One of Us?

How do Developing Market Professionals
Engage with International Communities of Practice?

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Abstract

Much focus has been given in recent years to the Community of Practice, Participation Metaphor of Learning. Less attention has been paid in the literature to understanding the elements effecting how people are able to engage, particularly within the dynamic of developing market professionals within international CoP's. This study explores the experiences and perceptions of established international professional's and newcomers within this dynamic. Through qualitative investigation in two organisations in West Africa and the Middle East, the study discusses findings within two meta themes regarding the effects of local newcomer's experiences of legitimate peripheral participation in their respective CoP's.

Firstly "Multiple and Consistent Identity Formation within CoP Constellation Navigation" explores two-way meaning and learning from professional communities and the impact on actors developing professional and personal identities. This is built from four contributory themes; Exploring different routes to CoP participation; Impacts of professional vs domestic CoP's on identity; Continuity of personal identity across CoP's and the impact of CoP norms on Identity. Secondly "Palatable Diversity" explores evidence around the impact of sponsored participation opportunities; Positive discrimination policies, Effects of local CoP members becoming established; Degrees of diversity found palatable by established Professionals, and finally: An absence of Racism in LPP. Conclusions are made that engagement in LPP is entirely possible through a nuanced understanding of individual differences within a complex landscape of CoP's, which is notably different for developing market newcomers in comparison to their international predecessors. This impacts on their professional and personal identities in different ways. It was however found that access was attainable to them, if they succeeded in understanding and navigating the trajectories required for participation by established members. This is presented as providing a contribution to the debate through problematizing recent literature on multiple identity creation through meaning making in legitimate peripheral participation, as well as adding to the discussion on attitudes to diversity within a constellation landscape of international and local CoP's.

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Contents

List of Abbreviations

CoP	Community of Practice
LPP	Legitimate Peripheral Participation
CoE	Centre of Expertise
NoP	Network of Practice
STA	Short Term Assignments

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.0 –Background and Conceptual Framework

After 20 years developing professional talent in the Middle East and West Africa, the evolving dynamic between established [1]"Old Hands" and local [2]"Newcomers" within critical national infrastructure, transport and logistics industries was unclear, due to the reducing role and influence of expatriate expertise and increased localisation in these industries. This study was established to explore the meanings made from experiences and perceptions of these groups, to better understand the journey of local talent in the current and changing landscape of professions within developing markets.

My own interest in analysing this changing international and local dynamic through the lens of CoP LPP frameworks, was sparked through execution of my first qualitative study while studying the CoP literature at MSc. Subsequently tracking this debate from its simple origins of situated learning through legitimate peripheral participation and mono directional trajectory of newcomers from periphery to core, (Lave and Wenger, 1991) through to widespread critique of over simplicity, inconsideration of individual agency and challenges to the static nature of CoP's and the established professionals within them, (Osterlund, 1996; Harrison et al, 2002; Hodkinson and Hodkinson, 2004; Fuller et al, 2005; Handley et al, 2006; Hughes et al 2007, McDermott and Archibald, 2010).

The evolution of the concepts and complexity of the paradigms were developed with the aim of closer describing the lived experiences of the actors (Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al, 2002; Hara, 2009) onwards into the contemporary debate of CoP structures within wider concepts of social learning systems (Wenger, 2000; Blackmore, 2010). A theory evolved through critique, development and diverse application beyond its scope, to sit alongside traditional acquisition metaphors, rather than replace them, into a complex construct of participation across a constellation landscape of CoP's and the disputed impacts on

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[1]The terms from the list of abbreviations are defined in the literature review, Chapter 2
[2] "   "

identity formation (Wenger-Trayner et al, 2015) which form the theoretical framework for the under researched areas of interest in this study.

5.2 Aims, Analytical Framework and Contribution

Significant social change was happening within the industries and markets mentioned, as the generations passed and reliance on expatriate expertise reduced. These considerations became a central topic for both local and expatriate communities, but lacked any substantial framework with which to describe, analyse and recommend to effectively support, both within the academic and practitioner spaces.

These observations were formalised into the research question of this thesis:

- *How do Developing Market Professionals engage with International Communities of Practice?*

From this, the thesis aimed to consider three primary sub questions:

(1) What elements affect African and Arab professionals' ability to access Legitimate Peripheral Participation with established professionals in international Communities of Practice?

(2) If number 1 is achieved, what is their trajectory to becoming established themselves?

(3) If number 2 is achieved, how do they manage Community of Practice access through LPP for those who follow?

This thesis is important because unlike earlier work on the social nature of professional community and identity, this study focuses exclusively on the nature of access, participation and the establishment of developing market professionals in industries where their respective communities of practice are spread globally. Reviewing within the analytical framework of the Community of Practice concepts, these aspects are under researched in general and not addressed in the context of developing market engagement in international CoP's.

The contribution is also important to practitioners, because there is no clarity within the academic debate around why some local professionals successfully negotiate LPP in their international CoP's, while others of seemingly equal skill, experience and qualification struggle to achieve the same outcomes. This lack of academic clarity has contributed to practitioners working in developing markets failing to provide reliable mechanisms for local talent to engage in LPP and establish themselves in International CoP's reliably and consistently.

1.2 Approach

The analytical framework designed to produce interpreted analysis of data within the concepts is within an interpretivist epistemology (Shultz, 1976) employing a Qualitative Methodology within Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

The Literature review in the chapter 2 forms the basis of participant classification and coded enquiry through a developed qualitative methodology, targeting two primary groups: A (Established international professionals) and B (Aspirant local professionals in Africa and the Middle East), with the addition of a small Group C (Company sponsored CoP coordinators).

For the purposes of this study, the term "Professionals" is used in line its consistent and applied meaning within the two participant organisations, and consistent with many heavy industrial sectors. The "Professionals" referred to in these organisations are skilled

employees who perform a role which requires academically assessed Awareness and Knowledge and practically evaluated Skill Competence which generally require between 1 to 3 years post qualification or training experience to become accepted as competently established.

Operational and Technical roles (e.g. engineers) are not differentiated from corporate or support function roles (e.g. accountants) in this "professional" definition, and only serve to differentiate from unskilled and semi-skilled roles, which generally take less than one year to become competently established. The use of the term is defined here to differentiate from the broader use of "The Professions" (e.g. Doctor, Lawyer) outside of this context.

Participant access was granted through two organisations with significant groups of criteria appropriate candidates in Africa and the Middle East, with which I had semi insider relationships. Whilst this research is not framed as a case study, a brief overview of the participating organisations are provided below, to give context to backgrounds from which the participants and CoP's were situated

Organisation 1 is a subsidiary of a National Oil and Gas Group in the Middle East. Employing or contacting approximately 2600 people between a major offshore downstream production and shipping facility in the Arabian Gulf, along with mainland and offshore Head Quarters plus several small project and satellite support offices and warehouses. At the time of conducting this study, Org 1 employed 64% local nationals its total workforce and was approaching the end of contracted shareholder partnerships with major international Oil and Gas MNC's which had spanned many decades. These MNC's had contributed to knowledge and capability through placing several technical and leadership personnel into the organisation and operations over a generation.

Organisation 2 is a subsidiary of a leading global ports and shipping operator, running container terminal and general cargo ports in 70 countries and employing around 22,000 people. Following decades of long term operational investment around the world, the

Scandinavian and European Head Offices, along with four regional offices, have a broad spectrum of relationships with their operational assets, ranging from wholly owned and managed entities, through Joint Ventures with National Governments and other Ports Operators, through to limited 'board only' representation in minority stake entities.

From candidates identified in these two organisations, three focus groups were facilitated (One for Group A and Two for Group B) in line with Bryman (2008) for the purpose of bridging the academic framework with participant experience and further developing thematic scope for the subsequent study. The outputs of these focus groups informed the design themes for subsequent semi structured interviews and produced the first development of coding themes for subsequent data analysis.

Pilot interviews were conducted, refined and expanded to a semi structured interview grouping, conducted in line with Mason (2011), Denzin and Lincoln (2008) with a total of 29 participants, (Group A =10, Group B= 15 and Group C = 4), featuring 13 nationalities in 11 country locations over 15 months.

In line with on-going thematic refinement, Constant Comparison and Deviant Case methodology was employed (Silverman, 2006) within Grounded Theory development (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and the methodology was adapted to record observational interaction and contextual data from time spent with participants and criteria equivalents, to support the analysis and interpretation of interview responses, with the aim of exploring deeper conative meanings from interpretations of the participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008) beyond logged thematic responses.

During the latter stages of Interviews and Analysis, eight validation sessions were conducted with 6 participants and 2 criteria equivalents to review interpretations. (Bloor, 1978; Reason and Rowan, 1981; Silverman, 2006).

Findings were presented for expert academic review at EMDoc 2017 and with Wenger-Trayner, (2017).

1.3 Chapter Chronology

In this introduction I have outlined the Background, Key Concepts, Aims, Contribution and Approach of the thesis. This final section will provide an overview of the thesis chapters to follow.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review, will outline the core literature forming the development of the concepts of Communities of Practice, focusing in on the social and interactional elements that address engagement and LPP central to this enquiry. It will then review the literature supporting, critiquing and developing on from the original concepts, summarising a debate characterised by increasing complexity.

Following this, the chapter will review the arguments within International Participation and Engagement, before reviewing Identity and Power within the CoP contexts, before identifying opportunities for further empirical contribution, both called for and absent in the existing literature. The chapter will conclude that the academic debate is entirely current, and much scope remains for empirical research and theory development in the CoP paradigm, specifically in the areas of enquiry of this thesis.

Chapter 3 – Methodology will provide a detailed and open record of the progression from the original research plan, to evolved methodology influenced by revised aims and experiential amendment, under a constant philosophy.

This chapter will proceed to position my philosophy of research, specific to the ontology and epistemology for areas of investigation in social science, which underpin the research choices that follow. It will then:

- Outline the criteria identification and access of research participants,
- Discuss the original and expanded focus group methodology,
- Outline the approach and development of semi structured interview guidelines,
- Discuss expert academic inputs and reconsiderations of methodology,
- Address and summarise the ethical considerations and mitigations applied within the selected methodology.

The chapter will then provide an overview of the analysis approach of the resulting data, and outline the developed validation process, before framing the limitations of the chosen and developed methodology and potential researcher bias, along with methods and limitations of mitigation.

Chapter 4 – Findings and Discussion, In this chapter, the data derived from the developed research plan, will be interpreted and discussed within the academic debate. The chapter will proceed with an overview of the two meta themes derived from the contributory analysis.
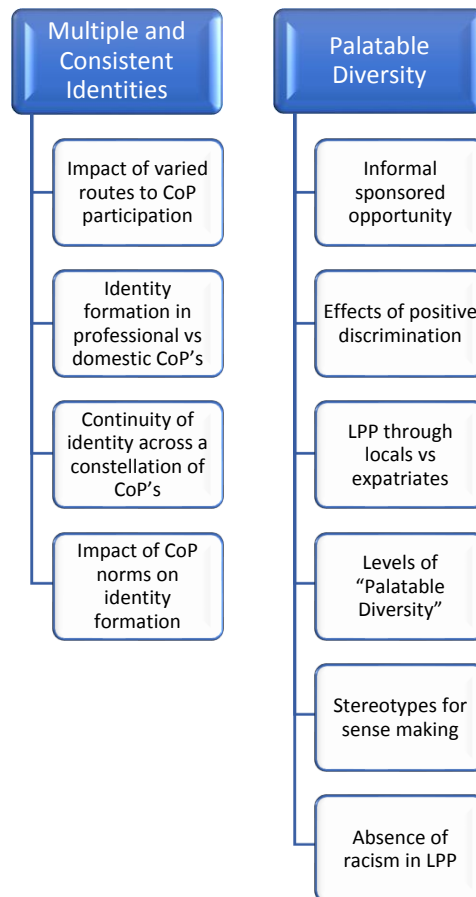
Figure 1: Introduction, Meta and Contributory themes

The first meta theme of "Multiple and Consistent Identities within CoP Constellation Navigation" will be introduced through the four contributory themes in the figure above.

Each of these sub themes will be introduced with an overview of data and interpretations, before exploring and providing placement within the academic debate, individually and as a meta theme.

The chapter will approach the second meta theme of "Palatable Diversity" in the same manner. Firstly, by introducing six contributory themes with in-depth treatment and academic discussion and reviewing the meta theme as a whole within the debate. Finally, the chapter will provide a summary of 10 conclusions from the analysis.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

Chapter 5 will provide a concise overview of outcomes of each stage of the research process, before readdressing answers to the research question and sub questions considering the findings and conclusion of the study.

It concludes that opportunities for developing market professionals to engage successfully with their respective international CoP's is shown as inconsistent for the participants, with a number of challenges particular to people who do not share commonalities of experience, culture and background with their established CoP core members. However, these differences, while proving challenging to navigate for locals within international CoP's can also be shown to have some noted advantages, and routes to engagement, CoP LPP and subsequent establishment are more likely for those who develop a mature awareness of the landscape they are attempting to navigate.

The implications for Theory and Practice derived from the conclusions will be outlined along with the limitations of the philosophy and methodology, and lessons learned from carrying out the research. Further opportunities for research are suggested, particularly in a developing market context to global CoP's, along with additional specific enquiries that could have been considered in the context of a similar study.

Chapter 2- Literature Review

Section 2.0 – Introduction to the literature review

In this chapter, the academic debates will be reviewed with specific relevance to the thesis question "One of Us? How do Developing Market Professionals Engage with International Communities of Practice?" This review will be developed through the following sections:

Section 2.1 will review the core literature, contributing to the development of Communities of Practice (CoP) theory. It will outline the heritage and progression of the concepts over the last 25 years, and will progress with specific relevance to this thesis by focusing on the areas which address entry and "legitimate peripheral participation" (LPP) in exploring the nature of access, and participation and membership of CoP's (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Section 2.2 will explore the literature supporting, critiquing, and developing onward from the original broad concepts, unpicking a debate characterised by increasing complexity.

Section 2.3 and 2.4 will review the arguments within the specific areas of Participation and Engagement as well as Identity and Power within the CoP context. Section 2.5 will give note to the debates outside of the areas of core relevance to the thesis before summarising the current state and development of debates in section 2.6 and highlight the opportunities for further empirical contribution; both called for and absent in the existing literature.

Section 2.7 will conclude that the academic debate is entirely current in the areas reviewed, and much scope remains for empirical research and academic development in the CoP theory, specifically in the areas Developing Market Engagement.

Section 2.1 – Central Texts within Communities of Practice

In a thesis focusing on the elements effecting engagement in international Communities of Practice for local developing market professionals, this chapter will first explore the core concepts raised by the central CoP texts before proceeding to explore the detail of the subsequent critique and development.

Before the research and development of *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation in 1991,* its authors Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger were working within a longstanding metaphor "Learning by Acquisition" (Willis, 1977; Spring, 1984; Cambourne, 1988). This Acquisition metaphor placed knowledge as something tangible, reproducible and generally quantifiable, which a learner had to acquire as an individual, regardless of context.

Following a line of debate including Brown et al (1989), Lave had developed much of the concept of Situated Cognition (Lave, 1988) and Social Learning Metaphors within her earlier anthropological works, observing skills development within workplace social transfer in West Africa (1977; 1985; 1988). These concepts were further developed in the 1991 book with Wenger (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

These concepts were however, in no way new, as demonstrated by the views of Dewey nearly a century earlier:

"I believe that the only true education comes through the stimulation of the child's powers by the demands of the social situations in which he finds himself", and further that *"I believe that education, therefore, is a process of living and not a preparation for future living"*

(Dewey 1897 p77-80)

Lave's anthropologist approach, (1988) to unravelling the situated nature of diverse cultures, when applied to a discipline more commonly associated with cognitive

psychology, helped to bring a fresh and contemporary prospective to the longstanding and largely unquestioned metaphor of Learning as Acquisition.

In collaboration with her student, Etienne Wenger, they worked under the Institute for Research on Learning's (California) philosophy of bringing together multi-disciplinary teams, primarily from sociology, psychology, anthropology and linguistics fields to address aspects of the nature of learning. Lave, as a traditional Anthropologists, and Wenger, having studied in Artificial Intelligence, set out to bolster the value of transferable knowledge within apprenticeships. They sampled workplace learning from studies within four diverse groups (Tailors, from Lave's previous studies in Liberia, plus Midwives, Navy Quartermasters and Butchers), in addition to group behavioural learning in a non-workplace setting, with "non-drinking alcoholics" (Lave and Wenger, 1991); Individuals identifying, participating and sharing common approaches within these groups were collectively described under the term "Community of Practice", which both Lave and Wenger defiantly credit the other for introducing (Wenger, 1998).

Within this concept, the authors reconsider the nature of learning and specifically propose we consider the locus of learning to be social instead of individual, and through Metaphor of Participation rather than Acquisition. (Hanks, 1991). This Social Theory of Learning within a *Participation* Metaphor opened debate on learning as something far more complex than previously posited, within an Individual Acquisition of knowledge metaphor had been adopted virtually, unchallenged by post-war educational theorists (Lave, 2011).

It was argued that learning through participation was a journey of learning "how to be" within a community that was intrinsically social, and that all learning was "situated", in the locus of participation, whether that be a formally designed pedagogy in an educational establishment or an entirely unstructured social phenomenon.

These considerations were viewed as a "*paradigm shift*" (Khun, 1996), calling into question centuries of educational tradition with very limited empirical evidence, only the small and seemingly abstract studies collected by the authors.

Lave and Wenger's initial aim was not to reconsider the core concepts of learning, but to explore the social learning aspects and benefits of workplace apprenticeships, in the hope of "*rescuing*" the somewhat diminished and inconsistent approach, subordinated to virtually all forms of formal educational at the time of their writing. (Lave and Wenger, 1991) A participant journey was described from "*Outsider*", through "*Newcomer*" towards become established, skilled and accepted by peers and joining (as they defined) the "*Old Hands*" at the core of any such CoP.

The experience of a newcomer learning how to become established was described as "Legitimate Peripheral Participation" (LPP) in which "newcomers" had to be more than just present in the environment of "old hands" to learn from them, but had to break in to establish a genuine and meaningful (legitimate) junior (peripheral) contribution (participation) within the locus of the "old timers".

Section 2.11 – Divergence of Subsequent Literature

Lave and Wenger's (1991) text served largely to problematize the field, rather than propose any academic redefinition. The limited empirical cases presented in Situated Learning, were more by illustration of noncompliance with an Acquisition Metaphor, rather than replacement. Exemplars in their cases were indeed inconsistent with the preceding academic premise, leading to suggestions that this challenged the fundamental perception of knowledge as a "*stable commodity*" that could be quantified and transferred. (Harrison et al, 2002).

The authors took differing directions following "Situated Learning". Wenger, writing still within the IRL, developed the concepts in *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity* (1998). Here, Wenger departed almost entirely from focus on Legitimate

Peripheral Participation (LPP), and directed attention to what he accepted were under defined concepts of social learning through reflected meaning, and the development of the individual identity through the process. This work provides more defined structure than the collected observations and enquiries of 1991 with Lave. Wenger suggests a shift away from demonstrated learning, such as traditional education exams where the individual learner is largely unconsidered, towards a "*social theory of learning*" where the learner is the primary consideration. In addition to the developed concept of individual meaning to social experiences contributing to the establishment of identity. (Wenger,1998)

"*Community of Practice*" is described here as a term with conjoined meaning separate to Community and Practice, with an inventory of four components of learning, which collectively overlap and are "*deeply connected and mutually defining*" in the same way as CoP. This allows the four components to be explored at any depth, but notably, only within their natural and social context.

Component	*Definition*
Meaning	Learning as experience
Practice	Learning as doing
Community	Learning as belonging
Identity	Learning as becoming

Table 1 – Wengers (1998) Inventory of CoP Learning Components

Wenger places his Social Theory of Learning centrally on two axes. Firstly, central on a Social Structure vs Agency axis, with a mediating axis of Social Practice and Identity, on which it is also central. His model is further situated centrally on axis of Power versus Meaning, and lastly and most significantly to this enquiry, on a further overlaid axis of Collectivity vs Subjectivity, with the balance and development of these two simultaneous identities (The collective as community and the subjective as individual) being at the heart of Wenger's theory of learning, later developed into a theory of "*being*" (Wenger-Trayner et al, 2015)

Wenger (1998) doesn't suggest superiority of any theory of learning, nor does he propose unification in middle ground as the model described above might suggest, instead he uses the axis to illustrate where his social theory of learning is itself situated within the wider debate.

From here Wenger presents a macro view, suggests that an individual is constantly moving in, out and between any number of different CoP's, which he describes as "constellations", in every aspect of their lives, so much so that they risk become indistinguishable and unaccounted for by the individual and previous concepts of learning.

He suggests individual experiences as more complex than the original account of Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP) which described a one directional progressive trajectory, heading from periphery towards core. He develops instead a more complex view of CoP's coming into and out of existence or prominence. Accounting for the development of new skills, approaches and techniques rather than simply the transfer of an existing static knowledge and established methods. He also redefines a model of CoP's containing multiple cores with bi-directional trajectories at different times. (Wenger,1998)

Within a complex "*landscape of practice*" Wenger proposes CoP's are not autonomous entities, isolated from the wider world, but rather Newcomers must master the methods employed by established members in their interactions with non-members and members of other CoP's. Wenger suggests these cross CoP and external interactions as a central aspect of CoP engagement, without which established members may not accept Newcomers until demonstrated to their satisfaction. (Wenger 1998)

Also highly relevant to this thesis, is the presented role of "boundary player" (Wenger 1998) suggesting that members on the periphery of a CoP, not necessarily shaping or driving its direction, still have potential for influence in bridging and communicating the identity of a CoP, by means of the member's wider constellation membership and

interactions. Access and influence of boundary players to a different map or constellation of CoP's than its core members have direct access to, may lead to a thesis of those with the skillset to traverse and broker from the periphery of CoP's to provide meaning (within CoP literature "meaning" equals "learning") and from this a development of personal role and identity, quite different from that originally posited as the standard CoP trajectory of LPP to a single core.

Lastly it is notable that Wenger returns to referring to the "Acquisition" of Knowledge" (Wenger, 1998) after 7 years of debate on the participation metaphor. Whilst this inconsistency is not referred to directly in writing, the reintroduction of the Acquisition Metaphor by Wenger can be regarded as consistent with his placement of the social theory of learning at the central coordinates within the existing paradigms as described above.

More recently, (Wenger-Trayner et al, 2015) reassert and refine the developed arguments within a framework consistent to that described above, in "Learning in a Landscape of Practice". Here, Wenger (now Wenger-Trayner) et al introduce the concept of "knowledgeability" to differentiate from competence within a CoP's. While competence is defined as knowledge and skills within a single CoP, Wenger-Traynor et al assert:

*"Knowledgeability manifests in a person's relations to a multiplicity of practices across a landscape" (*Wenger-Trayner et al, 2015)

The authors define the status of a CoP through the actions deemed competent and appropriate of its practitioners at that time. This suggests the standards of the established practitioner speaks of the current competence of the CoP they relate with. As such they argue that competence of a practitioner is a two-way social construct, with the CoP policing the standards an individual is held to, and the individual becoming representative, through manifesting the standards of the CoP. By extension, the individual member in turn shapes the standards of competence that can be expected from the CoP as a whole. The shift in perception requires actors to look at what was previously considered

to be individual measure (competence), now as a bilateral social process, effecting the landscape as well as the practitioner.

 Rather than any other major additions to the metaphors, Wenger-Trayner et al proceed to bring together and refine many of the developments elsewhere in the debate. They present the "body of knowledge" of a profession or social practice as more than its codified artefacts, and use the concept of "*knowledgeability*" across such a constellation landscape, which requires a move beyond the notion of single CoP's, as had been previously proposed. (Wenger,1998), to how complex cross community knowledgeability creates a "Social body of knowledge".

Firstly, within a complex landscape of multiple CoP's contributing to a practitioner's body of knowledge, they discuss the power dynamics of the various CoP's, arguing that influence and change within one CoP, may not influence the practice as a whole due to a "Hierarchy of Knowledge" subordinating some CoP's such as Doctors, Nurses and Allied health professionals within a landscape of patient care.

They go on to argue that even within national or international disciplines, practice within CoP's always remains localised, suggesting that whilst commonalities may be present across large geographies, including a hierarchy of knowledge, the details of practice are always contextualised (situated) locally, which leads to a description of the landscape of practice as "flat".

Wenger-Trayner et al go on to link the previous arguments on knowledgeability, identity creation and meaning making, as reasons for CoP boundaries being maintained, and not subsumed by each other. They suggest maintenance and transition of boundaries for practitioners being due to learning from one CoP not being automatically implemented in another, due to varied history and situated meaning which each has in unique context.

They propose these complex boundary encounters between CoP's should not be hidden within curriculums, creating impression of neat silo demarcation, but instead should be

used to leverage the opportunities for learners to understand the conflicts and prospective to *"Locate themselves within the landscape" (*Wenger-Trayner et al 2015*)*.

They expand on this identity forming aspect by breaking down three levels of identification with a CoP, arguing through boundary crossing of multiple CoP's, practitioners have different experiences in the three levels of identity creation cited in the table 2 below, which can create knowledgeability within practice, but only through complementary experience in all three levels is a strong personal identity likely to be established with a CoP. Practitioners may still relate to a practice within their personal identity, while relating even more so to another.

1	**Engagement**	To provide direct contextual experience
2	**Imagination**	To visualise ourselves within or out of particular landscapes as we engage and navigate them
3	**Alignment**	To comply with the core requirements of a practice to allow engagement.

Table 2 – Wenger et al (2015) Three Levels of Identity Creation

Jean Lave

In contrast to her co-author above, Jean Lave's work centred around development of methods of situated social enquiry within the wider social sciences through mixed disciplines, and interestingly, less so in her own field of Social Anthropology. Her developments in collaboration with varied peers, have challenged social scientists to reconsider the ontology of what exists in the spaces where actors engage, identities are formed, learning takes place, and problems occur. This has contributed to a challenge of what can be discovered, leading to Lave and others to raise questions and provide thought towards more satisfactory methodologies. (Lave et al, 1992)

This thread can be seen from objectives of Laves early research in 1973 to 1978 with members of the Gola and Via tribes in the tailoring district of Monrovia, Liberia, studying abilities to transfer arithmetic problem solving skills to unfamiliar situations

through mixed methodology of observation, interview, formal tests and experiments, drawing on informed input from linguists and mathematicians as well as social scientists to develop her methods. This was driven by Laves reflections on early phases of established research methods failing to provide adequate insight to what existed and what was happening in informal learning and application. Moreover, the original enquiry was driven through a stated dissatisfaction with the methods and binary classification of "Schooled & Non- schooled" employed regularly by Social Psychologists of the time. (Lave, 1977)

Through an intuitive appreciation of more complex social, learning and identity journeys, Lave sort to problematize classifications through a development of mixed methods, situational and extracted testing, (which progressively moved away from schooled testing methods) and a developed Critical Ethnographic analysis to explore meanings of cognition and behavioural practice for the benefit of richer enquiry in informal, situated and contextual learning and the impact on inclusion and forming of identities. (Lave 1977; 1993; 2008; 2011) This achieved some movement beyond the previous definitions of schooled and non-schooled communities, to assess effectiveness of complex social learning.

Lave's findings identified four entirely different verbal and written arithmetic systems in participants practice, suggesting that non-contextual formal schooling and contextual (situated) learning were perhaps cognitively separate things.

From Lave's initial research in 1973, through the development of technique and approach of additional return phases through to the year after she published her original findings in Cognitive Consequences of Traditional Apprenticeship Training in West Africa (Lave, 1977), a thread of situational learning theory was established.

This was developed further with Lave's collaborator in Liberia, HJ Reed (Reed and Lave, 1979) in a paper expanding on the techniques facilitated with other multi-disciplinary contributors. This concluded the relevance of *how* someone has learned an ability on

their effectiveness to transfer the application to another context. Reed and Lave suggest the suitability to generalise the developed mixed methodology to investigate social and transferable cognition in other environments and contexts. This generalisation is tested in the co-edited book with Barbara Rogoff, (Rogoff and Lave, 1984) through multidisciplinary case studies of "*everyday cognition*" providing further argument for interwoven or inseparable relationship between learning, identity forming and contextual social interaction.

It is clear to see some threads of rehearsal developing from the cross disciplinary contributors in "*Everyday Cognition – Development in Social Context*" (Rogoff and Lave, 1984) which informed and influenced later polarisation of her concepts with Wenger.

This also applies to a symposium in 1983, published as "Situational Specific Practice (Lave, 1985). Published conclusions from the symposium suggested that research at that time was at odds with formal learning ideologies, particularly the blending of formal participation in the situational context of application, such as structured apprenticeships discussed in her 1989 paper, directly contributing to Situated Learning with Wenger.

Lave suggests the research stood at an intersection with socialisation theories and was in line with Wenger's conceptual development within the debate some fifteen years later (Wenger, 1998).

Lave consolidated rather than developed these findings in her book "*Cognition in Practice: Mind, Mathematics and Culture in Everyday Life (Learning in Doing)*" (Lave, 1988). Building on from the ongoing "Adult Math Project" (AMP), Lave draws from the same type of methodology, employing it as an acceptable medium of investigating the contexts of cognitive and social learning. In this work, she consolidates and states in stronger terms her earlier assertions to moving the research "outdoors" figuratively and literally, from the social psychology traditions of bringing candidates into the laboratory, and therefore losing any contextual and situational evidence. Whilst most assertions of

"Cognition in Practice" reaffirm earlier arguments, one new position is discussed; Lave questions whether the argument of polarising formal learning against everyday activity may be moot, in that there may be nothing other than "everyday activity", regardless of the context or situation *"Synomorphicaly organised for the experience of the whole"*.

This question goes on to be revised and revisited many times in the subsequent debate opened by "*Situated Learning*" in the 1990's, most simply in the initial argument that all learning and participation is situated *"somewhere"* with formal learning pedagogies, and didactic constructions still largely "situated" in schools, colleges and universities "everyday activity" (Lave 1988, Lave and Wenger 1991).

In the last publication before her work with Wenger, Lave critiques and reviews the long term ethnographic research of Bridget Jordan on midwifery training and apprenticeship in the Mexican Yucatan, which was one of the five case study contributors to "Situated Learning", (Lave, 1989). In addition to providing her endorsement to the value of Jordan's findings around a critique of verbal teaching instruction out of context, Lave reflects on "*Didactic proselytizing*" and the replacement of "*nearly invisible everyday knowledge*" by a supposedly superior knowledge. Lave concurs with Jordan's assertion of the importance of verbal interaction during situated apprenticeship, citing her own views of the importance on learning to "*talk like a midwife*" in the context of identity forming during participation and application. Lave does not reference this as LPP, but is consistent in description. Lave diverts from critique of Jordan's research, with parallels to her own work in Liberia and again reflects on the ability to generalise the findings and methods of both of these works, drawing specific parallels to the actual nature of "*Peripheral Involvement*" in both of these contexts, quite clearly describing a contributory thread to the LPP concept.

Following *"Situated Learning"* in 1991, Lave drew parallels to her work with Wenger in comparison to Piper Mandy's research on barriers to learning participation for African American students and faculty at the University of California. (Lave, 1992a). In the paper presented to the American Education Research Association, Lave outlined clear

correlations in the theories of LPP in the context negative outcomes from *"subordinate participation"* on ethnic and gender grounds, falling short of the "*Legitimate*" LPP required for self-identity, and equality of learning outcomes. Whilst not developing the metaphor in any way, this short but clear endorsement of local application in assessing the acceptability of African American experience required to fully participate as members of the student and academic body in her own institution, is interpreted as going some way towards transferring the Situated CoP, LPP metaphor into mainstream education, and promoted a more inwardly focused aspect to the developing debate in higher education.

In the same year, Lave co-published a critique of the contemporary social studies conducted in the UK at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in the University of Birmingham. (Lave et al, 1992). While overtly a commentary on the direction taken by successive CCCS scholars and deans over a thirty-year period, Laves conclusions fell neatly into line with the thought processes of her own peer group. She supports a critique of the outsider position of the contributors to mainstream sociology up to the 1970's, in line with her own motivations to problematize social psychology classifications referenced previously (Lave 1977), and reflected later in (Lave 2011). Whilst offering a balanced critique, considering oversimplification, Lave et al, reviewed Willis (1977) approach to "*situated analysis in sensuous practice*" and a creation of *"subjective formation through practice and ethnographic study"* that echoes the parallel trajectories of the Californian Institute for Research on Learning (ILR) under John Seely Brown, a long-time peer and collaborator with Lave. This is particularly apparent in Willis (1977) enquiry relating to how formal and informal cultures *"create each other"* which became highly pertinent to the developing CoP debate. Lave et al (1992) conclude the CCCS direction away from the mainstream social enquiries of their contemporary peers, towards (i) a complex view of social formations, (ii) a connection of the internal workings of institutions designed to prepare for adult life, (iii) A complex cultural transmission "*generated in practice*" by each subsequent generation, rather than replicated, (iv) Questions the intersection in the debate and irreducibility of class, race and gender. Whilst no reference or comparison is made to the ILR academic direction, Lave's own objectives and work in Liberia, or her combined work with Wenger, it is

noted that this comprehensive critique gives away some appreciation and acknowledgement of the commonalities and the directions of their respective enquiries at the start of the debate in learning and social paradigms.

Moving back to the developing practices of social research, Chaikin and Lave (1993) case study a wide variety of methodologies from diverse contexts and perspectives, to enquire on the nature of situated practice. Relevantly it addresses approaches across disciplines, (psychology, education and anthropology) in continued efforts by Lave (and Chaikin) to leverage cross disciplinary methods and viewpoints.

Lave concludes there is *"no such thing as learning, only changing prospective"* and moves away almost entirely from critiquing traditional learning theories, but rather places established pedagogies as a "*historical step, from which further understanding can be reached*" (Chaikin and Lave, 1993)

In "Teaching, as Learning, in Practice" (Lave, 1996) Lave revisits the social theory of learning, not just as a paradigm, but as a societal goal to achieve "*ways of understanding learning that do not naturalize and underwrite divisions of social inequality in our society*" and suggests a reconsideration of a collective and social metaphor of learning is the "*only way beyond the current state of affairs"* She argues that any individualised cognitive theory, no matter how developed or sophisticated, will still *"blame the marginalised individual for being marginalised"* Lave goes further attempting to bridge the divisions between vocational education through apprenticeships and higher status formalised education of institutions, by reasserting the argument that there are no "*distinguishable modes of learning*" but learning is in fact "*a facet of the Communities of Practice of which educational enterprises are composed"* and calls for further research in ways that unintended and undesired ubiquitous social learning of divisions in institutions (xenophobia, racism, sexism and homophobia) can be designed out of these situational CoP's. In this way, it can be suggested that whilst Lave adds little to the metaphor, she is active in opening the situated learning concepts to a wider audience with more ambitious social goals.

As the CoP debate grew in a variety of entirely unintended applications in the late 1990's, Lave was conspicuously absent from much formal contribution to the metaphor. In 2001, she co-edited a series a of ethnographic essays (Holland and Lave, 2001) which narrated a popular view of a complex social landscape, in which personal identity, and the developing theories of identity creation had become an equal partner to culture, but had not "*usurped culture as the dominant factor theory*" in social sciences.

In 2002 Lave and McDermott provided a detailed treatment of Karl Marx substantial essay "*Estranged Labor*" applying the concepts to the prospective of "*Estranged Learning*" in contemporary society. Lave and McDermott employed this vehicle as a detailed analysis to question what parallels exist in social learning, and social exclusion. Lave and McDermott create a somewhat disturbing vision of well-intentioned new materials and procedures never being quite adequate to move set minds beyond an individualised theory of learning, and call for a constant *"development of new materials and process"* to "*stay alive*". They argue that despite the growing acceptance of social learning:

> "*…conceptual undertow relentlessly threatens to pull us back to the mainstream where children are primarily minds ready to be filled according to capacity, where teachers are transmitters[…]and where schools are a neutral medium for sorting out the best and the brightest…"* Lave and McDermott, (2002)

The authors call for constant efforts and innovations to keep pushing beyond the ingrained individual mindset, (in this analogy, of learners) which Marx claims is *constantly working against us, ourselves*. (Marx, 1844)

After some further absence from the published debate, Lave provided a short but insightful reflection on the developed practice and social learning debate in an epilogue for Amin and Roberts; Community, Economic Creativity, and Organisation (2008). In this, Lave provides a useful account of how her views have developed in the proceeding decade since publication of Situated Learning. She places the book as a "*Short Manifesto*" for learning in social practice and, like Wenger, clarifies that the work was

never an attempt at a prescriptive model and challenges practitioners who "*seem ignorant*" of their intent and acknowledged limitations, attempting to assimilate the model directly into practice. In this reflection she gives more weight to the production of personal and group identity within the process, than I would argue the original work contained.

Speaking to the motivations of writing, she states she and Wenger felt previous learning theory trivialised the *"Life and person transforming characteristics of learning"*. Like Wenger (1998), she then rejects the previous notion from 1991, of the one directional movement from peripheral to full participation and further acknowledges the original works limited exploration of shifting power between newcomers and old timers. Lave reasserts the strength of the case examples, as learning without specific didactic principles, which was contrary to the learning theories of the day, Lave refers to the butcher's apprentice case, as the potential "*dark-side*" of management focus on labour over learning, and the Alcoholics in knowledge sharing through linguistic participation of "*war stories*" on imprinting identity of how to participate effectively, as well as a further reflection of motivation of apprentices to move to full participation only in fields they felt a personal affinity to, within their developing identity (Lave, 2008).

Lave reflects that their approach centred too much on the process of producing experts on the way to mastery, with the old hands and masters being exemplars of what the newcomers were motivated to become. She reflects on this as a mistake, and acknowledges that masters were in fact "*complex co participants*" in the community, and newcomers may develop very differently (Lave, 2008).

Secondly Lave reflects that it was a mistake to leave out the political economic and institutional structures of communities of practice and reasserts more emphasis was required for learning in environments of conflict, particularly with old timers placed in the dilemma of granting LPP to newcomers with their own viewpoints, providing the tension between continuity and displacement

The overriding reassertion here by Lave, being that CoP's are not entities that can be captured, but instead a way of looking at social interaction and learning.

In terms of commentary on the developing debate, Lave observes a *"striking silence in most CoP studies about social class or race or ethnicity"* She argues that the initial identities which newcomers bring with them to gain LPP fundamentally include this and therefore relevant to the analysis of CoP's in context.

Lave (2008) also considers later research presumptions of an *"unmitigated good and politically benign nature of innovation and competition present in CoP's"* and calls on researchers to consider newcomers and innovators as potential "*whistle-blowers and questioners of accepted wisdom and old knowledge"* with their own potential agendas.

Unlike Wenger et al (2015) though Lave suggests caution in viewing a CoP as a local, closed or virtually local entity, but in line with Wenger (1998), promotes the consideration of boundaries between CoP's and re-emphasises increased *"knowledgeability"* rather than knowledge.

In conclusion Lave claims social practice theory makes "*conflicting assumptions about the nature of social existence*" and remains puzzled why the concepts and approaches migrated into business and education so readily, whilst not being adopted in her own field of Anthropology. She claims that subsequent studies may have lost the benefit of multi-disciplinary analytical practices that "*gave it energy*" (Lave, 2008)

Laves next significant publication "*Apprenticeships in Critical Ethnographic Practice"* (2011) was based on the Lewis Henry Morgan lectures at the University of Rochester which she was invited to deliver in 1993, in recognition of her research contributions at that time.

It was introduced and rehearsed in part through the equally referenced paper *"Maths Lessons in Liberia"* (2010) In this insightful prequel, Lave revisited her reflections on the work in *"Happy Corner"* and her own "apprenticeship" in Ethnographic research, and parallels her own development as a researcher and the application of critical ethnographic practice into the development of Social Practice Theory, as an elegant way of unpicking established structures and presenting more practical and relevant approaches.

Contrary to Wenger (1998, 2015), Lave (2011) makes a case to abandon dualist theories of learning in apprenticeship and wider social learning. In a lecture at the university of Lancaster (2011) She reiterates many of these points and clarifies that:

> "The *task is not to look at the person or the task or the world separately but look at one through, and with respect to the other, a dialectic relation…. Persons are changed by everyday practice as they themselves change everyday practice"*

Section 2.2 – Critique and Development

The chapter will now review the critique, support and development of the CoP concepts, and chart the evolving debates finally conclude with responses from Lave and Wenger.

The debates developed in this section are picked up to various degrees by many authors (over 3500 between 1991 and 2015) but can be summarised as falling regularly within seven areas of critique while will be discussed in this section

Seven common areas of critique within the CoP debate

1	*The role and ability of organisations to have direction and control on CoP's*
2	*LPP was over simplistic in its description of impact on individual's identity and made little account personal history or biography*
3	*Personal agency was underestimated in the metaphor*
4	*Newcomer Trajectory and experience disputed within CoP's*
5	*The static nature of "old timers" remaining permanently in the core of CoP's*
6	*Debated nature of CoP Constellations and Hierarchies.*
7	*Applicability in modern workplace settings including Technology and Virtual Communities of Practice*

Table 3 – Literature - Seven common areas of critique within CoP debate

Notably, several of the proposed shortcomings and unanswered questions of the original CoP works summarised in the table above, were acknowledged in the original text and subsequently by the authors, however this regularly overlooked in the critiques that followed. Over 3500 peer reviewed journal articles and several hundred books and articles were published on and around Communities of practice since 1991, and much repetition was evident, as could be expected in such a prolific debate.

By the late 1990's the debate was considering how and where to combine the learning by acquisition and participation metaphors, summarized by Sfard (1998) in employing the benefits of both with the limitations that they are in fact constructions lacking a single unified theory. This concurred with understanding the psychology of adult learning in

context (Situationally) in the hopes of ignoring the paradigm and applying the method, from wherever they may have come from (Gerber, 1998)

Ten years into the debate, Eraut, (2000) developed definitions of knowledge in support of understanding appropriate processes and types of learning for each. His delineation between Codified (public) and Tacit (personal) Knowledge, and further subdivision of Tacit knowledge into (a) Understanding of people and situations, (b) Routinized Action, and (c) Rules of situational decision making; supported Eraut's definitions of Work processes and modes of cognition, supported theorists and practitioners in better matching activities to outcomes.

The paradigm was still regularly tested in the literature, with Engestrom (2001) arguing a nonlinear direction to workplace learning in the different contexts of Who, Why What and How learning is to occur and through what process, developing on his 3rd generation of Vygotsky's 1920's Cultural Historic Activity Theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Engestrom, 1987, 2001)

Learner agency and individual identity formation was being revisited, with Lawy and Bloomer (2003) presentation of identity formation not being a separate entity within development, but in line with Lave (1996) and Fuller et al (2005) something which crosses all aspects of their experience.

By 2005, the areas of critique and support were becoming polarised, summarised by Fuller et al (2005) in a balanced review of strengths, and four areas of limitation. Firstly, that LPP had been over extended in application to all areas of workplace learning; Secondly, Lave and Wenger's dismissive view of the role of workplace teaching; Thirdly, the under developed definition of individual learner identity argued by Fuller et al to be formed both by the CoP LPP and also through what the learner brings from outside; and lastly, the underappreciation of conflict and unequal power dynamics within the original CoP context.

Attempts were made at this time to both ratify a framework of informal learning (Skule, 2004) and split the debate, pushing for increased precision, set against a "homogeneous" over use of low definition CoP's, as Amin and Roberts (2007) redefinition of four aspects of "Knowing in Action". Eraut (2004) contributes to this by differentiating types of informal workplace learning and placing them on a continuum (Formal to informal) which set out to encompasses all learning in a workplace setting, placing the Participation metaphor on this same continuum, consistent with Wenger's axis placement (1998).

The most comprehensive critique of the CoP debate was published 16 years after Situated learning in; *Communities of Practice: Critical Perspectives*, edited by Hughes, Jewson and Unwin (2007). The editors open their critical review in line with much of the previous section, suggesting that the early work of Lave and Wenger generated entirely new areas of social research in these topics, which were largely taken for granted previously within education, psychology and social sciences, but once challenged with an albeit imperfect alternate metaphor, a flurry of debate then followed.

Fuller (2007) addresses her critique largely in line with this, and summarises a number of weaknesses presented in the literature that followed Lave and Wenger's work. This follows a theme of subsequent over-simplification of many of the main concepts. Fuller first challenges the debate of the adequacy of the "learning as participation" as a standalone metaphor. She cites, Hager (2005) that the concepts of learning as participation and acquisition are not mutually exclusive as Lave and Wenger originally suggested, with consideration to a mutual and interlinked development of self, learning and the world, which posit learning as both a product and a process. Whilst a valid observation, this is largely aligned with Wenger's (1998) placement of the debate as bisecting the dichotomous indices of social and learning debate at that time, however this is unacknowledged by Hager and Fuller.

Secondly, a presumption by Lave and Wenger of predictable one directional social reproduction within the participation metaphor, with no reference to the possibility of *"Discontinuity and transformation"* Thirdly a challenge that any identifiable factor, be it participation or any other, could be adequately and universally generalised.

Whilst Fuller largely summarises the proposed weaknesses elsewhere in the literature, she also makes the separate argument regarding debate on the effective scale of Communities of Practice, in line with Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2004) that the concepts of nuance learning in narrow tightly knit communities are inconsistent with larger, broader community membership, and they represent two separate concepts.
Fuller challenges that this view does not develop the research significantly, as it still leaves a discussion on how large the *"container of community"* should be and what is inside or outside as a result of any such narrow or broad CoP definition of scale.
This is also at odds with early development from Bernstein's (1990) concept of boundary framing to appreciate what may or may not be transmitted as learning.

Fuller goes on to outline the limitation, acknowledged by Wenger (1998), of oversimplification of the concept of trajectory, discussed as a development of the original concepts in section 2.11. Fuller challenges Wenger's development of five trajectories from the original single concept, comparing Wenger's retained "*participation focus*", in his developed concept, with her own notion of *"trajectory focus"*, in line with Dreier (1999).

Fuller proposes that empirical study (Nielsen, 1997) suggest that the trajectories experienced by the individuals did in fact contribute to their perceptions. It is argued that this in turn shaped how engaged and connected they became, leading to a direct effect on what would be learned.

While making no specific reference to Wenger's development of participant experience across constellations of CoP's, she cites Osterlund (1996), predating Wenger (1998) by 2 years, on an over-emphasis of learning within the boundary of a CoP's, expanding on the

value of experiences in *multiple* social spaces, (arguably also CoP's) and the crossing between CoP contexts. Fuller concludes with a call to establish a "hierarchical dimension" of macro political world to the individual, as a thread missing within the debate at that time.

Hughes (2007) also questions the core texts, from the prospective of identity of the work. His primary critique being a lack understanding in the literature of whether Lave and Wenger, together and later separately, were presenting empirical evidence on how learning "*is*", or suggesting a model of how learning "*should be*". Hughes notes that these critiques were acknowledged in the original work, citing Lave and Wenger's (1991) description of their research as a "*conceptual bridge*" with the hope for further work to define the paradigm and leaving much of the process of CoP's "*intuitive*" to the members. Hughes however suggests that this has not necessarily happened in the subsequent literature, which he argues has progressed with a lack of coherence. He further cautions against the dangers of a potential "*hijack*" of the model by consultants and HR practitioners, in terms of the motivations of those establishing, sanctioning or facilitating intra-organisational CoP's exclusively for the organisations benefit. He calls for an academic CoP to collectively develop the paradigm.

Whilst acknowledging the significant contribution of the core texts, Engestrom (2007) goes further in his critique in relation to the contemporary workplace. He argues that Lave and Wenger's model is from a different socio-economic era, unreflective of post-modern collaborative working practices. He suggests that the generalisation from single location, hierarchical apprenticeships requires very different methods of entry and participation for their members, in comparison to fast changing, diverse and dispersed working communities he has studied.

Engestrom acknowledges that Wenger developed the concepts, moving away from the limiting restraints of apprentice learning, and moved into mainstream practitioner application through his subsequent 1998 and 2002 publications, but argues that the concepts still fall short of appreciating the development journey and relative maturity of

the both the organisation history and the individual's personal biography. Engestrom cites examples of virtual community learning and product development within IT environments, which did not exist in 1991.

Engestrom's view is challenged by Jewson (2007) suggesting that contemporary transitional environments have actually become more conducive to Wenger's definitions of mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire (Wenger, 1998) which separate networks from Communities of Practice. Whilst Jewson acknowledges, and promotes the arguments of mobile Technology shifting the locus of workplace settings, he cautions the effect of moving CoP LPP into the home, car and airport, by situating these new methods within relatively unchanged "*social* relations of employment" Jewson argues that far from diminishing CoP's which were previously relatively well defined within the workplace, contemporary "virtual" CoP's may offer members a missing shared identity and continuity, lost in other aspects of virtual working. Jewson proposes such varied situated contexts require new "*chameleon"* skills of its members to achieve continuity in multiple environments.

This theme is further developed by Amin and Roberts (2008) who suggest through their developed metaphors of Knowing in Action beyond communities of practice that "*every situated space*", be it office, screen, or remote geography comes with "*a multitude of connections*". They conclude that remote or virtual Communities of Practice can be just as "*sticky*" as locally situated ones. The Authors suggest that the debate on CoP concepts peaked in 2006, at nearly eighty publications, and present meta-analysis that the concepts and core terms within the metaphor are over generalised, encapsulating all "*knowing in action*", further suggesting that this generalised debate proves unhelpful to analysis.

Amin and Roberts characterise clear differences between situated Knowing in Action types (1) Craft based, (2) Professional, (3) Creative, and (4) Virtual, and call for a more "*heterogeneous lexicon*". This suggests Knowing in Action requires proximity across many forms; institutional, cultural, social, technological and geographical and calls for consideration of what "situated" means. They conclude that spatial proximity does not

define the "texture" of ties or trust, and that the quality of a localised workforce may also directly impact the quality of the communities formed.

Billett (2007) promotes Lave and Wenger's contribution as primary concept relevant to this thesis: The individual interaction and "*immediate social experience*" as "*the personal and relational". He* argues that this was largely overlooked in the former standalone Acquisition metaphor of learning and presents the "*personal*" element of individual agency as being minimised or entirely overlooked in later developed theory. He proposes that generalisation and internalisation of common meaning from shared experience is less likely than the literature may present, as the "individual" remains an entirely variable factor, with independent subjectivity filters, and most relevant, variable access to discourse, from which to develop meaning. Billett calls for research to be directed towards the individual aspect of social research to equal to the more prevalent and popular concepts around of CoP's,

Billett builds on this in his later work (2009) through which he proposes a more *"socially inclusive engaged and sympathetic view of the individual"* away from previous psychological arguments of the individual being asocial, and suggests an interdependence between individual agency and personal biography experience and social context, which views the individual retaining their autonomy in the landscape of social context. *"The individual can be seen as being socially shaped ontogenetically, albeit in ways rendered unique by their personal histories of self-constriction."*

Jewson (2007) presents argument of limiting generalisation and ambiguities of Lave and Wenger's community concepts, and makes a case for a more detailed measurement of these, specifically through Network Analysis. Whilst he acknowledges Wenger's assertion that communities within CoP's are more involved than simple networks, he still proceeds with an argument that Network Analysis can provide structure and metrics to more effectively define in hard terms what is happening within CoP's. he calls also for significant reflection on the story of historical context to any community analysis, in line with Engestrom, earlier in this section, and suggests Network Analysis, along with wider

concept of community from academic schools to add value in more specific and detailed appreciation of CoP dynamics.

Owen-Pugh (2007) compares Lave and Wenger's CoP model against the sports psychology model of learning transmission and Elisian theory of social development. She concludes that CoP's offer a more comprehensive model than Transmission in the areas of social and individual elements of learning, with four specific limitations: Firstly that CoP's underestimate the value of formal instruction; Secondly, an absence of theory around a competitive dynamic within communities. Whilst acknowledging Lave and Wenger's caution to avoid contested trajectories, and the likelihood of alienation of community participants, She argues that contested and competitive LPP remains a notable element in the formation of identity within CoP's in some situations; Thirdly, CoP's, like the psychological transition model, fail to theorize the variable tension in relationships between "*old hands and newcomers*" and therefore take no account of the impact of any breakdown in such relationships on both sides. Owen-Pugh suggests this accounts for some unexpected outcomes of LPP; Her fourth critique of the CoP model is that it does not adequately address established versus outsider rivalries, going further to suggest CoP's can actively marginalise newcomers in certain circumstances. Owen-Pugh proposes Elias's figuration theory as sympathetic to Lave and Wenger from the prospective of being *"culturally located"* and driven towards mastery, while providing a superior potential to analyse personal agency and situated marginalisation. This largely in line with Goodwin, (2007) who also suggests the CoP model is complementary with Elisian theory and can benefit from extension through it in specific ways. Goodwin draws parallels in the literature of identity formation and definition through the transition from school to work and outsider to LPP. He suggests however that in addition to learning skills and ways of working through situated LPP as Lave and Wenger theorise, the acquisition of appropriate adult situational behaviour would benefit and compliment the CoP model from Elisian theory. Goodwin goes on to propose that contemporary challenges of comparatively late membership of working communities by young people, may enhance the benefit of a synthesis of the two models to address a larger social picture.

Brannan (2007) however claims *"great explanatory power"* of the LPP model within CoP's, and draws on his ethnographic research in support of Wenger's "constellations" model in a contemporary workplace. He suggests however that developed literature has not adequately taken into account the gendered nature of LPP, based on his own findings. Brannan suggests the literature also lacks adequate description of other inequalities, which have bearing on the ability for newcomers to legitimise their interaction and participation. He suggests that further studies of LPP, may benefit from exploring the relative power dynamics of communities and actors, including the boundaries and nature of participation in this regard.

James, (2007) supports Brannan's assertion of a useful framework for analysis in part, but suggests that the developed "constellation" theory of Wenger (1998) whilst providing a closer description of her research findings, still makes incorrect assumptions of consensus and continuity for "old timers" across communities of practice. She suggests that with the academic world of her study, there was much insecurity though change apparent from when "newcomers" had transitioned to become "old hands". She suggests this required regular adaption, and modification of trajectories for those at the core(s) of various constellated CoP's, far from the static and one directional model originally presented by Lave and Wenger. Expanding on the adaption of trajectories within the model, Beck (2007) reviews the suitability of the CoP model with those exiting CoP's through unemployment. Whilst she concludes limited benefit from analysis using CoP's outside of a workplace context it is noted in this review for relevance and consideration of the impact on individual identity who are involuntarily removed from CoP's, noted by Beck.

These collected critiques are largely in line with Boud and Middleton's (2003) earlier exploration accepting that comparatively, informal learning is not traditionally held in as high regard in organisations, acknowledges the "*value in rendering learning visible, so it can be consciously deployed in enhancing work and the quality of life*". At odds with Lave and Wenger though they propose group social learning being broken into three

overarching categories, for which skills must be developed for acceptance. Firstly, a fundamental mastery of organisational process, without which further progression is limited. Secondly, in line with previous critiques and unaddressed in the original works, the ability to negotiate the political aspects of situated legitimate participation. Lastly, they suggest the ability to dealing successfully with the atypical, in a manner acceptable to the established order, is a factor also untouched in the original literature. The authors go on to question whether the groups reviewed by Lave and Wenger were in fact Communities of Practice at all, by Wenger's later fourteen factor definition (Wenger,1998), suggesting instead that some communities in the original work, reflect more loosely coupled groupings than would satisfy Wenger's later definitions. They propose the reality is less clear than Lave and Wenger would suggest, instead:

> *diverse range of people we learn from at work. Very few of them are recognised by the organisation as people with a role in promoting learning*"
>
> *Boud and Middleton, 2003*

Critically, while many workplace groupings have "features of CoP's, others do not promote meaning and identity in any significant way, and therefore are not really Communities of Practice at all. (Boud and Middleton, 2003) They join the growing call for more empirical research in support of the development of the debate.

Section 2.21 – Responses

Both Lave and Wenger placed the scope of their work, from the presentation of ideas and concepts in 1988 at a Conference of Work and Communications in San Diego, as a "conceptual bridge". They state clearly from the first writings, that LPP at the core of a social and situated metaphor, is:

> *"Not in itself and educational form, much less a pedagogical strategy or teaching technique" Lave and Wenger, 1989 pp40*

They call from the start of their work (Lave and Wenger, 1991) for more "*rigorous treatment*" of the major concepts presented, and in specific, the nature of CoP's themselves was left as an acknowledged and undeveloped "*Intuitive Notion*".

Wenger goes on to answer critique, both through his own and co-authored developments, and directly in Blackmore (2010). He reiterates that the concept of CoP's should not stand alone, but be analysed within the wider framework of learning within a social dimension. He addresses many of the common critiques in the literature within three broad headings; Firstly, that the original and further developed concepts do not take adequate account of individual power dynamics; Secondly, that the CoP concepts as presented are anachronistic, essentially representative of learning from a different time and era, with limited scope for modern workplace and educational pedagogy; and Lastly, that the concept has been co-opted or diluted by a number of originally unintended applications within the HR and business consultancy fields. (Blackmore, 2010).

Wenger "*acknowledge its validity*" of critique, in appreciation of how subsequent challenges and development "*help sharpen the perspective*" in a productive way.
In response the critique that CoP's do not adequately account for the dynamics of power evident in any community, Wenger reminds that the debate is situated within a theory and focus of learning specifically and was never referenced within the theories of social politics. Wenger accepts that issues of power are inherent within a social theory of learning, and goes further to place learning and power as directly interlinked. He suggests that every stage of learning is a step on a path of both achieving and claiming competence. He argues that any such competence is itself a significant power broking dynamic in the setting of acceptable shape and parameters of any CoP with only those accepted as competent in their field by their peers and seniors having claim to progress to core membership, and therefore gain any opportunity or power to shape the CoP in any particular direction. He therefore argues that power and competence achieved through learning are interchangeable, and as such power dynamics are not just noted in the metaphor, but when read in this way are actively at its centre.

He argues that this prospective is not at odds with the accepted notions of power and shaping identity, citing "*class, gender, institutional roles*" but suggests that they do so specifically "*through learning as the production of practice, identity and meaning*" (Blackmore, 2010). Wenger claims this experiencing of power through the lens of learning both supports and problematizes earlier concepts of institutional reproduction through class (Willis, 1977). He advocates each theory can be juxtaposed and is independently capable of telling its own part of the more complex reality, neither superior nor subordinate to the other.

Moving on to the second area of critique, citing Engestrom (2007), that a social theory of learning by participation is more representative of a craft producing age and as such retains limited capability of appreciating learning within technologically driven and connected, fast moving environments. Wenger argues that the very nature of social learning, from old hands to new comers is to "*anchor history in social practice*" of the day, not to reproduce historical context or method, but to place contemporary experience in historical context that comes from social and participative, rather than individual learning. Wenger expands the argument by contrasting networks to communities, defining them simply through their emphasis; A Network emphasis on "*Connectivity*" and Community emphasis on "*Identity*".

Wenger acknowledges the critique that the emphasis on community, rather than network, may appear "*quaint*" in a fast moving, highly connected and fluid workplace, but he suggests the contemporary application of balance, applying a wider network connectivity focus to the actions for communities that are in danger of becoming closed and internally focused, while at the same time considering a focus of identity on actions for networks that remain "*fragmented, undefined and individualised*".
In line with the first critique of Power, Wenger does not reassert his own validity against network theory in contemporary workspaces, but suggests they can coexist to be harnessed for the benefit each can bring to current and future contexts.
In response to the last set of critiques, around the concepts being co-opted by unintended practices, Wenger readily accepts this to be the case within a growing consultancy and

strategic HR disciplines. Referring to a shift from analytical concept to a what he describes as, "*almost as a technique…to create, cultivate or capitalise*" (Blackmore, 2010) Wenger is placed centrally in this critique as an academic theory developer supporting organisations in CoP challenges, leading some criticism that he is complicit in this transition. Citing Hughes (2007) and Vann and Bowker (2001) dissatisfaction that if this shift from analytic to applicable instrument is made, then its analytical efficiency is diminished, in addition to its fundamental benefits becoming diluted by inelegant practice.

Wenger suggests the concept is now some way out of any control, and by his own estimation almost entirely out of his own control as an originator. He provides no defence, rather discussion about the current and potential future impacts. He suggests that many practitioners may indeed apply the concept with little attention to underlying principles, and accepts that organisations are primarily interested in what benefits them.

An example such as Akoumianakis (2009) "*Practice Orientated Toolkits for Virtual Communities of Practice*", provides a toolkit model for application in virtual CoP's from a system prospective, offering conclusions that appear to mix Project team, Network and CoP principles but arguably shows only moderate attention to the underlying principles of the CoP's they aim to support.

Wenger argues however that an on-going debate both within academia, and in organisational practice has the potential to shape the discourse and lays a claim to the "*transformative potential for the future of learning*" (Blackmore, 2010). Wenger points specifically to the interest shown by traditional (Hierarchical) organisations, in cultivating Communities of Practice, albeit for their own ends, as something quite different from the traditional learning they have historically fostered. Within this Wenger also cautions the challenges inherent to the application of an approach that was never designed for this application. Prominent is the misfit of non-hierarchical communities within a formal hierarchical structure. This he claims leads to many CoP's failing or underachieving against expectations. Wenger questions whether regular failures in

application may lead to dissatisfaction with the concept, or equally, if application grows more skilled and successful, whether this would taint the analytical validity of the original metaphor in the eyes of the academic community.

Acknowledging the inherent tension between the two, Wenger maintains that a dual "*analytical and instrumental prospective particularly productive*" towards potentially a new discipline "*focused on the learning capability of social systems*" outside of the original CoP's descriptions (Blackmore, 2010).

By contrast Lave responds primarily speaking to the methodology of later empirical work, rather than the development of the concepts. She accepts and acknowledges critique of the original work and also the research of her contemporary peers within two areas, Power and Politics (Lave, 2011). Firstly, in line with response above, that research failed to account for the more complex social structures of power in the ethnographic research. This is accepted unreservedly by Lave, to the point of calling for a more comprehensive if somewhat complex "*critical ethnographic practice*" (Lave 2011) Lave suggests that the separate empirical post war traditions of psychology, anthropology and social politics, (notably brought together among disciplines in the Institute for Research on Learning) are individually disembodied from the whole empirical picture. She contends that future research to develop the concepts would have to study all aspects of the subject's lives and not just situated learning, as an isolated element. Lave further argues that after power, the second critique of insufficient political engagement is in fact "two sides of the same coin" and addressed through more cross discipline and expansive critical ethnographic practice. (Lave 2011)

Section 2.3 – Engagement and Participation in International CoP context

The previous sections have reviewed much debate on Engagement and LPP, however it is notable that literature on these areas within International CoP's is limited.

Noting the early debate on the local, situated nature of the CoP concepts, studies on an international context in previous decades challenged the nature of international participation as being within a CoP at all, but rather a connected Network of Practice (NoP) (Brown and Duguid, 1991, Pan and Leidner 2003)

This line of debate has however progressively receded in the subsequent literature as technology has increasingly connected various situated practices (Vaast, 2004). Amin and Roberts (2008) made the notable distinction between spatial and relational proximity within CoP LPP, arguing that relational proximity can be "*struck at a distance*" and the two should not be conflated or treated as the same. While in recent years CoP's are identified as bringing "*relief from professional solitude*" for colleagues across wide geographical spread, utilising modern technology to engage, without questioning the legitimacy of a CoP definition. (Lev-On, 2015)

Salminen-Karlson (2014) provides an account of international CoP with Swedish and Indian professionals. She concludes that much previous research had been within more hierarchical service provider frameworks with subordinate relationships, while in her study, collaboration and participation had to be negotiated on both sides within an evolving CoP with established Swedish members at its core, noting constructive progress could not occurring without both newcomers and old hands negotiating their own arrangements. Salminen-Karlson acknowledges the role modern communications plays in the ability of actors to engage and collaborate meaningfully, and recognises the additional and unique challenges on both sides of newcomers from a different historical and cultural background to the established old hands achieving LPP and engagement, however concludes, that within certain, nonspecific organisational cultures, these can be largely navigated and overcome.

General CoP participation, levels, routes and trajectories are well discussed in the debate for local CoP's and brought together by Borzillo et al (2010) as five "A's" (awareness, allocation, accountability, architectural and advertising) from periphery through potential levels of participation establishment and influence. Probst and Borzillo (2008) through large scale empirical research in the success and failure factors of CoP's in an organisational context propose ten success factors and five reasons for failure.

McDermott and Archibald (2010) take issue with previous arguments of CoP's not representing the current workplace, with technology, globalisation and increased demands on time of the community's experts. They provide evidence that those communities that have survived these contemporary pressures are often managed actively in the organisations in which they exist and are in fact a primary resource. They go on to suggest that communities are more like teams than previously thought although their focus is on the longer term, and they are directed by community leaders, without tacit authority. The authors claim that communities are now most effective when they have clear accountability and management oversight. This is discussed further by Borzillo et al (2012) who conclude from empirical research even traditional definition informal CoP's are in fact amenable to organisational manipulation. Four years later Bardon with Borzillo (2016) goes on to conclude that the establishing the correct balance of input, control and autonomy that organisations provided for CoP's to survive and perform, was still unresolved in 2016.

Ribeiro et al Kimble, (2010) argue the existence of a new type of CoP which they tag as a "*Quantum CoP*", which comes into and out of existence when required by its members, but still retains a sense of identity even when dormant. Lee et al (2015) suggest the intuitive notion that participation is more predictable in cases where both extrinsic benefit of Reputation and Intrinsic benefit of interactional enjoyment are present, within a management supported environment, building on from the previous assertion that joint enterprise is predicted through process strategy in CoP's Cheng and Lee (2013).

Wider CoP participation is debated in line with management and consultancy industries, Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002), targeted to open engagement and participation in CoP concepts to the non-academic world. Moran (2010) is an example of an author in this growing industry wishing to translate and apply the principles of CoP's in current literature of the *"commercial operation"* and opportunities of communities of practice, along with vocational examples such as Machles et al (2010) on ability of staff to engage in HSSE CoP's.

Significant studies such as the *"Learning at Work Survey"* Felstead et al (2004) focused on providing policy makers with hard data on activities which improved performance in the workplace, firmly within the learning as participation metaphor, but did not focus on the elements effecting individual's ability to engage effectively in LPP.

Section 2.4 –Identity and Power

The areas of Identity and Power are addressed together in this section, as much of the literature also addresses both topics as interlinked. It is also takes its own section in this literature review as an underdeveloped area in the CoP debate, regularly referred to as a consideration, but less frequently investigated empirically.

Whilst identity is acknowledged in the original and developed works, it remained nonspecific and largely unaccounted for in the agency of the actors, summarized by Billett 2006) who called for a more balanced view of situational social impacts versus individual social agency than the debate presented at that time. Whilst this is revisited *"It is the becoming of a person who inhabits the landscape with an identity whose dynamic construction reflects our trajectory through that landscape."* (Wenger-Trayner et. Al., 2015) it is not particularly developed.

The concepts of "becoming" through professional establishment and beyond were well discussed much earlier in the debate (Colley et al, 2003; Billett and Somerville, 2004;

Billett and Pavlova, 2005) and well prior to the debate within Hollands (1959) theory of Vocational Personalities linking identity formation and desired working cultures. It is concluded that Wenger et al (2015) bring little that is new to the discussion on Identity in CoP's in 2015.

Wenger (in Blackmore, 2010) addressed the critique of undeveloped influence of power consideration, by correlating "*Power*" interchangeably with "*Competence*", proposing the attainment of competence within any learning metaphor, including Communities of Practice, was actually a primary indicator of the power dynamic. Fox, S. (2000) argues that Actor Network Theory (ANT) can be combined with the developing concept of CoP's particularly within power relationships. Citing Foucault ref and the ANT power theory, power is not something possessed by an individual or even an institution that can be wielded over another, but power exists in all situations in situ and can be raised by different people at different times.

Fox gives the example of CoP journeymen developing practice through LPP, having no inherent consistent power through position or knowledge, but may in fact have fleeting power in the balance and direction of future developments. Old timers may have fleeting power by established knowledge, but the power remains in flux, situational dependant on the directions of practice, and the relevance of their experience.

It can be further argued from the literature that some inherent conflict of interest may exists, in the retention or development of power through knowledge and the shaping of practices within a scope that retains this. Fox cites his view in line with Lave's (1993) "*Emergent view of Context*" Fox (2000).

Core to this research are the views and actions of established international professionals, and their role in guarding entry to international CoP's. From the original 1991 Text, these old timers have been critiqued as being oversimplified or two dimensional.

Mork et al (2010) argue that the existing literature has only given token account of the power play involved in developing communities of practice. However, they describe the power in two distinct areas – the power "*to*" and the power "*over*". The main dynamic researched is that of the link between mastery and power in organisations and projects, and they argue that existing mastery of individuals may be threatened by the process of innovation at the heart of the CoP's and that within innovation, all members may in fact return to being apprentices, as there are no masters in any new evolving process. This should then be considered alongside who has the power to grant access and take actions within the evolving processes and some power may be exerted as a result.

The last consideration is "*Intra*" power play between practitioners in the same field (eg old and young) was different to the "*Inter*" power play of actors from different fields, and the authors argue that it was not a lack of understanding between disciplines that caused power conflict, but that they had different interests in the work of the CoP and simply acted according to those interests (Mork et al, 2010).

Section 2.5 –Diversity within International CoP's

Central to the focus of this study, no literature was published regarding effects of National Diversity on International CoP's prior to 2013 (Kirkman et al, 2013).

Diversity in terms of age, gender, tenure, and type of previous work experience are presented as positively correlated to mutual CoP engagement by Brouwer et al (2012), however, data suggests only moderate coloration, and in the UK school context of their study, does not particularly inform the international dynamic of this study.

Kirkman et al (2013) ask two general questions in support of their theoretical rationale for study in this area:

    (1) Why would nationality be salient in global CoPs?
    (2) Why would it matter for global CoP performance?

They argue firstly that it is a "*superordinate determinant of individuals' identities*", and they further suggest:

 "*Tapping country-specific knowledge also likely elevates nationality beyond other demographics (we also note that the CoPs in our sample were same-function, making functional differences less salient)*" Kirkman et al, 2013.

The lack of specific CoP diversity literature was well noted, however some ability to compare findings here to Social Categorization theory (Hogg and Terry, 2000; Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1987) is possible, consistent with the route by Kirkman et al, (2013) who's study on national diversity and global performance within organisationally sponsored CoP's drew literature from the limited Virtual Team debate to inform their enquiry.

Within the Virtual Team literature, Gibson and Gibbs (2006) concluded that nationality diversity was inversely correlated with global virtual team innovation, while Polzer et al. (2006) found diversity unrelated to conflict and trust within virtual teams
Social categorisation theory argues that groups of people regard their own demographic as superior, and will apply broad and sometimes inaccurate markers on other groups. It is argued from Van Knippenberg and Schippers, (2007) Williams and O'Reilly, (1998) that increased potential for social categorization comes from greater diversity in networks and groups, and correlates that there is likely to be a reduction in performance as a result (Kirkman et al, 2013)

From their study Kirkman et al (2013) go on to suggest a curvilinear (U shaped) prediction of performance, with reduction likely in moderately diverse / moderately social categorised CoP's, when compared to minimal Social categorisation in low diversity CoP's but high benefits from varied cultural backgrounds, and experience promoting thought diversity towards high performing CoP's in highly diverse International CoP's. They conclude: "*findings for nationality diversity are mixed in both face-to-face and virtual collaboration research.*"

Some argument exists of virtual teams and networks exhibiting characteristics of Cop's (Linton, 2015; Sarma and Matheus, 2015) and in some cases the literature conflates Virtual Teams with CoP's without clear establishment of CoP characteristics (Bourhis and Dube, 2010).

However, while the virtual team literature shares some of the same considerations, it does not address the specific nature of elements effecting participation (LPP) in international CoP's as this study pursues but is noted here in line with Kirkman et al's (2013) approach to inform this inquiry.

Section 2.6 – Acknowledged limits of review

This literature review on CoP's has been limited to the context of the study, but focus on the specific debates within the Access and LPP within the CoP participation metaphor debate, itself, placed within the much wider social learning and cultural evolution debates. Some related areas of literature that can be argued as relevant to this study are too broad to package within the research aims, or this review and these areas are noted and acknowledged below.

2.61 – National Culture

In a thesis centring on the elements effecting people of a locus, gaining entry and acceptance into international professional communities, which have at their core those from another background, it would seem an omission to exclude literature of the surrounding national culture debate.

Both meta-analysis; Oyserman et al (2002); Taras et al (2010) and "*many thousands of empirical studies*" (Taras et al, 2010) give indication of the scale of the debate.

In preparation for this thesis, the debate following from Hofstede's cultural dimensions (1980a) along with developed or alternative measures of cultural values and analysis

(Maznevski et al, 2002; House et al, 2004) has been considered, and the decision made to exclude research analysis of national culture due to Macro and Micro considerations of the thesis aims. At the Macro, the generally multi diverse nature of international CoP's within this enquiry and at the Micro, the unique micro cultures existing within particular communities along with consideration of individual identity and agency, and it was felt a search for national predictors may contradict this aim.

Acknowledging the development of Hofstedes Dimensions of National Culture, the original 4 dimensions; (Power Distance; Individualism versus Collectivism; Masculinity vs Femininity and Uncertainty Avoidance) were derived from early analysis in IBM through the 1960's and 1970's, from 40 countries with response rates above n=50. The additions of Bond (1991) and later Minkov (Hofstede et al, 2010) expanding the indices to a correlated fifth dimension of Long Term Orientation vs Short Term Orientation, (LTOWVS) and finally a sixth dimension of Indulgence versus Restraint (IVR) adopted by Hofestede (1991; 2010) from Minkov. Whilst it is tempting to provide some correlation from some or all of these six indices for generalisation and continuity in this thesis, a number of areas of concern prevail.

Firstly, this thesis is centred on the experiences of participants from number of different countries in West Africa and representatives from the Levant, Gulf and North African Arab states, all with their own unique national and local identities, with some clear differences evident before exiting the airport in each location, which are arguably not captured adequately in the developed Indices to date.

Whilst Hofstedes work is much expanded from the original 40 countries, now to 111 locations, including regions (Hofstede 2015), the updated dimensions feature only the generalised region of "*Africa West*" from which to reference culture within Communities of Practice in Liberia, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Nigeria and Angola, with Ghana featuring only new dimensions for (LTOWVS) & (IVR) During Focus groups for thematic interview preparation, the Nigerian national culture was presented as being unique in comparison to other west African nations as an example

The same is also true for the generalised region of "*Arab Countries*" from which to compare CoP participants from the UAE, Oman and Bahrain, whilst Jordan also features only dimensions for LTOWVS & IVR. (Hofstede, 2015)

Secondly, any attempt to align with these developed indices to establish a literature continuity (or deviation) creates a risk of prioritising the macro alignment over the micro thematic identification of the CoP cultures which is the true focus of the enquiry.

Hofstede outlines that cultures, (including dimensions, indices and other parameters) do not exist of themselves, but serve only as a construct (Hofstede, 2003), to capture and generalise through "*observable and measurable verbal and non-verbal behaviour*" (Levitin, 1973, in Hosfetde 2015). Again, the levels of generalisation necessitated within the national culture debate do not fit the aims of this enquiry.

The final and decisive factor in exclusion with respect to National culture is to moderate the scope and scale of to the research to an appropriate and manageable level, and by extension this literature review, to the most relevant and scalable elements appropriate to this project. Whilst the cross relevance is here acknowledged and the debate informative, a literature review and empirical study of elements of national culture with CoP's would most correctly deserve its own separate research proposal.

2.62 – Class

Whilst the majority of the Communities of Practice literature reviewed in the previous sections does not address issues of status in social class in empirical review, the field of enquiry is too closely related in social sciences ignore its impact from inclusion or omission in any new empirical goal.

Lave notes a "*Striking silence in most community of practice studies about social class, race and ethnicity*" (Lave, 2008) which would strongly support a claim of novel addition in any research proposal, however, there are four reasons for not pursuing this area:

Social class is not a central enquiry of the study, and was felt likely to dilute the focus on the Arab and African experience. Where references are made in focus group and interview they are of course coded and built into the narrative, but the area of social class has been delineated as outside the primary scope of this enquiry.

To have a detailed knowledge of the complex class, tribal and hierarchical mechanisms at play across the large and diverse geographies of this study is outside of reasonable scope. I have become aware of the dangers of misidentification of seemingly familiar class structures in former British influenced modern nations (Ghana, much of Nigeria, Some elements of Jordan and Oman) Consequently there are "false flag" class indicators at play that would make subtle enquiry difficult and time consuming at best, and simply wrong at worst.

While scoping a previous Doctorate thesis proposal, I had considered the elements effecting CoP LPP within the Royal Saudi Air Force, where class, appeared to be a significant element in the dynamics of established centrality. This enquiry was dismissed for a number of reasons and is less central in the selected study.

2.63 – National Social History

Whilst potentially relevant to the choices and perceptions of participants in this study, the National social and historical contexts are extremely diverse across the participant group as can be seen in Appendix B, and any attempt to unify them in a literature review would require its own volumes. Whilst general understanding of contextual backgrounds (such as colonial, independence, political and educational traditions) have informed preparation for interviews and time on locations, this topic has been deselected as non-central to the literature review.

Section 2.7 - Identification of Elements for Empirical Study

Trayner et al (2007) suggested more time is required working with international CoP's to listen and understand, disagreeing with Palloff and Pratt (2007) that international Communities of Practice may be more complex than they claim, suggesting that "*cross national and cross cultural adds more complexity and challenge*" She adds that international (online) environments may require more time to feel comfortable for some members, than local CoP's.

Brannan (2007) calls for further research in certain aspects of LPP such as the gendered nature and power inequalities, while Trayner et al (2007) call for more research into cross cultural international Cop's to understand how "*identity is negotiated through Legitimate Peripheral Participation within these*" (2007).

Lave (2008) notes a "*Striking silence in most community of practice studies about social class, race and ethnicity*" *while* Ribeiro, et al (2010) propose the area as a "*current rich seam of potential research*" in general, and specifically in the field of Quantum CoP's, Close to the context of this study, Kirkman et al (2013) identified no specific literature on National Diversity impacts on CoP's prior to their study.

As such there are several underdeveloped themes of research presented that would meaningfully add to the existing, copious body of general CoP literature, which have informed the focus of this study:

- Identity formation within International CoP's
- Impacts of Diversity within International CoP's
- African and Arab trajectories into international CoP roles
- Diminishing reliance on Expatriate expertise in international CoP's

Section 2.8 – Literature Review, Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has approached the literature review by first providing background origins to the CoP Participation metaphor, then tracking the detailed critique and further development into contemporary literature informing this study. The review has selectively expanded the literature into areas of Engagement, Participation and Inclusion, Identity and Power, and the limited literature on diversity within International CoP's.

The study then acknowledges limitations of three lines of literature which were possible candidates to analyse findings; National Culture, Class, National Social History, and makes clear the deselection for critical comparison.

In general, it is concluded that the debate surrounding the nature, routes and barriers of legitimate peripheral participation within International Professional CoP's is current and under investigated, leaving significant scope for empirical research.

The specific areas of modern international CoP participation in an Arab and African context, placed within an era of reducing reliance on western expatriate expertise, leading to a changing balance and dynamic, is notably absent from the literature, described by Wenger and Trayner (2015a) as "*a nut, not yet cracked*" with work required to better understand the impacts on identity and nature of LPP in multinational CoP's.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

Section 3.0 – Introduction to Methodology

This chapter will proceed to outline the philosophical considerations and methodological choices selected in designing and executing the research phase of this study.

The first Section 3.1, will position my philosophy of research specific to the ontology and epistemology for area of investigation in social science. This philosophy fundamentally underpins the practical research choices that follow in Section 3.2, which will provide an overview of both the initial research plan, as well as the considerations and development of the methodology following pilots, during study. This section will break the methodology into the four stages:

3.21 will outline the criteria and identification of research participants, along with approaches, approvals, access and amendments to the sample groups. 3.22 will discuss the original and expanded focus group methodology, the resulting data from which contributed to the design of pilot interviews that is introduced in section 3.23. In this section, the approach and development of semi structured interview guidelines is reviewed, including the symbiotic development of the thesis through on-going grounded theory, and the impact on further interview sets throughout the process.

Section 3.24 will then outline the expert academic inputs and reconsiderations of methodology best suited to the goals of the enquiry as the study developed, which contribute to Section 3.25 on the additional Contextual Observation and Participant Interaction data brought into the developed methodology. Finally, section 3.26 will address and summarise the ethical considerations and mitigations applied within the selected methodology.

Section 3.3 will describe the methods, and journey of analysis approach of the resulting data, from proposed plan, through experience and insights gained from the process along

with the areas of consultation and resulting amendments, while Section 3.4 will outline the initial and developed validation process.

Section 3.5 will frame the limitations of the chosen and developed methodology, while Section 3.6 will acknowledge further limitations and potential bias within my research position, along with methods and limitations of mitigation.

Key learning's from the development of the methodology will be outlined in Section 3.7, before the chapter is summarised in Section 3.8 as an evolved methodology, developed through considered approaches towards the revised aims of the study.

Section 3.1 –Philosophy of Social Research

This section describes the philosophy of a broadly Interpretivist Epistemology (Schutz, 1976), employing a Qualitative Methodology within Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) by unpacking the position of myself as a researcher within this field of study, through what is understood to exist in the constructed social reality of actors, and what is deemed possible to know about it, from an acknowledged position and potential bias's of a semi-insider to participants and organisations involved.

In positioning the ontology and epistemology of study and researcher, it is wise to equally consider what has gone before, to review what has become acceptable in the field of enquiry as valid evidence by peers and experienced academics in a specific area. It remains unacceptable however, for any researcher to make conclusions which they themselves do not believe are deductible from an ontological prospective, regardless of the ontological and epistemological position of their peers in the same discipline.

Social sciences may be able to argue their role in expanding the ontology of the sciences, through making cases of the existence of constructs and concepts that cannot be measured in a positivist, quantitative tradition. However, whilst methods can be selected

and adapted specifically to the field of enquiry, the core discussion of what exists and what can be known about it sets the parameters for the researcher themselves.

As Badley (2009) suggests *"We cannot represent reality, the world, accurately. We can only provide our made-up descriptions of it and hope that our descriptions are authentic and useful ones",* hence it is important that the research philosophy of this thesis is made overtly clear.

In my developed personal philosophy, I have experienced a shift from being surrounded professionally by a tradition of quantitative measurement commonly misquoting *"If you can't measure it, you can't manage it"* towards what W. Edwards Deming's actual said: *"It is wrong to suppose that if you can't measure it, you can't manage it – a costly myth."* (Deming, 1994)

This speaks to my ontological philosophy that the phenomenon targeted for study in this research; being an investigation of sets of personal perceptions around a collective social construct existing through the nature of identification of the respective actors, exists independently of our observation, and this philosophy is consequently a significant driver towards a qualitative methodology.

Whilst the field of investigation relating to access, barriers and acceptability in CoP's has been overwhelmingly qualitative in nature, there have been studies which claim the concepts do not have adequate quantitative rigour in tracking and measuring the longitudinal impacts of the actors (Nistor and Fischer, 2012), However they acknowledge that their proposed quantitate model for longitudinal CoP enquiry led to the community in their study being *"regarded in a rather simplistic view".*

A motivation away from Nistor and Fischer's description above endorses the wider debate on qualitative approaches, as it can seem that all approaches not overtly quantitative, will fall into a "Qualitative" category (Goodwin and Horowitz, 2002). While some methods may be employed by either school (Mason, 2011), my definition in line

with Barker et al (2002) is captured by the desire to get closer to the participants beliefs to gain "*a deeper understanding of what lies beneath the surface of initial data*" (2002) and being "*cautious of attempting to provide hard scientific answers to complex questions*" (Reeves, 1992).

From the position of the philosophy posited above, I argue that the quality of interpretations become academically significant, through an appreciation of the meanings attributed to them by the actors themselves, rather than simply quantifying the patterns and regularities observed in isolation from the meanings they are given.

As such, my ontological position relates to this perceived reality, which is subjective to the participants themselves, and it is this subjective perception which is the posited reality for which the methodology to follow is designed to investigate.

The research question for this thesis deals with elements effecting access to a disputed construct, created for academic discussion and analysis, in the form of "Communities of Practice". There is no club house or laminated card issued for progressive levels of membership of CoP's, so the nature and very existence of CoP's reside in inconsistent shared understandings in the minds of those who aspire, affiliate or lead them, and also notably in fragments by those who may not formally appreciate any such construct, and have no understanding of the terms created in attempts to describe them.

The collective of these fragmented points of view, stitched together to create a map of the whole, may go some way to describe the landscape for this research, whilst the particular perceptions of firstly those who identify themselves within such a construct, and secondly those who share elements of this recognition and aspire to a place within, may describe locus within such a landscape.

In summary, the philosophy and description of the landscape under investigation, sets the research firmly within the subjective minds of the participants. Even within company sponsored CoP's, with comparatively clear terms and goals, the relative perceptions of

the actors which motivates any action is the focus of investigation and in line with Yakkaldevi (2013) *"the job a sociologist is therefore to explain the methods and accounting procedures that members employ to construct their social world"*.

Combined with this ontology, no theory is proposed to be tested; rather an exploration of a fragmented construct is suggested, following grounded theory principles (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) to allow whatever is there to be discovered present itself, and from this, to generate a progressively better-informed picture and collectively summarise what is interpreted from these many parts.

Section 3.2 – Methodology of Research Design

From the philosophy outlined above, a research plan and framework was developed for ethical approval, the main elements of which are outlined in column 2 of table 4 below. The execution of the study prompted methodological reflections and amendments to original plan and analysis, which required consultation with my research supervisors and representative of the University Ethics Committee. These amendments and additions are contrasted in column 3 of Table 4 below for an overview comparison.

Research Stage	Plan	Actual
Ethics Submission	22/2/15	22/2/15
Ethics approval		Additional Ethics Consultation – 29/4/2015
Focus groups	A – 29/4/15, N=18 Dubai B – 11/5/15, N=12 Hague	A – 29/4/15, N=18 Dubai B1 – 11/5/15, N=12 Hague B2 – 9/6/15, N= Aqaba
Expert review of research plans	Not Planned	Wenger 26/6/15
Interviews	24 – planned # 1-8 by 28/5/15 # 9-16 by 13/7/15 # 17-24 by 26/8/15	Observed mock interview with feedback 3/6/15 Pilot Interviews Group A, 9/6/15 (Aqaba) Group B, 15/6/15 (Lagos) Interviews conducted between: 9/6/15 and 9/9/16 Group A, N=10 Group B, N=15 Group C, N= 4 (additional)
Thematic analysis and development phases	#1 1/6/15 #2 15/7/15 #3 upon interview completion Manually coded and themed from transcripts	Ongoing throughout, interview by interview Initial transcript coding n=6, Manual audio coding and Nvivo tool coding, methods developed through the process
Observational and Interactional data inclusion in analysis	Not planned	Applied from 26/6/15
Validation Sessions	Not planned	N=8 (additional)
Expert review of findings and analysis	Not planned	Wenger-Trayner, E and Wenger-Trayner, B – 5/10/17
Break from Studies	Not planned	Q3 & 4 2016

Table 4 – Research plan and execution variance

The following sections outline the journey of the adaption and evolution of the methodology from initial plans, through expert input, reflection and adaption of the study aims and methods, within the consistent philosophy of a post positivist interpretivist epistemology, employing a qualitative methodology within grounded theory.

Section 3.21 – Identification and Access

Initial scoping of the research problem identified 2 groups of primary actors required to define and access. Starting from Lave and Wengers original (1991) delineation of "Old Hands" and "Newcomers" these groupings were entitled Groups A and B respectively, while specific participant parameters were developed and tested.

In defining and testing criteria for participants in these groups, the aims of this study was revisited regularly to ensure that the focus on reflected experiences in accessing LPP for representative Group B participants through representative Group A's could be reasonably attempted. This directed a narrowing of Group B participants from any professional discipline who were aspiring to gain "Mastery" and influence in their profession through engagement with international established professionals, towards a more specific definition of those who had yet to attain seniority in their fields internationally, but had however gained demonstrated competence, and adequate positional seniority locally, that some level of participation in their international CoP's could be reasonably anticipated.

A further consideration was to ensure some length of tenure in their positions, to suggest adequate experience of the dynamics of negotiated access, from which to draw from. The Participant criteria was finalised as below after several revisions and checking various definitions against exemplar participant profiles.

Group A

(1) Employees who lead any professional discipline or business unit at national or international level.

(2) Not a National of (only) the country operations or function they head.

(3) Have a minimum of 20 years post qualification experience.

(4) No minimum tenure in current post.

(5) No minimum academic or professional qualification criteria, other than point six.

(6) Hold professional body and /or institute accreditation (e.g. Chartered Engineer, Director, etc.).

(7) *Mitigation of localisation policy considerations, in organisation one.

Groups B

(1) Employees in any professional discipline.

(2) National of the country they are employed in.

(3) Have a head of function, based locally or internationally who is not a national of their country.

(4) Have not yet attained head of function seniority themselves.

(4) Have between 5 and 15 years working experience in their current discipline.

Whilst the "Clear Water" of experience between group A and B participants became only 5 years between the most experienced Group B participants (<15 years) and the least experienced Group A's (>20 years). Criteria testing against exemplar potential profiles revealed extending the experience allowed in Group B opened up the study to several potential participants who were still aspiring for credibility and recognition after an extended period, and as such had experienced more exposure to the negotiated dynamic at the heart of the study.

Equally, calibrating the criteria of group A participants in removing tenure and qualification minimums, allowed the targeting of firstly some relatively recent additions to the most senior ranks in the organisations eg BU CEO and global COO's but allowed for their respective tenure in previous head of function positions to be accounted for, and

secondly captured several of the longest serving senior executive officers, who had navigated careers to those positions from non academic backgrounds, for example apprenticeships, technical and vocational diplomas, or had attained mid or late career higher degrees eg MBA's or DBA's, accessed through experience, rather than academic progression.

In parallel with defining the group criteria, I was fortunate to be granted approval to use SAP and Competency Assurance Management System access within my role in organisation 1 to interrogate the databases of all career and personnel development records for employees and contractors in the Oil and Gas organisation. This enabled me to produce exhaustive lists of potential candidates from each criterion set during definition.

Personal biographies of "Typical" representatives from each group were assessed to review age, experience, career trajectory, qualification and national transience, in attempts to assess how far above or below the tested profiles participants could reasonably be representative of their groups. This approach was repeated in the second subject company (outlined below), however I was not granted company wide access to SAP, but access was facilitated with the full reports and subsequent staff cards, yielded from database interrogation criteria from a company SAP super user, who conducted the criteria filtering on my behalf and provided me the reports requested.

From these, I was able to produce exhaustive target list of potential participants for each group, totalling many multiples of the number, which could be accommodated within the scope of this study for focus group, pilots and semi structured interviews.

Following Ethics approval for the study, and while conducting participant identification, I became aware of a third group of potential participants, which I had not been previously considered. The second subject organisation had within its structure a number of positions, which had either dedicated or significant responsibility for Community of Practice coordination. Whilst these types of roles had not been originally considered in

the proposal, a series of informal conversations with post holders suggested there was a further dimension of prospective, potentially available from them, separate and complementary to the Group A and B. Following further discussion with program supervisors and ethics advisor, a third group C was added to the study, that were:

Group C
    (1) Employees in any professional discipline.
    (2) A Job Title and/or Job Description, which stipulated Community of Practice (specifically) support and/or coordination as a primary responsibility within their role.
    (3) Had current objectives to provide some form of formal, company sponsored support, coordination and /or metrics with regard to CoP's.

The broad description of my status as a Semi Insider Researcher in each of the participant organisations, allowed the opportunity to assess the characteristics of potential CoP's, and therefore suitable participants for targeted inclusion in the study.

This scoping allowed some initial selection and deselection of groupings that were likely to fall in Wenger et al's (2002) broad definition of CoP's.

> *"Groups of people who share a concern, set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis"*

This broad pre-research assessment of the landscape allowed me to exclude members of working groups and networks that formed to combine executional efficiency within existing parameters or other largely mono-directional and transactional outcomes, and consequently did not deliver the requisite knowledge sharing and expertise growth, through shared community meaning and identity.

Other groupings such as certain project teams, which did in fact show evidence of growth in participants, were also excluded as CoP's through evidence of over involvement in organisational influence in membership, usually by directly deploying resources to work together through matrixed skill allocation, and raising questions about individual contributors consistency in ownership and identity in the focus, standards and execution of group deliverables. That is not to say CoP's did not form within these groupings, but as there was no shortage of criteria suitable CoP's in evidence, it was an easy decision to exclude any groupings early on, which had higher potential for incomplete alignment to the CoP definitions.

Further testing of a shared understanding of a CoP construct was designed against Wengers (1998) definitions under three areas of Practice, within Community of Practice. Evaluation of (1) Joint Enterprise (such as mutual accountability and consistent interpretations) Mutual Engagement (such as community maintenance and engaged diversity) and Shared Repertoire (such as shared styles and stories) (Wenger, 1998) were part of the study design at the participant level.

By definition, Group B participants, whilst almost certainly members of several CoP's, were not members of the CoP's under discussion, with which they aspired to engage and establish themselves. Again the position of Semi Insider Researcher provided the advantage of access to compare perceptions with both Group A participants and criteria equivalents as core members of any such CoP's, against both Wenger's broad and specific definitions.

Organisational Access
At the time of submitting ethics approval, I was contracted with a United Arab Emirates Oil and Gas producer, which presented a rich seam of international "Old Hands" and Local "Newcomers" for this study, by the nature of the expert mentoring through international Oil and Gas partner companies, and localisation. In line with Fields (2000) I recognised no detriment to recruiting participants from a criteria typical group I had

relatively straightforward access to, and this principle was also reflected for the second participant organisation below.

Dynamics between members of these groups within the organisation had in fact prompted my original academic considerations in the area of CoP's, however initial testing conversations around the suitability of the organisation also raised a particular concern that relationships between group A and B representatives may be biased in particular ways, due to the nature of the localisation policies positively discriminating for Group B's and Negatively discriminating for Group A's, and I felt there was a notable potential risk that some of the relationships, attitudes and perceptions of CoP access may be effected by this.

My approach to mitigation of this concern, was to consider only limited Group A participants in organisation one, that had potentially the least personal agenda within the dynamic described, by being entirely unaffected by being based in an international partner organisation independent of the localised entity, or being at the end of their working careers locally, who would not be negatively affected by successful establishment of local Group B's into their CoP's and positions.

Access was approved for either exclusive case study, or as a contributory organisation and this approval was then maintained in good standing when I left contractual obligations with the organisation and moved on to an in-house role with an employer in the International Ports and Shipping industry (Organisation Two).

While I had intended basing the study around participants in organisation one, It became clear that an even more diverse and rich participant stream existed in Organisation two, and these potential participants were less encumbered with the localisation policy considerations than many in Organisation one.

After some preliminary investigation with organisation two, along with discussions with my supervisors, I made the decision to apply for permission to also conduct the research

with candidates in Organisation two in the Ports and Shipping industry and move the study away from a specific case organisation, but approach participants wherever they best met the group criteria. It was felt that this participant based approach gave more credence to the objectives of the study and mitigated against bias of a single corporate culture.

I approached organisation two with a request for access and following detailed review of requirements for the study, and ethical safeguards for their staff, this was granted.

Section 3.22 – Focus Groups

The extension of "focused individual interview" methodology, outlined, while not necessarily originated by Merton, (Merton et al, 1956) was also considered by extension for group interview methodology in the same volume. Having re-emerged as a commercial marketing consumer analysis method in the 1980's, it broadened its academic application, particularly within Sociology, popularised by David Morgan (Morgan, 1988).

Consistent with the original plan, focus group methodology was selected for the specific purpose of bridging the academic literature and framework with criteria suitable participant experiences. Through this, it was aimed to socialise the concepts of the academic framework within the contexts of the experiences and perceptions of these participants, with the goal of providing broad participant scope to the areas of the academic debate to be investigated further in more in-depth interview.

This was achieved through developing the design themes for semi structured interviews and on-going development of the initial coding themes for subsequent data collection. and designed to both gather data and inform the design of a semi structured interview themes for groups A and B only.

Focus groups were planned and scheduled in Dubai for Group A representatives on 29/4/15 by taking advantage of a senior leader's conference held by Organisation two. Of the 60+ senior leadership attendees, nearly 40 were identified as suitable criteria participants and 25 invitations were made picking as broad a spectrum of nationality, function, age, and experience as possible within the target, with the reserved consideration of running a second focus groups if a high acceptance was received.

On the day of the group, 12 participants had accepted and confirmed, but on assembling at the venue, a further 6 attended without RSVP, making n=18 contributory participants.

The Group B (B1) session was scheduled in The Hague, on 9/6/15, taking advantage of an Organisation two Operations subject matter expert design and working group, which drew a significant number of local operational and engineering managers and superintendents from Africa to the Netherlands for that week, of whom a majority met the criteria for Group B participation.

16 invitations were made, with 13 agreeing to participate and 1 drop out due to ill health, leaving 12 participants for the Group B first session.

Whilst only one focus group for group A and B were planned originally, the demographic of B1 was exclusively African nationals, and an additional opportunity presented itself with another operational conference in Organisation two, held in Aqaba, Jordan, with mixed nationality attendance, but a larger proportion of acceptable criteria Arab Nationals from Jordan, Bahrain and Oman.

I again took the opportunity to target this assembly and made invitations to all 12 of the suitable criteria participants and held an independent focus group (B2) with 9 of the 12, with 8 of the 9 being Arab nationals.

In preparations for these groups, a separate catalyst question set was designed, with both collective and separate areas of enquiry for Group A and Group B (B1 and B2) Participants, to investigate differences in prospective between the groups.

The focus groups were run broadly in line with Krueger and Casey (2000) methods; with catalyst questions posed for the individual, with responses from that shared and discussed in triads, and views from the triads expanded to ½ group and full group open discussion with the objective of capturing individual views and building on the emerging themes with progressively wider group contributions to each other's points.

Concerns of swayed or muted individual opinions with the focus group methodology (Bryman, 2008) were addressed by amending the traditional design, and presenting the initial "Individual Catalyst Questions" using an anonymous user electronic voting system, employing "Turning Point" hardware and software embedded into MS PowerPoint. The Turning Point system was also utilised at the start of the focus groups to capture demographic information of age, professional function and length of service, which was then later available for filtering the subsequent responses by these demographics only.

To ensure transparency in anonymity in all sessions, the participant response keypads were drawn randomly by the participants themselves, and for effect, participants were asked to swap them again following an icebreaker and system instruction test responses, before commencing with the actual session demographic and catalyst questions.

The groups collective responses to the catalyst questions were presented back at the end of the question set, in the form of anonymous bar charts, which then allowed these collective responses to be discussed in the facilitated triads and ½ group to expand on the thoughts and considerations behind the response set. This largely avoided anyone being subdued by differing group views, as the opinions had at that stage already been anonymously expressed, and shared. The triads and half group views were then compared and contrasted for open group facilitated discussion in the traditional manner.

The rationale for mitigation of the concerns raised by Bryman (2008) is to promote participants to be more open to discuss underlying realities when they are aware of the whole group opinion, without being unnecessarily swayed by any vocal or assertive views in early discussion. This however presents its own considerations: If participants establish that their own opinions are not widely shared within the group, this may have its own limiting effects on their motivation to speak up in the wider group, however, in this situation, I as the facilitator had the opportunity to draw out the discussion from an informed position, knowing that a minority view has been expressed and captured on the system from somewhere in the room. This limits speculative probing within focus group facilitation and having now employed the tool in an academic setting, I have been encouraged by the speed and depth of subsequent discussions following the initial capture of opinions, compared to a traditional focus group methodology.

Focus group A1was recorded on Video (with audio) only due to technical difficulties with the separate audio recorder data card, while focus group B1 and B2 were recorded as planned, separately on both Video and digital audio recorder and closer proximity conference room microphone positions in an attempt to increase the audio quality of the triads and half groups for further analysis. This was only partly successful for the ½ groups, which were proceeding simultaneously, and largely unsuccessful for the triads in both sessions 2 & 3.

Whilst all sessions were conducted in English, the B1 Aqaba group recording was reviewed additionally by a native Arabic speaker, for any nuances in the cross talk and triads I may have missed.

The content, views expressed and emerging collective themes originating from the focus group were reserved for both grounded analysis and informing the thematic design of the subsequent semi structured interviews, however, in practice, there were no remaining original themes which had not been explored in deeper personal review in the subsequent interviews, so in practice the focus group stage served to inform the design of the semi

structured interviews templates which will be addressed in the next section, however, the likely influence of the outputs of this stage on my own grounded analysis is not ignored, and will be addressed in section 3.6 of this chapter.

Section 3.23 – Semi Structured Interviews

It is argued that the type of interview a researcher designs gives a clear indication of what is desired to be understood. Whilst a quantitative researcher will design structured, repeatable interviews in a consistent format, within this qualitative study I wished to explore deeper connotative meanings focused on experiences and interpretations of the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). As Mason (2011) clearly advises, there is no definitive methodology for semi structured interviews within the literature, however, with such a predominant methodology in Social Sciences, experienced researchers are able to provide valuable considerations in its deployment. Of primary consideration is the reflexivity debate regarding the level of influence the interviewer provides to direction of the conversation and subsequent interpretation (Mason, 2011).

Whilst some authors would strive for maximum distance and rigour in line with Quantitative traditions (King et al, 1994), others actively embrace the influence they have on the process and direction, and regard it in varying degrees from inevitable to completely desirable (Marshall, 1995).

My position on this debate is in line with Marshall (1995) that it may be futile to suggest adequate distance to avoid influence could be achieved within a semi structured interview methodology, due to the undeniable and extensive series of subjective choices made at every stage of the design and execution process.

Further to this position, Marshalls (1995) guidelines were adopted to purposely employ low definition broad categories of discussion within the semi structured interview themes, with the aim of encouraging participants to lead the conversations with their own

experience and meaning derived definitions without undue restriction. As it is their view of their own world that is the sole subject of the research.

As described in the previous section, the output themes of the focus groups were deducted into themes and added to the considerations arising from the literature review in the academic debate on LPP within CoP's, and a separate initial interview theme guide was designed for Group A and B participants, along with a further separate hybrid interview theme guide for the additional Group C participants. Whilst there had been no Group C focus group, several views were presented individually and collectively in all three focus groups on the employing organisations relationships with CoP's and these views informed the developed design for Group C interviews beyond the literature review.

Mock interview

Prior to the first pilot interviews conducted in Lagos, Nigeria. I had the opportunity to conduct a practice mock interview of the untested thematic interview guides, with a group of retained consultants acting as participant and observers. Whilst this was not considered in my original plan, it provided a welcome opportunity to test both my personal approach and the effectiveness of catalyst questions within the themes in a safe environment, and receive observational feedback from experienced corporate and academic researchers in an informal setting without affecting my live data set. Feedback and considerations from this trial are included in section 3.6 of this Chapter.

Interview Pilots

As described in section 3.21, extensive lists of criteria suitable candidates for Groups A and B semi structured interviews were generated from organisations one and two, which were then cross referenced with attendees on locations described in the previous section to target and construct focus groups.

These criteria approved lists were filtered by country location, and reduced to those I had reasonable geographic opportunity of scheduling within the initial six-month timeframe

planned for the interview stage, (Later extended). Potential participants on each country list were then ranked by potential to contribute, including level of English language and cross referenced against a diversity of function and range of demographic elements, leaving me with a priority list in each country of potential participants in a broad order of desirability to the study. This "order of desirability" would be reviewed as the research progressed, to further pursue diversity goals within each group.

No special arrangement or criteria were set for pilots, rather the first interview opportunities for Group A and B participants were targeted for pilot as they presented themselves, and a reflective review of the effectiveness of the interview themes, specific questions, my own skills in conducting the interviews were considered, and where appropriate further adaption to the interview guides and my style and approach were made. Within the Grounded theory paradigm however, this approach was not unique to the pilot interviews, and was in fact conducted consistently through the semi structured interview set with all three groups.

Semi Structured Interviews

The semi structured interview design, was piloted, developed and conducted with 29 participants in 11 countries, featuring 13 Nationalities, noted in tables 5 and 6 below.

Participant Nationalities					
Group A **N=10**		**Group B** **N=15**		**Group C** **N=4**	
Netherlands	3	**Ghana**	3	**Tunisia**	1
Oman	1	**Nigeria**	4	**Denmark**	1
Denmark	1	**Liberia**	2	**Georgia**	1
Bahrain	1	**Bahrain**	2	**Ghana**	1
Ghana	1	**Ivory Coast**	1		
UAE	2	**Jordan**	1		
Liberia	1	**Oman**	2		

Table 5 – Methodology -Participant numbers and nationalities

As the geographic spread of both Organisation one and particularly Organisation two was significant, and opportunities to access the participant locations limited, an email was sent to the top target participants (varying in number by location), approximately a month prior to scheduled travel to each location, attaching a soft copy of the company approval for access, letter of invitation and Participant Information and Informed Consent Form. (Appendix G) Locations conducted in table below.

Interviews Conducted in N= 11 Countries	
Netherlands	**Liberia**
Oman	**Nigeria**
Denmark	**Ivory Coast**
Bahrain	**UK**
Ghana	**Georgia**
UAE	

Table 6 – Methodology - Locations Conducted

This email was followed up with a phone call to ask for their decision on participation, reaffirm and answer any questions on the study and the contents of the informed consent form and if appropriate agree schedule and venue. On occasion where participation was not agreed for reasons other than logistics, gentle enquiries were made to try to understand their reasons.

Where scheduling was not possible with the first choices on each location list, the cycle was repeated with further potential participants on the criteria lists until the desired number were scheduled, and in most cases any remainders on the list who had not been contacted were retained as contingency to attempt to supplement scheduled approaches if / when dropouts were encountered at short notice.

The research plan was to record separate audio for transcription, and video for reflective review where deemed necessary, however, after noting 3 instances from the first 6 interviews, of participants agreeing to the camera, but showing some signs of reticence or hesitation with the video methodology, polarised by one Arab female participant, for whom photography or video was not culturally acceptable. On this occasion I confirmed

her position, which I had anticipated and did not ask her permission. I adapted the methodology from this point and pursued audio recording and field note records of the interviews only and focused on making the participants as relaxed and open about their experiences as possible early in the interviews.

A dated, but dependable Olympus VN 8600PC voice recorder with an external Soundtech Omni directional flat table microphone was employed alongside detailed interview notes and observations.

3.24 Expert Academic Review and Revisions to Plan

At the planning stage of the study, I approached Etienne Wenger (Now *Wenger – Trayner*) to request a meeting to discuss my research objectives and plans and attempt to gain some insight into the direction he was taking his arguments in his co-authored, then upcoming 2015 publication. He agreed, but we were unable to schedule until after the focus groups and pilot interviews had been conducted, and we finally conducted a Skype call on 26/6/15 attended by Wenger and Beverly Trayner. In this review of my objectives and research plans, Wenger and Trayner were supportive of the novelty of emerging themes, particularly within Identity Creation, and the enablement of knowledgeability in cross CoP navigation which drew parallels to questions remaining unanswered from their recent publication (Wenger-Trayner et al 2015).

Describing the dynamic between Group A and B participants as a "*tough nut to crack…which no one had yet achieved*" (Trayner, 2015a), They did however caution me on the depth of analysis that was possible from any 90 minute interview, and encouraged me to consider the additional validity of data from wider time spent in locations with participants, and also criteria equivalent individuals and groups both formally and informally. They also discussed the practice of reviewing analysis and drawn conclusions back to participants before publication.

These inputs were both welcome and unexpected, and to some degree threw my confidence in the ethics approved research plan as it stood. I reviewed my approach and discussed at length with my supervisors the possibility of additional ethics approval to include a deeper dive biography of an exemplar Group A and B participants in addition to the current interview plan.

My supervisors clarified my ethical considerations and were supportive of the goal for richer data, but cautioned the additional workload from the resulting data, which could perhaps produce a standalone thesis within an ethnographic and biographical methodology.

After several drafts of biographical and contextual ethnographic content from accumulated weeks and months I was spending with participants particularly in Nigeria, and further discussions with unaffiliated academic researchers, I revised my plans to acknowledge the reality of contextual, biographical and ethnographic considerations in informing the design of the focus groups and interview analysis, and to recognise this data, in the form of several notebooks of field observations, within the analysis phase of the data presented from interviews discussed in section 3.24 of this chapter.

To validate the analysis of findings from the methodology, In addition to Deviant Case and Individual Constant Comparative validation, I then included an additional phase to hold respondent validation sessions (Silverman 2006) to discuss and review the analysis and conclusions drawn from interviews, through an acknowledged filter of contextual data, with a mix of original participants and criteria equivalent non participants.

In addition to a number of emails, a second meeting was scheduled with the Wenger-Trayner's after the study had been conducted, to solicit their views on the adapted research approach in reality, and findings within the current academic debate, and the outcomes of this are discussed further in Chapter 4, Findings and Discussion. Transcript excerpts of both meetings can be found in Appendix C & F

3.25 – Contextual Observation and Participant Interaction

Following consultation with more experienced researchers and theory developers, as described in section 3.24 including Etienne and Beverly Wenger-Trayner (2015a, 2017), I was motivated to attempt to capture more of the social context and individual biography that I was encountering within growing relationships with some participants in their own professional environments, in addition to conducting formal research interviews, as described in Section 3.32.1. My starting point in design as an inexperienced researcher had led me to believe real evidence for the study could only be referenced from when the recorder commenced rolling, but engagement with more seasoned researchers and academics, including my supervisors, led me to consider my experience of highly relevant content being shared after the interview sessions. Initially I became aware of the predictable consistency of "off the record" discussions which became a regular feature of the post interview experience.

In line with Warren et al (2003) *"an extra depth of honesty and disclosure can be achieved on many occasions in the layer of time between the end of the agreed session and actual departure,"* Participants would regularly instigate a further discussion when we had closed the formal interview. Often wanting to know the experience of others (anonymised) but also regularly opening up in further depth on certain topics than they had allowed themselves to when the interview was formally in session. Further to this, in the subsequent days, and often when I revisited a location in future weeks and months, I would be sought out by some participants for further discussion, and I observed that in some cases the interview itself had provided adequate data content, but served further as a catalyst for future interactions and discussions brought back on topic by participants without prompting or direction from me.

These academic inputs, combined with what I was observing in participant locations, through post interview behaviours and experiencing in on-going interactions, began a process of re-evaluation of my standalone interview methodology, and admission that my original plan was purposely omitting valuable contributory data, simply because it wasn't

produced in the formal interview. From interview 6 onwards, I amended the interview verbal participant briefing to include that the session would being recorded with their permission, (audio only from this point) for the duration of our time together, including after the formal stage led by me. Whilst this captured some highly relevant content, many discussions continued out of the room, to cafeterias, smoking spaces etc., and in some cases for dinner or other social interactions.

After consultation with supervisors, extensive discussions, trial drafts of alternative approaches to the format of the thesis, I elected to complete the approved interview and analysis methodology planned, and supplement additional data from field note observations to be utilised primarily to support meaning making from the overt and codified interview data in analysis. This approach was in line with Denzin and Lincoln (2008) pp165-168 methodology of employing a combination of all observation types (a) immersive (b) participant elective (c) covert, within an evolving paradigm of validation, supported by Adler and Adler (1994) suggestion that observational and interactional research be found *"as part of a methodological spectrum"* serving as *"the most powerful source of validation"*. Developing from Pelto and Pelto (1978) parallel between social science research and legal cases, drawing on the eye witness, in this case the researcher, as *"a most convincing form of verification"*.

Whilst I maintained a regular diary of notes and observations from the period of identifying specific research topics for thesis, evolving into a research diary once the study was defined and had commenced, this was stepped up again in the areas of behavioural norms and group dynamic observations following the inputs above and became a core element in my research experience during the remainder of the study.

An important addition to the methodology in this amendment was the inclusion of Participant Validation interviews with selected participants and criteria equivalent non-participants, to ensure analysis and conclusions drawn from a wider combination of data was representative of their views. The addition of this approach will be discussed in Section 3.4.

3.26- Additional Ethical Considerations

While ethics runs through every aspect, the methodology described above is designed and executed in full accordance with the University of Leicester Code of Practice for Research Ethics, which is underpinned by the University Research Code of Conduct. The ethics application and approval were based on the 9 basic principles of the code (Leicester University, 2017) and is of course available with the ethics committee for review, however there are points of this study, which warrant special note in execution of the methodology.

A single description of my role as a Semi Insider Researcher and the nature of relationship with either Organisation or Participants is in fact inadequate to describe the reality of ethical considerations for this study.

Since commencement and completion, I am no longer associated with either company directly, and both organisations have undergone significant rebranding, restructure and staff changes within their parent groups since.

With the Oil and Gas organisation, I was a Semi Insider on approval, but officially an outsider granted certain access on commencement. That noted, the relationships, background contextual knowledge and insight clearly do not disappear with the change of contract, and the description of Semi Insider would remain more accurate in context.

In the Ports and Shipping organisation, my unrestricted access for research was granted through the corporate umbrella operating company, but my participants varied significantly in their relationship with that organisation, from directly hired, through to subcontracted in an independent managed subsidiary, and employed by a JV.

As such my considerations and relationship as a researcher was also highly varied, as I navigated from corporate environments where I would be seen as an insider, through to

autonomous company assets and joint venture investments where the relationship with each was non-hierarchical, and varying degrees of semi insider.

As such, a single terminology for my relationship with organisations I was accessing within the corporate banner of approval was not as same as Insider or Outsider, and as such I had to take a considered assessment of each participant and location and take appropriate steps to safeguard against any perceived pressure to participate or stigma in doing so.

Organisational and Participant safeguarding took absolute precedence throughout. Detailed accounts of approaches and considerations in each location are recorded in research diaries and I am happy to discuss individual considerations and mitigations, which would be too lengthy to document for the 25 participants in this chapter, but the overriding mitigation strategies in consideration of the general Semi-Insider researcher position included the following approaches on all occasions.

(1) Access to organisational data and permission to approach participants was requested on the condition of "no strings attached" and as such no product of research or thesis, other than that publicly available in any final library entry was requested or agreed to.

(2) Notable demonstration of differentiation in role between Academic Research and Corporate was made and reiterated at each step. Practical habits, such as email communication, scheduling, context and informed consent was exclusively through University or Personal Webmail to participants and access gatekeepers, and never through company email.

(3) Extension of the Informed Consent understanding and Verification through notice that all equipment (video, audio recorder, laptop, hard drive) was private research dedicated equipment, was discussed with all participants to further reassure not only that no data ever passed though equipment or storage owned or accessible by either organisation, but to further solidify the difference in role of the interviews.

(4) All Group B initial interviews were conducted offsite from the work locations, both to protect anonymity, but also to provide a physical boundary to support the understanding of differentiation in goals and objectives.

(5) Subsequent discussions and follow ups specifically on research topics, instigated by participants were equally punctuated with clear delineation that the conversation was now purely research.

(6) Retesting voluntary participation, through the practice of openly offering to switch to alternate participants, and overstatement of the large number of suitable participants available, to mitigate any situational pressure that may exist through respective company roles.

(7) Regardless of perceived participant comfort with the delineation of research, safeguarding through thoughtful redaction of shared content, beyond simple anonymisation was considered at each step.

3.3 Analysis Approach

With the revisions of methodology outlined in the previous sections, some revisions in the plans for analysis execution were also required.

Data Management, Transcriptions and coding

From a project planned interview schedule of approximately one per week, it was proposed to employ a local resource, to produce verbatim interview transcripts for subsequent production of a thematic code book, for coding in line with Silverman (2006) and Denzin and Lincoln (2008), and the on-going development of themes throughout the interview stage, within grounded theory.

Despite the amendments in analysis methodology which are outlined in the following section, the focus group data, interviews and contextual and interactional data were reduced on an on-going basis throughout the study through saturation point analysis of emerging themes, through the production of a coding form in line with Silverman (2006) and on-going reduction.

Noting a debate within grounded theory from its inception (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The notion of being entirely unable to enter analysis with no pre-conceived ideas of existing theories to consciously or unconsciously test against (Thomas and James, 2006) is entirely acknowledged in the methodology, particularly following an in depth literature review, informing focus group enquiry, and initial coding scheme. However, the approach of open coding to supplement any initial parent nodes was executed without challenge.

The coded thematic development and reduction was pursued in line with Strauss and Corbin (1990) three stage development, from a starting point of an initial coding book, derived from key features derived in the literature, supplemented by focus groups contribution, somewhat holistically through a 3-stage coding of the semi structured interviews:

(1) Open Coding (New and supplementary nodes in the code book).
(2) Axial Coding (Linking the nodes into themes).
(3) Selective Coding (Patterning themes into packaged meta-themes to address the research question.

In reality, instances of axial coding development were commencing simultaneously with on-going Open Coding, particularly following clusters of later Group B participant interviews, while additional new open codes were also created there, and also in subsequent Group A interviews, along with Deviant Case analysis and Constant Comparative methods as the interviews and observations progressed.

Any instances of inconsistent accounts between different participants were coded initially as presented in the data, but my open access approval for research and role as semi insider facilitated access to other relevant stakeholders / witnesses in the organisation, from which to compare independent accounts and form a more comprehensive triangulated picture of related events. This allowed the original participant data to be revisited, and analysed in light of additional data, and coding themes adjusted accordingly with additional evidence presented.

In execution, the quality of transcribing resource was not acceptable in both accuracy and turnaround time and the participant access and schedule constraints led to interviews becoming clustered by location, leaving me dissatisfied with the lack of continuity I was experiencing between interview, on-going field notes and ethnographic data, subsequent production of usable transcription to review and commence thematic coding.

Having persevered with rewriting the commercial transcripts for the first six interviews, two from the recommended transcriber and four from another transcriber, I found I was getting more depth of analysis from my own reviews of the audio while producing / editing the transcripts, and found that even the full edited transcripts were limiting in quality of data, without the audio (or video) to provide the nuanced emphasis and weight behind the participants words on the page.

In line with Neal et al (2015), I initially adopted the method of coding of the audio recordings manually in notes, to create an initial and developing code book in conjunction with the initial six transcriptions, and followed the methodology as soon as possible after subsequent interviews, often on the same or following day, and no later than the same week, while exploring resource options for further transcripts, however this resulted in a backlog of manually audio coded interview recordings pending transcription. In my limited experience as a researcher at this time, I was aware only of coded transcript analysis of semi-structured interviews, and was pursuing this methodology as a perceived mandatory requirement, however in progress review with my supervisors, it was suggested I investigate and consider continuing direct audio coding as a growing and

acceptable methodology, in line with my approach of a developing thematic towards deeper narrative analysis.

Following further discussions and investigations, including further academic methodology literature review, I quickly disregarded audio file dictation software to produce initial transcript drafts, after experimenting with Dragon Naturally Speaking and finding no success with this method, due to language and accent challenges in the recognition, but moved on to trialled the use of Nvivo and eventually adopting Nvivo for thematic coding and producing coding excerpt transcripts of data for further Narrative analysis within the files in line with Wainwright and Russell (2010).

The evolving and experimental nature of the analysis methodology left me with three separate formats of analysed data as I approached thematic saturation.

1 – Full transcriptions
2 – Manually coded thematises from separate audio files
3 – NVivo coded audio files.

I again reviewed this disparity with my supervisors who confirmed that data coded from transcripts versus audio coded thematic analysis was not the concern, as long as a consistent coding book was developed / applied throughout the evolving methodology. In overview, this was the case, whilst methods of evaluating the focus group and interview recordings and combination of notes were evolving throughout, through my personal experience during the study, the grounded theory principles of developing the initial code book from focus groups, and pilot interviews, and development of that thematic scheme through to saturation of contribution was applied consistently throughout the study.

3.4 Validation

Methodological evaluation was built into to the analysis methods as described in section 3.3 with the inclusion of a Constant Comparison method through on-going interview and field work, and identification for opportunities for Deviant Case analysis throughout the study as themes were being formed within Grounded Theory.

Following the methodological reflection and addition of Contextual Observation and Participant Interaction data discussed in section 3.24, the addition of a participant validation phase was planned as a supplementary method as concurred by Reason and Rowan (1981) to openly check the combined analysis with participants themselves. The format was designed with consideration of Bloor's (1978) outline of three possible procedures for Participant Validation, with Reason and Rowans (1981) preferred approach of providing respondents with a research report and record their reactions to it, the primary method in all sessions.

In addition to the core methodology for participant validation, I chose to adapt Bloor's 2nd method of researcher predictions for hypothetical cases, to employ a criteria equivalent non-participant to share their comparative views and experiences within the evolved themes from, the data, rather than hypothetical themes.

In line with Silverman (2006) a representative target group was identified of eight participants in total comprising three previous participants and one criteria equivalent non- participant from groups A and B. Original participant information and invitations were redeployed from the semi structured interviews for this purpose.

The format of these validation sessions were broadly the same for both previous and non-participants, with an introduction of purpose, followed by a brief overview of the study as a whole, with a breakdown of the meta themes and contributory themes derived from the analysis, before exploring from where each contributory theme had been formed.

All examples and collective data discussed was completely anonymised in both cases, with a separate final section for previous participants on those elements derived from collective contextual, observational and interview contributions from the respective participant themselves, which were discussed in detail and the participant questioned on any alternative conclusions in each case.The two non- previous participants were invited to contribute their own views and experiences around each of the contributory themes.

While no direct contradictions of analysis were raised, several calibrations around the level, regularity and consistency of examples within conclusions were discussed, and these calibrations were built into post analysis revisions of the final findings and discussion in the chapter 4.

Whilst this method is not presented to stand alone in validating the outcomes of the study, it was felt that it added additional layer of rigour in response to complicating the data contributions and subsequent analysis in the methods previously described.

3.5 Limitations

The methodology employed is within a Qualitative, Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) paradigm, and therefore indicative of the actual participants only. It is acknowledged that qualitative generalisation is challenging, as is the case in this study of small groups of representative participants, with no evidence to support their representative ability of a wider population, and from a specific time and place (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

Whilst fair thematic saturation is presented within the study, the possibly of participant and situational saturation remains constrained by the scale and scope possible of the individual research project. The possibility and likelihood of additional criteria equivalent participants offering further example variations within the coding is acknowledged and accepted within the limits of this enquiry.

Therefore, generalisation was not the intention of this study, or the wider field of enquiry (Wenger, 2015b) however grounded theory by its nature produces concepts within emerging theories and such concepts, by their nature are readily transferable and not limited to the group or situation they were founded or grounded in. (Glaser, 2002) however the transfer of concepts from the methodology described, should be limited to further Constant Comparative and Deviant Case Analysis (Silverman, 2006) to support further validation of future studies within a similar methodology.

Ethically, a challenge of not just this study, but also all contemporary research within the Social Sciences is the comparative limitations of researchers today when compared to the applied ethics and methods of our peers of decades previous. Looking back at some of the ground-breaking works I aspired to learn from and apply, e.g. "learning to Labour" (Willis, 1977) it is apparent that some approaches would not be ethically acceptable in contemporary social sciences, and as such would need to be moderated in a way that would perhaps fundamentally change what they offered to the body of knowledge.

Within the evolving goals of this study the aspirations to include more rich data in the form of personal biographies and detailed ethnographic enquiry were tempered with discussions with my supervisors around the level of anonymizing personal, biographical and organisational indicators, to avoid any chance of participant deduction, ran the risk of removing much of the very specifics which made them of value to the research goals.

With no resolution to these considerations, I came to the methodological conclusions that I could only capture and explore in published thesis as far as ethically appropriate, and that ethics around the participant exposure, would always come first at the expense of sharing any contextual depth that previous generations of social scientists may have been able to explore overtly.

3.6 Potential Researcher Bias

Whilst this chapter describes an evolution of many elements of the research project plan, considerations of potential researcher bias have remained relatively constant throughout, with the notable variation of role within the two participating organisations.

On commencement of the study, my considerations of potential researcher bias were consistent with my previous study for MSc, as I held the same contracted role in the same organisation, and took the reflective stance of a semi-insider. This stance was diluted as I left organisation one, but maintained approval for access to participants. While I no longer worked directly with the organisation, I still carried the legacy of perception to some degree from when I did.

Conversely, as I joined employment with the second participant organisation, I initially had no longevity of established relationships or insider position, but this inevitably developed over time, so it is reasonable to assume that perceptions of me would also increase as a semi insider as the study progressed.

This was naturally mitigated to some degree by my research being conducted primarily in operational business units, of various levels of affiliation to the head office function I ran professionally, ranging from wholly owned entity to contracted management of a government entity asset.

Whilst these varying levels of semi-insider researcher position brought some advantages in identifying, accessing, testing candidate criteria's, and providing "street credibility" (Robson, 1993) or contextual knowledge (Brannick and Coughlan, 2007) which in comparison to an outsider, most certainly facilitated significant additional contextual data and participant interaction outside of the interview set, and perhaps contributed some levels of understanding and rapport with participants, with a level of shared understanding that can *"allow for people to answer more on their own terms"* May (1997).

The academic literature is often quite superficial on the detailed challenges of insider and semi insider research of peers within the same organisation referred to by Labaree (2002) as "*hidden ethical and methodological dilemmas of insiderness*". The literature suggesting both positive benefits of potential to thoughtfully balance the ways issues are being researched, versus the potential for a loss of objectivity (Saidin and Yaacob, 2016).

To mitigate, the research goals were introduced to participants and presented as entirely independent of any workplace role I may have been known for directly or indirectly, and every conscious effort is made to review the data from subject organisations objectively. Practical distance was demonstrated by communicating through university or personal email addresses, rather than the company email, for research arrangements, and clear delineation of roles were established with each participant.

Aside from the considerations above, In a study focused on developing market engagement with International CoP's, I must acknowledge my ethnic and demographic variance from the majority of participants in Group A and all in Group B, and use this likely potential bias to further embolden the study aims of exploring the participants interpretations of experiences, in the knowledge my own lens of reference may lead to different meanings and conclusions than the participants.

Ultimately it is recognised that the potential bias described cannot be entirely eradicated from the process, and a final responsibility of awareness of such limitation in all analysis and conclusion is inherit in the role and responsibility of researcher in this study.

3.7 Key Learning's from Methodology Development and Execution

This chapter has aimed to describe a challenging and adapted evolution of development of both the academic goals of the study, research methodology to align to these goals, and not least my limited but developing experience as a researcher.

A full audit of learning's from the experience of executing the adapted methodology would require a chapter to themselves, however key points are worthy of note here.

(1) Initial research plans were comprehensive, but were designed sequentially, in line with Mason (2011) overview of the range of Qualitative approaches, Type two: "Theory Comes Last" inductive reasoning, within the original model of Glaser and Strauss (1967) Grounded theory development "Constant Comparative Method". In execution and developed methodology however, a combination of Masons (2011) Type Two and also Type Three *"Dialectic"* approach were the experienced reality. In Line with Blakie's (2007) description of *"Abductive Reasoning",* requiring a constant and cyclical relationship, between Data, Analysis, Experience and Theory, with each informing the other, constantly throughout the process, corroborating Coffey and Atkinson (1996) description. This latter description of a combination of Masons (2011) Type Two and Type Three approaches would be designed and accommodated from the start in future studies of this type and objective.

(2) Review shows a need for increased parallel processing of tasks within grounded theory to allow point 1 above to be most effective.

(3) The inputs from Wenger and Trayner were valuable, but would have been better placed earlier in the planning stage.

(4) Following the well-established method of codified thematic transcripts caused delays and quality issues in practice and proved challenging to synthesise with the adopted additional observational field note methodology. Experimentation with alternatives of manual audio coding and combined audio coding and notation software tools were good learning, but the execution plan suffered through delays in committing to an evolving analysis methodology and at times became overwhelming. As a result of the experience on this study, I would employ Nvivo

from the start as the tool for literature organisation, observational notes and Audio coding, to allow different sources of data to be managed more effectively.

(5) The impact of the widespread geography of selected participants was underestimated causing the research plan to be extended considerably in execution. On reflection it would have been possible to approach the aims of the study with a less diverse group of participants, in a smaller geography and timeframe. This noted however, I value the maximum diversity of experience achieved within the participant groups, but would consider the balance between this and execution challenges and timeframe in the future.

3.8 Methodology Chapter: Summary

This chapter has served to outline the philosophical considerations and methodological choices selected in designing and executing the research phase of this study. It has described a reflexive journey of learning through to an evolved methodology, developed through considered approaches towards the revised aims of the study, which produced findings and analysis, which will now be explored in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 – Findings and Discussion

Section 4.0 – Navigation: Introduction to the Findings and Discussion Chapter

In this chapter, the data derived from the research methodology described in Chapter 3 is interpreted and discussed within the academic debate. Companion documents with specific contributions to the findings, analysis and discussion in the chapter can be found in the Appendix as noted in the table 7 below:

Appendix	Document	Notes
A	**Reduced Coding Hierarchy**	*Reduced Open, Axial and Meta Themes at completion*
B	**Participant Table**	*Anonymized*
C	**Expert Academic Research Aims Review Transcript**	*Included to demonstrate the influence and locus of the change in focus and methodology on the analysis.*
D	**Example Participant Transcript**	*Selected to demonstrate examples of analysis through contextual data beyond interview responses, along with testing of saturation, consistent and deviant response.*
E	**Example Group C Transcript**	*Selected for demonstration of the informing value of contextual corporate prospective with the addition of Group C within the analysis.*
F	**Expert Academic Findings Review Transcript**	*For reference to the contribution, comparisons to other studies and further areas of exploration that were not considered in my initial research or analysis*

Table 7 – Companion Documents to Findings and Discussion Chapter

The chapter will proceed in Section 4.1 with an overview of the two meta-themes derived from the contributory data (1) Multiple and Consistent Identities within CoP Constellation Navigation and (2) Palatable Diversity.
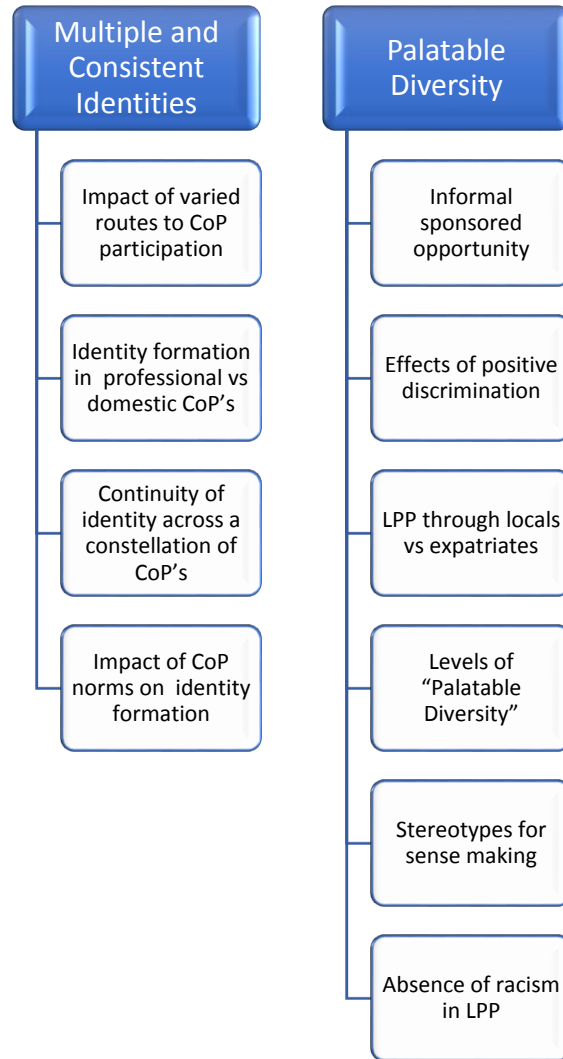
Figure 2: Findings, Meta and Contributory themes

Section 4.2 will explore the first meta theme of "Multiple and Consistent Identities within CoP Constellation Navigation" through the introduction of four contributory themes, (Sections 4.21 to 4.24). Each of these sub themes will be introduced in order, with an overview of data and interpretations before exploring in depth with reference to placement within the debate, with Section 4.25 reviewing the meta theme within the academic debate.

Section 4.3 will approach the second meta theme of Palatable Diversity in the same manner. Firstly, by introducing the six contributory themes (Sections 4.31 to 4.36) with

in depth treatment and academic discussion, finally reviewing the meta theme in Section 4.37.

Section 4.4 will provide a concise summary of the collective analysis, concluding that the opportunities for developing market professionals to engage successfully with their respective international CoP's is inconsistent, but several of their challenges are specific to people who do not share other commonalties with their respective CoP old hands. However, these differences, while challenging to navigate also have some advantages, and routes to CoP LPP and subsequent establishment are possible for those who become aware of the challenges and learn to navigate them.

Wenger (1998) defined the term "Community of Practice" as providing an "*inventory*" of four components, which collectively overlap. These components are reviewed predominantly in the sections outlined in the table below and contributed to the initial thematic coding design in chapter 3.

Component	Definition	Themes
Meaning	Learning as experience	4.32, 4.35
Practice	Learning as doing	4.31, 4.33
Community	Learning as belonging	4.34, 4.36
Identity	Learning as becoming	4.21. 4.22, 4.23, 4.24

Table 8: Developed themes aligned with Wenger (1998) Inventory of CoP Components

Section 4.1 Overview – Researchers Voice

The data interpreted and discussed in this chapter has unsurprisingly evolved through progressive rounds of thematic addition and reduction. From significant academic problem scoping, to literature review informing areas of exploration within focus groups, which in turn further contributed to the thematic design of the first broad topic semi structured interviews themes, and initial coding scheme.

In line with Grounded Theory thesis development, (Glaser and Strauss, 1977) the organisation and refinement of interview themes has been constantly reviewed and revised throughout the series, to bring in the informal interactional and contextual data of the revised methodology, and participant interview contribution to the expanded coding scheme until adequate saturation was identified, employing both Constant Comparison and Deviant Case analysis in the reduction and compounding process of the ongoing enquiry.

Possibly in line with all thematically reduced conclusions presented within a qualitative paradigm, there is so much left unsaid in the final cut. Interesting seams of data and analysis, which were ultimately deemed outlying to the research question or less central to the specific enquiry as those which remain, had to be demoted and as a result, the final shape of the findings and discussion presented in this chapter, (and therefore the thesis as a whole), is a highly contemporary draft, bearing only a passing resemblance to initial themes for investigation at the start of the research journey, and notable rejuvenation at each stage since analysis, and participant validation reflection.

In line with Marshall (1995), I submit that my voice as the researcher will be undeniably audible within each of the ultimately subjective choices made within the appropriate rigour and due process to reach this point. I consequently make no claim to objective unfiltered data within the philosophy and methodology described in detail in Chapter 3. Rather, it is hoped a thoughtful and considered approach to offering a framework and space for participants to generate open and honest contributions, through the meanings

they have made from their lived experiences. From that to extract a reasoned analysis; *employing*, rather than *ignoring* the contextual, personal and biographical knowledge which was gleaned as a by-product of the research experience. This is done with all possible subordination to my own filters, but acknowledgement of their existence.

Of the two Meta themes reduced from the enquiry, the conclusions of the first have been regarded as generally intuitive within participant validation and contextual discussion, however the interpretations within the contributory themes provide a deeper investigation of a more complex set of tensions apparent in the varied routes and outcomes of identity creation within Group B participants, and problematize the literature in this area. The interpretations within the second meta theme have conversely been regarded as less intuitive, and more emotionally charged within participant validation of the analysis and interpretations, in areas which have received a far less focused treatment in the academic literature.

Section 4.2 – Multiple and Consistent Identities: CoP Constellation Navigation

Section 4.20 – Introduction

In exploring the first meta theme, the areas of learning how "to be" as well as learning how "to do" are a clear thread in the Community of Practice literature to date, which describes a disputed model of parallel evolution of personal identity through learning "to be", along with a newcomer's navigation and establishment within CoP's that members relate to (Lave,2008).

Pykro et al neatly summarize a definition of the thread of this debate:

> *"In CoPs, learning is portrayed as a social formation of a person rather than as only the acquisition of knowledge. Learning entails change in one's identity, as well as the (re-)negotiation of meaning of experience."*
>
> *(Pykro et al, 2017)*

The nature of the landscape in which this occurs has been problematized through a complex map of constant encounters with CoP's in constellations, bi directional trajectories of members and boundary work between overt and less overt CoP's at every turn (Wenger-Trayner et al 2015), so has the nature of identity creation been problematized in the same way. (Lave, 2011) From a straightforward metaphor, of modelling relatable behaviours of established "*old timers*" and "*becoming and belonging*" Wenger et al (2002), to the subtleties of developing acceptable presence within fluid and diverse CoP constellations which is proposed within the literature as the more complex reality of CoP experiences. (Fuller, 2007)

The debate around identity creation, and a reciprocal shaping of the CoP's encountered through identity elements formed elsewhere (Arguably in other CoP's) is the subject of this meta theme which is built through four contributing threads.

In the first theme, Section 4.21 "Impacts on Identity Through Variance in Routes to CoP Participation", Group A Participants describe a familiarity and critique of their established peers internationally, having progressed through an often unrepeatable, and not necessarily desirable path of identity shaping which in many cases no longer exists. These navigated paths were not described rites of passage, nor was it suggested that professionals could never be equally capable via different routes, but rather most Group A participants took responsibility, and felt they could do a better job of supporting the next generation of selected and accepted newcomers. However, evidence suggested that Group A identity forming journeys had created both blind spots and identity differences, and this may require changes in the nature of the CoP's collective identity going forward.

In section 4.22 one of these potential blind spots is explored in how domestic communities viewed and valued professional status in the second theme. *Identity formation in Professional vs Domestic. CoP's.* The analysis presented serves to further problematize the debate, through an interpretation of a disjoint between in local community perceptions and professional status within CoP's of the of the Group B participants.

The third contributory theme in section 4.23 – Continuity of Identity across a Constellation of CoP's can be described as either a limiter or antagonist to identity formation. The analysis here describes a story of "*becoming known as*" rather than "*becoming*" and explores the challenges faced when a hard-won establishment in a CoP is achieved, and the struggle to move past that very identity in relation to other CoP's that participants subsequently identify with.

Linked to closely with the previous theme, Section 4.24 – Impacts of CoP Norms on Identity Formation; provides an intuitive bridge on acceptable behaviour modelling, from both prospective of expectations and eagerness to please. Data interpreted here pulls on inaccurate perceptions on both sides, as well as the interface and fine line between situationally modelled behaviour and identity creation / realisation.

4.21 – Impacts on Identity through variance in routes to CoP participation

"Working Class Millionaires?" - ("Derek", Group A)

This first section of the first meta theme, analyses the prospective of Group A participant's reflections on their own identity building journeys, and how that may subsequently influence the gatekeeper and LPP selector roles of their current international CoP's.

This is juxtaposed to different, and in some ways superior opportunities available to local Africans and Arabs in Group B and equivalent, and how these considerations shape both the external perceptions and internal identity development of those actors.

Social trajectory including perceptions of class stability or transience were not within the original themes designed from the scope or literature. Nor did they present significantly from the focus groups, however in the first Group A pilot interview, (excerpt below) this subject was opened and became a pseudo-demographic enquiry of social construct within future interviews of Group A.

> *Derek (A)   I don't own any shares in this place (…) or in [Operating company]. I take a wage from keeping the hook swinging, as I have for 20 years (.) and whilst we invest (.) all the profits go back to Copenhagen(..) So how am I any different to the lads you see out of the window there? [workshop below]*

In line with Nielsen's (1997) empirical study that trajectories experienced by individuals contributed to their perceptions and identity, four of the Group A participants who had transitioned through blue collar operational backgrounds, described themselves as working class. Notably, not from a working-class background but in the present tense. For these four established professionals, who collectively control access for many hundreds of local Arab and African staff for international legitimate peripheral participation in their respective CoP's, the construct of their identity was retained despite their trajectories.

Others in Group A had different perspectives, In the example below a recently promoted CEO of one of the most profitable container terminals in the world, and the only non-graduate in group A, has never regarded himself as working class, even when, by most accepted definitions (Rubin et al, 2014; Rubin, 2012; Sirin, 2005) through much of his career, he had been, having worked his way through various operational and then management roles.

A   *Do you think it matters (..) what anyone else thinks*

M   *Actually I do yes (..) how I present myself (...) [Refers to the MD of a sister port] <u>presents</u> [Emphasis] himself as knowing every nut and bolt of the operation (..) "<u>been there done that better than you</u>" [mocking] but that's what his COO is for. I've moved 10 boxes [shipping containers] for every one he has (..) but that's not our job now.*

A   *So the distance is important (?)*

M   *(...) Its about putting your time into the right activities(..) Every time [Derogatory reference to MD of another port] is counting twist locks (..) who is building relationships with [the inland supply chain] (..) government relations (.) negotiating the concession maybe 3 years ahead*

Noting Billettt's (2006) premise that: "*The individual can be seen as being socially shaped ontogenetically, albeit in ways rendered unique by their personal histories of self-constriction.*" Differences in personal career paths were apparent in all professions within Group A when compared to Group B.

The trajectories and career paths of the Group A Participants were largely unrepeatable, because those systems, locations and experiences were for the most part, no longer there, at least in the form they had been as described by Group A's. The industry and practices had moved on, and the available routes for Group B participants to achieve any similarity in CoP status, regardless of their nationalities and starting points, had altered as a result.

While some Group B's were reticent in their initial openness to admit true levels of aspiration, 13 of the 15 shared a desire to reach central or established international position, with international credibility and influence in their respective global fields.

However, a feature of those established in various International CoP's was a "*small world, small industry*" (John, Group A) interpreted as coming through comparative familiarity with a significant proportion of the industry leading figures, bordering on contempt in some cases, which was largely consistent through all 10 group A participants, including the more recent "break-in" African and Arab Group A members.

In the example below Marcus, a HR Director, recently moved up from a regional to a global remit, exemplifies an upper middle class Danish persona, which might be overtly at odds with a tough blue collar industrial environment, and bears little resemblance to any of his CoE members from developing nations who aspire to equivalent status.

Marcus relationship to these differing backgrounds is interpreted as "*knowledgeability*" (Wenger-Trayner et al, 2015) through long association boundary work, rather than membership of the CoP's themselves. Below excerpt discussing the difference in his approach to those he is often dealing with:

A   *How does this approach (..) effect your relationship with ops teams on location?*
M   *I have always tried to be my genuine self (.) Person.(…) I recruited and supported succession for [refers to a list of senior MD's and Ops heads]. I am no more an engineer than a ballet dancer (.....) but I like to think I know who will be successful in a particular location as well as role when I see her [emphasis] and who will do what is required to grow.*

In interview, and in role, Marcus made no overt effort to confirm to the social and protocol norms in country locations, but was widely respected in the operational groups he referred to. He demonstrated another way of engaging with the leaders of blue-collar elements of the business in an industry where others credibility was often achieved through a deep understanding of the business and time on the ground, Marcus however navigated through respecting the place and distance of experts in their own areas, and demanded the same in return.

Largely in line with Wenger-Trayner et al (2015), discussion of Marcus's long-term understanding came from extensive boundary association without threat of infringement, He was careful to never overstep the mark in operations and other support functions, but insisted on the same respect for his area of expertise, and through this appeared to have forged a successful ability to navigate a complex landscape with minimal compromise.

A Group B participant in his own team though felt he could not follow the same approach and CoP boundary trajectory of his established Group A colleague:
Ibrahim, a HR manager in Bahrain felt he had no choice but to engage far closer to the business than Marcus did.

AW	*What about you? How close are you to the day to day operation?*
Ibrahim	*If I don't take gawa [coffee] in the Majalis [phrase, not literal] I will not be listened to. In the winter [referring to industrial strike action] I was lucky, my house was untouched, and nothing left the gate for me [referring to spill over of tensions into the local community]*

Later in the interview

AW	*Your name was mentioned from the HR College (…) How useful(..)erm practical was that for you? [refers to the (XXXX) cross company professional HR development, preparations for strategic HR prescribing a clear HR culture with "Marcus" a heavy contributor]*
Ibrahim	*[edited out niceties] …I would hope to work like this. On CoE [regional and global projects] this is very nice (..) I think it is going well, but with these people [locally] I have to know their business, be close, and be seen to.*

Ibrahim had recently commenced studying for a PhD, He had a growing reputation, through successful involvement in regional and global CoE projects but regularly described an inability to conform with expectations of his senior and CoP core members.

Ibrahim	*Who am I to question (..) these are world class [referencing recent talent process changes] but we are coming from different places (..) I have my (.) to find my way to be in [Home location] but fit there [referencing European HQ] to have any future. The HR College (..) with no disrespect (…) it's very good*
AW	*But?*

Ibrahim	*^<u>However [Emphasis]</u> [Laughs] This is for who "Marus" thinks, with no background, I'm sorry to say education.*
AW	*But most on the College are similar to you from around the world (..) age(.) education (.) responsibility*
Ibrahim	*Indeed (...) I learn from them so much, Mainly even(..) but "Marcus" and [refers to other senior cross group HR] they are doing this for what they think we are.*

Ibrahim articulated what was felt by many of the Group B's, and the data revealed several other examples of perceived misalignment, cases of expectation, opportunity or development that Group B's felt (rightly or wrongly) was below them, or misaligned to their current level or needs.

Perhaps not uncommon in aspirational professionals keen to get ahead, but a regular feature in unpicking these perceptions was a view of the old hands replicating what they felt:

Opiyemi (Group B)   *That was probably fine in P&O in the 1980's*

Kingsley (Group A)   *I was doing this in [Multi National Company] nearly 10 years ago (...) this isn't new as he thinks*

Whilst there was no significant difference in group A and B educational attainment, it was notable that all the Group B participants had attained a bachelor's degree before entering the workplace, due to recruitment filtering in their locations, 4 of the 15 had completed a Post Graduate directly after their Bachelors and 4 more were currently studying for Masters part time. Group A's had a similar attainment spread of higher degrees, 6 out of 10 attained or currently studying, but only 5 of the 10 had completed a Bachelors before entering the workplace.

What differed was their route to work. Operational and Engineering roles in Group A and their peer equivalents, had typically entered work earlier and had often reverted to MSc

or MBA (4 out of 10 MBA without bachelors) described as a route to catch up with the current standard, and MBA as a route to senior general or corporate management.

Despite the youngest of Group A being only 3 years older than the oldest of Group B, it is interpreted that Group A's own highly diverse trajectories, mixed demographics and backgrounds are still perceived, by themselves and others (Including Group B and equivalents) as coming from a shared time, place and landscape that no longer exists, There is no sense of mourning or superiority for this perceived former territory however, in fact, some Group A's felt let down by elements of their own journeys, which they progressed through successfully "in spite of" (Christian – Group A) and they feel have been improved for the next generation.

The well-rehearsed argument of baby boomers and Generation X having a more experiential bias of likely successful trajectories, compared with later entrants, particularly in developing markets (Rahman et al, 2017) is present anecdotally in the perceptions of Group B, but this is not consistently borne out in Group A interviews. A relatively mature awareness of different routes, each with respective advantages and disadvantages was in fact present in discussion.

Whilst Lave (2008) observes a *"striking silence in most CoP studies about social class or race or ethnicity"* Group A's largely reported and were often seen to show an awareness of group differences in individual biography and trajectory of Group B equivalents to themselves, but recognised a high potential coming from individual agency, In line with Hodkinson et al, (2004)

Although indirectly recaptured by Wenger-Trayner et al (2015) in making the individual experience of navigation in constellations of CoP's *"unique",* this is quite contrary to Wengers (1998) developments which gave very little attention to the individual within the developed model, as our Group A participants report.

4.22 – Identity Formation in Professional vs Domestic CoP's

"Who's he when he's at home then? ("Mark" Group A)

This section explores some specific boundary work that Group B participants shared in navigating between very different cultures in their work and personal, local communities, exploring any change occurring in their identification of primary CoP's and what impact that may have had on their identities within each.

Three participant examples are drawn on in this section to demonstrate inconsistency of the impact of vocational CoP's on the actor's personal identity, which problematizes the debate in Social and Individual agency (Billettt and Sommerville, 2004; Billettt, 2006; O'Brien and Bates, 2015; Wenger-Trayner et al, 2015)

In the first example, Fatima, an upstream planner in the oil and gas industry is one of a growing number of female Arab engineers who have been largely accepted into a globally male dominated industry and region, however she pragmatically describes navigating a landscape which others see as restricting.

F	*No one wants <u>equality</u> [emphasis](..) We are women and engineers(.) we walk as women and engineers both (.) this is not a problem for me (..) for anyone who (....) yani {Arabic} does not want to make one*
A	*You're expected to deliver the same results as a male colleague right (?) but you have some restrictions though [referring to female offshore working, not allowed overnight on work site, and no rotational duty]*
F	*Why would any lady want to be treated as a man [?] I have to travel much more yes (...) I work while I travel (.) I arrive on XXX and 50 emails send from my outbox when I connect(..) You think the men [Her peers] are working hard while I (..) we travel (?) They have 24 hours to eat sleep work(...) this means they take one approach(.) I have maybe (..)4 to 5 hours on site(.) so I take my approach.*

[Edited off topic]

Fatima	*Look Adrian (..) We know this is not for every family (..) We know that views have changed and continue (.) Some may not be able to be this and some can (..) but they will be limited*

[Later excerpt]

Fatima   *(….) We all change a little to be with each other (…) in an easy way. These ladies deal with me and turn in the meeting to deal with their local colleagues in XXX and the rules are different (..) but we know and its fine*

[Later excerpt]

Fatima   *That is what I am saying [theatrically berating AW] I do not (…) Here [refers to SH/CoE Map] I am more joking and come with ideas early (…) here [refers to SH Map] I am more formal (…) Here [refers to SH Map] I am very formal and listen only (…) Here [refers to SH Map] I do not like it or want to be [Laughs] Here [refers to SH Map] I do not like either but I learn more (…)*

Intuitively some may consider that Gulf Arab female professionals develop multiple situational identities to navigate significant variance between the Domestic, Social and Professional landscapes, however this is not presented consistently in interview and contextual analysis. For Fatima, having differing values in one situation compared to another is unthinkable, with no less than lifechanging consequences for her and her family. She describes amounts of effort, and natural fit in various circumstances, along with clear boundaries and accommodations that all actors are aware of, but at no point describes adapting differing values or acceptable standards in these varying situations. Rather than any omission or lack of depth in her reflections, it is interpreted that this may in fact be central to her success in ability to navigate across CoP's as she does, by remaining personally more consistent and inflexible than western CoP case studies would suggest.

Observations, in line with Fatima's descriptions of the meaning and choices made from her experiences are interpreted as adaptive behaviours within a consistent identity. This is contrary to Wenger-Trayner et al's (2015) assertion of the creation of multiple identities through constellation navigation and is more in line with Billettt's (2004) earlier critique of the relational interdependence in CoP's undervaluing the individual and social agency in the ontological identity forming experience.

Whilst national culture is outside of the scope of this study, due to the wide spread diversity of participants, I suggest that Billettts (2004) critique should however be contextualised within the domestic culture of the group it is applied. Levels of individual agency acceptable domestically for participants, within Collectivists versus Individualist societies of which Group A and B participants differ (Hofstede, 1980, 2003) are highly likely to impact the levels of individual agency prevailing in identity creation across the differing professional and domestic CoP's.

For a GCC Arab women, Fatima is amongst the first generations to be able to plot a successful path to navigate both the expectations of the family, tribe, wider community and heavy industrial workplace. Rather than having formed dual or multiple identities unique to each environment, Fatima's reflections speak more to consistency of personal identity to which all these different experiences contribute to a single self. For her, the clear demarcation of her personal and societal values and boundaries must be respected and maintained, within an adaptive behaviour, across the CoP's of family, social and workplace interactions. She describes the rules of engagement in these experiences as more within her control than others may assume, again in line with Billettt, (2006) and Berger and Luckman (1996) this agency would suggest a likely lack of consistent experience across Group B and equivalents and therefore an inconsistent influence on identity formation which challenges any predictive premise.

Fatima's was a participant I had worked with for a period of years and had extended contextual observation to draw from. She was also only the second Group B interview conducted and her described model of consist identity with adaptive behaviour was tested through future group B interviews, with consistent, inconsistent and deviant results from the remaining thirteen. Two examples of which are shown below.

Maame and Wilfred are both planning supervisors in different West African locations and represent Inconsistent and Deviant cases respectively. Like Fatima, they both must navigate significantly different values and priorities across the CoP's they engage with,

but for them, this has dictated a developed duality, identified and presented through owning and internalising different situationally specific values.

Maame is one of the most open in sharing the duality between her working and community CoP's. In discussing an upcoming company family day, she has reservations:

M   *....Makoko isn't there anymore [refers to a local slum area] but the mindset is (..) in the people*

Later extract

M   *Something is always carried with you (..) of this I am clear(.) I relate more to my friends than my family (...) but is that not true of most people (?)*

Later extract

M   *...... My mother knows little of my life (..) and I do not live hers either (...) but I am at <u>home</u> when I am with her (...) and all {unclear}*

A   *At home(?)*

M   *It is as much me as my evening in the Soul bar with {xxxx} [local hotel] or working on the workflow plan with {xxxx} but (....) they cannot co-exist these different worlds*

A   *Then how do you move between them then (?) as you clearly do (...) You cannot be the only one who faces this challenge?*

M   *Some bring the street with them (..) they do not adapt to this place (...) I wish I could be like that (.) constant in my ways*

A   *But you can't (?)*

Mamme   *I am one person there and one here (...)*

This perception which Maame holds seems straightforward enough, compartmentalised into home; domestic community behaviours, values and standards being quite separate from her learned behaviours of later independent life. However, what Mamme describes here and elsewhere, is not adaptive behaviour to the circumstances, but a separate personal identity in those differing spaces.

Wilfred is also involved in workflow and logistics planning in West Africa, and whilst in a different country shares many of the background to current transitions of identity which Mamma describes, however he goes further.

Discussing a stakeholder map produced in the interview clustered into CoP's

W   *(..) Well I belong (.) I hope in any account (.) to all of them of course(.) that is why they are here (..) [written]*

A   *Of course(..) but that said (..) which do you feel natural (..) at home with compared to others*

[Edited Wilfred discusses groups for some time]

W   *From the beginning I knew I must become close to them (.) but this took some time to accept me as an outsider*

A   *Is that how you felt (?) an outsider (?)*

W   *It is what I was*

A   *And that changed(..) how (?)*

W   *over many years now (..) different people have come and gone (….) [reflects for an extended period] I suppose I became a stable presence to others (..) they knew me and knew that I believed in their addition [unclear] but not pushing (?)*

A   *how then (…) if not pushing (?)*

W   *(..) by being present (.) In it together*

A   *And how did people change with you during that time (?)*

W   *(…) It is more about how I changed with them (.) these are my brother and sisters (.) and once I became their brother (.) there is no going back from that*

A   *So do you change how you behave and interact with them (?) Now (.) I mean (?)*

W   *Do you change how you act around your sister and brother [challenging, almost aggressive] to who you are truly yourself (?)*

A   *(…) well (..) actually I think I behave differently (.)yes*

W   *But you are still truly yourself [more statement but framed as question] (?)*

A   *You feel that way (?)*

W   *If I describe it this way (..) when I have become their brother [Refers to the SHM] in a true sense(..) it no longer matters how I behave (It is from the heart and part of me (…) not false in any way*

Edited off topic

W   *I am several people (..) I believe we all are*

A   *Unpick that for me (.) How do you mean exactly (?)*

W   *I am this person (..) truly (..) genuinely [hand gestures] (.) but this person would not recognise me [other hand] I am no more and no less true here to here (…) but I have learned how to be here (..) as I said (..) as their brother*

[Later extract referring to social, multi group attendance at Wilfred's recent wedding]

W   *I am different with each. (..) I have learned to value and be (...) A different "Wilfred" (..) genuine but different. And is not how I speak of my opinion (..) I am a different person with each(..) no less or more(..).*

In the examples in this section an inconsistency is demonstrated between consistent, dual or multiple identities, The first participant who describes a constant identity with adaption to circumstances, the second participant who describes a dual and shifting identity, and the third whose perceptions go beyond this and describes clear delineation of identity in a variety of settings, exploring different underlying values and perceptions between CoP's which group B participants must broker.

Similarities are noted between perceptions of disjoint in the group B participants across seven countries with very different cultures of the GCC, West African and Levant. The three examples here, represent three of the four perceptions held across group B participants. The first view of restricted identity development through post LPP will be explored in the next section 4.23, the second view, of those who feel they adapt their behaviour but maintain a consistent identity. Thirdly those who identify clearly with separate communities, whose values and beliefs are in some way incompatible with each other, to the point they account separate personal identities rather than "identifying" with each. Lastly an extension of the third group of those who go further in their descriptions of their identity creation, and feel they are themselves different people within different communities.

Whilst this range of definition is in line with Kubiak et al's (2015) stories of Congruence and Incongruence in identity across CoP's, the strategies of navigation are not always consistent with the multi membership concepts they propose.

It is interpreted here that the status in one community, Domestic, Social or Professional, does in fact have some impact on status in another, but is not directly correlated, due to the different priorities and values of each, and underpin the undeniably complex nature of identity formation across a variety of environments, and speak of the very personal experience of each, largely in line with Billettt (2006).

Without any claim to generalisation, there are some considerations:

Firstly, the nature of adaption and transferability of identity to new CoP's such as workplace environments and then back again to established ones, when meaning and identity has been influenced through learning experiences, is felt by all participants to be a challenge. Those who do not self-identify these multiple identities across the CoP's like the example of Fatima, recognise clear differences and challenges, and adapt their approaches and behaviours as a result. This description is very different from having formed separate personal identities.

Those, like Maame, who would recognise within themselves a developed identification with diverse CoP's, do not describe themselves as adapting, but having made meaning of participation and experiences in one community to which they have personally related, engaged and become embedded, in the same way to the meaning and relation they made in the past, childhood and current communities. No one identity subordinate to the other but existing in parallel as a result of finding personal connection and meaning in each.

Examples like Wilfred's though go further in delineating separate groups from a variety of backgrounds speaks of his unique and individual relationship with each. His descriptions of being "frozen" when any of these worlds collide, such as at his recent wedding is testimony to his identity being beyond behaviour, and to having compartmentalised multiple identities, truly seeing himself as different "Wilfred" in different spaces.

No-one contributing to this research was confident to claim they had not been personally changed in some way as an individual through LPP, and a correlation between someone's changed view of the "world" as they saw it, and the nature of their personal identity as a result appears to present, albeit identified in very different ways.

What is less consistent though is the impact of the role in varying LPP's and identifying themselves as CoP members, and the automatic consequence of that in forming parallel identities. This seems to have been quite intuitively presented and readily accepted in the developed CoP literature in the last decade as evidenced by Wenger-Trayner et al (2015).

4.23 – Continuity of Identity across a constellation of CoP's

*"They call me the Fixer" – "*Michael" (Group B)

In clear contrast to Section 4.32, the example of Michael below, serves to problematise the nature of identity formation through LPP further. In line with Kubiak et al (2015) this example of "*unaligned engagement*" was a prevalent topic among Group B participants either currently or from past experiences. The guidelines provided by Edwards (2010) around boundary practices to alleviate incoherence were not entirely consistent with the participant experience, as will be discussed at the end of the section.

Analysis serves to build on the complexity outlined in section 4.22, through actor's perception of limitation to the flexibility they can employ in different environments, once they have become established in another.

Michael (Group B) is seen as the terminals "*Go to guy*" for anything outside of daily operational process. Observation on terminal shows Michael being consulted before others in operations feel confident to share their own views.

M	*...in sales [Dept] and manpower [HR] no one will let me ask a question (..) when I want to understand what they are thinking (..) I still want to learn all the other aspects of the business (.) but it seems my die is cast (….) I want to learn the commercial strategy of (xxxx) (..)*
A	*But (?)*
M	*They want me to speak when they need me (..) and in my area only*
A	*and you find this restricting (?)*
M	*This stops me being anything other than the fixer for many people*
A	*I spoke with (xxx)[Commercial Director] and he told me you had been hanging around annoying him [joking]*

M	*(xxx) is kind (..) he has allowed me to spend some time to understand some of their methods (..) informally (.) but he has made it clear to me (.)at my point in life (.) education (…) it is only so I am making sense of this in operational choices (..) nothing more can come of it*
A	*What you make of your knowledge (..) what you gain is up to you though (..) isn't it (?)*
M	*To start with (xxx) is only too happy to help me understand (..) [Unclear] seen as very positive to gain a better understanding (..) but after some time this novelty wears off for them. Not just (xxx) [Refers to other department senior management and Directors]*

Later Extract

M	*Is it very clear (..) I have made my bed (..) fought very hard to become (..) [unclear] (..) No one is indispensable but over the years I have tried very hard to be of maximum use to my managers (.) so they cannot see running the operation without me in the very centre of it (…) this is my strategy of survival from many years ago (..) [edited]*
A	*and now(?) you are respected I would suggest (?)*
M	*I hope so(..) but only as a character (…) as a <u>straw man</u> [emphisis] (..) a character I have <u>created</u> and <u>perpetuated</u> [slow emphasis]*

Later Extract

A	*Give me an example of why you believe this*
M	*(…) Even though(..) I learn about the business (,,) I am qualified generally(..)*
	There is a line with all department heads where I am welcome (…) and then beyond this (.) I am in the way (.) I am looked at as "what else do you want now?" after I have initially been praised for coming in my own time to learn how they do their jobs (..) some are openly hostile asking me why I need to know these things that are nothing to do with my job

In parallel with a growing interest and affinity with general business management, Michael also shared reducing affinity with his primary workplace CoP, and an unease at never feeling comfortable with the prevailing cultures.

Michael	*The more time I spend in the yard (.) the less I feel like these are my brothers (.) in some ways*
AW	*How so (?)*
Michael	*[Refers to various roles and people] are negative in many ways (..) often seeing problems (.) reasons (..) and interested in themselves (..) how something affects them*
AW	*and you feel different (/)*

Michael	*I <u>always</u> did (..) I didn't want to settle to take my wages (..) I wanted to be a high <u>performer</u> [slow, emph] and that requires a person to look at the <u>bigger picture</u> [emph]*
AW	*Do you feel you ever fitted in then (?) not just now*
Michael	*I became a <u>leader</u> (..) a leader <u>of men</u> (..) and a leader does not need to fit in to be centre of that small world (..) he needs to have credibility and be clear and <u>decisive</u> (...)*

Edited off topic

AW	*I get the impression something has changed though (?) through your studies or exposure to other aspects of the business (?)*
Michael	*(...) well you are right yes (...) no one thing (..) but reading and experiencing other ways always changes us I think (..) but others you meet do not know those changes that have happened within you (..) and are not patient to learn that you have changed (..) it is easier for them to know you as you were (..) because I think this is how they want you to be*

In common with several Group B participants, Michael has completed a post grad degree and perhaps more importantly to his peers and Group A participants, made significant efforts to understand the commercial, sales and administrative process and communities within the business in which he works, however, he feels he continues to face resistance in engaging legitimately with members of these different professional CoP's, due to the consistent perception of the local core CoP membership he previously worked so hard to establish, while at the same time feeling a diminished affinity there.

Michael discusses here and elsewhere, the journey of his experience in learning how to be a core member of his workplace operational CoP. As time passed Michaels own personal identity developed in a way that he felt he had more to offer, and most importantly began to relate more to different communities across the functions, but his willingness to change was not reciprocated with the access to LPP that he was looking for, limited instead to superficial knowledgeability (Wenger et al, 2015) overviews of systems, methods and processes, and denied meaningful Legitimate Peripheral Participation by the gatekeepers of those CoP's.

The impact for Michaels meaning making and subsequent identity formation, was that he felt in a void, between establishing himself previously as core member of an operations

supervision COP, with which he feels a diminishing identity alignment with, while being denied engagement of the business administration and strategy to which he is progressively felling more aligned to, but excluded from and the interpretation of this case speaks of an actor with the desire, driven through shifting personal identity creation, to be more than a boundary worker between a landscape of CoP's he navigates.

Michaels highly overt core membership of his local operational CoP appears to be a barrier for him in his desire to replicate his previous journey with new CoP's with very different social and operational cultures. The responses of others cited above are interpreted as members of other CoP's being relatively open to a Core member of a neighbouring CoP building some level of *knowledgeability* (Wenger-Trayner et al, 2015) through understanding and vocabulary to be able to navigate boundary work with them. I have observed initial tolerance in line with Michaels description, and even welcoming and helpful behaviour, but it is suggested that his core status, and his perceived identity, are also definitive in their rejection of him developing any further into their own CoP's.

However what is interpreted further here is an unspoken hierarchy of CoP's which contribute to the body of knowledge in adjacent fields, (Wegner, 1998) in this case, international port and container terminal operators, with each of the related corporate, administrative and operational disciplines required to make the machine work. Wenger-Trayner et al (2015) suggest a hierarchy of knowledge within this landscape which subordinates some CoP's in relation to others, and is consistent with the interactional and contextual observations of this study as the identity of the gatekeepers of these other CoP's within the landscape, is currently not aligned with Michael as an acceptable member to be granted legitimate peripheral participation beyond initial boundary work.

While Edwards (2010) describes boundary behaviours likely to increase success in engaging successfully within neighbouring CoP's in a more equitable practitioner field (Table 9 below compares her prescribed behaviours with those shared in the data)

Edwards (2010)	Present in data
Prescribed actions to increase boundary effectiveness	
Clarifying Purpose	Regularly
Articulating Personal experience	Regularly
Knowing what matters to other practitioners	Regularly
A willingness to reorientation ones approach	Occasionally
Preparedness to take risks and bend the rules	Infrequently

Table 9- Edwards (2010) Boundary practices comparison

Her focus here is on "relational agency" of cross disciplinary practitioners, where the knowledge is regarded as collective across the boundaries, however, in arguably more Silo'd environments than the two participating organisations, such as Michael describes above, there is no such collective agreement to understanding and therefore his approach to boundary work (largely in line with Edwards wider recommendations) are seen as unwelcome beyond a certain point, and at the discretion of the established professionals of those CoP's.

4.24 – Impacts of CoP norms on Identity Formation

 "Play the game son!" John (Group A)

This section explores the experiences involved between adaptable behaviour modelling to fit in with a CoP norms and expectations, and the resultant impact on identity creation. Data interpreted here centres on inaccurate perceptions on both sides, as well as the interface between situationally specific modelled behaviour and identity creation / realisation.

O'Brien and Bates (2015) argue a clearly observed but simplistic view that adopting the uniform of a profession, and spending time with its practitioners and other aspirants will rapidly speed up the identification of an individual within a CoP, however this section investigates more subtle delineations further into the journey of engagement in a CoP, to understand if these have an impact on future trajectories.

Samuel, a West African HSSE manager (Group B) presented well-formed views and about how he came to be who he was in his professional community, how this shaped his personality and identity and the strict behaviours expected by others of anyone following the same quite specific path.

S   *They [refereeing primarily to 3 established and respected HSSE Heads peers] would exclude me (…) from basic discussions (..) I got the feeling they did not (..) think it was necessary for me any more (…) they could trust me to carry the flag [emph](..) speak with one voice through the whole operation*

A   *So they stopped micro managing (..) your programs after [you*

S   *[after I had proved that I was (…) not just capable but (…) could represent them (.) in the workplace as if (..) they were there themselves*

A   *And how did they come to believe that (…) how do they know how you act when they are not there (?)*

S   *well (..) at the start I acted more like a shift manager (.) and also came with all manner of initiatives (..) ideas (.) all the time [Laughs] (..) but I saw that they kept things much simpler [emph](..) look at the fatal 5 only [referring highest impact incident types global strategy] I think many of my ideas were good (..) now (.) I have gone back to use some (.) many of them in fact (..) but at that time (..) It was good for me to ease back [emph]on my style (.) enthusiasm a little bit*

A   *To match how they communicated (?)*

S   *[How they communicated (..) exactly (.) and they told me this very clearly*

<div align="center">**Later Extract**</div>

S   *I think they hear and see some of my decisions(..) One particular I stopped some contract drivers (.) banned for 7 days because of repeated failure to follow the yard safety guidelines*

Edited off topic

Samuel   *It is hard to describe how difficult this is (.) Families will go hungry as their employers will not pay them for this period (..) but I learned it is better (..) for them(.) I mean (.) to learn this lesson in this way (..) than to be crushed in an M&M incident on the yard and leave their families with (..) destitute*

Edited off topic

AW	*But you think (xxx) believed this was an indication (..) this decision (.) recommendation as far as they were concerned (.) that you were standing your ground on the safety (.) non-negotiables*
Samuel	*More than this (..) I was told it needed to happen [and =*
AW	*[by xxx*
Samuel	*= [yes (.) and it was clear that if I did not enforce this (..) even though they knew it will put me in a very difficult position with my [unclear] I would be limited*
AW	*limited (..) in (?)*
Samuel	*Limited in my place (..) Restricted (.) in their eyes (.) And it was not just this (..) [Considering]*

<center>**Later Extract**</center>

AW	*And do you feel you have to take their point (.) comply*
Samuel	*No (..) I am free to take my decisions (.) in most cases anyway (.)I have done many things myself like the Fuze videos [peer e-learning how to's, filmed live on operations]*
AW	*Your own initiatives (..) well received I think (..) and hear (.) but following (xxx) approaches (?)*
Samuel	*If I don't I (.) I think I am less (….) respected (..) less involved with others*
AW	*But this is your perception of what would happen (..) you have never gone (..) against their [direction though*
Samuel	*[I have seen others (..) how things have changed for them*

Outside of the formal interviews I interacted with all of the core CoP members (including one Group A participant) referred to by Samuel. Naturally making no reference to any interview or comment, I enquired to the levels of talent, capability and consistency of the BU locations heads with some example comments below.

Anec 1	*(yyy) has a long way to go, in fact he's really a placeholder until we can get (xxx) released and across. We'll see how he does under (xxx) Samuel is spot on though (Location XXX) has seen a real improvement on the safety walks,[inspections] and I don't really worry about what's going on there so much now.*

Anec 2   *(refereeing to Samuel) he was a bit of an eager puppy when first in the role, running around, keen to please, but I think he's hardened up now. I've heard him make the calls, and he's settled down into reasonable safety leader down there.*

Anec 3   *Lot of busy work, initiatives, not so much impact. Samuel is getting the idea though, starting to focus the effort where it matters and not afraid to stand up when required. I can see a future for him, and we've already started to involve him in regional work.*

Anec 4   *(Samuel) can go his own way more once he's shown, over a longer period of time, he has the credibility to drive the fatal 5.*

The core CoP members Samuel refers to are not direct hierarchical seniors, two of the Anecs above are the same job grade / seniority, one is a grade higher (Director), and one Regional, who while being his function head, is not his reporting line manager. They do not work in the same location, but are viewed by Samuel (and most others) as the core members of a HSSE CoP in Africa, developing market locations.

Consequently, position and job grade are secondary to the construct of a shared CoP core seniority through experience and knowledge. Expatriates with long proven track records are known to be mobilised to locations with the worst safety records, and each of the Anec's above has had fatalities or serious injury incidents on their locations, so their current safety record does not contribute to the core members seniority or respect, as it is acknowledged they are deployed for transitional change phases.

Anecdotally they speak about his trajectory in terms of alignment first with their shared view and model of effective safety leadership, and consistent with Samuels perceptions, the door is only held open by them to those who conform to that model in the first instance. Those who prove themselves capable of this are then given more leeway in the CoP to try their own things, but this comes later.

It is interpreted that Samuel was moving from what Edwards (2010) describes as *Interactional Expertise*, in the ability to communicate effectively with the international CoP as a boundary worker from his own local CoP, to a point of being able to add value

and operate as they would recognise and endorse, described as *Contributory Expertise* (Edwards, 2010) during which transition, his ability to engage with the international CoP was adjusted accordingly by Group A equivalents.

Samuel gives examples of receiving both direct and indirect pressure to act and operate in a way that the core members find necessary or acceptable, which in his perception, is a prerequisite to be seen as a strong member of their community, and he believes this compliance is used as a gateway to the next level of CoP membership.

It is notable in context that a number of senior and core members elsewhere are happy to concede that there are several methods and approaches that can be successful in raising the safety standards and journey of a developing market location, but in Samuels perception, he felt pressured to comply with the clear approaches shared by his core CoP connections, or, he felt, run the risk of being denied the trajectory in developing a more central membership of the international CoP that he aspires to. Also notable is that Samuel had never tested his perception as above. He had taken steps to actualise his membership in the CoP to match his growing identity as an HSSE ambassador on and off the workplace, which was far more than a job to him, but remained frustrated that true core membership had been denied him at the time and felt he was being used as a token local endorser of core member approaches, encouraged to "play the game" of raising the community's capital in the local workplace.

In terms of identity creation, it is interpreted that Samuels frustration was growing due to a miss-match of his developed identity as "one of them", having continually complied and implemented the CoP's model of behaviour and action, with a perception that he was still very much on the periphery, only being allowed to participate, as he sees it, as a token African.

Whilst this is somewhat consistent with the core member views, the significant difference is down to Samuels impatience on the speed of progress of his trajectory. Samuel doesn't speak of any alignment with his line manager, (Formerly the BU COO, and now the

deputy GM) in fact the absence of reference is noted in both formal interviews and subsequent exchanges, his orientation is specifically to the senior and respected HSSE leaders around other geographies, and how he views himself is measured against these men.

He projected a growing alignment and resignation that he had to conform and "play the game" in those early stages as a gateway to growing acceptance, However having gone through the process of solidifying where he identified personally, he now found himself increasingly frustrated that there were further stages he had to go through to close the gap with core members over time, and he started to reference more of his own approaches as our exchanges continued.

Section 4.25 Meta theme discussion summary

In the four contributory themes to this section:
4.21 – Impacts on Identity through variance in routes to CoP participation
4.22 – Identity formation in Professional vs Domestic CoP's
4.23 – Continuity of Identity across a constellation of CoP's
4.24 – Impacts of CoP norms on Identity Formation

The identity forming aspects of the varied experiences and prospective are shown as highly complex and not entirely in line with any clear description present in the current literature.

Wenger – Trayner et al's (2015) presentation of identity forming aspects through three levels of identification with a CoP; through Engagement, to provide direct contextual experience, Imagination, to visualise themselves in particular landscape and Alignment to comply with the core requirements of a practice to allow engagement, comes closest to the perceptions shared in the collective experiences of the participants, but notably falls short of understanding the variances between International Group A and Local Group B

in lack of common shared experience, contributing in their respective abilities to achieve the second and third of these levels of identity.

As described by Wenger-Trayner et al, *"only through complementary experience in all 3 levels is a strong personal identity likely to be established with a CoP"* These differences may go some way to understanding the impact variance of trajectory many group B's, despite their very best efforts to engage, visualise and align to the international CoP's they aspire to establish within.

Section 4.3 Palatable Diversity

In this section, the argument is made that diversity is in fact desired and pursued by the Group A participants in identifying those being granted CoP access and LPP. Common misconceptions of those on the periphery and outside of the CoP's existed, that established Old Hands look to develop successors in their own image, however this is largely dismissed through analysis of the data.

Some consistency emerged that a level of limiting diversity was present, forming a bracket of those acceptable to be granted LPP (or sponsored in other ways) by Group A's and equivalents. That bracket is ill defined, but represented the Group B's national and individual identities while not blatantly modelling the predominantly western styles and approaches of the Group A's, but were at the same time not too alien to be unpalatable to them.

This dichotomy is argued to set quite strict parameters for Newcomers to be successful in becoming established in their respective CoP's. The placement of the findings and analysis within the very limited literature around the effects of diversity on international communities of practice is discussed in the conclusion to the meta theme in section 4.37.

Noting that no literature was published in this specific area before Kirkman et al, 2013, reference to the wider literature on Virtual Teams is contrasted.

Section 4.30 – Introduction

In this second meta theme "*Palatable Diversity*" the data is interpreted within six contributory themes. Firstly, in Section 4.31 – Informal Sponsored Opportunity, the perceptions of the nature of informal mentoring is explored, from the prospective of mentors choosing if, when and who should receive their personal attention and support, and from the prospective of those both chosen and excluded from receiving such treatment.

In the second contributory theme, Section 4.32 – Effects of Positive Discrimination; attempts to go beyond the well-rehearsed arguments around Positive Discrimination and Diversity Targets, and interpret the analysis primarily from the perspectives of peer group acceptance of those that are subject to these policies in Group B, along with the experience and perceptions of those interested parties in Group A.

Linked closely to the previous section the Third contributory theme Section 4.33- LPP Through Locals Versus Expatriates; explores the interpreted analysis around the common conception that local newcomers, who achieve position and credibility within international CoP's are less likely to be supportive in facilitating or allowing LPP for their countrymen and women, explored from the prospective of changes of identity linking to the previous section 3 and generation transition between former and contemporary old hands.

In the fourth contributing section to the meta theme of Palatable Diversity, Section 4.34, Levels of "palatable" diversity; explores interpreted evidence of categorized diversity from the prospective of Group A to review awareness and choices around the factors influencing trajectories of actors.

In Section 4.35 – Stereotypes for Sense Making centres on the views around perception, perceived benefits and knowingly inaccurate social reproduction of stereotyping in both Group A and B participants, and what impact this may have in catalysing or limiting LPP access.

In the final section 4.36 Absence of Racism Within LPP; disputes participant views of racism contributing to any notable barrier to LPP and consequential identity formation. Contrary to some focus group contributions, research preparation and scoping, the interpretation of the encounters interviews and observations provided no shortage of evidence to support awareness's of differences and secondary accounts of unacceptable racism, but the analysis and validation stands against this perception, with no actual evidence of restricted LPP through personal or institutional racism.

4.31 – Informal Sponsored Opportunity

"White Knights and Protected Species"

The two phrases of the sub title "White Knights" and "Protected Species" were regularly employed within group A, B and C participants across different geographies. The term "White Knights" was used by members of all groups to refer to senior established leaders autonomous involvement outside of formal company succession planning, in supporting the access, development and progression of selected local CoP members.

The phrase "Protected Species" was employed primarily by Group A participants with both positive and negative connotations in referencing either those selected by the "white knights" and more widely in the Middle East, for local staff who benefitted from accelerated development through positive discrimination policies and restricted disciplinary consequences.

How these phrases were used in the examples given, provided some insight as to individual social construct of the structure and access to selective CoP's, in the perceptions of the participants.

"Anna", a finance director in a head office location, had statistically the largest throughput of developing market staff onto STAs and fixed term contracts through her function

AW	*(Edited) why do we see perhaps a better balance (.) in your area [referencing to local hire diversity]*
A	*Any project or STA is established for a business need (..) first and [foremost*
AW	*[Finance CoE's (?) My understanding was (.)Correct me if Im wrong (.) they were set up to raise capability and bridge the gap in the talent pipeline (.) right (?)*
A	*That is one goal yes (.) but they add a lot of value in the BU's through*
Edited off topic	
A	*well (.) we have around the same ratio of STA's [as*

AW	*[but the selection (.) personal involvement (.) time and care over tasking and ensuring people are set up to (..) succeed (.) I feel a higher level of (.) Passion (?) from you personally in seeing these people come through successfully*
A	*(...)[reflective] No you are not being fair on others (.) there are some very passionate people in the SMT who care about people as well as the business [*
Edited off topic	
A	*Adrian (.) this is a people orientated business with great values (.) truly(.) that have been maintained for generations as (.) otherwise I would not be here (.) but this is first and foremost a business -business (.) The business case has to be sold first and the people case has to be insured (.) safeguarded [emphisis]by me and others but in that order, always (.) You understand (?)*

Verified in validation, Anna alluded to the fact she feels it necessary to legitimise her CoP endorsements and creations of LPP: her "White Knight" actions, to her business peers and seniors in one way; as business justification within projects and resource requirements, but meanwhile have her own agenda as a senior CoP member aside from her hierarchical position, which was explored many times in this and later exchanges.

This is contrasted to "Mark", (Group A)

M	*I know very little about what's going on in most of this business (.) and that's true for every CEO if they will admit it (.) I might see a little more than some by benefit of my route into that seat, but never the less, People have to be tasked and let them get on with it*
A	*So you [*
M	*[you know (.) I inherited all but one member of this team [ref the BU SMT] just bringing in (AAA) [Marks own replacement as COO, local xxx] I'm not happy with the way some people achieve their results (.) as we have discussed [unclear] before (.) and those people will change over time (.) but for now (.) they have a job to do (.) and I let them get on with it as long as they are delivering what has been tasked*
Later Extract	
M	*Look (..) I've got my eye on [outlines several people in several locations] I've worked with XXX on projects in {European HQ] and (yyy) in [Location] and I'm going to need to swap out the team steadily over the next couple of years (.)*
A	*and the reason for the timescale*

M	*I need a mix of experienced and new (.) can't do it overnight (.) I ruffled a few feathers by putting (AAA) in [Marks replacement for COO] ahead of the other ops managers around the region that others felt were (..) more ready (..) and honestly they were 100% right (.)*
A	*So why [*
M	*[AAA has been my guy for nearly 5 years (.) I don't need to be having a fight with a new COO who's got everything to prove and all the new ideas every two minutes*
A	*You need someone who [*
M	*[Knows the score (..) Yes (..) Sure he's still got a lot to learn on the commercial side (.) but he's my guy (..) and knows how things need to be done (.) without me having to spell it out (..) or any unnecessary (.) experimentation*

Later Extract

M	*Im making sure he gets on the regional and global Ops team projects (..) in some cases he's just taking over the seats I filled (..) but I'll make sure he gets on [upcoming global terminal automation project]*

Later Extract

M	*I know when AAA wants to go in a direction (..) I know at least he knows how to do it (.) and do it well the way that [XXX] and I did. If he goes another way (..) then I'm confident he's comparing it to the way we used to run things (.) and that's fine by me.*
A	*Is he loyal to you (..) Personally I mean (.) You think he wants to outdo your results (?)*
M	*(…) [smiles] I bloody hope so mate (..) Would get eaten alive in the "commercial politics" [code phrase for aggressive corruption and facilitation culture in West Africa] at company to company level[*
A	*[without you to support*
M	*(..)potentially (..) but he's got me to support for now (..) and let's see if we can have him ready for the time I'm not*

Several outside of the confidence of Mark and AAA suggested Mark was still running the COO role operations by proxy through AAA since they both stepped up in their roles. However, observation suggested Mark gave AAA complete freedom to run the operation as he saw fit. The difference in Marks perception was he had a known quantity in AAA, A local that both knew the culture internally and had learned both the what and the how of operations in that location from him, and as such had been brought through three successive career grades, at the expense of some more experienced and some would argue more capable candidates in other locations.

This is explored from the alternate end with "Hani", a Group B maintenance supervisor in his home country Middle East location. Hani had been prepared and promoted to a maintenance superintendent position by a long-term Head of Engineering in a location largely staffed by Indian and Philippine expatriates in operational areas, and as such Hani was viewed by many as having been elevated to this position by nature of his nationality rather than his capability and certainly many of his staff were more experienced than he was.

Extract discussing the dynamic between expatriate management, local staff and expatriate labour

H   *well (..) the first thing (..) the main thing to consider is I (..) we are the only constant here (.) the TWaN's [Third World National] will take their salaries and return home after hopefully many productive years and the Expat SMT's [senior management team members] will also not be here (…) in even a few years*

A   *So you feel that fact (.) changes the priority clearly (..) not just the merit (.) ability of today [but*

H   *[We do not put locals into jobs because only they are locals (.) and it is "our train set" [mocking a common expat phrase] no (.) we are building for the future (..) for generations (.) this is how [location] will be built securely for the country future*

A   *OK (.) So taking that (.) short term expats do not (..) warrant local positions for this reason how did you stand out to senior leadership from your local peers to oversee this (.) complex area*

Hani, along with others, described an advantage that came with English language skills in non-native English locations, to be able to cross boundaries between international leadership, management and labour as they established themselves.

Later extract

H   *But I would go and talk to discuss with [terminal workers and management] and understand these things in practical ways (…) I could do that because of our shared language (..) and not just to learn the facts in practice (..) but their views and learn their feelings about these things (.) it is being perfect or in some way could be improved even if OK(.)*

A	and you think [
H	[This changed my views (.) what I understood, and I think yes (.) changed how these men see me (..)
A	and [maintenance manager]
H	At first my needs to learn were not with him (..) but more basic (.) but I think over time my face would often be where it shouldn't be and he would come to me to see what I knew (.) I think both testing of me and learning for him (.) what I knew of the people's views

In a later extract Hani described an interaction with an international CoP which was inconsistent with the view of the Group A's and equivalents on the same subject

H	[I did not like it after some time (..) after five or six weeks perhaps I asked to be released to return home as I had more than learned everything (..) how it was (..) but [maint manager] did not agree and said I needed to learn more (.) understand the trust and relationships there (.) not just the processes
A	And you stayed following this advice
H	It is not in our culture to be away from our families for this time (.) I came home (.) but returned again after a month for a further two months
A	Did you benefit from this do you think?
H	When I returned people asked why I was back (..) they were less welcoming than before (.) I think like me they had seen I had learned everything in the time I had been there previously (..)and they did not want to waste their time with me any more (.) some people it seemed
Later Extract	
H	But this was as [eng manager] had said (.) different to understand how the people worked (.) together (.) they were aggressive perhaps (..) direct certainly in a very [unclear] way that would not be tolerated (.) accepted in my culture (..) while [location] is the star of the group it can be said (..) the people were mixed (..)
A	Mixed in what way (?)
H	Some true experts (.) most certainly (.) but a mix of other no stronger than we were (..) some would struggle in (home location) I think (.) Im sorry to say.

This one side of Hanis story appears to outline the benefits around participating in neighbouring CoP's in a Journeyman's own field, however exchanges with his Engineering manager and several members of the European terminal he visited outlined a

different story.   Hani's first visit did not go well, it is stated he was so severely out of his comfort zone that he avoided unnecessary interactions and remained in his hotel on several days claiming illness. As one of the world's newest and most advanced container terminals, his local Head of Engineering had called in many favours in his CoP to get Hani access to long term experience and was impacted personally by sending what local management in [xxx] saw as someone who had no potential to lead the function.

In exchanges with his LM, later verified and approved for inclusion in this research:

Anec   *Hani has no international future, he wouldn't consider relocating his family to another location even for a moment, so for international succession planning he should be off the radar completely, but he is a really strong local high potential for me, probably the best potential for senior leadership right now within the next 5 years, so if I need him to work locally to the same international standards he needed to experience how they work in reality.*

A   *High performer [*

Anec   *[No (.) High potential. This is a unique manpower environment in the group with locals sandwiched in between two groups of Expats in leadership and labour. Hani has what it takes I think to manage that and move up to senior leadership and that's obviously why I've put so much time into him*

A   *and getting him back into [Location xxx]*

Anec   *I had to think long and hard about that (.) It's my reputation on the line second time round (.) I was on leave when he started calling saying he wanted to come home "there was nothing more for him to learn" and I asked him to stay on until I got back to [Home location] the following week but he was already there when I got back(.) I took him out for the evening a few days later and had the hard talk with him. I told him he was going back, and not only that if he didn't manage to integrate and work with the team there he was done here(.) I told him the exact reasons I was sending him, and he was very upset(.) But at the end of the day I believed in this kid, I'd seen how effective he could be and knew he needed pushed over the edge. Of course, when Id talked him into packing his bags again [European terminal] refused to have him back(.) which to be honest I expected. I know [xxxx] from P&O and just told him he was having him back and we got that squared away*

In exchanges with SMT in [European Terminal]

Anec 6   *I thought I had been proved correct when he headed home after a few weeks, what the*
             hell has (xxx) sent me here, what was he thinking? But (Dep MD ANEC 7) said it was
             happening, and I needed to get on with it. If that was the case, I put him with the crew
             out of my way.

The decision to work with the maintenance crew was not Hani's request as he suggested

Anec 7   *When [xxx] said he was sending him back I just laughed, but he stood by his guns, he'd*
             told me originally it was "in there" with this lad, and to be honest if [xxx] says that, it'll
             be right, and it seems it was.

Marks example shows progressive LPP, typical of the White Knight and Protected Species metaphor common held across the participants. This is entirely inconsistent with James (2007) argument that established CoP members in her study tended to be insecure through the change apparent when newcomers transitioned to become established.

Those that had been identified, accepted and granted LPP in the former CoP, had proved themselves worthy of maintaining their trajectory, in line with Boud and Middleton (2003) three categories of skills required for LPP acceptance

Three Categories of Skills Required for LPP Acceptance

1	*Fundamental mastery of organisational process*
2	*Ability to negotiate the political aspects of situated legitimate participation*
3	*Dealing successfully with the atypical, in a manner acceptable to the established order*

Table 10 – Three Categories of Skills Required for LPP Acceptance,
(Boud and Middleton, 2003)

They are often elevated simultaneously to the periphery of the White Knights new CoP when their move occurs, which in turn strengthens their credibility as a core member of the former CoP in comparison to others. Marks actions in facilitating not just the elevation of AAA, but his seat at the table in various wider CoP's that he himself had formally occupied is a differentiator between simply promoting someone and elevating their CoP status in the White Knight metaphor.

This predicates an even more complex construct of a hierarchy of CoP's, not simply a landscape of equitable constellations, but rather a three-dimensional map of constellations with boundary work possible vertically, horizontally and diagonally.

4.32 – Effects of Positive Discrimination

"One of us or 'Quota'" – "Khalid" (Group B)

This section attempts to go beyond certain arguments around Positive Discrimination and Diversity Targets, and interpret the data primarily from the perspectives of Group B participant peer group acceptance concerned with the impact on their personal reputations and the perceptions of less capable peripheral local entrants "bring down their average" as a demographic.

Quoted in the subtitle title of this section, "Khalid", a manager in charge of non-containerised cargo in Bahrain, neatly summed up a two tier social construct shared by many high performing locals of various nationalities who were working in and through policies of positive local discrimination.

K   Look (..) we were all quota [emphisis] as [GCC Country Nationals] in international companies (..) well that is actually not true (.) there were many employed before quotas were introduced in [National Infrastructure] (.) but even then companies were expected (.) sometimes (..) offset contracted (.) to employ good numbers where possible (.) where

skills allowed (.) this effected the treatment (.) of the company (.) administratively in my father's time for example

Later Extract

A   *So one of us (.) to you I mean (.) is someone who has used their chance (.) done something with their lives (?)*

K   *That could be someone's opinion that they have been successful (..) who is to say who has done this if we don't know their story (..) but regardless of these things (..) there is a type of person (..) who is serious (emph.) maybe successful (.) maybe not as yet and maybe this is not in his destiny*

Edited

K   *(..) Serious describes many things (.) not a child (.) mature reliable (..) can think (.) will step up to what is required without yani (.) waiting (.) ^Serious [emph. Laughs]*

Edited

K   *So someone who is serious in progressing in their life (.) not accepting to live the minimum (.) this is also part of it too (.) but it is more I think*

A   *What else (?)*

K   *If I can say (.) it is an option for a person to give their reasons (.) excuses (.) in our culture I'm sorry to say (.) and frankly no one can challenge them on this (.) it is their right*

A   *Excuses about (…)*

K   *(…) to join a foreign company (..) even to join a local company who are not known to you (..) it is alien to us (..) to learn to be as one with them (.) to work as we do (.) It requires much change from the individual (.) to live his day in a very different way to that which he is used to previously (.) for some this is too much and they will hold onto to what they know (.)*

A   *you see those who choose that right [and*

K   *   [and those that choose (.) try at least (.) yes*

A   *So on the other side "Quota" [*

K   *   [Quota are those which I just describe (.) in to take the benefit but not serious to do what is required [*

A   *   [not [One*

K   *   [not One of us*

The fact Khalid found this difficult to define, speaks of the social constructs locus of residing in the minds of those that perpetuate it. Elsewhere, Khalid and other in group B spoke of overt success in material or hierarchical position not being an indicator that

someone is "serious", but more around the level of effort and engagement of an individual.

Khalid speaks of whether someone is trying to adapt and fit into a new work environment as relevant, but the fact this is self-defined, while used across a community of higher performing and integrated locals, (across country boundaries) leaves open the fact that others may define the "*one of us*" slightly differently

Khaled went on to describe introductions professionally and socially in the same way, and this shared meaning and shorthand clearly had an impact on the perceived identities of themselves and others against a complex and unique mix of cultural societal and professional criteria that was required to be "one of us". An expatriate could never be either "One of us" or "Quota" of course, and this is a boundary reinforcement through definition, in line with Wenger et al, (2015)

While it could be speculated that "Fatima" below, might be seen as "one of us" by Khalid, that of course can only be asserted by members who self and co-identity in the CoP. Fatima shares her concerns over the zero-failure rate and consequential lowered average of perceived capability in the international professional community, and the potential impact on genuine high performers.

F	*For sure (.) just like we have talked before (.) we have to target the positions (.) even one generation ahead perhaps (.) so how can young people study and learn practically (..) and desire a path until it exists*
A	*So you've seen the drop and then rise in standards again through localisation [statistically] Do you think that can be avoided in future targeted positions*
F	*I think there are things that can be done to (.) lessen this for sure (.) as we have started to have a longer cross over (.) in consultant advisor and coach roles for the expatriate*
Edited Detail	
A	*What about the selection of candidates coming on to train for those roles (.) do you think there should be a failure rate in the future (?)*
F	*Not just me (..) who thinks this (.) It is now harder for us to be respected equally (.) because of this*

A	*Do you think it has affected you (.) your reputation (?)*
F	*(...long reflection) I think (.) I have been lucky mashala (..) lucky to have had the opportunity to prove myself in the mens world [laughs] so for me I do not think it has been such an issue (.) but for others (.) most certainly they are angry because of it*
A	*Why is that exactly*
F	*for some (.) it will not matter what they achieve (.) they will be (.) painted as such (.) as a local who is there but always questioned does he deserve this if it were elsewhere*
A	*And why do you think that matters to them (?) to make them angry as you say*
F	*(...) we are a national enterprise but do not live just in the walls of this country (.) I was proud to speak at GASTEC [regional O&G show hosted in Abu Dhabi] with over 50 countries (.) We see what happens there (.) which nationalities gather together (..) and the real measure is the IOG's [International Oil and Gas Opcos – eg BP, Total] and how is our relationship with them*

Fatima, not feeling judged on any personal level through being a beneficiary of a positive discrimination localisation policy, speaks of her observations of the heavily localised national oil and gas companies credibility and professional relationships with the interface points of wider CoP's and networks. She references some personal anger of others at being seen only as a member of the localised talent pool, which is itself a unique CoP, which has boundaries with other CoP's in the same professional disciplines inhabited by members of other nationalities, but with different experiences and a very different impact on developed personal identity as a result.

In cases where positive discrimination is enacted for only part of a resident minority, as is the case above in *[GCC Country]*, it is argued by Hazri (2016) in his study of PD in Kosovo, that an imbalance of Power and Decision-making results. In this study though, there is a further sub group not readily identifiable in the literature who want to distance themselves from others effected by the same policy, which is in entirely line with Clabaugh (1995) perception of: *"being held responsible for something one does not control is the height of injustice"* The lack of consideration for individual agency in the original concepts is a common thread of critique and acknowledged. Wenger (2010) and the views held by Group A and B participants suggest this to be a reasonable concern.

4.33 – LPP through Locals versus Expatriates

"I'm up, you find your own way" – "Titus" (Group B)

It was a common feeling among Group B participants that local's who achieve position and credibility within international CoP's are less likely to be supportive in facilitating or allowing LPP for their own local countrymen to achieve the same thing. An argument is made of changes in identity and direction from one period or "generation" to another, and specifically through the changes in personal identity and associated responsibilities which come from acceptance and identification into International CoP's crossing boundaries outside of a participant's geography.

Following on from Fatima's concerns in the previous section around how even successful high performing locals can be viewed by international peers, due to their path of entry and trajectory differences, "Mohamed" (Group A) who is a West African and now himself an expatriate manager in a Middle East region, outlines the position he felt he was placed in previously.

M	*I'm not saying it is easier for an expatriate manager (.) how could it be for someone who knows little (.) or nothing about how our people are (..) but because I (.) our people know they are naïve to this (..) they are given a <u>pass</u> (emph..) not expected to understand for some time at least*
A	*But for you*
M	*I had to keep all the camps happy (.) well not really (.) that was impossible [laughs] but my people had expectation of me (.) which are different (.) and there was no pass for Femi (.) and as a consequence (..) people will look upon me more harshly (..) even when I do more for them than an expat.*
A	*So when you came into the [regional] role (.) what changed for you (..) what differences did you feel in the relationship with your own people compared to being an expat manager (?)*
M	*(...) Firstly (.) you need to realise that just because I am an African (..) all Africans are no more my brothers than all Europeans are yours*
Edited	

M	[laughs] Well for us for example our francophone Cote D'Ivoire cousins may in some cases be more brothers and sisters perhaps than other tribes close to my own family. You know of me (.) very well that I am Igbo [minority Nigerian tribe] and this means something more to others even than it does to me
A	In that [
M	[There were accusations from people of the Igbo takeover (..) jobs being filled by too many of my tribe (.) so on the one side I am pressured to *perpetuate* [emph] this from my community (..) and to reverse this from [other Nigerian managers] while all the while [expat CEO] knows everything but pretends not (.) could care less (..) just expects me to [unclear] (..)
A	How did you do that (..) what choices did you make to (.) navigate that
M	(...) I started by just looking at the candidates as a *person* (emph) without caring whether he is Yoruba [tribe] or Igbo but this is not the reality
A	In what way
M	Over time the criteria became additional (..) requirement (.) If we have too many of one tribe in an area (..) I have to instruct (..) a balance or we will face problems
A	And the reactions to that (?)
M	Well I think you know (.) when I instruct one manager to only recruit Igbo and he is Igbo (.) our cousins are in the terminal the following week and I am accused of bias (.) When I instruct the opposite (..) I catch all manner of problems outside of the gate

Edited small talk

A	and what of internal recruitment for the more senior positions
M	(..) well yes (.) this is a different case completely (.) the same pressures applied but perhaps it is even more visible (.) more pressure (.) actions even taken (.) for someone to fail if they are not a popular choice from the community (..) and of course pressure on them to support others in their tribe
A	And that is why certain positions (.) commercial for example (.) remains expatriate
M	The pressure for a man with the power to sign a commercial contract outside of the gates would be more (.) than the job is worth (.) I'm sorry to say (.) but I know my country

Later extract

M	While I was there also (..) there was no one ready to take on their shoulders what I had to (..) remember not just what we have discussed (.) but the change required to move to the 3rd floor (mgt office) was a European workplace (.) with a little Nigerian spice perhaps (.) but a change in pace (.) accountability (.) that people were not ready for (.) before [Director – local national returner who championed localisation] The talk on the floor and the yard would not be accepted there

Later extract

M	(…) I'm a local man and I also know what is required in these positions (..) I did not want to see anyone (.) from any tribe (.) come in to fail because it is different for us (.) we will be there (.) most of us (.) much of our working life (.) if not all
A	So you held back people (.) until they were (.) you felt more ready
M	I promoted many people (.) every one local of course (.) and created the strongest management team for operations (.) but that didn't mean they were ready to move upstairs (..) when I say someone is ready (..) The rest of the SMT are looking at me
A	But they all promoted locals up to at least Deputy grade
M	(..) Indeed as did I (..) but when a Danish or British man does this (..) they do so with (..) a pass (.) for the candidate of their expectation to be "fit for task" (.) when I do this I need the person to stand quickly as an equal at that table

Mohammed outlines his perspective as one who was pulled in different directions through his established SMT CoP and his community and profession CoP's. It is argued that he did not "pull up the ladder" behind him in any sort of self-protectionist motive as was suggested by some others around him which I engaged with, but through a raising of his own standards and expectations as a result of his own journey and experiences.

Statistically he had promoted a comparable number of locals into progressively senior positions in his operations (by far the largest head count of the business) But stopped short of some of the top positions under him which were peripheral to his own CoP. Mohammed presented a two-way protectionist view point. Firstly, of the people who reported to him by way of a fear of exposing them to the challenges that he personally faced and having them fail, both for their own sake but also very clearly for the effect that would have on his own reputation by proxy.

Secondly a protectionist view of his exclusive CoP, inhabited only by those that had successfully elevated to multinational senior management while still navigating the challenges of domestic CoP pressures. There was never any sentiment of protecting his own relatively rare status however, but more on protecting the standards of this CoP in his own construct.

In depth exchanges outside of formal research would suggest Mohammed had, in his own estimation failed regularly to meet his own standards for this CoP, which consequently impacted on his identity creation as an established senior manager, but most relevantly to this section, he found it challenging to consider other less experienced periphery members as potential ready for LPP or membership to succeed where he perceived himself as sometimes failing.

In the next example Ibrahim, an HR manager in *[Arab Country]* shared no such self-doubt in deserving his place with a senior leadership CoP, but not having achieved that yet he was still a definitive middle manager, a regular boundary worker with the SMT, and granted increasing amounts of LPP, he targeted the HRD role with a timescale. By nature of influence other locals perceived that he must have in HR however, Ibrahim often found himself being treated as core member of senior management seeking personal benefit by locals who knew no different.

I	*It doesn't matter what I say (..) people will believe what they think (.) and they think I can help them get their brother or cousin the job (..) they will pursue me (.) when I tell them the truth (.) that my role is more administrative (.) mainly (.) they will think I am making an excuse to not deal with them*
A	*What about internal progression (..) do you face the same challenges there*
I	*Yes (.) of course I think then it becomes a national issue (.) rather than a family one [laughs]*
A	*What do you mean (?)*
I	*Well then, I am (.) encouraged (.) to put in your [Arab Country National] brother*
A	*Over the expat*
I	*There are no expats coming to [Location] to be lashers but they see only the best jobs as going to westerners and of course they think it is in my hand to change this*
A	*So what happens when you can't*
I	*It is not just that I can't (..) I wouldn't (..) you know the culture here (.) people would not care if the business closed next week if they were rich and their bellies full this week*

Later Extract

I	*Well my father has served more coffee in the majalis since I have taken this role than in the 10 years previously*
A	*I see (.) people seek to influence you that way*

I	*I am accused of treachery (.) siding with the westerners in their eyes (.) but my father is my rock and stands behind me (.) drinks the coffee and nods but he is clever and sends them on their way with an action for the fathers to tell their sons to do from their side and not mine*
A	*such as*
I	*Just general, they have to work harder and live a clean respectful life and then mashala perhaps they will receive their right.*

The perception of Ibrahim "pulling the ladder up" after him was, in his view doubly unfair as his position did not afford the influence others thought it did, however he did not attempt to hide solely behind that correction, and was observed regularly berating others for what he regarded as lazy or selfish behaviour in his fellow *[Arab Country Nationals]*.

Ibrahim was regarded and self-identified as a "company man" who took his role seriously and acknowledged a responsibility to look after the company interests while it employed him. It was clear from Ibrahim's demeanour that when he was elevated to the HR director role he aspired to, he had no intention of acceleration of local's progression then either, as he set himself up to be a guardian of the "*one of us*" CoP described in the earlier section.

This demonstrates a combination of limited "Power To" vs "Power Over" descriptors of Mork et al, (2010) through data from several Group A's that they begin to be seen as able to influence the local CoP through nature of the LPP with the international. While for many, this was not yet the case, the influence of the standards they themselves were being held to achieve and maintain LPP was a key factor to how they themselves would choose to use their "Power Over".

This power is situational though and in line with Actor Network Theory cited by Fox (2000) demonstrated by Mohamed and Jo as previous group B criteria equivalents, now established Group A's, in maintaining that Power (to include or exclude for example) exists independently and does not reside permanently with the individuals who enact any

decision, but is something that will be picked up and applied according to the perceived standards of the CoP, enacted by a series of people over time.

In Ibrahim's example as with Mohammed previously, it was not a case of securing any exclusive position as a local within an international CoP, by denying entry to others that followed, more a case of safeguarding the standards that high performing CoP members would be judged by. An interesting feature of many of the Group B interviews was a perception of a difference in judgement between standards of a local community and that of a perceived international community.

Those that had a role in moderating additional local entrants to LPP or boundary work access, often held themselves to a higher standard than those who were outside of this perceived responsibility, and by extension, expected higher standards of ability and conduct for those, like themselves. This was not driven in any overt way by the international CoP members, but by the respective locals themselves.

4.34 - Levels of Acceptable "Palatable" Diversity

"He's a Character" - "Derek" (Group A)

This section explores interpreted evidence of categorized diversity, primarily from the prospective of the established old hands.

"Derek" (Group A) describes members of a CoP when going into a new operation, who are often referred to as sergeant majors:

D	*Tommy [A local operations superintendent] is spot on (.) We set up shop there and [xxx] (Ops Director) and I put all the sergeant majors out and we sit back and work through them (..) It all seems rosey as long as you don't pay attention to how much pressure they're under (.) on our behalf and equally from us mind (.) It boiled over that day (..) and honestly, he was spot on (.) in what he was saying*
Later Extract	
A	*Understood (.) So going back to Tommys level for a sec (.) that's why we see a flatter structure elsewhere (?) You (.) Lawrence have put in the extra level to work through (?)*
D	*Well not just to work through (.) Lawrence calls it 'Beta version (.)Head of – under testing ' [smiles]*
A	*like [New deputy CEO position]*
D	*Well pretty much (.) The job is like the longest interview anyone's ever had really (.)*
A	*That's the pool*
D	*Right*
A	*And Tommy is (..)*
D	*We'll (..) hes been sent to the changing rooms hasn't he (..)[laughs] but he'll be alright*
A	*It won't effect his future*
D	*Nah (.) He'll be on jankers but by next year it will all be forgotten (.) he's got a bit of growing up to do (.) but didn't we all (..)certainly at that age anyway (..) but he can charm the birds from the trees most days (..) can't judge a lad on one bad day (.) particularly as he didn't cause it*
A	*What's he got that puts him on that level then*
D	*Well he's a cheeky chap isn't he (.) He doesn't brown nose, or play at being one of us [expat] but he's always got a story to tell. Social like (.) Put that day aside (.) totally out of character (.) you can watch him walking over to the square [contract truck driver*

	holding area] where the lads are proper ready to kick off and he'll have em giggling like little girls in five minutes and everything's sweet (.) all happy families again. The kids a leader (.) people listen to him (.) no doubt about it in my mind
A	*So in a decade or so (..) Will he make [xxx]s job (Exec Director Operations)*
D	*Yeah (.) right mate [emph. Sarcastic]*

Derek describes a layer of leadership that are set up in his locations to specifically boundary work between his own leadership CoP and the local operational CoP's. A CoP , which is in place to limit the boundary work required between the two traditional communities, described by Derek and others as "Sergeant Majors" Neither of the men nor of the officers, but as Derek describes, "*particularly not of the officers*".

Observations and interactions were consistent with his descriptions and speak of a level of inclusion with strict limits, granted to people who could boundary work effectively. Derek in line with many others describe people who are granted boundary access to their CoP's but are not seen as potential to warrant genuine LPP, because they cannot be visualised as core members in the future by the current Group A's. It is this distinction between Boundary Work and LPP which is touched on in the next example of palatable diversity.

"Marcus" is a European HR director, heading up strategic HR for a group of clusters of countries in the developing market.

Extract discussing a recent talent assessment calibration

M	*(yyy) splits the pack I think for a number of reasons (.) No one would challenge the fact she is a high performer and also a high profile high performer*
A	*That was clear (.) there were no specific objections but a cold shoulder in discussion from [2 particular MD's] and the scores suggest 2 other CEO's had not supported originally.*
M	*We will not look at the raw data but (.) Prior to discussion yes (.) (xxx) is known locally very widely =[*
A	*[She does the local TV [weekly community show]*

M   *=[and she has made a notable impression on the [regional cross location projects] she has views (.) political in [location] a liberal and modern activist but this splits how she is viewed by the regional SMT's*

A   *Some see her local network (.) and personality as a plus [*

M   *[While for others (..) she is a bit too much for them to handle (.) perhaps*

The subject in question for Marcus had become a first-round name on any regional or global project in her field. She is a formidable personality who takes no prisoners in debate, but is regarded as emotionally intelligent and courteous at all levels. Marcus presented her as an example of someone who was seen as a first-choice addition to the SMT CoP in the future by around 50% of the established group while most of the remaining votes stated the exact opposite (with two middle ground votes). His argument that she was too much for some, was further interpreted as not because of her social network following and her local cable TV segment, but more that she was an uncompromising example of a strong-willed [West African National] woman. Marcus' thesis was the regional senior leadership had an appetite for a flavour of authentic diversity, but not an eccentric, extreme example of diversity which was too outlying for the dynamics of their current group.

Whilst in line with the movement of the debate that decisions on inclusion for LPP over such wide geographies were definitively within CoP's rather than NoP's as previously proposed by Brown and Duguid, (1991) Pan and Leidner, (2003) the understanding of the subtleties of behaviours and standards of application of the CoP transactions, which make some candidates palatable to established Group A's, demonstrate knowledge only achievable through a level of relational proximity in highly connected remote CoP's or Transient Group A's on locations, This is clearly differentiated from spatial proximity by Amin and Roberts (2008) who conclude that remote or virtual Communities of Practice can be just as "*sticky*" as locally situated ones.

4.35 – Stereotypes for Sense Making

*"Its called a stereo-type 'cos I get the same **** in both ears" – "Derek" Group A*

This section has evolved from regular occurrence in the data, of participants acknowledging the flaws in their early analysis of current or potential CoP participants, as well as others in neighbouring CoP's.

It draws on views of both group A and B participants, of their respective sense making of the complex and evolving landscapes they inhabit and navigate, and their knowing employment of simplified stereo-type constructs, with no claim to their accuracy.

(1) as a starting point for trajectory actions,
(2) to build on for further calibration,
(3) as a shorthand tool for ease of communication for those outsides of their CoP's or working environments.

Derek, quoted in the heading of this section, is an Engineering manager (maintenance) with a focus on partnering with Group HR on manpower planning and talent acquisition, driven due to a significant industry shortage of maintenance engineers generally and specifically those who are capable of talent progression to supervision and management within their field.

D	[I'd be quite happy with intake that can use <u>hand tools</u> [emph]to be quite honest (.) Graduate engineers are more like high school kids (.) never seen a bloody workshop (.) (XXX) [National technical college] lads (.) and girls actually are honestly much better day one [Noting that the Technical college had a very poor reputation as a place of last resort for low academic students]
A	The O&G teams said exactly the same (..) what's going on there (?)
D	You tell me (..) but I can tell you I'd rather have 10 of them than a hundred graduates from (xxx)
AW	There must be exceptions (..) Any 10 from [(xxx) (?)

D	*[Oh hell no [laughs] (…) there's some serious weeding and sifting to do to get a few that might not drive an RS over the quay edge (.) but the best of that bunch are the best we get*
A	*So they are not progressing past fitter (?) for English (?) technical(?)*
D	*Well yes (.) I've got (xxx) on 6 month secondment at (xxx) for Technical English (…) waste of time (..) we've got to try it (.) sure but he's never (.) like never going to get to the level*
A	*And the GEP [Graduate program] (?)*
D	*Well (xxx) is held up as the poster child (..) and she bloody deserves it (.) no argument (..) below her there's maybe (.) <u>maybe</u> [emph] (..) four more across AME that could make shift superintendent (..)*
A	*So there's a good few exceptions (..) on both sides [and external*
D	*[Oh god <u>yeah</u> (.) when I bang on about all the GEP's being soft handed kids and the ACT's not being able spell their own names (..) pay no heed [laughs] (..) I know within 30 seconds if I've got the right attitude (..) potential in front of me (..) but that's only because I've had to go through literally hundreds of these kids (…) I know the best and worst we've seen within that from each source (..) and I know what Im looking for (..) Honestly everyone in here is a <u>bloody exception</u> [emph] or else the place would be empty [laughs]*

Over the course of 2 years, Derek served to remotely introduce and guide me through his own and other boundary CoP's across the Middle East and West Africa, both for my day job and this research, and he regularly communicated in stereotypes as a simple construct for mapping the stakeholder and CoP landscape to the uninitiated.

Below the stereo type though was an uncommon level of awareness of and about those he dealt with, personal motivations, strength and weaknesses to a level of subtlety and revealed accuracy uncommon in his peers. The phrase: *"they are all…"* was never meant to be taken literally and was greeted with surprise and confusion if it ever was.

In common with this, Titus, a recent promotion in the last year to Operations manager in [West African Location] also brokered heavily in stereo types to describe the changing landscape of predominantly expatriate managers who came and went.

Discussing new senior manager

T	And then it is down to the personal business of selecting the favourites, the new <u>spies</u> [emph]the new deputies and those that think their career has taken off for the next few years [smiles broadly]
A	and its always new ones (?)
T	Not immediately (..) No (.) Never (..) but eventually one will be moved here and another one moved there (..) and before you know it we have a new ring

Later Extract

T	But we play the game (..) from 3 CEO's and 4 COO's in my time alone (.) and other function heads (..) we pretend (.) and deal with each as a typical Dane or Dutchman for example (.) or lord save us a typical Englishman
A	Steady now [laughs] (..) So you know you're dealing with an individual (..) who you will get to know over time (..) and already have some background on from their last posting in most cases[=
T	[In all cases
A	Right(.) So how do you treat a typical Dane or Dutchman then
T	[and I know (..) and I have visited Den Hague and Copenhagen several times (..) before the travel ban [ebola] and now communicate there even more [REMOVED] by webex (..) I know very well this is not the final approach (...) but this is how I start (..) knowing it will change
A	[and
T	[After working for several years with a man's <u>predecessor</u> (emph..) it is like we reset the business (..) All the working habits have to be reset and learned again (.) but that is OK (..) We are experienced in this routine (..) and so are they

Titus, in line with many other Group B participants in their home country, navigating a through-put of experienced mid to late career senior managers on 3-5 year GMP (Global Mobility Contract) assignments, outlines one of a number of survival strategies in their local Community of Practice.

Clearly understanding that the background information collected and sweeping stereotypes constructed are likely to bear little resemblance to the individual they would get to know and be working with for the coming period, a routine kick-start is orchestrated by Titus and his peers to establish an interactional baseline; A CoP re-

establishment cycle of sorts, from which to build and develop legitimate relationships and participation.

It is noted that whilst a tone of resignation and inevitability was conveyed during interview and interaction with Titus and a number of other group B participants, no evidence of any real frustration in this repeated process was shared, rather an understanding of necessity for the requirement on both sides before personal calibration and understanding of individual agency could be embarked upon, and even a sense of pride in their awareness and ability to proceed by employing superficial stereotyping that they describe, quickly and efficiently, without anyone taking it too personally or seriously.

Beyond the resignation and inevitability displayed, as much in the tone and body language than the narrative, Titus was different in that he displayed more confidence in the likely outcomes of the re-establishment cycle than some other group B participants, perhaps due to his longevity and number of such cycles he had endured.

In these types of communities with the additional dynamic of a fixed term core member rotation on location, which have been common in MNC's in various industries across the developing markets, a further layer is added to the trajectory of newcomers once they become accepted and legitimate peripheral participants. In the cases above, Titus was open to the risk of being marginalised again by an incoming Old Hand, which previously would have paused his trajectory, however Titus, having not yet established himself as an international manager or CoP core, is no longer a Newcomer either, and holds a relatively senior operational position locally. While this position is no guarantee of future acceptance in the local and wider CoP, (Others in such positions elsewhere have been found wanting and been consequently exited or marginalised by incoming International managers) Titus has developed a confidence from the international CoP coming to him, in the manner of successive GMP leaders rotating through his location during his own development and creation of his own identity relative to them.

This speaks strongly of Wengers (2010) response to Engestrom's (2007) critique of CoP's reflecting a previous age, through the ability described by participants to "*Anchor history in new Social Practice*" rather than simply replicate it (Wenger 2010) In these cases, the CoP's had to be effectively reinvented every 3 to 5 years as core senior members rotated in and out of location, and at each time, the remaining local CoP members "reset" their approaches based on their previous relational proximity and understandings, (Amin and Roberts, 2008) until new understandings were reached.

This level of emotional maturity was not apparent in all his Group B peers however. In some cases, participants recognised a clear difference between personal readiness for a local senior role, particularly through a diversity and inclusion policy to their benefit, but equally perceived they would be the most junior of the CoP peers in similar positions regionally and globally.

Whilst mercenary, this consideration is consistent with Boudreau's (2013) talent management prospective on diversity, in "retooling" HR systems to manage the psychology of diversity, and maximise the value of human resources through optimum timing of advancement, in the same way as developing raw materials for increased asset value.

This dichotomy of readiness or attainment of local hierarchical and positional status and the accepted position in the wider professional CoP was not universally accepted by the Group B participants with 2 in particular bemoaning the lack of respect they perceived from their international peers, despite them gaining the positions they had attained. Some well-considered views were shared within the data on what stereotyping does in the actor's view to help catalyse a rotational global management policy, and the CoP's which are cognitively constructed and reconstructed as a result. A world away unconscious ignorance and exceeding my acknowledged preconceptions of participant's social sophistication. Views and observations from both the static local workforces and ultimately short-term management shed light on some of the thought processes involved in changing dynamics of a social construct such as a Community of Practice.

Section 4.36 – Absence of Racism within LPP

"Well, it's everywhere isn't it"

Following on closely from the previous section on the positive employment of conscious stereotyping as a mechanism to accelerate LPP in the relatively short-term circumstances of GMP, this section turns to the less savoury side of the same enquiry, and looks at the data generated around negative racial bias.

A majority of participants had stories of third party anecdotes, hearing of racism in action in the context of their professional communities, but in the case of Group B participants, none of the 15 could actually cite an instance when they had personally been the recipient.

In the example below, a senior director, and core of a high profile international CoP, states categorically that he had seen discrimination in the decisions made by other senior peers, and the example he offers reflected negative default views of other senior leaders of the ability of any Indian national to successfully establish operations in challenging African locations.

N	*Yeah I suppose if you were talking you know there were instances of not quite racism but certainly close to it and discrimination I would say*
A	*In which direction 'cause it's a topic that's raised that's been raised from various angles in virtually this is the last interview this project it's been raised by most people but in different contexts*
N	*Um (..) I rather use … it was the ability of an Indian individual to be successful in Africa*
A	*Ok because of those in that description that any Indian is likely to be have less chance of success in Africa (?)*
N	*Yeah and I think that it was a stereo-typical view of Indians who were er (.) and I suppose it's the use of the English language actually..]*

However in further discussion and validation, (also as a case I was personally familiar with) it emerged that whilst he identified a case of unconscious bias in some of his peers, (Cueller, 2017) this did not in fact stop them posting the Indian national into the African position and no discrimination in action was validated

The strongest examples of racism were historical, and provide by Group A Participants. "Christian", the most senior of the participants, and globally respected gave examples of his view of how things were:

C   (…) Understand (.) that I came into the shipping business (..) in a very different world to that which you see today (..) Racism was not specific in our industry (..) it was commonplace in our people in life (..) in general (..) In all walks of life (.) it was largely (.) socially acceptable (.) but being an early global industry (..) we progressed better than most I think (….) Travel (..) Diversity as we now promote (..) breeds relationships and (..) understanding of people I think

Discussing others who were openly racist

C   [I have always tried to give people their breaks when things are said like this (..) I cannot share the values and morals of 20,000 people we employ (.) so I judge by their actions (.) rather than how they behave or misbehave after a little too much beer (..) for example (..) otherwise (.) maybe this office is empty by now [Smiles]
A   Confidentially of course (..) there have been cases though
C   I will not discuss individual cases (..) but yes people have left the business on my direction as well as (XXX) [Top group leadership] (..) as I say (.) by their actions
A   and today.
C   These are few (.) unheard of really (..) The cases that come to my attention are invariably of some other issue (..) and things that have been said or alleged seem to be bolted on to this (..) rather than being at the heart of the matter (..) as I said previously (..) ours was one of the first industries (..) decades (.) centuries even before my time (..) to bring together peoples from all corners of the world (.) with that their differences can be apparent and abrasive some might say for one another (..) but also we have the chance to know people for who they are (..) and we will like or maybe dislike the person from that

Later Extract

C   [We value what the difference _brings_ [emph] (..) and to value diversity (..) you must recognise openly differences between us of course

Historical cases such as these, of which there were several, go against Engestroms (2007) critique of CoP's best fit for replication, but are in line with Wengers response to this, of CoP's ability to "*anchor history in social practice*" rather than reproduce historical context or method, but to place contemporary experience in historical context (Wenger

2010) In this case, Christian doesn't deny the negative history of racism in his CoP, but neither does he take any action to perpetuate it.

Another western prospective comes from "Joanna", targeted to participate in Group C of this study for her position as a titled Community of Practice coordinator in group head office HR. In line with the other 3 Group C participants who had some level of formal CoP coordination delineated in their role (Joanna being a titled HR CoP coordinator) each of their roles was largely unclear in practice, and entirely consistent with Iaquito et al's (2011) conclusions that the role of the CoP coordinator was not understood by either Organisations or CoP members without further individual agreement.

In the only formal interview with her, alongside many further interactions, it became clear she had decided to seek an exit strategy for the role as she had become frustrated with the challenges of corporate establishment and coordination of professional CoP's across a highly diverse culture geography. When exploring the challenges, she faced which led her to this decision, she opened the subject of racism early in the list:

J   *(…) [getting stressed] well you probably know all about it (..) everyone seems to (..) he had the cheek to raise a complaint against me (.) formal complaint with (xxx) [HQ HRD] and call me a [expletive] racist (.) The lazy [expletive] just trying to deflect attention from the fact he's done nothing (..) and I mean nothing (.) at all (…) he's the [expletive] racist [Becoming increasingly distressed and emotional] everyone will take his side obviously*

I halted the interview and called a break

Later extract after restarting

J   *I think being a woman (.) and he felt he was being reprimanded (.) which he certainly wasn't (.) we were discussing a gap but Im not his boss (.) but I get he maybe felt that (.) anyway when I called him he went nuts (..) shouting at me that I had no right blah blah blah [calm manner, dismissive] (.) so I closed the call and left it (.) didn't react*

Later extract

J	*No (..) it became all manner of accusations (.) mainly suggesting that I had no respect for Arabs (..) but I brushed that off (.) because I know that's nonsense (.) There are bigots and racists here like anywhere (.) but Im certainly not one of them*
A	*Are there (?) where have you come across it*
J	*Well (..) I've heard people complain for sure (.) in the regional offices*
A	*and in HQ (?)*
J	*Well (.) not really (.) I mean we have some characters (.) Our South African friend for instance [a HQ Dept Head] but I've never come across anything (.) you know (.) out of order. I mean things like what happened to me (.) just some sort of misunderstanding or whatever (.) but never anyone (.) anything beyond that*

The complaint against Joanna was dropped after some internal arbitration, with the other party accepting there had been a lack of cultural calibration on Joanna's part in dealing with an Egyptian office, and accepting he also would benefit from understanding the working and communication culture of the European HQ he reported through.

Prior to embarking on this research, one of the drivers to explore the area selected was a strong anecdotal perception of racism on both sides of the local and expatriate divide in the oil and gas industry in the Middle East. The perception of actioned bias was seemingly present in experience, and consequently was built into the research agenda for further investigation.

What came from the data though was counter intuitive to my expectations. All participants in groups A, B and C excepting 2 in group B, were comfortable and confident in assertions that some degree of individual, community or even institutional policy of racism was present and could be encountered in their respective industries, at least historically and to varying degrees, however virtually no personal experience was offered to back up these assertions.

Joanna's example above highlighted two common threads through the interviews: Firstly that most people had heard of some level of racism in the workplace, but no one interviewed had recent and clear first-hand experience of it themselves in the participant groups for this research. Secondly that cultural miscommunications were commonplace

in company operating across over 70 countries, which could easily be interpreted as racism by recipients or casual observers.

Despite the evidence collected from the data pointing largely to positive discrimination through policies of the promotion of diversity, if any at all, the anecdotal perceptions were still present with most participants that racism was still a factor in their professional CoP's, despite a lack of example to support.

Whilst there is virtually no literature on racism in CoP's, there are calls to investigate. Potapchuck (2010) called for CoP's as a *mechanism* to investigate racial equality through connecting groups of existing awareness, General workplace racism literature ranges legal definitions such as "selective incivility" (Becerra, 2015) which would certainly facilitate established CoP members to "*perpetuate racism by masking it as everyday acts, whether consciously or unconsciously*" (Becerra, 2015) through to alignment with literature on Unconscious Bias (Thuraisingham, 2013).

Cuellar summarises that
'*Even the most culturally congruent person will have some unconscious biases*"
(Ceullar, 2017)

From Cueller's position above it is not unreasonable to consider that others may see what they recognise as bias in Group A participants, whether or not it is actioned or conscious. While most had stories to tell of others, but rarely of actions that they had witnessed, in such a small sample group, I am cautious to draw any generalised conclusions in this area. However, as the data points overwhelmingly away from the anecdotal perceptions, it would invite wider based study top to pursue further.

4.37 – Meta Theme Discussion Summary

Evidence has been presented within the 6 contributory themes of

- Informal Sponsored Opportunity
- Effects of Positive Discrimination
- LPP through Locals versus Expatriates
- Levels of acceptable "palatable" diversity
- Stereotypes for sense making
- Absence of Racism within LPP

It is concluded that diversity is valued and actively pursued by the Group A participants when identifying those being granted CoP access. However, those acceptable to be granted LPP or sponsored in other ways by Group A's did not deviate too far from accepted CoP norms to be unpalatable for the Old Hands.

This dichotomy is presented to contribute to quite restrictive parameters for Newcomers to be successful in becoming established in their respective CoP's. Whilst MNC's commonly connect diverse national groups internationally in the guise of a CoP to work on best practice and procedures (Kimble and Hildreth, 2005) very little literature is available on the impacts, effects, mechanisms or predomination of diversity within LPP in International CoP's.

Kirkman et al, (2013) study on national diversity and global performance within organisationally sponsored CoP's drew literature from the limited Virtual Team debate to inform their enquiry, which while sharing some considerations, does not address the specific nature of elements effecting LPP in international CoP's to which this study aspires.

Kirkman et al (2013) ask two general questions in support of their theoretical rationale for study in this area

      (1) Why would nationality be salient in global CoPs;

      (2) Why would it matter for global CoP performance?

They argue firstly that it is a *superordinate determinant of individuals' identities*, which is discussed at length in the previous section 4.2 of this chapter, and they further suggest *"Tapping country-specific knowledge also likely elevates nationality beyond other demographics (we also note that the OCoPs in our sample were same-function, making functional differences less salient)"(Kirkman et al, 2013)*

The lack of specific CoP diversity literature was well noted, however some ability to compare findings here to Social Categorization theory (Hogg and Terry, 2000; Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1987) is possible as the route also pursued by Kirkman et al (2013) The Social categorisation theory is argued from Van Knippenberg and Schippers, (2007) Williams and O'Reilly, (1998) that increased potential for social categorization comes from greater diversity in networks and groups, and correlates that there is likely to be a reduction in performance as a result (Kirkman et al, 2013)

While elements of the first part of this argument are consistent with examples in Section 4.35 on Stereotypes for sense making, it does not closely correlate with other findings explored in this meta theme.

In relation to the second part of the argument on Social Categorisation theory, that performance is likely to reduce through proliferation of categorization in more diverse environments; Performance measurement is not within the scope of this study to quantify or compare, however, contributions from Group A participants and criteria equivalents gave no indication that performance was compromised in their view, in comparison to other operations they have experienced in less diverse or localised Communities of Practice.

From their study Kirkman et al (2013) go on to suggest a curvilinear (U shaped) prediction of performance, with reduction likely in moderately diverse / moderately social categorised CoP's, when compared to minimal Social categorisation in low diversity CoP's but high benefits from varied cultural backgrounds, and experience promoting thought diversity towards high performing CoP's in highly diverse International CoP's.

The lack of further additional placement in equivalent literature is presented to support the case of novelty and contribution within a debate on Palatable Diversity in International CoP's.

Section 4.4 Findings and Discussion Chapter – Summary and Context

This chapter has explored limiters and delimiters for developing market professionals to engage successfully with their respective international CoP's from the context of both multinational "Old hands" who largely control access and LPP, and the local "Newcomers" who aspire to such a trajectory.

As outlined in the introduction, Wenger's (1998) development of the community of practice "*inventory*" of four components was employed in the initial design to calibrate adequate breadth of exploration of chosen themes. In the research and informed initial coding design of literature and research findings, however if we are to consider Wenger's original definition of CoP components, then we must also accept his premise that each is "*deeply connected and mutually defining*" and this is entirely in line with what each of the 10 contributory themes have suggested.

Component	Definition	Themes
Meaning	Learning as experience	4.32, 4.35
Practice	Learning as doing	4.31, 4.33
Community	Learning as belonging	4.34, 4.36
Identity	Learning as becoming	4.21. 4.22, 4.23, 4.24

Table 11: Developed themes aligned with Wengers (1998) inventory of CoP components

Interpretation of analysis around elements effecting identity formation in sections 4.21 to 4.24 suggests these aspects cannot be viewed in isolation, rather each of the other three CoP components are shaped by concepts formed there, and Identity formation is reciprocally shaped by the perceptions and realities in the other three.

Figure 3 Summary – Mutually defining CoP components

The analysis and interpretation of the data has shown that experiences, and the meaning made from them to be inconsistent across Group B participants in local markets, but several of their challenges to successful LPP and core engagement are particular to peoples who do not share other commonalties of experience and backgrounds with their respective CoP old hands. These differences, while challenging to navigate also have some advantages as highlighted in this chapter, and routes to International CoP LPP and subsequent establishment are indeed possible for some local market professionals in West Africa and the Middle East who learn the best approaches. The implications of these findings for academic debate, organisational practice, and this research question will now be discussed in the conclusion in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 - Summary and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

From a literature review described in Chapter 2, concluding that the Community of Practice metaphor had travelled extensively from its origins to inform disciplines outside of Social Learning theory, no consistency was found within the academic debate in four areas pertaining to this study:

(1) The specific nature of engagement in LPP in CoP's.
(2) The disputed impacts on identity formation from diverse experiences.
(3) Attitudes to diversity in within CoP's by established members.
(4) Absence of study in developing markets on engagement in international CoP's.

From this, the broad enquiry of this thesis "*One of Us? How do Developing Market Professionals Engage with International Communities of Practice?*" was formed.

The study was designed to better understand the choices and implications of the journey that local talent had to navigate, to successfully engage within a dynamic of reduced expatriate influence in a changing landscape of professions in developing markets, and the influence and prospective of established international professionals on local talents ability to achieve this.

The question was addressed within an Interpretivist philosophy of social research (Schutz, 1976) leading to a qualitative methodology within Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Designed and developed as described in Chapter 3, to build on the literature review conclusions.

Firstly, focus groups were held to validate the area of enquiry and thematically develop a pilot design and conceptual coding for Semi Structured interviews, targeting two primary participant groups from the literature. (A) Established International Professionals and (B)

Aspirant Local Developing Market Professionals. Opportunity was also taken to gather additional supporting data from a third group (C) Company Sponsored CoP Coordinators.

Two organisations with developing market presence and large numbers of Group A and B criteria employees agreed to allow me access as a semi insider researcher. Following interview pilots and expert academic contribution, amendments to the methodology were described in Chapter 3, to make the best use of Contextual, Interactive and Biographical Data that was available to support interpretation and analysis (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008).

Following thematic saturation and ongoing testing of data through Constant Comparison and Deviant Case methodology (Silverman, 2006), validation of the interpretations and analysis were conducted with 6 original participants and 2 criteria equivalents from Groups A and B, leading to refinements and conclusions, which are summarised in the following section.

5.2 Answering the research Question

The research question of ""*One of Us? How do Developing Market Professionals Engage with International Communities of Practice?*" was broken into three primary areas to be addressed separately within a methodology informed by the literature review:

(1) What elements effect African and Arab professionals' ability to access Legitimate Peripheral Participation with established professionals in international Communities of Practice?

(2) If number 1 is achieved, what is their trajectory to becoming established themselves?

(3) If number 2 is achieved, how do they manage Community of Practice access through LPP for those who follow them?

The title of the Meta themes themselves, derived from countless rounds of coding and grouping of data around the evolving themes, are of course conclusions in and of themselves of what was seen in the study. At the highest level, the study concludes that:

(1) Neither Multiple nor Consistent Identities were evidenced exclusively as the outcomes of Aspirant local professional's journey of complex elements to engage and establish in their perspective CoP's, while simultaneously navigating their relationships with their local and domestic CoP's.

(2) A level of "Palatable Diversity"; that describes a genuine openness to difference, but within subjective limits, was evident in the choices and actions of established professional's choice in granting LPP access, through various means, to selected local aspirants.

However, underneath these neat headline conclusions, sits a complex, messy reality, of unique individual experience and a further conclusion:

(3) Recognition of Individual Agency, concluding further that no predictive ability is established from any of the actions or mechanism described

At the level below the meta themes, 10 conclusions are summarised from the contributory themes. Making meaning from experience, leading to identity creation in individuals through legitimate peripheral participation and progression trajectories within a constellation landscape of established communities of practice was problematized in four areas:

	Conclusions – Multiple and Consistent Identities within CoP Constellation Navigation
1	Different routes for generations and national cultures, led to different experiences, and consequently varying effects on formation of identities.
2	A complex relationship existed between levels of individual identity between Home Culture CoP's and International Professional CoP's which showed both multiple situational identities, and consistent identity in navigation.
3	LPP was notably restricted for those who became known primarily for membership and identification in one CoP but identified progressively more with another.
4	Long term pressure to confirm to CoP behaviour norms, created an increased tolerance, but not a multiple identity in participants.

Table 12 - Conclusions - Multiple and Consistent Identities within CoP Constellation Navigation

While access to LPP and subsequent progression of diverse newcomers, was encouraged and pursued by established CoP members in this research, with several caveats within the contributory themes.

MTB	Conclusions - Palatable Diversity
1	Informal long-term mentoring was evident of those selected by "Old Hands" to be suitable to carry on the progression of their CoP's.
2	Negative views of the impact of positive discrimination policies on the highest potential local newcomer's identity was not shared by established international CoP members.
3	Higher standards set for LPP to be granted by established locals, than by expatriates.
4	Differentness seen as positive by established members, within limits palatable to them.
5	Use of known stereotypes to speed up navigation and establishment of CoP's employed by both sides
6	Absence of evidence of racism in action within the data, despite popular perceptions of prevalence.

Table 13 - Conclusions - Palatable Diversity

Overall, from the original definition of requirements to engage in CoP's (Lave and Wenger 1991), (1) Domain of Intertest, (2) Relationships (3) Development of Shared Practice, this thesis has addressed questions in the debate on the ability of remote professionals to engage meaningfully and evolve Cop's internationally. The conclusion of analysis in this study suggests that the international professional communities are indeed CoP's by the initial and subsequent definitions.

Engagement of Group B participants through attaining meaningful LPP and future trajectory is concluded as attainable through the developing and nuanced awareness of local developing market professional newcomers to recognise and adapt to the unique challenges which their landscapes present.

A nuanced understanding that individual agency, through different abilities, speeds and methods to adapt to the differences in requirements across international CoP's will be affected by the different personal biographies and trajectories of the actors, and will have consequences to their opportunity to engage while this is negotiated.

The choices, actions and abilities of these types of diffuse and diverse Cop's are the key to their success or failure in successfully engaging with their established international peers who are largely open to their membership, in the CoP's they aspire to engage with and ultimately influence.

5.3 Implications

5.31 Theory
Each of the 10 conclusions in Tables 12 and 13 above comment on findings placed within the literature. Whilst the selected methodology restricts the ability to widely generalise, several considerations for theory development are proposed for consideration, through additional empirical testing.
From the meta themes the following two considerations to theory are proposed:

(1) Agency of individuals is presented as being more significant than current literature would suggest in the lack of predictability of identity impacts of LPP

(2) Attitudes to diversity are presented as being non-binary. In cases of positive views of differentness, it is presented that a subjective comfort zone exists for each individual for endorsement and support

5.32 Practice

In line with observations at commencement of this thesis, that practitioners were ill equipped to advise and support LPP for developing market locals in International CoP some initial considerations are presented:

(1) An awareness that all aspirant newcomers in developing markets will not adapt in a predictable, consistent or naturally repeatable way, due to notable differences in background, class, culture and establishment and identification with other local CoP norms.

(2) From this, to account for unique challenges in the International CoP dynamic, wherever possible an individualised approach should be taken in career pathing and succession planning, including CoP awareness and navigation in a similar manner to how stakeholder mapping and career path coaching is currently applied for global High Potentials.

(3) Support should be provided for Global Mobility expatriates to understand and assess local talent in an objective and informed manner. This could be supported by tailoring real time performance management systems currently entering the market to these needs, in addition to traditional assessment and readiness suite approaches, which are less employed in developing markets.

(4) HR systems should be encouraged to move away from developing market categorization (weighted bias) and allow individual performance and potential to be assessed against global or education level norm groups.

(5) Unconscious Bias awareness should be incorporated into specialist as well as leadership grade development

5.4 Limitations

Limitations of the Qualitative analytical frame work within Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) dictates a methodology of this research, limited in line with Laves early work in west Africa, (Lave, 1977) to analyse elements of experience from the actual participants only, in a specific a specific time and place (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Whilst the conclusions from these participants are not readily generalisable, Grounded Theory, by its nature produces concepts, which by their nature are testable in other environments (Glaser, 2002) as discussed in the previous sections of implications for Theory and Practice.

Limitations of the philosophy, methodology and my place as a semi insider researcher have been addressed in the limitations section of the methodology imitations chapter Section 3.5.

Whilst the study has been conducted over a large geography, the participant numbers in each country provide no representative national or regional response. The geographies represent the opportunity to access criteria suitable participants in the study organisations only.

5.5 Further Opportunities

Several opportunities for further research are proposed:

From the literature review:

(1) Impacts of National Culture on International CoP's

From the findings and conclusion of this thesis – These include:

(1) Response testing in line with this enquiry, from equivalent participant groups in other developing market locations

(2) Are formal professional bodies, such as chartered institutes, recognised and valued in the same way in developing markets?

(3) Predictive ability of CoP constructs of the formation of single, dual or multiple identities

From expert academic input, other aspects of the topics could have been considered within the participant groups:

(1) Which participants were "happiest" (or least conflicted) crossing boundaries from previous CoP's to become established in new ones – those who adapted their behaviours within a constant identity or those who maintained separate dual or multiple identities (Etienne Wenger-Trayner)

(2) Influence of native or second language in the ability to identify with a CoP (Beverly Wenger-Trayner)

5.6 Closing remarks

As this study contributes to a Practitioner Doctorate in Social Science, rather than a PhD, it was perhaps inevitable that I, as a "*scholarly practitioner*" (Philips and Pugh, 2010) would be drawn to unpick the practical mechanics at play within the process involved in CoP LPP, in a context aligned with my practice. To execute the research, my own journey through the Constellation Landscape of multiple Cop's which this degree requires, has at times prompted in me, nothing short of jealousy for those who can routinely engage with rich qualitative research and theory development as their core career.

My interactions with much more experienced researchers and academics such as my supervisors and faculty at Leicester; At conferences such as the EMDoc2017 and NYU Abu Dhabi, as well as the kind support and interaction with Etienne and Beverly Wenger-Trayner and others, has softened my practitioner edge over the last seven years and caused me to reflect on the fact that successful engagement in this degree, by its very nature, creates people like me to be boundary workers by definition, becoming increasingly comfortable between the CoP's of high quality academic endeavour and cutting edge practice and implementation.

Whether, as my thesis discuses, this creates in me a dual identity or promotes adaptive behaviours, I will reflect upon further at such a time that this endeavour may be hard bound, however I have concluding faith in my individual agency to find the right balance.

> *"Perhaps one day we will visit your landscape and you will be able to tell us where to visit, what to look out for, and who we'll cross paths with.*
> *And we'll thank you for your knowledgeability. And for the opportunity to expand ours.*
> *Then, together or separately, we'll move on."*

Wenger-Trayner, E. and Wenger Trayner, B. 2015

Appendices

Appendix	Document
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B	**Participant Table**
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D	**Example Participant Transcript**
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A- Reduced Coding Hierarchy

Reduced Open Axial and Meta Themes

Meta Theme	Group	Lit Concept #	Formalised (concept)	Axial	Open / Combined codes
Multiple vs Consistent Identity	Becoming	23	Continuity of identity across a constellation of CoP's	Single Identity	Situational / Sit Adaptive; Age to LPP / Ed / Personal Social history / Class
	Becoming	21	Impact of varied routes to CoP participation	Routes to LPP	Constant Values; Return to Ed / Development; P&O / DP / Int O&G / Regional; Former / R.O.P. / Can do better; Support / Corporate B/Grd; Operational B/Grd
	Becoming	22	Identity formation in professional vs domestic CoP's	Work vs / Domestic	Culture - Nat; *Gendered / Local / Industrial / Class; Tribal / Home / Domestic / Family; Conflict / Duality - Values / Self; Friend / Fam / Peer; *Boundary
	Becoming	24	Impact of CoP norms on identity formation	Norms	Long Term Adaption; Pressure To / Not /; N/C Historical Conformity; *Withholding / *Heirachy
Palatable Diversity	Practice	33	LPP through locals vs expatriates	Expats vs Local LPP	Local Fac LPP; Expat Fac LPP
	Practice	31	Informal sponsored opportunity	White Knights / Protected Species	Informal PD; Pet People / Ego / Cheerleaaders; *Withholding / PU ladder / ID; Sponsor - Seek Distance from (Dis); Pet Project / Bus Justification; Gatekeeper
	Meaning	32	Effects of positive discrimination	Positive Discrimination	Reputation (Dis) / Credibility; Differentiate (Dis); Distance from (Dis); *Gatekeeper / *Power; Withholding; "Token" African / Arab; Int Mobility; Localisation; Accelerated Dev; Gendered; Bus Justification
	Meaning	35	Stereotypes for sense making	Stereoypes	Ignorant Stereotypes / First Impressions; Conscious Stereotypes; Stereo Bens / Challenege; Fair / Unfair Perceptions
	Community	34	Levels of "Palatable Diversity"	Palatability	Differentness Pos / Moderated / Limited Pos; Differentness Neg / Diff neg Overt / Diff Neg Covert; Testing vs RSM
	Community	36	Absence of racism in LPP	Racism	Actioned Disc; First Hand Disc; Race - Third Party Anec; Unconscious Bias / Disc - Reflected Perp; Historical Disc
None - Standalone		S1	None	Social Media / Int LMS	Speciality Isolation / Matrix / Project; Yammer / SMPos; Yammer / SM Neg; Competitor / Cross Co; Gatekeeper
		S2	None	Virtual / Distance	Structure / Social Business; AME / Understand; Calender / Con Shedule
		S3	None	Regional / Corporate	National Skills; Reg / Corp Priority / Motivation
		S4	None	National Gvt	National Ident

Contextual / Cross / Multi Theme Codes: Motivation / Engagement / Witholding; Fairness / Unfairness Relationship / Trust; Personal; Subserviance Heirachy - Dominance / Power to / Power over; Boundary / COP / Corp / Region; Broker / Distance (gen)

B- Participant Table (Anonymised)

	Age	Nationality	Working Location	Job Role	Time in Profession	Time in location
Group A **Established Career Professionals**						
1- Christian	57	Netherlands	Netherlands	Global Ports Ops SME	41yrs	9yrs
2 – John	52	South Africa	Oman	GM Operations	36 years	1yr
3 – Andrew	46	Denmark	Denmark	Head of Finance	25yrs	Lifetime
4 - Marcus	54	Denmark	Bahrain	HR Director	12yrs (20yrs alt career)	3yrs
5 – Johan	49	Netherlands	Netherlands	Head of Operations	25 years (6yrs alt career)	Lifetime
6 – Anna (f)	46	Sweden	Netherlands	Finance Director	25 years	2yrs
7 – Jo (f)	40	Ghana	Ghana	HSSE Director	18yrs (12yrs in Europe)	1yr
8 – Derek	50	UK	UAE	GM Engineering	20yrs (18 alt career)	3yrs
9 – Mark Change	44	UK	Liberia	CEO, Former COO	(1yr) 26yrs Operations	5yrs
10 – Mohamed	56	Nigeria	UAE	Chief Operating Officer	30yrs (10 yrs alt career)	4yrs

	Age	Nationality	Working Location	Job Role	Time in Profession	Time in location
Group B **Early and Mid Career Arab and African Professionals**						
11 – Michael	35	Ghana	Ghana	Superintendent (Operations)	14yrs	Lifetime
12 – Samuel	37	Nigeria	Nigeria	HSSE Manager	6yrs (1 Year Hague)	Lifetime
13 – Titus	41	Liberia	Liberia	Operations Manager	12yrs	Lifetime
14 – Joseph	38	Nigeria	Nigeria	Engineering Manager	16yrs (3 years in Rotterdam)	Lifetime
15 – Idris	30	Ghana	Ghana	HSSE Supervisor	5yrs	Lifetime
16 – Kingsley	30	Ghana	Ghana	Maintenance Manager	12yrs	Lifetime
17 – Opeyemi (f)	29	Nigeria	Nigeria	Superintendent (Operations)	5yrs	Lifetime
18 – Khalid	37	Bahrain	Bahrain	General Cargo Manager	20 years (1yr as mgr.)	Lifetime
19 – Wilfred	36	Ivory Coast	Ivory Coast	Planning manager	7yrs	Lifetime
20 - Ibrahim	35	Jordan	Jordan	HR Manager	12yrs	Lifetime
21 – Hani	32	Oman	Oman	Maintenance Supervisor	9yrs	Lifetime
22 – Blessing (f)	26	Ghana	Ghana	Commercial Officer	6yrs (1yr in Denmark)	Lifetime
23 – Mamme (f)	32	Nigeria	Nigeria	Planning Supervisor	15yrs	Lifetime
24 – Basma(f)	32	Oman	Oman	Sales Manager	7yrs (3 in UK)	Lifetime
25 – Fathima (f)	29	Bahrain	Bahrain	Upstream Planner	6yrs	Lifetime

	Age	Nationality	Working Location	Job Role	Time in Profession	Time in location
Group C **Field and HQ CoP Coordinators / CoE's**						
26 – Hibba (f)	36	Tunisia	Oman	Global CoE HR	15 years (9 in other industries)	6yrs
27 – Joanna (f)	28	Denmark	Denmark	Corporate CoP Coordinator	1 year (6 in HR)	Lifetime
28 – Tatiana (f)	34	Georgia	Dubai	Global CoE Technical Competency	10yrs	Lifetime
29 – Michelle (f)	36	Ghana	Ghana	Global CoE Talent L&D	14yrs	Lifetime

Nationalities					
Group A	10	**Group B**	15	**Group C**	4
Netherlands	3	Ghana	3	Tunisia	1
Oman	1	Nigeria	4	Denmark	1
Denmark	1	Liberia	2	Georgia	1
Bahrain	1	Bahrain	2	Ghana	1
Ghana	1	Ivory Coast	1		
UAE	2	Jordan	1		
Liberia	1	Oman	2		
	10		15		4

Countries Conducted - 11			
Netherlands	Bahrain	Liberia	United Kingdom
Oman	Ghana	Nigeria	Georgia
Denmark	UAE	Ivory Coast	

C- Expert Academic Research Plan Review Transcript

A – Adrian
E – Étienne Wenger
B – Beverly Trayner

17:25

00:00

B   *Yeah be careful what you say etc er I..]*

A   *[Yeah indeed*

B   *I did some related I had a sort of similar concern back in '98 I was living in Portugal and I wanted to find out what it was I did some research to find out what it was that made some Portuguese people successful in international settings and it..]*

A   *[Ok*

B   *And you know I was sort of I was then in those days I was teaching English for all specific and academic purposes but I just knew it wasn't language there was something else*

A   *Yeah*

B   *I was shadowing a I shadowed a Human Resource Director who was very successful in an international setting even though she still remained very Portuguese..]*

A   *[mhuh*

B   *And um (.) I had a number of findings but this was my in road also to give me some practice one was but what I noticed was how what a tight knit community practice she had around her of Portuguese people..]*

A   *[Yeah*

B   *International Portuguese people who were able to I mean it was in this community that they really made sense of international concepts and international things and could yeah and so my conclusions that or she her conclusions was out of all my findings that was the most important she said that is why I am successful is because I have this group of people yeah and they were..]*

A   *[Sure*

B   *they were local people yeah*

E   *And they were all working for international companies (?)*

B   *They were all working for international companies yeah..]*

A   *Yeah(.) We are seeing in Nigeria specifically we are targeting actively targeting Nigerian returners that have gone out worked for international companies elsewhere and are considering or don't know yet they are considering that we might approach them to return with that international experience but in this case Nigerian um Nigerian coaching but the guys I've got one lady and two guys currently they don't they actively kind of distance themselves from the Nigerian network just in those three specific cases(.) They take a step back and their network is very much er embedded in um cross-company international very diverse very spread out and it's not that that tight knit community(.) Whereas in the Middle East that's almost exactly what you've just described you know those you know that that group and that clique of er international experienced Arabs very much their own groupings very much so(.) My wife's er Jordanian and she has helped me out with a few of the er more subtleties that I can't break through. [Laughs] break through there you know.*

E   *Wow*

A   *Yeah this is um I mean the breakdown um of the um personal biographies one thing that that doesn't seem to be or I haven't found a great deal of research on the status of the status of the tribe the status of the community that the individuals come from it's clearly looked at in very different ways and we try to grab these individuals parachute them into a professional or a corporate setting play by a certain set of rules that's dictated there but when they step outside of our yard gate or wherever the way that they are seen the way that they perceive status er and respect is very different from location to location um and it doesn't I'm struggling to bring any generalisations because when I step out into Nigeria into Ghana or into and back to the Middle East doesn't generalise [laughs] it doesn't just feel to generalise at all I don't how you feel about that(?)*

E   *Are you saying that they have a hard time reintegrating into networks local (?)..]*

A   *Not necessarily no the more that (.) the fact of being um the fact of being a community senior in the Middle East it might be more religious if you were a scholar you know if you had certain family or you came from particular families the status within the wider social community is definitely focused and driven by that whereas you know whereas we've got all these mixed um mixed heritage West African countries of French and Portuguese and British backgrounds and the way that personal status seems to be er calculated or valued is different it seems inconsistent*

E   *Hmm*

B   *Yeah I so relate to what you are saying and 'cause I'm and something that I always thought is how in the same way as like if you are international it's so easy to live in two different languages it's almost like people can have two different identities..]*
05:03
A   *[Yeah*

B   *and er there's not without so much conflict that there's one in the international setting and one in the home setting and somehow yeah people are able to hold that tension in a different way than mono identity*

A   *Sure yeah(.) I mean the only small measurements I ever managed to get were around professional bodies that there was just a disinterest in certain groups I was working with to achieve er professional body status be it chartered engineers or CIPDs or whatever it*

might be there was always a group there but it wasn't the take up I would have expected in other er European countries for an example(.) The status from the outside or from another body or group didn't seem to have um the same gravity that the other measures of status would be if you were unmarried without children in you know in er the northern Emirates you were never going to raise your status by being a chartered engineer in that community it didn't have the same gravity er that it might have had elsewhere that was you know so hard to um to generalise [laughs] so hard to

E   *But what about for UAE government (?)*

A   *Again it depended who you were worked for(.) If you were working for a MN a proper multi-national company but in in most of the Arab states I think it's fair to say that that the top level is government and semi-government employment that's where you know the top stream of graduates would want to be*

E   *Hmm*

A   *Working for a private sector organisation in most of the oil rich GCC its private sector is not on their radar for it's a very small population that would go that route*

E   *Oh really oh ok*

B   *And you are focused on the international companies or on oil companies (?)*

A   *I'm sticking to I'm a year into the (XXXXX) group so I'm only doing a doctorate not a long PhD or significant research so the advice was to focus specifically on this one organisation(.) Um I think it fits nicely it selfishly covers a lot of countries it gives me access to a lot of um very easy access to a number of people so I'm only going to look at the container terminal side of the (XXXX) group in Africa and Middle East which is twelve locations*

A   *In a regional office yeah*

E   *Well it's a nice sample*

A   *Also it's starting to get out of hand [laughs] its good*

B   *So how are you um collecting data (?)*

A   *Um apart from a couple of focus groups and I've bits and pieces from oil and gas previously I'm just about to go into er semi-structured interviews now for the next six months*

E   *Hmm*

B   *But do you do them face-to-face (?)*

A   *Yeah (.) Yeah there's an opportunity for face-to-face for far more that I could probably manage [laughs] in the period yeah I'm trying I was originally trying to keep it down to thirty um face-to-face interviews I sent out about fifty um requests targeted requests to the groups I have now responses from everyone but I haven't had any refusals at all yet any so I'm into the forties [laughs] already which is..]*

E   [Wow

B   And are you able to do drill down on any particular individuals(?) 'Cause I slightly
                      suspect that you are gonna get specially in that context people are gonna say what they
                      think you want to hear

A   Yeah absolutely I mean I've given that lots and lots of thought and um yeah that's the
                      reality of it um I've got relatively long with each individual most of the interviews will be
                      done at the end of the day after and then leading on after hours(.) Um I've got all of the
                      senior people that I would want to get all of my targeted senior people I've got and then
                      it's a growing population of um er young professionals in various disciplines(.) So are
                      you suggesting that perhaps it's a wiser idea to focus and really drill down into less
                      people (?)

B   Or just to take one or two people you know and drill down into them..]

A   [Sure do a more complete biography

B   as well as the others because I think that yeah by really drilling down also in terms of just
                      hanging out with them you know [laughs]..]

A   [Sure yeah indeed

B   To get some of those real details and subtleties and build up a bit more of a rapport
                      because I think especially well my experience of Middle East people is quite hard to get
                      really into ..]
10:00
A   [Indeed

B   that yeah

A   It's um this is where my naivety and you know I'm not a career researcher and I'm
                      breaking into these boundaries but most of the really interesting stuff has come from the
                      gin and tonic or the after work dinner over the last few years and you know I've been
                      scared to formalise that because that's not real research but of course it is(.) It is real
                      research..]

BE   [yeah yeah yeah yeah

A   So and you know I'm lucky with a couple of great supervisers in Leicester who are
                      pushing me to relax a little bit and you know ok you know tick those boxes that you have
                      to do but and I am fortunate I do have the opportunity to spend when I travel what else
                      am I going to do(.) I've got my evenings completely free and many times weekends when I
                      don't travel with er you know very hospitable um people around and yeah I'm very lucky
                      to spend time with some of the people that I'll be researching so I'll grab that advice with
                      both hands thank you [laughs] thank you so much(.) No agreed indeed since I mean it's
                      more I'm looking at a lot of the same issues but the context being specifically are their
                      differences with um particular the African location which I have less experience of I
                      might be asking the same questions that you've asked a thousand times and many
                      researchers have but I'm looking for the specific context in these locations for these

nationalities and these locals(.) Am I on the wrong track do you think (?) Am I heading in the (?) [laughs] you know

E   *No I think it's very interesting yeah um*

B   *I find it really interesting yeah er mhuh*

A   *Ah well thanks so much for your support*

E   *For instance these um these Nigerians well you know I was born in Switzerland and I live in US Bev was born in Kenya she's lived in Portugal and UK and now she's in the US and these kind of complex identities ..]*

A   *[Yeah*

E   *and course you yourself I'm assuming you were born in the UK (?)*

A   *[Yeah*

E   *and er and now you live in the Middle East(.) It's now even when I go back to Switzerland it's not like I feel very Swiss you know..]*

A   *[Sure absolutely there is yeah*

E   *But er there is a part of me that is Swiss see what I mean(?) But and so this cross boundary identities are complex because it's not like you know they all affect each other all these locations of belonging affect each other you know*

A   *Absolutely absolutely*

E   *Your study she was quite Portuguese(?)*

B   *Yeah*

E   *Right*

B   *Yeah yeah*

E   *Yeah and she was not detaching from the Portuguese not like the way the Nigerians he was saying when they come back they are almost I don't know are they excluded or did they resist reintegrating local networks(?)*

A   *I think they resisted and you know we almost want to separate the Nigerians out from all the West Africans because there is a clear distinct cultural differences(.) Um it just so happens that I spent a lot more time in Nigeria than elsewhere in West Africa so I'm being a bit opportunistic and I've got some closer friends there as well(.) Yeah they definitely seem to be um of one coaching client who I've got to know very very well over the last year or so um and she just she will not engage with um with the networks that she left behind she feels that she's got um she's worked really really hard to build up these international networks and that's how she wants to be identified(.) You know that's s fair comment there's lots of remote locations that I do want to be careful about generalising so in one of the focus groups there was a discussion around um with the senior people a*

discussion around some of the expats is essentially being lonely(.) They're out there with maybe two or three other of their own nationality there's nothing to say that they would get along just because they happen to share the same country(.) And that bringing you know becoming these white knight figures and bringing one or two people selected through the ranks and bringing them in to their community it was suggested by more than one person that in some cases it was it was a hobby it was a er you know to clear away some of their dead time particularly for one or two individuals who were working remotely without family er and they took one or two of these people through and it was a project for them as much as anything and the relationship and the engagement promoted it(.) So again there's hundreds of sheets of things I want to dig into in the interviews depending how they go but I really like the idea of really bio-ing and going into far more in depth with er couple of select cases(.) I hadn't considered that's really appreciated(.) Excellent

15:10

B   *I think the reason why I find this so interesting is because I think it is a tough nut to crack I don't think anybody has..]*

A   *[No*

B   *I think I think what you are doing is kind of ground breaking you know in its space and so that's what makes it really interesting yeah*

A   *It's the bit that makes it frightening but that's great [laughs]..]*

B   *[Yeah*

A   *I don't foresee any being able to come out with any grand generalisations or I just want to scratch away and see what we see a little bit that's it nothing more than that and what direction that might lead and er what I might carry on with so that's really great I really appreciate you giving your time and er and comments thanks so much guys*

E   *It's certainly exploring a new kind of territory er doing it in depth and (.....) that's what you do you cannot these are the issues that I see and generalisation is not so much the point*

A   *Sure yeah absolutely no..]*

B   *[Yeah adding a language to those things what you are seeing that that will be helpful that will be enormously helpful*

A   *A language(.) Absolutely no I was interested from ten years ago and finally you know I am just about reaching the point that I can but you've actually touched on a point which is a lot of the conversations and researchers actually already been done its been done in the ten years of getting to know people and spending time with people in different locations and I just really hadn't thought of that as you know from er this isn't real research but it is of course it is I just need to capture it and be disciplined about it (.) Great I think I really should respect your time and let you get to the shower [laughs]*

B   *[Laughs] ok well you keep us up because it really is I do find it really interesting..]*

E   *[Yes*

A	*Thanks for your support no that's great(.) So would it be ok if I connected with you in later in the year to maybe share some of the findings and um get your feedback..]*
B	*Absolutely*
A	*Oh I really appreciate that thanks so much(.) Enjoy the rest of your day and have a great one and thanks for your time really appreciate it ..]*
E	*[Ok*
A	*Thank you very much bye bye*
E B	*Bye Bye*

D- Example Participant Transcript

A – Adrian
N – XXXX

95 mins

00:00

A	*Happy Days (.) Right its official (..) Ok so (...) everything that I've said up to this point around the reasons for doing this session I'm not going to be specific about what any of those areas are or I'm gonna essentially conduct the same interview that we've done over the last two years eighteen months to a year ago(.) Um and the only things that I'd ask you is that you focus on your own personal experience not heresay of anybody else or other things of that nature(.) We talked probably long enough er in the past about what I was studying and what we were focusing on and frankly it's been fascinating um way more than the degree you know to the point that I'm now looking at which projects I can follow on after I've finished and I know I can carry on with (.) but you know for the next sixty minutes or so I want to focus on your experience ..]*
N	*[Yeah*
A	*and entirely yours so it doesn't have to be you know not in just your current job but in the last five seven years..]*
N	*[Yeah*
A	*at while you've been in this level of seniority over these sorts of positions(.) So firstly can you give us a quick overview about your level er level and experience over the last five years or so(.)*
N	*Um over the last five years I've always been um a director level er and by that I mean I've reported to CEO so I've been in the top tier of management er and part of that steering group board senior executive leadership team er and whatever titles they're called ..]*
A	*[Yeah*
N	*um and that's um that's been a full time member so hundred percent all meetings everything that's been involved in (.)*
A	*And how much of that time has or what proportion of that roles and responsibilities have been involved with developing markets (?)*
N	*Um in the last five years probably er certainly India Africa with [xxxx] so that was um from 2014 to the start of 2017 would be about fifty percent if not more I would think and um with this business slightly less so because um it's mostly the Middle East and um some parts of China as well and some parts of Asia I have to say so Malaysia Thailand..]*
A	*[Yeah*
N	*Um (..) Philippines so er probably about forty percent so only slightly less .....*

A	*So focusing just on those experiences that you would describe and the economic description of what the development market is irrelevant but areas that you would envisage as developing market how would you describe the dynamic between you personally and the professionals in those locations(?)*
N	*I think the dynamics are always one of they expect your experience um because of your nationality and their ideas around er what a UK professional stands for so his..]*
A	*Ok*
N	*His development and his experience um so the dynamics run around almost that they are subservient to almost anything that you would suggest because of so you know you could actually be a very er badly advising professional and still actually make an impact because their ability or their um reticence in challenging you is actually quite little so they expect you to know everything and them to learn..]*
A	*[Ok*
N	*So it's almost a master servant type of relationship..]*
A	*[Really as much as that*
N	*Yeah*
A	*Was that consistent across all locations were there significant differences in different areas(?)*
N	*No I think you know was um I thinking mostly in Africa and Asia because that's two different continents(.) Um Egypt Africa is very um (.) er how do I describe that almost very subservient to your ideas and your activities and your thoughts and your leadership so they will follow or they will er be vocal in saying they will follow but whether they do or not is a different matter.*
A	*Right*
5:00	
N	*Asia the Asians are about more questioning but they will still follow if that makes sense(.) So there's a few more er loops you go through in terms of selling yourself and your ideas before you know you get to the same place but they're um essentially that's the um you know and it's the reverence to reverence is a good word actually you know this um I hate to say it and it's not you've got a white face you come from the UK you are a member of some professional thing that they've heard of which is very strong and now growing from a UK based to worldwide um understanding a network um you've been at it a long time therefore you know..]*
A	*[Do you mean by that the professional body or the ..]*
N	*Yeah the professional body yeah*

A   *Ok (.) So just to pick up on your point that perhaps in Africa you said that they'll pretty much will always say yes they'll always concur they'll always subserve but they might not always do that (?) If that's finishing your sentencing I don't want to do that(.)*

N   *Yeah I think there's always an awareness that almost that you're flying in solve a problem and fly back out again so it's your tenure actually your ability to stay any length of time and that as a fly in my experience as a fly in fly out expat professional coming to review and assist and help for a very very short length of time and then everything else is at distance(.) So um and they are aware of that as well so um depending on their own motivation and I suppose that's part of it is motivating them to want to do it themselves rather than me telling them you know something that you need to do and then coming back a month later..]*

A   *[Sure*

N   *and finding out you know it's not done and they were not motivated to do it(.)*

A   *Well that's exactly where I want to get to(.) So where we got instances of you actually engaging you've come in you've flown in you know you've not flown out yet what impression do you get of their behaviour when you are on the ground compared to I know you can't visualise when you are not on the ground but what cues do you get of consistency or difference in the behaviour when you're there(?)*

N   *There's well in terms of what I do and looking at the experience was one of um there was a certain I wouldn't say lack of trust almost a deficiency of trust level which only increased you know as the visit went on so there's still the idea that we were there to in some way police what they were doing without helping them and so the logic I was there to tell them what they were doing wrong rather than to help them you know succeed(.) So they were very very um reticent to show you things that actually were the hub of the real problem*

A   *Yeah they weren't necessarily open about the um yeah..]*

N   *[No no there was a lack of um transparency so they would only show you things that you actually asked for rather than them taking the lead to say you know what this is a problem ..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *So there's almost that they are waiting to let's get to know you and let's get to understand you and then we'll happily share..]*

A   *[Right ok*

N   *And that's quite consistent in all the countries I must have visited in Africa there was ten or twelve countries..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N	*And Asia four or five(.) India very very similar as well could include India (.) India's culture is um (.) actually quite different from the other two as well in that um there is that hierarchy of that castee system ..]*
A	*[Right*
N	*which delays responses coming out and depending whose asking the questions(.)*
A	*Right ok(.) So in those environments and you know pick any or pick a range if you can visualise who the best people were the best locals how were they different to the general that you've described(?) How did they stand out how did you tell they were the best(?)*
N	*The best locals typically had in my opinion they had the left the country at some point so they'd been to another country and seen what good perhaps looked like ..]*
A	*[Ok*
N	*or something different may be not good they were aware that there was different standards(.)*
A	*Yeah*

10:00

N	*They were almost self-educating as well so they were taking initiative to improve themselves..]*
A	*[Yeah*
N	*um so they would be going through professional exams they would be going to courses they'd be attending er meetings and trade fairs and stuff like that so um they may even have been educated in a different country as well(.)*
A	*Ok(.) So there education experience had got some was that always the case or majority or how would you say(?) ..]*
N	*Yeah I'm thinking of people that they'd perhaps let's say they worked in or they way in Nigeria but they worked in Ghana(.)*
A	*Right*
N	*You know they'd moved around the continent I'm not saying that they particularly moved continents but you know they'd had a spell of doing some other activity somewhere else and they typically worked their way up as well so(.)*
A	*These sort of other indicators so you know attending travel fairs educating themselves about their industry in other ways is that a differentiator were they doing things that the*

other guys weren't(?) Were they doing it more(?) Were they more vocal about doing it you know what was the reality there(?)

N   *Yeah well that's probably a good question because I wasn't asking them so it's difficult to tell um*

A   *They certainly they didn't make you aware that they were doing it whereas these guys did*

N   *Yeah you could you know when we talked about the experience they had and where they got the thoughts or ideas from they would articulate they'd seen it somewhere else..]*

A   *[Yeah seen it come across it*

N   *Yeah or even online you know they'd been um I suppose you know in terms of visualisation what was different they were actually very questioning in their attitude so going back to my original comment about being very subservient ..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *they were very well into er to ask for feedback so I'm doing this for example I'm doing xyz in this way what do you think(?)*

A   *Right*

A   *Is that they would ask no that question is there other parts of the world of the business that are doing it better(?)*

N   *That's a very interesting question. That's was a very very typical (.) There was a great guy for instance in Ghana that's exactly what he always asked*

A   *Yeah*

N   *He was in charge of …………...where can I see it better whose you know um the two guys I thinking of who particularly struck me as rising stars so they were you know those gems that you find as you go around who are working in quite low level jobs but they are way above..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *you know um there's was a few of them(.) And some of the management teams as well.*

A   *And how were they come back to some of those bits how were those guys and were they all guys or were there women in that or (?) I know it's very male dominated industries but*

N   *Um oo that's a good question(.) Actually in an answer to that if there were I would've have been able to tell you straight away and I can't so the answer is probably not*

A   *Yeah yeah*

N   You're right the industries that I'm working are very male dominated

A   Sure sure(.) So the things that you saw in these individuals by highlighting where they were getting their ideas by being inquisitiveness by looking for best practice elsewhere these sorts of indicators educating themselves and may be having a background of um certainly awareness or exposure to outside of their own operations(.) You recognise that in them did that affect that you treated or communicated with them compared to others(?)

N   Yeah I think when you get that type of response you're liable to give them well they're two things you're liable to give them more of your time and your ability to transfer or have discussions on higher level things increases..]

A   [Right

N   So um the concepts that I would present to them rather than um I don't mean basic I'm not trying to be derogative to the people um because obviously in some points I was talking in a language that was different as well so they were French speaking countries ..]

A   [Yeah yeah

N   So I tend to tone everything down but the ability to understand sort of higher level concepts that bit more complexity was easier

A   Yeah you were more confident

N   Yeah they understood let's typical management concepts they would have read it or understood it or you know be part of a leadership programme or something so they were able to get that slightly quicker so the conversations the ideas and the concepts could not only be at a much higher level but we could accelerate the conversation..]

A   [Yeah

15:00

N   if that makes sense(.) And they understood um the level we were working at was moving towards not quite a strategic level for that operation but certainly more less tactical and more into ..]

A   [They were thinking more on our level

N   They were moving up a level yeah ..]

A   [Yeah yeah ok understood

N   So um for example typically part of my role was problem solving so the um solutions they would come up with were much higher up the hierarchy than they would've normally have been in other words PPE for instances for safety issues always we'll provide more PPE and do more tool box talks these guys were thinking levels..]

A	[Yeah

N	we could actually design that differently we can move things particularly in the ports where they could um the terminals they could move you know they'd ideas of um process flow and understanding of efficiency and effect and this is where safety at the same time and that's quite er that's quite..]

A	[Yeah to be thinking about

N	even in a non-developing world yeah to take them to that level so

A	So to ask you a question that you can't possibly answer but to get your views on it(.) How did the local management view these same individuals compared to your view(?)

N	I think there's two sides to that I think there's in management who (.) who were um open to (.) promoting and developing the people who worked for them..]

A	[Yeah

N	and therefore and I'll come back to this in a minute and I don't want to sound too racist but um and typically that would be where the management team were expats as well

A	Yeah

N	Against um let's just say a location where the management team were local there was more of a distrust or a downplaying of the ideas of these stronger individuals(.) Now that could be for many reasons but possibly because they were seen as a threat or that if they were promoted in some way they would lose them from this you know they would lose a strong team and it would be difficult to replace them..]

A	[Right

N	So it was about loss at the end of the day um but that was typically yeah more than typically the response yeah I think that's almost the case

A	So the expats would be in the circumstances you've described probably there for a three to five year rotation they perhaps didn't face the same potential loss of capability if they promoted somebody through into other roles..]

N	[Yeah I think

A	Is that your understanding

N	[I think they would've a willingness to put the individual before themselves in other words whereas it's a loss for me if I can promote and develop this person then it's a gain to the business somewhere else you know if they you know as long we were not losing them to competitors

A	Yeah again looking at that um high level that company level view(.) So did you see evidence of that did you see evidence of local national management you know how did

that come about that you would know that(?) We kind of understand what's going on in their minds what their motivations are for actions ..]

N   *[Yeah*

A   *were you making recommendations that were not buying into or what was(?)*

N   *Yeah I think typically what would happen I'd spend three to four five days on a site so first couple of days would be fact finding and I would be assisted by one of these individuals or I certainly would be you know once I'd discovered them I'd be tapping into them about ..]*

A   *Right*

N   *So um and typically we'd be using them to bounce ideas off you know to get a better understanding of the operation itself and thereafter at the last day would be a presentation back to the management team or it might be a small management team it might be the MD and his Operations Director at that point(.) And new business exactly same(.) Um that er you could tell by um the reaction you know who did you speak to and then when I mentioned the name they would you know almost um not quite you know question their ability to give you that information but certainly you know*

A   *[Minimise the value*

20:00

N   *devalue the contribution is probably slightly devalue you know they not outright saying they're talking rubbish but um you know its statements like he's got a long way to go or he's not the finished article or he's had a limited view of life you know all of those statements that were all away of that just make you question the validity of the conversation [laughs]you know after spent three days with someone and er yeah that was always I suppose that was always the issue that they would always come back and say well you've only been here for three days*

A   *Right*

N   *So you're getting a very potent almost static view of life rather than the complexity you know as it goes through a month(.) I might have been there for instance when there were no ships or*

A   *[Right*

N   *it was a slow period because it was not cocoa season or you know*

A   *[Sure*

N   *All those environmental variations and business variations that fit in as well so those have an impact on what you see and obviously if you go and visit a business which is um not particularly under pressure but still delivering a profit then its operationally easy if that makes sense against a business that is um let's talk about [xxx location] that is*

always busy um but sometimes struggle in the end(.) And [xxx] for instance struggle to make a profit so they had both ends they would be very very busy pressurised that end and they weren't making any money at the other end (.) So you know the ability of people to manage in that environment ..]

A   *[Was comparatively*

N   *Yeah*

             [Small Talk]

A   *So we were at operationally easy versus operationally struggling and not making profit locations where the dynamic of management and capability going through is likely to be significantly different..]*

N   *[Yeah*

A   *That bit we understand (..) What about other expatriates within so knowing your structure you had you know a couple of other expats who were in other travelling positions did they share your view of their capability that you saw of the individuals was it a consensus or did you have difference of opinions(?)*

N   *Yeah this was um something that we'd at this process around the um nine box matrix and the rising stars I can't remember the title of it now..]*

A   *[Right*

N   *but the people that we felt that were ready for development and typically twice a year um and amongst the regional office where I would say most of us were travelling in and we saw the same people but perhaps in a different environment ..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *but we came across the same people then um we did discuss our views on all of them*

A   *[Sure*

N   *in a very formal way as well um to rate them not only in terms of their performance um as we saw it but where they could actually go in the nine box..]*

A   *[their potential yeah*

25:00

N   *Yeah potential and performance(.) Um (.) And I suppose we were looking for the when we had the discussion the consensus were around the same set of characteristics traits we saw so that was the energy it was about the sense of um development as well the ability to work with others so collaborate the ability to um communicate at a level where they could address people and have confidence so that confidence and er ability almost impact and influence at whatever level they were working on(.) Those were the kind of*

characteristics we were looking at rather than the just the technical abilities for instance..]

A   *[Yeah so technical definitely below that*

N   *Oh yeah yeah it was more about it was around about the leadership skills or their managerial leadership skills or the potential for you know to do a job(.) So um on the most part we and I suppose this is quite an interesting point cause those visits were all conducted independently of each other so..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *um you know HR or Operations would go or myself would go and we'd all look at them in a different light but we almost always came up with the same sort of scoring and we'd do that individually and then we'd do it as a group and we weren't we were never very far away in recognising the same um the same set of characteristics(.)*

A   *So once somebody had been identified and you found yourself in that situation I mean how many times had that come up while you've identified may be there's a consensus with other senior or regional leaders then local management is not necessarily leverage in that position as far as in the way that you would like to see it happen what came next when you were aware of tha (?) Did you have to kind of just keep your hands off it do you have any er unofficial routes to these guys then or what was the situation(?)*

N   *Um it was probably there was probably two or three actually so the first one would be that you know in my feedback to the MD particularly or the management team I would make them aware of someone I'd come across..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *perhaps at middle management level even lower management level so I would …………….. that he would be um he would be a good candidate to be promoted and to let's just say another position or a recommendation that he went to work in another part of the business in another country to gain or to take and that did happen quite a lot his knowledge and experience to work with another particularly in the safety function to go and work so for instance we had the guy from er Ghana going to work in um Ivory Coast stuff like that so that did happen(.) And those would be er short term um you know placements to work there so we developed that way*

A   *Yeah*

N   *The second way is really they were almost (..) promoted and I don't mean promoted in the sense that they moved jobs we promoted them in continual discussions with the MDs or other parts of the businesses where they've got spare people or even at the head office as well um so there was a great talent in Spain for instance who eventually ended up in a group role in Holland..]*

A   *[Right*

N   for that reason and he was not promoted within his business but he was promoted into the group ..]

A   [Yeah yeah

N   but we promoted as an individual..]

A   [From his profile yeah yeah ok

N   Yeah(.) And the third way was through the formal route through that development processs um they identified star people and the readiness to move up

A   [Right

N   And typically and I have to give (xxxx) their credit there was a lot of movement and they'd the ability to move people within that two to three to five year cycle..]

A   [Yeah yeah

N   of promotion to MDs and you saw some of that yourself that um XXXX for instance who was Operations in XXXXX got moved in to an MDs role in XXXXX through that very process

A   Yeah(.) So for these guys there seems to be a quite a line you're either you know if you've been identified and not just by you but by others as you've described that would provide these observations and if somebody didn't fall into that category

N   [Yeah

A   but they were you know an adequate performer in their own location what was the future like for them(?)

30:00

N   Um well first of all they might not have been picked up um but secondly if they were then it was a matter of um time and development and further experiential meets so would we put them on a short term placement we'd be provide them with support or a mentor um and that was a priority thing so sometimes they didn't quite you know there was a I suppose there was a finality to resources in other words if you'd twenty people ..]

A   [Yeah

N   they all didn't it would be top five…]

A   [Yea sure

N   the rest would be put on the watch list as you know one to two to three to five years..]

A   [Yeah

N	and then um we'd hopefully were there long enough to make sure they weren't lost in the system(.) That's a good question now looking at where we are now but the intention back three years ago was that .....]

A	[Yeah

N	and they were tracked through as well. Um but by the same token some of them um they were put on a leadership courses they were given the opportunities of extending their placements but they just didn't make it which is what you'd expect aswell..]

A	[That's exactly my next question

N	Yeah

A	Yeah Ok (.) So expand on that for me a little bit so a few have been picked up put on are these the guys that may be were on that borderline that got put on there are the some of the guys that have been ID'd..]

N	[Um no they would be yeah they would be ID'd um either formally but obviously informally they are ID'd informally to get on to the formal list

A	[Yeah

N	Then from the formal list you know they progress and they're picked um at that point through say it correct either you can argue say objectively subjectively..]

A	[Sure

N	but we all went this is you know that management team of eight people who had the decision on all those people um and it was one person one vote so it was quite democratic on the most part..]

A	Mhuh

N	Um and some of them didn't make it through um their ability and these are locals I'm speaking about less so expats moving them so I'm thinking of locals developed in the country..]

A	Yeah perfect

N	Um because of their ability to transfer perhaps they were given an opportunity in another country and they didn't quite fit in with the culture..]

A	Ok

N	Um and there's a few examples of that where Africans didn't end up in the right place and they struggled(.) Now the reason they struggled was perhaps because um in a lot of developing countries the male or female is working is quite happy to leave the children and family in another country..]

A   *[Right*

N   *for a long period of time(.) And that network of support from the home doesn't exist and sometimes depending on where they are themselves they don't have the strength to see that through(.) [Or] let's just say other life matters happened so as we all faced either there's problems with your children or you're having children at the bottom end sorry at the um early stages of life or you're paying sort of extended family in some way and difficulties health wise are passing away at the other end(.) So um and that came up quite a lot as well(.) Um (..)*

A   *So the domestic issues understanding that that was causing restrictions where you've got people that have been given an opportunity move to another location and sort of been brought into the club to some degree and then they've struggled other than you know domestic reasons or personal reasons you said some of them didn't fit into the culture how did that manifest itself (?) What were the issues that would be raised (?)*

N   *Um the two areas I'm thinking about is India and Africa um Africa India has got the caste system so depending on where they were on that system then they may end up being in a lower caste but a higher position which is a difficult thing to then delegate activities and responsibilities to others because they don't necessarily willingly accept the level of your or your positional authority I should say..]*

A   *[Absolutely*

N   *um so therefore you have to command respect in other ways(.) And unless they were um you know super qualified on those softer aspects then they would always struggle*

A   *Yeah*

N   *Africa is very tribal as well but to a different level so um it was the same type of issue um (.) but it's that individual trying to fit in to a culture that is um (.) in some cases quite oppressive actually..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *Even to Africans and I suppose as a UK expat I didn't quite always get the subtlety of that ..]*

A   *[Right*

N   *And I don't think a lot of us did you know*

A   *Sure*

N   *Did I take enough time to understand that the answer is probably no I didn't you know*

A   *Aha*

35:00

N   *But I think if you whereas a typically white European expat management team understood those things a bit more then we might have made better informed decisions and therefore the success of the individual might have improved actually..]*

A   *[Ok*

N   *Because we almost in some respects set them up to fail so um and a good example is that moving them to another country but moving them to let's say a terminal which was already failing in some way so their task as well being a new leader or an inexperienced new leader um their ability to shine um you know they were up against it before they..]*

A   *[Right so the inexperience*

N   *so they had a huge way to even cross the line before they started moving on to successful things..]*

A   *[Understood*

N   *So um and you have to bear in mind that these people were just on the most part were rising stars so they weren't particularly long-term experienced people we'd done a great job for a long time they were constantly er moving through the ranks(.)*

A   *Were there cases of success(?)*

N   *Oh yeah there was lots as well*

A   *Aha(.) So what was different there(.) The individual or the circumstances (?)*

N   *I think a bit of both I think it has to be um you know again going back to my point about the environment um it'd be easy for a successful individual to move to an already successful terminal..]*

A   *[Right*

N   *you know 'cause the pressure on them to deliver are therefore less(.) When we talk about success I suppose that you have to define what that actually means and that was more about did they bring something new to the operation..]*

A   *[Yeah ok*

N   *you know um or did they enhance the skills of that team in some way um that they didn't have before this is regardless of profit or loss or anything around that..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *So um you know in terms of what we would do did that bring more energy to um closing out the objectives for instance in a very innovative way(.) So there was again a guy went from um (.) Oh god (.) Nigeria into he went into where did …… work um Benin..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N	so from a very very large operation to a very very small operation but one that had inherent problems as well and very very low in technology(.) Um and then that individual um what we observed there or I observed was his ability to work with what he had and make the most of um so it wasn't about he needed the massive resources or the big team that he had in Nigeria ..]
A	[Yeah
N	he actually he adapted his skills to lead the team and work them through to a set of conclusions based on what they had..]
A	[Resources available
N	and that was really the successful thing(.) To have not the to have the same level of success but on a very very different setting if that makes sense(.) So the outcome actually the result was good but the circumstances were extremely different
A	Yeah yeah that makes a lot of sense(.) Now I mean how you measure success for me it's not of any major interest about how you define it what's important is how you define it(.)
N	Yeah
A	You personally(.) So if you see were there any cases of local management and individuals locally feeling that they were being successful that they were making progress but you didn't necessarily agree with the matrix or the way that they were measuring success..]
N	[Er yeah and um the (.) I'm thinking particularly XXXXX in the second terminal in XXXXX which was a smaller one at um XXXXXX um I had an individual there who always felt that he was more successful but he wasn't seen(.) They were over shadowed by the larger terminal..]
A	[Right
N	in the capital um and they were always seen as a backwater(.) And one of the reasons is and as you are well aware was the difficulty or the trouble had to travel to that so actually the number of individuals who turned up there to observe on a regular basis what he's doing was limited..]
A	Yeah
N	And that was problem not that they were doing a bad job
A	Right(.) But you feel that he was rating abilities above where you would or that he wasn't just being recognised for what he was doing(?)
N	Um no that particularly they were doing good things and by that I mean in terms of the objectives they had set themselves they were delivering them and those objectives were making a difference

A	Ok
N	So that is clear against the bad start
A	Right
N	Um they particularly worked through um one continuous improvement project from start to finish which was very very well done(.) Um the difficulty was that the individual was able to articulate himself at a level that was much higher than he was delivering
A	Ok ok
N	So I'm choosing my words carefully [laughs]
A	Ah it'll all be
N	They were smart and they were smart because they were remote um sorry that doesn't sound right he's not smart because he's remote
A	[He was able to
N	they were smart and they were remote
A	Ok
N	Which meant that they the checking of the validity of the statements that were coming out to um communicate success were not always ……..]
A	[Ok ok

40:00

N	So it wasn't until we went to visit that we recognised that yeah there was good work being done but it wasn't the level that we thought it was being done so the reports and description of things were way beyond ..]
A	[you got the chance to calibrate that yeah reality
N	Yeah exactly
A	Ok that makes perfect sense
N	But well um er was it any successful that in terms of what they did in the environment they worked in which was a very very difficult environment um probably not but you know at that point in terms of the recognition in that individual it was around the fact that just not a lot of people observed them
A	Yeah yeah so just the numbers of observation

N	*Yeah*
A	*Ok(.) So if we compare this so I'll switch time scales a little bit compare your experience of picking out and you've explained quite clearly the sorts of behaviours that you'd wanna see and the sorts of er attitudes and approaches that somebody would be penciled in as a high potential(.) Somebody that'd be brought in to have more exposure those be the actions that'd happen(.) Compare that to your experience at other stages in other in developed countries were you looking for the same characteristics there(?) Were you looking for different things in those groups(?)*
N	*Mmm that's a good question(.) Um no I don't believe I was actually um because I believe things that make or um in my experience the things that I've seen or the habits and characteristics in an individual that make them successful is the same it doesn't matter whether it's developing or not in a developing country..]*
A	*[mhuh*
N	*Um I think in a developing country they were more obvious because there's less of them..]*
A	*[Right ok*
N	*So in other words when you found a star it was actually a bright change star and you know let's just say in a developing country there are a lot more um to choose from therefore yeah*
A	*Right*
N	*It's difficult you know I think you need to be more objective in that assessment um whereas it was actually quite obvious in developing countries you know*
A	*So taking the number alright so there's significantly less because various routes to that point in developing markets but similar characteristics similar things that you are looking for because you feel those are the things that bring success(.) (..) In that (.) I'm trying to phrase that correctly(.) If you pegged somebody as a genuine top two top three in a developing market how would they compare to somebody who is a top two top three in a developed economy in your experience(?)*
N	*Mmm*
A	*Are they interchangeable (?) Is there a significant difference(?)*
N	*(...) That's a good question(.) I think there is because of the environment that they worked in so developing country is perhaps their experiences in both in terms of breadth and depth of let's just say technology or um new ways of working or just varied ways of working just using that as an aspect..]*
A	*[Yeah*

N   *would be less because some tools and equipment and processes just are not available in a developing country..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *It hasn't reached them..]*

A   *[Just not what they could possibly be exposed is limited*

45:00

N   *They may have seen it on not firsthand I mean or not actually been involved in er the implementation or the commissioning of the Plant or equipment or even idea in some cases(.) Whereas um in a developed country you would know from where they've worked and their experience through interviewing ..]*

A   *[Mm what they've been exposed to*

N   *Yeah exactly um and there's a higher likelihood that they would have been exposed to that*

A   *Yeah (.) So the opportunity was certainly there anyway*

N   *So from so that experience thing is probably not interchangeable in terms of the personal skills and the traits and habits then yes I think they are interchangeable it's the application of them based on um and the willingness of others to accept the application of those based on the fact you don't have the experience which I think is the struggle for the people in developing countries..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *so they can't always um demonstrate to someone in a developed country that they've they know and understand and have worked in that environment..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *there's always that friction between the two and I think that goes for expats and you know particularly when they're working aswell(.) You know going back to your original question I was expected as an expat to have all that experience..]*

A   *[Right*

N   *even if I hadn't you know*

A   *[Yeah yeah you were expected to yeah*

N   *It's almost you've worked in the UK you must have been involved in fairly complex things..]*

A *Right right(.) So there's something I want to dig into at the second part of the interview um but it does take us to that relevant point(.) Is it possible in your opinion for somebody with this background to reach and do the job that you do to the level that you do it(?) (…) Entirely confidential entirely*

N *In my opinion yes I don't think there's a limit to anyone's and may be that's a very (.) apple pie view of the world but I think that it's the (.) just going back to my previous it's that lack of experience of things that make the difference in your experience so in other words your exposure to the new technology or modern I don't mean modern I mean advanced ….. let's just say construction let's keep it to that you will not see in Africa because they are not*

A   *[Yeah they're not deployed*

N *You know they are not using those methods and you can see it here in XXXX as well(.) You know the locals if you look at construction the local construction company against a more an international they are completely different*

A *Right*

N *And therefore if you haven't used those tools and techniques it's difficult for you to perhaps to progress with any level of authority technically because people will always question your background*

A *Yeah*

N *And I think that question in background does not help you achieve success so it would hinder you and always be a stumbling block*

A *So this to widen that and it's staying on exactly the same point your career path taken outside of this interview but coming from an industry that was starting to regulate coming through where it was when you joined you know as you went through your time and to where it is now and to where it's going that experience is not it's not possible for anybody to replicate that because that was from a period of time that you've gone through so how does somebody mitigate these challenges in your opinion(?) How would you guide somebody who has not had the benefit of seeing how bad it can be and then how it can be improved (?) What do they do other than travelling and trying to replicate the experience you've described(?)*

N *Yeah um (..) that's a good question(.) Um (..) to me it's still about developing those core and fundamental skills that make you question why something is what it is ..]*

A   *[Right*

N *you know and um and I think whereas they cannot perhaps experience it firsthand because you know it happened at a point and time let's say like as you actually said so um you don't understand the path of technology until you've perhaps started at the beginning or..]*

A			[Right

50:00

N			worked your way through and therefore you understand whatever it is(.) Um but it's the understand of the only way is really through um er possibly you know having discussions about you with individuals who did that and case studies to see what was the key decision making points in that process because those things that skill does not change..]

A			[Yeah Ok

N			 the ability to understand what is the root cause and what is the you know if you start off with a problem statement and then generate daily solutions and then quantify those solutions and then determine you know in an almost hard kind of way but

A			That remains consistent

N			Yeah what could be sort of and that sort of made the methodology of framework for thinking is actually fundamental in anything I think and it doesn't matter where you are..]

A			[Yeah

N			You know in my role I don't necessarily need to understand all the technical aspects but I do know just the questions to ask..]

A			[Yeah

N			that finds out whether you know the technical aspects [laughs] um or exactly as you've asked me you know if um if I was to come to you on site and say what's the best way who does that best ..]

A			[Right

N			It's that kind of experiential questioning that says what does good look like(.) So and by that I mean these are the skills that allow an individual who cannot possibly had that experience to move and to may be learn..]

A			[Yeah may be to skip some of that to get into a certain point

N			Yeah

A			Ok understood(.) So let me draw a parallel then and I don't know if this is hypothetical and if it is I have to kind of disregard your responses but have there been cases of western expatriates um expatriating quite early in their careers so that they've then picked up quite significant experience that's been in the same locations of the guys that we're talking about(?) Have you got experience of that(?) Have you seen expatriates who've come out you know say mid-twenties and then spent another ten or fifteen years er in their trade in these locations with the same um context(?) Or is that not so common in your experience(?)

N   No typically the expats that I've come across would be mid-career to pension-career long..]

A   [Yeah

N   And the reason they are expats is because that experience that they've had previously is valued therefore it's a premium..]

A   [Yeah that's why they're at that point right yeah

N   Um

A   So some of your other colleagues in other areas they've got trades that people are mobile quite early in their careers they go and apply them quite er quite early this is understood'']

N   In the oil industry some of the engineers will be graduate engineers so for instance I've come across them but I haven't worked directly(.) But in my new business I've come across more now um (.) but they (.) no in the most part they're still verging towards you know and I'm talking age group thirty to thirty-five may be the young you know..]

A   [That's the young end

N   That's the young end of the expatriates life to be honest

A   Absolutely

N   You needed to have gained the minimum these days well let's take the Middle East would be ten years' experience you know um ………. husband ….. for instance……………. civil engineer ten years' experience and they are the least or elsewhere he only just graduated so he's actually only about five years' experience ..]

A   [Right

N   so that's so he's typically working he will work further down the pecking order as a section engineer rather than a you know resident engineer…..

A   Yeah no that's absolutely fair(.) Ok turning on to um your colleagues your peers the other senior team members around(.) I have spoken to some of them um in conference and others I haven't (.) Would you feel that there description of the same sort of things would be consistent of your own or would you feel that some of them would have different views(?)

N   Mmm (..) Well thinking back to those sessions that I talked about earlier you know and they're always … in a group of eight you know you're going to get four or five mainstream and mainstream I meanin thinking very very similar and they'll be some at either end ..]

A   [Yeah

N	So the majority I would say yes um after thinking about those personal attributes that make a difference regardless of your technical I think technical abilities are given ..]
A	[Yeah
N	So and I would hope..]
A	[A baseline sort of thing yeah
N	Yeah and then it's your ability to impact and influence and for me that's always been the case
A	So the ability to impact and influence(.) Bearing in mind that senior team was diverse within you know it's certainly a European um but it was a diverse team within that(.) Were there consistent views about what is required to influence(?)

55:00

N	No um because if you take well you know obviously there was an American in the group who you know um but you perhaps have not done an interview(.) His view on life was very very objective..]
A	[Yeah
N	Um and so it was about numbers it was about things you could measure and manage which is a kind of American cultural trait in my book so there was a very focus on hard they love statistics and hard numbers(.) And then you take the financial guys as well and the commercial guys they have the same because that's the discipline(.) And then the other side of the coin is the people we were involved and you know HR and myself and um and you know legal to a certain extent where there's sessions around um how people make decisions based on their values and their experiences and their culture or their emotional intelligence really [Laughs]
A	[Yeah
N	rather than their um education(.) And I think that there would be that split as well um it's a bit like you know the exercise we did with your coloured wheel it was quite obvious where we were coming from in fact I was talking about this today actually it was quite obvious where we were coming from and sometimes we were ……we were opposite completely opposite ends of the sphere if you want ..]
A	[Yeah sure
N	Um so that you know I think it's always a reflection on you you're always looking for somebody I suppose [laughs] that's quite like you
A	Are you I mean because I've heard you describe teams of the attributes that are required I've heard you use that phrase you know that what's required you know you might have described somebody who perhaps fitted in quite well so in a social level and had ability to influence but sometimes the skills that were required were different that was a

particular situation a particular environment it needed a specific kind of approach in there(.) That's not necessarily a description do I pick somebody like me for that to fit into that(.) Or do you feel there is more of an element of that than we've discussed(?)

N   *Yeah well it's these unconscious biases you know that we became of um you know we did that session I think you know I suppose I probably knew some of that was at work but it wasn't until we actually went through them and I recognised them that seven or eight unconscious biases we could possibly have(.) And then you playback in your mind let's just say interviews when you are looking to promote someone into a higher level and you think some of those biases were already at work at that point..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *So if you add that into the mix um then that's quite a significant factor if expats are deciding short term expats are deciding the future of locals who are other expats who could be developed and moved into higher roles in the business(.) Um and then you add in you know there's things that some like nepotism and um country bias as well you know they come from the same countries as me..]*

A   *Did you see much of that(?)*

N   *Yeah (..) Yeah(.) I think that became obvious where(.) Sorry it wasn't obvious it became obvious where the person promoted had less talent than perhaps someone else but the interview panel I'm choosing my words carefully but from broadly the same country(.) Or there was no interview even*

A   *Right(.) I mean to be clear that this project anonymised by company as well as person..]*

N   *[Yeah I think*

A   *[There's no reference to the opposite*

N   *Yeah I suppose if you were talking you know there were instances of not quite racism but certainly close to it and discrimination I would say*

A   *In which direction 'cause it's a topic that's raised that's been raised from various angles in virtually this is the last interview this project it's been raised by most people but in different contexts*

N   *Um (..) I rather use … it was the ability of an Indian individual to be successful in Africa*

A   *Ok because of those in that description that any Indian is likely to be have less chance of success in Africa*

N   *Yeah and I think that it was a stereo-typical view of Indians who were er (.) and I suppose it's the use of the English language actually..]*

A   *[Yeah ok*

60:00

N	which is very fast and sometimes unintelligible um (..) I don't think that their ability to communicate at levels and this caste system comes in again where they are almost inhibited to speak their mind and this almost this er colonial thing about why expats they would just bow into …….. all the time..]
A	[Right right
N	And that's the majority there will be some people obviously who um I'm thinking of one in particular based in Mumbai he was on a completely different caste level and it was pretty obvious he could be worked internationally..]
A	[Yeah
N	You probably know who I mean
A	Yeah ok
N	Um so but he was the exception he was the absolute exception(.) Yeah
A	So steering I just want to jump into a couple of specifics steering that back locally were there instances where you had a local or a national of that country who had a far better understanding of the dynamics of either the caste or the tribe and knew potentially what the restrictions were how to influence within that system but that's not necessarily the way that a westerner would do it(?) Were there cases of anybody that were relatively affected in that way or did you not see that so much(?)
N	(…..) Oo (.) I don't think I saw to a huge degree and something else just crossed my mind that in the management sessions we had we tried to positively discriminate as well in favour of locals
A	Yeah
N	So that was actually an unwritten policy (..) That we promote locals particular to senior posts wherever we could
A	In their location
N	Yes
A	Yeah
N	In their home country or continent
A	Yeah
N	More so continent because of the mobility of people(.) Um so um (..) yeah it was still parachuted on expats
A	Right

N	Yeah um and typically that would be where they come to the end of their rotation or they weren't fitting in in a role in another part of the world..]
A	[The expat
N	Yeah
A	Yeah
N	Um (.) or we were making room at head office and we wanted to move them out to there (.)
A	Yeah
N	Out to other regions of the world
A	Ok
N	And then there was you know the other part of it was there was countries that just was difficult to get people to go to you know through hardships they were just too hard for people to go to(.) Yeah we didn't feel the local the ability in the local population as well so that's was a..]
A	[Yeah
N	You would then draft them someone that but (..) er(..) I can't think of you know of any instance where I felt it was a really really bad decision based on this criteria at all actually
A	Yeah no fair enough(.) Expanding on out of al…… is on my list as well so positive discrimination wasn't a formal policy..]
N	[No
A	in that organisation but um everybody else I've spoken to at a senior level would agree with your comment that it was a shared er collective on the understanding that it's something they
N	[Yeah they wanted to do
A	Were there any impacts of that(?) Without me being directive in my question were there any impacts of that informal agreement of that's what you were doing(?)
N	In terms of what that team agreeing or in terms of actually the decision when it was made(?)
A	Yeah so making decisions based on ok there's an expat that could go in but we've got a you know may be this person isn't quite as capable or as experienced or as we think we can do that job and we're going to put them in(.) Were there impacts in how that person was viewed if they put in a role based on that type of thought process(?)

N   You're talking about the local rep..]

A   [Yeah what was preferred in that way

65:00

N   Um I'm thinking of one in particular and I felt that he was given more support actually in
           my opinion..]

A   Ok

N   So this was XXXXX going to ……..

A   Yeah

N   Which I think that was the big decision that was made in my time I was there

A   Yeah

N   So he was the first XXXXXX I think in the business anywhere(.) And I may be wrong so
           that was a big (.) and the terminal he went to was in well first of all they had XXXXX so
           he had to deal with a crisis..]

A   [Of course

N   And secondly er three things they were restructuring the terminals aswell so there was
           construction project going on so it was not only operational but they were constructing
           and thirdly it wasn't doing too well in terms of business (.) And it was an old fashioned
           very um er labour intensive unionised environment so there were a number of challenges
           there(.) Um I felt at the time and I was involved in that as well that they did identify that
           they knew about this individual in terms of strength and weaknesses and where they
           needed to support him and also if they needed to draft anyone else into that team or make
           sure they retained so XXXXXX um you know the guy very very very very calm English
           expat was there he was the second in command and they made sure he was at the end of
           his rotation and they actually extended that to make sure XXXXXXX was …..

A   Yeah

N   So um (.) So I think the impact on hand was positive to start with I think as it wore on that
           and I do think this is true that patience of honeymoon periods slowly went away so um
           the expectations were on them to deliver then much higher I believe

A   So back to the same baseline as the other MDs..]

N   [Yeah yeah

A   Ok (.) And how in your experience how did the other MDs um respond to kind of
           understanding what was going on in that dynamic

N	I think we that group of MDs were very very mature um they were very worldly travelled and the majority of them had spent time in Africa
A	Mhuh
N	I think they also understood that long-term future of the business wouldn't be sustainable unless we started bringing in locals as well albeit that in some respects that would hinder the career path for them because you had to move..]
A	[Yeah
N	That was also an unwritten policy as well you had to do your time
A	Yeah
N	Let's just say in a difficult part of the world(.) um so um (.) I think there'd be some reticence as well because at the end of the day the MDs had a very very comfortable expat lifestyle as an MD um so they were very very well treated they would be typically European white expats um and perhaps they started to see that some of those opportunities were disappearing as well(.) Um I felt that on the whole they were very very supportive of XXXXX as well
A	Right
N	So they didn't undermine him they didn't start you know the whispers around his poor performance or anything that would have affected his support..]
A	[A slightly unequal er
N	Yeah exactly
A	What about one or two levels below that where you were parachuting in ..... you were parachuting in various you know really mid-level positions and they were steadily being localised or steadily being considered for localisation anyway(?) Were the effects of localisation positive discrimination any different at the low levels in your opinion(?)
N	No I think even though the three and half years that I was there or whatever I was there you could start to see the thinning out of the expats and ..]
A	[Yeah
70:00	
N	and gradually being the succession plan was working so they were gradually um Nigeria things is a good example particularly in the main terminal(.) When I first went the number of expats was almost all of them and then latterly you know my last visit um the number of locals was probably 70% against 30% expats(.) So I think that's may be the percentage is not quite consistent but that move was consistent in all of the terminals in my view..]

A   Yeah

N   There was some areas um where that expertise would not have been replaced so engineering was kind of one of them

A   Yeah

N   That's not necessarily to say they were white European expats there'd different types of expats..]

A   [Yeah XXXXX

N   Yeah exactly(.) Dutch um sorry not Dutch South American and so on(.) Um so yeah so those were gradually being swapped out as well um

A   And within that within HSE and within that peer group was there any um acknowledgement that there were differences in capability now because of positive discrimination

N   Er yeah um no no having said that we recruited um an individual in er (.) in India um who and he's still there now in a group position who was very much the equal of any of his peers

A   mhuh

N   Um he understood again going back to what I spoke about earlier he understood the concept he understood his skills needed to er manage change and get those concepts into play but he also understood the local market

A   Yeah

N   and that's was a very strong combination ..]

A   [That balance between the two yeah that combination

N   But again going back to what you asked earlier his experiences were on border point so he worked for an international business

A   Right to reach that point ok

N   Yeah exactly(.) So um and the same in Africa as well particularly West Africa we were getting people from latterly as well because of the downturn in the oil market we were getting people that'd been trained for international oil companies

A   Right

N   So not only had they got training and um but they also had the experience as well that they wouldn't have got you know let's say..]

A	*So they got that experience locally but it was from an international source..]*
N	*[Yes indeed yeah*
A	*Ok(.) Gotcha(.) So where you got these groupings and I am just stitching that picture together of some people brought into position not on merit internationally but on readiness and capability the best of that group and an unwritten positive discrimination as these were going through(.) How did that affect the regional webex(s) or the other points of interface where these peers would you know connect in projects or in things of that nature(?)*
N	*I think from me um yeah projects is the way they would come together there's a matrix organised for a project to deliver a specific project so these were a good example is the continuous improvement project we'd multi-disciplinary team mostly from the terminals in the country and they would be the locals for the most part(.) 'Cause in my team at the end there was hardly any expats(.) So all of the people in the country were almost locals..]*
A	*Yeah*
N	*Um the quality of um in those discussions and the um the solutions that they delivered were much higher much quicker again going back to almost parallel to what we were talking about earlier the ability to move things forward quickly and to higher degrees of sophistication was there*
A	*Yeah*
N	*Um and that was about them particularly the Indians actually they learned the system so then they continuous improvement system and the steps they needed to take and they became actually really really good at working the system*
A	*Ok ok*
N	*So they understood what you needed to do to achieve [laughs] the success um not in a kind of a work around way they actually and this is a trait particular very very good administrative skills so attention to detail..]*
A	*[Yeah system execution*
N	*Yeah willingness to follow the steps in the process*
A	*[Yeah*
75:00	
N	*Whereas we might be lazy and jump from one to five(.) So um (.) so you started to see that coming in and they always started picking up the habits as well I suppose that's what we were trying to teach them it was more around coaching them in how they may approach problems and well one of the things I did with them was how to approach an MD*

A   *Ok*

N   *You know you go in and he's going to say I've got five minutes of time and that's what we practiced right I said tell me in one minute what you want from me*

A   *Sure*

N   *Um and that was a simple skill they just didn't get so they would think you know I have to explain all this in detail t you..]*

A   *[Do a presentation or something yeah*

N   *And then you may give me an answer and I said no you have to tell go on in and ask them what it is you want you know and tell them why you want it and what will happen if you don't get it [laughs]or you know options..]*

A   *[How did that go down(?)*

N   *You know some of them could carry it off because you know they had um a good example is our friend in XXXXXX um Indian friend who was very successful um and he understood that working against a GM and MD..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *So um er so you got a very direct tall not aggressive but very imposing MD against a very small Indian chap and they actually built up a very good relationship because he got the concept of understanding what it was the GM needed to know(.) A direct..]*

A   *[A direct tale of that*

N   *Dah de Dah and telling him I'm doing it wrong and they got that and I suppose that's what they were learning and developing as they went along*

A   *Ok(.) So I mean you've been an expat for a long time on and off do you feel that any of these elements have eroded the standards of your profession or do you feel that this is a necessary journey to go through(?)*

N   *Yeah well I suppose a good example is when I came out in 2008 and I was picking up at that point I had a team of a hundred and ten people(.) And the team of expats was about fifteen so we had to develop that larger team through our own good and bad habits as well um so yeah the expats came in and expats life can be very easy and can be very lazy and very direct as well(.) Um so (.) it was around making sure we were always setting a good example and I sacked because expats because they weren't setting a good example*

A   *Yeah*

N   *Certainly the example that I wanted to set for them which was very much in developing people to manage these things themselves so..]*

A   *[So that was a big part of the role developing people to manage themselves*

N   Yeah I think that is what we are brought here as expats(.) You're brought here not to do the job but you should be developing the team if you are looking after the team(.) That to me has always been part of the role..]

A   [Sure

N   And lucky I understand that and I always understood that

A   But not all expats may be have always got that yeah

N   No you know they live hard work hard and they get done through others but not in a good way in other words they're not developing them too much(.) Um so I don't think to me none of that has eroded our profession I think it's enriched it to be honest I think the ability to have cultures understand each other and um work in multi you know fast paced multi-cultural environments and share learning experiences has only enriched what we do(.) I certainly don't think it's dragged it down or um you know made it worse

A   Ok

N   At all

80:00

A   Ok (…) Okay that covers most of (...) So can I ask I've got one area we've not really touched on and it's not really for you but I like to hear your views on it(.) So some of our um the two groups that we are working on for this project are XXXX yourself in different functions and then established professionals up to er fifteen years from a local background(.) We've had very different discussions with those young men and women around the formation of who they see themselves going through similar process to what you've just described(.) So coming out of the village in India and coming out the tribe in the Middle East coming out of you know the Muslim or Christian groups and the sub-tribes in Africa with very clear family identities with brothers and sisters doing this and that and then they're thrust into an international organisation with mentors that are bringing alien ideas and alien approaches and alien thoughts(.) Those that have been successful and in a way that you've described it have demonstrated their behaviours that have brought success that have allowed them to navigate that(.) Some of them have felt very conflicted that they have to put you know one outfit one character when they are not with you but in that environment and they have put another character on when they're in their domestic and tribal and other and of course there's no hard line it doesn't stop at the gate that creeps in here and creeps back there(.) Others have said no it's just adaptive behaviour(.) I behave in this way but my values are consistent whether I'm here(.) Others say actually what I see is in your world what I see as safe and appropriate is actually different when I'm sat here in my village this is safe and appropriate this would be unacceptable in this my values are different(.) How do you view that(?) How do you I mean that's a pretty is fairly split it's fairly fifty-fifty between the …….

N   Yeah well the couple of examples that I talked about earlier are quite the prominent ones(.) So if you go to the Indian culture where there's a difference to caste

A   Yeah

N   *And then African culture where's there a difference to families so the seniors in the family in the tribe*

A   *Yeah*

N   *Those are very very um ingrained things that individuals would grow up on … that would be developing on growing up(.) So then um if we fast forward to the point where if we see one of the successful traits as your ability to challenge and question then that is not something that comes naturally..]*

A   *[Totally*

N   *in either of those environments*

A   *Totally totally*

N   *So at that point they do have their adapted behavior does that some way filter or weaken their culture(?) um (.) no because I think its situation to be honest*

A   *Yeah*

N   *Um it's about (.) adaptability it's about adapting to the environment you're in at the time um and being aware of the approaches that will you make successful in that environment*

A   *Yeah*

N   *But that's not necessarily(.) does that diminish your values(?) um that's the difficult question because you know..]*

A   *[It's a not a fair one because you're re-projecting it on to somebody else it's not a fair one..]*

N   *[Exactly*

A   *I just wondered about how you saw that um*

N   *But you know those are two examples where and you know going back to some of your original questions in terms of what you see and what you visualise that's where you see sometimes where's the success and failure of individuals..]*

A   *[Right the ability to*

N   *and I think that's a really really crucial point(.) Their ability to stay outside the cultural norms and to be successful in the business environment they are now in as opposed to perhaps where the you know the*

A   *[The parameters that are placed on 'em yeah ok*

N	*And that's goes for females as well you know we've not even talked about gender but you know I think that amplifies that even more in particularly in the Middle East for instance*
A	*Absolutely*
N	*So um er yeah individuals who perhaps responded …… has made no difference to them because they are aware they need to be adaptive and they've got that self-awareness you know they've been coached or so taken an example from someone else and um the people who have responded the other way are aware of it as well but obviously they feel it's a bit more of a stretch for them um in my view but*
A	*So the awareness might be there but the ability to carry it through..]*
N	*[Yeah I suppose that then it becomes have they got the skills and competence to overcome it and perhaps the answer is no*
A	*Yeah*
N	*And that depends on if..]*
A	*Or it hasn't been demonstrated at least..]*
N	*[Yeah exactly*
A	*on that point*
N	*So I think that's a good point*
85:00	
A	*Alright lovely(.) Can we just do a quick audit but that's pretty much where I wanted to cover (…) Yeah paraphrase one or two er (.) Just one or two have you seen or even personally driven have you seen instances of senior expatriates picking favourites within the local populations and at that the phrase that's being use is kinda white knights*
N	*Oo I've never heard that phrase um have I seen that(?)*
A	*Where they kinda of you know if we think of a and the way to contexture it because this has come from others that the white knights they'll pick out may be ………. the way that you've described..]*
N	*[Yeah Yeah*
A	*And then this person whether they're remotely or whether they're locally for that period they then get significant preferential treatment to see them you know to sort of see them through on their path(.) So it's kind of informal sponsorship outside of company policy really*
N	*I would be naive to say that it doesn't exist have I see it much (..) not as much not to a great extent..]*

A   *Yeah(.) I mean off the point having been in the same organisation I didn't see it a great deal of it..]*

N   *[No*

A   *Instances small but not..*

N   *I think um and this is another cultural thing I think some of the locals in the countries we worked in have the got a very very high work ethic*

A   *Right*

N   *Which going back to my point about an expatriate life in some instances can be very easy*

A   *Yeah*

N   *That could I see an expatriate latching on or being um very very er comfortable in promoting an individual who'd a very high work ethic..]*

A   *[Pickup on what that's like*

N   *Yeah*

A   *[understood*

N   *Because they're reliable um you know the traits are very accurate reliable work long hours not afraid to you know some of the culture things that come in here are happy to work Friday night Saturday morning that type of thing which is typically an expats leisure time..]*

A   *[Gotcha*

N   *You know so if there's someone who can cover the shift or you know they can work the weekend for another shift coming in that where's I'm away golfing as an example..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *Is um always going to be viewed highly*

A   *Yeah (.) So that's the perception did you see much of it (?) I mean it doesn't have to be definitive were you aware or(?)*

N   *Again the answer to that is very subjective(.) Yeah know I know um..]*

A   *[Potentially yeah*

N   *Um in er India yes er but more so in Africa*

A   *Right*

N   *Yeah(.) But again I'm thinking you know I'm thinking through the numbers here in your top percentage was everything that I saw less than ten percent so between five and ten percent of everything that I saw would you know..]*

A   *Might fall into that yeah(.) Ok (...) yeah I mean a lot of this is paraphrasing other ways(.) Tthe hardness of local professionals potential we've looked at um just a small one on technology um you've seen a career where you this is about formally community as a practice but you see the point where the ability to communicate and influence within your professional community was you know limited to who you could connect to with in the industry and the projects to the point now where you know XXX tried Yammer they tried all types of um project tools that allow people to connect to other ways(.) Did that have much of a difference on locals ability to connect meaningfully with their peers with their more experienced industry professionals(?)*

N   *No um I don't think it was ever successful because I think that some of the cultures that some of the countries I should say the cultures is very much face to face um (.) yeah so if you are not in the same room I can't ask you a question..]*

A   *[Yeah*

N   *And er going back to that original point that hierarchy so if I'm a director then there's a reticence to you know Oh we can't contact you know(.) And that's actually compounded locally as well because someone might say I'm going to ask Alan and they will say you can't do that*

A   *Yeah*

90:00

N   *You know ask your local guy or whoever the regional guy is don't go..]*

A   *[And then get them to carry it out*

N   *And um I think you know as an example I used to hold monthly webex(s) you know and that would include all these countries (.) Um so they'd be expats and European expats and also locals on the call and you know in terms of at the end or during the session is there any questions or anybody want to comment (.) at the beginning certainly there was very very little in the way of the locals*

A   *Yeah(.) Did you see that change at all(?)*

N   *It did change because [laughs] I kinda deliberately asked them you know so I would always wanting a..]*

A   *[Yeah right trying to draw them out yeah right*

N   *I wanted them to be more vocal um so I would turn it round and I would go to someone whose let's just say um you know (.) whoever (.) M in XXXXX (.) M tended to be a bit vocal oh that's a bad example so may be one of the African countries you know..]*

A   *[Yeah yeah and try and draw them out a little bit*

N   *XXXXXX (.) XXXXXXX what do you think (?)*

A   *So without doing that to start with you just weren't getting the contributions (?)..]*

N   *[No no they would listen and take notes (.) I think it was also the same in a lot of the training sessions as well it wasn't until they built up confidence to say you know it was about they're vision of who I was as well*

A   *Right*

N   *You know I'm this white experienced expat who is at Director level and don't you know and my view to them was I'm not any different from you I want to learn from you so it was about my ability to change their concept of me as well*

A   *Yeah bring that boundary down a little bit yeah*

N   *To say right we're all on the same levels here and you do that through humour and just build up the trust you know um through all the various things you know (.) You'd sit and eat with them you know and there's nothing any different from the level that they were at*

A   *Yeah yeah*

N   *And you'd welcome the questions(.) I think it was the manner of the responses as well 'cause sometimes it can just be almost swept aside*

A   *Yeah what happens when they actually do speak up and then they're asked to be welcomed..]*

N   *[Yeah it has to be very much you know and others are watching that as well and then the whole thing spirals to the point that says you know you can phone me up or they did phone me up you know they just ignored the locals and that*

A   *Yeah …… which is quite a big deal isn't it we got …… what they needed to get to but you know breaking into quite long held you know*

N   *Yeah I think you could start to see that and I did to see it extend you know I would go to a terminal and go to a management meeting where I was just there as an observer and the individuals in particularly in the safety team they would be leading the meeting they'd be very vocal in it..]*

A   *[Yeah ok*

N   *And you know when I talked to the MD about it he said they weren't like that before you know they seemed to have gained a voice and some energy and some confidence that*

A   *[You've created amongst them*

N   Yeah I mean that wasn't you know somewhat difficult to break down but there's a few that welcomed that and they were just moved ahead very very quickly with it

A   Sure sure(.) Ok(.) I'm ticking off the areas from my findings and the only areas we haven't talked about or more from the prospective of the um of the newcomers if you like rather than experience(.) So from my side that's pretty much what I wanted to cover (.) Have you any questions on what we've talked about or anything you want to clarify(?)

N   No you know from my point of view it's been very interesting and a lightbulb moment went on with that question [laughs] which is um you know has got me thinking actually so er

A   You know it's strange one you're not only one to say that(.) I've been back to do some er I've done validations with people that I've interviewed(.) We've put the findings together and then gone back and said you know this is what you said and here's my interpretations of what you said which is really important particularly when you've been dealing with um other cultures

N   Yeah

A   You've gotta it's not what they say it's what sits behind that you've gotta draw that interpretation(.) And there's never been no no I did not mean that there's been a lot of calibration um around that(.) But in a few instances quite a few instances they've just been talking about their experiences they've been talking about what went through it but in some cases it's been a catalyst for them to stitch it together and make some meaning from it..]

N   [Yeah

A   Actually this was an event that caused me to think like that it caused me to act like that that has caused some changed in me and they haven't stitched that together before so I was and I didn't get any of that in the interviews I only got it in the validations when I get back to have those discussions um going o (.) I'm going to pause at that

N   Ok

A   Thank you so much

E- Example Group C Transcript

File 2 – Interview C2 19/08/15 (50mins, 21s)

A– Adrian
J – (XXXX)

50.21s

00:00

A   *OK interview 3.2 19th August er XXXXX (.) Good Morning*

J   *Good Morning*

A   *Um so at no point will I reference your name during the um er during the interview you've had the full sheets of er..]*

J   *[Yes*

A   *Your participation and you know that you can stop the interview at any time(.)*

J   *[Yes*

A   *Ok thanks so much..]*

A   *Um the interview will be transcribed by a third party and there'll be no reference to your person ..]*

J   *[Ok*

A   *or the company that we are interviewing in so everything that is recorded is factually(.) Comfortable(?) Happy(?)*

J   *Yes*

A   *Great fine great(.) So can you tell me um your involvement with communities of practice(?)*

J   *Yes um (..) I was asked to start looking into how we could establish communities of practice here..]*

A   *[Mhuh*

J   *Um so initially it was just the idea that we wanted to get something started to better collaborate with all of our entities around the world but there was we didn't really have a starting point that I knew of at the time(.) Um as I started coming up with some ideas I did a little bit of research into communities of practice um but it started out very slowly and I think in many cases hasn't worked very well with the exception of our Labour Relations department which had already been kicked off before I was brought in I just didn't realise that um*

A   So you weren't aware of the existence of another CoP when you were tasked(?)

J   No no..]

A   [Ok

J   Um I was subsequently brought in to a project in labour relations and found out that
           way..]

A   [Right

J   And they were working very well and we are trying to use that as an example on how we
           can structure others within HR(.)

A   So just to go back to the start point of that(.) Who not who by name but what role or what
           position tasked you to er to this(?)

J   Er the head of HR Operations

A   Ok yeah(.) Great(.) I want specifically what was your brief(.) Was your brief to um to
           look into the options for CoPs or to task and connect and set one up(?)

J   Um (..) that's a good question

A   Or was it not specific(?)

J   I think maybe it wasn't quite as specific we knew that the end goal was to actually
           establish the communities of practice and get the right people involved..]

A   [Yeah

J   Um I think through um multiple different (..) ways we've seen that our company is not
           very good at collaborating around the world and that there's a lot of duplicate work
           being done and um some locations are weaker than others and there's really the need
           from our people to learn from each other..]

A   [Ok

J   But so far everybody is so isolated in their own location ..]

A   [Mhuh

J   and they don't even maybe know who their counterpart is at other locations

A   [Yeah

J   or sometimes even who the global person is to reach out too to find out more

A   Ok

J   So we were trying to figure out a way that we can really open this up um there was some work using Yammer ..]

A   [Mhuh

J   as a just as social collaboration tool to try and get people just to start talking within the HR community with one another um

A   So to be clear and specific this was the brief was for HR(?)

J   Yes specifically for HR and we wanted to look at how we could do this within the various um kind of teams or departments so around certain topics like training or um talent or you know compensation principle stuff like that

A   Yeah so it was task specific(?)

J   Yes

A   Yeah within the deliverables of that function(.) You mentioned um learning specifically..]

J   [Yes

A   to be able to learn from each other was that the primary objective or is that something that you came up with(?)

J   Er that was one of the primary objectives we had um when the global team had kind of started talking about there was a strong need for this we also were being asked by our um business implementation portfolio that they had a need within er their locations in Latin America because they had some that were performing much um stronger than others and they were saying we really need to bridge the gap there and also try and you know kind of bridge the gap in knowledge between what the global team knows and what the locations know(.)

A   Right

J   And so there was a push from er that portfolio to really get this started and we were saying well why do we want to do this only for one portfolio when we are talking about doing it globally..]

A   [Got it

J   So it kind of really er pushed things forward..]

5:00

A   [hmm

J   probably sooner and a little bit more of a rush than maybe would have been so ideal..]

A	[So the brief involved once you looked into it you connected with some other people and..]

J	[Mhuh yes

A	and it evolved another way

J	Yes

A	Ok understood(.) (..) Ok so how did you feel about being given that task(?) Was it something sorry I might clarify that was it something you'd had previous experience on(?)

J	No

A	Ok(.) So then receiving that task what was your process and how did you feel about that(?)

J	Um(.) I first looked at so the business implementation portfolio that wanted really wanted this had already put together a presentation on why do we need communities of practice er what are the potential areas we could create them around within HR(?)..]

A	[Mhuh

J	Um and really with the ultimate goals to get to so I really worked through that and talk to the person that was er really pushing that from that group to better understand what they were looking for(.) Then I also just did some brief internet research from the kind of the so I am sure you know their names um of the people that really came up with the term communities of practice and did the initial research there.

A	Lave and Wenger

J	Yes yes(.) Um just to try and kind of get some ideas about what when I'm being asked to come up with how to do this and actually move it forward what does that even mean(?)

A	Yeah correct

J	Um 'cause I wasn't even really familiar with the terminology beforehand..]

A	[Yeah I don't think that's uncommon

J	So

A	Um so did it how formal was that process did you end with in project terms did you end with the scoping document er terms of reference or was it an informal discussion kind of heading in a certain direction(?)

J	It was much more informal..]

A   *Yeah ok..]*

J   *Um I think most of what we do in lot of the projects here are less formal*

A   *Yeah ok..]*

J   *So*

A   *And that's the way it stayed at this point there is no kind of terms of reference and..]*

J   *[Yes*

A   *Yeah and you look a little uncomfortable about that(?) That would be my observation*

J   *Oh um no it's just nothing (.) everything was a bit unorganised I guess..]*

A   *[Ok*

J   *um so just er we want communities of practice go ..]*

A   *[Yeah [laughs] Ok*

J   *And then it was ok um how are we going to do this and I started trying to come with some of my ideas and then there was a lot of I think internal discussion between the HR leadership team and what does this really mean and do we really need this and..]*

A   *[Sure*

J   *um and so its been kind of a struggle going forward and then other projects have kind of oo you know we started seeing some other projects that were coming on board that we could use more or less that some of this has been put on hold until we get some other things in place..]*

A   *[Right*

J   *because at some point it seems like we are pushing one thing but we don't even have the means to do it with yet*

A   *Ok so there's clearly a bit of frustration..]*

J   *[Yes*

A   *around that process*

J   *Yes*

A   *Ok(.) So if nothing changed and you projected forward twelve months and thirty six months how would you guess it might be(?)*

J   *Um well the communities of practice in labour relations er the goal there was to start setting them up within all the geographical regions because labour issues um (.) you can't really compare them on a global scale because they're much more locally based and..]*

A   *[Ok*

J   *but we thought we have some um terminals that are in the same country but ..]*

A   *[Mmm*

J   *those people don't talk to each other so if something happens at one it might affect the other*

A   *Ok*

J   *And with countries that are very closely grouped round each other*

A   *Yeah*

J   *So really specifically looking at er Middle East North Africa was the first that was kicked off*

A   *Yeah*

J   *and its er become very strong and those people really share what's going on(.) So you've got um Egypt and Bahrain and Jordan and the unions there are so involved in what's going on in all of those locations so it's really important that we get ahead of that and make sure our people are talking also(.) So that was really the focus there was a very clear point in why we needed this and the people that were involved really bought into it also*

A   *So would it be fair to say that that was reactionary against the..]*

J   *[Yes*

A   *the Arab transport unions and yeah*

J   *Yes um and our global labour relations function is still very new it's only about a year and half or so old um..]*

A   *[Yeah*

J *since they really got the person here involved with that and so he has been trying to set things up but yes it has been reactionary um and after that then they started one in West Africa so for the country Nigera Ghana um..]*

A *[Yeah*

J *and this has been not just within this company but for the other companies in our group*

A *Yeah*

J *Um which because there are also things going on with some of the other business units that actually were impacting what we were doing in the area..]*

A *[Within the negotiations yeah*

J *So the..]*

A *[But it would be accurate to say the um the head of that function sits across the companies*

J *Yes*

A *So it's not an internal CoP that's expanded it starts off as a cross company forecast to some degree ..]*

J *[Yes he is fifty percent allocated to our company and fifty percent to all of the other companies in the group*

A *Yeah*

J *Um because we have so many more labour issues than other companies because we have far more blue collar employees and unionised employees than other companies um so really we've been piloting a lot of stuff within this company but where we can get the rest of them involved..]*

A *[Mhuh*

J *We've been trying to do that at the same time ..]*

A *[Sure*

J *Instead of bringing them in at a later point*

A *Ok so it was a focus to bring them in as early as practical*

J *Yes and..]*

A   [Ok

J   some of the other business units um had also had a clear need for it so they wanted to get involved..]

A   [Yeah

J   Others haven't really been involved other than they know that it's going on

A   Is this XXX or is this HR(?)

J   Um..]

A   or is it both (?)

J   It's both..]

A   [Ok

J   Um so labour relations is part of our HR function um technically

A   Ok

J   It's all wrapped up they are all reporting to the VP of HR

A   So in terms of CoPs you see them (?)

J   I

A   Cross pollinating or are they part or are they separate how do you see it(?)

J   Um what do you mean(?)

A   So if the XXX say your CoP that's based in Egypt or its co-ordinated through XXXX that is the same as the HR CoP(?) Or are they different(?)

J   Um ..]

A   [Animals

J   They are different

A   Ok

J   They are different but we're hoping that because the ones with labour relations are going much better that we can really use those as lessons learned on how we need to set up the others

.

A	Sure sure but it wouldn't do you see it as being the same people that would be involved(?)

J	Um probably not with labour relations they are not so it's technically in HR function but not even all the locations really have HR staff..]

A	[Yeah ok

J	Or sometimes it's operations people that are doing the labour negotiations so it's really per location who is in charge of doing the labour relations there..]

A	Yeah

J	And so for the HR communities of practice it will be in the locations who is responsible for this specific task..]

A	[Gotcha

J	in HR

A	So it's more task specific than role specific yeah(?)

J	Yes yes

A	Which could be anybody almost yeah to various degrees Ok(?)

J	Yes

A	Ok so kind of task specific membership(.) Great(.) Ok so that's interesting background and context um if you were to you know jump in the elevator and describe the current situation of HR CoPs if you were may be trying to attract somebody to become involved or whatever how would you describe it accurately at the moment(?)

J	Um it's for the most part very very immature right now um so there is a desire to grow and strengthen them so there's room for somebody to you know really come in and get involved and help shape the direction in which we move.

A	Ok interesting(.) What do (.) so you describe it as immature so how does that manifest itself(?) How do you know it's immature(?) What indicates the ……(?)

J	Um we just tried to start some too quickly(.) So you know we'll have some annual process come up when we go let's try and get a community practice around this at least so our people will talk if they have questions they can you know share what they are doing share best practices things like that(.) But we just spin it up don't communicate it up properly nobody knows about it if they do they just kind of sit in a group and don't talk

A	Ok

J   Um and so you know part of the problem I think within this organisation alone is we don't even always know who's responsible for these tasks

A   Ok

J   I mean even from a global point of view who does it in a certain location we don't always know and people turn over so quickly that..]

A   [that's a shame

15:00

J   you think you have a list of names in the locations going ..... no it's this person

A   Gotcha yeah

J   So that's really..]

A   [That's a real challenge right

J   what we've started trying to focus on now is just getting the communication and the people identified

A   Ok

J   so then we can really try and go back and move forward with the communities of practice

A   Ok(.) Um but you said that there was a desire so it was immature but there was a desire to er to develop where does that desire come from(?) Is it if I was to compare people from The Hague and compare people out in business units would I see the same desire for it to happen(?)

J   I don't know um..]

A   [Yeah Ok ...

J   I think there's definitely a desire from headquarters to start these um we know that there is a lot that people can learn from each other but um we had really set up a group around our employee engagement survey so the um not the people at each location responsible but kind of um one person over each portfolio or over each region that can really..]

A   [Mmm

J   that we can talk directly to and they can feed it down to the locations

A   Ok

J   And we kept asking you know please send us your best practices so we can share this..]

A   [Mmm

J   you know globally so people can really learn because some of the locations or regions were doing great things and you really saw a lot of activity in others just silent..]

A   [Yeah

J   And you'd try and pull this information and just nothing you'd just get nothing so..]

A   [mhuh

J   it does make me wonder(.) I think there is a need I think there's probably a desire from the locations but I don't think maybe we understand globally what it is that they need we are just trying to push something at them.

A   Yeah Ok(.) So that you've made reference a number of times about knowledge sharing which I appreciate is you know is one of the main fundamentals of CoPs is there any other are you seeing any other benefits other than transfer of knowledge or sharing and best practices is anything else coming out of the networks(?)

J   Um (….) I would probably not yet I just don't think we are at a point..]

A   Yeah not yet seen enough

J   to see that much um(.) I think even with the labour relations ones that are far more advanced um I'm not always really watching what's going on but since these people are kind of not located at one location you know there's a lot of communications going on at Yammer there..]

A   [Mhuh

J   but some of it is you know this is the feedback we received from the union here I think this may impact your location because of x y and z

A   Yeah

J   Um but that's still really knowledge sharing a little bit of maybe getting some strategy in place on how to deal with certain issues

A   Yeah

J   and that would also be the goal is that um you know the groups can kind of identify problems that they're facing and together work on coming up with a solution or proposing solutions to the global team

A   Ok

J   And it will also help the global team really identify where you know may be we don't realise things aren't running smoothly but then through that community of practice we

can say oh wow a lot of people don't understand this or this isn't working well that so we clearly need to change the process

A   Ok gotcha(.) So there's an element of dashboard of feedback loop of ..]

J   [Mhuh Yes

A   management tool er within that approach(.) Ok(.) Are you seeing um any elements not (.) ok I understand your definition of a company CoP and what you are trying to get from it I get a relative feel for that(.) Are you seeing any pockets of groupings or communities within HR that have formed by themselves(?)

J   Not that I'm aware of

19:27

A   Ok(.) (..)Ok great(.) So just moving off slightly now to look at the people involved the actual individual people(.) How would you describe the breakdown of demographics you know I'm not looking for a report but roughly speaking have we got you know what percentage Arabs what percentage Africans what percentage you know sort of ball park(?)

J   Well I think I would say really the only effective communities of practice we have are those in labour relations a little bit around our survey where we've really tried to build that up better this year(.) Um within labour relations right now there's only two solid established communities of practice and we are about to kick off a third um but so far those are all people from the Middle East and Africa(.) Um so really the only involvement of people outside of those nationalities are the global people involved and a few of the other like some expats that are working there that are I think..]

A   [Yeah exactly

A   So that's the kind of so it's situated Africa Middle East but

J   Mhuh

A   are the majority of them African Arabs or are there a lot of expats(?)..]

J   [Um

A   within those groupings(?)

20:00

J   No I would say the majority are African and Arabs it's in a lot of cases it's the head of HR for those locations

A   [Yeah

J	which are mostly local hires um or maybe if they are not local they are from a similar region..]
A	[Sure ok
J	Um but no I can tell even from names alone that those are mostly African or Middle Eastern
A	Mmm sure by their names yeah(.) That makes sense
J	And there we're about to establish one in Latin America and those will all be
A	All local
J	Latin American people yeah and South American
A	Ok(.) Now do you see do you notice any differences in engagement from Africans and Arabs in those CoPs compared to er engagement from the vast mixed majority you've got in HQ(?)
J	Um well actually interestingly enough the kinda the Middle East North Africa some of the Arab region is far more active than the West Africa one
A	Yeah
J	Um I'm not sure why but that one I don't if may be there need is greater because we do have a lot of issues going on in those countries so maybe the need spurred them to be more active but I even see somewhat in headquarters at least from a certain um HR department head you know kind of why are we doing this like do we really need this and is this kind of a waste of time are people just going to end up chit chatting all day and not really doing their job(?)
A	Sure
J	Um and I think you have a department head saying that and that kind of filters down a little bit because that team has been one that I have been trying to get involved there's just no
A	Yeah ok (.) And what nationality would that person be(?)
J	XXXXX

22:48

A	Ok(.) (...) Ok (...) Which leads us nicely onto negativity so what other elements of cynicism or push back have you experienced during this it sounds like you've had a few(?) [laughs]

J   Yes um I think there's been a difference in opinion from most of the HR leadership team and the heads of the HR ..... of excellence um so my boss you know has very much a vision of how this should go

A   Mhuh

J   Um and she's really pushing it and she really wants this um you know her counterpart that I just mentioned you know originally the only real tool we thought we had available were trying to get away from just individual emails going around so that people can see answers and get knowledge..]

A   [Correct

J   So we were using Yammer because that is kind of the tool that is available

A   Mhuh

J   Um and his initial reaction was I don't see the point in Yammer this is like a company facebook and people are just going to sit there and play all day and no work is going to get done(.) And I think that vastly underestimates our people and um..]

A   [Ok

J   You know the conversations that I have seen on there because I have really been administering that tool so um you know there are you do some people saying I just have a question about how this works or hey in our location we just set up this new training programme here's the details of it so maybe other locations want too(.) Um you know and then I've seen one of the heads of the portfolio HR that has also come back and said well this is clearly not working so I don't even know why we're trying

A   Ok(.) And where did that opinion come from(?) I didn't catch the(?)

25:00

J   Um he was we were talking about trying to set up more communities of practice and implement a new framework within labour relations and he was saying well communities of practice don't work look what global HR has been trying to do

A   Yeah Ok but that individual they're situated here or(?)

J   They are located in headquarters but it's the head of XXXXXX

A   Ok

J   That had initially been pushing initially communities of practice

A   So you've had a u-turn in that opinion ok

J   And I had set up for his group of people when they were originally requesting something for Latin America um a space on our sharepoint portal specifically for them where they

could upload documents and where they could have a team discussion site (.) and I have the right to view whose looked at the page none of them ever even looked to see what I had put together so it makes me wonder you know it seems like it's a lot of talk we want this we want this we want this you try to come back with something and (.) Oh well it's not a priority actually

A   How do you feel about that(?)

J   Truly frustrating when you try and spend a lot of time er support the team and then (.) you start wondering well did you even want or did you just wanna come off looking like you had great ideas

A   Ok(.) (..) So if nothing changes what do you think is the risk to the organisation(?)

J   Er things will continue as is where um you don't have a clear idea of what's going on in our locations there are things breaking down and I really to me the biggest issue is we keep creating things in headquarters and then it turns out that some locations have already done it and we just never knew(.) Or one of the portfolio's has put something together

A   Yeah

J   And ..]

A   [As you said at the beginning the duplication..]

J   Yes..]

A   [Duplication of work

J   And then you know portfolios they get desperate or locations do because the headquarters isn't putting something together that they need because we have our own priorities

A   Yeah

J   Um and so one location will create it some other location in another part of the world will create it they don't know that they've both done it and there's huge differences in quality also(.) So you know it should help the global team to really know what's needed so we can really target our efforts and then keep the quality level and standardisation going but at this point it's just always frustrating because we keep doing stuff and then oh it's already been done(.) oh all we maybe needed to do was just..]

A   [Yeah

J   bring it up to a global standard or something that's relevant to everywhere..]

A   [Mhuh I get that yeah ok

A	If um if the situation was different and um communities sprung up out of without any support from the organisation they just appeared overnight when you came in tomorrow and they were well connected and they were communicating extremely well but you weren't necessarily in that loop as a headquarters how would you view that(?)
J	(...) Me personally I don't see a problem with it if we know about it and can get involved and learn from it um..]
A	[Ok
J	but..]
A	[If you know about it and can learn from it..]
J	Yeah(.) I mean I guess if we don't know about it if it's still helping the locations that's also fine but I think there's a lot of reasons that the headquarters team also needs this communities of practice just even our communications is just seriously lacking so um to me it's needed from locations and global and portfolio level(.) There's just a need all around that we all need to be better at (.) keeping in touch and learning..]
A	[Sure sure
J	and sharing
A	But if we were to put the point which may be put that the objective if the objective was for as you've described for your functions to be able to um stop duplications to be able to raise their standards if that happens outside of the remit of HQ is that still ok or is that a problem(?)
J	Um (.) both..]
A	[Yeah Ok
J	I think it's still ok because at least you're getting the locations to discuss and share knowledge um and I think when you have the ground up support that's even better because then they've identified a need they've reached out to each other and then if at some point headquarters can get involved then you've already built up the support that you need..]
A	[Right
J	Um as opposed to us trying to force something on them that they may or may not want
A	Do you fell that's what's happening(?)
J	Um I think they probably want it I think we don't do a very good job of communicating it and bringing it to the organisation in way that they realise that they do need it and do want it
A	So is that a sales piece may be or a marketing piece rather than a..]

J   [Yes Yes um you know we've mentioned that every few months the VP will say something on his webex that all of HR is invited to oh you'll see this coming and then we do stuff but we never even tell anybody..]

A   [Right

J   So unless people are just clicking around trying to find stuff

A   Yeah they're going to have to stumble upon it rather than er ok

J   And then we get people here saying well why isn't anybody doing anything(.) Well we didn't even bother to tell anybody(.) So I think the biggest problem with if something did pop up from a local or global that our headquarters wasn't involved in is you always have to be a bit concerned that maybe there's a location that's doing things not following the policy or not the right way and they're spreading that out to other locations..]

A   Hmm

J   So it's more of a quality and centralisaion issue

A   Yeah ok (..) You know so trying to be careful not to you know say something do you agree with it

J   [laughs]

A   Um does this organisation have its experts situated in HQ(?)

J   In most cases yes

A   Ok so the lead ..]

J   [There are a few local..]

A   [Technical yeah

J   experts um and that's what we really want to try and you know we've tried to take the step back from the communities of practice figure out who our people are who the experts are and where they are

A   Yeah

J   Um try and get better communication channels in place and we're almost to that point that we can that we've finished that point that we can go back and try really establish communities of practice the right way this time

A   Ok

J   *Um but yeah this time we're trying to build it around those experts um so for example we have you know super users for our compensation staff um..]*

A   *[Yeah*

J   *in the system with systems experts and you wanna build up a community practice involving those people..]*

A   *[Sure*

J   *and so they can really if the locations have questions too they can feed it up through those people and those people can either answer or if they don't know come back to the expert here in headquarters..]*

A   *[Yeah*

J   *Um but really let them also talk to the locations and build that there but first we're having to try even figure out some tasks we know because there are these super users but most cases you know we rely on the portfolios to be like we have this person and they are really really really great but(.) this task..]*

A   *[Yeah hmmm*

J   *So in most cases you know we are sending emails out to all these people it's not even to the right people information not going to the right places..]*

A   *[It's last year's list or..]*

J   *[Mhuh*

A   *or connections yeah ok(.) So this is specifically HR and labour relations(.) Do you feel that the same um er that you've got your functional experts in HQ as you have described do you think that is the same as in other functions and deliverables in business(?) Is it HQ situated and transactional boundary or do you think is there any difference in the (?)..]*

J   *[Um*

A   *the matrix of that(?)*

J   *I think after we did our reorganisation at the beginning of this year we tried to make this a very functional company instead of you know more regional based*

A   *Mhuh*

J   *I think yes they brought in all of the regional experts they moved everybody to have ..... most part..]*

A   *Ok*

J   with the exception of one region

A   Ok(.) And that applies to all disciplines to your operations experts to your technical partners (?)..]

J   [As far as I am aware

A   Yeah ok

J   I am sure there are some instances where it's not the case but from what I've seen and all the people that have recently moved to headquarters from different locations..]

A   [From wherever it might be yeah ok

J   Um I think that's probably the case

A   Ok (...) Right (...) Ok(.) So tell me about understand the challenges er tell me about one example of success that you've had in this(.) So you've specified a lot about the labour relations so when has that really worked well(?)

J   Umm I think our Middle East and North Africa community of practice in labour relations has (.) has worked really well um they appointed kind of a co-ordinator or a head to run this community of practice that would directly interact with the functional head of labour relations here in headquarters

A   Yeah

J   Um ..]

A   [And that co-ordinator is based in XXXX

J   [In XXXX yes

A   So not HQ(?)

J   No(.) No um and he has been very active and very involved he's had meetings with um some of the unions in that area and really come back with you know what came out of this meeting what are the challenges I think we are gonna see um how might this really affect your location even though its in another country but it's in the same geographical area

A   Yeah

J   And there's been a lot of conversation and because he's been so involved all of the other people have been saying oh actually this was the latest thing that came out of our strike at our location here's..]

A   [Mhuh

J	*Here's happening here and so there's been so much communication and so much um sharing of the problems and issues where they can I think really understand you know what's happening in that part of the world outside of just their limited scope within their location*
A	*So describe that CoP to me(.) How many members would you think are regular participants how many members are occasionally dipping to the edge or(?)*
J	*Um I think in total the members in that community practice is probably somewhere around twenty(?)*
A	*Ok*
J	*Um there's multiple people from some of the same locations um when there's several people that are really involved in labour relations especially the Egypt location*
A	*hmm*
J	*Um I would say (..) there are probably four locations that are really truly participating and so it's multiple people from those locations ..]*
A	* [Ok*
J	*Um that would be um XXXX,XXXX,XXXX from our business unit and then XXXX from our sister company*
A	*Ok(.) Which would leave how many potential locations that are not engaging(?)*
J	*Um..]*
A	* [or regularly engaged*
J	*Um I'm trying to..]*
A	*[I'm not going to quote it back to you*
J	*[Laughs]*
A	*Just a ball park*
J	*No I'm trying to think what other locations are involved that are*
A	*So as an example XXXXX (.) there's a JV in the um..]*
J	*Yes not so active I think that maybe because it's a JV and so..]*
A	* [Ok*

J   Um (.) I'm not sure that they've ever even joined the communities of practice(.) I know invitations have gone out but I can't recall if they've joined I know they've not been active

A   Ok

J   Um (…) trying to think if there's some other locations in that area um

A   From the other from the sister companies or outside the grid I don't have that knowledge at all would there be other agents and other parts of the network that we you know we might have reached out to but have chosen not to engage or just not open any more

J   Um for the Middle Est North Africa I think there was only really the one sister company that has labour relations use um that actively wanted to join and they have been really active..]

A   [Ok

J   And as for others I'm not aware that any were really invited even um..]

A   [Right

J   Maybe and I don't know if that's because of the scope of their business that there's just not much going on there for them but I know the Latin American community of practice that we're establishing it has strong involvement from several of our sister companies because they are heavily involved in Latin America and what's going on in our terminals there is also affecting their business um whether or not they can bring their ships in..]

A   [Sure

J   So it's I believe three or four companies including ours that are involved in that community of practice and it's being equally pushed from all of the companies

A   Yeah from the same head office cascade type ..]

J   [Yes

A   Ok

J   But they also have quite a bit of local involvement so um kinda the heads of the locations there are better really pushing this forward too because ..]

A   [Right

J   the labour issues are going on there right now ..]

A   [Ok

J   are um actually dangerous very dangerous..]

A *Yeah understood yeah understood(.) So I can find motivations there er and the gravity of that(.) How would you er view the news that this most successfully community of practice for locations twenty regularish members across company how would you view the news that one of those um (.) one of the most of active members was outside of the XXXXX group it was a direct competitor that was er actively engaged in and then involved in discussion(?)*

J *Um (..) I think well I think labour relations is a very er different (.) it's just yeah it's just a whole different ball park that if you are talking something just within HR where it really needs to be in the company(.) Um from my perspective and the work I've done within labour relations um if there was somebody that was actively partcipating from another even competitive of ours..]*

A   *[Mhuh*

J *That's ok because it's really the business is trying to get ahead of the unions(.)*

A *Ok*

J *And so I don't and I think the head of labour relations would agree that um where we can we need to learn from other companies that maybe they are doing something better than us may be they have better negotiations or better umrelationships with the unions or better strategy(.) Or maybe we can help them in some way..]*

A   *[Ok*

J *So I think I don't see that that would be a problem(.)*

A *Ok(.) So in this instance this is your er your corporate union(?)..]*

J   *[mhuh yes*

A *This is your answer to er organise labour(?) ..]*

J   *[Yes*

A *Organised organisations*

J *Yes it is a part of it yeah there is a framework that's just been established that we are trying to really we want to use these communities of practice to um implement that across the organisation(.)*

A *Ok great(.) I'm really conscious of time so there is things that I maybe want to explore on that(.) But I'd like you to take the next sort of um just five minutes or so before we start to wrap up around um progressive membership(.) So if somebody was too let's take a sample if somebody was to join the organisation in one of these key locations and they wanted to engage with this CoP..]*

J   *[mhuh*

A   *how would it be received do you think(?)*

J   *Um I think very well I think um the for us kind of more the merrier(.) Anybody that wants to be involved and we want their participation I think that's probably partially so far for most communities of practice there has not been very good participation*

A   *So you welcome the participation regardless of what the individual could bring to the party(.) Say they had no experience in this region they were parachuted in as an external hire and …*

J   *Um the labour relations ones are closed off to anybody that's not part of that region um so in that case then if they had nothing to do with that region no they would not be welcomed in(.) Um er there's also just um a Yammer group dedicated to our labour relations people in general so..]*

A   *[Which are a managed group with..]*

J   *[Yes*

A   *Do you approve and accept memberships to that(?) yeah ok..]*

J   *[And it's within that there's closed groups for the communities..]*

A   *[Gotcha*

J   *that are limited to that region(.) But I would say if somebody was new to labour relations and they maybe had ideas for that region they could just discuss it in an open forum..]*

A   *[Gotcha*

J   *and that can be taken into the community(.) Um but within just HR communities of practice it's restricted only to HR but within those most of the groups are open so anybody can join and try and they even want to learn more about maybe a subject or task they are not involved in so they can really upscale ..]*

A   *[Ok*

J   *And that's also fine(.)*

A   *Ok(.) So if somebody was literally hired as an expat hire just to backfill for a short contract as we've had a couple of times in the region um they've got no real experience and not a great deal to add to the pot(.) How is there engagement is it welcomed (?) Do they (.) they can't really add anything from their own experience but they would probably draw from other people's experience(?)..]*

J   *[Yeah that's*

A   *Is that part of role of this or is it really(?)..]*

J   *[Yes*

A   *Yeah ok*

J   *Um so we really want to share information but we also hope that people want to learn things..]*

A   *[Right ok*

45:00

J   *Um and that's some of the ones we've tried to establish a part of the problem to me is that the global team hasn't been involved enough with the knowledge that we have here because you will see some locations saying hey I have a question about this and then nobody is looking at it to respond ..]*

A   *[Ok*

J   *Um*

A   *I see so the question goes out to the masses..]*

J   *[Yes*

A   *they assembled from ..]*

J   *[so that has been part of problem that we don't always get those masses involvement*

A   *Yeah mhuh*

J   *Especially from a certain team here that apparently doesn't see the need*

A   *Ok(.) Ok(.) So we see that situation(.) So if you had a magic wand what would you change what would you do differently(?*

J   *Umm I would've changed how we originally tried to implement them because we've talked so much about it the locations keep expecting things to happen and there's it was rushed and hurried and not set up well and so there hasn't been much um acceptance of it(.) And I think if we had taken the time initially to set things off and have a real proper kick-off then..]*

A   *[so what would that look like what would a real proper kick-off look like(?)*

J   *One um much better communication of the initiatives um where to find more information and when to go there(?) Um whose involved(?) Why we've set it up(?) Um what really I*

think at the end of the day what everybody wants to know why should I use this(?) So specifically how can the locations benefit from being active in this(?)

A   *Yeah I get ya(.) Ok(.)*

J   *And I think even bringing in initially when we're setting them up you know some (.) get the feedback from locations about what they (.) what they want and what they could use and how they think it should be set up because at the end of the day there are um end users and our customers so we should not just think about what makes sense to us but what makes sense to the locations(.)*

A   *Sure(.) Ok so I guess I'm going to try to wrap up by nine thirty um how does this differ from any other type of network(?) What makes this a community of practice(?)*

J   *(.) That's a good question I think right now here we kind of just label [laughs] everything community of practice..]*

A   *[Right*

J   *And that's also ..]*

A   *[It's more of a..]*

J   *[part of the problem*

A   *Ok*

J   *Um and I think going forward we will try and do away with that and they will only be created around um tasks that we really need..]*

A   *[Ok*

J   *That we can see the need for it um that there's a pull from the locations for it also..]*

A   *Gotcha yeah(.)*

J   *But at this point its been oh subject ok we are just gonna to set up something called the community of practice(.) Community of practice um talent management and everybody is going ok what's that (?)*

A   *Fair question right ..]*

J   *[Yeah*

A   *Yeah fair question(.) Alright(.) If you weren't mandated if it wasn't given to you as a specific project would you engage with it(?)*

J	At this point with outside of labour relations no
A	Ok
J	Um I do like our HR group on Yammer and I have engaged with it quite a bit for the employee engagement survey but I am one of the global co-ordinators for that programme so..]
A	[You've got a specific role within that ...]
J	[Yes and so I would see that I would use them for things that I'm specifically involved in
A	Yeah
J	But outside of that most of them and we have a lot of open groups there's nothing happening so(.)
A	Yeah ok(.) Ok so if your role was to change in the next six months we might not see you as engaged if you didn't have directive ....
J	Yeah I think also maybe I'm not a good example of it because my specific..]
A	[You're a …… example
J	My specific role is very broad so I'm not really an expert in any one subject I do projects here..]
A	[Ok
J	Um with the exception of the survey and a few of the projects that are specifically run that are within our team um but I do nothing with really the annual cycle or the processes the things that we have tried to build communities around so really my only role has been to try and create a form for those people to connect
A	Sure which is your areas so matrix projects(.) Ok great(.) As much as I'd like to take another two hours to go through many of these areas in more depth
J	[Laughs]
A	um that has ticked off the areas I wanted to ask your views on I'd like to maybe explore er other bits at some other time but
A	Thank you so much for your time
J	You're welcome
A	Very very much appreciated

F- Expert Academic Findings Review Transcript

A – Adrian
E – Etienne Wenger-Trayner
B – Beverly Wenger-Trayner

51:24s

00:00

B   *Hello*

A   *Hi Beverly Etienne*

B   *Hi Hi that's better now I can hear you*

A   *[Laughs] That's always an advantage that's er*

B   *How's the sound for you(?)*

A   *Yeah I could just about hear you I think skype's been a little bit hit and miss in the UAE I think it's officially banned it's officially not supposed to be used er some days it's perfect some days it's not. So you..]*

B   *Ok so on the phone can you hear us now on the phone(?)*

A   *I can hear you fine now can you hear me ok(?)*

BE   *Yeah Yeah very good*

A   *Great, excellent(.) I'll just turn my volume up slightly(.) I've got you on speaker just so I can er write at the same time(.) So you've answered my first question you're in Portugal(?)*

B   *Yes Yes*

A   *[Laughs] very good ok great(.) Look obviously thanks so much for taking the time um it's two years I think it is since um you were last kind enough to..]*

B   *[………..*

A   *Laugh's that's encouraging*

E   *………………..*

A   *Yeah at which time I think I've said you know perhaps I might you know try to connect with you in about six months when I'd you know finished the bulk of the research so two years later [laughs] that's the nature of research isn't it*

B   *It feels like 6 months anyway*

A	*Yeah I was surprised actually when I looked at the dates yeah um but yeah absolutely(.) And I guess you know in the meantime er you know you've published Learning and Landscapes which was obviously another major thought point for me um from all the other contributors as well(.) Um I mean to sort of jump straight at it the two main points I kinda wanted to firstly just to acknowledge um the influence that you had on my thought process last time(.) Um referring back to my notes you suggested that I dug in a lot deeper to a fewer individuals(.) Um I had to balance that with um you know with the kind of direction that I still had to pass a degree as well as you know getting in the research(.) What I ended up doing was doing you know a very formal traditional um interview based piece however not ignoring all of the time you know the weeks and months I'd spent with the individuals in their locations and using that to shape a lot of the format and to shape a lot of the um the contextual data really um that added to that(.) And then you know ran that back through the individuals er through you know probably um more interesting validation sessions after they'd had chance to reflect on that(.) So very much a compromise but you know I just wanted to acknowledge the sort of you know the influence that you'd had on me at that point(.)*
B	*Mhuh*
A	*Um the main areas that I had*
B	*Adrian sorry have you now got your PhD or is it this before you've done it(?)*
A	*This is my yeah submission now so I officially..]*
B	* [Ok*
A	*officially submit in December er defend in January so I'm on yeah draft number seventeen or whatever of my submission now [laughs]*
BE	*Mhuh Wow yeah*
A	*[Laughs] Not literally I've no idea what draft I'm on(.) I'm on various drafts you know*
E	*Yes but you defend you have your viva in January(?)*
A	*Coming January yeah(.) So I'll submit in December and then I've got my viva in January yeah*
E	*Wow*
A	*That's the plan yeah(.) Um yeah so that's kind of where I am and it's become very much two things(.) There's the task of passing a degree which is one thing um and then you know the years that I've spent involved in this topic um of which the degree is just one element of it(.) Um and that's becoming really clear that you know big chunks of what I'd enjoyed big chunks of what I want write about and not really part of the degree so that's one task and then you know there's whatever I go on to try and write afterwards so you know I just wanted to separate those things out(.) Um so the main area that I really really value your views on(.) I've just sent you a poster across I don't know if you can see that or not um*
05:08	
BE	*Yes Yes we have it in front of us*

A   *Great lovely(.) Well the main area then I mean please you know jump into anything but the main area er from my side is discussion one(.) Around some participants were very much split um between those that would describe and use language um and give evidence really of having a consistent identity as they moved between boundaries as they moved between local and international CoPs and CoPs of different disciplines(.) Some of them very clearly described a very clear identity of themselves which by all means have been shaped by you know many areas but they were very clear in describing a single identity(.) And their behavior may be adapted or adopted um as they travelled if you like but their identity was singular(.) Compared to you know almost fifty-fifty really a number of the other participants that really did describe some very clear journeys(.) And some of the definers were around at one point in their life they very much identified typically in a technical group typically with the behaviours and the ways of er being and interacting in a way they'd come through(.) And then as their career had changed they start to identifying different areas and genuinely they identified more in these other areas(.) And they had a shift in er identity that never lost where they came from still had that but they genuinely identified and had a identity that was somewhere else(.) And then there was a lot of complexities that came from that whether they were accepted whether because they were seen as having an identity to somewhere else*

B   *Sorry Adrian can you just give me one second sorry one second*

A   *Of course absolutely sorry*

           [Small talk]

B   *Ok Sorry*

A   *No in the slightest apologies for the five minute monologue that wasn't my intention [laughs]*

B   *No no*

A   *Squeeze in(.) So yeah I guess there's some really interesting stuff*

E   *I was …… so can you repeat which um what was …………….. single identity I didn't get that*

A   *Yeah so there was no overriding um conclusion from what I did there were primarily almost we could split the groups really both with experienced and aspiring(.) Um by those that felt that they had a constant identity as they navigated their landscapes of CoPs and those that felt that they genuinely had multiple identifications they held differing values when they were in one group of people and they would genuinely hold different values in another group er in another CoP(.) So they were some of the defining characteristics not just that they felt comfortable here or they related but certain things were ok in one CoP that were not ok in another(.) And you know in the end they absolutely identified equally with both of those and were conflicted as a result(.) But that compares to the other group that like not you know I have a pretty clear you know identity and my behavior may be adapted as I move but the identity remains consistent(.) Um so that's the one I wanted to dig into and get your views on it if at all possible(.)*

E   *Were you able to predict who would be in which group depending on certain characteristics or was it just predicting random(?)*

A   *Yeah I'm sure it's not random but I certainly couldn't predict um at all. There were common..]*

  B   *[..But I thought you said that at one point they are part of the technical group didn't you say that some of them were from of a technical group is that right(?)*

A   *Yeah absolutely(.) So those that had come into more general management or even senior management and had come through a technical um background they'd been engineers they'd been whatever they'd come through those routes into the general sea sweep that was their path(.) Um yeah many of those individuals still had a very clear identity with you know the values of the areas they'd come from um understandably had a clear perspective but not all um so of those individuals they didn't describe um a differing context or differing values as they moved between those boundaries(.) They were consistent whereas others would say yeah I have you know these are things that are appropriate these are behaviours these are values that I have and equally I have slightly different values when I'm in this community these are things that are ok these are that they personally feel(.)*

10:22

B   *Can you give an example of that of like different values yeah(?)*

A   *Yeah I mean personal behavior is an example so there was a great deal of loyalty in um so of the local and this is local we do have the international locals(.) So there was a great deal of loyalty that the person would come first um even if it was at the expense of the organisation or the money or the project um that was ongoing(.) But when that person put on a different hat and they were in another role um and in the centre of another CoP that was organisational centric they were happy that they were you know maybe the people were not always told the truth maybe the people you know in those positions were not always communicated with fairly or even dealt with fairly in some cases(.) Now as a set of core values you know I thought that was pretty significant that was I would not do that when I'm here but I would do that when I'm there(.) You know I thought that was quite significant(.)*

E   *There's no predictive characteristics of who would be more typical than another(?)*

A   *No not that I identified I'd love to be able to say differently but no I certainly didn't form any predictions from that no*

B   *And did you go back and ask the people who had like um different identities and different cultures did you ask them what they thought the reason was(?)*

A   *Yeah I mean actually at the time and then I did eight formal validations as well as you know countless gin and tonics as well(.) Um firstly the conversation was very uncomfortable for the participants er you know we're talking about really fundamental aspects of themselves(.) The validation sessions probably had more solid content to them maybe because people had chance to reflect on it that was my you know my thoughts on it(.) May be we were opening you know a fairly you know unthought-of or you know not er forwardly cognitive subject at the time of the interview and we did explore and we did*

dig in at that time(.) Um so one of the key points that came out in the validations were the actions were fairly consistent so people recognised that when they were in one CoP particularly hierarchical when they are in a CoP that is hierarchically junior to another and then they boundary and then they become established um in a you know a more commercial or a general management CoP that the behaviours that are expected in that CoP are different(.) The way that they approach the same challenges is different there is a behavioural normative that is required as they moved (.) but the key difference that I still struggle with is when that came into actual when people said I adapt my behavior absolutely you know this is I understand that they now and I think you've referenced in the book several times that of people sort of doing what is required to fit into the CoP but not necessarily having the effect on their identity(.) Um versus you know those that said look when I'm here when my boots are on the ground here I feel this way(.) I feel um I feel responsibility to my peers I feel um a set of behaviours is that's who I am when I'm there but equally when I get on a plane and I sit in HQ and I'm doing this role or I'm on that project there is an element of me that fully identifies with what you know what needs to be done there and that's just as much me as this is on the ground here(.) If that makes sense yeah

E   That's very interesting yeah

A   So you know I don't expect you to have any magic wand on this I just wondered if you had any similar experiences or any thoughts on that at all(?)

15:00

E   So were there also differences in how should I say enjoyment or like having conflicting multiple identities as opposed to a consistent identities(?) Did they those who had consistent identities were they more happy or were they more enjoying work or did you have a sense of that(?)

A   That's a really interesting question I mean I haven't you know dug into that in great depth um but intuitively from other indicators from other questions (.) I think those that would describe multiple identities were as [Laughs] I don't think it's a leap of conclusion to say that they were significantly conflicted um their sense of place their sense of who they were was varied it wasn't consistent so in the moment situationally ability to you know embed with a group compared to whether they were happy or not is really interesting(.) I think the consistent identity group thinking back right now the consistent identity group were probably more secure and more aware or they would describe their behaviours as adaptive er rather than conflicted. Certainly the happiness as a title is not something that I explored but that's really really interesting way of looking at it

E   Yeah may be happiness is not the right word that was just something ……………....or yeah

B   Did you say just going back to what you said before were you suggesting that um (.) now I've lost my train of thought to do with those people who had conflicted identities were you making sure that you were looking at CoPs at a similar level or were those inconsistent identities was that inconsistency related to um a sort of vertical movement between CoPs(?)

A   Yeah that's..]

B   *Whereas the conflicting identity of a horizontal movement between CoPs*

A   *Yeah that's a really good point um so yeah I think that there was some consistency between those that were promoted there was some consistency of er of that conflict of having you know different objectives I think that's pretty natural and pretty well you know documented wider than this but those that were moving um so from a peer level so those that moved say from a CFO type of position to a company project type position pretty much a you know a level um sideways and that was fairly common(.) Um the organisation is not heavily matrix but it is quite matrix there are lots of regular pull togethers in projects so there's a lot of peer movement um certainly a lot of boundary work in those type of situations(.) And so yeah no I'm not trying to differentiate between you know what's how does your identity change as you move to more senior positions and then you've got that's not really what I'm talking of you no(.) It was..]*

B   *[So all the people with conflicted identities were moving horizontally across communities is that right(?)*

A   *Um well bear in mind they're moving people are moving hierarchically at the same time as you know they are their careers are ongoing the times that they're reflecting on are ongoing but that wasn't just the threat it wasn't simply you know here are the group that've moved into um the ten senior or established members ok one of them had just moved into a CEO position but in most cases they were at er they might have moved slightly hierarchically but they were you know they'd been established for quite an extensive period of time and as they moved for an example as they moved out of the European CoPs in their areas and then moved to perhaps an expatriate position in West Africa or in the Middle East then that you know it's those types of journeys that we were talking about the values what was the importance that is placed on an equivalent CoP in a different location because of very different um different challenges and a very different starting point for the individuals joining those groups as well(.) That's a whole load of stream that we may be don't have time to discuss today but um this was clear you know this was a really interesting part from the recent books that people come in from different paths to reach the same point er you know to reach a point of establishment or boundary work that had an effect and created its own internal boundaries this was consistent with what I found as well(.) Um so again I don't know if I'm going round in circles Beverly [laughs] but I don't know I'm adding any values*

20:00

B   *Mhuh*

E   *Wow that's a really interesting finding yeah*

A   *I mean the fact that it's not I didn't have a conclusion that was yeah you know we are seeing lots of multiple identities or we're seeing you know primarily consistent identities(.) There was strong examples and really clear self-definitions of both you know very clear use of language very clear use of values um an example given that actually supported both really that I am a single individual and I'm shaped and I'm formed by my experiences but it produces more identity compared with other groups that were er other individuals that formed a group that said you know actually yeah you know I sit over there and I have very different values may be I'm over extending that but I feel different values when I'm in this situation than I do when I'm in this CoP(.) Um I don't know I mean is that an outlier in your experience(?) I mean you are dealing with lots and lots of people who are researching the area*

B	*There's nobody who has done something as detailed as this(.) Are people um are all the CoPs in English(?)*
A	*Er no that's a really good point(.) So they communicate internationally in English as a common language the local CoPs are mixed er you know I picked up quite a few locations er so they're mixed yeah local languages and you know Ivory Coast is French whatever it would be yeah be in different places*
B	*I was just thinking I mean I just saw a very …… I was thinking how it's somehow easier to hold multiple identities from me myself in different languages(?) Not such a push to have a consistent identity in different languages*
A	*Right Ok yeah*
B	*I wondered you know if there was a connection there with the people who have multiple identities and between people of different languages(?)*
A	*Yeah I mean I'm slightly embarrassed because that's exactly what you said to me when we spoke previously that there is a way of thinking I'm not particularly bilingual I speak a little Arabic to a point er but that point of reaching where you start to think in the language and you start to use the nuances that only that vocabulary has and the other vocabulary doesn't yeah and I haven't hand up to that I haven't actually considered that in the analysis*
B	*Oh I see*
E	*But from all the subjects are from the Middle East is that correct (?)*
A	*No there are about two-thirds West African actually (.) two-thirds West African and um yeah about a third Middle East yeah*
E	*Oh two-thirds West African right(?)*
AB	*Yeah*
E	*But you have no European in your(?)*
A	*Um not in the aspirants er only in the er established (.) You know the research was around local CoPs um their ability and elements affecting them connecting their international CoPs if you like their ability to engage with their international CoPs(.) So the established people yeah I've got er Dutch and Danish er British um but also some locals that have become established as well(.) Um the participant list that's on the poster is actually anonymised for location as there's a few very well known individuals where I only had one person in that country as the you know the established person(.) Actually the group er participants is actually anonymised as well [laughs] it's just an illustration rather than a actuality if you get my point*
E	*I mean this is very interesting in terms of helping people it will be interesting to see is it easier to navigate the world if you allow your identity to become flexible and multiple or is it easier to navigate the world if you maintain a constant identity(?)*

A	*Right*
E	*You know what I mean (.) I mean if you are …………… the chief question of people you know how do you handle the fact that you're constantly travelling in the landscape(?)*
A	*Very much so*

25:00

E	*Yeah it will be very interesting to pursue this and say ok which one feels to allow people to move more productively across boundaries and yeah and where does the different come from(?) To me those are really interesting question to pursue if you decide to pursue it beyond your PhD*
A	*Absolutely yeah absolutely(.) I've connected with a local um a place called a talent enterprise which is a semi-academic that have been doing some really good Middle East research(.) Yeah we know we've had some prelim chats(.) Yeah where you go with it you know whether you know if we see some partners in that going forward whether that actually gives anyone a tool or a framework you know these are people reflecting on where they felt currently and what their journeys had been rather than you know no sort of tool kit you know no sort of recommendation from it in any way um*
E	*Right*
A	*So yeah and you know there were so many interesting pieces and so many paper ideas you know scratched away on this but even people who didn't travel even people who had very limited exposure to the situated um CoPs in this day and age they were may be having five or six or seven webex(s) internationally with very mixed virtual CoPs and the way that they described their connection to people that they hadn't met was still you know still notable(.) You know I'm not saying there's any equivalency of gravity in that but it was still notable in a way that might not have been even ten years ago by teleconferences or whatever it might be(.) There is a requirement for the skype to work [laughs] for that to be the case so may be our example today isn't a good one but um*
E	*Wow this is really interesting …………………….. many communities belong to many communities*
A	*Absolutely*
E	*And the question of how consistent of an identity do you maintain ….. as you travel the landscape….. metaphorical travel I think that's a really interesting question and I'm not sure that anybody has really (.) I've never read anything about the ………..*
A	*Right you know your work and um I've lost my pages I'd lots of notes here in the book but even in some of the case studies that are um er from Chris Kubiak as an example of it being you know that identities is not necessarily fragmenting as you have all these experiences er and the individuals you know trying desperately to you know I'm paraphrasing but I'm trying to stitch an identity together from all of those you know fragmenting experiences(.) You know that resonated a great deal for me and it may be felt like that some people were more successful in doing that some people had more motivation to try and you know stitch an identity together whereas others coming back to your question of happiness earlier other people just kind of were aware of the fact that*

look this is weird when I'm sat in this situation in this you know I think some things are ok that I wouldn't think are ok when I'm sat in this situation(.) Um so I'm not sure if it's about success in doing that but it's certainly an awareness that there is a difference either a different journey or a different trajectory in achieving that(.) Um and some of the elements that are in discussion two are more about the pragmatic elements around you know how people have engaged(.) Um and I was quite warmed by the positivity of that there's an overriding feeling that there's a level of racism in the organisation but I didn't see any evidence of that at all(.) There was a limit to acceptable diversity there was a limit to how different people could be and still be accepted but um you know some of those pragmatic abilities to engage and opportunities to engage to get that they were quite positive(.) Overall they were quite positive as an experience you know(.) However er like I say I think I've data dumped on you [laughs] too much really I just wanted to get your ..]

B   *[I have another question going back again to the recent …… is there did you notice that again if I think of my own personal experience*

A   *Yeah*

30:00

B   *When ……. multiple identities sometimes that is enhanced by being part of er those communities which you want to belong to so they are part of your future self they're your ….. you're ready to hold I have to be ready to hold more inconsistent identities because I need a community for a certain …….*

A   *Right right*

B   *And so to with those who are not consistent may be it was because they were……….they were going to progress in but they hadn't yet reached*

A   *Yeah that's yeah I mean that's a really sort of current point(.) I've got one example um that that's the strongest of the aspirant participants supported by others but one particularly where he genuinely identified strongly in another CoP and had spent the last eighteen months edging his way in and trying to find ways into this(.) You know he felt that he's he came from a health and safety background and he was far more passionate about the people factors element in um you know stopping people being killed it was that simple the organisation killed twelve people a year it wasn't a joke it wasn't a game(.) And he became far more engaged in the people factors element so the you know organisational psychologist and behavioural psychologist(.) But of course even though he went away and you know did a post grad certificate and did his bit he wasn't ever seen as a central part of that community and he wasn't particularly welcomed into it because he was seen as a really central operational HSE guy and that was one of you know the negative experiences that he already felt a strong identity as you described Beverly(.) Um he already felt values that were based in that community but the community wasn't letting him in(.) Not in meaningful ways not in genuine ways only in peripheral project communication ways you know(.) So yeah I think that's absolutely consistent Beverly that's um*

B   *I know*

A   *There was one..]*

E	[Yeah that's really interesting the role of the openness of the communities in allowing you either to have a consistent identity or in demanding that you be multiple in ...... asking you to deny your membership in others
A	Yes
E	that would be interesting also
A	Absolutely(.) Yeah I think there was a certainly regular elements of once you know established or central members at that point recognise somebody as being a central member in another CoP really you know a poster .... for that particular area almost that became well not almost that pretty clearly became a barrier to them becoming anything more than a boundary worker in to become central in the other CoP meant you know taking off your colours and putting on the colours of this CoP(.) And of course that's not you know as you described far more eloquently than I can that's not the reality people are constantly navigating and having multiple memberships at varying levels on a constant basis seems you know that's certainly as I see and I would never dream to challenge that(.)Um but those that say look this is my home you know this is the centre of my constellation some of those are quite protective of those that are very central in other er CoPs(.) I would absolutely support that from this small piece of research yeah
B	Mhuh
33:55	
	Ok um separating out the two jobs of passing the degree compared to everything else that's come from it there's far more as you said to me two years ago and I naively took it on board but didn't realise what I was taking on board the evidence supporting that is so contextual it's so micro detailed um that it's just so big an area I can't squeeze all that into what I'm writing here so I've had to be far more..]
B	[I know
A	You know I've had to pull out the meta themes I've had to you know sort of pull out the broad strokes and give examples but there's a lot more under that that I'd love to carry on exploring you know
E	Yes this is a very rich area(.) What did you mean by putting a market perspective on your data I didn't quite understand that(?)
A	A market perspective(?) No I'm not sure(.) Um may be was I talking about the contextual and ethnic graphic um piece(?)
35:00	
E	No you said in your conclusion in adding a developing market perspective
A	Oh right yeah I mean by location not by commercial market just in the language of those organisations so those you know those locations that are literally having the infrastructure built to support the you know the commerce whatever it might be
E	Yeah
A	So those that are not established markets but developing markets um

E   *Oh I see I get it*

A   *Yeah just the language on that yeah(.) The UAE is a really interesting one because it's got it's foot in both sides it's only third generation in terms of market penetration but it's extremely developed in some certain areas you know perhaps more so in some areas than the West and the East in some areas*

E   *So you are distinguishing between different economic developed(?)..]*

A   *Yeah I mean it does become..]*

E   *[I get it*

A   *Yeah I'm mixing metaphors a little bit there to be totally honest yeah*

E   *Ok got it*

A   *Look I know I need to really respect your time the one thing I did wanna ask you over and above this is where would you in your experience my supervisors and the university have given me a couple of publications to consider of which I don't even have my notes to hand um you know I'm freelance at the moment I've done the last twelve months I was promoted I became the Global Head within the (XXXX) group and then I didn't wanna relocate to (XXXX) and I took redundancy and I've been working freelance for the last year doing general talent work as well other pieces while I finish my doctorate(.) But I'd really like to carry on this sort of two-way I'd like to carry on in commercial practice I'd like to carry on in consultancy may be even some long-term internal contracts er for the key players I'm looking at(.) But I'd like to research as you know I'm not a career academic you know and looking at your trajectories you know what's your views about where somebody like me could move forward(?) How do I engage with you know is there groups or studies or anybody I could contact in your views you know(?)*

B   *Are you interested in like living in sort of um I mean there's lots in there's a sort of a cross cultural side to network(?)*

A   *Ok*

B   *Or is it more …… low level type network or business network what is it that you are sort of(?)*

E   *Are you looking for an academic position(?)*

A   *Not really no(.) Um Leicester have got some research pieces going on and they'd said (.) I don't mind jumping into something for a couple of years I'm not necessarily looking for a career if you know what I mean I'm not looking to go that route(.) Um but I've got a taste for it so to go back to Beverly's question um social learning is primarily you know where my interest lies(.)*

B   *I know*

A   *I'm a talent and development guy professionally that's what I've been doing that's what I do that's what I'm known for really(.) Er but I do want to carry on I do want to do studies*

of an academic quality but you know having one foot in either camp seems to be er you know a hard path to tread a little bit really(.)

B   *Yes*

E   *I mean you know we are not in an academic position but we don't do really a lot of research we do still …..*

A   *Sure yeah*

E   *We don't do a whole lot of research in the formal sense of it*

A   *Understood yeah understood*

E   *But er we will probably do more of that if we were financially independent but so are you totally about really continuing this research paper ….. collection um interviewing people and so on and so forth*

A   *Well I mean that's just the mechanism to get there isn't it and er I'd to develop my skills in that area er with no end game no objective I'm not looking to get into the citation competition [laughs] with senior academics um but I've had a taste of it and I've been doing it in isolation and you know for one maybe it's a case of saying yes to Leicester and jumping in with them for a year or two on some of their research projects to work with more experienced researchers and get it a bit more of a flavor from them(.) Er but also you know more I've been reaching out to local um local groups local institutions that might be pulling together the analysis of data and things like that that things I might be involved in(.) I haven't had any solid yeah this is something I'm going to do yet I'm just er thinking ahead to next year really(.) I just wondered if you might have known anybody within your networks that were you know kind of doing that sort of thing or what routes they had gone down really that was all(?)*

40:00

B   *I can't think of anybody offhand I mean lots of people would be so interested in this. I mean I think you could like if you could get an academic article out and then you know publish it in a more of not an academic thing but more like sort of a business thing or an organisation thing*

A   *Yeah*

B   *You know more in a sort of story line may be not quite Harvard Business Review but somewhere more sort of a business type magazine a magazine type article that refers your PhD data I think that would be quite an interesting way to go*

A   *Yeah sure that was certainly on my radar um absolutely(.) I've another former colleague who's just retired and they're looking to do er you know similar sort of things(.) They're looking to pull in a bit of their background and their research into more a wider audience really a little bit(.) Fair enough it was just an open question [laughs] that was all*

E   *…………………………………….. but I would be very interested in what you are finding it seems to me*

B   [Yeah this feels like a hot topic really when you're in a way to be fairly advanced in this you're yeah..]

E   [And you would have a lot of credibility in the talent management community because of your great experience in the field

A   I would hope so I've got some (.) I find that the I don't mean to be in any way negative really but the talent community is very much HR driven(.) They are primarily in my humble experience they're primarily looking for a nice neat you know a four box or nine box model that they can implement that's there unfortunately seems to be the driver(.) If I look at the ATD in the US or CIPD and their talent their sort of talent CoPs underneath that there's lost of people like me who are really passionate about you know getting involved in that but they are in the main they're on the periphery of those communities they are not central(.) Um I interviewed a part of this I interviewed a few CoP coordinators that are corporate you know they had a job title that said I co-ordinate CoPs in my organisation and again they were little bit marginalised within the HR talent community as being you know they're not thought leaders they're not central they were struggling to get their voices heard a little bit(.) But that doesn't mean I shouldn't you know keep pushing in that area and perhaps try and raise that agenda in some of those forums a little bit(.) Just 'cause it doesn't exist for me to you know hook my wagon onto in my experience I shouldn't try and push that agenda you know(.) (..) Look I mean thanks so much for your time

B   [We're not quite helpful …………. Yeah

A   No not at all you know the fact like all research in fact you are you know I might have had in mind yeah you're connected to fifty you know really active thriving er you know sort of cross-over networks now you know if you don't know them they probably don't exist right so

B   Mhuh

E   ………………………………

A   [Laughs] There's a level of visibility that um you know my little part of the world I'm struggling(.) But there are actually on a more positive note there are some you know individuals that are you know really sort of doing good cross-over work it just hasn't gained any breadth of exposure yet(.) Um and again you know because of where we're based you know this stuff tends to get bolted on to the more mainstream research(.) No not at all [laughs] all information is useful and knowing that you know there's not an immediate circle of networks is also really you know really useful to know and lets me place myself(.) I mean you've certainly added my views I really wanted to get your views on those that split between multiple and consistent identities(.) Um is there anything going on you know within your network that would is close to this is there anything that may be would be good for me to be aware of are you aware of other people researching the same sort of area or(?) Or not really or(?)

45:00

B   I can't think yeah no I think yeah for me I mean it touches more on the world as sort of as an international and multicultural …..

A   Right

B	*So that's more of where the people are doing this kind of work but not so much as a cross-over*
A	*Yeah*
B	*Um*
A	*So it may be the same areas but just not situated in specifically in CoPs I guess and I've read some of those papers yeah*
B	*Yeah it's such a big topic that I think it's really hard to ………… I mean ever such an interesting one*
A	*Well absolutely I'm almost fearing coming to an end of the degree because that's given the structure of going on to it and now it requires me to maintain the discipline to try and give it legs after that you know to try and carry on with that after that you know*
B	*Mhuh*
A	*Well look how's the rest of your day you're in Europe for how long are you travelling for(?)*
E	*Well I'm not sure that we will say we are traveling right now ……………………*
A	*Yeah ok*
E	*We have been travelling working in healthcare and sports coaching sport so for us it's a lot of travelling also across um you know across the …………..*
A	*Sure yeah*
E	*But not very much in business in the last few years*
A	*Interesting ok(.) It's a very fashionable term HR moved in to this CoE centre of expertise model that's become very fashionable now er you know to sort of spread these people out and a real clear sort of extension of that is the CoEs creating you know trying to manipulate and manage CoPs(.) So I'm hearing a lot more er fluency um in you know a really sort of you know surface veneer level concepts of CoPs in you know in business(.) These guys sort of take in more partnership roles HR becoming more of a partner across functions within the series so I'm hearing more fluency so I'm surprised I'm actually surprised to hear that(.) Um in the same period is when the period I've observed the kind of growth of that really but*
E	*I think in business it's become very much an established part of doing business so*
B	*Yes there are plenty of sort of ………………………*
A	*Right ok(.) Again although there may be more fluency in it I don't know if I'm seeing lots and lots of good practice in the circles that I'm moving at all(.) Space for people to be able to you know one of the very best I've come across recently is a completely free um IT um IT group in Edinburgh which my son happened to be a part of which is just kind of*

given resources by the various IT companies that are situated geographically around there(.) You know all the latest toys all the latest bits of kit(.) And the things just appear in this place nobody is entirely sure how the location gets paid for to be honest er you know and people bring their problems bring their challenges bring their personal projects on and they work on what they're interested in working in and um you know it's a real definitive CoP in my view that is supported but given space and given you know loads of resources(.) Really interesting little group you know but I'm not seeing that sort of quality in the formalised er corporate world at all

E   *Right.*

A   *Just in my little window anyway the bits I'm seeing but er (.) Look guys I really want to respect your time(.) Sorry go ahead*

B   *I just going to say that Trayner is spelt with an e not an o*

A   *Oh ok thank you(.) Thank you so much(.) How embarrassing is that I do apologise(.) Oh dear Oh dear*

E   *No problem*

A   *That will be my first correction and edit of the day [laughs] thank you so much(.)*

50:00

A   *Yeah probably best to get that right(.) Ok(.) Thank you so much er absolute pleasure and I really really appreciate your views(.) Yeah like you say where..]*

B   *[Yeah fantastic it's really interesting for us so and also yes if you do a publication then do send it to us*

A   *Thank you absolutely(.) I absolutely will(.) It will absolutely be done um what I haven't really chosen where to focus it on there's boxes of what I think are interesting areas that are not central to this there are boxes of things that I could go into much more depth that I really don't have space(.) So yeah what it will be I don't know something will absolutely be written and something will probably be co-written we've already put some time in the diary for next year with a colleague(.) So thank you so much I really hope that we cross paths again in the future*

BE   *Yes definitely yeah*

A   *I think if nothing else I'm due you both a gin and tonic for your [laughs] thought leadership*

B   *Yeah definitely yeah*

A   *Thanks so much enjoy the rest of your day in Portugal I'm very jealous it's far too hot where I am I'd rather be where you are and er I hope to cross paths again soon thank so much guys*

B   *Yes ok Adrian bye*

G- Participant Informed Consent Form

Researcher: Adrian Waite

C/O Centre for Labour Market Studies

University of Leicester

United Kingdom

Research Supervisors:

Dr Martin Quinn / Dr William Green

6th Floor, Ken Edwards Building,

University of Leicester,

1st March 2015

Dear Participant,

Ref: Informed Consent for Research Interview Participants – Data Protection

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research project on International Communities of Practice. I greatly appreciate you giving up some of your time in order to participate.

I am undertaking this research as part of a Doctorate Degree in Social Science under the supervision of the University of Leicester. The project aims to explore the elements effecting locals becoming accepted into international professional communities of practice, from both the prospective of local professionals and those already established in international professional communities.

You were approached to take part in the project as a (XXXXXXX) It is important to note you may withdraw from the study at any time. If you are happy to take part, I will ask you to sign the attached consent form giving your agreement to participate. You may still withdraw from the study, even after signing this form.

The interview will take a maximum of 90 minutes during which I will ask you a series of questions. I will also give you the opportunity to ask me any questions you may have. Be assured that your participation, and the information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. All data collected will be managed in accordance with the ethical codes set out in the British Sociology Guidelines. In addition, your answers will be unattributed to either yourself personally or any specific organization you currently or previously work for. The data gathered during the interview will only be used for my Doctorate thesis. Your own data will be completely anonymous, and you will not be identifiable. There will be no use of verbatim quotations from the interview without your consent

Once again, thank you very much for your participation. If you have any questions at this stage, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Waite

Informed Consent Form

Research Project:

"Elements affecting the acceptance of locals into international communities of practice"

This project aims to research the changing nature of informal professional communities in your industry internationally. It aims to understand more of the relationship between established professionals at the core of such communities, and the development and acceptance of local professionals from a variety of countries in Africa and the Middle East into these established professional communities.

I agree to take part in an interview as part of the above study. The research has been clearly explained to me and I have read and understood the participant informed consent letter. I understand that by signing the consent form I am agreeing to participate in this research and that I can withdraw at any time. I understand that any information I provide during the interview is entirely confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than the research project outlined above. The data will not be shared with any other organizations and no verbatim quotes will be used without your consent.

If you have any further questions or concerns not covered by the researcher, you are free to contact Research Supervisors at the University of Leicester, on the details supplied on the attached letter of informed consent.

I agree that the interview can be recorded by digital audio recorder: Yes / No

I agree that the interview can be recorded by digital video camera: Yes / No

I agree to the use of verbatim quotations from interview: Yes / No

Signature …………………………………………………… Date ……………………………….

Name: (Please Print) ……………………………………………………………………………….

H- Focus Group Informed Consent Form

Researcher: Adrian Waite

C/O Centre for Labour Market Studies

 University of Leicester

United Kingdom

Research Supervisors:

Dr Martin Quinn / Dr William Green

6th Floor, Ken Edwards Building,

University of Leicester,

1st March 2015

Dear Participant,

Ref: Informed Consent for Research Focus Group Participants – Data Protection

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research project on International Communities of Practice. I greatly appreciate you giving up some of your time in order to participate.

I am undertaking this research as part of a Doctorate Degree in Social Science under the supervision of the University of Leicester. The project aims to explore the elements effecting locals becoming accepted into international professional communities of practice, from both the prospective of local professionals and those already established in international professional communities.

You were approached to take part in the project as a (XXXXXXX) It is important to note you may withdraw from the study at any time. If you are happy to take part, I will ask you to sign the attached consent form giving your agreement to participate. You may still withdraw from the study, even after signing this form.

The Focus group will take a maximum of 90 minutes during which time I will ask a number of questions for answer through a voting system, discussion in small groups and between the group as a whole. I will also give you the opportunity to ask me any questions you may have. Be assured that your participation, and the information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence. All data collected will be managed in accordance with the ethical codes set out in the British Sociology Guidelines. In addition, your answers will be unattributed to either yourself personally or any specific organization you currently or previously work for. The data gathered during the focus group will only be used for my Doctorate thesis. Your own data will be completely anonymous, and you will not be identifiable. There will be no use of verbatim quotations from you without your consent.

Once again, thank you very much for your participation. If you have any questions at this stage, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Waite

<u>Informed Consent Form</u>

Research Project:

"Elements affecting the acceptance of locals into international communities of practice"

This project aims to research the changing nature of informal professional communities in your industry internationally. It aims to understand more of the relationship between established professionals at the core of such communities, and the development and acceptance of local professionals from a variety of countries in Africa and the Middle East into these established professional communities.

I agree to take part in a focus group as part of the above study. The research has been clearly explained to me and I have read and understood the participant informed consent letter. I understand that by signing the consent form I am agreeing to participate in this research and that I can withdraw at any time. I understand that any information I provide during the interview is entirely confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than the research project outlined above. The data will not be shared with any other organizations and no verbatim quotes will be used without your consent.

If you have any further questions or concerns not covered by the researcher, you are free to contact Research Supervisors at the University of Leicester, on the details supplied on the attached letter of informed consent.

I agree that the interview can be recorded by digital audio recorder: Yes / No

I agree that the interview can be recorded by digital video camera: Yes / No

I agree to the use of verbatim quotations from this focus group: Yes / No

Signature ………………………………………… Date ……………………………….

Name: (Please Print) ……………………………………………………………………….

I- EMDoc PGR 2017 Thesis Conference Poster

Adrian Waite, Doc. Soc. Sci. Student, School of Business, University of Leicester

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"One of us?"

How do Developing Market professionals Engage with International Communities of Practice

University of Leicester

Background

After 20 years developing professional talent in the Middle East and West Africa, the evolving dynamic between established "Old Hands" and local "Newcomers" was unclear. This study was established to explore the personal experiences and perceptions of these groups, to better understand the journey of local talent in developing markets to becoming established in their professional, international communities of practice.

Questions to be explored

What elements effect African and Arab professionals' ability to access Legitimate Peripheral Participation with established international professionals? If achieved, what is their trajectory to becoming established themselves, and how do they manage Community of Practice access through LPP for those who follow them?

Research Approach

Three groups of participants were identified for Qualitative investigation

Group A – Established International Professionals
Group B – Aspiring local professionals in Africa and the Middle East
Group C – Professional Community of Practice Coordinators

Focus groups were held with representatives of A & B to establish themes for investigation. This supported a semi structured interview design, which was piloted, developed and conducted with 29 participants, featuring 13 Nationalities, in 11 countries. Additional data was integrated to support grounded analysis of emerging themes and 8 interpretation validation sessions were held with sample participants.

Focus Groups — 1x Group A, 2x Group B

Semi Structured Interviews — 29 interviews with ongoing development of emerging themes

Contextual Data — Ethnographic and contextual data to support analysis and interpretation

Validation — 8 Validation Sessions conducted

Countries Conducted - 11: Netherlands, Oman, Denmark, Bahrain, Ghana, UAE, Liberia, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, (UK), (Georgia)

Literature Conclusions

The debate surrounding the participation metaphor, relating to routes and barriers of legitimate peripheral participation within a constellation landscape of situated practice is current and contested, particularly relating to identity creation.

Findings

Two meta themes emerged from analysis of 10 evolved themes

Multiple and Consistent Identities
- Impact of varied routes to CoP participation
- Identity formation in professional vs domestic CoPs
- Continuity of identity across a constellation of CoPs
- Impact of CoP norms on identity formation

Palatable Diversity
- Informal sponsored opportunity
- Effects of positive discrimination
- LPP through locals vs expatriates
- Levels of "Palatable Diversity"
- Stereotypes for sense making
- Absence of racism in LPP

Discussion 1 - Multiple and Consistent Identity

Making meaning from experience, leading to identity creation in individuals through legitimate peripheral participation and progression trajectories within a constellation landscape of established communities of practice was problematized in 4 areas.

- Different routes for generations and national cultures, led to different experiences, and consequently varying effects on formation of identities.

- A complex relationship existed between levels of individual identity between Home Culture CoP's and International Professional CoP's which showed both multiple situational identities, and consistent identity in navigation.

- LPP was notably restricted for those who became known primarily for membership and identification in one CoP but identified progressively more with another.

- Long term pressure to conform to a CoP norms, created an increased tolerance, but not a multiple identity in participants.

Discussion 2 - Palatable Diversity

Access to LPP and progression of diverse newcomers, was encouraged and pursued by established CoP members in this research, with several caveats within the contributory themes.

- Informal long term mentoring of those selected by "Old Hands" to be suitable to carry on the progression of their CoPs.

- View of negative impact of positive discrimination policies on the highest potential local newcomers identity, not shared by established international CoP members.

- Higher standards set for LPP to be granted by established locals, than by expatriates.

- Differentness seen as positive in established members, within limits palatable to them.

- Use of known stereotypes to speed up navigation of CoPs from both sides.

- Absence of evidence of racism within the data, despite popular perceptions of prevalence.

Conclusion

The findings problematize recent literature in the debate on multiple identity creation and attitudes to diversity within a constellation landscape of Communities of Practice, in addition to adding a developing market perspective to existing data sets.

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