate resources. They experience pressure by handling multiple roles (Douglas & Shepherd, 2000).

In addition to 'traditional' challenges, social entrepreneurs face additional pressure from their hybrid commercial and social motivations (Smith et al., 2013). The Start-up motivations of social entrepreneurs often emerge from an unmet social need over the identification of a sound commercial opportunity (Hynes, 2009). In order to run a successful business however, social entrepreneurs need to pursue both social and commercial objectives. Motivations are often based on the belief that their business will enhance the well-being and quality of life of marginalized groups, or a desire to change the status quo and create social value (Certo & Miller, 2008; Doherty, et al., 2009; Bornstein, 2004). This is in opposition to a robust focus on the commercial aspects of the model. In pursuing these, they are expected to demonstrate the same commitment and determination as a 'traditional' entrepreneur to financial gain, as well as a deep passion for the social cause. This in turn could restrict social entrepreneurs' capacity to embed good HRM practices into their day-to-day operations (Guclu, Dees & Anderson, 2002).

A growing number of studies explore the concept of work/life balance and burnout point in entrepreneurs (Blair-Loy & Jacobs, 2003; Buzzanell & Liu, 2005; Lechat & Torrès, 2016). As entrepreneurial activity can entail extreme levels of uncertainty and personal risk (Baron, 2008; Lechat & Torrès, 2016), researchers generally agree that emotional exhaustion can cause chronic stress, which leads to burnout (Perry, Penney, & Witt, 2008). Unlike many employed workers, entrepreneurs cannot rely on resources, vacation time or healthcare from their organizations unless they have institutional protection (Klein, 2006; Perry et al., 2008). Thus, entrepreneurs are more likely to experience burnout, which can result in business failure (Perry et al., 2008). Despite this, burnout and the emotional struggles of entrepreneurs have still not been extensively explored (Shepherd, Marchisio, Morrish, Deacon, & Miles, 2010; Voltmer, Spahn, Schaarschmidt, & Kieschke, 2011; Lechat & Torrès, 2016). According to Fernet, Torrès, Austin, & St-Pierre (2016), feelings of loneliness exacerbate burnout.

Talent attraction & recruitment

People play a significant role in organizational success with a specific focus on the performance and effectiveness of the business (Huselid, 1995). As such, social enterprise leaders must make mindful choices about how they attract, recruit and select paid staff and volunteers. Social entrepreneurs face similar HRM challenges to those working in other sectors, e.g. taking responsibility for recruitment, performance, pay, attendance, training, and welfare issues (Royce, 2007). However, they face additional challenges arising from the hybrid social enterprise model.

This complexity can result in difficulties articulating the culture and context of the business. This results in problems attracting and recruiting employees who share the ethos of social action (Battilana & Dorado, 2010) while also having commercial skills and knowledge (Liu & Ko, 2012). Houston (2005) claims that those employed in not-for-profit enterprises have different motivations from those engaged in commercially driven sectors. As such, these employees seek more intrinsic motivators, such as an alignment of personal values. They also like the opportunity to apply their values to the day-to-day decision-making and operations of the enterprise (Brown, Yoshioka, & Munoz, 2004). However, not-for-profit employees expect reasonable pay and career growth opportunities. However, limited resources prevent many social enterprises competing with the levels of pay and incentives of the private sector (Brandel, 2001). This is often due to erratic financial environments and short-term funding regimes (Royce, 2007). These factors could affect the recruitment and motivation of the right calibre of employee (Brown et al., 2004) and staff retention (Halpern, 2006; Ban, Drahnak-Faller & Towers, 2003) to manage the commercial aspects of the business.

Workforce management

Many social enterprises strive to be inclusive employers, in keeping with a core aim of the sector to develop people (Pache & Santos, 2013). It is common for human resource structures in social enterprises to operate through tiered workforce models that comprise employees, volunteers, and employee-beneficiaries, purposefully developing employment opportunities for those disadvantaged in the labour market. Social enterprises operate a two-tiered staffing model of paid staff and volunteers. The inclusion of volunteers can alleviate some of the contextual challenges of "shoe-string" budgets, skills shortages (Salamon, Sokolowski, & List, 2003) and the capacity to facilitate day-to-day operations (Hynes, 2009) especially during start-up (O'Hara, 2001). However, this can bring additional challenges of supervision and volunteer commitment (Royce, 2007). Over-dependence on volunteers as a long-term strategy should be viewed with caution (Badelt, 1997; O'Hara, 2001).

Integration of paid staff and volunteers can also pose HRM challenges. Fostering an environment in which volunteers and employees can work together in harmony requires leaders to meet the needs of these different stakeholder groups simultaneously (Borzaga & Solari, 2001). A lack of resources and a focus on social impact means that some neglect to develop internal processes, particularly in the management of their own human resources (Cornelius, Todres, Janjuha-Jivraj, Woods, & Wallace, 2008). Literature also shows that organizations that adopt the employee-and-volunteer model have higher staff turnover compared with those with employees only (Liu & Ko, 2012).

Sometimes, The core purpose of a social enterprise is to create jobs for disadvantaged, underrepresented people. This means that some social enterprises operate in an even more

complex three-tiered model, further blurring stakeholder boundaries (Doherty, et al., 2014). Such a model focuses on employment and training for those facing additional and complex challenges to mainstream labour market integration (Nyssens, 2006, Davister, Defourny & Gregoire, 2004). This workforce model includes the traditional volunteer and employee roles but introduces a third cohort, confusing the client-employee relationship. Social enterprises can include employees who have "the dual role of client and employee and the use of resources to assist both the personal development of the employee (as a client) as well as the performance of the employee (as an agent)" (Doherty et al., 2014). A social entrepreneur using this model can be challenged by balancing meeting the support needs of the client-employee and the needs of the business (Ohana et al., 2013).

Imbalanced or non-existent business strategy

Weak, imbalanced or non-existent business strategies can arise for several reasons including hybridity and a lack of time, capacity, and skills. Bornstein (2004) describes how the strategic intent of the social entrepreneur influences the strategic positioning of the enterprise overall. As discussed above, social entrepreneurs can place their social motivations above the commercial realities, which can result in weak business strategies. In such instances, informal strategies are often implemented, which can neglect the commercial perspective (Doherty et al., 2009). Again, this ad hoc approach can lead to somewhat novel approaches to HRM (Newman et al., 2015).

Having time to work 'on' the business (as opposed to 'in' the business) can be a challenge for social entrepreneurs. Responsibility for developing strategy lies with the already "time-constrained management" (Dickerson & Hassanien, 2018), adding to the pressures of the day-to-day running a social enterprise, including finding time to manage and develop staff and/or volunteers. To overcome this, Gates (2010) recommends that social entrepreneurs should devote time to scenario planning to understand the likely future direction of the business, including planning staff development, future HR needs, and succession. This can enable social entrepreneurs to plan for change before the need arises.

Lack of knowledge and understanding of how to plan or where to seek support can also present a challenge, as demonstrated in Hynes' (2009) research of social enterprises in Ireland. this work showed that none of the respondents had a strategic plan to guide their enterprise, opting for a more informal approach to business growth and development. Despite the lack of formal planning, the need to adopt a formal process was identified with social entrepreneurs suggesting

> that as they were becoming busier with increased customer numbers they felt they would soon need to implement procedures or more formal strategies to guide firm development. However, they were unsure what type of procedures to implement or where to source advice on this topic (p. 120).

Research Context

The concept of social enterprise in Slovenia is relatively new with the term first used there in 2009 (Borzaga & Galera, 2014). However, it is underpinned by a long history of co-operation and non-government organizations. Since then, interest in social enterprise has grown, partly driven by the government's interest in work integration of social enterprises (WISE) to address structural unemployment and in creating jobs for groups of people who are disadvantaged in the labour market (Bradač Hojnik, 2017). The legal definition in Slovenia of social enterprise is a

business that provides products or services where making a surplus is neither the sole nor the principal objective and they strive to create societal impact (Official Gazette, 2018). Slovenia was one of the first European Union member states to adopt a specific law on social enterprise. The Act on Social Entrepreneurship regulates the activity of social enterprises through an open model, which allows for the creation of a social enterprise regardless of the legal structure of the company. As of March 2019, there were 262 registered social enterprises, representing 0.2% of the business population (Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, 2019).

The restaurant is located in Ljubljana city centre, the capital city of Slovenia with 288,000 inhabitants. It provides traditional cuisine from the global south. Its mission is to improve the employability of migrants and refugees through hospitality work and build understanding between migrants and local communities. Its inception was supported by the Institute for Global Learning funded by the European Union and the Slovenian Ministry of Labour. This enabled the founders to launch catering and cookery workshops in 2012 and the restaurant in 2014. Since the end of 2015, it has been part of the 'Open Kitchen' initiative in Ljubljana where local restaurants serve street-food at the central outdoor market on Fridays between March and November. Additionally, the restaurant serves as a platform for migrants and refugees to tell their own stories via their traditional cuisine, music or talks, to aid community integration. To date, seven migrants have been trained, with four of them currently employed within the project. Overall, more than forty migrants have benefitted from the project directly or indirectly.

The restaurant/catering business is a successful and financially sustainable social enterprise that has operated for more than six years. The organization appears to be performing well or even better than other social enterprises in Slovenia. Investigating practice in a successful social enterprise might help other social entrepreneurs to reflect on their own. The founder and CEO was a teacher and helped refugees and vulnerable migrants as a volunteer along with their spouse, who is also a migrant. The company is the first social enterprise venture for the founders. They are novices in the business world. They struggle to adapt their career paths to become social entrepreneurs. The company experiences some unique HRM issues as employees and volunteers originate from various countries with different cultures and values, and they have different support and development needs.

Methodology

To understand HRM challenges faced by social entrepreneurs, we used a qualitative case study method to explore the richness of the focal case (Bryman, 2004). We deliberately chose a descriptive case study approach, as Yin (2003) states that researchers can use it to investigate the depth and scope of the phenomena that occur within the data in order to explain the complexities of situations.

This case study consists of semi-structured interviews and observations in a representative social enterprise in Slovenia. Data collection took place between September and November 2018. Ten exploratory unstructured and semi-structured interviews with the founders, CEO and two key full-time workers were conducted in English. Eight observations of parts of the enterprise's business operations in their restaurant and 'Open Kitchen' were completed. We systematically analysed social media activity and the website of the business. Interview transcripts and field notes underwent thematic analysis which focused on challenges in the business and personal

lives. This semi-open coding took place in relation to broad HRM challenges identified in the literature. The three co-authors discussed possible interpretations until consensus was reached.

Findings: The Case Study

Based on the thematic analysis of data, we identified four major HRM-related challenges faced by the founder and CEO and their team. They are strategic, managerial, and leadership perspectives (a personal aspect and a decision-making aspect). These four challenges are organically connected. In reporting our findings both the company and respondents within the business are anonymized and the non-gender-specific pronoun 'they' is used in both singular and plural senses.

Challenge 1: Managing hybridity

The founders have two clear social objectives: enhancing the employability of migrants and refugees who reside in Ljubljana and building bridges between migrants and Slovenians. In line with these objectives, they want to create a financially sustainable platform to achieve this. However, pursuing two social objectives along with the commercial aim sometimes creates conflicts and challenges. From the outset, the founder knew the business had to be sustainable, even if this meant prioritizing the commercial aspects of the business over the social. They admitted that if the business had concentrated only on the 'social' story without focusing on good food and services, their business would not have survived. The founder said:

> We have to do a very good business thing to survive. We have to achieve our goals, which are not business per se. However, if we do our business badly, there is no point in pursuing our social goals because it's a social 'business'. So that's why we now put a lot of energy into developing the business part.

The founder believes that the more they develop and focus on the business/commercial side, the more easily their social targets can be achieved. However, they emphasise that balancing social and commercial values is important in a social enterprise. They understood that constant and balanced growth, as an enterprise, was essential to keep training and hiring migrants and refugees. their co-founder echoed that he also believed that long-term survival made having a strong business foundation imperative. He spoke of the various strands to the business, including catering, open kitchen, and cooking courses as a way to diversify their market reach, while also supporting their social aim of creating jobs, enhancing employees' skills and community integration.

Challenge 2: Recruiting and developing the right people

The hybrid nature of social enterprise can make it difficult to find the right person who shares the same values and the ethos of the organization. To balance commercial and social missions, the founders recruited a Slovenian business consultant, whose role was to assist them in advertising the restaurant and strengthening business operations. According to the founder, however, this was the worst decision they ever made for the business. The consultant disregarded the company ethos and neglected their social values. This ultimately had a negative impact on the business and professional relationships with other employees by almost taking over the business and its decisions. According to the founder, at the end of 2015, the business was very close to ceasing

trading because of this issue. This led the founder to re-evaluate their approach to recruitment. They believed that this external approach was a "risky choice" for the business. They stated, "Taking somebody from outside and hoping that he will do the best thing is worthless". Since then, new employees have been carefully engaged through trusted 'internal' appointments from within their target community who share the same ethos and values for social enterprise.

The company has many volunteers who help to meet the capacity demands of the business. Volunteers are mostly migrants and refugees from the global south. However, they found difficulty in hiring full-time people, not because the business could not support their employment financially, but because they wanted to remain volunteers. According to the founder, some migrants and refugees receive a financial subsidy from the Slovenian government, but once they move into official employment, they lose this grant. This monetary allowance is often more than the business can offer them in a paid position. As a result, the founder decided to retain them as volunteers, so they could continue training and gain experience without a negative impact on their financial situation. Although beneficial for the volunteers, it is not necessarily positive for the company to rely on volunteers.

The case presents examples of how employees with different backgrounds have been supported and developed to take on key roles in the operations of the business. Culture or language can be challenging for the first few months, but the founder has tried to create a supportive and mutually respectful environment with their staff. Hence, managing diverse employees is not as difficult as it could be. According to the founder, this could be entirely because they have trustworthy staff and the chef has trained well enough to take care of the kitchen. The chef supports the founder to balance the daily demands of the business. The founder commented

> we can't do it [manage the business] without the chef because he is perfect for this job. And now it's very hard to do without him.

The founder described the time the chef started to lead the cooking and kitchen operations as an "aha! moment", which helped them to focus on other aspects of the business. They spoke of how staff would previously refer to them to solve every problem, which is no longer the case. They commented, "I continue with my work. He focuses on the kitchen", showing a degree of delegation and division of responsibilities. They would like to keep delegating to trusted employees and training them. This suggests that social entrepreneurs should think carefully before engaging volunteers, to ensure that supportive systems and processes are in place to aid retention and integration.

Challenge 3: Entrepreneurial burnout at leadership level

We detected signs of entrepreneurial burnout in our case. The founder has been multitasking and taking on numerous responsibilities in the business. For the founder, the most critical problem they faced was lack of time and admitted that they attempted to deal with too many things at once

> Time is a problem because I am supposed to do more than a million things aside. So now, somebody has to keep up with our web page. Nevertheless, we do not really have time to focus on that. I am writing now a project [funding application] and I do not even sleep. For sure, there is nothing on the webpage published, (nothing about) what's going on now.

They anticipated that one of their employees could take on this role. However, it was evident that all team members already had a full workload.

Additionally, the founder found it challenging to meet the demands of their personal life and prioritize their well-being. The founders work long days, taking little time for themselves. Every day, they start at six o'clock in the morning and one is involved in every aspect of the business until it closes. This includes managing staff and volunteers, serving guests, attending to marketing, ordering, and finances. The business completely occupies their life. Moreover, it is difficult for them to draw a clear line between the business and their personal life as they started this business with their spouse, and they run the company together. They confessed that it was not always productive to work with their spouse as they kept talking about the business, even at home.

> If I would write my own future in the past, I would not choose [working with my spouse]. It is harder. You can't stop thinking about it. … [one day, their spouse was talking about the business at home], I told them 'Look, between six in the evening and nine in the morning, we don't talk about the business.' It was because kids were running everywhere and I was in the middle of cooking dinner. They came up with some topic regarding the 'Open Kitchen.

Such heavy workloads burned them out psychologically and physically. They experienced health problems and suffered from stress. As a result, they were unsure whether they could move the business forward and continue to juggle multiple demands. They told us that they would close the business next year if their stress levels became unmanageable and yet it is still open at the time of writing (September 2019). While the founder remains the central figure in the company, the integral role of key staff, such as the head chef, is starting to help to balance the demands of running such a multi-faceted business, although pressures are still high with never-ending commitments.

Challenge 4: Non-existence of business strategy

Burnout affected the founder's business decision-making process. They admitted that they could not develop a long-term strategy for their business but relied on ad hoc decisions. The founder said,

> We don't really make a decision in advance so much, because we don't plan everything. Something just happens.

The founders and the team do things spontaneously, react and improvise for specific situations as they arise. They observed "at least now we know in September that we should start thinking about December". The reason they had a tentative plan for December was that they had orders for Christmas. The plan was not driven by a long-term business strategy but rather reactive to seasonal demand. They also admitted that they have been "lucky". The founder did not think this approach would present a problem in the longer term. When they explained how things had been improvised, they were dismissive of the possible negative long-term consequences, considering this approach "interesting" and "fun". They believed this was a positive and unique organizational culture, which seemed to be working for them. They regarded this as a learning experience for them and their team and believed that they learned by doing, not by thinking and planning ahead. In their words:

> Because every day is something new, it's interesting. I'm the kind of person who likes working with people who really think differently, not everybody in the same way. I think this also brought something unique, because whoever comes up with some sort of idea …, 'Oh, interesting!' 'Huh, let's try it, right?' and we do it. And if it doesn't work, it doesn't work. But we don't really kill ideas."

They considered that having a formal business plan or strategy could be detrimental to the business, which could be influenced by the negative experiences that the founder encountered when engaging with professional business support. The founder hired a full-time 'business consultant' who was supposed to provide a business plan, but the experience was a "living hell" They thought that specific business plans from the consultant did not fully reflect their business and help the business grow. The consultant tried to change everything according to his ideas. When they hired the marketing consultant, as discussed above, they had the same experience. Since then, they have trusted their own instincts and capabilities.

Discussion

From our findings, we show four challenges that social entrepreneurs would commonly face from several HRM perspectives: strategic, managerial, and leadership. Figure 1 presents a summary of our findings.
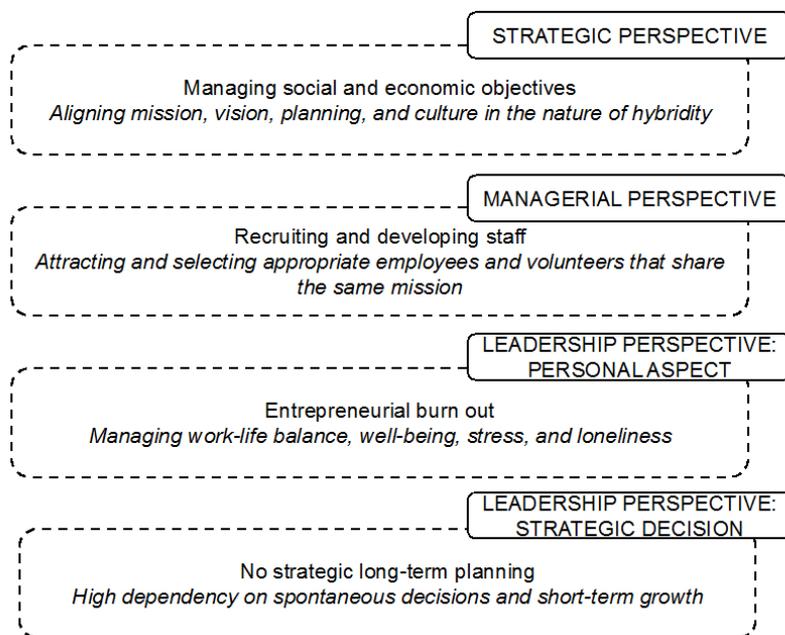
Figure 1. The Four HRM Challenges of Social Entrepreneurs

This case can be exemplary in dealing with some of the challenges, such as setting and achieving its social mission, having a financially viable business and developing resilience in the face of a range of obstacles. However, the company's most significant challenges are managing the scope and evolution of the business in terms of long-term strategic planning. In terms of HRM, these are evident in the following two themes: a) entrepreneurial and organizational learning and b) developing the organically growing business through more structured systems and process. This entails formulating a long-term strategy for business development, paying attention to recruiting and managing people, resolving the staffing model, delegating and focusing on work/life balance and burnout prevention at leadership level.

Our findings echo the literature in pursuing dual missions (Hynes, 2009; Imperatori & Ruta, 2006). The CEO admitted that balancing both social and commercial objectives was challenging. To achieve an economic mission, alongside a social mission, social entrepreneurs should prepare a business plan, in which they specify the three core premises of successful business outcomes. However, we found that the CEO does not have a formal strategy to manage those two goals as Doherty et al. (2009) recommend. Even if scholars claim that social entrepreneurs must understand the unique underlying value of their social enterprise (Certo & Miller, 2008; Doherty et al., 2009; Bornstein, 2004) we found that it was challenging even (or maybe particularly) for a successful social entrepreneur. In practice, the founders could not develop this strategic picture, as their day-to-day life was too busy keeping their business afloat and dealing with many different tasks by themselves.

If a social entrepreneur feels they lack knowledge, competencies, and experience, it is imperative to widen their entrepreneurial team with people of complementary knowledge, competencies, and experience. Another possibility is to hire a business consultant, but as we saw in this case, attention is needed not to damage relationships and to understand the ethos of the business. Relying on people who do not understand the core mission of a social enterprise is risky since they might overlook the social aspects. If it is well articulated, it can be a unique value of a social enterprise. The literature suggests that social entrepreneurs often focus on the social dimension but they lack business skills and knowledge (Hynes, 2009). For social entrepreneurs, it is necessary to undertake an entrepreneurial approach while maintaining the social mission at the core of their values.

We found that the company considered recruiting and managing people a challenge, which they might be able to overcome through appropriate human resource development. The founder has their spouse as an active entrepreneurial and personal partner, but they need to strengthen their core team with other reliable co-workers to whom they can delegate. We saw a need for upskilling current employees to gain new knowledge, skills, and experience to better achieve the social and economic mission of their social enterprise. We also saw that the founder had begun delegating and trusting their employees, which is a prerequisite for a sound organizational culture, employee satisfaction, and entrepreneurial burnout prevention. In addition, the founder has encouraged volunteers of diverse backgrounds as a key competence, which provided a supportive and mutually respectful environment for their employees. These practices can be further developed from a human resource development perspective.

Attention should also be paid when hiring workers and a probationary period allocated before full-time employment is suggested. In addition, as the literature suggests (Peattie & Morley, 2008; Doherty et al., 2014; Badelt, 1997; O'Hara, 2001), the founders and CEO must manage full-time workers and volunteers. The dual staffing model in which employees and volunteers work together represents challenges to human resource development. This can be overcome with an appropriate approach, i.e. ensuring supporting systems and processes to retain and integrate both valuable staff groups in one social enterprise. Such models can alleviate the internal shortage of knowledge, skills, workforce, and money for wages (Salamon et al., 2003). In Slovenia, wages are relatively highly charged with taxes and duties.

Finally, our findings show that the founder is heading for entrepreneurial burnout because of their high work overload and minimal rest. This is typically found in social entrepreneurs in the existing studies as they lack a commercial or business background and are overwhelmed by the

day-to-day operations of their business. It is a recurring issue in social, as well as commercial, entrepreneurs (Guclu et al., 2002; Blair-Loy & Jacobs, 2003; Buzzanell & Liu, 2005). Taking on several tasks and roles is usual for entrepreneurs (Douglas & Shepherd, 2000), but after the initial phase of the entrepreneurial venture, some roles and tasks must be delegated to competent team members, employees, and outside partners. For long-term efficient firm development and growth, we suggest (social) entrepreneurs delegate tasks in order to avoid burnout. From an HRM perspective, The founder should invest in training for their employees and have greater confidence in the entrepreneurial team members. This may also provide the employees with an opportunity to develop their own skills with responsibilities. In turn, it would enable them to ensure their work-life balance (Valcour, 2007). We found this virtuous circle from the case as the founder developed trusty key employees and gave them their own responsibilities. Moreover, subjective well-being has been proven to be a key to success in entrepreneurship (Uy, Sun, & Foo, 2017). Assuring their own subjective well-being to avoid burnout can be an important HRM issue at the entrepreneurial level to sustain the business and develop entrepreneurial team members in the long term.

Implications for practice

The practical implications of our research are of interest to practising and aspiring social entrepreneurs. They will also concern policymakers interested in shaping an environment of support for the social entrepreneurship sector. HRM practitioners and scholars will find useful examples in our work. We found that social enterprises — and in this case specifically — lack a strategic orientation (Bornstein, 2004; Doherty et al., 2009). This leads us to suggest that social entrepreneurs set a mission and vision for their business and set specific goals in the short, medium, and long term. They should spend time and consideration on creating a strategy. From the analysis of *this case*, we suggest social entrepreneurs make a business plan or a business model canvas (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010). They could use methods such as design thinking (Brown, 2008) or lean start-up (Reis, 2011) to understand their core position and direction. They should identify a sound, viable mission, clear purpose, and set goals with achievable success criteria. We suggest that social entrepreneurs regularly evaluate their progress towards these goals. Where necessary, goals can be divided into smaller, measurable tasks. In so doing, they can understand better what is to be done and how to accomplish each task in the social and economic sense. Policymakers, experts, and scholars should design tailored courses and seminars to aid social entrepreneurs in constructing such documents and discuss good and bad practices with participants at such sessions. We saw in this case that luck played a part in the survival of the project and business, but in the long term, much more strategic orientation should be undertaken. Also, social enterprises should embrace an entrepreneurial orientation alongside their social mission.

Another practical implication stemming from our research deals with knowledge and skills that social entrepreneurs currently possess and transfer to their staff. If entrepreneurs lack business knowledge and skills, we suggest taking some business and entrepreneurship-oriented courses, seminars or MOOCs, study relevant literature or ask for advice from reliable consultants. Some social entrepreneurs might find useful turning to consultants from 180DC (180 Degrees Consulting, 2019), an organization in which university students help non-profit and social enterprises receive support and expertise to improve and expand their services (180 Degrees Consulting, 2019). Moreover, HRM issues play significant challenges in social enterprises. Therefore, talent acquisition, recruitment, staffing models, staff retention and upskilling should

be discussed deeply in seminars, conferences, and other meetings where social entrepreneurs and HRM experts come together.

Finally, we saw that social entrepreneurs rely on a trial-and-error methodology to tackle social and business issues. Although entrepreneurs are inclined to try several times before achieving the intended result, we must warn them that after each iteration, they should take some time to reflect on any outcomes and evaluate their experiences. Entrepreneurial and organizational learning is a key HRM determinant that should be considered. The literature suggests that there is no learning and gaining new knowledge without a cognitive reflection (i.e. making sense of their decisions and ways of doing business) of that outcome or experience (Aldrich & Yang, 2014; Kolb, 2014; Politis, 2005).

Conclusion

In this paper, we uncovered four HRM challenges in the social enterprise we studied, a restaurant/catering company in Ljubljana supporting the employment of economic migrants who live in Slovenia. The four challenges are: managing the hybrid nature of social enterprises, recruiting and developing right people, avoiding burnout at the leadership level and having a core business strategy. Based on the challenges stemming from practice and the on-going debate in the scholarly literature we propose future research opportunities in the following areas. First, researchers could investigate personality-related (e.g. lack of knowledge, risk tolerance, improvisation, and heuristics), firm-related (e.g. size, history, organizational complexity, and capacity) and environment-related (e.g. industry, competition, dynamism, and technological turbulence) factors that hinder social enterprises from taking time to think or re-think about their core business propositions and strategy. Researchers should also investigate the occurrence and development of dynamic organizational capabilities within social enterprises and suggest ways to nurture them in the long run. Organizational learning is a core premise of the development of firms and could be investigated further also in the context of HRM issues in social entrepreneurs since there are several cohorts of staff (i.e. leaders, employees, and volunteers) that need proper recruitment, training, and upskilling.

Our findings have important implications for social entrepreneurship research and offer rich future research opportunities. First, we find that the absence of strategy, clear mission, purpose, and goals are the core shortcoming in social enterprises (Bornstein, 2004; Doherty et al., 2009). Therefore, scholars in social entrepreneurship could dig deeper into the occurrence and antecedents of this challenge. By uncovering the reasons behind the absence of the core business premises, we will be in a better position to tailor educational programmes for social entrepreneurs.

Due to the nature of hybridity in their businesses, social entrepreneurs may feel more lost and lonely as they cannot entirely belong to the social sector or the business sector, but they juggle two motivations. Hence, social entrepreneurs can be likely to feel lonely even if they are quite motivated by their own values. However, we do not know much about how such value-driven leadership of social entrepreneurs can be influenced by conflicting motivations, burnout, and emotional defects.

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**Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management
challenges and opportunities for HRD**

Impactful Learning: Exploring the Value of Informal Learning Experiences to Improve the Learning Potential of International Research Projects

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This paper explores how an analysis of secondees' informal learning experiences can highlight opportunities for increasing individual and collective learning capacity of an international partnership and the achievement of project objectives. A thematic analysis method (Miles and Huberman, 1994) was applied to 19 secondee's individual learning reports. The main findings discuss three themes which were elicited through secondees' informal learning, including a) living in a host country; b) working in a host country; and c) developing an academic career. The paper outlines practice, policy, and research implications for improving the learning potential of international research projects.

Key Words: informal learning, international research projects, international secondments, collaborative learning

Introduction

Traditional models of learning are inadequate in explaining the complexity and permeability of learning required to support the development of professional practice (Manuti et al., 2015), particularly when this crosses sectoral boundaries e.g. between universities and business (Yusuf, 2008), and cross cultural domains (Gopal, 2011). This paper will review the learning of project staff participating in the delivery of an EU funded international research project. EU Research Innovation and Staff Exchange (RISE) funding supports international mobility of staff through a 30-day defined period of stay i.e. secondment in a partner country. For the Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management 3 (GETM3) project the partners are based in UK, Poland, Slovenia, and Republics of Ireland and South Korea. The main aim of the project is to enhance the individual and collective research capacity to enable them to collaborate internationally and develop impactful research with their stakeholders to benefit the wider EU community.

Little attention has been paid to learning patterns in such interdisciplinary research projects. The specificity of such learning is widely described in the literature, but often in their distinctive

fields i.e. psychology, education, computer-supported learning, and many others (Hmelo-Silver, Chinn, Chan & O'Donnell, 2013). Importantly, mere taking part and co-operating in projects must be distinguished from impactful peer learning i.e. peer tutoring, co-operative learning, and collaborative learning (Damon & Phelps, 1989). This encourages us to widen our understanding of the different forms of learning that might contribute to the success of international research projects (Marsick & Watkins, 2015).

Lifelong learning is something that humans do constantly and holistically to engage in connected, effective, and meaningful lives. It is a socio-personal process directed by our capacities, intentions, contexts, and support. As Billet (2010, pp. 401) explains

> learning is not wholly dependent on external sources, it occurs all the time as we engage in activities and interactions in our homes, with our families, with our friends and acquaintances, in our work, in our workplaces, in our community engagements, in the everyday tasks in which we engage, and when we are alone.

Thereby, learning through work informs our expansive intersubjective lifeworld and vice versa (Houlbrook, 2010).

This paper is informed by workplace learning theory (Billett, 2002; Eraut, 2011; Illeris, 2016; Poell, 2013), where 'work' is not situated in a physical 'place' (Felstead et al., 2005) but in the 'process' of interactions with others engaged in shared activities (Jacobs & Park, 2009). Formal planned structured learning experiences e.g. workshops have been designed into the project to share and develop knowledge and research expertise (Eraut, 2000). However, working on the project facilitates processes of informal and incidental learning "wherever people have the need, motivation, and opportunity for learning" (Kerosuo, 2001, pp. 28). Participants plan for specific project and professional outcomes before undertaking an international secondment. However, the purpose of this study is to explore the most impactful and unplanned learning experiences gained by project participants during their international mobility secondment, which provide opportunities for both personal and professional development. This analysis will inform recommendations for designing 'learning rich' international collaborative projects.

In this paper we present an exploratory initial analysis of the learning experiences of participants involved in the first two years of a four-year EU funded project on Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management (GETM3), funded from Horizon 2020. The paper is structured as follows. In the first section we provide brief details of the GETM3 project and the learning infrastructure constructed to support, capture and evidence learning from participation in the project. The next section will provide a critical review of literature on workplace learning to provide a theoretical framing for the investigation. This is followed by an outline of the research design and methods deployed to collect, analyse and present a subset of the full project data on the learning platform available at this stage. In the tradition of presenting qualitative data the findings will be then be analysed and presented as part of the discussion framed by the literature, which will logically inform a set of conclusions. The final section will consider the research, policy and practice implications for enhancing individual and collective learning in international collaborative research projects.

Context: GETM3 project structure

The focus of the GETM3 project is to understand how universities, companies and students perceive talent and entrepreneurship and identify key stakeholders needs and requirements

(Northumbria University, 2019). Importantly, EU Research Innovation and Exchange (RISE) funding is for the direct purpose of developing and enabling the growth of individual, institutional, and international research capacity through a programme of international secondments between partners in the project. A key requirement, therefore, is evidencing the impact of the multi-level research capacity building achieved through the project.

Within the GETM3 project there is a package of work activity led by an international and interdisciplinary team skilled in learning and innovation processes, research and project evaluation. The project manages to maximize impact by driving researcher development, networking, knowledge transfer, and dissemination internally as well as externally. The GETM3 team promotes continuous process review in order to shape collaboration with partners and stakeholders and to enable data collection, analysis, and evaluation for research purposes. Project engagement is delivered through quarterly networking events called 'Sandpits', social media, and dissemination strategy. The team advise on direct and indirect learning and support activities to facilitate and evidence researcher development.

The purpose of this paper is to explore how secondees' informal learning experiences during international secondments highlight opportunities for increasing individual and collective learning to enhance the learning capacity of this international partnership and achievement of project objectives

GETM3 learning architecture

The team developed a learning architecture to frame and support individual, institutional, and international collaborative learning throughout the duration of the project. This included the development of a learning platform and personal and professional development framework, through which evidence of learning is captured using an individual research development record (IRDR). This is complemented by planned activities supporting networking, knowledge exchange and stakeholder engagement, communication and dissemination, which facilitate opportunities for collaborative and interdisciplinary learning in five host partner countries.

Learning platform

A learning platform provides an online collaborative learning environment for consortium members and researchers. All learning resources from activities undertaken within the GETM3 project are stored on the GETM3 365 SharePoint site, hosted by Northumbria University. The repository of learning resources is accessible to all members and supports remote and continuing professional development throughout the duration of the GETM3 project. The site is dynamic, so that new resources and materials are added throughout the lifetime of the project, particularly from the quarterly networking 'Sandpits'. In addition to delivering online materials, the site is used to actively promote communities of practice/interest among participants and stakeholders. Importantly the platform provides opportunities for relevant qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis of research and researcher development, progress and achievement over the life of the project to meet project objectives.

Personal and professional development framework

All secondees have been provided with a subscription to the VITAE researcher development website (https://www.vitae.ac.uk/) to access learning resources to support their professional

development. Vitae is the UK member of EURAXESS — https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/ Researchers in Motion is a unique pan-European initiative delivering information and support services to professional researchers. The project uses the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (RDF) (University Of Birmingham, CRAC, & Hampton, 2014) to evaluate project participants' knowledge, behaviours and attitudes. The RDF consists of four domains: (1) knowledge and intellectual abilities, (2) personal effectiveness, (3) Research governance and organization, (4) Engagement, influence and impact. The RDF outlines the 'characteristics' of excellent researchers' and provides a clear structure to inform, develop, and record 'learning' gained by individual members through their participation in the project. All project members provide a self-assessment using the Vitae RDF at the beginning and at the end of the project, to inform a quantitative and qualitative analysis of researcher development through participation in the project.

Individual researcher development record

All project members undertaking secondments are required to complete an online individual researcher development record (IRDR) for each secondment. This requires the production of an individual personal development plan, informed by their RDF self-assessment and project deliverables. They will complete their IRDR before, during and after completing their secondment, to encourage anticipatory and reflective learning (Senge & Fulmer, 1993). There is a structured set of questions to prompt a reflective account of their learning. Once completed individuals receive a certificate of participation in the project from the EU.

Networking, knowledge exchange and stakeholder engagement

A key objective of the project is to maximize impact by internal and external networking, knowledge exchange, and dissemination. Key networking activities are facilitated through the quarterly 'sandpits', which are hosted in each partner country. The sandpits are a means of facilitating 'intra-project' learning and dissemination between partners and stakeholders involved in different aspects of the project (Kotnour, 2000). The project has completed seven sandpits to date, with sandpits aligned to the key stages and deliverables of the GETM3 project. They facilitate networking activities with stakeholders in the project including our employer partners, employees, young students, and entrepreneurs. Wherever possible, international secondments are scheduled to enable a critical mass of researchers and stakeholders to network and engage in knowledge production during the sandpits. Academic careers are often contingent upon contextual factors e.g. institutional and cultural that frame the constraints and opportunities for professional development (Zacher, Rudolph, Todorovic & Ammann, 2018). Therefore, sandpits are a key process for facilitating learning through social networking, knowledge and skills development workshops, peer learning, stakeholder engagement, and collaborative learning throughout the project activities.

Communication and dissemination

This section outlines elements of the learning architecture, which structures and supports the development of formal and informal individual and collaborative learning through participation in the project. Overall, the GETM3 project facilitates a rich learning environment with opportunities to support both interdisciplinary and international learning. For example, during 2017-19, partners in GETM3 project have organized 14 conferences, 27 workshops and four

exhibitions. In addition, project colleagues have participated in 30 conferences, 54 workshops, and three training events. These activities provide an excellent range of diverse opportunities to facilitate individual and collaborative learning. Networking and conference attendance are particularly important in developing academic professional identity (Gardener & Willey, 2018). Furthermore, this infrastructure enables the collection, analysis and presentation of evidence to support the achievement of the project outputs on building interdisciplinary international research capacity to the EU funding provider. This rich learning environment provides the context for this investigation.

Workplace learning

A review learning theory can usefully inform our understanding of the processes and impact of learning on participants and stakeholders in international research projects. Existing learning theory suggests that both projects and the workplace environment support similar methods of learning: formal (such as seminars, conferences, courses) and non-formal (informal and incidental) (Albrecht, Burandt & Schaltegger, 2007). These diverse sources of learning can facilitate the development of the individual and collective capability of research team members.

The process of learning not only increases learners knowledge, abilities, and skills but can also change their values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours (Jarvis, Holford & Griffin, 2003). According to Illeris (2008), it depends on both the person and his or her learning abilities (elaboration and acquisition of knowledge) and on the learning conditions (internal and external, interaction with the environment) in which learning process takes place. Learning is initiated by external or internal incentives, however, it is widely acknowledged that impactful learning requires engagement of both the affective and cognitive domains (Kolb, 1984; Illeris, 2016).

In the context of learning in the workplace, there is often a foregrounding of the organization learning processes as distinguishable from the development of individual practice. Argyris and Schön (1978) use systems thinking to understand the role of organizations' norms, policies, and behaviours to enhance decision making. Engestrom's (2001) focus is on the social and organizational context rather than on individual learning. He uses concepts of horizontal learning, often involving 'boundary crossing' (Kerosuo, 2001) to explain how problem solving occurs through interactions among peers, mediated by tools and signs without resorting to orthodox knowledge. However, other scholars foreground how people learn through experience and their interactions with others in the workplace. Models of peer learning, coaching and more recently 'reverse mentoring' (Rogawski & Rogawski, 2018), are increasingly evident in the literature. Boud (1999) argues that peer learning is particularly relevant for academic staff development, and many institutions have formal policies of peer learning. Schon (1983) built on Dewey's work (1916) to focus on the value of critically reflecting on personal practice to engage in a process of continual learning. The term 'communities of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991) has emerged to connect concepts of learning and knowing within a collaborative space where "groups of people [are] informally bound together by shared expertise and a passion for a joint enterprise" (Wenger & Snyder, 1999, pp. 139). Boud and Middleton (2003) outline the form and processes of informal learning though interaction with others at work. There is increasing focus on the potential of technology enhanced collaborative learning and the use of learning platforms to facilitate digital connectivity, where online interaction motivates learners to interact with others, be more attentive, learn among peers, and exchange knowledge (Molinillo, Aguilar-Illescas, Anaya-Sánchez & Vallespín-Arán, 2018).

Learning may occur both in formal and informal situations. Formal learning is a planned, deliberate process that is delivered in structured educational settings i.e. in classes, during conferences, seminars, trainings etc.. Non-formal learning might be organized by an employer or by an employee, however the employee is responsible for the learning process (Table 1) (Marsick & Watkins, 2015).

Type of learning	Who set objectives	Who organizes the means
Formal learning		
Planned and organized by the employee	Employer/Organization	Employer/Organization
Informal learning		
For the needs of organization	Employer/Organization	Employee
Non-Formal learning		
Organized outside formal education, parallel to formal education system	Employee	Employer/Organization
Incidental learning		
Byproduct of other activity	Never planned	Never planned

Table 1: Forms of learning
Source: Developed based on Marsick & Watkins, 2015; Mocker & Spear, 1982.

It is speculated that only 17% of formal learning is controlled by the organization. Employees are responsible for the remaining 83%. They learn informally and incidentally. However, the outputs may not match the employer's needs. Therefore, informal and incidental learning should be considered by organizations while planning employees' development (Marsick & Watkins, 2015), and scholars, including Boud (1999), have demonstrated its value for developing academic careers.

In collaborative projects, both learning from peers and sharing knowledge are very important (Kotnour, 2000). International projects provide an opportunity for organizations to secure new knowledge and share complementary knowledge that project partners would and may never share if not participating in a joint undertaking. However, this requires respect and trust, transparent communication channels, and mutual commitment and shared gains (Ryoo & Kim, 2015). Well-organized information exchange channels, employees networking, compatible communication systems, and devices influence better knowledge exchange and inhibit political manoeuvrings (Sense & Antoni, 2003).

Cooperation and learning in joint university-business projects can be mutually beneficial (Cohen, 2012). However, Steinmo and Rasmussen (2018) highlight some initial barriers which can be overcome by building social capital through reciprocal social networks. Over time, networking creates new collaborative partnerships, which encourages the development of shared understandings and build trust (Al-Tabbaa & Ankrah, 2016). University-business collaboration enables knowledge productivity but only when everyone is involved in learning networks (Powell, Koput & Smith-Doerr, 2006). Steinmo and Rasmussen (2018) investigated fifteen innovation collaborative projects in university-business networks and recommend that partners

must organize and manage social relationships in order to benefit from learning outcomes that may take place in collaborative networks.

The reviewed literature above reveals that focusing on informal and incidental learning can illuminate how participation in international secondments could create opportunities for impactful learning through unplanned experiences. The evidence on international projects and specifically university-industry partnerships suggests that efficient learning would depend upon an individual and collective commitment to develop social capital through investing in inter-relational processes and activities for mutual gain e.g. networking. Therefore, this paper will explore what kinds of learning are enhanced through informal and incidental opportunities by secondees on an international secondment as part of an international research project.

Methodology

The main purpose of this research is to explore 'how' and 'what' knowledge individuals acquire through in-formal learning in the context of a large scale of EU-funded project. To discover inside and detailed information, we adapted a combination of 'primary archive data (PAD)' and 'thematic' research method (Bernard, 2012; Bryman, 2004). The key benefit of using archive data is that it is easy to trace the already collected data and examine them repeatedly to answer the research questions. When assessing the value of primary archive data, Guba and Lincoln (1981) and Bryman (2004) suggested that researchers must be aware of these questions: what is the history; who produced the document; what are the authors trying to accomplish; to what extent were the writers likely to tell the truth; is the meaning of the document clear? We have clearly considered these questions when evaluating the document data for this research.

The archive data we utilized was primarily and specifically produced for the four-year GETM3 international research project. This large scale project involves nine HE institutions across five countries, including UK, Poland, Slovenia, Republics of Ireland and South Korea. Project secondees (those who undertook a 30-day international secondment) completed an individual report as part of their secondment in one of these five countries. The report reflects on professional and individual learning at three stages: before the secondment, during the secondment, and post secondment. The archive data produced by secondees provides ideal data for analysing and understanding individuals' formal and informal learning.

We accessed these reports with the authority of the individual (ethically they agreed that the data belongs to the project and can be used for the purpose of the project related research). By adapting the thematic analysis method (Miles & Huberman, 1994), we selected 19 reports, read them repeatedly and extracted the quotes from these reports to build hierarchies of themes (called codebooks). Our main themes and sub-themes come from both priori theoretical understanding of professional informal learning and the primary archive data from the online reflective learning platform. Dey (1993, pp. 34) calls the themes developed from existing literature 'priori themes'. Using the priori themes (Maxwell, 2005) and developed by the five researchers together in a research meeting, another two researchers created hierarchical themes; selected quotes from the reports and shared the emerged themes and sub-themes with the other three researchers, the themes were revised accordingly.

Record Number	Nationality	Gender	Researcher Category	ID
1	Korea (Republic of)	Female	ER	KR1
2	Hellenic	Female	ER	H1
3	UK	Female	ER	UK1
4	UK	Male	ESR	UK2
5	UK	Female	MNG	UK3
6	UK	Female	ER	UK4
7	Mexico	Male	ESR	M1
8	Polish	Female	ER	P1
9	China	Female	ESR	C1
10	UK	Female	TECH	UK5
11	UK	Male	ESR	UK6
12	Lithuania	Female	ESR	L1
13	Polish	Female	ER	P2
14	Polish	Female	ER	P3
15	Polish	Female	ER	P4
16	Polish	Male	ER	P5
17	UK	Female	ADM	UK7
18	Polish	Female	ER	P6
19	Polish	Female	ER	P7

Table 2: List of participant details

The findings represent data submitted by secondees from four of the host country partners including United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Poland and Slovenia. The data extracted for analysis was drawn from the individual research development records of 19 secondees in response to the following question:

> You may experience significant informal learning that was not planned or expected. It is important that you reflect, record, and evaluate the details of the three most significant unplanned learnings that you have gained from the secondment.

The data was analysed using thematic coding (Guest, MacQueen & Namey, 2011). The research team identified three first level priori codes to organize the data, based on the literature and their collective experiences participating in the project. The first theme 'personal' sought to collect any reflections on the secondees' personal experiences of living in a host country environment. The second level codes identified included: communication, building new relationships, and interpersonal competence. The latter was organized into two further third level codes including personal and professional to reflect their everyday living experiences and secondly their relational connections with their professional country hosts. The next first level code captured the secondees' experiences of working with a host country institution. There were three, second level codes that emerged within this data. The first code reflected their relationship with their partner host university and particularly the organizational norms and behaviours, the second included planning their research, particularly access to research participants and ethics, and the final code focused on approaches and practices in doing the

research. The final first level code focused on the secondees' academic career. There were three second level codes identified in this data. The first code identified a theme of networking and communication, the second reflected evidence of developing their academic practice, and the final code identified a reflective approach to the development of their wider professional practice. The table below outlines a summary of the codes, which emerged in the data analysis.

First level codes	Second level codes	Third level codes
Living in a host country	Communication	
	Interpersonal Competence	Professional Personal
	Building New Relationships	
Working with a Host University	Norms, Behaviours and Practices	
	Planning Research	Ethics Access to Research Participants
	Doing Research	Research Approaches Research Methods
Developing an Academic Career	Networking and Communication	
	Academic Practice	
	Reflective Professional Practice	

Table 3: Summary of the codes

Findings and Discussion

This section will provide an exploration of the themes emerged through the data analysis, with direct quotes to illustrate key insights, framed within the context of the literature, which will consequently inform a set of conclusions. As discussed in the previous section, the main three themes that emerged from our analysis are; living in a host country, working with a host university, and academic career. Therefore, the following sections will explore and discuss these themes further.

Living in a host country

One of the primary goals of the GETM3 project is to build an international collaborative research 'community of practice' (Wenger & Snyder, 1999). Although key members of the project steering group had collaborated on previous projects and visited each other's countries and institutions, this experience was not typical for the majority of secondees. Many of the secondees would be visiting unfamiliar places and institutions, and staying for one week to one month, exceptionally up to three months, on any one occasion.

While some support could be expected from the host institution e.g. in finding suitable accommodation, often in student residences. Nevertheless, secondees were expected to live independently, find their way around the city, and organize their own food shopping and social outings. Therefore, for many secondees living 'independently' in a host country was an insightful

experience, which motivates further learning, "how to improve my communication skills with foreigners need to be improved in the next secondment" [UK1].

For many secondees, the opportunity for an international extended stay was unusual but promoted personal confidence in international travel for work. One secondee asserted:

> When I have travelled with work in previous roles … I have never really travelled around the location on my own. This has either been due to the fact that I was travelling in a large group, or that the locations have not been safe enough to do so as a lone female. By the end of the week in Ljubljana, I felt safe and confident enough to walk in an unfamiliar city on my own, do some sightseeing and shopping, before taking public transport back to my accommodation [UK7].

However, there was still a feeling of uncertainty,

> despite feeling safe to do this, I did encounter some unwanted attention which made me a little wary — I am not sure if this will affect my future travels and walking alone, this is something I will have to monitor" [UK7].

Therefore, there is an undertone of potential anxiety expressed when undertaking this experience as a lone female, even in the friendliest of cities. However, many secondees reported that living in the host environment had a positive experience on their interpersonal relations with their host country and new international colleagues.

The interaction with the host country nationals enabled secondees' to reflect on their own personal perspectives.

> The interviews with PhD students and young entrepreneurs were very interesting for me. It allowed me to gain not only scientific experience but also to meet interesting, inspiring people and think about changing my approach to life and entrepreneurship [P2].

A planned encounter that elicited unplanned reflections on their own professional and everyday life.

The secondment experience facilitated the building of new international relationships. There was an appreciation of partners' efforts to support the relationship and work together despite diverse interests. One secondee comments by saying:

> I could see, despite cultural differences and the wider context of geo-political uncertainty (e.g. Brexit), a real commitment from project partners to ensure the project relationships were strong and to making the project a success [UK5].

This is consistent with Wenger (1999) who argues that social participation supports informal learning and commitment to shared goals. Learning through the 'process' of interactions with others engaged in shared activities is consistent with Jacobs and Park (2009), view of impactful learning through work. An experienced academic colleague commented on the support they received from younger colleagues, "I have found that young people are very proficient at using different methods of communication and dissemination, and they are very open and eager to help experienced scientists" [UK5]. This supports the value of peer learning and potentially 'reverse mentoring' when secondees use their own expertise to enhance the development of their colleagues (Rogawski & Rogawski, 2018).

Working with a host university

This theme reflected the research purpose of the secondment, to work with colleagues in the host institution to contribute to the achievement of planned research outputs for the GETM3 project. Three areas emerged in exploring this aspect of the findings. Firstly, relating to the norms and practices of the hosts and the host institution, secondly planning, and finally undertaking the research.

There were many examples of how informal learning was developed through engagement in the relationships and practices of the host workplace for secondees within the project (Wenger & Snyder, 1999). There were often very different expectations of how meetings and presentations were conducted. As one secondee commented:

> We were in a company presentation and the host colleagues just talked between themselves throughout, they didn't even sit politely and pretend to listen [UK4].

Long meetings frequently overextended. However, there were different approaches to deal with this situation:

> I learned that not everyone thinks it's necessary to offer a visitor some refreshments (or at least offer a break for refreshments) during a four-hour meeting, which will make me even more aware of offering this hospitality in future meetings that I host! [UK5].

In addition, the opportunity to experience different ways of working and interacting was insightful as confirmed by one secondee:

> Observing professionals from a different country in their 'natural habitat': learning different ways of organizing work, distributing responsibility by assigning tasks in different way, culturally unique ways of communicating (building argumentation, manner of speaking). All this is accessible in hands-on experience only and observation; no way to read that in a book [P6].

The reference to "culturally unique" ways of communicating, would suggest that discussions were culturally patterned and insightful leaving a visceral impact of this experience, "no way to read that in a book". Others used visual means of bridging the communication barrier. "I really enjoyed seeing how they focused on the questions based on the imagery and bringing their own experience. How universities work in different places" [M1]. This illustrates Engestrom's (2001) concept of learning where an acceptable outcome is achieved by the re-creation of activities and tools to support the learning process.

Professions are often assumed to share consistent practices, irrespective of where they are performed internationally. However, in reality they may reflect issues of 'boundary crossing' between institutional and cultural domains (Kerosuo, 2001). A fundamental issue within the research process is ethical practice, which provides rigour and transparency to the process and integrity and confidence in its results to an academic and wider audience. However, early discussions within the project identified diverse ethical approaches. A secondee commented: "It had never crossed my mind that there would be such different approaches and institutional practices to ethics, and particularly evidencing individual informed consent" [UK4]. Understanding organizational processes is an area often navigated by informal learning, however the 'who' and 'how' are often influenced by contextual factors, including access to documentary sources or informal contacts (Boud & Middleton, 2003). Negotiating access to research data and participants can often be a challenging aspect of conducting international research, "It is very

hard work. Without strong and direct support from the host's side it is impossible to conduct research in foreign environment" [P2], problematic access to partner's networks in collaborative projects is consistent with Sense and Antoni (2003). However, overall there is evidence of good support from colleagues in the host institution:

> I was delighted to participate in the preparation and conducting interviews and focus groups in the K Company [P4].

Another participant commented

> I was delighted to visit one of the enterprise incubators in the Ljubljana, and conduct interview in the "real environment" of some of the young entrepreneurs … and learn how PhD students and young entrepreneurs from Slovenia develop their scientific career and set up their companies [P4].

However, the practice was not always consistent and sometimes this had a negative impact on the experience and relations between secondees. In some cases, poor communication between the various secondees and the host country meant that any planned activities were not fully realized as a participant reported that

> I found that I did not really get much help from the team of [another university] as his team from the University of X had already arranged data collection by themselves. I thought this was quite bad coordination. If we shared our schedule and data collection plans before we got to Korea, it would have been so much better and lead us to another collaboration [KR1].

This lack of co-operation is consistent with some of the limitations of communities of practice identified by Pemberton, Mavin and Stalker (2007). Sometimes, secondees may have made assumptions, not checked the quality of the access to various companies, and if these companies were appropriate for the focus of their investigation. Lack of preparation and asking the right questions did prove a learning experience for some, which they will carry forward: "Also, I learned what can go wrong and this can prove useful in the future … when planning research visits" [P7].

Informal learning is often not recognized as learning within organizations with Boud and Middleton (2003, pp. 195) stating that "It is typically regarded as being "part of the job" or a mechanism for "doing the job properly" and is thus rendered invisible as "learning". Secondees were expected to collect research data in their host country. This encouraged colleagues to explore and see the value created in different research approaches to their own. A researcher experienced in using qualitative approaches commented:

> Quantitative research allows you to reach a larger data set and it is more practical in your effort to gather and collect data. Working in teams with other fellow researchers in the same project is more efficient and effective because you can share experiences, you can share data sets and you can share the effort you need to put in the research and the writing of any academic articles [H1].

Secondees were often conducting interviews not in their first language, and without a colleague from the host institution. Developing interview skills was frequently reflected upon in their learning accounts, particularly time management. For others it was about developing appropriate interpersonal skills in an international context as illustrated by the following comment:

> I learned how to build relationships with people. I tried to get my participants settled in and make them comfortable to talk. During the interviews, I tried to observe the behaviour of the participants

and I learned to use appropriate techniques, e.g. rephrasing — it helped to motivate the participants to speak more, explain, provide developed expression, — requesting for examples to get richer information [P1].

The examples of reflecting on regular academic practice demonstrated by the secondees supports Boud and Middleton (2003, pp. 195) assertion that "there is value in rendering [informal] learning visible so that it can be consciously deployed in enhancing work". Overcoming the challenges faced in working with the host institutions and finding constructive solutions to communication barriers, proved to be an essential tool for many secondees to progress and further develop in their academic career as we will discuss in the next section.

Developing an academic career

The last theme identified in the analysis was a focus on developing an academic career. There were three sub-themes, which emerged including, communicating and networking, academic practice and reflective practice.

One of the benefits of the secondment experience is the opportunity to establish a network of international colleagues with whom to collaborate beyond the lifetime of the project. If a partner was hosting a relevant international conference it would be included in, the Sandpit schedule were possible. Gardner and Willey (2018, pp. 234) found that conference participation was an "important contributor to progression of the intellectual and networking strands of identity-trajectory for researchers at all stages of development, although for different reasons". This aspect of the secondment was often positively reflected in the secondees' comments: "I have participated in a top HRM conference. No conference in Poland offers the chance to meet so many researchers with similar challenges and the best research works" [P2].This supported the development of academic knowledge relevant to the GETM3 project and enabled secondees to establish new contacts outside of the project, "My aims of networking, subject knowledge, and gaining experience were definitely achieved during this secondment, the sandpit participation and the HRIC conference" [P7]. Colleagues gained insights into how colleagues from other institutions developed their academic careers:

I have found that researchers from the University of Ljubljana co-operate with many prestige universities in the world … how they develop their scientific career and with which universities and other researchers they co-operate [P4].

Similarly to many professions, the digital landscape has had an increasing impact on the academic ecosystem. Increasingly, academics are strongly encouraged by their institutions, funding bodies and research partners, to promote themselves and their academic endeavours through digital channels and platforms (Molinillo et al., 2018). Even the most reticent have been encouraged and supported by their colleagues as illustrated in the following comment: "I have learned effective ways of using social media as a public relation platform for the research projects ... and highly interactive platforms of communication and networking" [P2]. This is a good illustration of how the expertise of colleagues can act as a learning resource for others (Boud & Middleton, 2003).

Academic careers are often contingent upon contextual factors e.g. institutional and cultural that frame the constraints and opportunities for professional development (Zacher et al., 2018). The international secondment to a host university provided opportunities for people to develop

their academic practice, "I was invited to deliver a guest lecture, as well as an entrepreneurship seminar for both home and international students at KNU [Korea], it was a wonderful teaching experience" [UK1]. For others it encouraged them to do things differently:

> I never expected that the visual map I prepared was so efficient, I had three major barriers, the language, the technical jargon and the culture. By doodling my research and main ideas, I created a platform that invited them to collaborate with their thoughts, it was one of the main side learnings I had [M1].

It enabled some to develop skills in managing research projects in a multinational context, "planning tasks, communication, sharing knowledge, using different tools for work, being aware of different methodologies and approaches popular in different countries" [P6].

Finally, the secondment experience facilitated a reflective approach to the researchers' own practice (Schon, 1983). For some this provided an opportunity to gain inspiration from their research encounters, "I learned from them some attitudes: e.g. enthusiasm, passion and confidence, proactivity. They gave me a good motivation for seeking ways to improve my performance and for research excellence" [P2]. Consistent with Boud and Middleton (2003), learning from others' experience was integral to secondees transferring the learning to their own context and practice, "Participation in this conference gave me the opportunity to take time out for reflection on strategies to help my university department in organizing such big events" [P2]. For some colleagues they reflected on their changed perceptions of colleagues through working together in the project:

> As I have only previously worked within programme quality support and partnerships linked to programme development, it was a surprise to see academic staff working on subjects that they were clearly engaged in and passionate about. It gave me a new perspective on academic colleagues, even those I have known for a number of years [UK7].

This section discussed the three main themes identified in the analysis and framed in the context of the literature, which have informed conclusions in the next section.

Conclusions

This paper has discussed how informal learning can generate learning opportunities that enhance both individual and collective learning capacity in the context of an international collaborative research project. All of these interactions are institutionally and culturally patterned which leave a lasting impression on secondees and frames their future encounters with their international partners.

The secondment experience enhanced individuals' confidence and competence in undertaking extended independent stays in host countries. Secondees learned that the formal research work of the project was contingent upon informal practices. This included their own preparation beforehand in eliciting support from their institutional partners e.g. to access participants, which required understanding of their host institution's ethical practices. Establishing and sustaining international networks was dependant on engaging in informal social activities, which developed research relationships and collective research capacities. The final main theme identified in the analysis is a focus on developing an academic career through a formal self-reflective approach (e.g. using the projects learning platform). There was clear evidence that participation in the

project had elicited a reflective approach to understanding and reimagining their own careers. Networking with colleagues and stakeholders, encouraged secondees to reflect upon their own current and aspirational careers. Many took the opportunity to develop new professional skills beyond research and transfer learning back to their own institutions.

Implications for practice, policy and research

The implications for practice include ensuring that secondees are more effectively supported in preparing for their visit. In any international project, the value of planning cannot be underestimated. Therefore, given that secondments are normally scheduled around sandpits, then the host should be able to facilitate closer communication among secondees prior to the visit to ensure an effective strategy for data access and collection and that the secondees have undertaken due diligence in their preparation. Given the rich experiences of cross-cultural working on international projects, it would be useful to set up workshops during the sandpits to share experiences and outline shared best practices that could be implemented to improve partnership working in the next two years of the project. In order to enhance any project social media strategy, it would be useful to include an early workshop on effective strategies for digital engagement for individuals, and encourage reverse mentoring from more technology capable colleagues to less confident ones.

Planning sandpit events around relevant international conferences gives access to leading international experts and opportunities to extend professional networks outside the project. Host institutions should be encouraged to consider ways of enhancing secondees professional development e.g. to lead on seminars and present research papers. Finally, to facilitate equitable access to the research process. Priority should be given to visual methods of communication in knowledge exchange activities with fellow researchers and stakeholders and project communications including the dissemination of research outputs.

The policy implications should discourage less experienced lone researchers to undertake secondments without robust 'in country' support including an assigned host 'buddy'. The sandpits are a great success, repeated secondments build 'social capital' and 'research capacity' between international colleagues and should be planned into any international projects.

Due to the nature of the qualitative research, we recognize several limitations. First, the research findings are derived from 19 secondees from across five countries. When implementing our findings, other researchers or practitioners must be cautious about the context of this EU funded research project (e.g. large, complex covering international institutions and countries). Second, our findings mainly focused on the contents of written reflective reports, individuals' country of origin and destination have not been taken into consideration when designing and analysing this research. A more in-depth exploration of 'informal learning' patterns amongst different countries, researchers at different stages of their careers, could be considered in future research. For instance, individual informal learning style may be influenced by embedded 'national culture' and other behavioural differences in relation to individuals' identity of 'country of origin'.

The GETM3 international research project is at the mid-point stage and has 15 months until completion. This paper set out to investigate how an analysis of secondees' informal learning from undertaking international secondments could highlight areas in which the secondees learning could be enhanced in the remainder of the project and wider projects. After an initial

analysis of secondees learning records at this midpoint stage, several suggestions were outlined to improve policy guidelines and practice activities to ensure that the project achieved its objective of developing individual and collective research capacity among the international research collaborators and their institutions.

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**Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management
challenges and opportunities for HRD**

Reflections on Leading Young Talents:
A Manager's Perspective

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This piece presents an expert view on the topic of leading entrepreneurial talent in a global business environment. Based on a structured interview with a manager who heads a department of 250 employees in an enterprise with 2,000 employees, we explore best practices for managing young talents. By investigating different ways of engaging young employees, the research makes recommendations aimed at improving employers' retention policies and reducing the risk of losing talented employees. Specifically, the interview offers a leader's insights on talent management in the form of seven "ingredients": (1) employee empowerment; (2) employee motivation as a long-term vision; (3) early investments; (4) cross-generational collaboration; (5) ensuring employee well-being; (6) transparent promotion criteria; and (7) leadership motivation.

Key Words: talent management, leadership, young employees, practice, experience, industry

Introduction

Human talent contributes significantly to organizations' attainment of a sustained competitive advantage (e.g., Lawler, 2010). However, attracting and retaining young talent is a major challenge for organizations around the globe (Keller & Meaney, 2017). Thus, practitioners and academics alike are driven to identify the best ways to strategically manage talented employees in order to enhance their job satisfaction, well-being, individual and team performance, and, ultimately, their retention (e.g., Collings, Mellahi, & Cascio, 2019; Narayanan, 2016).

The current piece provides a practitioner perspective on the topic of managing[1] young entrepreneurial talent in a global business environment. According to Collings and Mellahi (2009), strategic talent management is a set of:

> activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organization's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organization (p. 304).

But how can organizations ensure the continued commitment of their young high potentials? Past research suggests that "management style may be the key to successfully leveraging Millennial employees' talents" (Thompson & Gregory, 2012, p. 237). Through a qualitative approach, we

investigate the best practices of a manager at ETI Elektroelement d.o.o. — an international company in the electro industry with 2,000 employees headquartered in Slovenia — and discuss their implications. Since its year of foundation in 1950, ETI has grown into a world's leading provider of products and services in the field of electrical installations.

As Head of the Fuse Business Unit, our subject matter expert, Mr. Peter Benko, shares insights into his employment, engagement, and initiatives in relation to leading talent at ETI. To date, Peter has been working in the company for thirteen years. Four years ago, he assumed a leadership position and is now heading a team of 250 employees organized in production units. He is the direct supervisor to 15 young engineers, each of whom is specialized in the field of product and technology development. Thus, Peter looks back at his time at ETI and what he has learned from managing his team. He shares his best leadership practices for addressing key challenges in managing young talents and achieving success with his team of engineers, which he describes as being dynamic, agile, proactive, diverse, and self-initiated. Specifically, Peter defines talent as:

> Talents have some special motivation and engagement, very high loyalty, and commitment to the organization. They are quick learners who easily develop competencies to handle problems, and in just a few months after hiring are able to work independently. Knowledge is crucial, but if other things are not present, knowledge is not enough. The real gems are those with strong initiative, positive thinking, who are looking for things to do by themselves and are very good at cooperating with others.

The company ETI has an inclusive, strengths-based rather than an exclusive approach to talent management (Dries, 2013). This means that, from a strategic perspective, every employee in the company is seen as a talent and developed to reach their full potential (e.g., Buckingham & Vosburgh, 2001; Warren, 2006)[2]. In order to achieve excellence and bring out the best in his team, Peter adopts inclusive yet guiding leadership practices. In what follows, we elaborate on seven ''ingredients'' that we derived from the interview for successfully managing young entrepreneurial talent, namely: (1) employee empowerment; (2) employee motivation as a long-term vision; (3) early investments; (4) cross-generational collaboration; (5) care for employee well-being; (6) transparent promotion criteria; and (7) leadership motivation. This piece contributes to the field by offering a practitioner perspective on the success factors for inclusively leading young engineering talent in a Slovenian medium-sized organization in the electro industry, with key departments located in rural regions[3].

Leading Millennial Talent: Turning Challenges into Opportunities

Definitional complexities acknowledged, Millennials are seen to comprise a generational cohort born between 1982 and 1999 that is set to make up 50% of the workforce by 2020 (Barbuto & Gottfredson, 2016; Fry, 2015). This generation of employees is often associated with negative workplace stereotypes such as unwillingness to work, lack of motivation as well as unrealistic salary expectations, perceived neediness, a sense of entitlement, and disloyalty (e.g., Thompson & Gregory, 2012). However, reflecting *essentialism*[4], stereotypes are overgeneralizations of groups of people and must, therefore, be interpreted carefully (Fox, 2010). In fact, increasing evidence highlights more positive attitudes and characteristics of Millennial employees (e.g., Gani, 2016). Thus, research by Baker Rosa and Hastings (2018), for example, found that managers perceive their young subordinates as being pro-active, eager to learn and develop, and open to receiving constructive feedback. Millennials also tend to value work-life balance and while, according to

Peter, they are extrinsically motivated, they first and foremost appreciate work that is interesting (Kuron, Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2015). When asked about what is important to young people at work, Peter notes:

> I think they mostly want to come to an inclusive, innovative environment where they will be given an opportunity. Salary may be important, but not as the top priority. It's more important for them that they can learn, express their creativity, and contribute.

As suggested by prior research, "relationships with immediate managers may be the key to fully leveraging, motivating, and retaining Millennials" (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Lancaster & Stillman, 2003; Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010). "[More specifically], if organizations are going to succeed, managers need to adopt leadership and management styles that complement their young employees' work styles" (Thompson & Gregory, 2012, pp. 239; 243). In the following sections, we introduce the seven ingredients Peter uses to manage the young entrepreneurial talent in his department successfully.

Employee Empowerment

Peter argues that the creativity, motivation, and innovative spirit of talent flourish when given freedom. He believes that a problem emerges if Millennial talent is held back from realizing their ideas. Peter adds that employees can be limited from reaching their full potential when the vision of leaders and young employees are not aligned. According to Peter, this misalignment is often due to different ways of thinking:

> Young people have a different way of thinking, that is, out-of-the-box thinking. I have seen cases when leaders held young employees back from developing their full potential, even though the ideas they had were good. For example, young employees were not allowed to realize their idea just because it was something out of the ordinary (neither regular nor common). Also, the problem is often that older employees 'know' that an idea will not work. But then the young employees, who do not know that the idea is 'bad' and will not work, just make it happen. They make it work but in a different, out-of-the-box way. I have heard this quote once; it goes: 'For many years, we have been trying to solve it, unsuccessfully. Then the young came along, not knowing that it cannot be solved, and they solved it'. I often repeat this statement because it is very true.

Thus, empowerment is a vital characteristic of the leadership style that Peter embraces. Here, we define employees' empowerment as "a multifaceted construct corresponding to the different dimensions of being psychologically enabled. [In particular, psychological empowerment is] a cognitive state characterized by a sense of perceived control, competence, and goal internalization" (Menon, 2001, p. 161). More specifically, Peter argues that independence and inclusive decision-making are pivotal for motivating employees, developing feelings of self-efficacy, and building trust. Consequently, giving employees autonomy over their jobs permeates Peter's leadership style.

> Not only are they included in the decision-making process, but they have to make their own decisions. On their own. For example, I give a lot of power to them. Maybe this is one difference worth mentioning. In many cases, we talk about power or responsibility. If you make someone responsible for something, this can be quite problematic because it can result in fear: 'What if something bad happens'. But if you give someone power, you also give them a chance to execute the idea in the most optimal way possible. And thus, the thinking about the problem changes. As

a result, the person works with a more positive outlook and a positive attitude, not worrying about 'what if this does not work out'. So, this is my way of motivating them — empowering them, trusting them, and also giving positive feedback.

Further, Peter argues that a critical component of successfully managing Millennial talent is to allow them to contribute to the success of the company, that is, to be part of the company's vision and strategy. This inclusive approach may foster young employees' intrinsic motivation and lead to higher work engagement. Such an approach also gives young employees the opportunity to work on something meaningful and fulfilling, which aligns with scholarly findings on the career expectations of Millennials (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010).

> When we were making the plan for this year, I told the guys to prepare their ideas they want to realize this year. They presented their own suggestions at a meeting. Later on, I gave them the task to evaluate their ideas — how much would we have to invest in it and what would we get from it. After two weeks, we had another meeting where we discussed all of the ideas together. In the end, we chose the six most valued ideas, and we included them in our annual plan. If you look from that perspective, they are actually working on their own ideas and are practically building up their contribution they want to give. Of course, these ideas are matched with the vision and strategy of the company, so pursuing these ideas does not lead us in the wrong direction. In fact, I have realized that people work better when they are working on their own ideas. They know better how much time they need, so in the end, the deviations from the deadlines are much smaller when people are setting their own timelines. Also, the tasks are done much better this way than if I were to develop the tasks alone and just give them to them.

Through the shared creation of ideas and projects, Peter seeks to foster employees' creative, entrepreneurial spirit. However, Peter states that freedom must be balanced with guidance and prioritization on the leader's part.

> At certain moments, as needed, I am a leader in the full sense of the word, and I am not a co-worker. I decide 'Okay, we'll do it like this' or 'This task is a priority; we'll work on it first'.

While Peter strongly believes in empowerment and non-authoritative leadership styles, he also provides clear directions as to which activities to concentrate on.

Long-term Vision for Young Employee Motivation

With regards to the provision of negative feedback, Peter says:

> Even if they fail, I will not say: 'This was totally wrong, what were you thinking?' I always try to see the positive, even in failure. I see it as a lesson. Because we are unable to learn if we do not make mistakes.

He finds that young employees are typically very self-critical and well aware if they have completed a task below standard. However, by having a long-term vision of motivation, Peter thinks that pointing out every mistake does not result in long-term benefits. Instead, he predicts discouragement among the employees that might harm organizational goal attainment in the long run. While a no-feedback culture is no solution for Peter, he believes that a positive attitude and outlook towards the future result in more learning and thus a better future performance than a mistake-oriented culture of finger-pointing.

First of all, I would like to emphasize a positive attitude and a positive outlook. It is important not to concentrate too much on what was one month ago, two years ago, etc., but what is going on right now and what will happen in the future, how we can solve the problems that arise.

In order to maintain business excellence and reach organizational objectives, Peter emphasizes that providing employees with specific, timely, and continuous performance feedback is essential. Aside from one-on-one conversations with engineers about the progress in reaching objectives and the weekly meetings, he also holds a monthly meeting where he demonstrates the financial side of the work performed, as shown below:

Once a month, we have a meeting where we discuss a monthly report, which includes how many products we made last month, how many sales we made, what we did well, what we did poorly, how productive we were. I inform them of this measurable data. And I always try to give at least one good example from the previous month.

The Early Bird Catches the Worm

Peter explains how the challenge of attracting and retaining talented employees affects Slovenian employers in urban versus rural areas differently. In the Slovenian region of Izlake where the company's Research & Development function is centralized, the shortage of highly qualified electrical and mechanical engineers led the organization to introduce a competitive scholarship programme which acquaints future employees with the organization's engineering practices at an early stage of their university studies. Through early investments such as summer work and industrial placements, the firm begins establishing connections with potential employees during their time at university. Thus, students get to know the company, the production process, and the culture early on in their career. This initiative contributed to the company's above-average graduate hiring and development of a young workforce. In particular, the majority of employees in charge of technology or applicable development are younger than 30 years.

We are kind of lucky as far as recruitment goes because we run a very good scholarship programme and we mostly employ all young employees through that. This gives us the opportunity to test them throughout their study and also develop certain competencies that they don't get through their study so that they are then ready to start working once we employ them. If we had to find engineers in the market, it would be a different story as there are simply not enough of them.

Cross-generational Collaboration at Work

Managers often encounter generational gaps in the workplace that hinder successful performance. Peter intentionally fosters intergenerational collaboration so that employees can learn and appreciate different opinions. More specifically, cross-generational connections have been nurtured by introducing regularly-rotating, diverse teams comprised of younger graduates and older, more experienced employees. Formalized cross-generational collaborations enable knowledge transfer from older to younger employees and vice versa through, for example, mentoring and reverse-mentoring (Kaše, Saksida, & Mihelič, 2019). Over time, these collaborations can form solid relationships and thereby contribute to a better understanding of worldviews, values, and attitudes of different generations.

Teams are the key connector between the two generations. Our employees are used to working in diverse teams, and they are a regular part of our working life. With the help of teamwork, obstacles between the two generations are dissolved.

Transparent Promotion Criteria

When considering talented candidates for promotion, Peter specifically considers the employees' competence, innovative capabilities, and team spirit. Most importantly, however, he focuses on the attainment of measurable goals.

> So, for promotion, it is crucial that the person is capable of *achieving results* that can be measured in numbers. We actually measure the numbers by the entire department, not by individuals, but you always know who contributes what. While it is critical that he or she is *competent*, or that the person can achieve some good results, it is also important that the person has many innovative ideas. Someone can be a great worker but does not have any *innovative*, breakthrough ideas, which we need. Another important factor is the team-spirit. Someone can be a great individual, but if they are incapable of *teamwork*, problems can occur — for example, that other team members become dissatisfied. So, it is really important that workers are able to work with others and are team-oriented. For this to happen, they must be educated in that way, and this does not happen by itself.

While performance is measured on a team level, individual contributions are known and communicated transparently.

Ensuring Employee Well-being

As a leader, Peter seeks to be approachable on matters related to both his employees' professional and personal lives. On a daily basis, Peter takes time to sit down and engage in one-on-one discussions with his employees, asking how they are doing at work, whether they have encountered obstacles to achieving their goals, but also enquires about their feelings and well-being more generally. It is important to note that these discussions are informal and serve as motivational drivers. He prioritizes mental and physical well-being above all else and signals employees to take enough time off work to recover from illness.

> I always tell them that it is important that they first feel okay. 'Take as much time as you need — if you need three or four days instead of two, it's okay, don't worry, just make sure that when you come back, you can start working normally'.

Leadership Motivation

A big challenge for leaders is that they not only need to motivate their employees, but also need to nurture their own implicit and explicit motivations in order to inspire and successfully manage talents (e.g., McClelland, Koestner, & Weinberger, 1989). Peter, for example, is motivated by the vision and desire to create a more modern company and strives for constant improvement and excellence. However, most importantly, he seeks inspiration from the energy and desire of his team and the responsibility of the organization for the community in which they live and work. The willingness to "do good" and the responsibility he feels as a servant leader to help create a successful company which can, in turn, give back to the local community functions

as his motivation to lead. Some of these elements are a reflection of "conscious capitalism" and "conscious leadership", which entails doing good for a higher purpose (Mackey & Sisodia, 2014). Peter notes:

> Many times, my team is my motivation. Another important aspect is that the company is very important for many people — we have around 1,000 employees working in Slovenia, which means 1,000 families who rely on income from here.

Lessons Learned

Prior research suggests that fostering a leadership base that suits the needs of young talent is the key to ensuring the continued commitment of Millennials (Barbuto & Gottfredson, 2016). In light of the needs and expectations of young employees and current challenges of modern workplaces, value-laden leadership approaches such as transformational or servant leadership are considered especially appropriate (Sendjaya, Sarros & Santora, 2008; Thompson & Gregory, 2012). While both transformational and servant leadership focus on elevating leaders' and followers' morale and motivation, they differ in the role leaders assume in the process (Sendjaya et al., 2008). Primarily, the role of a servant leader is to serve his/her employees, whereas the role of a transformational leader is to inspire his/her employees in order to achieve organizational goals (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Sendjaya et al., 2008). In particular, servant leaders typically prioritize follower needs over organizational needs or self-needs. At first glance, this suggests that organizational goal attainment may suffer from having servant leaders. Yet, Sendjaya and colleagues (2008) claim this is not the case. In fact, Gregory Stone, Russell, and Patterson (2004) argue that "organizational goals will be achieved on a long-term basis only by first facilitating the growth, development, and general well-being of the individuals who comprise the organization" (p. 355). Further, Barbuto and Gottfredson (2016) reason that "servant leadership is likely the optimal leadership style for creating an organization rich in human capital development and for making an organization a preferred workplace for the Millennial generation" (p. 59). We find that the seven best practices on which Peter relies closely resemble servant leadership. While Peter is very aware of the importance of managerial decision-making that benefits the company's innovative power and revenue-creating capacity, he sees organizational success as a pathway to serve customers, employees and owners, but also the local community and the families of his employees. This multi-stakeholder focus is reflected in the following statement:

> We need to work only on the ideas that will bring us the greatest value. What is important to me is that this company grows continuously, develops new solutions that go beyond existing ones, and has a positive impact on all stakeholders, including employees, customers, owners, and the local community. We have 1,000 families that depend on the company's success, so the company needs to be healthy for the future of these families.

When concluding the interview, we asked Peter six questions with the instruction to answer them intuitively and quickly (Table 1). Upon reflecting on his own leadership practices with regards to managing Millennial talent, Peter feels that by giving his team autonomy and empowering them, he is providing young employees with opportunities to grow and innovate. Enabling employees to become decision-makers and help create new projects or ideas allows Peter to achieve better results with his team than he would alone. Peter also argues that having an open mind and trust in junior employees is a requirement for successfully managing young talent and nurturing their enthusiasm. Moreover, he wishes to create more open working environments

that further facilitate dynamic collaborations. Yet, while being appreciative of the characteristics young people bring to the workplace, Peter emphasizes the responsibility of higher education institutions for developing curricula that better prepare students for the work they will encounter in their profession as engineers.

Question	Answer
Being a leader is …	… pretty amazing. It seems to me that I can do more together with my team than if I were to work alone.
Managing young entrepreneurial talent requires …	… an open mind.
I wish young employees were …	… more educated about real-life cases which are useful at work during their studies. But this is more a matter of the higher education system and not of the young employees. I wish that graduates continue to come with so much momentum and enthusiasm.
I am glad that young employees are …	… coming to work with such enthusiasm.
Given that you had unlimited financial resources, which approaches for working with the young would you like to use in the future?	I would reorganize the working space/environment to offer much more creative work than it does currently. I would make everything more dynamic — everyone would have their own laptop, and they could work for one period with one team in one place, then another period with another team in another place and so on. I would also add some round standing tables which would be used for brainstorming. There is still a belief that if someone is not working at the table, they are not working. But I completely disagree. I think that people moving around, having discussions with several groups has a positive effect and can produce great results. The workspace should be more open in order to enable this kind of work.
What would your advice be to other practitioners to establish a productive relationship with young people?	Above all, to trust in young employees and believe in their abilities and talents because I think they are incredible.

Table 1: Subject matter expert's reflections on leading Millennial talent

While we urge not to generalize from case study research, we invite scholars and employers alike to reflect on the seven different ingredients our expert practitioner identified and consider how they might apply to the specifics of other organizational contexts and industrial sectors.

Based on the aforementioned research and conclusions drawn from the practitioner interview, we predict that successful leadership practices likely depend on the values and needs of the employees as well as the organizational culture. We, therefore, developed two key recommendations for those leading Millennial talent:

a) **Form trusting relationships with talents.** Past research emphasizes the importance of trust and meaningful connections for developing talents' loyalty and commitment (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Moreover, by establishing strong relationships with employees, managers build a foundation for effective leadership and facilitate employees' seeking and acceptance of feedback (Thompson & Gregory, 2012).

b) **Tailor the leadership style to talents' needs.** According to Thompson and Gregory (2012), the negative stereotypes associated with Millennial employees are likely to transform into strengths if managers are able to fit their leadership style to their needs. Thus, a needy employee would metamorphose into an eager learner, and a disloyal employee would become entrepreneurial (Thompson & Gregory, 2012).

Concluding Remarks

This piece investigated best practices in leading young talents in order to improve employers' retention policies and reduce their risk of losing talented employees. Based on a structured interview with a senior manager, we identified seven best practices that have enabled Peter to achieve success with his team. Building on these practices, we recommend leaders with an inclusive talent strategy to (a) form trusting relationships with their employees; and (b) tailor their leadership style to their employees' needs.

Acknowledgments

Notes

1 Conceptual distinctions between leadership and management acknowledged (e.g., Antonakis & Day, 2017), the present piece uses the terms leading and managing interchangeably.
2 For more information on the tensions between inclusive and exclusive talent management and related advantages and disadvantages, please see, for example, Dries (2013).
3 The case study was conducted in the form of a semi-structured practitioner interview that included a set of questions on Peter's previous leadership experience, talent management practices, leadership style, and motivations for working with young engineers. The researchers obtained informed consent and received permission to provide organizational and person-specific information. The interview was conducted and recorded in the Slovenian language, subsequently transcribed, and then back-translated into English by an expert academic fluent in both languages. In an inductive approach, the data were thematically organized by two independent researchers without prior hypotheses derived from theory, extracting seven distinct topics from Peter's reflections.
4 Essentialism relates to the tendency to infer essences which are often ascribed to people's underlying traits (Eagly, Nater, Miller, Kaufmann, & Sczesny; 2019; Prentice & Miller, 2006)

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HRD Forum — Viewpoint

**Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management
challenges and opportunities for HRD**

HRD Implications of Virtual Teams:
Explorations and Challenges

**Molka Mazghouni, Chonnam National University
Ilsang Ko, Chonnam National University
Samuel Clegg, Northumbria University**

Virtual teams, sometimes referred to as global dispersed teams, are increasingly replacing co-located traditional teams at work. This strategy improves the workflow dynamism and fulfils the organizational need to enlarge the parameters of businesses seeking to explore international markets and opportunities. There can also be cost considerations involved as skilled, reasonably priced talents are more readily accessible in emerging economies. But what is the impact and challenges of such virtual working?

The Global State of Remote Work report 2019 explored data from 3,000 candidates located in six continents. Respondents varied in ages from 18-65+ and worked in different industrial fields including technology and marketing, healthcare and medical, hospitality, transportation, and more. Some of the major findings of the report indicate that employees who work virtually at least once per month revealed a 24% higher level of happiness and productivity compared to non-virtual workers. Furthermore, organizations that provide virtual work facilities encounter 25% less employee turnover than organizations that do not provide virtual work facilities.

This suggests significant merits to virtual working. An important addition is the finding that virtual working is said to be especially attractive to Millennial workers/Gen Y given their technological skills and desire for flexibility. However, by contrast such workers are said to also appreciate collaborative work environments and require direction in their workplace. The virtual work environment provides challenges and opportunities regarding team-based structures. Research has addressed several issues relating to controlling the communication medium process to aid fulfilment of multiple tasks and accomplish team members' goals, and the most convenient means to coordinate such groups which rely extensively on virtual work. An open question is whether certain settings of team core characteristics are advantageous or unfavorable in relation to characteristics and values-based work of Millennials. Two important factors here include skill differentiation and authority differentiation. Skill differentiation is "the degree to which members have specialized knowledge or functional capacities that make it more or less difficult to substitute members" (Hollenbeck et al., 2012, p. 84), while authority differentiation is

"the degree to which decision-making responsibility is vested in individual members, subgroups of the team, or the collective as a whole" (Hollenbeck et al., 2012, p. 84) In order to further explore this topic we conducted interviews with x 5 generation Y respondents, representing 5 industries, 4 nations, and 5 organizations. For the purpose of this forum we present the findings along the themes of a) factors determining virtuality, b) virtuality and team member outcomes and c) subsequent levels of organizational commitment and turnover intentions.

Factors Determining the Level of Virtuality

… Different cultures don't affect our communication with the tools like video calls. Distance doesn't impact the task accomplishment because adopting a method like Scrum helps on its barriers (Khawla, Tunisian based in France).

… Work norms and routines influence of the level work process quality in virtual communication and due to these differences, it takes more time to the members to be on the same level of performance … (Khawla).

… We had all different work norms and routines and it is the biggest advantage of working online, you cannot force anybody to work same way like you so online working help to avoid working same way like others … (Miryam, Pakistani Based in South Korea).

I think the member knowledge and skills affect the virtual space for example when 2 tasks are affected by 2 people the one who has more skills will do it better than the other that will affect the communication quality between them and it will rise conflicts … (Khawla).

What is more important is to setup norms and routines for the team so everyone will have to follow it (Sana).

... Based on my experience the coworkers came from different nations and background. We communicate in English we don't meet that much and because of that we don't face a lot of misunderstanding … (Sana, from Morocco based in Dubai).

... The level of knowledge and skills it affects the work because virtually you don't know the actual skills of the person working with you but if you' re working in the same place you can manage easily but virtually you cannot see their capability you can only see that in the output … (Sana).

… If coworkers and the team have same nation it would be easier in term of time we can gain more time because of communication ways will be faster and easier but I don't think it matters in multinational virtual team when we share the same target and we have the same vision … (Rami, Tunisian Based in Morocco).

… For me it is difficult to work in different time zones because the meeting hours becomes very difficult to cope with but I had experience to work in different time zone that doesn't affect the work that is you who have to manage this it is easy if you are able to manage it … (Miryam).

… If we had the same working routines we can reduce time of accomplishing the work but if we don't it is not much big problem … (Steve).

… Knowledge and skills differentiation this is common problem for offline and online but in offline is easily to deal with it to be really honest it is very hard to deal with different knowledge and skills on online work … (Steve).

Relationship Between Virtuality and Team Member Outcomes

The leader of the team is the most influencer on members team outcomes:

> … Identity with the team should be developed … especially the manager should listen and understand what's happening and what they feel in virtual team and try to motivate them and listen them … (Khawla).

> … My leader and others play their leadership role it is good to have different leaders at once in different fields … (Khawla).

> … It is essential that team members from different countries have different knowledge skills and educational backgrounds so here the manager are asked to combine their knowledge and skills and to make an exchange between different team members … (Rami).

> … If the tasks are well dispatched between the team members then I don't think there would be a problem of working or achieving the target … (Rami).

> … It totally depends on other team members and in case they are providing good working environment and cooperating very well and respecting other person comfort zone. Then I felt successful and satisfied … (Miryam).

It is not easy to develop some of individual outcomes because of virtuality barriers:

> … I think in virtual you cannot achieve a high satisfaction because it could be misunderstanding and you cannot know because the person cannot tell their dissatisfaction easily … (Sana).

Team Member Outcomes and Subsequent Commitment/Turnover Intentions

> … I am attached emotionally to my team especially the ones I work with in France because she is so kind even I don't know her in reality and I think with my first experience she tries to help me a lot with difficult problems … but … If I have the possibility to change my work I will do so because I will feel more present in real office of work and I love to exchange experience and others skills … (Khawla).

> I would consider moving from the virtual work if I get a bigger chance to learn and develop my skills … (Sana).

> … I would change my position if I have more benefit and more opportunity to learn … (Sana).

> … There was no emotion with them in the start but step by step I developed with them some kind of friendship … (Steve).

> … I don't think that want to change my job because the problem I face on virtual work are not severe (Steve).

> … Yes, sure I feel attached to the team I worked with I belong to network of colleagues and we shared same targets and tried our best to achieve the targets and fulfill the demand and make the success … (Rami).

No attachment was developed because of the independent way of working that are characteristics of most of the virtual jobs, coupled with short time communication

… I work mostly independently and I don't communicate that long with my coworkers … (Sana).

… I got a lots of chances to work in non-virtual position but this job has provided me a lot and helped me to take care of my baby child and take care of my house and gave comfortable zone and gave me a lot of knowledge and the managers were very communicative and caring to us … (Miryam).

Summary

This Forum opens up the critical topic of Millennial's experiences of virtual work. There are many points of direct relevance to HRD that can be noted. These include the importance of norms, routines, targets and working towards a clear vision. Many respondents mentioned the importance of the individual skills required for virtual work, but also raised the question of how they could best understand the skill-sets and capabilities of those they are dealing with virtually and have not direct met. Also of critical significance is leadership that encourages, motivates and sets the tone for virtual interactions. Finally, in terms of the impact of such work, many respondents mentioned the significance of relationships, shared understanding and a sense of shared achievement as factors that would motivate them to stay with an organization. As virtual work becomes more prevalent, it is incumbent on HRD professionals to better understand the opportunities and challenges presented by this work. The result will be the development of an optimal infrastructure of support to facilitate Millennial workers in their virtual work.

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HRD Forum — Viewpoint

Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management
challenges and opportunities for HRD

Out of the Frying Pan … A Conversation
Changing Lives, Changing Careers

We report verbatim a frank conversation in English between three business professionals as they discuss their various experiences of life and career management totalling more than 100 years in China, France, Germany, Ireland, South Korea, the UK, and the USA. All are international managers who have moved between countries and industries. We brought them together in Asia to compare their experiences and provide food-for-thought for industry practitioners and academics alike. The participants were promised anonymity to encourage openness and so names have been changed. All other details are exactly as discussed. We believe this format offers significant insights into vastly differing national, industry and organizational cultures and the practical challenges these present. It demonstrates how people adjust to environmental turbulence and thrive, and reveals the real thought-processes and true motivations behind life-changing professional decisions. This discussion concentrates on the circumstances and decision to change careers.

Patricia: I worked in industry for 16 years, maybe more — international businesses and various quite well-known companies. I was expatriated with one of those and spent three or so years in continental Europe, in marketing and innovation roles. Then I had my first baby and came to Ireland, taking a role as head of innovation with a different manufacturing company operating strict factory hours. After about two years there I was pregnant with my second baby, and decided I needed a change of lifestyle.

Andrew: Most of my career I have lived in the city of my birth, but I had worked away a little bit. I've always wanted to be a lecturer, from my time in college. This was a dream I had actually: teaching. I taught for one year in college while I was doing a Masters, and I thought "I like this, but I don't know anything" so very specifically I decided "This is the job for me, but maybe sometime in the future".

Patricia: I swore I'd never work in education as my parents were teachers. But then I did a short course in innovation leadership at one of the leading business schools in the UK. I was there for about three days, and I watched these guys deliver this course, and I just thought "y'know what, I could do that, and enjoy it". It looked to me like a series of presentations, and I thought "I can do presentations, this is not teaching like in a school. You don't have to manage the classroom or anything". And at about half past three on the Friday, I set off to travel a long way home, and I saw staff walking off the campus. I thought "I could walk out of work at half past three in the afternoon". It was the flexibility I envied. I thought that was all they did.

Andrew: I went into industry and spent about 10 years at my first job. I worked in the US as a result, and all my professional training came from that company. It was very professional in terms of project management, proper training and a good work ethic. I liked that. But after 10 years I changed jobs twice. Jobs became more interesting, I was now bringing my training to new companies and fixing them. That was my new role, but there was a lot of traveling.

I started a family, there were two children. I met this guy I had worked with previously who worked with students. After a chat he said "I'm heading home", and I said "It's only four o'clock", and he then told me about his summer. I said to myself "Do y'know what, my life is completely inflexible, totally inflexible". In fact, I was in Africa, and I had a very young child at home in the UK who ended up in hospital. I remember thinking "I can't live like this. I can't be on the road when I need to be at home". So I spoke to the guy I had met and he said there was a job going at his higher education place. I interviewed for it, and it was when I was in the interview that I remembered that 20 years before I had said I always wanted to do this job. And now I had the opportunity. In fact, when I took the job, it wasn't a permanent role. I took it in April and the job was finishing in September. I was so sure I wanted to change that I chucked in a permanent job for this opportunity, on the grounds that it might renew. And here I am 11 years later, still there.

Patricia: This sounds very familiar. I did an interview at a university while I was on maternity leave, just for the interview practice I told myself. I had my baby head on — just thought I'd try and fit back in my suit. They talked me into the job over a series of three interviews. It was the flexibility of the work really, that's what I was after by that time. That was about 15 years ago.

Georgina: I went the other way, because I never worked in industry, I always worked in the university sector. So it's almost like I stayed in school, you know, it was like I never really realized there was life outside. Well I did, but for me, I'm not an academic as such, even though I did teach. I'm a lawyer by background, by training, and when I moved to Asia from the US, I actually was teaching English, and I was offered a job to help them develop the international relations office.

But I said I would only do it if I worked until two o'clock in the afternoon. And because I'm a foreigner in my adopted country, they gave me that job. Even though I was on an administrative contract, I actually had kind of academic powers. This is the flexibility that you talk about. So it meant that I saw my kids growing up, and I was around, I was home. But still, I had that privilege being an ex-pat.

I really enjoyed it, I did. I knew what I had and I enjoyed it, and I never thought I would ever change. The university's international relations were transformed by my work. Then — and this has something to do with culture as well — for administrators at 60, it is decided: "that's your cycle and thanks very much". So that's quite young, I mean now, in a western context. So it was all of a sudden, and because this was a government university, they said to me, the year before I was going to turn 60, "Well you're healthy so we'll consider extending your contract, but now you're going to have to work longer hours for less pay".

At that point, there were other things going on in my life as well. My husband passed away and my children had grown up so it's not like I have a young family to go home for at two o'clock for any more. The university sector, to be honest, is so slow; so slow at making any decision, so slow at innovating, so slow because there doesn't seem to be any accountability. There isn't the merit-based culture. There are too many stakeholders with differing agendas. I'm the kind of person that likes to do things and move forward and make it happen and whatever, and it was just like I had been worn down. I felt like I'd pretty much given everything I could, given the circumstances. And so when those two issues collided, I started thinking "so what am I going to do for the next 10 years?"

Reality Bites: A New Culture Takes its Toll and Forces Change

Patricia: I had an MBA I'd done part-time. They hired me for my MBA and my industry experience, and I was the last hire before they started to require a PhD, which I didn't have.

Andrew: Yes, actually I was the same. I came in with a Masters but without a PhD, and I was hired for my industry experience. But every time I interviewed for a promotion, it was irrelevant. They basically said "Well that's all industry experience, what have you done in here?" I was hired for my experience but then it doesn't count anymore.

Patricia: That is exactly the same again for me. For any leadership or management role, I would talk about what I'd done in the past and they'd say "Oh yeah, that's not here", and the implication was that here it's different, maybe it's harder, that kind of thing.

Andrew: And the idea was that academics were special. And the academic world is different, it's not the real world. It's its own microcosm, and people behave differently, and whatever you're used to in your professional life, you have to put that to one side, and start thinking differently. I think they're right.

Patricia: I was actually very, very naïve. I took a serious pay cut and deliberately calculated it. My partner and I calculated whether or not we could stand the cut and what the benefits were with the flexibility, summer holidays and things. But I had no idea that I would be on that salary for the next 10 years. I was used to every six months going back to my boss and saying "here's my performance against targets, thank you very much", and I just got used to incremental pay rises, negotiated by me on a regular basis.

Andrew: Same here. I think motivation in work now, as an academic, is completely different. Completely. I had a chat with this guy who introduced me to the university, who was very dissatisfied with the place. He kept looking for someone to say he did a great job, and I kept telling him "No one is going to say that", you either like what you do, or you do something different. No-one's going to pat you on the back.

They announced the introduction of performance appraisals but there's no carrot, and there's no stick. So it's a really interesting chat, but nothing else. So you have to motivate, or figure out how people are motivated, and give them that space.

Patricia: I remember being really shocked when I said "How do you get a pay rise around here?" My boss said "Oh, we get a pay rise automatically every year". I said "What?" and he said "except you, because you're on the top of the scale so you've got to get a promotion". And I thought a promotion would be on merit, but it's not, it's political. So you have to be there a long time otherwise you simply haven't got the political network, the reputation, the record.

And then they said "you need to have a PhD".

Andrew: I had the same again, quite similar. I went for my first permanent job internally, and the guy who was almost guaranteed to get it automatically also applied for it, got the job, and I was still on my temporary contract. So I went for every job going, and it was immediately, "Sorry, no PhD". And then you say "Well I'm a really great teacher and I do all this work with industry". The assumption is that everyone can do that, that's baseline. Don't come in here telling us you're great at your job because really, it's about what else have you done. So within a year I started my PhD, and six months before I got it, I missed another permanent job because I didn't have it. So I'm thinking "this is insane. This is not merit based at all". I got the PhD and next time it came up, I got the job. It took me a few years to figure out the formula but once you get it, you get it.

Georgina: I had a friend of 15 years whose husband is the CEO of my company. One day he just sent me a message, so I never went job hunting in industry. He just messaged me and he said "if you'd like a job, come to see me anytime". He knew my reputation and what I had achieved at the university. So I went to the factory and I met with him for a tough interview. I said "Well, you know I'm actually quite serious about this", and we never even discussed any conditions, nothing. He just said "Would you like to see your office?"

Andrew: Did you have a fear of leaving?

Because when I speak to most academics, there's this institutionalized conversation which is "oh, it's too late for me now, I've been in here for too long, who would hire me?" and there's this feeling of oppression, and that you just have to put up with your life.

Georgina: True, absolutely true. I didn't know if I would have an option at 60. Originally I started looking at other universities, just because I needed a change.

I earn much more money than I ever did in the university sector. Of course, my hours are horrendous. I travel business class which I never did before. Because I am a director of a company now, the respect I get is totally different to when I was at the university, because I was never considered an academic. But here, I'm a director, the power is totally different. Because things move so fast, because I can make things happen, because I have more power than I ever had. I get the recognition and I get the bonus. So what you're talking about, I never experienced.

Survive Becomes Thrive

Georgina: To me this is now exciting. And I would never look back. The university keeps coming to ask me "Will you come back?" but they're too slow, it's too late.

Patricia: I always intended to leave after a couple of years. I thought I'll do this for a couple of years — the salary is terrible — I'll go back into business. And it has just never happened, because you adjust your lifestyle and the benefits have been fantastic for my family life, my personal life. After a few years I'd carved out this international role at the university, it was great and I was doing really well. I'm invested now: got my PhD, teaching awards, a research career and a promotion.

Andrew: I love the idea of the flexibility, and my entire family moved around that flexibility and it changed everyone's life. My wife got a job where she didn't have to worry about coming home at a particular time, or leaving at a particular time. So I was now the first point of contact for the kids, which is great. There's no way I would back out of that. I'm in it for life.

Comment

This conversation raises interesting questions for HR practitioners, general managers and employees themselves. All three contributors — both male and female — refer to their family circumstances and the great extent to which these drove career decisions. In what way should this influence recruitment policy and campaigns? How does this fit with the increasing reluctance, or, in some environments, illegality of discussing family plans and circumstances with job candidates? Does this sensitivity result in candidates being unable to discuss their true motivations/commitment and demonstrate their ability to manage their family lives while working?

Despite significant professional experience, the speakers were still surprised by some differences between reality and their perceptions or expectations of their new career. To what extent could this be avoided in recruitment and induction? Is it realistic that the 'warts 'n' all' of a job, career, organization or industry be exposed to a potential recruit and what are the disadvantages of focussing only on the selling points (real or imagined)?

What attributes, attitudes and skills are evident from the discussion which help the participants to cope and adjust to unexpected challenges and eventually thrive? How can these be developed in younger people who are likely to experience many unpredictable changes in their working lives?

HRD Forum — Viewpoint

**Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management
challenges and opportunities for HRD**

Opinion: Can Working Abroad
Ever be Worthwhile?

Alison Pearce, *Northumbria University Newcastle*
Katarzyna Dziewanowska, *University of Warsaw*
Rose Quan, *Northumbria University Newcastle*
Szu-hsin Wu, *Dublin City University*

Introduction

Despite assumptions of automatic benefits, sending people abroad can sometimes be bad for business, while working abroad can be as much of a pain, as a perk or privilege.

Over the last 3 years, we have managed and participated in a major international staff exchange programme supporting research and innovation, funded by the European Commission. A consortium of 16 partner organizations of varying size, in different industries and across five countries in Europe and Asia undertook to complete 270 months of international secondment between them.

The results have been overwhelmingly positive and successful: new and fruitful relationships between individuals and institutions, a diverse network growing in size and stability, increasing confidence, creativity and innovation within the project, a rapidly developing international profile and significant new skills sets, international experience and effectiveness for all involved. We have navigated stormy geopolitical waters involving Brexit and US-intra-Korean relations. The development of such capacity is a key aim of our project.

However, we have arguably learned more from our failures than our success. In this opinion piece we want to take the rare opportunity reflect on the mistakes we have made and how we rectified them, recovered and thrived. By the end of our staff exchange project, we believe we will have perfected the creation of value from international mobility and everyone can learn from our experience and the solutions we have developed.

Internationalization Through Staff Mobility

Many businesses are engaged in internationalization strategies which rely on staff mobility. Many policy makers insist on the need for companies to internationalize in order to function in a globalized world. The need for intercultural understanding and international knowledge has become an urgent priority, while international literacy has become critical to cultural, technological, economic and political health. In the current political atmosphere in Europe, the USA and beyond, it is more important than ever to build understanding between both people and organizations. When governments pursue isolationist, nationalistic policies then companies must be self-reliant in developing their business abroad and co-operating with international partners. Despite all technological development so far, there is still no substitute for face-to-face communication, spending time together and experiencing another country 'on the ground'. Even so-called 'born-global firms' will find this more challenging if freedom of movement decreases.

There is widespread evidence in a substantial field of academic research and the constant flow of published advice that business trips abroad, foreign assignments or periods of expatriation often fail to create value. Worse still, such activities can even destroy value for business and individuals. Potential international partners can be alienated. People who travel report scepticism and even hostility from colleagues at home. However you define them, encounters with "foreigners" can be disastrous for both parties and their employers.

What do we mean by value? It depends on the aim of the international work for the people involved and their employers. It can be short or long-term, quantitative or qualitative, more or less commercial. Value is therefore somewhat subjective and accumulated on multiple levels. We use the broadest possible definition: participants must deliberately discover or create it, then construct and interpret it through active engagement, individually or collectively. Value can emerge in participants' ordinary or extraordinary, expected or unexpected activities during international mobility. Working out how to create and interpret these value creating activities is vital.

So how do we ensure the creation of value by those mobilized staff? What is the right balance between individual and organizational effort and attitude? In this reflection we challenge the simplistic assumption that all mobility is automatically a force for good and suggest some realistic ways to ensure value-creation through pro-active management of sound processes and policies. Our experience is specific to the aims and constraints of our project, but the learnings are universal.

How to Find the Right People to Go to the Right Places

For the Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management project, we have used two different approaches to identify candidates to send abroad: first, selecting people who had the right qualities, experience, attitude, knowledge, and skills. We chose people whom we and our colleagues trusted and judged to be dependable. Second, volunteers self-selected, arguing that they were suitable. We used Vygotsky's concept of 'zones of proximal development' in order to judge how individuals would cope or benefit. We sent our most experienced people first, and to the most culturally distant destinations. We accepted offers from those who considered themselves particularly experienced. Both of these approaches have proved to be fallible. On

occasion, incorrect assessments have been made by both recruiters and volunteers, resulting at times in inappropriate behaviour, emergency interventions, less productive secondments, premature returns, and strained organizational relations.

Early on, we made a significant strategic change. At first, we aimed to maximize value by expatriating as many different individuals as possible. After several challenges and even failures, in which value was actually destroyed, we aimed to maximize value by repeatedly expatriating a smaller number of individuals, often to multiple destinations. This has proved to be much more successful: past performance is a clear indicator of future value.

We deliberately made the secondment opportunities financially constrained in order to avoid attracting volunteers motivated for the wrong reasons e.g. to "fill their boots". We believe this has worked in places, with participants keener to create alternative value for themselves. However, we have found that more senior staff are less likely to travel under these circumstances. Attitudinal differences to the use of public funding and accountability have meant this has not been consistently successful. Varying purchasing power, cost of living, travel cost variables and salary levels between countries have made a consistent approach impossible.

Uncertainty has made the establishment of a pipeline of secondees challenging. Plans are constantly fluid, with individuals changing jobs, starting a family, or suddenly having other obligations or priorities. Then they sometimes just get cold feet. The humanity involved in international work has been at the fore. Geopolitical events such as Brexit and changes in North Korean-US foreign policy have affected attitudes and confidence in a project involving the UK, Ireland and South Korea.

We have worked with two types of people in fulfilling these secondments: passive dependants and active independents. All wanted access to organizational resources (e.g. information, accommodation, facilities, funds). However, some of them over-emphasized these tangible resources and ignored intangibilities. Some felt emotionally isolated and perceived a lack of support from the sending and hosting organizations. In contrast, others believed that their value was created actively by them as an individual and that learning how to access resources — tangible and intangible — was part of the challenge.

Many companies consider family accompanying expatriates a problem. In contrast, we suggest that the family contributes to a positive experience by providing social and emotional support and thereby making an assignment less risky. The value of the family seems to be closely connected with cultural difference: the greater the distance between the home and host cultures, the more important the role of family as support mechanism. We have heard family responsibilities described as 'speed-bumps' — i.e. hindrances to professional development and performance. This encourages people to keep them hidden, adding to the stress of being away from home. There are few people so isolated that they have no-one to care about. In other words, this affects everyone. We suggest that these concerns are made explicit and family embraced as a potential point of communality with other human beings. In our experience, discussing and dealing with issues outside of work has deepened, broadened and strengthened relationships while simultaneously encouraging others to take part. This in turn diversifies the mobilized group beyond the 'usual suspects' for international work. Expertise is developed and shared between secondees.

How to Ensure that Things get Done and People End Up Wiser

From a standing start, we have rapidly realized the value in good processes around the communication and organization on both sides of any international secondment and have rushed to set them up. Pre-departure explicit discussion of aims, activities and responsibilities mitigate the risks inherent in implicit assumptions about different cultures. We then use social media and other on-line channels to update, report and record events and actions. This facilitates ongoing monitoring, spots issues arising, aids swift and often informal resolution. The interactivity of social media encourages 'approval' from colleagues, builds team spirit, shares experience, and demonstrates visibility.

Nevertheless, issues have included unclear roles and differing organizational cultures and politics. Secondees have vastly different motivations for participating, so flexibility is key. Universally, a secondment abroad is considered an optional extra by an employer and so work accumulates beforehand and afterwards, with most participants having to maintain responsibilities at home while working abroad. Even experienced travellers have realized that actually trying to achieve things in a foreign country or unfamiliar organization is impossible in a short time — it's not like being on holiday or even at an international event. Pressure of time makes cultural assumptions more likely and dangerous. Even predictable issues such as jet lag, time zones, language barriers, climate, and lifestyle differences have taken some by surprise when they try to progress their work rather than relaxing.

These issues often apply to the hosts too. Underestimating the work involved in hosting a series of incoming employees is common. The ultimate irony is that the most convenient times to travel are exactly the times no-one is available to host.

Most important is deliberate and structured review of lessons learned. We have done this both formally and informally. Along with face-to-face conversations at hosts and on return, secondees complete a learner record and write reports about their achievements and challenges. Seminars and focus groups have been held as well as larger groups reviewing arrangements and suggesting developments. It is important to realize that some more profound lessons take time to learn — it is only months after return that secondees start to realize and appreciate what they have really learned, often about themselves.

Expatriate assignments' success or failure is normally attributed to the organization while the role of the person involved can be underplayed. Independent overseas experience might outstrip formal expatriation as a source of human resource development for organizations. Expertise might better be developed by individuals acting independently than through some corporate policy, which robs the initiative of some of its learning opportunities. There is a considerable difference between a company-led expatriation and an autonomous working abroad experience. The level of responsibility felt by the organization is completely different.

Conclusion

The assumption that all international experience is positive is an overly simplistic assertion. Indeed, the nature and extent of value creation through international mobility is very largely down to the individual and particular context of the experience. This makes it less controllable

by organizations and more reliant upon the selection of individuals, with previous performance clearly indicative of the future.

Managers can rely neither on institutional policy and process nor entirely on the individual. Rather, a combination of the two should be developed for maximum value creation. Value is more likely to be created and ensured by repeated exposure to international experience and so this should be reflected in the strategy. However, an individual's ability to assess their own capacity or efficacy for international work is limited, and sometimes based on erroneous measures such as holidays abroad or international events. Great care should be taken to assess this more objectively and assignments planned accordingly.

A key idea is to avoid motivating participation in mobility using the wrong levers, such as financial gain, which will not drive value creation for your organization. Meanwhile, keep an open mind regarding what value can be created and how. It can come from unexpected sources and take time. Recruit and select 'active independents' and embrace rather than reject or ignore their family circumstances — everyone has significant others and family members can provide support and motivation.

Establish robust processes and policies around pre-departure preparation and ongoing communication. Yet maintain flexibility towards individuals and their motivations. Ensure you understand them. Structured debrief and post-return review are priceless in building organizational knowledge and individual expertise. Ideally, review immediately and after a few months to capture superficial and deeper learnings.

Working abroad can often be worthwhile and, properly managed with a reliance on the individual, it can create great value for your business.

The Authors

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HRD Forum — Book Review

Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management
challenges and opportunities for HRD

Beware Casual Leaders: Leadership Matters

Book Review by Dr. Alison Pearce

Beware Casual Leaders: Leadership Matters
Andy Portsmouth
Matador, £12.99

Beware casual leaders — they leave casualties wherever they go! So claims Andy Portsmouth, who has worked for some of the UK's and Europe's largest multi-national companies over the past 35 years. Starting as a graduate, he progressed to director before becoming a board-level consultant. The tone of his book is set by the blurb: "Cut through the corporate b*llsh*t. Many organizations are sabotaged from the inside. Their biggest threat is not from competitors but from themselves." The writing style is down-to-earth with many exclamation marks!

The structure of the book is interesting. There are five sections ranging from accountability, through culture to values, each with a useful synopsis at the end. By the second page of the Prologue we learn Andy's four rules, which are conclusions about the working world he drew at an early stage in his career, already disillusioned. They concern the responsibility of the CEO, valuing employees, the value of a good boss and leadership development. Three of these rules are explicitly explored in greater detail later on, but less so the fourth.

Portsmouth is at pains to establish his credentials based on practical experience in a wide variety of industries and companies. Equally, he is clear that he is not an academic, researcher, psychologist, titan of industry, famous entrepreneur, global CEO, known by the City or even the most talented person he knows. This honesty is refreshing and adds to his credibility. His subjective viewpoint is both the strength and the weakness of the book. It is clear from the start why he has found some behaviour in others so problematic. Indeed, a later chapter starts with a direct quote from a mentor "The trouble with you, Andy, is that you are too kind to your team and too hard on your boss". In academic research, this would be an acknowledgement of subjectivity and presented as a limitation. As in academia, this is no reason not to listen, but laudable self-awareness. This is certainly a characteristic valued by the author, who describes it as a constant theme of the book and dedicates a chapter to it. It is a clue to how he defines 'casual leadership'.

For GETM3, the book is relevant given its early premise that the old paradigm no longer applies: leaders were so good at their job that they were promoted to develop others to be equally good. Nowadays, leaders must engage and motivate people whose skills they have never had

and therefore cannot improve. Portsmouth identifies the difference between assertiveness and aggression as key to effectiveness in a younger, better educated and more diverse workforce.

The book races through some of the best established leadership, management and organization theory, which is useful in bringing it all together and applying it, with Portsmouth's interpretation, to 'casual leadership'. Some of these classics go back to the sixties. There is a lesson for academics here to see how your theory is interpreted and used by an industry practitioner, and which is standing the test of time. The author also compiles his own checklists of values, behaviour, competencies etc and helpful summaries of related theories. There are times when the book feels a little outdated, such as when a typical contract is described as 37.5 hours a week, 9-5, Monday-Friday with a fixed salary. It would be especially interesting to consider how 'casual leadership' applies to zero-hours contracts in the gig economy. These are fleetingly mentioned towards the end, in relation only to increasing employment-related stress. Where this book outdoes a standard textbook or airport self-help book is the range of sources, including, for example, the Financial Reporting Council's Guidance on Board Effectiveness and several large-scale, current surveys and polls which inject interest and currency.

In addition, Portsmouth provides a litany of leadership and management horror stories he personally has experienced, at times listing them in a somewhat overwhelming tidal wave of incompetence, sociopathy and worse. This is described as "casual" behaviour, by which I think he means thoughtless, tactless, insensitive, and unconscious. It is certainly a lack of self-awareness and it is applied not only to leaders. Some of it sounds far from 'casual'. I found myself hoping that those implicated would read the book and recognize themselves with shame. Experience tells me they probably will do neither. If you're feeling miserable about your boss, this at least will make you feel less lonely. The author states at one point that "living in reasonable harmony with other people" is the base state common to all of us and I wonder why he thinks this, given his experience. As a teacher, it occurred to me that these examples would make very useful mini case studies to support discussions around leadership, management and handling conflict.

For me, the greatest weakness of this otherwise engaging book are 20 pages dedicated to uncritical admiration and eulogizing of the leadership approach in the armed forces based in the UK and USA. Excellent exemplars of something they might be, but here there is no acknowledgement of the limit to which the experience of such organizations can (or wants to) be applied to civilian life. There is no mention of the well-publicized lapses in leadership and other errors which result in atrocities, nor of the long-term damage to military mental health now becoming apparent. The chapter title refers to "life and death" which could have included other examples such as hospitals, the emergency services, NGOs in disaster zones, dangerous industries or space agencies. This is followed by another 15 pages of the same, but this time about New Zealand's highly successful rugby team, the All Blacks. At this point I should declare my own subjective viewpoint as a woman. Now I know women serve in the armed forces (10% at last count) and that women play and watch rugby, but why select and explore so intimately and at length such male-dominated examples? There are five women fully named in this book, and four are in the 30-strong list in the acknowledgements of good leaders with whom the author has worked. Portsmouth expends much effort on understanding the importance of values and yet one of the All Blacks' brand values is 'masculinity'.

As my reading progressed, I found myself disagreeing, at times quite profoundly, with some of the author's assertions. Firstly, introverts (or "loners") can't be team players. I wondered how the values of inclusion, tolerance and political correctness — apparently so highly-prized

by younger people — would sit with this attitude. I recommend reading Jennifer Kahnweiler's 2018 book *The Introverted Leader: Building on Your Quiet Strength* or watching Susan Cain's 2012 TED talk *The Power of Introverts* (so far viewed 24 million times) which led to her 2013 book *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*. Secondly, trust is an absolute with no halfway house. "You do not trust people with your money but not with your confidences". Well, I don't share my secrets with my bank or my PIN number with my friends. There is one anecdote about an alleged lack of integrity in which I really wanted to know why the HR manager said she could not afford to pay Nigel his bonus. This was never explained.

Conscious, thanks to his mentor, of a rather harsh attitude to leaders, Portsmouth touches on different leadership styles, and occasionally admits the value of alternative approaches in certain circumstances. His summary of the apparently depressing 2017 Skills and Leadership Survey is used to blame specific leadership styles for problems driven, or exacerbated, by environmental changes such as rapid technological development and flexible working. I can't decide whether this is justified.

Perhaps cognisant of his high expectations of leaders, he does dedicate space to "ten things your leader deserves" and yet I again found myself in violent disagreement with some of them. Is it realistic and reasonable to "bring the best version of yourself to work every day" with the right energy levels and your game-face on? This seems at odds with the current drive for mental health awareness and the training of mental health first-aiders in larger organizations. A deeply British attitude to work is on display as having "a good gossip with mates" (over breakfast) and a "leisurely boozy lunch on a Friday" (both surely desired extrovert behaviours) are described as 'theft'. The French will tell you mealtimes are when all the big decisions are made. Further, we must keep our workstations clean and tidy and always be on time. In British culture, "being on time is all about respect". Personally, I have never felt less stressed at work than when living in a French region where 15 minutes' grace is a cultural norm. There, people prioritize more important things than punctuality, like talking to a friend or colleague you bump into on the way to the meeting. They avoid taking offence at something as unavoidable as lateness.

These personal diversions in experience and attitude do not detract from what is a common sense and highly readable account of the author's accumulated experience and wisdom. The suggestions of useable theory and models add value and meaning to the author's cathartic appeal for better, more people-focused leadership. And I have to agree with him!

The Reviewer

Dr. Alison Pearce is Associate Professor of Strategic Entrepreneurship at Newcastle Business School at Northumbria University, UK, Affiliate Professor at Grenoble Ecole de Management, France and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. One of the original cohort of British Erasmus students sent abroad in 1987 she spent 15 years living and working internationally in marketing, design and product development culminating in Head of Innovation and Business Development and running her own marketing and design consultancy. She is now the convenor of a faculty Research Interest Group and her work has been published in academic journals, industry magazines, books, blogs, and news media. An original member of the GETM3 team, Alison led the funding bid and now leads the project's overall implementation, undertaking secondments in Ireland, Poland, Slovenia, and Korea.