CROSS CULTURAL MANAGEMENT:
COLLABORATION BETWEEN
FILIPINO MANAGERS AND THAI SUBORDINATES

HATAINUS PHEWTHONGNGAM

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……………………….….…..………......
Miss Hatainus Phewthongngam
Candidate

....
Assoc. Prof. Astrid Kainzbauer,
Ph.D.,
Advisor

....
Asst. Prof. Randall Shannon,
Ph.D.
Chairperson

....
Duangporn Arbhasil,
Ph.D.
Dean
College of Management
Mahidol University

....
Ronald Surachai Thesenvitz,
Ph.D.
Committee member

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HATAINUS PHEWTHONGNGAM 5949163

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THEMATIC PAPER ADVISORY COMMITTEE: ASSOC. PROF. ASTRID KAINZBAUER, Ph.D., ASST. PROF. RANDALL SHANNON, Ph.D., RONALD SURACHAI THESENVITZ, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to find the recommendations for both Filipino managers and Thai subordinates for them to be able to work well together better.

In order to receive an insight information, qualitative method by narrative interviewing the sample respondents in person to be able to analyze both their answer and interaction more accuracy and completion.

The finding result in three recommendations for Thai subordinates which are Understand the space between work and personal life, Do not be afraid to ask questions and Work with efficiency. Two recommendations for Filipino managers including give opportunities and Spend time with your staff.

KEY WORDS: Filipino Management/ Cross Cultural Management/ Thai Subordinate/ Conflict/ Culture Difference

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Thailand had long been recognized as one of the fastest growing countries in South East Asia in terms of economy. The country attracts many investors from both outside and inside with its variety of resources, friendly investment laws and strategic geography but one of the things that Thailand is now in desperate need of is labors. With the unemployment rate lower than one percent, the situation of labor shortages is now become national issue. Thailand from labor export to labor import country in such a short time. Each year people from many countries, especially neighbor countries, come to Thailand looking for a job. The situation is difference in the Republic of the Philippines. Nowadays, more than 10 million Filipinos of the population are working and/or living out site their homeland, which calculated to around 10 percent, meaning that the country is relaying on migration for their economic vitality. Each year the biggest part of the country incomes is occurring outside the country and Thailand is also one of Filipinos' destination for works. Unlike labors from other neighbors countries, most Filipinos come in the country as skilled labors. Well educated with high level in English proficiency, they are the right candidates for the need of skill labors in managerial lever. New country means new people, working outside your home country can spark a conflict from differentiation in culture, believe, tradition or even because of difficulty in communication. Eventhough, both Thailand and Philippine are located in Asia, but the two countries have in difference in cultural and believe which could possibly turn into conflict if threated lightly.

The scope of this study is to focus on the difference in culture between Filipinos managers and Thai subordinate. Emphasizing on finding of the way both nationalities act, behave, adapt and deal with each other in the business context, management and subordinate. The rationals behind this selection are the rising of Philippines workers moving to work in Thailand. According to a speech of the Department of Employment (DE) director-general Varanon Peetiwan made in 2017, said that the Philippines score

first of nine countries in terms of the number of foreign skilled workers in Thailand. According to the department foreign workers statistic in 2017, the top five were the Philippines (14,830), Malaysia (2,924), Singapore (2,034), Myanmar (1,948) and Indonesia (1,279). These skilled workers have jobs in teaching, management, engineering, architecture and business in Thailand. Despite the increasing number of Filipinos in Thailand, Thai people understanding of Filipinos' culture, believe and behavior is not even developing, make it hard for Thai people to adjust themselves to Filipinos especially Filipinos managers. To understand and finally able to establish recommendations on cross cultural management between the two countries, this study will take two difference approaches in order to understand more in depth about this topic both primary and secondary data. The scope of this study will narrow down to multinational firms with Filipinos staff who have been working in management level in Thailand for more than three years with Thai subordinates.

Beginning with an in-depth study in cultural differences between Thai and Philippine by gathering related theories, finding, stories, testimonials and statistic as secondary data all under a condition of official published and reviewed no more than five years back from reliable sources. Using the finding to create two difference sets of interview questions for Thai subordinates and Filipino managers to find out about hands-on experiences and stories as primary source of data both positive and negative. All findings will be analyzed and conclude to create recommendations and best practice for Thai subordinate and Philippines managers.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to create effective interview questions, guideline and recommendations related to cross cultural management, in-depth secondary data review is critical. To survive and success in multinational firms, ones must understand the difference in terms of culture to be able to deal with unexpected situation more effectively. Hofstede's Cross-cultural and Kurt Lewin's leadership style are used in this study.

2.1 Hofstede's Cross-cultural Dimensions

Culture, as the collective programming of the mind, distinguishes one group or category of people from another (Hofstede, 1993). Culture is one of many factors which shaped us to who we are today. The same concept and though is similar to the meaning of culture in an organization. In workplace, culture act as unspoken rules which influence employees' behaviors. Professor Geert Hofstede conducted one of the most well-known studies of how people in workplace are influenced by culture. Each country scores on the dimensions are relative which means the culture score can only be used when comparing to others. All 6 dimensions including Power distance, Individualism, Masculinity, Uncertainty avoidance, Long term orientation and Indulgence.
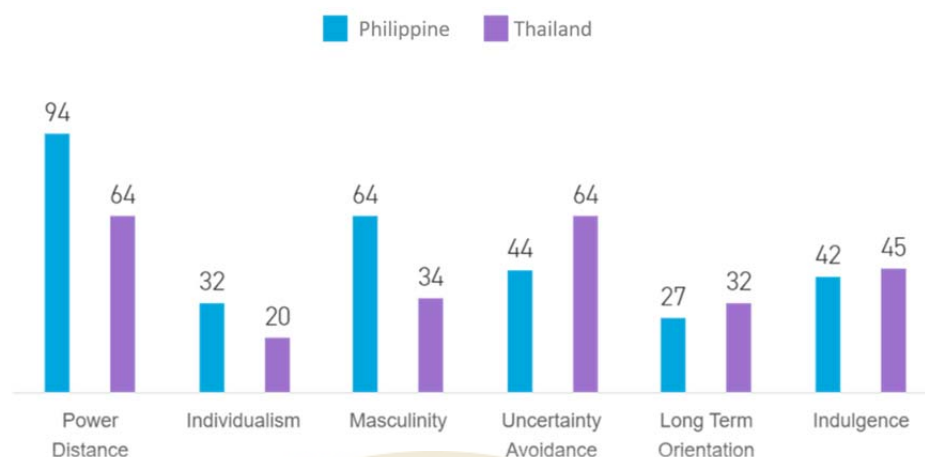
Figure 2.1 Hofstede's cross-cultural dimensions index comparing Thailand and Philippine

Referring to Figure 1, the score show that two countries have share some similarity as well as difference. Philippine is clearly received higher index score in Power distance, Individualism and Masculinity while Thailand standout in Uncertainty avoidance. Both countries are similar in terms of Long term orientation and Indulgence. Each dimension will be explained and compare between Thailand and Philippine for in-depth understanding.

2.1.1 Power distance

The Power distance score shows the degree of inequalities in the society. This index is created to represent how much the particular society value in ranking or hierarchy. People in low Power distance country will have a tendency to treat others in the same lever comparing to a country with high score. In an organization, this score reflects hierarchy or ranking system in the company. Easily measure by the process when an employee wants to make an appointment with the management. Many steps, take long time and require many paper work are referring to high hierarchy. This score also associate with how a decision will be made in an organization.

With a score of 94, the Philippines is an outstanding hierarchical country. People accept that there is difference. Boss or management is expect that his follower will do exactly what have been assigned. 64 is the score of Thailand on Power distance which is slightly lower than the average of all Asian countries at 71. Thai society understand that there is inequalities. Each rank has its own privilege and employees show respect

and loyalty in return for protection and guidance. Eventhough, the attitude towards managers are more formal, the information flow is still in hierarchical. Comparing to Philippines, Thais are much lower in Power distance score means that when in a firm, Filipinos managers will want their subordinates to follow their orders strictly while Thai staff might listen to only work related tasks.

Filipinos believe that being a manager have that unspeakable power above others and must be treat differently. Filipinos believe that rank mean there are differences in they the way they will be treated by others, (Gonzalez 1994). Filipinos managers expect to be respected and received something more privilege than other lower level employees. Their opinion, suggestion and authority carries more weight than of others. Staff voice still be heard but just because they want to maintain the group vibe.

2.1.2 Individualism

This score shows how people in the society treat each other's. Whether people in the country referring themselves as 'I' or 'We.' In the society with more 'I' or individualist, people are expected to look after themselves and their close family only. In Collectivist societies people belong to 'in groups' that take care of them in exchange for loyalty. The higher the score gets, the higher that society is in individualism level. According to Triandis (1989), collectivism societies are focus on being in a group, social harmony and their behavior are influenced by others.

Thailand score at 20 while Philippines score at 32, both country are considered as collectivistic societies. This mean that they are commit and value in being a part of a group such as family, extended family and relationship. Loyalty to the in-group in a collectivist culture is believe to be more important than any other rules or regulations. People tend to stay together with the group decision and follow it even when in doubt to keep their position in a group. In collectivist societies offence leads to shame and loss of face, employer/employee relationships are perceived in moral terms (like a family link), hiring and promotion decisions take account of the employee's in-group, management is the management of groups. The situation is stronger in Thailand, Thais will avoid confronting circumstance and even when saying 'Yes' may not mean as an agreement. Thais are very sensitive and will do everything not to feel shamed in front of their group.

In collective society, relationship is the one and only key to do business and it takes time to build. Relationship comes before business, always.

Similar situation also happens with Filipinos. Even as a manager of a firm, Filipino manager is committed in making and maintaining smooth interpersonal relationship with subordinates, other managers, supervisors or sometime even competitors. They are willing to keep the staff eventhough they are not benefit to the company or his group anymore, just keep the group momentum going.

2.1.3 Masculinity and Femininity

Another difference in cultural aspects between Thais and Philippines is the level of 'Masculinity' at 64 and 34 respectively. A high score means more Masculinity. This score indicate that the society has a high possibility to be driven by competition and success. Eager to define themselves as a winner or the best among peers. A low score reflect to Feminine on the dimension means that the society are caring for others. A feminine culture is more focus on quality of life and equality. Standing out or competition is unpreferable. According to Wacker and Sprague (1998), information will be used in order to make a decision to gain advantage over competitors in masculine culture. On the other hand, feminine countries have a tendency to use information to support decision making. At 64 score, Filipinos managers are tend to be decisive and aggressive. They value competition, performance and when conflicts occur, straight forward action or even fighting are the solution. In contrast, Thailand score at only 34, the lowest among others. Thailand is a Feminine country. This lower level is indicative of a society with less assertiveness and competitiveness, as compared to one where these values are considered more important and significant. This situation also reinforces more traditional male and female roles within the population.

2.1.4 Uncertainty avoidance

This reflect the society perception toward changes. The higher score gets, the more people in the country or society is vulnerable to change. They will always be prepared and follow every rules and regulations strictly to eliminate all possibility that will make things go out of plan. The ultimate goal of this population is to control everything in order to eliminate or avoid the unexpected. With the score at 64, Thai people are not

very good with change. They prefer to do things the same way rather than trying new thing even though it might result in something greater. Filipinos on the other hand, has a score of 44 which indicate that they are more willing to change when necessary, openminded and more flexible. This could create a conflict when changes happen. Filipinos managers are happy and adapt to it quickly while Thai staff are all still quite and in the stage of stay put.

2.1.5 Long-term orientation

Score low on this aspect means that people in that society look for a way to get quick result, prefer to spend money for short-time happiness, value society picture and status and protection of one's face is important.

Both Thailand and Philippine got a very low score at 27 and 32 respectively, indicates that they both are more normative than pragmatic. People in this type of society have great respect for their culture, traditions and willing to do more to secure the future and focus on achieving quick result.

2.1.6 Indulgence

Hofstede's most recent dimension, indulgence versus restraint, was added in 2010. This might call in to doubt the validity of using data originating from questions asking respondents to describe how happy they are. In this aspect both countries scored a very similar points at 45 for Thailand and 42 for Philippine which are not significantly difference in terms of comparison.

2.2 Kurt Lewin's Leadership Style

Leadership is the act of individual who influences other group members toward the organizational goals. According to Kurt Lewin who studied the way in which leadership styles of a manager will influence subordinates behavior (Lewin, 1992), there are three types of leadership style including Autocratic or Authoritarian leadership, Democratic or Participative leadership and Laissez-faire as known as Consultative leadership. There also one more recent style added to Kurl's theory which is Paternalistic Leadership.

2.2.1 Autocratic or Authoritarian leadership

The characteristic of managers who belong in this group is that they are the center of power of the group. They will control the group activities, decisions and judgement. Members in the group have less to none ability to make a decision. Typically, there would be very little interaction between the leader and team members. The assignment will be passed down to the team with specific instruction on how the job should be done. There are both positives and negatives aspects. One in certain is that it is a good start for an inexperience team mates. When people are lack of knowledge and skill, manager with this leadership style will give orders with details and specific instruction, make it easier for the team to get the task done. On the other hand, this style will not be very efficient with team members who already have the necessity knowledge because it limits their freedom to explore the new possibility.

2.2.2 Democratic or Participative leadership

This style of leadership is truly reflecting the word itself. Managers with this type of leadership will work as a part of the team eventhough they remain in power of making the final call, the process is more focus on cooperation among team members. Each member is encouraged to share ideas and giving feedback to the group. The leader then considers ideas and even select if it is right for the team. No doubt that this type of leadership receives more positive feedback than the dictator who simply just boss people around. Every style has its own weak spot, for this type of leadership it is not suitable with inexperience team since they lack of strong leadership, it would be hard to make others follow. As long as there is enough knowledge in the group to keep the work going, participation leadership should be fine to lead the project.

2.2.3 Laissez-faire or Consultative leadership

This type of leaders offer little or no guidance to group members and leave decision-making up to group members. They delegate the majority a project is one that has complete trust in his or her team and will allow them to run with the job. No frequency checkup or close monitoring, no surprise that out of the three styles, Consultative is the most popular one. Eventhough this style can be useful in situations involving highly qualified experts, it often leads to poorly defined roles and a lack of motivation and

frequency cause troubles if the team is not actually ready enough to handle things on their own.

2.2.4 Paternalistic Leadership

Under Paternalistic Leadership, the leader assumes that his function is more like a father and a son. Members of the team are expected to treat the leader with complete obedient and respect. In exchange, the leader will give protection, reward and make sure that his subordinates work in a good working environment and receive reasonable benefits. Eventhough this style of leadership look positive but some might feel uncomfortable, especially when working with mature or experience staff.

According to a research published in the Journal of applied management and entrepreneurship in 2009 under a topic of 'Comparing Filipino and American task and relationship orientations', Filipino manager has a tendency to focus more on relationship with him / her subordinates than task, like people to listen, follow and respect their opinions. They are paternalistic and like provide leadership. All of this reason clearly staged that Filipinos manager has a 'Paternalistic leadership style'. Referring to the study of Thai employees' preferred leadership style (Vimolwan Yukongdi, 2010), the most preferred style of leader for employees was the consultative manager, followed by participative, paternalistic, whilst the least preferred leader was an autocratic manager. With this difference, Thai staff might feel uncomfortable working with a Filipino leader who has Paternalistic style'.

2.3 Conclusion

Referring to the previous literature review of Thailand and Philippine culture using Hofstede's cross-cultural dimensions and leadership style theory, the conclusion of similarity, differences and hypothesis on possible conflicts are listed in table 2.1 below

Table 2.1 Summary of Thai and Philippine differences and possible conflicts

Topic	Thailand	Philippine	Possible conflicts
Power distance	Medium -low	Very high	- Difference level of believe in hierarchy system might result in confusion and misunderstanding
Individualism	Collectivism	Collectivism	-
Masculinity	Femininity	Masculinity	- Confrontation when problems occur - Problem solving style - Loosing face in Thai staff
Uncertainty avoidance	Low	High	- Difference rate of keeping up with changes
Long-term orientation	Low	Low	-
Indulgence	Low	Low	-
Leadership style	Prefer Consultative	More on Paternalistic Leadership	- Misunderstanding or confrontation - Feeling embarrassment - Objected - Lack of team harmony

In-dept interview will be conducted in order to learn more about another possible aspect or best practice that could help create work harmony between Filipinos manager and Thai subordinates or thing should be avoid to success in create the team spirit.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to study and give recommendations to Thai employees who work under Filipinos management. To provide them with guidance and clarity in some of the field which was not include in the finding with research studying in chapter three. In order to obtain most trust and up to date information, primary data collection method is needed with an aim to confirm the conclusion written in literature review and also find some new aspects.

3.1 Primary Data Collection Method

Primary data collection is a method of collecting fresh data from the source of interest. It can be done in many difference ways such as focus group, individual interview, observation or proposing a case study. There were many researches and document been done in studying related to culture of Philippines and Thailand but very little to non has explain the differences when it comes to working together and how culture alter their behavior at work. Thus, a qualitative research could be used to examine the attitudes, feelings and motivations from business people who are working in the international business (McDaniel & Gate, 2013).

3.2 Narrative Interview

The use of narrative is an advantageous investigative resource in qualitative research, in which the narrative is a traditional form of communication whose purpose is to serve content from which the subjective experiences can be transmitted. Since this paper aiming is to conduct a list of recommendations on how Thai employees should do in order to work and get along better with their Filipinos boss, the story from participants are crucial to the construct of this finding. This type of interview is used to encourage

interviewees to tell their stories, experience or thought toward a certain topic of interest by creating an environment and style of telling and listening to stories, similar to a conversation in everyday life. Not just a conversation that is important in Narrative interview but also other unspoken words during the interview session such as their tone of voice, pause, body language or their face expression.

3.2.1 Sample selection

Since the source of this research is Filipinos who have Thais subordinates and Thais who have Filipinos boss in general, type of business is not taken to consideration. Eight interviewees were selected base on the same which is he/she must have at least one-year experience working with Thais or Filipinos in a position of direct superior or subordinate. Each interviewee sharing their thought and stories base on their experience working with Filipinos or Thais. Eight participants from eight difference companies. Four Filipinos from four difference companies and filed of work were selected. They all are in management or leading position in each company and have Thai subordinates more than one year and also for Thai staff. One Filipinos manager working in graphic design, another in accounting and the rest in marketing related field, with experience working with Thais subordinates at three, ten, two and four years respectively. For Thais, the first interviewee works as sales coordinator follow by copywriting, sales person and an assistant editor in a publication company. They had experience first-handed working under Filipinos boss for two, two, two and a half and one year and a half respectively.

Table 3.1 List of interviewees and their personal information

Interviewee code	Nationality	Position	Experience	Gender
F1	Filipino	Graphic designer team leader	3	F
F2	Filipino	Account receivable manager	2	M
F3	Filipino	Cluster digital marketing manager	10	M
F4	Filipino	Online marketing manager	4	M

Table 3.2 List of interviewees and their personal information (cont.)

| Interviewee code	Nationality	Position	Experience	Gender
T1	Thai	Sales coordinator	2	F
T2	Thai	Editor	2	M
T3	Thai	Sales person	2 and a half	M
T4	Thai	Assistant editor	1 and a half	F

3.2.2 Interview questions

Open-end questions will be most suitable in this research. It allow interviewees to express and share their experience, stories or their thought freely and interviewer can also ask further questions if necessary to encourage them to share their personal stories. Narrative interview is done using open-ended questions. The questions listed below was created base on the finding during research studied in chapter three in order to prove whether the aspects, Power distance, Masculinity and Uncertainty avoidance, in Hofstede's cultural dimensions and Leadership style are the root of conflict or not. Also aiming to find unaware culture related aspect that is also a cause of problem at work for Filipinos boss and Thai staff. Each Thais and Filipinos interviewee were given the same set of questions.

3.2.3 Conduct the interview

Preferable interview environment and scenario is face to face interview at a venue that induce warm and sharing atmosphere such as restaurant, café or coffee shop. Interviewer can see the un-spoken language from the interviewees easily with this scenario but for those who live outside of Bangkok or fell more comfortable sharing their experience without meeting in person, a phone interview is an alternative. In this research, all Filipinos interviewees are more comfortable to share with phone interview and also some of the Thai interviewees who live out of Bangkok. The session takes approximately 30 to 45 minutes including introducing, ice breaking questions and other related questions that was ask by the interviewer to create seamless conversation and in order to get encourage interviewees to open up and share their experience.

3.2.3 Research framework

After finish the data collection from narrative interview, the final conclusion of this research is to combine and compare the result from primary data, narrative interview, and literature review. The final product will be a list of recommendation and concerns for Thais workers who working with Filipinos supervisor in order for them to work together more effectively and efficiently the process is shown in the figure 3.1 below.
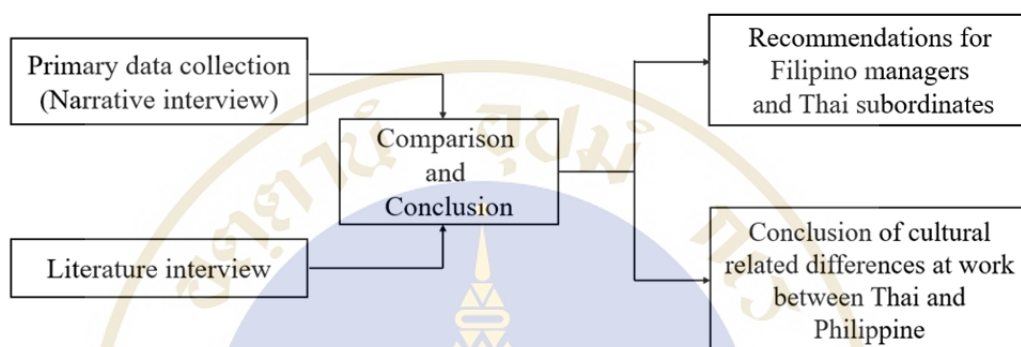
Figure 3.1 Research framework

CHAPTER IV
DATA ANALYSIS

After the narrative interview was completed the data was summarized and analyzed. The responses can be categorized by the similarity of answers among all interviewees in order to identify the common problems that occur when Thais work with Filipinos.

4.1 The Value of Time

This is a topic that every Thai interviewee mentioned, while three out of four Filipinos interviewees agreed but with a different perspective than the Thais. Ms. F1 experienced this situation first hand and said, "For instance, working hours. Thai people value time [by] what time they clock in and clock out from work. The longer they stay at work, the more they seemed hard working, even if they're just YouTubing the entire day. The success of work is somewhat measured through the time spent and not much on the outcome." When asking Ms. F1 to share her worst or best experience working with Thai people, she said, "Probably my worst experience would be being reported for coming in late and leaving on time from an older subordinate."

This difference of perspective for time related issues occurred with Mr. F2 as well. "An example would be of a Filipino colleague of mine who did her work as soon as it was given to her and submitted it to me after it was finished, which was way before the deadline. While Thai colleagues usually start doing their work before the deadline, but would usually still be able to complete the work right on time." When asked what he would suggest to Thais who work with Filipinos, so they can work more efficiently, Mr. F2 said, "Do not procrastinate and try to work as efficiently as possible." This emphasizes how he feels about the problem of seeing the importance of time.

Mr. F4 mentioned his experience with a Thai subordinate and her time management. "I don't expect her to complete tasks assigned before [the] deadline but

at least on-time, or she can tell me her preference so we can find the deadline that fits for both of us," he said. "She always told me that there [was] still plenty of time but in the end, she cannot make it." From these three responses, we can conclude that Filipino managers value time and that time is an important issue when working with Thai people. They feel that Thais do not see the importance of time management or the value of time itself.

The situation is somewhat different from the Thai subordinates' point of view. Ms. T1 has been working as a sales coordinator with a Filipino boss for two years and noted that her boss always leaves work on time and does not value her efforts to stay late to finish her assigned tasks. "She always comes to work on time and leaves on time when the clock strikes 5:00 pm." Ms. T1 said angrily about her boss. "You will not find her even when it's just five minutes past 5:00 in the evening. I have to stay late at least two or three days a week, but she never appreciates what I do."

This is similar to Mr. T2 who mentioned that his Filipino boss only works during working hours, "He is very focused on his tasks when we're at work but after that no. It is his time." Mr. T3 also shared his experience of working with a Filipino boss when having to work out of town. "Even [when she] is not in the office, she really separates her work life and her personal life [and] actually nothing is wrong about it. It's just that sometimes Thai people are always helping each other out even after work hours – and especially when you are working outside." While Ms. T4 has the least amount of experience with Filipino boss, having only worked together for a year and a half, her response is very similar to others. "My boss really gives value on how to manage time efficiently. She wants a clear deadline and timeline for everything. She is very professional, but sometimes Thai people just need more flexibility and we really work hard after work hours."

At work, Filipinos think that Thais don't give value to time and that they don't manage the time they have for each task, sometimes valuing it in a different way than they do. On the other hand, Thai subordinates feel strongly that their Filipino bosses do not see when they work past office hours and never stay late at the office themselves. The Filipinos' punctuality makes Thais feel that they are not fully dedicated to their job.

4.2 Different Meaning of Friendship

This topic arose from Thai participants with three out of four Thai interviewees mentioning that their Filipino bosses don't see them as part of their team and never spend time building relationships with Thai staff. This topic came as a surprise during the interview and suddenly became an issue of how Thais and Filipinos definition of friendship is different.

Starting with a story that Mr. T3 shared about his manager, "I never see him go out or party with any of the team members or other employees in the office. We hardly see him after work hours which is strange, because normally Thai people work together and go out for fun together after a long work day or even sometimes outside of work hours. He will always be there for you at work, but you will never see him at any office party."

Ms. T4 also had the same experience as Mr. T3. "I barely see [my boss] outside of work. She comes to work on time and leaves on time." She continued, "She never joins us for dinner or group parties. Even though she is such a good team player when it comes to work, she is not really your friend. She is just literally your friend only from 9 am. To 5.30 pm."

Mr. T2 added more evidence of the Thai point of view on this topic saying that, "It is a tradition for us Thai people to look after each other as a group, as a family, so we normally go out together. The oldest person in the group sometimes ends up paying or taking everyone home after a party, but that is not [the same] with Filipinos. They just don't understand that they need to connect with us as a person not only as a coworker or subordinate. At work they are terrific and perfect, but just lacking group spirit."

All Filipino managers who were part of this research expressed that they are always a team player when it comes to work related issues, but none of them mentioned going out with their Thai coworkers or subordinates for trips or activities outside working hours. Ms. F1 said that she wants her team to know that when it comes to work she is 110% supportive and is always available to help and support. While Thai staff at her workplace value the time they spend together after work, Ms. F1 responds that she has to take care of her family and children at home. This does not mean that she does not care, but that she has other responsibilities. Mr. F2 feels that Thai people focus too much on building relationships when it is much more important to get your work done.

We can conclude that Filipinos and Thais different points of view in terms of the meaning and practice of friendship. For Thais, work life and personal life are the same. People at work need to be there in their personal life as well. This is different from the Filipinos who believe in collectivism; they value their relationships at work and being the best team player possible. They prefer to separate their work life and their personal life and want to keep it that way. Thai people do not understand this sometimes and think the Filipinos don't value the relationship between boss and subordinate.

4.3 Afraid of Losing Face

This is the topic that the majority of Thai and Filipino interviewees agreed on. Three out of four Filipino managers had experienced incidences when Thai subordinates were afraid to ask questions which later affected their assigned. Ms. F1 feels that Thais and Filipinos are very different when it comes to confrontation and asking questions. "They don't ask questions and avoid confrontation. Communication and avoidance of confrontation goes hand in hand. For instance, whenever a task is assigned to a Thai subordinate, he/she often takes it even if he/she thinks it cannot be done in order to avoid complaining," she said about her experience with this issue. "This task often times ends up incomplete due to the lack of clear understanding of the task brief. He/she did not ask more questions about it and could have understood the brief in different way. They afraid to use wrong grammar."

Mr. F3 gave a clear response to this topic as well as a recommendation from his point of view. "When you assign a task to the Thai staff and, after the task is completed it's somewhat different than what you have assigned, my recommendation is be assertive that the task is well understood." Mr. F4 is another interviewee who responded to this topic saying, "I don't mind at all if there is wrong grammar or even the wrong choice of words as long as they try. Oftentimes they don't ask because they don't want to lose face in front of others, but it is not good for the company and [the staff] will end up with a task that is incomplete."

Thai subordinate interviewees also shared many valuable experiences and stories about this topic. Three out of four Thai staff said that they don't want to ask their Filipino boss for help directly because they afraid of losing face. Firstly, Ms. T1, who

works as a sales coordinator said that, "I don't want to ask my Filipinos boss questions even though sometimes the task she gave is not crystal clear. I would rather find a way by myself than asking her questions about the task in front of my colleagues."

Another interesting perspective that Ms. T1 mentioned is the way her Filipinos boss deals with problems. "Whenever there is something wrong or she feels that she needs explanations, she will go straight to whoever she wants to talk to and ask them straight to the point without hesitation, or sometimes with no intro at all about what the problem is," she said. "If she needs a talk, she will began to talk right away. This makes me feel uncomfortable sometimes. I know that they are all work related questions, but can she just ask us to her room or maybe at least ask in a nicer way."

Mr. T3 said that he prefers to ask his Thai friends when he has problems rather than ask his Filipino boss, because he is afraid that she will think he is not smart. Ms. T4 went through a similar situation with her Filipinos boss as well. "She explains everything to me in detail and sometimes asks me questions in front of everyone. I like that she is very blunt and forward when it comes to solving conflicts and problems though. It makes things a lot easier and less emotional, but I can never be like that."

While Filipinos are open and welcome all questions from their Thai staff, Thai subordinates are too shy to say anything. This may create conflict which can result in the misunderstanding of an assigned task and spending more time than expected to complete it.

4.4 Mai Bpen Rai Culture

Three out of four Filipinos accepted that they face the issue of Thai staff being too laid back at work. Ms. F1 thinks that, "Filipinos are more aggressive in the workplace while Thais are subtler and more laid back – perhaps attributed to the Mai Bpen Rai mentality." Mr. F2 said, "Compared to Thais, Filipinos concentrate more on their work while Thais are more laid back. An example would be of a Filipino colleague of mine who did her work as soon as it was given to her and submitted it to me after it was finished, which was way before the deadline. While Thai colleagues usually start doing their work before the deadline but would usually still be able to complete the work right on time."

He also helped explain the difference in the level of uncertainty avoidance for Thais versus Filipinos. "While my team was undergoing an annual audit (the auditors outnumbered us 2 to 1), I was unexpectedly called to the other campus of the university I work at. Everyone was not prepared for me to go away at such a busy time. This was also held during the start of the new (and busiest of the year's) semester," said Mr. F2. "Suffice to say that we were swamped with work and had to work until the evening for 2 weeks straight. Since I was the sole person who handles A/R, I was worried that my colleagues wouldn't be able to explain my side of the work to the audit. Surprisingly, they were able to comply with/answer most of the requests/inquiries from the auditors with a calm demeanor. The ones they couldn't, they would call me for assistance. After that, we had a lunch party to celebrate surviving that hellish 2 weeks of the year. It was good to know that I can depend on them and that they could adjust to unexpected situations like that."

Mr. F3 said, "Filipinos are hard working. Thais are jai yen yen." This concept means means laid back and shows how the three Filipino bosses feel that their Thai staff don't have a sense of urgency at work. They are slow most of the time and do not prepare tasks ahead of time which might create a chain reaction for others who work on the same team.

4.5 Adapting to Change

This last topic was mentioned by three out of four Thai subordinates who participated in this interview. They noticed that their Filipinos boss is not comfortable with changes in the workplace. "Since we are a very small company, about less than 15 people altogether, change affects everyone in the office. No exceptions. [My boss] always acts out even with the smallest change possible," Ms. T1 explained. "It takes time to adapt, but [in the end] she will definitely get over it."

Mr. T3 also shared his experience about his Filipino boss' reaction to change. "We went through a complete change of top management about a year ago. A new multinational company bought the company that we work for and made it a part of their business in Thailand. For Thai staff, we were all thrilled about the change. New management means improvement and it might lead to better pay rate," he said. "My boss did not

look at it that way. He did not handle the change very well. Normally, he will have a plan for what to do each week or month and he will stick to it. With the change he had no choice but to remake everything. He even thought that I might take his job away in the change."

Finally, Ms. T4 mentioned this about her boss, "If there is something new in our department, for example, new software for the data collecting process, she will start asking tons of questions about it before she even tries using it. After everyone adapts to the change then she will start turning to it." When change comes, Thai subordinates feel that their Filipino bosses do not respond to it well and often question their behavior.

There is one topic that Thai subordinates feel is an advantage to working with Filipino bosses, which is that the hierarchy at work becomes significantly smaller.

4.6 No Heirarchy

This is one concern that might be the cause of conflict at work and the results turned out to be very interesting. From the findings in the literature review, it was possible that Thai subordinates might have a conflict with their Filipino boss since they tend to have a medium to high power distance, while Thais have a medium to low power distance. However, the result is quite the opposite.

Ms. T1 mentioned that working with a Filipino boss is almost the same as working with a Thai supervisor except that she needs to be well prepared before asking for support. Her reaction is similar to Mr. T3, a salesman, who said he doesn't feel any pressure talking to his Filipino boss at all. "She has this open-door policy which really means her office door is open all the time. It is so easy to talk to her. I don't need to make any appointment or send an email first," he mentioned. "If I have an issue that needs her attention immediately, I can just knock on her office door. She wants everyone to respect her and acknowledge her, but that you can also easily talk to her."

Ms. T4, who was working in a publication company, had this to say, "It is actually very easy to talk to a Filipino boss, even easier than talking to a Thai boss sometimes. In Thai we have to add words like Pe, Khun or Than which indicate the status of that particular person, but when I'm talking with my Filipinos boss, none of

those words are needed. I talk to her with respect since she is the boss, but it is so much easier to ask her questions."

One of the Filipinos managers said something similar as well. Mr. F4 mentioned that he always makes sure that everyone under his care knows what to do by spending time talking in person about tasks or topics that concern them. When talking about her Thai subordinate who is older, Ms. F1 also mentioned something interesting, "Being a young manager, it is often difficult to assign tasks if your subordinates are older than you since they tend to not follow or even sometimes complete the task halfway. They have this seniority at work which is determined either by how long they have been with the company or their age."

These responses show an aspect of Thai culture that is not mentioned in the literature review and cannot be described by using Hofstede's theory. There is a difference between hierarchy at work and in daily life. Thai people respect people who are older or those who have a higher position at work; in this case, it refers to people who have been with the company for a long time and people who have a more superior job title. These people expect to be respected, which makes Thai boss even harder to reach sometimes.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, RESEARCH RESULTS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

By combining and analyzing the information from the literature review and narrative review, there are similarities and differences when comparing the findings to Hofstede's theory.

5.1.1 Similarities

Table 5.1 below is the summary of the similarities found between the topics raised by conducting narrative interviews and Hofstede's theory of cross-cultural communication.

Table 5.1 Summary of Thai and Filipino similarities when compared to Hofstede's theory

Topics found in Narrative interview	Hofstede's theory	Summary Details
Different meaning of friendship	Individualism and Collectivism	Thai subordinates focus on building relationships both at work and outside work hours, while Filipino managers like to keep their work life separate from their private life.
Adapting to change	Uncertainty avoidance	Filipino managers need more time to adjust to new changes compared to Thai staff.
No heirarchy	Power distance	It is easy for Thai subordinates to talk to Filipino bosses. There is no need for a formal schedule or preparation.

5.1.2 Differences

There are two main topics that do not correspond to Hofstede's theory according to the interview results.

- Mai Bpen Rai culture: Three out of four Filipino managers who participated in this interview agreed on this topic and stated that Thai staff are too laid back and not active enough at work. Sometimes it makes them doubt their abilities and commitment to the job.

- The value of time: In our interviews, Filipino managers talked about how their Thai team members value time or time management. They said that Thais value the length of time people spend at the office not the value of the work, which is different from the Filipinos.

- Afraid of losing face: Thai subordinates prefer not to ask questions even if they do not fully understand the instructions given by their Filipino bosses because they are afraid to speak up. They don't want their friends to see that they have to ask for help and don't want their boss to think that they are not good at their job. The same goes for when their bosses make comments, Thais prefer feedback to be given in private to prevent others from seeing it.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the information that we have derived from the research and interviews, we can conclude that it is important to understand and adapt to cultural differences and have these recommendations for both Thai and Filipino managers below.

5.2.2 For Thai subordinates

- Understand the space between work and personal life

From the literature review, it is clear that both Thais and Filipinos are collectivists, but the narrative interviews add more details to this topic. The definition of collectivism is different for each country. Thai subordinates need to understand and accept that every person needs their own time. When their Filipino managers don't stay for a late dinner, it does not mean that they are ignoring or neglecting their efforts, but that they need some alone time with their families. Filipinos are very close to their

family and relatives. Both work and personal life are important to them, so they try to divide their time equally between both.

This will help ease the problem of a differenct meaning of friendship.

- Do not be afraid to ask questions

All four Filipino managers said they welcome every question and are more than happy to answer. It is the nature of Thais to be afraid to express their thoughts in public or in front of others. They try to avoid the chance of losing face. When it comes to the work environment, communication is crucial to the success of each task. Thai subordinates need to start talking to their bosses to eliminate the problem of misunderstanding. This will also help in creating a strong bond between the manager and the team.

This will help ease the problem of staff who are afraid of losing face.

- Work with efficiency

Thai staff are viewed as acting with a jai yen attitude, which means slow and chill. Because of this, Filipino managers feel that Thai staff only value the time people stay at the office. They don't prioritize. After they receive an assignment, Thais have to make a plan of what to do, when to do it and why. This will help in keeping track of all activities and allow them to arrange their work according to the level of importance.

This recommendation is aiming to solve the issue of Mai Bpen Rai culture and the value of time.

5.2.3 For Filipino managers

- Give opportunities

One of the biggest issues for Thai people is confidence. In order to start building a sharing environment, the manager needs to make subordinates feel that it is okay to share and ask. Start with something simple, such as asking for their opinion about their own work. There are no right or wrong answers. This is to encourage staff to speak up and feel comfortable to share. Then move to a topic which is bigger, such as asking questions in a meeting.

Filipino managers also have to change their style of criticizing their subordinate's work. Instead of speaking directly in front of everyone, try making it more private. Call staff to the office or at least to an area where they are not going to be center of attention. Try not to make strong comments to Thai subordinates in front of others.

This suggestion will help solve the issues for staff who are afraid of losing face.

- Spend time with your staff

Thais stick together as a group and will consider the actions of each member, especially the head of the group or the Filipino managers in this case. Spend time with your staff. Even just one or two times per month, stay late with them, eat out with them or give a compliment when they do something good. This will help strengthen the team spirit and make subordinates feel that they are appreciated by their boss.

This suggestion is suggested to solve the different meaning of friendship between Thais and Filipinos.
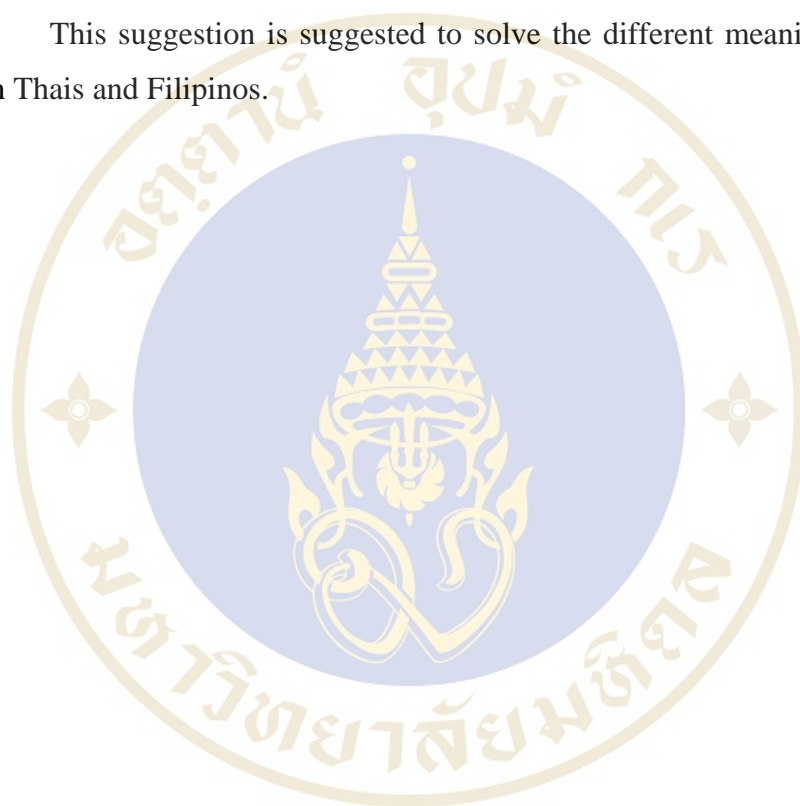
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Filipino manager

Number	Interview questions
1	How old are you and what's your current job position?
2	How long have you been in Thailand and how long have you been working with Thai subordinates?
3	How do you normally communicate with your Thai subordinate? (TH or ENG)
4	What are the differences between working with Filipinos and working with Thais? Can you give an example situation?
5	Is there any misunderstanding happen when working with Thais?
6	How do you respond to those differences?
7	Can you tell a story of a good/bad memories you have working with Thais?
8	What do you think is a barrier for Filipinos when it comes to working with Thais?
9	What advises would you recommend to Thais and Filipinos to be able to work well together?

2. Thai subordinate

Number	Interview questions
1	How old are you and what's your current job position?
2	How long have you been working with Filipino manager or boss? (direct boss)
3	What are the differences between working with Filipinos and working with Thais? Can you give an example situation?
4	Is there any misunderstanding happen when working?
5	How do you respond to those differences?
6	Can you tell a story of a good/bad memories you have working with Filipino boss?

Number	Interview questions
7	What do you think is a barrier for Thai people when it comes to working with Filipino boss?
8	What advises would you recommend to Thais and Filipinos to be able to work well together?