

EXAMINING EMERGENT SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN OVERSEAS
OPERATIONS

by

Kristofer Hawbaker

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of
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Abstract

Stadler, Mayer, and Hautz (2015) believed that most global companies did not possess the right management capabilities to make overseas movement profitable. Businesses must manage a bevy of internal and external organizational and process interdependencies to achieve success globally (Dynes, 2008), and these organizational processes have become increasingly more complex and adaptive (Anderson, 1999; McKelvey, 2001; Stacey, 1992; Wheatley, 1999). Today's business leaders still develop reductionist solutions to solve complex problems despite this type of thinking's practical limitations (Menkes, 2011). Comstock (2016) foresaw emergent management as a necessity in the current era, which requires organizations to unify around information flows and empowered individuals. As globalization intensifies the demand for international operations and global partnerships, business leaders must confront an evolving leadership paradigm (Baumgartner & Korhonen, 2010; Menkes, 2011). For organizations to survive amidst the rapid connectivity and complexity that defines today's global business environment, they need to balance their traditional, planned, structural change methods with the unpredictability and emergence of new approaches (Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009).

Keywords: leadership, management, strategy, emergence, international business

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Dr. Kimberly Johnson, Dissertation Chair

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family— my wife, Lindsay, and my children, Hudson, Cooper, Haley, and Madison. Without their incredible patience and constant support, this endeavor would have been impossible. Ecclesiastes 4:12 reminds us of the importance of team support: “a person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken (NIV).” Thank you, Lindsay, Hudson, Cooper, Haley, and Madison, for standing with me in this challenging season. Your love has been genuine and steadfast (Romans 12:9).

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First, I would like to acknowledge God. 1 Chronicles 16:34 reminds simply, “give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; his love endures forever (NIV).” Without His strength and resolve, I would be dust. He has filled me with grace and enriched me with speech and knowledge (1 Corinthians 1:4-5). Praise be to God.

Next, I would like to acknowledge my wife, Lindsay, for her seemingly limitless patience in this trying season of life. She married me shortly after I graduated from the United States Naval Academy and has endured the pain and separation caused by my multiple deployments to the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and Africa. Mother of our four beautiful children, Hudson, Cooper, Haley, and Madison, she is a wife of noble character and exceptional resilience. Despite the intensity my naval service brought into our home, she championed my post-graduate education and never questioned my academic ambitions. Thank you, Lovie.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Stadler, Mayer, and Hautz (2015) believed that most global companies did not possess the right management capabilities to make overseas movement profitable. Child and McGrath (2001) believed that the challenge to today's organizational leaders is to identify alternatives to conventional bureaucratic decision-making models and develop theories to improve how humans collectively accomplish their goals the best. Menkes (2011) lamented that 21st-century business leaders still develop reductionist solutions to complex problems despite this type of thinking's practical limitations. However, McChrystal, Collins, Silverman, and Fussell (2015) and Menkes (2011) thought that 21st-century management had evolved from reductionism to emergence.

Comstock (2016) foresaw emergent management as a necessity in the current era, which requires organizations to unify around information flows and empowered individuals. As globalization intensifies the demand for international operations and global partnerships, business leaders must confront an evolving leadership paradigm (Baumgartner & Korhonen, 2010; Menkes, 2011). Physical and non-physical resources are becoming more difficult to move in the once traditional reductionist style, which relied on logical, linear, and predictable adjustments to business operations (McChrystal et al., 2015). Uhl-Bien, Marion, and McKelvey (2007) found that today's operating environment has become increasingly complex and adaptive.

Organizational theorists have begun to conceptualize organizations as complex adaptive systems (Anderson, 1999; McKelvey, 2001; Stacey, 1992; Wheatley, 1999). They increasingly reject the more traditional, mechanistic view of organizations because the simple models of classic science that they are based on are unworkable (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001). This research examines the complex foreign operating environment that challenges international businesses' pursuit of profitable overseas operations. Namely, the researcher seeks to improve upon

academia's understanding of the emergence phenomenon as it relates to influencing international business systems management strategies.

Background of the Problem

During the onset of the Iraq War, General Stanley McChrystal, Commander of the Joint Special Operations Task Force in 2003, observed that United States military operations appeared outdated and pitifully motivated by legacy warfare protocols (McChrystal et al., 2015). State of the art training and military technology had been marginalized by deficiencies in the organizational structure of the U.S. military (McChrystal et al., 2015). Highly centralized leadership responsibilities and slow feedback loops between battlefield commanders and executive decision-makers abroad made gaining an advantage against their high-speed, well-coordinated, terrorist enemies difficult (McChrystal et al., 2015).

The U.S. military had failed to address many of the most critical strategic issues it faced going to war in Iraq (Cordesman, 2009), which included the United States handing over political sovereignty to the Iraqis and aiding the newly formed Iraqi military in thwarting terrorist threats to the Iraqi transitional government (Shah, 2004). From 2003-2006, an anti-American insurgency expanded into a broad communal struggle for power and influence in the new Iraq and deeply complicated U.S. military efforts to transfer complete political and military authority to the Iraqi government (Schlosser, 2017). By 2007, the United States initiated the "surge," which called for an additional 30,000 troops to deploy to Iraq to stem the growing insurgency (Schlosser, 2017).

The surge's initial challenges were not rooted in troop training regimens, asset provision for battlefield events, or access to critical warfare resources (Ricks, 2015). Instead, as Major General David Fastabend observed that the U.S. military had a management problem, and it

needed to change its organizational behavior and culture to accommodate the speed and scope of warfare in the 21st century (Ricks, 2015).

Consequently, the U.S. War in Iraq has waged on 15 years later, and it has proven lengthy, costly, and increasingly uncertain (Cordesman, 2016). Strategic improvements to the military's organizational culture under General Stanley McChrystal in the early 2000s appear distant to the "increasing incrementalism", or slow augmentation of military troops, which seems to inspire today's military strategy in Iraq (Cordesman, 2016, p. 1). A brief troop withdrawal in 2011 followed by their return in 2014 highlights the strategic hiccups suffered by U.S. military and political leaders in achieving the initial goals of the Iraq War (Ackerman & McCarthy, 2014). The inefficient, perhaps ineffective, military campaign in Iraq and Syria exposes the U.S. for having not developed a credible strategy to counter terrorists and rebuild national institutions in Iraq (Cordesman, 2016).

Implementing an effective international systems management strategy proves challenging for military and civilian entities, alike. Stadler et al. (2015) discovered that it took global companies an average of ten years to achieve a one percent return on assets from overseas business operations. This statistic shows how difficult it is for companies to create successful international initiatives. Global expansion represents a complicated element of business development and should not be considered as a default growth option for most businesses (Stadler et al., 2015). Stadler et al. believed that most global companies did not possess the right *management* capabilities to make overseas movement profitable.

Menkes (2011) shared that the management sciences have long been dominated by what is considered the "Cartesian method" (p. 1). The Cartesian method refers to the way management scientists study a problem and create a tool to fix it by breaking down the issues

into parts that can be isolated and measured for their cause and effect (Menkes, 2011). This type of reductionist thinking has long been hailed for its ability to provide clear, concise, and evidence-based answers to essential questions (Menkes, 2011). In the postmodern world, however, reductionist thinking does not explain complex systems well (Menkes, 2011). This notion is evidenced by General McChrystal's (2015) Iraq War observations and Stadler et al.'s (2015) examination of international business profitability. The world is becoming more complex and overseas operations have been forced to adapt their management science to survive in this increasingly dynamic business environment. Dohrer (2018) captured this sentiment when he said, "global companies of the future are going to be globe-trotting adaptors rather than static cross border operators of the past" (p. 1).

Problem Statement

The general problem to be studied is how emergent systems influence international business leaders' management strategies for overseas operations. Stadler et al. (2015) believed that most global companies did not possess the right *management* capabilities to make overseas movement profitable. McChrystal et al. (2015) and Menkes (2011) thought that 21st-century management had evolved from reductionism to emergence. Comstock (2016) foresaw emergent management as a necessity in the current era, which requires organizations to unify around information flows and empowered individuals. As globalization intensifies the demand for international operations and global partnerships, business leaders must confront an evolving leadership paradigm (Baumgartner & Korhonen, 2010; Menkes, 2011).

The specific problem to be studied is what kind of reductionist and emergent systems management strategies are being employed by international business leaders in overseas operations. Today's international business leaders are still developing reductionist solutions to

complex problems despite this type of thinking's practical limitations (Menkes, 2011).

Organizational theorists have begun to conceptualize organizations as complex adaptive systems (Anderson, 1999; McKelvey, 2001; Stacey, 1992; Wheatley, 1999) and increasingly reject the more traditional, mechanistic view of organizations because the simple models of classic science it is based on are unworkable (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001). The need for a new way to thinking about management stems from the notion that "today's widespread, fast-moving and complex change is inherently emergent and unpredictable" (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010, p. 214).

Organizational leaders and decision makers find themselves with the need to merge both planned strategy improvements with emergent, unplanned ones (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010).

In part, this is because physical and non-physical resources are becoming more difficult to move in the once traditional reductionist style, which relied on logical, linear, and predictable adjustments to business operations (McChrystal et al., 2015). Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) found that today's operating environment has become increasingly complex and adaptive. Child and McGrath (2001) observed that the challenge of today's organizational leaders is to identify alternatives to conventional bureaucratic decision-making models and develop theories to improve how humans collectively accomplish their goals the best. Emergent systems management strategy confronts the uncertainty of international business environments by simultaneously evolving and implementing strategic processes (Jamil & Shah, 2015).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to refine academia's understanding of the foreign emergent business environment and explore the reductionist and emergent management strategies employed by international business leaders to operate in this environment. A study of management strategies used by well-established international

businesses should add depth to the study of emergent system behavior and produce insights about successful foreign emergent systems management strategies (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010; Wycisk, McKelvey, & Hulsmann, 2008; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). At this stage in the research, management strategies employed by international business leaders to counter foreign emergent systems will be defined as the study of how organizational leaders' implement management strategies to solve problems and make decisions with regard to how these strategies impact collateral operations in a foreign country (Wood & Caldas, 2001; Wycisk et al., 2008). The author employs the experiences of international business leaders, scholarly work on business management in overseas operations, and any cross-disciplinary studies that may further clarify the essence of emergent behavior to ultimately reveal the essence of management strategies employed in today's overseas operations (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Throughout the course of the study, the researcher also expects to explore the behavioral characteristics of the emergence phenomenon as it relates to the foreign operating environment. Dyson (1997) referred to emergent behavior as that which could not be analyzed any more straightforward than a whole system. Osmundson and Huynh (2008) sought to label emergent behavior in systems engineering as the relationships among a "system of systems" (p. 1). McChrystal et al. (2015) defined emergent behavior within the military organizational structure as the coordination of a "team of teams" (p. 52). These labels represent the phenomenological essence of emergent behavior within the engineering and military fields of study. Within the realm of international business, however, the nature and spirit of emergent behavior and emergent system management lack the same concentration-specific description offered by Osmundson and Hynh (2008) and McChrystal et al. (2015). The researcher believes that a study

of international business management strategies will further build upon the emergent system phenomenon recently presented in other areas of research.

Nature of the Study

For this business topic, the researcher has chosen to implement a qualitative study that describes the phenomenological behavior of the emergent business environment and explain its influence on international business management strategies employed in overseas operations. Creswell and Poth (2018) stated that qualitative research should be used when “a problem or issue needs to be explored” (p. 46) and the cause-and-effect relationships of a problem are less important than “describing the complex interactions of factors in any situation” (p. 44). Rather than seek the data-centric and statistical-mindedness of quantitative research and attempt to measure the cause-and-effect of the problem, the researcher relies on the literary flexibility, theory development, and contextual description of qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Moreover, the idea of exploring a topic rather than measuring it points to qualitative research’s more natural relationship with the researcher’s phenomenon-based problem. Stake (2010) remarked that “qualitative inquiry is distinguished by its emphasis on holistic treatment of phenomena” (p. 31). A discussion of the various qualitative research methods and their designs reveals this problem’s appropriate fit with phenomenological studies. Steering away from specific cause-and-effect explanations to social research, qualitative research moves toward a more personal interpretation of the phenomenon (Stake, 2010).

Discussion of method. Qualitative inquiry and research design commonly takes the form of five different approaches. These approaches include: narrative, case study, grounded theory, ethnography, and phenomenology. These research methods and their associated designs

display particular characteristics that aid in exploring a variety of problems (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Narrative research refers to a variety of analytic practices and disciplines that are conveyed using individuals' "narratives" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 67). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) asserted that narrative research uses individuals' experiences to explore the social, cultural, familial, linguistic, and institutional issues that constitute and shape the life of that person. When the researcher can identify important themes "told" by study participants, then the narrative design can offer a significant avenue for organizing and presenting qualitative analysis (Creswell & Poth, p. 70).

Case study research is used to produce empirical inquiry that investigates a case in depth, and within its real-world context to wit, the boundaries between the case and the context may not be evident (Yin, 2014). The features of a case study include an inquiry that copes with reconciling more variables than available data points, relies on multiple references to hone the research position and pursues prior theoretical propositions to organize data collection and analysis (Yin, 2014). Creswell and Poth (2018) submitted that case study research refers to a type of design in qualitative research that may serve as both the object of the study as well as the product of the inquiry.

A grounded theory study strives to move beyond description and develop or reveal a theory (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Mainly used to generate theories regarding social phenomena, grounded theory studies produce a higher level of understanding that is "grounded" from the analysis of data (Lingard, Albert, & Levinson, 2008). Grounded theory has often been linked to multivariate statistical techniques and quasi-statistical research procedures that generate analytical data for theory development (LaRossa, 2005).

Ethnography differs from grounded theory as it studies the social interactions, behaviors, and perceptions that occur within groups, organizations, and communities (Reeves, Kuper, & Hodges, 2008). Ethnographic studies focus on capturing the shared patterns of behavior, beliefs, and language exhibited by people in the same place (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The central aim of most ethnographic study is to “develop an overall cultural interpretation” of a studied group (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 92).

A phenomenological study reveals individuals’ experiences in the form of a phenomenon or concept (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Phenomenology reduces human experiences into a central, universal description of the nature of those experiences. Liberman (2017) advocated that phenomenological studies challenged researchers to abandon academia's usual dogmatism to accept the world the way it is. Instead, phenomenology research examines the mental traps that prevent academics from recovering underlying and ulterior truths—the essence of the way things are (Liberman, 2017).

Discussion of design. Narrative design proves appropriate for qualitative analysis when individuals’ experiences shed light on important strategies, consequences, and common stories, which supply valuable qualitative information to the academic world (Creswell & Poth). When the researcher can identify important themes "told" by study participants, then the narrative design can offer a significant avenue for organizing and presenting qualitative analysis (Creswell & Poth, p. 70). Moreover, Green (2008) believed narrative research carried a unique persuasive property. Since stories are often associated with entertainment, individuals experience a natural attraction to narrative research (Green, 2008).

The use of case study research is significant when researchers seek to evaluate history, conduct a survey, or produce an experiment based on the lessons learned from research

participants, or cases (Yin, 2014). Case study research is used to contribute to people's understanding of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena (Yin, 2014). The essence of case study research shows an approach to research rather than a methodology (Rosenberg & Yates, 2007). Walshe, Caress, Chew-Graham, and Todd (2004) described case study research as a flexible and adaptable research approach, which can be utilized to represent a host of phenomena.

Lingard et al. (2008) suggested that grounded theory is appropriate when the study of social interactions or experiences aims to explain a process, rather than to test or verify an existing theory. Grounded theory researchers do not test or develop hypotheses; instead, they allow the theory to emerge from a careful analysis of the data (Lingard et al., 2008). Grounded theory tends to be a good research design when a theory does not already exist to explain a problem (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Researchers employ ethnography when the central aim of the study is to provide in-depth insights into people's views and actions based on the location they inhabit (Reeves et al., 2008). This type of study tends to be appropriate when describing how a culture group works and explores how the group's beliefs, language, and behaviors contribute to issues facing the group (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Hammersley (1992) suggested that ethnographic studies should be used "to document the culture, perspectives, and practices of the people in their settings" (p. 512).

At its foundation, phenomenological design attempts to fuse intellectual and practical interests into one philosophical mosaic (Budd, 2005). Unfortunately, no single definition exists to clarify phenomenological research design (Budd). Lyotard (1991) aptly explained that phenomenology recognizes practical experiences more than sensory feedback. As Stewart and

Mickunas (1990) elaborated upon, the world has no meaning apart from consciousness. The use of phenomenological design is essential when researchers desire to know more about the "what" and "how" of human experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 75).

Summary of the Nature of the Study. While the narrative research design and the case study research design also provided compelling research vessels for this topic, certain challenges constrained their ultimate use. The embedded nature of storytelling found within the narrative research design would have pressed the reader with distracting questions about the nature and qualification of the study's participants rather than appreciate the essence of the subject matter (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participant's experiences affect the credibility and influence of the academic narrative. The case study research design has also proven problematic for many researchers due to the difficulty in pointing to the method's research structure (Yin, 2014). Case study research's capacity to describe qualitative and quantitative methods, offer prospective and retrospective viewpoints, induce or deduce approaches to theory, and examine one or more cases make it a confusing inquiry process for many researchers (Walshe et al., 2004; Rosenberg & Yates, 2007).

Grounded theory studies often prove opaque or confusing, and the researcher often struggles to determine when the theory has been sufficiently detailed (LaRossa, 2005; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Lingard et al. (2008) believed the veracity of grounded theory studies relied on implementing iterative study design, theoretical sampling, and a system of analysis. Incorporating these three variable elements to grounded theory research quickly proves challenging and opaque (Lingard et al., 2008; LaRossa, 2005). Moreover, grounded theory researchers often find it problematic to determine when a research category is saturated or theory has been sufficiently explored (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Ethnography research proves challenging because of its reliance on cultural studies and requirement for extensive data collection (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Developing cultural theories invites a host of inferences about the people and activities that contribute to said culture (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The complex nature of social life requires ethnographers to record a variety of elements in their notes (Reeves et al., 2008).

Ultimately, capturing the essence of the emergent business environment as it relates to international business management and strategy development seemed more consistent with the phenomenological research design. The use of phenomenological design is essential when researchers desire to know more about the "what" and "how" of human experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 75). Phenomenological researchers attempt to uncover the nature or essence of a subject in this type of study. Budd (2005) suggested that phenomenology represented the appearances apparent to human consciousness even as human consciousness changes throughout history and a person's life. In many ways, the phenomenological study merely seeks to construct the unseen world and give form to the natural and essential attributes of life's subjects—to define its phenomena.

Research Questions

Two research questions will guide the study. The first research question is *what is the lived experience of international business leaders who have recently managed emergent systems in overseas operations?* This question seeks reveal the essence of international business management in the foreign emergent business environment. The following minor research questions may aid in organizing information gained from this research question. These minor research questions include:

1. How does this individual describe the emergent business operating environment in a foreign country?
2. In this individual's view, what elements contributed to the successful or unsuccessful management of emergent systems in overseas operations?

The second question is *what reductionist and emergent systems management strategies do international business leaders employ in their foreign emergent business environment?* This question seeks to illustrate specific international business management mechanisms and philosophies used in the emergent business environment, illuminate the scope and breadth of international business operations overseas, and highlight emergent systems inherent in overseas operations. The following minor research questions may aid in organizing information gained from this research question. These minor research questions include:

1. What philosophies underlie business leaders' selection of these reductionist and emergent management strategies?
2. What assumptions to business leaders make about the emergent nature of overseas operations that may affect the development of their management strategies?

Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework seeks to introduce the general concept of leading and managing complex and adaptive business systems, describe the emergent nature of the international business network, and highlight key elements of the complex leadership theory and the strategy-as-practice approach to emergent systems management strategy. These concepts contribute to the readers' fundamental understanding of the emergent business environment and the systems management strategies developed by international business leaders to operate within this environment. The researcher ultimately seeks to investigate the core attributes and

behavioral characteristics that comprise a foreign emergent system and identify prevailing leadership and management sciences used to direct international business operations in the foreign emergent business environment. In part, the researcher will advance Uhl-Bien et al.'s (2007) complex leadership theory and Vaara and Whittington's (2012) strategy-as-practice approach to emergent systems management strategies in the foreign emergent business environment.

Discussion of leadership and management of complex adaptive systems. Mintzberg (2011) believed that managers were also leaders and suggested that leadership was merely "management practiced well" (p. 9). Moreover, management science represents practice, which is primarily learned through experience and rooted in context (Mintzberg, 2011). The practice component of management, as described by Mintzberg, distinguishes the act of leadership and management as an inherently emergent process. According to Vaara and Whittington (2012), the practice-focused approach to management "emphasizes the embedded nature of human agency" (p. 288). This sentiment suggests that management science is a pliable and even artful cognate, which humans adapt to satisfy given operating environments.

Furthermore, Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) found that today's operating environment has become increasingly complex and adaptive. Brooks (2012) called this "dynamic complexity" an essential feature of emergence (p. 109). Subsequently, these emergent or complex adaptive systems (CAS) now represent a basic unit of analysis in complexity science, which measure the neural-like networks that bond the goals, outlooks, and needs of today's organizations (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007, p. 299).

Complexity science has gained credibility in recent decades because organizations often implement changes to business processes without observing how those changes impact people

and interact with other processes (Wood & Caldas, 2001). Now, more businesses seek to develop management processes that can autonomously react to these complex and changing demands on their environments to participate profitably in highly competitive and changing markets (Wycisk et al., 2008).

Discussion of the emergent nature of the international business network. A depiction of the international business network is provided in Figure 1 and illustrates the basic relationship between a central corporate mass and its individual overseas entities. A variety of sources indicate that international businesses most struggle with foreign culture, language, supply chain and logistics, political differences and local laws, labor qualifications, and environmental considerations (The Hult School of International Business, 2017; US-Pacific Rim International, Inc., 2010; Ali, 2014; Hill, 2018; Driver, 2017). Additionally, relationship building with regional business allies and government entities proves demanding for international enterprises (US-Pacific Rim International, Inc., 2010; Hill, 2018; Driver, 2017). These foreign systems often prove different from a firm's domestic systems and usual require international business managers to pay special attention to consumer's behavior and cultural nuances (Ali, 2014) as these elements can affect the firm's brand-power, supply chain management, and business partnerships (Hill, 2018).

Increasing global connectedness and growing multinational alliances have challenged the conventional top-down leadership and management structures that once dominated the industrial era (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). Therefore, international business leaders of today's knowledge era must modify the formal leadership structures of yesterday to accommodate the ever-changing operating environments of today. Overseas business systems have become increasingly emergent as their cultural, technological, social, and financial structures grow more complex and

adaptive to foreign influences (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). Child and McGrath (2001) believed that the challenge of today's organizational leaders is to identify alternatives to conventional bureaucratic decision-making models and develop theories to improve how humans collectively accomplish their goals the best. This sentiment rings true for today's business leaders who are seeking the best management strategies to negotiate the ever-emerging behavior of international operations.

Discussion of complexity research theory. Plowman et al. (2007) suggested that leadership complexity theory has made its way into organizational science, challenging leadership research's traditional linear, mechanistic view of organizations. Complexity theory conveys the impact unpredictability of future events has on organizational leaders. While traditional views of leadership grow out of the long-held view of organizations as equilibrium-seeking systems whose futures are knowable and arrived at by leaders who plan interventions and control behaviors (Stacey, 1992; Wheatley, 1999), a growing body of work shows that these systems exhibit emergent behavior (Chiles, Meyer, & Hench, 2004). Agents demonstrate emergent behavior because of the way they interact with a variety of other agents and produce unintended outcomes without the intervention of a central controller (Chiles et al., 2004). Thus, organizations take on properties and structures that are unexpected because people and groups interact, and the results of those interactions produce perpetual novelty (McKelvey & Lichtenstein, 2007).

Discussion of strategy-as-practice management approach. The strategy-as-practice (SAP) approach to strategy and its formation focuses on how practitioners involved in strategy making are enabled or constrained in their activities (Whittington, 2006). Practices are "accepted ways of doing things, embodied and materially mediated, that are shared between actors and

routinized over time" (Vaara & Whittington, 2012, p. 287). The practice-focused approach is distinct in that it "defines itself in opposition to methodological individualism and instead emphasizes the embedded nature of human agency" (Vaara & Whittington, 2012, p. 288). While emergent strategies have received less attention in SAP research when compared to deliberate strategies the approach has nonetheless yielded insights (Vaara & Whittington, 2012). The SAP approach to emergent strategy research promotes the phenomenological perspectives associated with emergent behavior.

Discussion of relationships between concepts. The illustration found in Appendix 1 was developed based on findings shared in the discussion on the emergent nature of the international business network and relates the *International Business Network* to a business's *Overseas Operations*. Paramount to this body of research is the understanding of the mass found in between these two agencies—the *Foreign Emergent Operating Environment*. This area in the illustration represents the emergent macro and micro actors that influence overseas operations and challenge international business leaders' systems management strategies.

Absent from this diagram is any specific connotation of management actions (e.g., sharing, communicating, organizing, learning, leading, etc.) or leadership and systems management strategies (i.e., complex leadership theory, strategy-as-practice approach). The researcher will seek clarity on the actions and leadership and systems management strategies that underlie international business leaders' management of overseas operations in the emergent business environment. Rather than interpret this model in a linear fashion, the reader is encouraged to view the emergent concepts embedded within this illustration as dynamically complex, overlapping, and constantly interacting (Brooks, 2012).

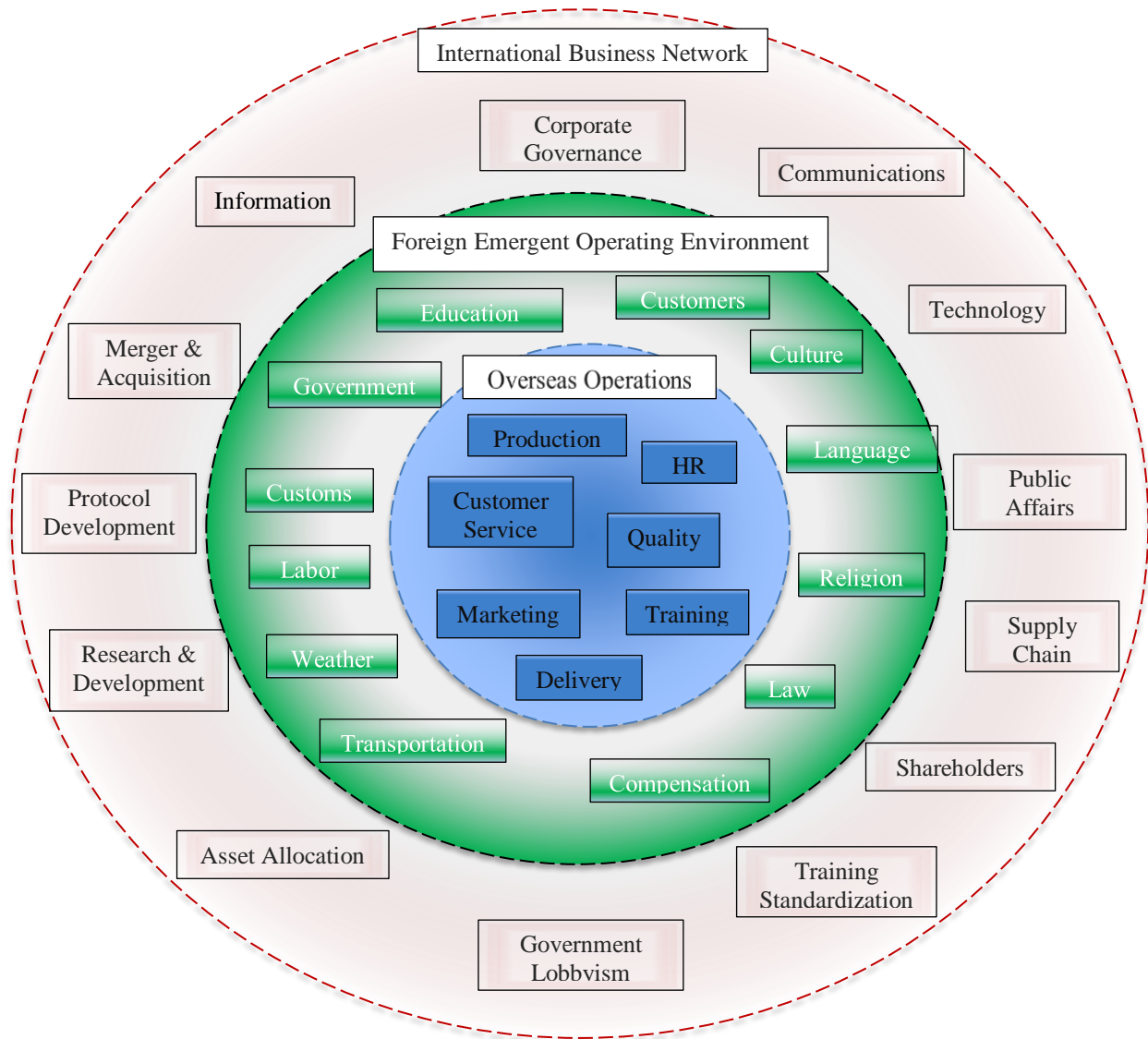


Figure 1. Relationships between concepts.

Businesses must manage a bevy of internal and external organizational and process interdependencies to achieve success (Dynes, 2008). Furthermore, these organizational processes have become increasingly more complex and adaptive (Anderson, 1999; McKelvey, 2001; Stacey, 1992; Wheatley, 1999). Rather than moving toward harmony and equilibrium, organizations tend to exist in conditions of instability, which move away from equilibrium and toward highly complex behavior (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001). Stacey (1992) also suggested that

most modern organizations operate at the edge of chaos and must manage a fine balance between stability and instability. As organizations become increasingly aware of their connectedness to each other and to their emergent global environment (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010), they seek to balance their traditional, planned, structural change methods with the unpredictability and emergence of new approaches (Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009).

Summary of the conceptual framework. This conceptual framework introduced the general concept of leading and managing complex and adaptive business systems, described the emergent nature of the international business network, and highlighted key elements of the complex leadership theory and the strategy-as-practice approach to emergent systems management strategy. These concepts contribute to the readers' fundamental understanding of the emergent business environment and the systems management strategies developed by international business leaders to operate within this environment. The need for a new way to thinking about management stems from the notion that "today's widespread, fast-moving and complex change is inherently emergent and unpredictable" (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010, p. 214). Emergent systems have forced decision makers to view organizations as non-linear systems and re-conceptualize the role of leaders within an organization (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010).

Definition of Terms

This section serves to clearly define key terms and concepts referred to in the researcher's problem statement. Descriptions of these terms is not intended to inspire controversy. Rather, it is intended to clarify for the reader the essence of semantic elements found at the heart of the researcher's project.

Emergent Systems: David Brooks (2012) described the essence of emergence when he

wrote: “Emergent systems exist when different elements come together and produce something that is greater than the sum of its parts. The pieces of a system interact, and out of their interaction, something entirely new emerges” (p. 109).

Emergent systems embody the dynamic complexity that naturally occurs in everyday life. Systems and processes do not perform in a sterile vacuum. Rather, their interactions with other systems and processes inspire adaptations, enhancements, and collateral influences. The concept of emergence, which underlies the term “emergent systems,” contrasts with the common management philosophy of reductionism, which does little to discriminate between multi-layered attributes co-existing within dynamically complex environments (Menkes, 2011).

Influence: Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2018) defined “influence” as “the act or power of producing an effect without apparent exertion of force or direct exercise of command” (p. 1). While the term “influence” sounds like a common term, it plays an especially important role in inspiring the phenomenological method of research for the problem statement. The researcher seeks to discover how emergent systems exert an unapparent, indirect force on business leaders’ management strategies.

International business leaders: Individuals employed by a company or corporation to oversee and direct the activities required of international business enterprises. In the best interest of this research, international business leaders are also individuals who possess the capacity to inspire or affect change in corporate management strategy.

Management strategy: “Management strategy” refers to the way humans develop plans to organize tasks and achieve goals. The study of management strategy has yielded two important theories: deliberate strategy and emergent strategy (Mintzberg, 1978). The researcher used Mintzberg’s management strategy research to organize the type of management strategy

employed by international business leader. Deliberate strategy represents humans' preplanned formulations to achieve goals, while emergent strategy focuses on the uncontrollable and adaptive elements that arise nearly unintended or unpredicted from such formulations (Mintzberg, 1978).

Overseas operations: “Overseas operations” refer to business activities that occur beyond a company or corporation’s domestic borders and which service permanent international enterprises. The companies studied in this research tend to be large, multinational firms. These companies tend to possess longer corporate lifespans, exhibit trade across multiple countries, and demonstrate higher financial impact than their small and medium-sized rivals.

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

The researcher proposes three assumptions, three limitations, and two delimitations. Assumptions refer to concepts that should be reasonably considered true. Limitations address areas of potential research weakness. Delimitations serve to unbound areas of expected academic constraint.

Assumptions. The researcher assumes the following assertions to be true and does not intend to actually verify them throughout the study. Namely, the researcher posits the following: large, multinational companies are most affected by emergent systems, a strategy, management, and leadership research remains holistic in nature, and only two general classifications of management prevail. These positions represent reasonable truths that do not require further verification.

Large, multinational companies are most affected by emergent systems. The researcher assumes that large, multinational companies are most affected by foreign emergent systems. Given the tremendous financial influence and breadth and depth of global enterprises exhibited

by large, multinational firms, these companies offer the researcher a broader and more credible data set to examine the phenomenon. While small and medium-sized businesses account for a high percentage of international business activity, their financial size, shorter lifespans, and typically unilateral agreements, make phenomenological data collection immensely more difficult.

A holistic view on strategy, management, and leadership research is adopted. The researcher assumed that discussions on strategy, management, and leadership can generate holistic insights into the corporate behavior of international businesses and highlight the essence of the phenomenon within this context. Digressing into strategy, management, and leadership research nuances likely distracted from examining the essence of the phenomenon. The researcher sought to address strategy, management, and leadership theories most relevant to the phenomenon without corroding the research pursuit with contentious or trivial discussions on strategy, management, and leadership peculiarities and differences.

Only two classifications of management strategy prevail. The researcher made the assumption that business leaders develop systems management strategies based on *reductionist* or *emergent* philosophy. While other thought processes or hybridizations of these theories may exist, the researcher focused on the essence of leaders' systems management strategies. A policy that is mostly reductionist in nature is considered reductionist, while a mostly emergent philosophy is emergent. The researcher did not exasperate the systems management strategy by parsing the percent composition of companies' systems management strategies. Strategies explored in this research may be defined in totality based on their majority exhibition of reductionist or emergent characteristics. This research strategy maintains the researcher's desire

to qualify the essence of the phenomenon without unfairly subjecting it to quantitative or mixed research methods.

Limitations. The researcher recognized limitations as potential weaknesses to the study. Namely, the researcher posited the following: identifying a clear relationship between emergent systems behavior and management strategy, discerning between management and leadership theory, maintaining a disciplined focus on international business management strategy from a holistic perspective. These concepts demand academic rigor and discipline research techniques.

Identifying emergent systems' influence on systems management strategy. Showing that emergence has influenced a corporation's systems management strategy requires the researcher to clearly describe the existence of emergence and responsibly correlate the existence of this phenomenon with leaders' strategy improvements or changes. The researcher did not believe that leaders explicitly *know* that emergent systems have inspired their strategic formulation, therefore, the researcher did not desire to prove that emergence *causes* strategy change. Rather, the researcher believed that leaders unwittingly improve systems management strategies in parallel to the emergent behaviors creating new business challenges to overseas operations.

Discerning between management and leadership. The researcher delineated management and leadership philosophy and strategy within the body of work. Where the differences were marginal or inconsequential, the researcher clarified the impact semantics had on the overall discourse (e.g., focusing on concepts that highlight the phenomena rather than those that accentuate the management-leadership semantical debate). Defining "management strategy" and explaining the role "international business leaders" play in developing that strategy responsibly delineated the nature of each side of the management-leadership paradigm.

Appreciating international business management strategy from a holistic perspective.

The study focused on international business management strategy from a holistic perspective rather than a specific one. Obvious differences exist among industries and countries. The focus of this study was on the presence of emergent behavior in traditional foreign business institutions and the international business operations with whom they interact. The researcher sought to evaluate the unique attributes emergent behavior commonly portrays in foreign environments, which may differ from attributes exhibited in domestic environments. Namely, the researcher desired to discover the strategies an overseas manager might need to adopt to manage a foreign emergent system that his domestic counterpart may not consider or find consequential to successful business practice. The study remained disciplined in this pursuit and did not become encumbered by hypothetical situations and what-if assumptions.

Delimitations. Delimitations were largely defined by the researcher's assumptions. The research focused predominantly on the overseas operations conducted by large, multinational U.S. companies and their leaders' development of reductionist or emergent systems management strategies to address foreign emergent systems' influence on those operations. Discussion on small and medium-sized companies' response to emergence was out of the scope. Additionally, hyper-fixation on leadership and management semantical differences was out of the scope.

Significance of the Study

In 2014, international trade comprised 30% of the U.S. economy, and U.S. exports of goods and services totaled \$2.3 trillion (Delehanty, 2015). The United States International Trade Administration remarked that over 70% of the world's purchasing power exists outside of the U.S. (2018). Henderson (2018) rephrased this metric in another way by suggesting that 96% of the world's customers reside outside of the United States. Modern improvements in trade

finance, the Internet, and trade agreements have drastically increased access to markets worldwide, which has served as a catalyst for the international expansion of many U.S. companies, small and large (International Trade Administration, 2018).

The demographic breakdown of U.S. companies engaging in international business operations highlights the type of company most affected by foreign systems influences. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, 97% of the United States' exporters were small businesses (Henderson, 2018). Despite their numerically high representation by percentage, small and medium businesses account for less than one third of the known export value of U.S. goods' exports, and a majority of these businesses only trade with one other country (International Trade Administration, 2018). Moreover, faced with great financial risks, high tariffs, and customs clearance delays associated with international trade (Delehanty, 2015), less than 20% of these businesses will survive past the first year of operations (Speights, 2017). Despite the large quantity and unquestionable contribution of small and medium-sized companies to U.S. international trade and exportation of goods, these business's shorter lifespan, unilateral trade arrangements, and smaller financial impact on global revenues proves less vulnerable to foreign systems influences described in this research. Rather, the researcher focused on the phenomenon as observed among large, multinational companies conducting overseas business operations.

These firms' longer lifespan, broader international reach, and deeper pockets provided the researcher with more data to examine the systems management strategies employed by their international business leaders. In 2016, Wells Fargo found that 47% of U.S. companies expected to profit from international business activity (2016). These profits, however, came mostly from large multinational companies. The McKinsey Global Institute found that just 10% of the

world's public companies generated 80% of all profits (2015; Anonymous, 2016). Moreover, firms with more than \$1 billion in annual revenue accounted for nearly 60% of total global revenues and 65% of market capitalization (McKinsey Global Institute, 2015; Anonymous, 2016). These firms, usually Fortune 500-sized, tend to last 40 to 50 years, which provides the researcher with a longer timeline to address corporate systems management strategies (Goodburn, 2015).

These corporate management strategies almost unanimously support the conduct of overseas business operations with 87% of U.S. companies agreeing that international expansion was required for long-term growth (Wells Fargo, 2016). International business growth, however, proves challenging for most companies. Stadler et al. (2015) discovered that it took global companies an average of 10 years to achieve a one percent return on assets from overseas business operations. Despite the promise of sales growth and increase profitability achieved through the access of new overseas markets, this statistic shows how difficult it is for companies to create successful international initiatives. Global expansion represents a complicated element of business development and should not be considered as a default growth option for most businesses (Stadler et al., 2015).

Business's global expansion is more complicated to manage than domestic operations (Stadler et al., 2015). Stadler et al. believed that most global companies did not possess the right management capabilities to make overseas movement profitable. Kelly (2015) suggested that companies often struggle globally because they do not conduct comprehensive market research to determine where their company should expand. They do not develop an effective global market entry strategy (Kelly, 2015). Overlooking matters of global logistics, not adapting sales

and marketing channels, and not effectively soliciting the knowledge and expertise of local teams to lead overseas initiatives, businesses struggle to manage activities internationally (Kelly, 2015).

Perhaps this is because humans have attempted for most of their history to solve the world's problems by using reductive reasoning (Brooks, 2012). The linear and logical aspect of reductive reasoning has long-appealed to humans who thought they could only break down a complex problem into its parts to understand the problem better. For generations, humans have been taught that this type of deductive thinking is necessary to grasp the whole of a problem (Brooks, 2012). Contemporary professionals, however, have observed the limitations of reductionist thinking in solving organization's complex and dynamic problems. Amidst the vibrant and ever-adapting elements of global organizations, which span broad geographic and cultural borders, managers attempt to solve problems and make decisions vital to the organization's financial health and welfare.

Reduction of gaps. This study sought to fill gaps in the business world's understanding of foreign emergent systems. Namely, this research aimed to place the study of emergent behavior squarely within the context of international business management strategy. Modern literature currently lacks a definitive link between emergent systems and international business management strategy. The findings of this research could prove revolutionary to the way business leaders think about implementing management strategies in overseas operations. The emergent behavior of systems in the international business environment appears to significantly alter the way leaders develop management strategies to direct these systems and run profitable overseas operations.

Implications for Biblical Integration. This study struck at the heart of "The Great Commission." Matthew 28:18-20 reminds that Jesus gave his disciples an important command:

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. (ESV)

Jesus's Great Commission signaled to his disciples that Jerusalem's single, central location would no longer be deemed as the religious mecca for the Christian faith. Instead, the Christian faith would decentralize and expand to spread the message of Christ. This pivotal movement in Jesus's message represented a shift from domestic ministry to international ministry. His disciples would now be expected to preach to the Gentiles; God's salvation would be made available to all peoples around the world (Acts 28:28). International ministry became a critical element of the Christian faith after Jesus issued the Great Commission.

The disciples needed to be trained in the act of foreign discipleship, which God supplied. Ephesians 3:16-19 captures the central vision of the Christian faith, which Paul spoke:

I pray that out of His glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep the love of Christ is, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (NSV)

Christians across the world would be called to accept Christ into their hearts and to abide by a divine love that roots and binds Christians together. Despite humans' differences across the world, God's love would transcend the cultural, geographic, and spiritual boundaries separating His followers.

Despite the simple and portable message of God brought to the corners of the world by His disciples, humans' adaptability and complexity offered a kind of destructive emergence that yielded drifting churches. The bible cites Paul's frustrations with the Church of Corinth, Ephesus, and Philippi, which often strayed from the disciples' teachings. Foreign emergent systems like competing religions, brutal governments, different local customs, and geographic distance strained the disciples' management of international churches. Despite the emerging influences acting on these churches, God's disciples found ways to introduce and re-introduce the Christian message in a way that could take root in these foreign lands. It could be said that these early disciples found ways to confront foreign emergent behavior by developing management strategies that ensured the gospel of Christ could flourish throughout the world.

Relationship to field of study. The study of emergent systems and their impact on international business management strategies capture unique elements of the operating environment unique to the field of international business. Thus, this topic fell within the realm of Liberty University's international business cognate. The content produced from this study is anticipated to add credibility to the University's international business cognate and may even provide follow-up and complementary research to support the University's business leadership cognate. The benefits of such research prove multifold for Liberty University and the academic body of work at-large.

Summary of the significance of the study. Corporate management strategies almost unanimously support the conduct of overseas business operations (Wells Fargo, 2016) despite the fact that managing these global operations are more complicated than domestic ones (Stadler et al., 2015). Most global companies do not possess the right management capabilities to make overseas movement profitable (Stadler et al., 2015). The emergent behavior of systems in the

international business operating environment appears to significantly alter the way leaders develop management strategies to direct these systems and run profitable overseas operations.

The study of emergent systems and their impact on international business management strategies capture unique elements of the operating environment unique to the field of international business. Modern literature, however, currently lacks a definitive link between the emergent business environment and international business systems management strategies. From a Christian worldview, emergent systems management represents an ever-present concept confronted by Jesus's disciples. They found ways to confront foreign emergent behavior by developing management strategies that ensured the gospel of Christ could flourish throughout the world.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The following literature review combines perspectives and philosophies pertaining to the examination of emergent systems business management strategies implemented in overseas operations. Organized into five parts, the literature review explores the phenomenology of reductionism and emergence, highlights the origins of systems theory and emergent strategy, discusses the impact emergence has on business processes, examines emergent strategy research and organizational leadership perspectives, studies the impact of foreign emergent systems on systems management strategies, and summarizes general themes from the literature. The review concludes with the researcher's discussion on his initial perceptions of the literature and the ultimate themes revealed after the collection of qualitative data.

Phenomenology: Reductionism and Emergence

Menkes (2011) lamented that 21st-century business leaders still develop reductionist solutions to complex problems despite this type of thinking's practical limitations.

Organizational theorists have begun to conceptualize organizations as complex adaptive systems, which are capable of emergence, adaptation, and self-organization (Anderson, 1999; McKelvey, 2001; Stacey, 1992; Wheatley, 1999). Theorists increasingly reject the more traditional, mechanistic view of organizations because the linear way of approaching problems is being steadily challenged by the complex, or emergent, way of thinking (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001). The balance between reductionist and emergent thinking has caused many theorists and practitioners to oscillate between one extreme and the other (Mariotti, 1999).

Reductionism as a phenomenon. Wood and Caldas (2001) defined reductionism as “the classical approach in analytical thinking...which divides the whole into parts, and then focuses on each part separately” (p. 93). Reductionist thinking represents humans’ natural deductive type of thinking (Brooks, 2012). When solving complex problems, humans have a nearly instinctual desire to break the problem into pieces to comprehend the overall nature of the problem (Brooks, 2012). Western culture has become conditioned to the reductionist and linear fashion of thinking (Wood & Caldas, 2001). According to Brooks (2012), reductionist thinking served as the driving force behind much of the twentieth century’s scientific research (p. 108). Reductionism, or reductionist thinking, denotes the way most humans naturally approach problem-solving and decision-making.

The challenge for reductionist thinking. While reductionism offers thinkers a simple prism from which to assess everyday problems, it has trouble explaining what Brooks (2012) calls “dynamic complexity” (p. 109). Dynamic complexity refers to the essential features of a human being, a culture, or a society. Organizations often implement changes to business processes without observing how those changes impact people and interact with other processes (Wood & Caldas, 2001). Throughout the natural flow of everyday life, the essence of human

systems embodies dynamic and complex characteristics. These characteristics suggest that human life is continuously immersed and acted upon by systems, organizations, and movements, which can be identified as active, adaptive, and multi-dimensional (Menkes, 2011). The way humans naturally think, therefore, comes at odds with the way humans' environment naturally behaves. Humans' pattern of reductionist thinking demonstrates an almost ulterior motivation to impose that simplicity on the environment that surrounds them. The dynamic complexity of humans' environments, however, supports an alternative phenomenon in human thinking.

Emergence as a phenomenon. Since reductionism does little to discriminate between multiple-layered attributes co-existing within dynamically complex environments (Menkes, 2011), researchers began to increase their interest in emergent systems (Brooks, 2012). The essence of emergence is described by Brooks (2012): “Emergent systems exist when different elements come together and produce something that is greater than the sum of its parts. The pieces of a system interact, and out of their interaction, something entirely new emerges” (p. 109).

Emergent systems embody the dynamic complexity that naturally occurs in everyday life. Systems and processes do not perform in a sterile vacuum. Rather, their interactions with other systems and processes inspire adaptations, enhancements, and collateral influences. Brooks (2012) captured this notion when he suggests that “no complex behaviors in free-ranging humans are caused by a linear and additive set of causes” (p. 111). Emergence connotes the phenomenological interaction and adaption of humans’ seemingly commonplace environment.

The challenge with emergence and its contrast with reductionism. Brooks (2012) lamented that “the difficult thing about emergence is that it is very hard in emergent systems to find the cause of any problem” (p. 112). Emergent thinking does not yield causal factors to

problems. This sentiment sharply contrasts with reductionist thinking, which can provide the thinker or decision maker with causation to their problems (Menkes, 2011). Emergent system solutions and problem-solving methods, therefore, tend to possess a more holistic viewpoint. Emergent thinkers implement actions in “cascades,” and focus on ways to produce an “avalanche of positive influences” that affect the resulting outcome (Brooks, 2012, p. 112). Both good and bad outcomes appear to emergent thinkers as the product of multiple actions acting upon the agent simultaneously. While reductionist thinkers may try to pinpoint the origin of a single drop of water spraying from a hose and attempt to determine its effect on the nourishment of a garden, emergent thinkers would prefer to look at the entire stream and posit the collective benefit of the volume of water on the garden.

Systems Theory: An Origin of Emergent Strategy

Systems theory refers to an interdisciplinary theory about every system in nature and society and also serves as a framework used to investigate phenomena from a holistic approach (Capra, 1997). The concept of holism, which underlies systems theory, harkens back to Aristotle who claimed that knowledge was derived from understanding the whole of an object rather than that of its parts (Mele, Pels, & Polese, 2010). Today, systems theory encompasses a broad field of management research, which tends to focus on analyzing the relationship between organizations and their environment (Mele et al., 2010). The essence of emergent behavior and strategy can find its conceptual foundations within multiple systems theories.

The Viable System Model and Cybernetics. The Viable System Model refers to a system that is adaptable for the purpose of surviving in its changing environment (Beer, 1972). The viable system embraces cybernetic qualities, which tend to apply to autonomous organizations (Mele et al., 2016). Cybernetics refers to “the study of how actions by a system

cause changes in the environment that are understood by the system itself in terms of feedback, allowing the adaptation of the system to new conditions” (Mele et al., 2016, p. 128). The cybernetic quality found in the viable system points to a system’s ability to change its behavior—to adapt—based on its environmental stimulus.

Open System Theory and System Self-Organization. Open system theory (OST) refers to the relationships between organizations and the environment in which they operate (Mele et al., 2016). This school of thought differs slightly from the viable system’s cybernetic qualities in that open system theory focuses on organizations’ ability to adapt to changes in environmental conditions with or without information processing (i.e., no feedback loop required; Katz & Kahn, 1978). This theory proposes that systems can self-organize and adapt to contextual conditions (Mele et al., 2016). Specifically, OST offers two levels of behavior: counteraction and amplification. Counteraction refers to the way an organization processes information from its environment and negotiates this environment with purposive behavior—adaptation (Mele et al., 2016). Amplification denotes an organization’s ability to self-organize and improve upon its behaviors—self-organization (von Foerster, 1981).

Managerial applications of Systems Theory. Mele et al. (2016) expressed that systems theory and systems thinking could be applied in management. Systems theories have been discussed in terms of knowledge, value, quality, environment, relationships, adaptation, and complexity (Mele et al., 2016). Each of these components may relate to international businesses overseas management strategies. Mele et al. stated that “managers should become familiar with the concept of systems and the associated way of thinking” (p. 131). Managers can govern the whole system by constantly formulating new interpretations of various business scenarios to find better positions, implementing periods of management adjustment, transformation and

redefinition of the organizational structure (Mele et al., 2016). Mele et al. even advocates a hybrid emergent-reductionist way of thinking about today's business problems by suggesting that "systems theories and perspectives can effectively contribute to management, marketing and service research due to their dual approach: the global, holistic view of observed phenomena and the specific, reductionist view of their specific components and traits" (p. 131).

Emergence and Impact on Business Processes

Fischer (2003) explained that business processes were sets of one or more linked procedures or activities, which collectively achieved business objectives (e.g., realizing corporate policy goals). Business processes are conventionally comprised of variously linked sub-processes in a subatomic-type structure (Debenham, 2006). Dourish (1998) described emergent business processes as those that are not predefined and present themselves ad hoc. Emergent business processes tend to take place at higher levels of organizations (Dourish, 1998). They differ from traditionally routine production workflows, which tend to be well-defined and occur at lower levels of the organization (Fischer, 2003). While the outcomes of production workflows are usually predictable, tasks involved in an emergent process emerges as the process develops (Debenham, 2006). The unpredictability of emergent business processes is often enhanced through the collaboration of individuals whose informal meetings and irregular information flow make the processes more difficult to predefine (Smith & Fingar, 2003).

The value of emergent business processes. Despite the inherent difficulty of predefining and predicting the outcomes of emergent business processes, they contain valuable knowledge-driven sub-processes that can yield process and performance knowledge (Debenham, 2006). Knowledge-driven processes differ from goal-driven processes because they are not fixed and can adapt to user knowledge and information flows (Debenham, 2006). The emergent

properties of knowledge-driven business processes can increase productivity and improve performance (Debenham, 2006).

Types of business processes. Debenham (2006) references three different types of business process: task-driven, goal-driven, and knowledge-driven. Each of these types of business process represents the unique attributes that describe organizational workflows. Task-driven and goal-driven business processes tend to represent reductionist thinking, while knowledge-driven business processes are emergent in nature.

The task-driven business process. A task-driven process has a unique decomposition into a possibly conditional sequence of activities. Each of these activities has a goal and is associated with a task that always achieves this goal. Production workflows typically are task-driven processes (Debenham, 2006).

The goal-driven business process. A goal-driven process has a process goal, and achievement of that goal is the termination condition for the process. The process goal may have various decompositions into sequences of sub-goals, where these sub-goals are associated with other affiliate activities and tasks (Debenham, 2006). Due to the hierarchical complexity of goal-driven processes, separating successful and unsuccessful goals and tasks is challenging (Smith & Fingar, 2003).

The knowledge-driven process. A knowledge-driven process may have a process goal, but the goal may be unclear and adaptive (Dourish, 1998). Evolution of knowledge-driven processes is determined by the process patron, often in light of knowledge generated during the process. At each stage in the performance of a knowledge-driven process, the next goal is chosen by the process patron; this choice is made using general knowledge about the context of the process, called the process knowledge (Debenham, 2006). The process patron also chooses

the tasks to achieve that next goal; this choice may be made using general knowledge about the effectiveness of tasks, called the performance knowledge. So, insofar as the process goal gives direction to goal-driven and task-driven processes, the process knowledge gives direction to knowledge-driven processes (Debenham, 2006). Therefore, the management of knowledge-driven processes is considerably more complex than the other two classes of a process.

Knowledge-driven processes present as emergent activities that evolve and change based on patron participation.

Managing reductionist and emergent business processes. Managing knowledge-driven emergent processes is more difficult than traditional task-driven and goal-driven processes (Debenham, 2006). Knowledge-driven processes represent a less concrete, more holistic way of achieving corporate goals. They are emergent. Task-driven and goal-driven processes, however, follow a reductionist style of thinking where outcomes are linear and logical (Debenham, 2006).

Businesses must manage a bevy of internal and external organizational and process interdependencies to achieve success (Dynes, 2008). The way business infrastructure elements, like information technology or supply chain management, work together represents the emergent properties inherent in today's business processes (Dynes, 2008). Business risks materialize from these emergent properties and challenge managers' usual lack of understanding of the interdependencies and consequences of various business infrastructure elements (Dynes, 2008).

Types of foreign emergent systems. A variety of sources indicate that international businesses most struggle with foreign culture, language, supply chain and logistics, political differences and local laws, labor qualifications, and environmental considerations (Ali, 2014; Driver, 2017; Hill, 2018; The Hult School of International Business, 2017; US-Pacific Rim

International, Inc., 2010). Additionally, relationship building with regional business allies and government entities proves demanding for international enterprises (Driver, 2017; Hill, 2018; US-Pacific Rim International, Inc., 2010). These foreign systems often prove different from a firm's domestic systems and usually require international business managers to pay special attention to consumers' behavior and cultural nuances (Ali, 2014) as these elements can affect the firm's brand-power, supply chain management, and business partnerships (Hill, 2018).

Using technology to manage business processes in an emergent environment.

Andreessen (2011) observed that the reliability, usability and affordability of software systems serve as the most significant disruptive force in most industries. Software designers now consider how to develop software systems that evolve alongside the evolving enterprises that rely on their use (Fayoumi & Loucopoulos, 2016). These evolving software systems aid businesses who have come to rely heavily on these systems predictive power in an ever-changing and adaptive business environment (Fayoumi & Loucopoulos, 2016). Emergent systems have complicated organizations' ability to fuse traditional business practices with newly developed information systems. Businesses are challenged to align business processes and goals without a developing a clear strategy for how to foster the relationship between business change and information systems implementation (Fayoumi & Loucopoulos, 2016).

Changing the leadership mindset to handle complexity. How do we increase the complexity of our thinking when the answer is not simply yes or no, good or bad, right or wrong? Often, managers look for simple answers because they tend to make people feel safer and less disruptive; however, modern leaders ought to consider how to increase the capacity of their decision making (Schwartz, 2018). This increase of capacity challenges a deepening, widening, and lengthening of perspectives. Deepening depends on our readiness to test our blind

spots, deeply held assumptions, and fixed beliefs. Widening means considering more perspectives — and stakeholders — in order to address any given problem from multiple vantage points. Lengthening requires focusing on not just the immediate consequences of a decision but also its likely impact over time (Schwartz, 2018).

To manage complex systems, a leader must accept a change of cognitive and emotional mindset. Asking questions like “what am I not seeing here?” and “What else might be true?” challenges leaders to avoid confirmation bias and consider other possible perspectives (Schwartz, 2018). Also, leaders should consider tackling the most difficult problems first. Often, in wrestling with the most difficult problems, leaders discover nuanced solutions or themes that reveal solutions to adjacent problems (Schwartz, 2018). Finally, embracing complexity is more than a cognitive challenge; it’s an emotional one, too. Increasing conscientiousness aids in revealing possible emotional pitfalls and promotes a more adaptable mindset (Schwartz, 2018). Consequently, a conscientious leader exhibits a level of emotional courage that is more likely to challenge truth and explore alternative perspectives.

Improving business processes comes with emergent risks. Improving business processes continues to challenge business process change (BPC) practitioners and researchers (Jurisch, Rosenberg, & Kremer, 2016). Improvements to business processes come with collateral risks. Gemino, Reich, and Sauer (2008) proposed that these business process risks can be better understood by separating those risks into two different categories: a priori risk factors and emergent risk factors. A priori risks refer to those that can be estimated before a project begins, such as budget, duration, or inexperience of the team and later. Emergent risks denote those that can evolve during a project, such as a client manager or executive sponsor change

(Jurisch et al., 2016). These risk factors result in different degrees of organizational change and can illuminate reasons (Jurisch et al., 2016).

Emergent risks to business processes are not understood well. Several BPC researchers have focused on a priori risks and critical factors influencing BPC success, whereas others have focused on design and process of risk management (Jurisch et al., 2016). The link between emergent risks and BPC performance, however, remains mostly unexplored (Trkman, 2010; Jurisch, Cuno, Palka, Wolf, & Krcmar, 2012). Emergent risks are important to understand because they reflect the dangers associated with business process changes and adaptations. As projects become more complex, evaluating processes' emergent risks becomes more important to the predicted performance outcome (Jurisch et al., 2012).

Types of emergent risks. Emergent risk factors refer to the new risks that emerge during a project and to the actions of project managers to deal with the risk and progress of the project (Gemino et al., 2008). Emergent risks are commonly divided into two categories: organizational support risks and project volatility risks (Jurisch et al., 2016). Organizational support risks involve executive sponsor support and user support (Gemino et al., 2008). Project volatility risks refer to project targets (e.g., budget, schedule, etc.), key personnel, and external conditions (Sharma & Yetton, 2007; Gemino et al., 2008).

Business solutions need to capture today's complex operating environment. To address the dynamic requirements of today's business environments, a researcher must go beyond traditional systems and services. Intelligent, emergent software systems represent as strategic trend businesses are turning toward to evaluate business processes at the right level (Fayoumi & Loucopoulos, 2016). The implementation of data-based algorithms and smart computation

systems may enable a user-manager to perceive the complex business environment that surrounds them with higher clarity and certainty.

Emergent Strategy Research and Organizational Leadership

Mintzberg (1978) theorized that two types of strategy could be observed: deliberate and emergent. Deliberate strategy represents humans' preplanned formulations to achieve goals, while emergent strategy focuses on the uncontrollable and adaptive elements that arise nearly unintended or unpredicted from such formulations (Mintzberg, 1978). Strategy research tends to emphasize humans' choice in implementing specific policies and plans, which relates more directly to the concept of deliberate strategy (Bower & Gilbert, 2005). Emergent strategy, however, receives less acclaim in the strategy research world (Mirabeau & Maguire, 2014) despite Mintzberg's (1978) claim that emergent strategy represents a way to reinvent management and make it more relevant to a volatile world. The importance of emergent strategy has long been recognized (Mirabeau & Maguire, 2014).

Semantic argument of strategy research. The term strategy carries multiple meanings within the academic body of work (Hafsi & Thomas, 2005; Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, & Lampel, 2005). Conceptual distinctions serve as the premise of much strategy research, which continues to blur the definition of strategy and inspires an uneven development of the field (Farjoun, 2002). Strategy process research can be classified into six perspectives: rational-mechanistic, cognitive, upper-echelon, middle management, organic, and micro (Hutzschenreuter & Kleindienst, 2006). Strategy research literature typically distinguishes strategy formulation from implementation, assuming that the latter follows the former and prioritizing research accordingly (Huff & Reger, 1987; Mintzberg et al., 2005). Similarly, strategy content, and in particular how specific

strategies are related to performance when undertaken in a given context, is addressed far more often than strategy process (Hafsi & Thomas, 2005).

Another tension relates to intentions and the assumed extent of strategists' foresight. Porter (1996) asserted that strategy means “deliberately choosing a different set of activities to deliver a unique mix of value” (p. 64). In contrast, Mintzberg (1978) suggested that emergent strategy referred to a pattern in action that was realized despite or in the absence of intentions. Strategy process research is characterized by an ever-increasing plurality of concepts and frameworks, which continues to yield “an amazing set of partly competing, partly overlapping models” (Hutzschenreuter & Kleindienst, 2006, p. 674).

The relationship between emergent systems and emergent strategy. McChrystal et al. (2015) and Menkes (2011) thought that 21st-century management had evolved from reductionism to emergence. Comstock (2016) foresaw emergent management as a necessity in the current era, which requires organizations to unify around information flows and empowered individuals. As globalization intensifies the demand for international operations and global partnerships, business leaders must confront an evolving leadership paradigm (Baumgartner & Korhonen, 2010; Menkes, 2011).

Physical and non-physical resources are becoming more difficult to move in the once traditional reductionist style, which relied on logical, linear, and predictable adjustments to business operations (McChrystal et al., 2015). Uhl-Bien et al. (2007) found that today's operating environment has become increasingly complex and adaptive. Child and McGrath (2001) observed that the challenge of today's organizational leaders is to identify alternatives to conventional bureaucratic decision-making models and develop theories to improve how humans collectively accomplish their goals the best. Emergent systems management strategy confronts

the uncertainty of international business environments by simultaneously evolving and implementing strategic processes (Jamil & Shah, 2015).

Emergent strategy is an academically explored concept. Since Mintzberg's (1978) identification of emergent strategy, researchers have validated the concept by demonstrating in various empirical settings how realized strategy can, with reference to prior intentions of top managers, be parsed into deliberate and emergent components (Boyett & Currie, 2004; Lowe & Jones, 2004; Mintzberg & McHugh, 1985). Research has also focused on the recognition of emergent strategy once it appears and its legitimation by top management, which leads to changes in the organization's intended strategy such that "patterns from the past" become "plans for the future" (Mintzberg, 1978). Moreover, Slevin and Covin (1997) found a positive correlation between emergent strategies and firms with organic structures operating in benign environments, while Osborn (1998) suggested emergent strategy is more likely in contexts characterized by semiformal systems and interactive controls.

Emergent strategy exists but is not well-researched. While literature supports the existence of emergent strategy, it contains little information detailing what emergent strategy is (Mirabeau & Maguire, 2014). Furthermore, while front line and middle managers appear prominently in accounts of emergent strategy, the activities they carry out have not been fully explained (Mirabeau & Maguire, 2014). Emergent behavior is credited in strategy research, but its definition, impact, and illustration appear ambiguous.

Strategy-as-practice approach to emergent strategy research. The strategy-as-practice (SAP) approach to strategy and its formation focuses on how practitioners involved in strategy making are enabled or constrained in their activities (Whittington, 2006). Practices are "accepted ways of doing things, embodied and materially mediated, that are shared between actors and

routinized over time" (Vaara & Whittington, 2012, p. 287). The practice-focused approach is distinct in that it "defines itself in opposition to methodological individualism and instead emphasizes the embedded nature of human agency" (Vaara & Whittington, 2012, p. 288). While emergent strategies have received less attention in SAP research when compared to deliberate strategies the approach has nonetheless yielded insights (Vaara & Whittington, 2012, p. 313). The SAP approach to emergent strategy research preserves the phenomenological perspectives associated with emergent behavior.

Complexity leadership theory and emergence. Plowman et al. (2007) suggested that leadership complexity theory has made its way into organizational science, challenging leadership research's traditional linear, mechanistic view of organizations. Complexity theory conveys the impact unpredictability of future events has on organizational leaders. While traditional views of leadership grow out of the long-held view of organizations as equilibrium-seeking systems whose futures are knowable and arrived at by leaders who plan interventions and control behaviors (Stacey, 1992; Wheatley, 1999), a growing body of work shows that these systems exhibit emergent behavior (Chiles et al., 2004). Agents demonstrate emergent behavior because of the way interact with a variety of other agents and produce unintended outcomes without the intervention of a central controller (Chiles et al., 2004). Thus, organizations take on properties and structures that are unexpected because people and groups interact and the results of those interactions produce perpetual novelty (McKelvey & Lichtenstein, 2007).

Emergence refers to the existence of complex adaptive systems. Complexity theory originally developed in the physical sciences where scientists were attempting to understand the complexity of nature, and increasingly found linear models to be ineffective in capturing the complex and emergent nature of phenomenon (Holland, 1995; Kauffman, 1995; Prigogine,

1997). Observing that emergence and perpetual novelty exist throughout nature gave rise to the identification of common characteristics of complex adaptive systems because "in our world, we discover fluctuations, bifurcations, and instabilities at all levels" (Prigogine, 1997, p. 55). Some of the characteristics of complex adaptive systems include: (a) they are made up of many agents who act and interact with each other in unpredictable ways, (b) they are sensitive to changes in initial conditions, (c) they adjust their behavior in the aggregate to their environment in unpredictable ways, (d) they oscillate between stability and instability, and (e) they produce emergent actions when approaching disequilibrium (Plowman et al., 2007). Additionally, complex systems are dynamic and non-linear, and rarely explained by simple cause-effect relationships.

Organizational leadership theory and emergence. Organizational theorists have begun to conceptualize organizations as complex adaptive systems (Anderson, 1999; McKelvey, 2001; Stacey, 1992; Wheatley, 1999) and increasingly reject the more traditional, mechanistic view of organizations because the simple models of classic science it is based on are unworkable (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001). Rather, organizations exist in conditions of instability, and as organizations move further away from equilibrium towards instability, they are capable of highly complex behavior.

Examining organizational learning, innovation, and internationalization. Navigating today's economy relies on organizations' ability to learn, innovate, and "internationalize" (Chiva, Ghauri, & Alegre, 2014, p. 687). The modern economy has moved beyond the industrial age, which simply transformed raw material into finished goods, and has entered the age of the creative knowledge-based society, which sees organizations continually breaking down physical and non-physical barriers to employ novelty and behavior modification to operations (Chiva et

al., 2014). The traditional way of thinking of organizational growth as a linear connection between learning, innovation, and internationalization (Alegre & Chiva, 2008; Molero, 1998) has given way to an appreciation for the evolution of these relationships (Chiva et al., 2014). Chiva et al. (2014) assert that the evolving organizational concepts of learning, innovation, and internationalization “require us to move beyond linear causality, reductionism and determinism, to adopt a new, more complex and holistic paradigm” (p. 688).

Emergent behavior is the keystone to complexity theory. While complex systems have many characteristics, Chiles et al. (2004) described the concept of emergent self-organization as complexity theory's “anchor point phenomenon” (p. 502). System-level order emerges because of interactions among entities with individual schemas at a lower level in the system (Anderson, 1999). In self-organizing systems, order comes from the actions of interdependent agents who exchange information, take actions, and continuously adapt to feedback about others' actions rather than from the imposition of an overall plan by a central authority (Chiles et al., 2004). Thus, complex systems are characterized as non-linear because the components that comprise them are constantly interacting with each other through a web of feedback loops (Anderson, 1999; Stacey, 1992). Thietart and Forgues (1995) described the non-linear nature of interactions in organizations, which give rise to emergent, unknowable futures.

Emergent behavior is highly sensitive to environmental inputs. Emergence happens in complex systems in part, because they are sensitive to initial conditions; that is, a small fluctuation in one part of the system can bring unexpected changes to other parts of the system (Plowman et al., 2007). Maguire and McKelvey (1999) argue that when organizations move away from stability and into the “region of complexity,” adaptive tensions give rise to emergent self-organization. In fact, most argue that it is only as organizations move into far-from-

equilibrium states that emergent ideas are possible, giving rise to innovation and creativity (Anderson, 1999; Chiles et al., 2004; McKelvey, 1999). Complexity theory, which centers on the premise of emergent self-organization, challenges researchers abandon the notion that leaders can posit predictable futures.

Foreign emergent systems and influence on systems management strategy.

Organizations are becoming increasingly aware of their connectedness to each other and to their global environment (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). The 21st century is being hailed as one of unprecedented change as businesses conduct operations on an unparalleled global scale (Kanter, 1999). For organizations to survive amidst the rapid connectivity and complexity that defines today's business environment, they need to balance their traditional, planned, structural change methods with the unpredictability and emergence of new approaches (Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009). The need for a new way to thinking about management stems from the notion that "today's widespread, fast-moving and complex change is inherently emergent and unpredictable" (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010, p. 214). Organizational leaders and decision makers find themselves with the need to merge both planned strategy improvements with emergent, unplanned ones (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010).

The depth and scope of modern international business. In 2014, international trade comprised 30% of the U.S. economy, and U.S. exports of goods and services totaled \$2.3 trillion (Delehanty, 2015). The United States International Trade Administration remarked that over 70 percent of the world's purchasing power exists outside of the U.S. (2018). Henderson (2018) rephrased this metric in another way by suggesting that 96 percent of the world's customers reside outside of the United States. Modern improvements in trade finance, the Internet, and trade agreements have drastically increased access to markets worldwide, which has served as a

catalyst for the international expansion of many U.S. companies, small and large (International Trade Administration, 2018).

The demographic breakdown of U.S. companies engaging in international business operations highlights the type of company most affected by foreign systems influences. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, 97% of the United States' exporters were small businesses (Henderson, 2018). Despite their numerically high representation by percentage, small and medium businesses account for less than one third of the known export value of U.S. goods' exports, and a majority of these businesses only trade with one other country (International Trade Administration, 2018). Moreover, faced with great financial risks, high tariffs, and customs clearance delays associated with international trade (Delehanty, 2015), less than 20% of these businesses will survive past the first year of operations (Speights, 2017). Despite the large quantity and unquestionable contribution of small and medium-sized companies to U.S. international trade and exportation of goods, these business's shorter lifespan, unilateral trade arrangements, and smaller financial impact on global revenues proves less vulnerable to foreign systems influences described in this research. Rather, the researcher focuses on the phenomenon as observed among large, multinational companies conducting overseas business operations.

These firms' longer lifespan, broader international reach, and deeper pockets provide the researcher with more data to examine the systems management strategies employed by their international business leaders. In 2016, Wells Fargo found that 47% of U.S. companies expected to profit from international business activity (2016). These profits, however, came mostly from large multinational companies. The McKinsey Global Institute found that just 10% of the world's public companies generated 80% of all profits (2015; Anonymous, 2016). Moreover,

firms with more than \$1 billion in annual revenue accounted for nearly 60% of total global revenues and 65% of market capitalization (McKinsey Global Institute, 2015; Anonymous, 2016). These firms, usually Fortune 500-sized, tend to last 40 to 50 years, which provides the researcher with a longer timeline to address corporate systems management strategies (Goodburn, 2015).

Corporate strategy supports overseas business expansion. These corporate management strategies almost unanimously support the conduct of overseas business operations with 87 percent of U.S. companies agreeing that international expansion was required for long-term growth (Wells Fargo, 2016). International business growth, however, proves challenging for most companies. Stadler et al. (2015) discovered that it took global companies an average of ten years to achieve a 1% return on assets from overseas business operations. Despite the promise of sales growth and increase profitability achieved through the access of new overseas markets, this statistic shows how difficult it is for companies to create successful international initiatives. Global expansion represents a complicated element of business development and should not be considered as a default growth option for most businesses (Stadler et al., 2015).

Global expansion is more challenging than domestic operations. Business's global expansion is more complicated to manage than domestic operations (Stadler et al., 2015). Stadler et al. believed that most global companies did not possess the right *management* capabilities to make overseas movement profitable. Kelly (2015) suggested that companies often struggle globally because they do not conduct comprehensive market research to determine where their company should expand. They do not develop an effective global market entry strategy (Kelly, 2015). Overlooking matters of global logistics, not adapting sales and marketing

channels, and not effectively soliciting the knowledge and expertise of local teams to lead overseas initiatives, businesses struggle to manage activities internationally (Kelly, 2015).

Perhaps this is because humans have attempted for most of their history to solve the world's problems by using reductive reasoning (Brooks, 2012, p. 108). The linear and logical aspect of reductive reasoning has long-appealed to humans who thought they could only break down a complex problem into its parts to understand the problem better. For generations, humans have been taught that this type of deductive thinking is necessary to grasp the whole of a problem (Brooks, 2012, pp. 108-109). Contemporary professionals, however, have observed the limitations of reductionist thinking in solving organization's complex and dynamic problems. Amidst the vibrant and ever-adapting elements of global organizations, which span broad geographic and cultural borders, managers attempt to solve problems and make decisions vital to the organization's financial health and welfare.

Analysis of the foreign emergent operating environment. Before the 1920s, multinational enterprises sought access to resources and governments who could give them exclusive contracts and amenable deals to build their businesses (Jones, 2017). Firms dedicated significant resources to build political contacts with host governments and strengthen their business's local identities (Jones, 2017). During this time the major business management challenge was to overcome logistical challenges and develop global value chains (Jones, 2017).

Beginning in the 1980s and extending to the present era, however, international businesses had to readdress their global value chains and incorporate local relevance into global products to respond to local competitors (Jones, 2017). Despite globalization's recent homogenizing effects, which have tended to flatten the world and reduce foreign barriers (Friedman, 2005), some believe that ever-maturing global markets have actually given local

cultures greater credence and consequently further fragmented existing consumer and social groups (Barber, 1995). International businesses now confront stronger local marketplaces, which better understand their consumers' cultural, ethnic, and religious reaction to goods and services (Barber, 1995). Moreover, local firms based in large and fast-growing emerging markets have become powerful global competitors to Western multinational enterprises who are accustomed to the higher-cost structures of developed countries (Kumar, 2008). Additionally, today's locally-owned companies are more likely to receive national legislative preference, especially in countries like China and India (Jones, 2017).

Successful modern multinational enterprises have found ways to compete with emerging local competitors. International businesses with robust proprietary technologies and well-esteemed brands were best-suited to compete with local companies (Jones, 2017). Furthermore, international firms that designed global capabilities with local relevance tended to compete well alongside local firms (Jones, 2017). Some successful international businesses have even simply emphasized the superior quality of their products and guaranteed their product's unparalleled safety to both consumers and the environment (Jones, 2017).

Identifying emergent systems' influence on overseas operations. Emergence is described as “unpredictable, often unintentional, can come from anywhere, and involving relatively informal self-organizing” (Weich & Quinn, 1999, p. 361). It happens in real time and tends to foster “ongoing realignment with the environment, ongoing learning and strategy making” (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010, p. 217). Stacey (1992) suggested that most modern organizations operate at the edge of chaos and must manage a fine balance between stability and instability. Organizational strategy tends to embrace emergent changes to business operating

environments (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). Weick (2000) stated that emergent change leads to benefits such as:

Sensitivity to local contingencies; suitability for on-line real-time experimentation, learning and sense-making, comprehensibility and manageability; likelihood of satisfying needs of autonomy, control, and expression; proneness to swift implementation, resistance to unraveling; ability to exploit existing tacit knowledge; and tightened and shortened feedback loops from results to action. (p. 225)

Emergence, however, also increases unpredictability of personnel and system-based interactions, which can lead to massive difficulties predicting outcomes inspired by emergent changes (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). Consequently, emergent systems have forced decision makers to view organizations as non-linear systems and re-conceptualize the role of leaders within an organization (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). Livne-Tarandach and Bartunek (2009) expressed that leaders should no longer be considered sole initiators and implementers of pre-planned organizational change, nor reactive agents to emergent forces; rather, leaders are expected to “develop the ability to connect the two to create synergy” (p. 28). Emergent systems have forced corporate leaders-managers to become facilitators and supporters of change rather than simple controllers or enforcers of planned changed initiatives (Schulist, 2000).

Emergent systems behavior in multinational organizations. Western companies have had to overcome tremendous challenges to succeed in foreign countries (Eyring, Johnson, & Nair, 2011). Many multinational companies simply try to export their domestic models abroad and leave most of their business processes unchanged (Eyring et al., 2011). Emergent phenomena, however, prove very difficult to analyze and predict, which makes the simple exportation of domestic business models overseas an unlikely success (Bonobea, 2002).

Emergent systems and their behavior have “challenged the fundamental assumption that our complex world can always be understood best through top-down approaches” (Bonobea, 2002, para. 37).

Emergent systems behavior and the United States military in Iraq. During the onset of the Iraq War, General Stanley McChrystal, Commander of the Joint Special Operations Task Force in 2003, observed that United States military operations appeared outdated and pitifully motivated by legacy warfare protocols (McChrystal et al., 2015). State of the art training and military technology had been marginalized by deficiencies in the organizational structure of the U.S. military (McChrystal et al., 2015). Highly centralized leadership responsibilities and slow feedback loops between battlefield commanders and executive decision-makers abroad made gaining an advantage against their high-speed, well-coordinated, terrorist enemies difficult (McChrystal et al., 2015).

The U.S. military had failed to address many of the most critical strategic issues it faced going to war in Iraq (Cordesman, 2009), which included the United States handing over political sovereignty to the Iraqis and aiding the newly formed Iraqi military in thwarting terrorist threats to the Iraqi transitional government (Shah, 2004). From 2003-2006, an anti-American insurgency expanded into a broad communal struggle for power and influence in the new Iraq and deeply complicated U.S. military efforts to transfer complete political and military authority to the Iraqi government (Schlosser, 2017). By 2007, the United States initiated the “surge,” which called for an additional 30,000 troops to deploy to Iraq to stem the growing insurgency (Schlosser, 2017).

The surge’s initial challenges were not rooted in troop training regimens, asset provision for battlefield events, or access to critical warfare resources (Ricks, 2015). Instead, as Major

General David Fastabend observed that the U.S. military had a management problem, and it needed to change its organizational behavior and culture to accommodate the speed and scope of warfare in the 21st century (Ricks, 2015).

Consequently, the U.S. War in Iraq has waged on 15 years later, and it has proven lengthy, costly, and increasingly uncertain (Cordesman, 2016). Strategic improvements to the military's organizational culture under General Stanley McChrystal in the early 2000s appear distant to the "increasing incrementalism," or slow augmentation of military troops, which seems to inspire today's military strategy in Iraq (Cordesman, 2016, p. 1). A brief troop withdrawal in 2011 followed by their return in 2014 highlights the strategic hiccups suffered by U.S. military and political leaders in achieving the initial goals of the Iraq War (Ackerman & McCarthy, 2014). The inefficient, perhaps ineffective, military campaign in Iraq and Syria exposes the U.S. for having not developed a credible emergent strategy to counter the complex terrorist threat in the region and rebuild national institutions in Iraq (Cordesman, 2016).

Emergent systems behavior and global political involvement in Somalia. The social, political, and business landscape in Somalia has proven quite complex and emergent over the past several decades. On behalf of the Federation of American Scientists, Hall (1994) wrote about the struggle in Somalia:

Our experience in Somalia is an example of what can happen when reductionist thinking dominates the minds of our decision makers. Somalia seemed like a very simple problem. Go, provide people food, get out. Simple. The Somali society was ignorant, poor, uneducated, and backward. It's been an economic and social basket case for year...within Somalia, itself, social, economic, military, and politically forces were extraordinarily complex. (para. 33)

Volatile political situations, like the one in Somalia, combined with complex elements related to the United Nations, the United States, and multilateralism, made the Somalian plight of the early 1990s nearly impossible to simplify (Hall, 1994). Problematically, the political environment of the time had no regard for futurity or sustainability of policies implemented in Somalia. Hall remarked that “reductionist short-term plans don’t deal with the process of perpetual change... change causes turbulence and chaos... [these] plans often fail” (para. 36).

In 2011, Lederach et al. prepared a fresh approach to peace building in Somalia and proposed the Theory of Change Approach for how the region might approach its growing terrorist threats. The first element of their framework addressed the need for Somalia political policies to “more accurately portray the complexity of the context and issues in responding to terrorism beyond what now appears as two mutually exclusive approaches” (Lederach et al., p. 8). In other words, Somalia would need to develop comprehensive plans to combat terrorism and address the entire health of its country and constituent institutions. The “us vs. them” anti-terrorism strategy was too simple and too bifurcated to prove helpful to organic political improvements and to appropriately guide foreign assistance (Lederach et al., p. 11). This complex foreign environment required emergent strategies to “to appropriately target isolation of the few, while robustly engaging the wider population” and “encourage[ing] [their] robust interaction within the wider civil society” (Lederach et al., p. 15)

Emergent systems behavior and Amazon in Egypt. Numerous Egyptian companies have been in talks with the e-commerce behemoth, Amazon, to start an Egypt logistics center that would connect Egypt to Amazon’s global network (Anonymous, 2017). The Middle East represents one of the fastest growing e-commerce markets in the world, and Egypt happens to be one of Amazon’s favorite overseas retailers (Panda, 2017). The company, however, does not

offer local Egyptian products for sale domestically (Anonymous, 2017). Amazon hopes that by opening a logistics center in Cairo, it can increase e-commerce in Egypt (Puthuparampil, 2016).

This movement to invest in Egypt would appear consistent with Amazon's recent investments in Dubai and Bahrain where the company implemented its Amazon Web Services (AWS) and boosted its cloud-computing services and online demand computing platform (Puthuparampil, 2016). Amazon, however, has only recently shown interest in stable Middle East countries, like Bahrain and Dubai. Egypt, the most populated country in Africa and the Middle East, though representing a massive opportunity for Amazon also displays several complex business problems. Perhaps, Amazon's biggest hurdles might be with Egypt's recent political instability and its highly taxed, very impoverished citizenry. These social dysfunctions can increase the size of underground economies.

Ionut (2015) expressed underground economies as those that result in the transactions of goods and services illegally to evade taxes. Underground economies, a complex and highly emergent phenomenon, serve consumers' desires for more affordable goods and services while also creating jobs for workers leaving the work force due to high tax rates (Ionut, 2015). The growth of underground economies can make it difficult for legitimate business ventures to succeed and often rob businesses of the opportunity to provide cheaper goods and services (Ionut, 2015). Consequently, underground economies can create a profitability barrier for legitimate domestic and international businesses to overcome.

This social dysfunction does not presuppose, however, that Egypt does not have control over improving their economic situation. Goto and Mano (2011) found that underground activity can be deterred if governments promote formal sector growth in production technology, transaction costs, and entry costs. Moreover, when legitimate firms can offer better wages and

assist the government in increasing jobs, underground economies begin to reduce in size (Goto & Mano). The government can reduce their nation's underground economy by reducing taxes and passing favorable legislation for business growth.

Emergent Systems Management Strategies for Overseas Operations

This section explores the application of management strategies on emergent concepts such as culture, supply chain, and political risk. Leveraging cross-cultural competence leads to global growth (Hummel, 2012). Understanding the impact of fine-detailed supply chain interventions and their impact on other supply chain operations increases supply efficiency and performance (Ritter, Wilkinson, & Johnston, 2004). Understanding, analyzing, reducing, and responding to political risk improves global relationships in overseas operations (Rice & Zegart, 2018).

The importance of cross-cultural competence for global growth. Hummel (2012) suggested that the global companies that stand to experience the most growth in the future are those that master doing business across cultures. This “cross-cultural competence” refers to the way businesses understand and follow the six cultural elements found within the Business Model of Intercultural Analysis (BMIA; Hummel, 2012, para. 6). The six elements of the BMIA are cultural themes, communication, group dynamics, globalization, process engineering, and time orientation businesses (Hummel, 2012). Each element points to an important angle of businesses' development of cross-cultural competence.

Leveraging the power of culture. Cross-cultural differences have been identified as the most significant impediment to successful international operations (Hummel, 2012). Finding a framework to confront cultural differences head-on, like the Business Model of Intercultural Analysis, provides international businesses with a way to leverage the power of culture

(Hummel, 2012). Managing overseas operations to increase cross-cultural competence represents a new generation in emergent systems management strategy.

The importance of corporate culture. In 2016, the Global Human Capital Trends survey found that 82% of respondents believed that culture represented a potential competitive advantage in international business (Kaplan, Dollar, Melian, Van Durme, & Wong, 2016). Since culture represents the system of values, beliefs, and behaviors that influence the way work is done in an organization, it is not surprising that 87% of surveyed respondents consider culture important (Kaplan et al., 2016). Despite being viewed as important, many corporate employees do not understand their culture. Only 28% of respondents admitted to understanding their culture well (Kaplan et al., 2016).

Using data and behavioral information to manage and influence culture. Business leadership now sees culture as a business issue and not merely an HR issue. New culture assessment tools have emerged in business, which have enabled companies to diagnose their culture using a variety of proven models (Kaplan et al., 2016). Businesses can now use these tools to understand and improve their culture. The importance of culture in the workplace has inspired companies to proactively define what culture means to their company (Kaplan et al., 2016). Consequently, as employees clearly understand their company's culture, they begin to understand who the company hires, who gets promoted, and what behaviors will be rewarded with compensation or promotion (Kaplan et al., 2016). Culture is the proverbial glue that binds individuals and teams of individuals to their business's central goals.

The importance of relationship-building in international business. Aarikka-Stenroos, Aaboen, Cova, and Rolfsen (2018) found certain "initiations" to play an important role when firms enter a new geographical market (p. 76). Primarily, firms need to build trust and

commitment, learn about each other, overcome geographic and cultural distance, gain information and employ relationships to become an insider (Aarikka-Stenroos et al., 2018). Establishing social contacts in the foreign environment increases international bonds and improves foreign market opportunities (Aarikka-Stenroos et al., 2018). Moreover, personally and professionally grounded contacts in the international business environment allows companies to assess the counterpart's competence, demonstrate credibility, and show cultural understanding (Mainela, 2007). These social contacts serve as the initial basis for developing formal international business relationships (Su, Yang, Zhuang, Zhou, & Dou, 2009).

Sending executives to the foreign environment to build corporate credibility and gain client trust. Backaler (2018) suggested that companies expanding into foreign markets needed to gain the trust of local business partners and prospective customers to succeed. The chief way to build this trust is to send executives to meet with the foreign clients to build personal relationships and to hire location distribution partners to represent their products overseas (Backaler, 2018). An international business leader's personal credibility is his greatest asset in building trust during these foreign interactions (Carucci, 2018). Credibility lends itself to forging a mutual respect, which is considered the fastest way to establish individual relationships (Carucci, 2018). While global business models change, trusted relationships in the foreign environment remain constant (Backaler, 2018). Research confirms that presenting oneself as someone who possesses trustworthy characteristics helps build strong relationships fast (Carucci, 2018).

The value of developing "domestic clusters" to gain international partners. Montoro-Sanchez, Diez-Vial, and Belso-Martinez (2018) found that international businesses, especially small to medium-sized businesses, benefited the most from establishing domestic relationships in

the foreign environment. Businesses that developed family contacts, informal social connections, and technological and institutional relationships increased value for their company's international business (Montoro-Sanchez et al., 2018). Embedding themselves into "domestic clusters," international businesses that were able to become centrally located amidst a dense collection of domestic contacts were more likely to succeed in building international partnerships in the foreign environment (p. 728). Developing local contacts and strong community connections within the foreign environment enables international businesses to acquire valuable knowledge exchanges and manage the international process more competitively than companies whose networks are less developed (Molina-Morales & Martinez-Fernandez, 2010).

Complex networking approach to supply chain management. The modern era has struggled to agree on the conceptual framework for supply chain management. Despite Choi, Dooley, and Rungtusanatham (2001) finding high levels of complexity and previously unrecognized interdependencies in the supply chain, Cox, Sanderson, and Watson (2006) conceptualized supply chains as simple linear systems, which were represented by a series of sequential interactions from participating components of the supply chain. Cox et al.'s simpler illustration of the supply chain seems to be popular among today's researchers in spite of increasing evidence that complexity and adaptation now affect the supply chain. Pathak, Day, Nair, Sawaya, and Kristal (2007) and Li, Yang, Sun, Ji, and Feng (2010) posited that even if modern supply chains were complex and adaptive, then there would be no need to re-conceptualize supply chains from simple linear systems to complex adaptive systems. Some supply chain researchers concern that over-examining the fine detail of every interaction within

the supply chain could make the holistic study of the mechanism very difficult (Hearnshaw & Wilson, 2013).

Understanding how interventions effect the supply chain. The various complex and adaptive interdependencies observed within the supply chain, however, prove a critical phenomenon to be understood by managers (Ritter et al., 2004). Bradbury (2002, as cited in Janssen, 2003) remarked: “The character of a modelled complex adaptive system is embedded in the fine detail of the many entities and their interactions, not in the gross pattern of a few strong linkages” (p. 54).

By studying the fine details of the supply chain, managers can become aware of the indirect effects that interventions in one part of a supply chain have on another part (Ritter et al., 2004). Choi and Hong (2002) encouraged supply chain managers “to understand the structure of supply networks and be able to build theories of supply networks” (p. 491). Managers of today’s supply chain networks must have a more complete understanding of what the supply chain really is and conceptualize how it works.

Emergent political risks in overseas operations. The modern era has created a complex and adaptive political environment for many international business operations to navigate. In terms of political risk, international businesses must now negotiate both the actions of governments and also the galvanizing influence of Twitter, Facebook, and social media (Rice & Zegart, 2018). Businesses are not only concerned with the political activities conducted by legitimate governmental entities but also those political agendas pursued by motivated individuals. Now, individuals armed with nothing more than a cellphone, a computer, or a social media account can inspire a widespread political movement (Rice & Zegart).

Understanding, analyzing, reducing, and responding to political risk. International businesses are concerned with political risk because it refers to the probability that a political action will significantly affect a company (Rice & Zegart, 2018). Organization's capacity to manage political risks is especially important today since they must consider both the local effects of political action and also the chain reaction those actions can have on their business affairs in other countries. Political "events in far-flung places are affecting societies and businesses around the world at dizzying speeds" (Rice & Zegart, 2018, p. 4). Political risk to overseas operations in one part of the world is not isolated from operations found in other parts of the world.

How to deal with political risk in overseas operations. Parker (2018) conducted an interview with Rice and Zegart (2018) to discuss ways global organizations could best confront political risks. Rice and Zegart offered a simple framework—understand, analyze, reduce, and respond. International business managers should understand their company's appetite for political risk, analyze the political risk inherent to a location of operation, find ways to reduce exposure to political risks in these operations, and respond to political incidents before they become crises (Parker, 2018). Fundamentally, effective global organizations "take political risk seriously, they approach it systematically, and they lead from the top" (Rice & Zegart, 2018, p. 259).

Themes and Perceptions from Literature

The literature review provided the reader with an in-depth look at the phenomenology of reductionism and emergence, the origins of systems theory and emergent strategy, the impact of emergence on business processes, emergent strategy research and organizational leadership perspectives, and the impact of foreign emergent systems on systems management strategies.

From the initial review, four perceptions emerged. After qualitative data were collected, these perceptions were reviewed, and additional literature-based themes were revealed.

Initial literature-based perceptions. Four major perceptions emerged from the original literature review. First, complexity research is growing (Mele et al., 2016). Second, emergent behavior proposes that systems can self-organize and adapt to their contextual and environmental conditions (Hudson & Denzinger, 2015). Third, organizations are increasingly relying on technology, namely smart software systems, to predict emergence and improve business processes (Fayoumi & Loucopoulos, 2016). Fourth, emergent system management strategies tend to favor a balance between emergent and reductionist styles (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010; Mele et al., 2016).

Complexity research is growing. The academic body shows that complexity research has grown over the past few decades (Mele et al., 2016). The interest in this field of study by practitioners and researchers alike demonstrates the increasing relevance of complexity research. Emergence, a phenomenon inherent in complex systems, has matured in the past decade into a formidable research topic. Its essence as a phenomenological feature of today's natural environment and human systems combined with a diversity of description offers researchers a vast canvas to project their theories and hypotheses upon.

Systems are complex and adaptive. Hailing from the open system theory, self-organization proposes that systems can assemble and adapt to contextual conditions (Mele et al., 2016). The two elements of the open system theory, counteraction (adaptation) and amplification (self-organization) highlight the essence of modern emergent behavior (Mele et al., 2016). Emergent self-organization represents a type of management phenomenon that fosters greater human autonomy within the workplace and improves operational efficiency. Hudson and

Denzinger (2015) stated that “the goal of self-adapting self-organizing emergent multi-agent systems...is to reduce operation and design costs” (p. 973). Emergent self-organization has the potential of increasing operational efficiency by reducing communication and wait times and increasing scalability of operations (Hudson & Denzinger, 2015).

Despite the advantages of emergent self-organization, increased human autonomy and adaptation increase unpredictability of operational performance when combined with an emergent environment (Hudson & Denzinger, 2015). Not surprisingly, emergence theories emphasize the processual nature of organizing (Hosking & Morely, 1992). The effects emergent behavior has on international business management strategies for overseas operations, therefore, presumes the researcher explore the operational implication of both emergence and self-organization of foreign business systems.

Technology is improving emergent systems management. Emergence is credited as being a 21st-century phenomenon (Kanter, 1999; Jones, 2017). Its complex and adaptive characteristics supersede humans’ natural ability to predict the effects and interactions of emergent systems. Conceptual models, intelligent software developments, and networked smart systems have increasingly assisted humans in their ability to predict outcomes from emergent systems (Fayoumi & Loucopoulos, 2016). International business managers would be remiss in overlooking the utilization of such products to evaluate the influence of foreign emergent systems on overseas operational efficiency and productivity.

Emergent systems management requires balance. Decision makers tend to understand that both reductionist, planned changes and emergent, unplanned changes act on their organizations’ health and welfare, but they do not understand completely how to respond to emergent changes (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). A certain tension seems to exist between what

elements managers perceive as unchangeable and what elements can succumb to change. Managers often protect their core competence, purpose of the organization, values and ethics, communication, and security against change despite the fact that change is on-going and already affecting these elements (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). Managers' reality and perception of change is affected by ever-present and unpredictable emergent impacts (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). This sentiment is what led Mele et al. (2016) to challenge managers to think about today's business problems from both a general holistic (emergent) and a specific reductionist view.

Literature-based themes revealed after the study. After the qualitative study was conducted, the researcher found that most of these perceptions were consistent with the data. The existence of emergent behavior in overseas business operations is understood by many international business leaders, and their ability to produce end-to-end business solutions to counter the phenomenon is improving. These leaders tended to implement a balance of reductionist and emergent strategies to manage international business systems. Their utilization of technology to predict the impacts of the emergence phenomenon on overseas business operations, however, was not revealed in the study. Of the preliminary perceptions gathered from the original literature review, this one was the only one not illuminated by the data.

In addition to the researcher's initial literature-based perceptions, the study also highlighted three literature-based themes that were not originally identified as significant. First, the emergent nature of culture plays an important role in shaping a country's industry, business practices, and social issues that should be understood by international systems managers. Second, competition is viewed by international business leaders as uniquely intense and stemming from global rivals rather than from local marketplaces in the foreign environment.

Finally, leaders rely heavily on local relationships to augment their understanding of the foreign business operating environment.

Cultural awareness is important in systems management strategy development.

Western companies have had to overcome tremendous challenges to succeed in foreign countries (Eyring et al., 2011). Many multinational companies simply try to export their domestic models abroad and leave most of their business processes unchanged (Eyring et al., 2011).

Consequently, international businesses most struggle with foreign culture, language, supply chain and logistics, political differences and local laws, labor qualifications, and environmental considerations (The Hult School of International Business, 2017; US-Pacific Rim International, Inc., 2010; Ali, 2014; Hill; 2018; Driver, 2017). Hummel (2012) suggested that the global companies that stand to experience the most growth in the future are those that master doing business across cultures. Cross-cultural differences have been identified as the most significant impediment to successful international operations (Hummel, 2012). Finding a framework to confront cultural differences head-on, like the Business Model of Intercultural Analysis, provides international businesses with a way to leverage the power of culture (Hummel, 2012).

Competition is viewed as global and foreign rather than local and emerging. Despite globalization's recent homogenizing effects, which have tended to flatten the world and reduce foreign barriers (Friedman, 2005), some believe that ever-maturing global markets have actually given local cultures greater credence and consequently further fragmented existing consumer and social groups (Barber, 1995). International businesses now confront stronger local marketplaces, which better understand their consumers' cultural, ethnic, and religious reaction to goods and services (Barber, 1995). Moreover, local firms based in large and fast-growing merging markets

have become powerful global competitors to Western multinational enterprises who are accustomed to the higher-cost structures of developed countries (Kumar, 2008).

International businesses with robust proprietary technologies and well-esteemed brands were best-suited to compete with local companies (Jones, 2017). Furthermore, international firms that designed global capabilities with local relevance tended to compete well alongside local firms (Jones, 2017). Some successful international businesses have even simply emphasized the superior quality of their products and guaranteed their product's unparalleled safety to both consumers and the environment (Jones, 2017).

Relationship-building is critical to international business success. Montoro-Sanchez et al. (2018) found that international businesses, especially small to medium-sized businesses, benefited the most from establishing domestic relationships in the foreign environment. Businesses that developed family contacts, informal social connections, and technological and institutional relationships increased value for their company's international business (Montoro-Sanchez et al., 2018). Backaler (2018) suggested that companies expanding into foreign markets needed to gain the trust of local business partners and prospective customers to succeed. The chief way to build this trust is to send executives to meet with the foreign clients to build personal relationships and to hire location distribution partners to represent their products overseas (Backaler, 2018). An international business leader's personal credibility is his greatest asset in building trust during these foreign interactions (Carucci, 2018). Credibility lends itself to forging a mutual respect, which is considered the fastest way to establishing individual relationships (Carucci, 2018). Developing local contacts and strong community connections within the foreign environment enables international businesses to acquire valuable knowledge

exchanges and manage the international process more competitively than companies whose networks are less developed (Molina-Morales & Martinez-Fernandez, 2010).

A Summary of the Literature Review

The literature review combined perspectives and philosophies pertaining to the examination of emergent systems business management strategies implemented in overseas operations. Organized into five parts, the literature review explored the phenomenology of reductionism and emergence, highlighted the origins of systems theory and emergent strategy, discussed the impact emergence has on business processes, examined emergent strategy research and organizational leadership perspectives, studied the impact of foreign emergent systems on systems management strategies. The review concluded with the researcher's discussion on his initial perceptions of the literature and the ultimate themes revealed after the collection of qualitative data. While concepts reviewed in this section revealed specific business insights, modern literature currently lacks a definitive link between emergent systems behavior and international business management strategy.

Transition and Summary of Section 1

Organizations are becoming increasingly aware of their connectedness to each other and to their global environment (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). The 21st century is being hailed as one of unprecedented change as businesses conduct operations on an unparalleled global scale (Kanter, 1999). For organizations to survive amidst the rapid connectivity and complexity that defines today's global business environment, they need to balance their traditional, planned, structural change methods with the unpredictability and emergence of new approaches (Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009). The need for a new way to think about management stems from the notion that "today's widespread, fast-moving and complex change is inherently emergent and

unpredictable” (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010, p. 214). Organizational leaders and decision makers find themselves with the need to merge both planned strategy improvements with emergent, unplanned ones (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010).

Furthermore, emergent systems have forced international business managers to readdress organizations as non-linear systems and re-conceptualize the role of leaders within an organization (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). Livne-Tarandach and Bartunek (2009) expressed that leaders should no longer be considered sole initiators and implementers of pre-planned organizational change, nor reactive agents to emergent forces; rather, leaders are expected to “develop the ability to connect the two to create synergy” (p. 28). Emergent systems have forced corporate leaders-managers to become facilitators and supporters of change rather than simple controllers or enforcers of planned changed initiatives (Schulist, 2000). The world is becoming more complex and managers of overseas operations have been forced to adapt their management science to survive in this increasingly dynamic business environment. Dohrer (2018) captured this sentiment when he said, “global companies of the future are going to become globe-trotting adaptors rather than static cross border operators of the past” (p. 1).

Section 2: The Project

Organizations are now identified as complex adaptive systems (Anderson, 1999; McKelvey, 2001; Stacey, 1992; Wheatley, 1999), and organizational theorists increasingly reject the simplicity of more traditional, mechanistic views of organizations (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001). Emergence happens in complex systems because a small fluctuation in one part of the system can bring unexpected changes to other parts of the system (Plowman et al., 2007). Emergent phenomena, however, prove very difficult to analyze and predict, which makes the simple exportation of domestic business models overseas an unlikely success (Bonobea, 2002). Emergent systems and their behavior have “challenged the fundamental assumption that our complex world can always be understood best through top-down approaches” (Bonobea, 2002, para. 37). For organizations to survive amidst the rapid connectivity and complexity that defines today’s global business environment, organizational leaders and decision makers find themselves with the need to merge both planned strategy improvements with emergent, unplanned ones (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010).

The objective of the qualitative research found in this work is to explore the planned and unplanned management strategies employed by international business leaders to operate in the emergent foreign business environment. Business leaders are no longer mere executors of pre-planned organizational changes and reactors to emergent forces; instead, they learn how to implement planned and unplanned strategies to improve business processes (Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009). The researcher pursues phenomenological data to sufficiently examine the complex foreign operating environment that challenges international businesses’ pursuit of profitable overseas operations. Emergent systems have forced corporate leaders-managers to become facilitators and supporters of change rather than simple controllers or enforcers of

planned changed initiatives (Schulist, 2000).

Scrutinizing the behavioral characteristics of the emergence phenomenon in overseas operations, the researcher hopes to clarify the role of leaders within a global organization and describe the emergent system management strategies they employ to oversee overseas operations (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). Conducting personal interviews with international business leaders and gathering extensive scholarly literature on emergent business management in overseas operations, the researcher expects to report the essence of emergent behavior in the foreign business operating environment and explore the foundations of management strategies employed in today's overseas operations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The need for a new way to think about management stems from the notion that "today's widespread, fast-moving and complex change is inherently emergent and unpredictable" (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010, p. 214).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study will be to refine academia's understanding of the foreign emergent business environment and explore the reductionist and emergent management strategies employed by international business leaders to operate in this environment. A study of management strategies used by well-established international businesses should add depth to the study of emergent system behavior and produce insights about successful foreign emergent systems management strategies (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010; Wycisk et al., 2008; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). At this stage in the research, management strategies employed by international business leaders to counter foreign emergent systems will be defined as the study of how organizational leaders' implement management strategies to solve problems and make decisions with regard to how these strategies impact collateral operations in a foreign country (Wood & Caldas, 2001; Wycisk et al., 2008). Conducting personal interviews with

international business leaders and gathering extensive scholarly literature on emergent business management in overseas operations, the researcher expects to report the essence of emergent behavior in the foreign business operating environment and explore the foundations of management strategies employed in today's overseas operations (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Throughout the course of the study, the researcher also expects to explore the behavioral characteristics of the emergence phenomenon as it relates to the foreign operating environment. Dyson (1997) referred to emergent behavior as that which could not be analyzed any more straightforward than a whole system. Osmundson and Huynh (2008) sought to label emergent behavior in systems engineering as the relationships among a "system of systems" (p. 1). McChrystal et al. (2015) defined emergent behavior within the military organizational structure as the coordination of a "team of teams" (p. 52). These labels represent the phenomenological essence of emergent behavior within the engineering and military fields of study. Within the realm of international business, however, the nature and spirit of emergent behavior and emergent system management lack the same concentration-specific description offered by Osmundson and Hynh (2008) and McChrystal et al. (2015). The researcher believes that a study of international business management strategies will further build upon the emergent system phenomenon recently presented in other areas of research.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher ethically interviewed international business leaders predominately involved in developing and executing management strategies for their company's overseas operations. The objective of the qualitative research interview was to explore the "what" and "how" behind the emergent system phenomenon influencing management strategies in business's overseas business operations (Moustakas, 1994, p. 34). Careful to preserve the ideas

and concepts conveyed by the research participants and cultivate mutual learning and academic curiosity, the researcher bracketed, or suspended, personal agendas, beliefs, and preconceptions pertaining to the emergence phenomenon, which may have unduly influenced interview data and skewed participant perspectives on the research phenomenon (LeVasseur, 2003).

The researcher has primarily relied on the interview transcripts of these business leaders, the observations produced from their respective workplace environments and interview settings, and archival information researched to validate interview data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Additional references, such as literature reviews, interviewee journal notes, and interviewee emails have also been used to substantiate phenomenological themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The researcher believed that examining the experiences revealed by international business leaders engaged in overseas operations and management strategy offered sufficient “textural” and “structural” description to “convey the overall essence of [their] experience[s]” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 78). Using the information gained from these international business leaders as well as data acquired from personal, official, and popular culture documents (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006), the researcher could report the essence of the emergence phenomenon using a “composite description” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 80).

Participants

The researcher sought interviews with international business leaders that worked for large and publicly identifiable companies whose past or present jobs had required them to develop or manage overseas business operations. Each interview participant was required to review and sign a consent-to-participate form, which detailed the purpose of the qualitative research study without stating the central research question (Groenewald, 2004), described the type of data collected, and clarified the ethical responsibilities incumbent of the researcher to protect

personally identifiable information and discuss any potential risks associated with participation in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The interview participant was also informed of his or her right to withdraw from the study at any time (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Ultimately, the researcher desired to encourage a spirit of mutual learning and academic curiosity between the interviewer and the interviewee, while offering respect and gratitude for the participants' involvement with the study.

The researcher gained access to international business leaders who would have likely experienced the emergence phenomenon by conducting Internet searches and telephonic inquiry to the offices of various large companies involved in overseas business operations (Groenewald, 2004). When possible, one-on-one interviews were conducted in person and the data were recorded and transcribed for future thematic analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Moreover, the researcher used snowball sampling, a method of expanding the sample by asking one participant to recommend others for interviewing (Groenewald, 2004). In addition to in-person interviews, the researcher utilized email correspondence and telephone exchanges with research participants to encourage a working relationship and ensure a persistent and transparent link between the participants and the study they assisted.

Research Method and Design

Capturing the essence of the emergent business environment as it relates to international business management and strategy development proves consistent with the phenomenological research design. The use of phenomenological methodology is essential when researchers desire to know more about the "what" and "how" of human experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 75). Phenomenological researchers attempt to uncover the nature or essence of a subject in this type of study. Budd (2005) suggested that phenomenology represented the appearances apparent to

human consciousness even as human consciousness changes throughout history and a person's life. In many ways, the phenomenological study merely seeks to construct the unseen world and give form to the natural and essential attributes of life's subjects—to define its phenomena.

A phenomenological research method reveals individuals' experiences in the form of a phenomenon or concept (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Phenomenology reduces human experiences into a central, universal description of the nature of those experiences. Liberman (2017) advocated that phenomenological studies challenged researchers to abandon academia's usual dogmatism to accept the world the way it is. Instead, phenomenology research examines the mental traps that prevent academics from recovering underlying and ulterior truths—the essence of the way things are (Liberman, 2017).

At its foundation, the phenomenological research design attempts to fuse intellectual and practical interests into one philosophical mosaic (Budd, 2005). Phenomenology seeks “to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 75). One common way to achieve this is by conducting multiple, in-depth interviews with individuals who have experienced the phenomenon and collect data from these narratives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Once enough participants have been interviewed, the researcher can generate themes from the analysis of significant statements found within the collected narratives (Moustakas, 1994). Textural and structural descriptions can be developed to highlight the essence of the narrative themes and then reported in a “composite” description of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The phenomenological design culminates in a comprehensive presentation of the “essence of the experience in the written form” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 80).

Population and Sampling

The researcher sought interviews with international business leaders that worked for large and publicly identifiable companies whose past or present jobs had required them to develop or manage overseas business operations. It was essential that all participants had experienced the emergence phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A purposive sampling strategy ensured that individuals could “purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 158). Specifically, a criterion-based sampling method worked well because everyone studied had experienced the phenomenon. Criterion sampling refers to the selection of participants based on specific criteria e.g. those who have experienced the studied phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Sometimes snowball, or chain sampling was used to gain access to other research participants who had also experienced the phenomenon.

The sample size of the phenomenological study was not viewed as strictly as the criterion-based sampling requirements (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Phenomenological study sample sizes vary greatly from just 1 (Padilla, 2003) to as many as 325 (Pokinghore, 1989). Generally speaking, the sample size of phenomenological studies falls somewhere between 8 participants (Groenewald, 2004) and 10 participants (Dukes, 1984). Conducting multiple, in-depth interviews with a small group of phenomenological research participants typically satisfies the study’s intent to produce a composite description of the “essence of the experience” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 80). Participants in the sample must ultimately deliver purposeful data that adds value to academia’s understanding of emergent behavior in the foreign business operating environment and increase its thoughtfulness of management strategies employed in today’s overseas operations.

Data Collection

The act of data collection implies a multitude of endeavors engaged by the researcher. The researcher ethically and rigorously locates individuals for inquiry, gains access and establish rapport with them, develops a purposeful sampling size, obtains information, and stores data securely (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The phenomenological research method tends to rely on interviews as a primary source for data collection (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Consequently, the researcher serves as a key instrument in the collection, organization, and eventual interpretation of the data.

Instruments—qualitative studies. Searching for the essence of a phenomenon requires a deep understanding of the phenomenon from the experiences shared by several individuals (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To prevent the researcher from injecting individual bias and allowing personal interpretations to skew the data, phenomenological academics recommend that researchers “bracket” themselves from the data collection process (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 81). Bracketing refers to the way researchers can suspend their understanding of a concept or phenomenon and permit a type of detached but reflective curiosity to cultivate the data (LeVasseur, 2003). This kind of experiential research pursues a collection of interpretations rather than a simple or “best explanation” of the data (Stake, 2010). The phenomenological researcher should avoid the temptation to think of himself as an instrument to find answers and produce definitions (Patton, 2002). Rather, the researcher should be patient to allow the data to emerge and reveal “rich descriptions of phenomena and their settings” (Kensit, 2000, p. 344).

The interview guide promotes the collection of experiential data and the description of the phenomenological essence. To facilitate a disciplined and efficient interview with research participants, the researcher prepared a concise interview guide to ensure the collection of

experiential data and encourage eventual delivery of the phenomenological essence of the studied problem. Overhead questions were produced along with multiple probing questions to solicit thick description from the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Stake, 2010). The general problem to be studied is how emergent systems influence international business leaders' management strategies for overseas operations. To promote dialogue and inspire mutual understanding, the researcher will use the following interview questions to address the general problem statement:

1. What has been your role in developing and/or executing systems management strategies for international business operations?
 - a. [*Probing question*] How does this role compare to that of a colleague who must focus on domestic systems management strategies?
2. What elements of the foreign environment do you confront first when creating systems management strategies overseas?
 - a. What elements have surprised you after a systems management strategy has already been employed?

The specific problem to be studied is what kind of reductionist and emergent systems management strategies are being employed by international business leaders in overseas operations. To encourage descriptive feedback and capture the essence of the business leaders' systems management strategies and theories, the researcher will use the following interview questions to address the specific problem statement:

1. What is an example of a systems management strategy you have developed or executed specifically for an international business operation?

- a. How would you explain this strategy's effect on collateral business processes (e.g., productivity, quality, supply chain, customer service, human resource management, etc.)?
 - b. Were follow-up strategies or improvements to the existing strategy required to address these effects?
 - c. What differences (if any) did you note in implementing these strategies abroad versus how your colleagues implemented them domestically?
2. What elements of this management strategy proved successful? Unsuccessful?
 - a. How were you able to implement what you learned from this strategy into future systems management strategies?
3. What advice would you give to other international business leaders for preparing systems management strategies in the foreign environment?
 - a. If they could avoid making a specific mistake when developing their international systems management strategies, what would that mistake be?

The complete interview guide can be found in Appendix A.

Data collection technique. Phenomenological studies are often supported by interviews with individuals who have experienced the phenomenon as well as other forms of data such as observations, documents, and modern media (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher will employ a similarly rigorous approach to data collection, which includes the use of interviews, personal email correspondence, digital text messages, and academic literature review, to produce a comprehensive qualitative study on the emergence phenomenon. Considering the financial burden or security intrusion caused by some types of modern communication (e.g., digital text messaging), the researcher clarified each participant's favored method of communication and

specifically requested the participant to indicate whether they would prefer to opt-out of certain types of communication. To achieve this type of comprehensive data collection, the researcher first developed a robust literature review, which pointed to various elements of the emergence phenomenon within international business and systems management. To find the essence of the emergence phenomenon in systems management strategies overseas, the researcher next established connections with ten business leaders who have experienced the emergence phenomenon while developing and executing management strategies in overseas operations (Dukes, 1984). The researcher conducted personal in-depth interviews with these business leaders to collect as much raw data as possible from each participant's perspective. Finally, the researcher followed up with research participants via phone, email, and text message to clarify elements of their respective interview (Groenewald, 2004; Creswell & Poth, 2018). From the researcher's academic literature review, interview transcripts, and observations, the data were coded and a final report of the findings was prepared (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data organization techniques. With the permission of each participant, audio-recordings were collected of each in-person and telephone interview. Participants were assigned a unique code and linked to the date of their recording to clearly categorize their data (e.g., P1). Recordings were then saved as audio files on the researcher's password protected personal laptop and later transcribed into Word documents for coding and thematic analysis.

Field notes were also taken as a hedge against the academic peril of audio equipment failure. Lofland and Lofland (1999) also encouraged the use of field notes to reinforce human memory of gathered data and make environmental observations that are not captured by the interview transcript. Attempting to inspire a more natural conversation between researcher and participant, field notes during the interview were used merely to capture "observational notes,"

which sought more to explain environmental observations during the interview (Groenewald, 2004, p. 15). After the interview, the researcher would later examine the field notes and provide theoretical and analytical notes, which would add meaning to certain observations and remind the interviewer of contextual symbols (Groenewald, 2004).

To ensure the confidentiality of all collected data, the researcher's interview audio files, participant transcripts, and field notes were kept together and secured in a personal safe when not under the immediate supervision of the researcher. Upon the completion of the qualitative study, the researcher intends to erase and cross-shred original data files to ensure that no personally identifiable information is compromised. If follow-up research is requested by Liberty University and access to the researcher's original data files required for such research, then the researcher will develop a memorandum of understanding with Liberty University, which details how the original data should be responsibly safeguarded.

Data Analysis

Phenomenological researchers seek to understand how the participants experienced a phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A data analysis technique known as horizontalization refers to the way a phenomenological researcher looks through the data and identifies "significant statements" relating to the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994; Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 79). These statements are eventually coded, or assigned a qualitative value, and mined for thematic importance (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The resulting thematic analysis begins the researcher's quest to identify and corroborate emergent descriptions of the researched phenomenon (Daly, Kellehear, & Gliksman, 1997). A "careful reading and re-reading of the data" defines this stage of the data analysis process, which attempts to legitimize identified

themes and prepare a foundation for a descriptive report of the phenomenon (Rice & Ezzy, 1999, p. 258).

Qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data analysis for the phenomenological research method is defined by the researcher's systematic identification of themes relevant to the description of the phenomenon found within the data (Daly et al., 1997). To identify these themes, Moustakas (1994) suggested that the researcher could horizontalize data to reduce it into significant statements. These statements are eventually organized by codes and prepared for thematic analysis (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Qualitative data analysis is an iterative process that continuously questions and preserves the integrity of the collected data while also critically validating the legitimacy of identified themes and phenomenological descriptions derived from that data (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

Examining the data through coding and thematic analysis. While data analysis can easily be mistaken as a linear procedure, the process tends to run iteratively and reflexively alongside the data collection process (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Data collection and data analysis stages for this study were conducted concurrently. The interactivity of these two research stages does not imply a dilution of either process; rather, it points to the researcher's rigor in reading and re-reading data to ascertain key insights into the phenomenon's effect on international business operations (Rice & Ezzy, 1999).

Using codes to develop themes. The coding process involves recognizing an important moment and encoding it prior to interpreting it (Boyatzis, 1998). A code is considered "good" if it captures the qualitative richness of the phenomenon (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 1). For this qualitative study, the researcher relies on information gained from interview transcripts, scholarly literature, and participants' email/digital correspondence to develop a rich description of the emergence

phenomenon's influence on systems management strategies in overseas operations. Encoding this information organizes the data so the researcher can eventually identify and develop themes from it. Themes are considered patterns in the information "that at a minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 161). Themes provide the researcher with clusters of meaning from which textural and structural descriptions of the phenomenon can be reported (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

A phenomenological data analysis approach to the qualitative study. Prior to data analysis, the researcher described personal experiences with the phenomenon to bracket bias and deter research preconceptions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Next, the researcher converted all collected data into Microsoft Word documents to ensure congruity among the varied research sources. Participants' transcriptions and correspondence were assembled into standalone documents and coded individually. Using the comments feature of Microsoft Word, the researcher could highlight significant statements and assign codes to these statements (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Eventually, the researcher grouped the participants' statements into broader units of information to highlight certain themes (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). From these themes, the researcher sought to texturally and structurally describe the "what" and "how" of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 75). The data analysis process concluded with the researcher's preparation of a composite description of the phenomenon, which incorporated both the textural and structural descriptions of the data (Groenewald, 2004).

Qualitative validity and reliability. Standards of validity and reliability aid in evaluating the integrity of academic research. The validity of academic research depends upon the researcher's adherence to validation and evaluation criteria, while the reliability of the work pertains to the consistency and clarity with which data are collected and analyzed (Creswell &

Poth, 2018). Polkinghorne (1989) expressed validation as an idea that is well grounded and well supported. Creswell and Poth (2018) restate the notion of an idea being well grounded by referring to validation as a process of “checking the accuracy of a qualitative account” (p. 259). The precision of a study is found in its reliability. A study’s reliability is defined by its “stability” across other codes and data sets (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 264).

Using triangulation to validate research findings. Various types of triangulation exist, but the researcher will focus on data triangulation and theoretical triangulation (Hussein, 2015). Data triangulation uses multiple data sources in the same study to validate research findings (Hussein, 2015). Using multiple sources, such as interviews with similar participants, observational notes from other comparable environments, and scholarly literature reviews, the researcher can triangulate with data and corroborate the insights found within the research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Theoretical triangulation refers to the researcher’s use of multiple theories in the same study for the purposes of supporting or refuting findings (Hussein, 2015). In the conceptual framework for this study, the researcher outlined multiple theoretical discussions, which included the concept of complex adaptive systems, the emergent nature of the international business network, the complexity leadership theory, and the strategy-as-practice management theory. Comparing themes and insights found within the participants’ interview transcripts and the researcher’s observational notes, the researcher can evaluate the validity of the conceptual framework prior to delivering the final interpretation and summary of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Clarifying the researcher’s influence on the data to validate findings. Additionally, the researcher answers evaluative and self-critical questions that disclose, or bracket, the researcher’s personal experience with the phenomenon so the reader understands the researcher’s

position for taking the inquiry (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Clarifying the researcher's biases and orientations pertaining to the phenomenological research concedes to the reader what elements shaped the data's interpretation (Weiner-Levey & Popper-Giveon, 2013). The researcher also shows how his or her experience influenced the interview data, the accuracy of the interview transcripts, and the conclusions drawn from those transcripts (Polkinghorne, 1989).

Validating data by ensuring its rich description and transferability. Moreover, a phenomenological researcher must point to how the data answers “what” and “how.” Van Manen (2014) remarked that answering the following questions tested phenomenology's level of validity: “what is this human experience like?” and “how is this or that phenomenon or event experienced?” (p. 350). These questions depend on experientially descriptive accounts of the phenomenon and seek to validate the data through first person reporting (Van Manen, 2014). Ultimately, the phenomenological researcher intends to show rich descriptions that allow readers to make decisions regarding the transferability of the study's findings and enable sharing of the research across other academic settings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2013). Thick description of the phenomenon reinforces the credibility of the study's sources and methodology (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Identifying saturation in phenomenological research. Due to phenomenology's historically varied sample size, defining the point at which the study is saturated is challenging. Typically, qualitative research is considered saturated when there is enough data to ensure the research questions can be answered (Bowen, 2008). Phenomenological research places greater importance on the depth of experiential data than the number of participants contributing the data (Burmeister & Aitken, 2012). Consequently, the sample size of this phenomenological study was not viewed as strictly as the criterion-based sampling requirements (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Determining content validity and face validity in the study. Despite the study's smaller sample size, the researcher rigorously pursued the study's content validity and face validity. To achieve content validity of the study, the researcher developed a conceptual framework for the study, prepared a descriptive interview guide to focus research findings in the field, and made a list of large, publicly identifiable international companies from which study participants would be interviewed. The content of these items and criteria associated with interview participants was submitted to the researcher's dissertation chair, dissertation committee, and university institutional review board for evaluation and overall measurement of the research approach (Brod, Pohlman, & Waldman, 2014). The face validity, or perceived transparency and relevance, of the study was ascertained when after conducting multiple, in-depth interviews with a small group of research participants, the researcher could produce a composite description of the "essence of the experience" from the collected data (Holden, 2010; Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 80).

Promoting reliability in phenomenological research. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), reliability refers to "the stability of responses to multiple coders of data sets" (p. 264). While validation challenges the accuracy of collected data, reliability examines the precision with which such data are collected. Researchers can increase the reliability of their data by obtaining detailed field notes, using good-quality recording devices, and by transcribing digital files (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Moreover, using an easy-to-interpret coding process during the data analysis process enhances the reliability of research findings (Kuckartz, 2014; Richards & Morse, 2012). Codifying the coding process into a codebook and sharing it with other researchers also promotes research transparency and encourages more precise data collection and analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Transition and Summary of Section 2

Identifying the essence of a phenomenon requires a deep understanding of the phenomenon from the experiences shared by several individuals (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Phenomenological studies are often supported by interviews with individuals who have experienced the phenomenon as well as other forms of data such as observations, documents, and modern media (Creswell & Poth, 2018). From these varied data streams, the researcher must systematically identify themes relevant to the description of the phenomenon found within the data (Daly et al., 1997). These themes seek to shed light on phenomenological research's fundamental questions: "what" and "how."

Throughout this meticulous research process, the researcher should be patient to allow the data to emerge and reveal "rich descriptions of phenomena and their settings" (Kensit, 2000, p. 344). Developing clear descriptions of the phenomenon reinforces the credibility of the study's sources and methodology (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Moreover, rich descriptions permit readers to make decisions regarding the transferability of the study's findings and enable sharing of the research across other academic settings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2013). Ultimately, the phenomenological research design attempts to fuse intellectual and practical interests into one philosophical mosaic (Budd, 2005). Phenomenology seeks "to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 75).

In pursuit of first-hand phenomenological data, the researcher sought interviews with international business leaders that worked for large and publicly identifiable companies whose past or present jobs had required them to develop or manage overseas business operations. When examined alongside scholarly literature, observational notes, and digital correspondence, these interviews provided key insights into the behavioral characteristics of the emergence

phenomenon in overseas operations. Furthermore, the resulting thematic analysis developed rich descriptions essential to improving academia's understanding of modern systems management strategies in the foreign business operating environment (Liebhart & Lorenzon, 2010).

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Business's global expansion is more complicated to manage than domestic operations (Stadler et al., 2015). Physical and non-physical resources are becoming more difficult to move in the once traditional reductionist style, which relied on logical, linear, and predictable adjustments to business operations (McChrystal et al., 2015). Furthermore, the modern economy has moved beyond the industrial age, which simply transformed raw material into finished goods, and has entered the age of the creative knowledge-based society, which sees organizations continually breaking down physical and non-physical barriers to employ novelty and behavior modification to operations (Chiva et al., 2014). In this new environment, Stadler et al. believed that most global companies did not possess the right management capabilities to make overseas movement profitable.

Succeeding in today's economy relies on organizations' ability to learn, innovate, and "internationalize" (Chiva et al., 2014, p. 687). The traditional way of thinking of organizational growth as a linear connection between learning, innovation, and internationalization (Alegre & Chiva, 2008; Molero, 1998) has given way to an appreciation for the evolution of these relationships (Chiva et al., 2014). Emergent systems management strategies prove to be a revolutionary method to confront the uncertainty of international business environments by simultaneously evolving and implementing strategic processes (Jamil & Shah, 2015). While Chiva et al. (2014) asserted that the evolving organizational concepts of learning, innovation, and internationalization now require managers to move beyond reductionist strategies and wholly adopt emergent ones, Mele et al. (2016) advocated a hybrid emergent-reductionist way of thinking about today's business problems, which combined both emergent and reductionist management methods.

Overview of the Study

At the core of this study is its fundamental purpose to refine academia's understanding of the foreign emergent business environment and explore the reductionist and emergent management strategies employed by international business leaders to operate in this environment. To achieve this greater understanding of the foreign emergent business environment and reveal insights into modern international systems management strategies, the researcher interviewed six international business leaders involved in developing and executing management strategies for their company's overseas operations. These business leaders were at least 18 years of age and worked for large and publicly identifiable companies as senior managers or executives. Representing a variety of industries, these business leaders delivered systems management and strategy insights pertaining to technology, defense and aerospace, artificial intelligence and electronics, airlines, and manufacturing.

To standardize the data collection process and increase the reliability of the narrative-based research, the researcher administered the same interview questions to each participant. Only materials (i.e., recruitment letter, consent form, and interview guide) approved by Liberty University's Institutional Review Board were utilized throughout the data collection process. Led by an interview guide consisting of ten questions and requiring 15-20 minutes of each participant's time, the researcher maintained a professional and unbiased disposition. The phenomenon under investigation was never revealed to the participants throughout the interview process to guarantee the candidness of their responses. Rather than consider himself an instrument to find answers and produce definitions (Patton, 2002), the researcher sought to allow the data to emerge and reveal "rich descriptions of phenomena and their settings" (Kensit, 2000, p. 344).

When responses to interview questions began to yield consistent themes and rich descriptions while also providing fewer significant differences, the researcher determined that the phenomenological research had become saturated. Moreover, as the interview data were triangulated with scholarly literature reviews and open source interviews of other prominent business leaders, the researcher found the research satisfied the project's core purpose to increase academia's understanding of the modern foreign business operating environment and reveal current systems management strategies employed in this environment. The resulting thematic analysis provided the reader with a composite description that richly portrayed the phenomenon's essence. Furthermore, a host of international systems management strategies were expressed in the process.

Presentation of the Findings

At the onset of this project, the researcher endeavored to find descriptive answers to two key research questions. First, the researcher sought to learn "what is the lived experience of international business leaders who have recently managed emergent systems in overseas operations?" This inquiry was more narrowly focused on two minor questions, which examined how the individual described the emergent business operating environment in a foreign country, and what elements the individual believed contributed to successful or unsuccessful management of emergent systems in this environment. The second major research question sought to learn what types of systems management strategies were being employed by international business leaders in their foreign emergent business environment. This inquiry also focused on two minor research questions, which examined what philosophies underlie business leaders' selection of specific management strategies, and what assumptions were made by these leaders about the emergent nature of overseas operations and its effect on management strategy development.

Conducting interviews with six international business leaders who represented a variety of industries, the researcher found that these leaders' responses to a thoroughly prepared interview guide satisfied the project's major and minor research questions. The following findings are shared by the researcher to improve academia's understanding of the emergence phenomenon in the foreign business operating environment while also shedding light on the modern systems management strategies employed by today's international business leaders.

General

The researcher found that the data generated from interviews with six international business leaders from various industries produced four thematic categories: (a) descriptions of the emergent business operating environment in a foreign country, (b) successful elements of systems management strategies in the foreign environment, (c) philosophies that underlie international business leaders' systems management strategies, and (d) business leaders' assumptions about the emergent nature of overseas operations. When responses to interview questions began to yield consistent themes and rich descriptions while also providing fewer significant differences, the researcher determined that the phenomenological research had become saturated. Supported through illustrative, narrative-based descriptions from senior managers and executives, these themes revealed significant discussions about culture's importance on the foreign environment, business leaders' perceived need to gain trust through relationship-building in the foreign environment, and companies' development of products and business solutions that considered the emergent effects of the foreign environment. These descriptions were triangulated through scholarly literature reviews, which sought to compare and contrast participants' responses against a broader academic context.

After a review of the phenomenological data and scholarly literature review, the researcher specifically observed one outlier and one discrepancy. One participant maintained a very different perspective than his colleagues on a number of questions. His interview offered an educated but outlying perspective on the subject matter. His differences are addressed throughout the findings. Additionally, one discrepancy was noted in the preliminary research of emergent management systems in scholarly literature, which yielded several discussions about the importance of integrating modern technology into the international business infrastructure (e.g., predictive analytics, artificial intelligence, interpretive computer algorithms) to aid international business leaders in anticipating emergent processes in the foreign environment. Not a single participant, however, shared any insights about the use of technology in countering emergent behaviors in international business processes. Nonetheless, the data delivered a rich description of the emergent business operating environment in a foreign country and provided multiple insights regarding the assumptions and philosophies integral to developing systems management strategies for overseas operations.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The data answered the project's two major research questions and four minor research questions. The following qualitative data were organized by research question, illustrated with first-person descriptions, and supported by scholarly literature. To preserve the participants' anonymity, the researcher has used a method of coding, which refers to each participant by an alphabetical identifier (e.g., participant #1 is referred to as "PA," participant #2 is "PB," and so forth). Additionally, four data tables provide the reader with a concise overview of the data collected in relation to each of the four minor research questions. The resulting analysis yields

an academically enriching addition to the greater body of work on the emergence phenomenon and the international systems management strategies employed to address the phenomenon.

Descriptions of the emergent business operating environment in a foreign country.

To better understand the perceived responsibility and lived experience of each participant in the foreign business operating environment, the researcher asked each participant to describe the differences between their roles as international business leaders and those assumed by domestic colleagues with similar responsibilities. Furthermore, the researcher asked the participants to discuss what elements of the foreign business operating environment they typically confronted first, and what (if anything) usually surprised them about this environment. The responses to these questions helped answer the researcher's minor question: how do leaders describe the emergent business operating environment in a foreign country?

The foreign operating environment is very different from the domestic environment.

PA, PB, PC, PD, PE, and PF all agree that the domestic counterpart to their international responsibility is very different. Participants tended to describe with candid detail the distinctions between conducting their job internationally and doing the same job at home. This is consistent with Ali's (2014) notion that foreign systems often prove different from a firm's domestic systems.

In PF's opinion, the difference between him and his domestic counterpart was "like when one twin went up the space station and the other stayed on the ground" (October 17, 2018). Having performed in both domestic and international roles during his lengthy business career, PF suggested that a person's approach and personality tend to differ from the domestic forum to the international one (October 17, 2018). In-person contact with customers, for example, happens less often in the international environment than in the domestic one, which requires international

business leaders to make frequent email and phone contact with foreign clients that their domestic counterparts may not have to rely on making (October 17, 2018).

Some participants even believed their role could not be directly translated in the domestic market. PB remarked about the differences in responsibility division between domestic and international business leaders (September 23, 2018). He and his fellow international business colleague assumed different responsibilities than their domestic peers when they initiated foreign business deals (September 23, 2018).

PE stated that the difference “primarily has to do with the level of training we give to employees who are engaged with international business directly” (October 14, 2018). International business leaders received far greater training on concepts like foreign law, negotiating processes, and how to work with the Department of State and the Department of Commerce (October 14, 2018). PD pointed to the different challenges presented to scheduling labor and managing personnel issues like sick days and performance failures (September 27, 2018).

PA, whose international business roles often involved negotiation with foreign government entities, suggested that an international business leader’s understanding of foreign government protocol was very different from the expectation placed on a domestic counterpart (September 24, 2018). The transferability of terms between nations and governments was difficult to manage (September 24, 2018). The legalism and security protocol surrounding business exchanges with foreign government entities proved complex when compared to domestic business dealings (September 24, 2018). Overall, the participants expressed their international business experience as markedly different from their domestic colleagues.

Literature perception of the foreign environment. Stadler et al. (2015) observed that business's global expansion is more complicated to manage than domestic operations. Western companies have had to overcome tremendous challenges to succeed in foreign countries (Eyring et al., 2011). Many multinational companies simply try to export their domestic models abroad and leave most of their business processes unchanged (Eyring et al., 2011). Consequently, international businesses most struggle with foreign culture, language, supply chain and logistics, political differences and local laws, labor qualifications, and environmental considerations (The Hult School of International Business, 2017; US-Pacific Rim International, Inc., 2010; Ali, 2014; Hill, 2018; Driver, 2017). Additionally, relationship building with regional business allies and government entities proves demanding for international enterprises (US-Pacific Rim International, Inc., 2010; Hill, 2018; Driver, 2017). Foreign systems prove vastly different from domestic systems (Ali, 2014).

A country's culture influences its industries, laws, social issues, political landscape, business processes, and expectations for foreign business dealings. When asked what elements of the foreign environment the participant confronts first, PC and PE immediately and concisely mentioned "culture." PC stated that there is "a greater emphasis on culture when you move to a new foreign market outside your domestic domain" (October 6, 2018). Subsequently, PC remarked that she "need[ed] to do as much work as possible to understand culture, politics, social issues, competitive issues, and the current state of the business" (October 6, 2018). Understanding the culture to this leader was "the biggest element" that was often overlooked by international business people (October 6, 2018). While many individuals tend to perceive politics as a key influencer on international business, PC believed that culture did more to affect the way a country's people views a product's value (October 6, 2018). Being culturally aware

aids business leaders' product design and improves their knowledge of the design's interaction in the foreign marketplace (October 6, 2018).

PE expressed that the "first thing is understanding the culture of the country [the company] is dealing with" (October 14, 2018). We're successful when "we engage with people that are aware of the culture and the business practices and the law of those countries" (October 14, 2018). Culture is critical to understand because as PE remarked, "people from different countries with different cultures tended to carry different expectations about what they should or could receive in business negotiations" (October 14, 2018). Moreover, PE suggested that "if you don't have company employees in those countries then you try to hire consultants to help [the company] work through those unique things, because it's a foreign environment" (October 14, 2018).

PA also commented that the greatest advice she'd give a future business leader about the foreign environment is "to understand the culture" (September 24, 2018). Never assume that terms are the same across foreign lines (September 24, 2018). A people's culture can also affect the perception of influence and decision-making, which can impact efficient and successful business dealings in the foreign environment (September 24, 2018). She credited understanding foreign culture as a critical part of her ability to gain the trust of foreign businesses.

Literature perception on the power of culture on a country's central institutions.

Hummel (2012) suggested that the global companies that stand to experience the most growth in the future are those that master doing business across cultures. This "cross-cultural competence" refers to the way businesses understand and follow the six cultural elements found within the Business Model of Intercultural Analysis (BMIA; Hummel, 2012, para. 6). The six elements of the BMIA are cultural themes, communication, group dynamics, globalization, process

engineering, and time orientation businesses (Hummel, 2012). Cross-cultural differences have been identified as the most significant impediment to successful international operations (Hummel, 2012). Finding a framework to confront cultural differences head-on, like the Business Model of Intercultural Analysis, provides international businesses with a way to leverage the power of culture (Hummel, 2012). Managing overseas operations to increase cross-cultural competence represents a new generation in emergent systems management strategy.

International business leaders compete against the entire world in each foreign environment. Understanding the competition is an important part of any business venture. Participants tended to describe competition in the foreign business operating environment as being global and foreign. Rather than compete against local businesses, PF and PC concerned about international competitors.

PF explained that understanding the competitors in a foreign environment would help shape one's approach and expectation for business dealings with companies within that country (October 17, 2018). For example, PF shared that "in a Middle East market, which might be saturated with European competitors, a U.S.-based company may need to build more relationships, improve cost terms in the contract, and develop better scheduling of the product or service to remain competitive within the environment" (October 17, 2018). Building relationships in these competitive environments may require businesses to behave more creatively and aggressively. PF suggested that one way he has tried to distinguish himself to his clients' trust in this environment is to setup equipment for live demonstrations (October 17, 2018). While live demonstrations can foster trust and earn a business leader credibility, PF lamented that many businesses become stuck in their own comfort zones and miss out on foreign business deals because of their perceived inflexibility and brashness (October 17, 2018).

To counter this complacency, PC recommended that international business leaders should “conduct a modified Porter’s Five Forces Analysis and then interview with people who have been there” to learn about the foreign environment and anticipate external competition (October 6, 2018). Porter’s Five Forces Model challenges a user to analyze the competitiveness of a business environment based on five forces: competition in the industry, potential of new entrants to enter the industry, power of suppliers, power of customers, and the threat of substitute products (Porter, 1980). Moreover, business leaders should learn how to incorporate mixed-experience teams that utilize professionals from various countries and different national backgrounds (October 6, 2018). This diversity of experience and nationality serves to enrich a business team’s professionalism and increase its competitiveness in the foreign environment (October 6, 2018).

Literature differences in perception of foreign competition. Despite globalization’s recent homogenizing effects, which have tended to flatten the world and reduce foreign barriers (Friedman, 2005), some believe that ever-maturing global markets have actually given local cultures greater credence and consequently further fragmented existing consumer and social groups (Barber, 1995). International businesses now confront stronger local marketplaces, which better understand their consumers’ cultural, ethnic, and religious reaction to goods and services (Barber, 1995). Moreover, local firms based in large and fast-growing merging markets have become powerful global competitors to Western multinational enterprises who are accustomed to the higher-cost structures of developed countries (Kumar, 2008).

International businesses with robust proprietary technologies and well-esteemed brands were best-suited to compete with local companies (Jones, 2017). Furthermore, international firms that designed global capabilities with local relevance tended to compete well alongside

local firms (Jones, 2017). Some successful international businesses have even simply emphasized the superior quality of their products and guaranteed their product's unparalleled safety to both consumers and the environment (Jones, 2017).

Successful elements of systems management strategies in the foreign environment.

Desiring to learn about the successful and unsuccessful elements of the participants' systems management strategies in the foreign business environment, the researcher asked each participant to share a systems management strategy he developed and implemented internationally, and how he believed it differed (if any) from solutions developed domestically. Then the researcher asked the participant to describe specific elements of these strategies that were considered successful and unsuccessful in the foreign environment. Answers to this question tended to focus on the successful elements of the leaders' strategies rather than fixate on unsuccessful ones.

Consequently, the responses to these questions helped answer the researcher's minor question: what elements contributed to the successful management of emergent systems in overseas operations?

International business leaders often employ small, focused, and project-based teams to operate overseas rather than relying on permanent individuals or large-scale groups. PA, PB, PC, PE, and PF all shared their experiences working for small teams in overseas business operations. Despite representing much larger corporations back home, these participants worked in project-based teams under a limited scope of time to achieve corporate goals for the designated project.

PA worked with teams to provide defense and aerospace solutions to foreign governments and reported that the focus of these teams and member composition often changed after a job was finished so the team could recombine new, more qualified human resources to

approach a different foreign customer (September 24, 2018). PB served alongside corporate teams to negotiate foreign manufacturing contracts (September 23, 2018). His role was portable and quickly useable across team lines. PC helped develop various technology solutions for foreign companies across southeast Asia, even as the teams representing these solutions often disbanded or regrouped under different guidance and with different human and financial resources (October 6, 2018). PE usually aided engineering contracts and supply chain issues pertaining to specific corporate projects overseas (October 14, 2018). He felt largely responsible for guaranteeing the legal processes required by the U.S. government were dealt with promptly without causing delays to overseas operations. PF developed surveillance systems that incorporated specific company equipment to solve exact foreign requests for such tech solutions (October 17, 2018). His role required him to develop creative solutions for foreign tech and surveillance requests and guide the foreign sales team to support the eventual business solution.

Literature perception of international business presence overseas. As organizations become increasingly aware of their connectedness to each other and to their emergent global environment (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010), they seek to balance their traditional, planned, structural change methods with the unpredictability and emergence of new approaches (Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009). This notion serves as the premise of McChrystal et al.'s (2015) best-selling book, *Team of Teams*, which suggested that small, agile, and highly-specialized teams could move quickly and respond to an emergent environment faster than traditional, bureaucratic leadership hierarchies.

The team of teams concept came to flourish as state of the art training and military technology had been marginalized by deficiencies in the organizational structure of the U.S. military (McChrystal et al., 2015). Highly centralized leadership responsibilities and slow

feedback loops between battlefield commanders and executive decision-makers abroad made gaining an advantage against their high-speed, well-coordinated, terrorist enemies difficult (McChrystal et al., 2015). While Menkes (2011) lamented that 21st-century business leaders still developed reductionist solutions to complex problems despite this type of thinking's practical limitations, U.S. military leaders, like General McChrystal propelled a new way of thinking about organizational leadership overseas—one that employed small, focused, project-centered teams to complete the mission.

Understanding both country-level and industry-level issues is required of international business leaders in the foreign environment. PA, PC, and PE shared the importance of their roles in learning both country-level and industry-level elements of the foreign environment. PA found that defining military challenges in a foreign country became complicated due to basic misunderstanding in national terminology. She commented that “concepts are not always defined in the same way... before making assumptions, basic questions need to be asked to ensure full understanding of the foreign government” (September 24, 2018). “Terms do not always cross foreign lines,” so a business leader must pay attention to the delivery and interpretation of basic business terminology (September 24, 2018). Consequently, PA learned it was critical to ask basic questions about language and culture prior to making assumptions about the nature of the business relationship.

Similarly, PC lamented the importance of focusing on industry-level and country-level problems to supply the best solution for the foreign partner. Specifically, a business leader “on the international level [is] going to have to understand regulatory prep, issues, requirements, business practices of a country... which could include business and economic, cultural issues as much as regulatory ones” (October 6, 2018). Sometimes the eventual technology solution

prepared and sold by this business leader to a particular foreign company would be constrained by the country's economic, cultural, and regulatory environment. As PC quickly alluded, however, "you allow for that in your design, you plan for that in your design, and you may consider that you can't respond to those issues in the product itself and so it become a limitation, not a technology matter...all of these things have to be thought through in our work" (October 6, 2018).

PE remarked that the legal process between the U.S. government and foreign companies overseas is highly legalistic and often burdensomely bureaucratic. "There are so many gotchas in this [international business] world," he remarked (October 14, 2018). "It's a very political process," he continued (October 14, 2018). The bureaucratic nature of business dealings overseas is often slow and "very painful" (October 14, 2018). PE suggested that understanding the legalistic process of international business, preparing for the foreign country's laws, and learning about the foreign company's business practice can save time and money by preventing costly delays and lost economic opportunity costs (October 14, 2018).

Literature perception of learning and understanding the foreign environment. Kelly (2015) suggested that companies often struggle globally because they do not conduct comprehensive market research to determine where their company should expand. They do not develop an effective global market entry strategy (Kelly, 2015). Navigating today's economy relies on organizations' ability to learn, innovate, and "internationalize" (Chiva et al., 2014, p. 687). The modern economy challenges organizations to continually breaking down physical and non-physical barriers to employ novelty and behavior modification to operations (Chiva et al., 2014). The traditional way of thinking of organizational growth as a linear connection between learning, innovation, and internationalization (Alegre & Chiva, 2008; Molero, 1998) has given

way to an appreciation for the evolution of these relationships (Chiva et al., 2014). Chiva et al. (2014) assert that the evolving organizational concepts of learning, innovation, and internationalization “require us to move beyond linear causality, reductionism and determinism, to adopt a new, more complex and holistic paradigm” (p. 688).

Integrating local presence into project teams is critical to learning cultural expectations and building trust in the foreign environment. PA, PB, PC, and PE shared the importance of developing strong local contacts and incorporating talented local business people into their business teams in the foreign business environment. PA and PC suggested that most foreign companies will find a complete U.S.-supported business solution alarming and may insist on their local contractors or subcontractors to assist in parts of the business arrangement (September 24, 2018; October 6, 2018). To build credibility in these foreign markets, PA and PC believed that incorporating highly-talented foreign representatives within their project teams helped to establish credibility, gain a trusting relationship, and increase business productivity (September 24, 2018; October 6, 2018). “When we were building a business in Asia we were really doing well when we hired locals really well.” PC remarked (October 6, 2018). PA shared a similar perspective, “when it came time to start to work with the Australians, we integrated the Australian team from the start, and supplemented them with others to cover gaps” (September 24, 2018).

PE preferred to maintain company employees who are familiar with the local culture and foreign environment stationed overseas (October 14, 2018). When corporate infrastructure overseas cannot support stationing employees permanently in the foreign environment, PE suggested “you try to hire consultants to help” (October 14, 2018). These consultants can embed themselves in the corporate team for a period of time to help advise the team of the country’s

unique culture, business processes, and local laws (PC, October 6, 2018). It is necessary to have local assistance because “it is a foreign environment” and “almost everyone’s country is different” (PE, October 14, 2018).

Literature perception of internationalization of foreign business operations. The 21st century is being hailed as one of unprecedented change as businesses conduct operations on an unparalleled global scale (Kanter, 1999). Liebhart and Lorenzo (2010) found that today’s global companies understand their interconnectedness in the evolving international environment. To successfully operate in this new environment, organizations must accept a learning culture that addresses growth and internationalization (Chiva et al., 2014). International businesses are increasingly relying on the knowledge and expertise of local teams to lead their company through matters of global logistics and sales and marketing strategies in the foreign environment (Kelly, 2015).

Building relationships on a business and personal level delivers a competitive advantage overseas. PA, PC, PE, and PF each described the importance of building relationships in foreign countries to maintain a competitive advantage in that business environment. PA found it especially important to develop local contracting relationships to support overseas initiatives and build trust with local companies (September 24, 2018). “In most foreign countries, having a relationship is critical. Business is not even discussed until a relationship is established, which validates credibility and establishes trust.” PA stated (September 24, 2018).

PC expressed the significance of developing credible and trustworthy relationships with foreign clients. She remarked, “the only way to penetrate the [foreign] market is to do it through local markets, and to do that you have to build credibility” (October 6, 2018). To build

credibility, PC remarked that it is as simple as “saying what you do and doing what you say... if you do what you say, you’ll earn credibility and respect in that market” (October 6, 2018). PC continued, “probably the most important thing in any relationship, foreign or domestic, is trust... and you earn that” (October 6, 2018).

PE believed that international business leaders “build relationships [because] it’s a very political process...[the company] is trying to get into establishing relationships with a certain country to gain a type of advantage... just by trying to establish a relationship”(October 14, 2018). PF described the biggest challenge to succeeding in the foreign environment is “developing a good relationship”, which can be difficult when “you don’t visit company more than once per year” (October 7, 2018). It is important to “establish relationships with key people, not only technically from a business standpoint but also personally,” PF commented (October 17, 2018). PF continued, “be a person that is approachable, trustworthy...the more interest you can show in the person...[that] makes you more natural to them, so they’re more comfortable with you” (October 17, 2018).

Literature perception of importance of relationship-building in international business.

Aarikka-Stenroos et al. (2018) found certain “initiations” to play an important role when firms enter a new geographical market (p. 76). Primarily, firms need to build trust and commitment, learn about each other, overcome geographic and cultural distance, gain information, and employ relationships to become a country insider (Aarikka-Stenroo et al., 2018). Establishing social contacts in the foreign environment increases international bonds and improves foreign market opportunities (Aarikka-Stenroos et al., 2018). Moreover, personally and professionally grounded contacts in the international business environment allows companies to assess the counterpart’s competence, demonstrate credibility, and show cultural understanding (Mainela, 2007). These

social contacts serve as the initial basis for developing formal international business relationships (Su et al., 2009).

The relationship to the first major research question. The researcher developed two major research questions, which sought to reveal key insights that would answer the project's problem statement. Here the author addresses the relationship the data shares with the first major research question: what is the lived experience of international business leaders who have recently managed emergent systems in overseas operations? Overall, the researcher found that participants spoke positively about business dealings in the foreign environment and tried to focus on successful and beneficial strategies to confront unique elements of the foreign business operating environment. Participants shared their lived experience in terms of describing the foreign business operating environment and the elements that successfully contributed to their systems management strategies in that environment.

From the first minor question, which sought to describe the emergent business operating in the foreign environment, the researcher found that participants viewed the environment as significantly different from the domestic environment. In this environment, participants identified with the notion that culture played an important role in shaping a country's industry, business practices, and social issues. Moreover, participants perceived competition as uniquely intense and stemming from global rivals rather than from local marketplaces in the foreign environment. The essence of the foreign operating environment could be described as different from the domestic, deeply influenced by local cultures, and diversely competitive. An overview of the findings relevant to the first minor question can be viewed below in Table 1: *Descriptions of the Emergent Business Operating Environment in a Foreign Country*.

Table 1

<i>Descriptions of the Emergent Business Operating Environment in a Foreign Country</i>			
Source	Industry or Sector Represented	Foreign and Domestic Role Differences	1 st Elements Confronted in Foreign Environment
PA	Defense & Aerospace	Understanding of procurement process differs; culture and relationship-building; competition	Descriptions of military challenges and budgetary constraints of foreign clients/governments; identify decision makers and build relationships
PB	Manufacturing	Division of responsibilities different from foreign and domestic; supply chain	Have trusted U.S. interpreter for foreign negotiations; do not trust foreign clients
PC	Technology/Electronics	Understanding of foreign business requirements, regulatory environment, cultural issues; relationships; foreign competition	Understand client company's core business, culture, and regulatory environment; understand competitive issues
PD	Airlines	Management of manpower; effect on personnel scheduling	Understand communication methods
PE	Defense & Aerospace	Level of training regarding foreign law, negotiation; culture	Culture, legal process and foreign law/negotiations; relationship-building
PF	Technology	Frequency of visits with customers: domestic is more often, foreign is less; foreign law and regulations, culture; competition	Developing good relationships, both business and personal; understand major competitors in country
Scholarly Literature		Vastly difference from domestic; culture heavily influences country's institutions; business competition is strongest locally and from emerging markets	Must "internationalize" and learn environment to grow; build relationships with clients and employ local consultants/advisors

From the second minor question, which sought to reveal the successful elements of the business leaders' systems management strategies in the foreign environment, the researcher found that participants usually worked in small, focused, and project-based teams, understood the country-level and company-level elements of the environment, relied on locals to augment teams' credibility and cultural awareness, and built relationships to earn trust and enduring business contacts. Participants rarely focused on unsuccessful elements of management strategy. Rather, they turned the question into an experiential-based lesson about what does work in the foreign environment. The essence of successful systems management strategies in the foreign

business operating environment could be summarized as using small, project-based teams, preparing for country-level and company-level elements of the foreign environment, and relying on local professionals and a network of relationships to gain credibility and earn the trust of their foreign business clients. An overview of the findings relevant to the second minor question can be viewed below in Table 2.

Table 2

Successful Elements of Systems Management Strategies in the Foreign Environment

Source	Industry or Sector Represented	Difference between Foreign and Domestic SMS	Successfully Employed Elements of SMS
PA	Defense & Aerospace	Used small team; basic misunderstandings of terms overseas requiring clarification;	Build relationships with clients and local advisors
PB	Manufacturing	Small team; supply chain more difficult overseas; quality assurance and manufacturing very challenging to manage	Implemented U.S.-veteran hiring program for U.S.-based manufacturing
PC	Technology/Electronics	Used project-based, small team; country-level and country-level issues must be understood; understand client's country/governmental constraints	Incorporate local professionals into team; gain trust of client by building credible solutions and demonstrating respect
PD	Airlines	A part of a large overseas base with permanent presence; speed of communication and management of personnel	Delegation of responsibility; clear communication
PE	Defense & Aerospace	Small team; must understand foreign legal process well; use local consultants or based employees to help team	Building relationships with clients, local consultants, and permanently based employees is critical to success
PF	Technology	Small traveling teams; managing overseas operations difficult because teams do not visit countries/clients often throughout the year	Use frequent email/phone correspondence to maintain client relationships
Scholarly Literature		Use of teams in international business is a common theme	Learn culture; use expertise of local teams; establish client trust

Philosophies that underlie business leaders' systems management strategies.

Pursuing the essence of how international business leaders think about business operations in the foreign environment, the researcher asked participants to give examples of systems management

strategies they have developed and employed overseas. Additionally, the researcher challenged participants to reveal what advice they would extend to other international business leaders as well as what mistakes they would discourage them from making. The responses to these questions helped answer the researcher's minor question: what philosophies underlie business leaders' selection of reductionist and emergent management strategies?

Understand the foreign culture—do not cling to home country culture too firmly. PC believed that most international business leaders overlook the effect culture has on companies who try to deliver a product or service in a foreign country. “Politics is what most people are thinking they need to immediately understand,” but “I think there is a greater emphasis on culture when you move to a new foreign market outside your domestic domain,” she said (personal communication, October 6, 2018). It is necessary to study foreign culture prior to entering the country. About doing business with foreign clients, PC suggested, “read all the news about them, understand the core business they are in, and understand the culture, business culture that they have” (personal communication, October 6, 2018).

PC also shared how something as simple as dress code can prevent a successful business encounter. She remarked, “if you’re traversing the world, make sure you have the right combination of clothing so no matter what kind of culture you’re going to walk into you can dress appropriately because other it can take away everything else.... You can’t have a conversation if you’re improperly dressed” (personal communication, October 6, 2018). For example, a female from a U.S.-based company dressed in traditional Western-attire may be perceived as too loose or unprofessional in an Islamic-centered country like Kuala Lumpur (personal communication, October 6, 2018). Perceived conduct and appearance, like dress code, can prove critical to successful business engagements in the foreign environment.

PA and PF both suggested that business leaders from international companies, especially U.S.-based international companies, should try not to impose its country's way or process on the foreign client (personal communication, September 24, 2018; October 17, 2018). For instance, PA suggested that on a joint U.S.-U.K. project, it became obvious that the U.K. entity relied on the U.S. technology but conspicuously resented the reliance. To mitigate the tension, PA's team hired local contractors to work on the U.S. firm's behalf alongside the U.K. company. The U.K. company more readily accepted the U.S. firm's technological solutions when they realized they would be implemented by local, U.K. contractors without being constantly reminded (personal communication, September 24, 2018). The national tension did not bother PA who remarked that "imposing our process, solution, knowledge, cost, and operations" would be a mistake (personal communication, September 24, 2018). She clarified this point, "we enter a foreign country to support them, not direct the outcome" (personal communication, September 24, 2018).

Well-funded, technologically vaunted countries like the U.S. can come across as brash and prideful, which can turn off foreign clients and act as a barrier to a trusting business relationship (PF, October 17, 2018). PF recommended that international business leaders "lose any big pride you might have. That's the first step...don't be so American" (personal communication, October 17, 2018). Rather than spending too much effort selling a foreign client on one's home country strength and culture, PE advised leaders "to talk a little bit about [the foreign country's] local events... to engage a little bit" (personal communication, October 17, 2018). Ultimately, PA, PC, PE, and PF each shared that international business leaders' understanding of foreign culture was important to successful business engagement overseas.

Literature perception of corporate culture awareness. In 2016, the Global Human Capital Trends survey found that 82% of respondents believed that culture represented a potential competitive advantage in international business (Kaplan et al., 2016). Since culture represents the system of values, beliefs, and behaviors that influence the way work is done in an organization, it is not surprising that 87% of surveyed respondents consider culture important (Kaplan et al., 2016). Despite being viewed as important, many corporate employees do not understand their own culture. Only 28% of respondents admitted to understanding their culture well (Kaplan et al., 2016).

New culture assessment tools have emerged in business, which have enabled companies to diagnose their culture using a variety of proven models (Kaplan et al., 2016). Businesses can now use these tools to understand and improve their culture. The importance of culture in the workplace has inspired companies to proactively define what culture means to their company (Kaplan et al., 2016). Consequently, as employees clearly understand their company's culture, they begin to understand who the company hires, who gets promoted, and what behaviors will be rewarded with compensation or promotion (Kaplan et al., 2016). Culture is the proverbial glue that binds individuals and teams of individuals to their business's central goals.

Establish trust through building relationships and involving the local community. The most common piece of advice given by the participants was to focus on building local relationships in the foreign business operating environment. The term "relationships" proved a frequently cited and often recalled concept that spanned a variety of interview questions.

PA, PC, PE, and PF believed that developing local business contacts and integrating local professional talent into business teams was an effective way to gain the trust of foreign clients. PA, PC, and PE viewed the learning of foreign culture as an important precursor to building

relationships. PE specifically stated that using local professional consultants was an important way for companies to learn about a foreign client's culture and subsequently earn that client's trust by demonstrating a respect for local culture (personal communication, October 14, 2018).

PF said that the biggest challenge to developing successful systems management strategies in the foreign environment was "developing a good relationship" (personal communication, October 17, 2018). Since international business leaders do not personally meet with foreign clients that often throughout the year, establishing relationships can prove difficult. Fostering personal and professional relationships with foreign clients creates familiarity and builds trust between the business leader and his foreign client (October 17, 2018). Furthermore, PF shared the importance of learning about local social issues and current events impacting the client's community. "Just try to be approachable, trustworthy, focused... learn a little bit about their country... a little bit about their local events because it truly is an international world" (personal communication, October 14, 2018). These acts typically led to PF's company building professional credibility, increasing its approachability, and earning the trust of the foreign client.

For PC, earning trust with a foreign client is achieved by learning as much as she can about the client's environment, which includes social, economic, legal, and industrial issues. This knowledge helps her "guide the conversation much better, and that means more questions and listening well... to give back to the customer an understanding and attitude of someone that can help you with that problem" (personal communication, October 6, 2018). According to PC, trust is not simply received by representing a trustworthy brand. "You get the value of the brand walking in the door before you, but you have to deliver on that brand. You have to be approachable after that" (personal communication, October 6, 2018).

PC also pursued the integration of local professionals within her international business teams to foster foreign trust. “When we were building a business in Asia, we were doing really well when we hired locals really well” (personal communication, October 6, 2018). “This is because foreign clients tend to appreciate diverse business teams that include local professionals” (personal communication, October 6, 2018).

Literature perception of the value of building domestic relationships in the foreign environment. Montoro-Sanchez et al. (2018) found that international businesses, especially small to medium-sized businesses, benefited the most from establishing domestic relationships in the foreign environment. Businesses that developed family contacts, informal social connections, and technological and institutional relationships increased value for their company’s international business (Montoro-Sanchez et al., 2018). Embedding themselves into “domestic clusters,” international businesses that were able to become centrally located amidst a dense collection of domestic contacts were more likely to succeed in building international partnerships in the foreign environment (p. 728). Developing local contacts and strong community connections within the foreign environment enables international businesses to acquire valuable knowledge exchanges and manage the international process more competitively than companies whose networks are less developed (Molina-Morales & Martinez-Fernandez, 2010).

Business leaders’ assumptions about the emergent nature of overseas operations.

Seeking to collect international business leaders’ perspective on how their management strategies interacted with their foreign business environment, the researcher asked participants to share their opinions of how their strategies affected collateral business processes. Moreover, participants were asked how lessons learned from their strategies affected their future systems

management strategies. The insights gained from these questions helped answer the researcher's minor question: what assumptions do business leaders make about the emergent nature of overseas operations that may affect the development of their management strategies?

Business solutions, especially technological ones, must consider end-to-end impacts on the foreign company. PA, PC, and PF remarked about the limited budgets and financial constraints that often plague foreign companies. Consequently, companies doing business in the foreign environment must consider the end-to-end delivery of their products and services.

PC stated that “observing changes in the business processes is a part of the calculus... we’re not really developing a point solution and walking out without considering a systematic view of the work... we try to get the whole job done from start to finish” (personal communication, October 6, 2018). Her firm was responsible for replacing aspects of a job with something new or eliminating steps altogether. Providing the client with an effective business solution required her team to “measure the value creation and importance” of each step (personal communication, October 6, 2018). She continued, “we use the job to be done and the interaction with other jobs to be done in the end-to-end process to understand what else we could be disrupting when we make a change somewhere in that value chain or production chain” (personal communication, October 6, 2018). In so doing, PC believes that transparency in the end-to-end sale of a product builds goodwill between the companies and develops trusting business relationships. She even conceded, “we may not be able to solve the problem, but it’s identified to the customer and the customer builds it into their work plan” (personal communication, October 6, 2018).

PA shared a story about a U.K. company who desired hardware and software technology solutions. After reviewing the U.S.-based tech solution, however, it became clear to the U.K.-

based company that software changes were more sophisticated and costlier to the company's existing infrastructure than originally anticipated. The U.K. company had to redefine its desired business solution and reengage with the U.S.-based company to satisfy its limited budget and desired tech solution goals (personal communication, September 24, 2018).

PF and PC suggested that delivering end-to-end impacts of a product or service often endears the client to the company and gives a sustaining competitive advantage to the company for future business even if it means losing the current negotiation (personal communication, October 17, 2018; October 6, 2018). PF remarked, "you have to be pretty helpful to the customer because they don't always have the experience or technical background that might be required to understand such a system or the challenges with it" (personal communication, October 17, 2018). "Help[ing] them be successful gives them a better feeling for you," he continued (personal communication, October 17, 2018). PF opined that "you're not there to sell a product, you're there to help them solve a problem," which "in some cases, doesn't involve your product" (personal communication, October 17, 2018). While it is exhausting to develop a solution only to be rejected, PF advised, "maybe they don't work with you this time, but they come back to you next time...the best strategy is to be very open and honest and develop a trusting relationship with the customer" (personal communication, October 17, 2018).

Literature perception of end-to-end business considerations. Businesses attempt to successfully manage a host of internal and external organizational and process interdependencies (Dynes, 2008). The way business infrastructure elements, like information technology or supply chain management, work together represents the emergent properties inherent in today's business processes (Dynes, 2008). Business risks materialize from these emergent properties and challenge managers' usual lack of understanding of the interdependencies and consequences of

various business infrastructure elements (Dynes, 2008). Improving business processes continues to challenge business leaders (Jurisch et al., 2016). Improvements to business processes come with collateral risks. Gemino et al. (2008) proposed that these business process risks can be better understood by separating those risks into two different categories: a priori risk factors and emergent risk factors. A priori risks refer to those that can be estimated before a project begins, such as budget, duration, or inexperience of the team and later. Emergent risks denote those that can evolve during a project, such as a client manager or executive sponsor change (Jurisch et al., 2016). These risk factors result in different degrees of organizational change and can reveal various business solutions (Jurisch et al., 2016).

Supply chain management proves exceptionally challenging for overseas business operations. PB, PC, PE, and PF commented on the difficulty of managing supply chains in overseas operations. PE remarked about how sometimes his company wanted to export something but “the government would say A-Y is okay, but not Z. So we would have to develop something else or put something else into the supply chain” (personal communication, October 14, 2018). According to PE, supply chain management is laden with government restriction, provisos, and caveats. Moreover, “supply chain quality operation involves teaching another country how to build something,” which he considered a difficult business endeavor (personal communication, October 14, 2018).

PF said that legal clearances for the exchange of goods, services, and ideas was very difficult between the U.S. government and a foreign government (personal communication, October 14, 2018). Moreover, when developing business solutions with foreign companies, PF lamented that simple additions or changes to the existing supply chain usually required U.S. government approval and incurred extra bureaucratic processes (personal communication,

October 14, 2018). For international companies, the legalism surrounding the supply chain can dramatically slow down the exchange of goods and services between countries.

PB, who specialized in managing manufacturing contracts for overseas business operations, expressed how changes in manufacturing contracts can severely impact foreign supply chains (personal communication, September 23, 2018). Moreover, the reliability of foreign labor and external local support proved difficult to monitor for quality. PB shared concerns about shipping issues, quality assurance, fluctuations in material integrity of products, offset negotiations, and credibility of licenses for contracted foreign support (personal communication, September 23, 2018).

PC's firm provided business solutions that sought to improve a client's workflow or supply chain by utilizing one or more of the following three strategies: adding or eliminating process steps, using technological tools in place of human-based processes, and/or inventing new value-creating processes (personal communication, October 6, 2018). Throughout these business propositions, PC asserted the importance of identifying disruptions to the production chain and the value chain when designing business solutions for a foreign client (personal communication, October 6, 2018). "We look at the way we're creating value in terms of looking at the product problem area, and we measure the value creation and how important it is relative to other things" (personal communication, October 6, 2018).

Literature perception of the complexity of modern supply chain management. The various complex and adaptive interdependencies observed within the supply chain prove a critical phenomenon to be understood by managers (Ritter et al., 2004). Bradbury (2002, as cited in Janssen, 2003) remarked: "The character of a modelled complex adaptive system is embedded in the fine detail of the many entities and their interactions, not in the gross pattern of a few

strong linkages” (p. 54). By studying the fine details of the supply chain, managers can become aware of the indirect effects that interventions in one part of a supply chain have on another part (Ritter et al., 2004). Choi and Hong (2002) encouraged supply chain managers “to understand the structure of supply networks and be able to build theories of supply networks” (p. 491). Managers of today’s supply chain networks must have a more complete understanding of what the supply chain really is and conceptualize how it works.

Foreign clients expect relationship-building to occur before business deals commence.

PA, PB, PC, PE, and PF referred to the importance of relationship-building as a precursor to successful international business engagements. PA remarked, “in most foreign countries, having a relationship is critical... business is not even discussed until a relationship is established which validates credibility and establishes trust” (personal communication, September 23, 2018). In some countries, favors must be granted when doing business. Other countries “have an unwritten rule that the business be consummated via a local business to which you are a subcontractor,” which means that “it’s imperative to understand the local in-country process for doing business” (personal communication, September 23, 2018).

PC expressed that the company’s brand equity might assist an international business leader with receiving an introduction with a client in a foreign environment but “delivering on that brand... you have to be approachable after that” (personal communication, October 6, 2018). PC found “you don’t want to come in and start doing all the talking... [instead] walk in with the essence of the research you’ve done...ask some soft open-ended questions in the beginning, which is going to allow your customer to talk and express themselves and tell you what they want you to know” (personal communication, October 6, 2018). Even cultural nuances, like

dress code, can impede a business introduction. PC recalled, “you can’t have a conversation if you’re improperly dressed” (personal communication, October 6, 2018).

When asked what advice he would give to other international business leaders about preparing systems management strategies in the foreign environment, PF said it was essential that leaders “connect” with the foreign client (personal communication, October 17, 2018). “Focus... learn a little bit about their country.” Using foreign language, understanding client culture, and learning about local events demonstrates interest in your customer and inspires trust (personal communication, October 17, 2018). PF continued, “the more interest you can show in the person...that makes you more natural to them, so they’re more comfortable with you” (personal communication, October 17, 2018). PE added that because people all over the world are inherently different, building relationships was important for companies to learn the foreign client’s expectations for business contracts and negotiations. “[The client] doesn’t think like we do, their expectations are different, and it drives us” (personal communication, October 14, 2018).

For PB, relationship-building was found to be very difficult. He stated that he often could “not trust any of what foreign clients said and only half of what they write” in their contracts (personal communication, September 23, 2018). Even this counter position cements the concept that relationship-building and client trust prove a vital foundation to systems management strategies employed in the foreign environment.

Literature perspective on trusted relationships as a bedrock for successful international business. Backaler (2018) suggested that companies expanding into foreign markets needed to gain the trust of local business partners and prospective customers to succeed. The chief way to build this trust is to send executives to meet with the foreign clients to build personal

relationships and to hire location distribution partners to represent their products overseas (Backaler, 2018). An international business leader's personal credibility is his greatest asset in building trust during these foreign interactions (Carucci, 2018). Credibility lends itself to forging a mutual respect, which is considered the fastest way to establishing individual relationships (Carucci, 2018). While global business models change, trusted relationships in the foreign environment remain constant (Backaler, 2018). Research confirms that presenting oneself as someone who possesses trustworthy characteristics helps build strong relationships fast (Carucci, 2018).

The relationship to the second major research question. The researcher developed two major research questions, which sought to reveal key insights that would answer the project's problem statement. Here the author addresses the relationship the data shares with the second major research question: what types of systems management strategies were being employed by international business leaders in their foreign emergent business environment? Participants shared their systems management philosophies and provided general assumptions about the foreign business operating environment. Overall, the researcher found that participants used terms like "culture," "relationship," "trust," "credibility," and "competition" most often. Participants most frequently cited the importance of building local relationships to gain credibility and earn the trust of their foreign clients.

From the first minor question, which sought to describe the philosophies that underlie business leaders' selection of reductionist and emergent management strategies, the researcher found that participants gave significant thought to how business processes affected each other as well as considering how their individual presence was perceived by foreign clients. A majority of participants spoke of the importance of learning about foreign culture and often perceived

cultural understanding as an important foundation in building trusting business relationships. Moreover, trust was signaled as a key element of developing successful management strategies.

Participants cited building relationships with locals and the foreign community as the most common way to build trust with foreign clients. Incorporating local professionals into international business teams was also a frequently cited method of developing trust and gaining credibility with foreign clients. The essence of the systems management strategies employed by these international business leaders could be described as culturally conscientious and intentionally aware of social networking and relationship building in the foreign environment. An overview of the findings relevant to the first minor question can be viewed below in Table 3.

Table 3

Philosophies that Underlie Business Leaders' Systems Management Strategies

Source	Industry or Sector Represented	Advice for Employing SMS Overseas	Mistakes to Avoid when Employing SMS
PA	Defense & Aerospace	Understand culture; build trust and relationships	Don't impose home country's way or process on foreign client
PB	Manufacturing	Depend on U.S. firms for must-have components; don't trust what foreign clients say or write	Do not depend on foreign country for specific parts; have audit process in-country
PC	Technology/Electronics	Understand competitive environment; learn client's culture; gain knowledge about the foreign country	Don't shy away from building local networks and employing local talent; diversify teams
PD	Airlines	Delegate responsibility and make strong personal contacts	Start each day fresh and set aside the previous day's preconceptions or challenges
PE	Defense & Aerospace	Implement employee training for the U.S./foreign legal process; understand country's culture	Do not forget to engage with people that are aware of the culture, business practices, and law of the client's country
PF	Technology	Be approachable to clients; engage with client and show interest in them and their environment	Don't underestimate the way the competitive environment may shape the demand for relationships; Often requires more/stronger

Scholarly Literature	Learn about foreign and corporate culture; build local relationships	relationships in foreign country The value of domestic relationships often overlooked; local contacts and strong community connections improves international business
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From the second minor question, which sought to explore what assumptions business leaders made about the emergent nature of overseas operations that may affect the development of their management strategies, the researcher found that participants usually considered the end-to-end impacts of their business solutions on the foreign client, concerned about the complex nature of managing the supply chain in the foreign environment, and sought trusting relationships with foreign clients. Participants were very aware of the way their product or service affected other business processes and even expressed that when their product proves highly disruptive to the foreign clients' business processes, the participants would offer to develop solutions to remedy the disruptions. Of large concern to many participants is the complex nature of the supply chain in the foreign environment. Most participants simply spoke to the supply chain's complexity as a difficult mechanism to influence, while one participant dryly conceded that companies should consider domestic sourcing for manufacturing and production to avoid the hassle of overseas supply chain challenges.

All participants mentioned the importance of developing strong personal and business relationships with foreign clients prior to commencing business deals. Establishing credibility and building trust with the foreign client was assumed to carry a significant competitive advantage over other companies with fewer or weaker relationships. The essence of the assumptions made by international business leaders about the emergent nature of their overseas operations could be summarized as being aware of product disruptions to foreign business

processes, anticipating complex challenges to foreign supply chain management, and developing strong working relationships with foreign clients. An overview of the findings relevant to the first minor question can be viewed below in Table 4.

Table 4

Business Leaders' Assumptions about the Emergent Nature of Overseas Operations

Source	Industry or Sector Represented	Perception of Management Strategy Influence on Foreign Environment	Lessons Learned to use in Future SMS
PA	Defense & Aerospace	Develop transparent solutions that consider client/country constraints	Integrate local presence into team; relationships must be built before business is begun
PB	Manufacturing	Supply chain can be impacted by nearly everything to include port closures, certification audits, product manufacturing timelines, and quality assurance processes	Move manufacturing to the U.S.
PC	Technology/Electronics	Must consider end-to-end impacts of business solutions; important to share business solution impacts with client	Understand culture; establish strong business relationship with client
PD	Airlines	A loss or re-scheduling of manpower can greatly impact other operations	Clear communication and delegation of responsibilities
PE	Defense & Aerospace	Supply chain management strained overseas; legal clearances from home and foreign countries challenge processes	Train employees about legal requirements in home and foreign country; develop local contacts with consultants or rely on overseas employees
PF	Technology	Must understand how components fits into greater solutions and be able to explain it	Build trust by selling client on a solution rather than a product; a trusting relationship will inspire future contracts
Scholarly Literature		Improving business processes creates chain reactions, which affect other collateral processes; defining types of process risk important for successful improvement; supply chain management considered very difficult overseas	Building trusted relationships is bedrock for successful international business; a leader's credibility inspires mutual respect and fast relationship

Summary of the Findings

The researcher found that the data generated from interviews with six international business leaders from various industries produced four thematic categories: (a) descriptions of the emergent business operating environment in the foreign country, (b) successful elements of systems management strategies in the foreign environment, (c) philosophies that underlie international business leaders' systems management strategies, and (d) business leaders' assumptions about the emergent nature of overseas operations. Supported through illustrative, narrative-based descriptions from senior managers and executives, these themes revealed significant discussions about culture's importance on the foreign environment, business leaders need to gain trust through relationship-building in the foreign environment, and companies' development of products and business solutions that considered the emergent effects of the foreign environment. These descriptions were triangulated through scholarly literature reviews, which sought to compare and contrast participants' responses against a broader academic context. The resulting data answered the project's two major research questions and four minor research questions. Moreover, the qualitative data analysis yielded an academically enriching addition to the greater body of work on the emergence phenomenon and the international systems management strategies employed to address the phenomenon.

Applications to Professional Practice

The research sought to resolve the general and specific problem stated at the beginning of the project. The responses to these problems provide the international business practitioner with key insights for professional practice. Included in this section are four central concepts for today's international business leader to consider: (a) international leaders experience emergence in the foreign environment, (b) business leaders consider competition inconsistently in the

foreign environment, (c) relationship-building is critical for building trust in the foreign environment, and (d) successful international business leaders account for emergence in their products and business solutions. Moreover, the researcher explores the implication of the findings in relation to the project's biblical framework, which proposed that foreign emergent behaviors place exceptional strains on disciples seeking to fulfill Jesus's Great Commission.

Findings in relation to the general problem. The general problem, which was to study how emergent systems influence international business leaders' management strategies for overseas operations, took root in Stadler et al.'s (2015) assertion that most global companies did not possess the right management capabilities to make overseas movement profitable. Management as a philosophy, however, proved an evolving concept in the modern international business environment. The premise that management strategies were evolving overseas was founded with McChrystal et al. (2015) and Menkes (2011), whose research suggested that 21st-century management had evolved from reductionism to emergence. Emergence, which refers to the unpredictable interconnectedness of systems, procedures, and activities (Fisher, 2003), was viewed as a complex and growing field of management study (Debenham, 2006). In fact, Comstock (2016) foresaw emergent management as a necessity in the current era, which required organizations to unify around information flows and empowered individuals. Moreover, Baumgartner and Korhonen (2010) pressed the reader to consider emergence within the context of intensifying globalization in the modern era, which has challenged business leaders in the successful expansion of international operations and development of global partnerships.

International business leaders experience emergence in the foreign environment. In response to the general problem, the data affirmed two notions. First, emergence is a phenomenon that effects international business processes. Participants of the study repeatedly

pointed to the importance of understanding a foreign country's culture, law, supply chain, politics, legal processes, social issues, and business processes to lead successful overseas operations. These elements match almost verbatim the researcher's initial literature study, which revealed multiple types of foreign emergent systems. A variety of sources indicated that international businesses tended to struggle most with emergent systems like foreign culture, language, supply chain and logistics, political differences and local laws, labor qualifications, and environmental considerations (Ali, 2014; Driver, 2017; Hill, 2018; The Hult School of International Business, 2017; US-Pacific Rim International, Inc., 2010). Moreover, participants frequently referred to the challenging but ever-important emergent concept of relationship-building as a way to succeed in their foreign environment. Driver (2017) and Hill (2018) remarked that relationship building with regional business allies and government entities proved demanding for international enterprises.

Business leaders perceive competition inconsistently in the foreign environment.

Second, international competition creates uneven emergent behaviors in the foreign environment. Participants tended to view competition as international and external to their overseas business operations. Consistently, these business leaders described their competition as foreign rivals who came from outside the client's country.

This perception, however, may run contrary to contemporary literature, which suggested that local competition now intensely challenges international business. Barber (1995) first observed that international businesses confronted stronger local marketplaces, which better understood their consumers' cultural, ethnic, and religious reaction to goods and services. Friedman (2005) later expressed that despite globalization's flattening effect on the world, which has helped to reduce foreign barriers and increase international commerce, ever-maturing global

markets may have actually given local cultures greater credence. Kumar (2008) then suggested that local firms based in large and fast-growing emerging markets have become powerful global competitors to Western multinational enterprises who are accustomed to the higher-cost structures of developed countries. The concept of intense domestic competition in the foreign environment proved a growing trend in recent academic literature. Subsequently, Jones (2017) found that international businesses with robust proprietary technologies and well-esteemed brands were best-suited to compete with local companies. Furthermore, international firms that designed global capabilities with local relevance tended to compete well alongside local firms (Jones, 2017).

Findings in relation to the specific problem. The precise management philosophies and assumptions exhibited by today's international business leader inspired the project's specific problem, which sought to explore the kind of reductionist and emergent systems management strategies that were being employed by international business leaders in overseas operations. Menkes (2011) observed that international business leaders were still developing reductionist solutions to complex problems despite this type of thinking's practical limitations. This assertion appeared alarming when over a decade earlier organizational theorists had begun to conceptualize organizations as complex adaptive systems (Anderson, 1999; McKelvey, 2001; Stacey, 1992; Wheatley, 1999) and had increasingly rejected more traditional, mechanistic views of organizations (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001). Like Menkes (2011), Liebhart and Lorenzo (2010) had challenged organizational leaders to view the business environment as one where "fast-moving and complex change [was] inherently emergent and unpredictable" (p. 214). Jamil and Shah (2015) and McChrystal et al. (2015) heralded the newly evolving management philosophy, regarded as emergent systems management strategy, which confronted the uncertainty of

international business environments by simultaneously evolving and implementing strategic processes.

Relationship-building is critical for building trust in the foreign environment. In response to the specific problem, the data confirmed two prevailing management strategies. First, international business leaders strive to establish trusting business relationships. This theme proved most consistent across the diverse backgrounds and experience of the participants. In no mistakeable terms, these international business leaders had learned that building strong local relationships served as a foundation for successful business dealings in the foreign environment.

This data proves consistent with numerous contemporary sources. Backaler (2018) suggested that companies expanding into foreign markets needed to gain the trust of local business partners and prospective customers to succeed. The chief way to build this trust is to send executives to meet with the foreign clients to build personal relationships and to hire location distribution partners to represent their products overseas (Backaler, 2018). Montoro-Sanchez et al. (2018) echoed this sentiment by saying that businesses benefited the most from establishing domestic relationships in the foreign environment. Examples of domestic relationships included: businesses that developed family contacts, informal social connections, and technological and institutional relationships increased value for their company's international business (Montoro-Sanchez, et al., 2018). Ultimately, Aarikka-Stenroos et al. (2018) found that firms needed to build trust and commitment, learn about each other, overcome geographic and cultural distance, gain information, and employ relationships to become an insider. Establishing social contacts in the foreign environment increased a firm's international bonds and improved its foreign market opportunities (Aarikka-Stenroos et al., 2018).

Successful international business leaders account for emergence in their products and business solutions. Second, business leaders typically prepared systems management strategies that accounted for emergent behavior. Participants often cited the importance of developing complete, end-to-end products and solutions for their foreign clients. The significance of this holistic way of thinking, in their opinion, was to address any process disruptions that could affect the health of the foreign client's company. In so doing, the participants also commonly believed that solving, or at a minimum openly addressing these business disruptions, would exhibit transparency and foster trust with the foreign client.

The data revealed that international business leaders tended to be aware of the emergence phenomenon and attempted to address emergent behaviors that resulted from their products and business solutions. This assertion runs counter to Dynes (2008) who believed managers usually lacked the understanding of the interdependencies and consequences of various business infrastructure elements. The participants, however, did not express that confronting disruptions or changes to business processes was easy. A fairer statement comes from Jurisch et al. (2016), who explained that improving business processes continues to challenge business process change practitioners and researchers.

Findings in relation to biblical framework. The project's biblical framework proposed that foreign emergent behaviors place exceptional strains on disciples seeking to fulfill Jesus's Great Commission. Jesus's Great Commission, which sought to empower his believers to make disciples of all the nations by bringing the message of Christ throughout the world, would endure considerable worldly challenges (Matthew 28:18-20). A diversity of humans spanning globally would challenge disciples to share God's love across cultural, geographic, and spiritual boundaries. Foreign emergent systems like competing religions, brutal governments, different

local customs, and geographic distance would strain the disciples' management of international churches. Disciples, then and now, struggle to build enduring relationships and solve problems in the foreign emergent environment.

The international business leaders interviewed in this study provided two significant themes to vault the biblical framework of this project. First, relationship building comes from knowledge, humility, and approachability. Second, leaders solve problems with conscientious solutions. These themes find firm biblical foundations and act as useful professional applications to Christians and business people, alike.

Relationship-building comes from knowledge, humility, and approachability.

Participants most commonly cited the importance of building trusting relationships with foreign business clients. To invite trust, participants described the importance of knowing their client's culture and expectations, demonstrating humility, and appearing approachable. One participant mentioned the importance of guiding conversations with foreign clients in a way that showed them respect and yielded relevant business solutions. Ephesians 4:29 suggested, "let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that is may give grace to those who hear" (ESV). Two participants specifically suggested that business leaders should reduce the importance of their national identity when entering discussions with their foreign clients. Paul similarly reminded us in Philippians 2:3, "do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves" (ESV). Three participants cited the importance of approachability in building strong relationships with foreign clients. Romans 12:10 proposed a similar concept, "love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor" (ESV).

Leaders solve problems with conscientious solutions. Second, participants expressed the importance of approaching their foreign clients with solutions to problems rather than mere saleable goods and services. By framing the international business transaction as a solution to their clients' problems instead of a money-driven sale, the business leaders believed their foreign clients found them more credible and trustworthy. Viewing the client's problems and needs, the leaders satisfy Romans 12:13, which said to "share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality" (ESV). To perceive the client's interests as paramount in the business transaction fulfill Paul's teaching in Philippians 2:4, which stated, "do not look to your own interests, but each of you to the interests of the others" (ESV). Moreover, multiple participants cited the importance of developing transparent, end-to-end products and business solutions that conscientiously considered emergent disruptions and changes to the client's existing business processes. Proverbs 3:27 pointed to the importance of transparency and action by stating, "do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act" (ESV).

Recommendations for Action

The research yields the following four actions: (a) embrace both emergent and reductionist systems management strategies in the foreign environment, (b) prioritize relationship-building in the foreign environment to gain trust and foster corporate learning, (c) develop end-to-end business solutions that address emergent behavior in the entire business exchange, and (d) thoroughly analyze the evolving and emergent effects of competitive forces in the foreign environment. Each of these actions addresses the intended audience and provides subsequent steps for practical implementation.

Action 1: Embrace both emergent and reductionist systems management strategies in the foreign environment. Reductionism and emergence in their purest philosophical forms

maintain distinctive strengths and weaknesses. Reductionist thinking is natural to the human mind as it divides the whole into parts, and then focuses on each part separately (Wood & Caldas, 2001). The downside of reductionist thinking, however, is that it does a poor job of explaining environmentally ordinary but dynamically complex features observed in human behavior, culture, or society (Brooks, 2012). Emergent thinking, on the other hand, is less intuitive to the human brain and lacks the ability to determine causal factors to problems (Brooks, 2012). The positive side of emergent thinking, however, is that it more accurately describes the multi-dimensional, complex attributes associated with the human environment (Menkes, 2011).

Organizational senior managers and executives should take this action. Given the complementary strengths and weaknesses of each style of thinking, it follows that today's business managers should adopt both reductionist and emergent management strategies. Mele et al. (2016) advocated a hybrid emergent-reductionist way of thinking about today's business problems by suggesting that "systems theories and perspectives can effectively contribute to management, marketing and service research due to their dual approach: the global, holistic view of observed phenomena and the specific, reductionist view of their specific components and traits" (p. 131). Unfortunately, a hybrid management strategy is often challenging for leaders to employ. Leaders tend to understand that both reductionist, planned changes and emergent, unplanned changes act on their organizations' health and welfare, but they do not understand completely how to respond to emergent changes (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). A certain tension seems to exist between what elements managers perceive as unchangeable and what elements can succumb to change.

Step 1: Develop reductionist plans that consider emergent behavior. Managers often protect their core competence, purpose of the organization, values and ethics, communication, and security against change despite the fact that change is on-going and already affecting these elements (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). Managers' perception of change is affected by ever-present and unpredictable emergent impacts (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). This sentiment is what led Mele et al. (2016) to challenge managers to think about today's business problems from both an emergent and a specific reductionist view. A reductionist interpretation and communication of emergent business systems, like knowledge, value, quality, environment, relationships, adaptation, and complexity provides a natural but conscientious perspective of the business operating environment (Mele et al., 2016). This hybridized way of thinking allows managers to govern the whole system by constantly formulating new interpretations of various business scenarios to find better positions, implementing periods of management adjustment, and transforming and redefining the organizational structure (Mele et al., 2016).

Step 2: Utilize small, focused, project-based teams to carry-out management strategy and deliver performance feedback. Organizations are more aware now than ever of their connectedness to each other and to their emergent global environment (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010). Subsequently, these organizations balance their traditional, planned, structural change methods and their unpredictable and emergent new approaches (Livne-Tarandach & Bartunek, 2009). McChrystal et al.'s (2015) advocated that small, agile, and highly-specialized teams could move quickly and respond to an emergent environment faster than traditional leadership hierarchies. Defranzo (2015) remarked that team feedback is essential to organizations' capacity to formulate better decisions, increase performance, and learn how to improve products and services.

Action 2: Prioritize relationship-building in the foreign environment to gain client trust and foster corporate learning. Aarikka-Stenroos et al. (2018) found that a business leaders' ability to initiate strong relationships with foreign clients played an important role when their firms entered a new geographical market. Primarily, leaders should attempt to build trust and commitment, learn about each other, overcome geographic and cultural distance, gain information and employ relationships to increase their local knowledge and develop a competitive advantage (Aarikka-Stenroos et al., 2018). Establishing social contacts in the foreign environment increases international bonds and improves foreign market opportunities (Aarikka-Stenroos et al., 2018). Moreover, personally and professionally grounded contacts in the international business environment allows companies to assess their counterpart's competence, demonstrate credibility, and show cultural understanding (Mainela, 2007). These social contacts serve as the initial basis for developing formal international business relationships (Su et al., 2009).

International leaders and team managers should take this action. Elbedweihy, Jayawardhena, Elsharnouby, and Elsharnouby (2016) found that international business leaders' desire to understand what drives customer satisfaction and product quality may not be sufficient for sustained success in a competitive landscape, which is increasingly characterized by rising complexity, product proliferation, consumer skepticism, and a challenging economic climate. Rather, motivated by positive financial outcomes, companies are exploring how to build long-term relationships with clients (Elbedweihy et al., 2016). International relationships are becoming increasingly critical to business performance (Samaha, Beck, & Palmatier, 2014). Despite rising interest in international relationship-building for improving business performance, managers appear to have little guidance about how to adapt strategies in different countries and

often default to “cross-national generalizations” (Steenkamp, 2005, p. 6). There appears to be a consensus that relationship-building is important but over-generalized guidance to international managers may constrain needed improvements to foreign business performance (Samaha et al., 2014).

Step 1: Ensure that international leaders and members can build personal and professional rapport with foreign clients. Backaler (2018) suggested that companies expanding into foreign markets needed to gain the trust of local business partners and prospective customers to succeed. The chief way to build this trust is to send executives to meet with the foreign clients to build personal relationships and to hire location distribution partners to represent their products overseas (Backaler, 2018). An international business leader’s personal credibility is his greatest asset in building trust during these foreign interactions (Carucci, 2018). Credibility lends itself to forging a mutual respect, which is considered the fastest way to establish individual relationships (Carucci, 2018). While global business models change, trusted relationships in the foreign environment remain constant (Backaler, 2018).

Step 2: Pursue domestic relationships in the foreign environment to gain competitive local knowledge and resist lesser-networked competitors. Montoro-Sanchez et al. (2018) found that international businesses, especially small to medium-sized businesses, benefited the most from establishing domestic relationships in the foreign environment. Businesses that developed family contacts, informal social connections, and technological and institutional relationships increased value for their company’s international business (Montoro-Sanchez et al., 2018). Embedding themselves into “domestic clusters,” international businesses that were able to become centrally located amidst a dense collection of domestic contacts were more likely to succeed in building international partnerships in the foreign environment (p. 728). Developing

local contacts and strong community connections within the foreign environment enables international businesses to acquire valuable knowledge exchanges and manage the international processes more competitively than companies whose networks are less developed (Molina-Morales & Martinez-Fernandez, 2010).

Action 3: Develop end-to-end business solutions that address emergent behavior in the entire business exchange. Businesses must manage a variety of internal and external organizational and process interdependencies to achieve success (Dynes, 2008). The way business infrastructure elements, like information technology or supply chain management, work together represents the emergent properties inherent in today's business processes (Dynes, 2008). Inevitably, these business processes will encounter or create problems and risks. Leaders can gain trust from clients by minimizing problems and communicating transparently with clients (Llopis, 2013).

International leaders and team managers should take this action. Business managers traditionally lacked an understanding of the interdependencies and consequences of various business infrastructure elements (Dynes, 2008). The findings of this research seem to indicate that leaders' awareness of emergent behavior in international business is increasing. While improving business processes continues to challenge business leaders (Jurisch et al., 2016), the best leaders also tend to be the best problem solvers (Llopis, 2013).

Step 1: Identify risks and categorize by type. Improvements to business processes come with collateral risks. Gemino et al. (2008) proposed that these business process risks can be better understood by separating those risks into two different categories: a priori risk factors and emergent risk factors. A priori risks refer to those that can be estimated before a project begins, such as budget, duration, or inexperience of the team and later. Emergent risks denote those that

can evolve during a project, such as a client manager or executive sponsor change (Jurisch et al., 2016). These risk factors result in different degrees of organizational change and can illuminate various business solutions (Jurisch et al., 2016).

Step 2: Build trust with foreign clients by disclosing business risks and preparing conscientious business solutions. Transparent communication is the first step in solving business problems (Llopis, 2013). When leaders facilitate an open dialogue between people about a problem, they also inspire trust and foster a safe environment for everyone to air their concerns and develop better solutions (Llopis, 2013). Participants in this research commonly described their clients as trusting and open when they candidly addressed business disruptions caused by their products or services. Research confirms that presenting oneself as someone who possesses trustworthy characteristics helps build strong relationships fast (Carucci, 2018).

Action 4: Thoroughly analyze the evolving and emergent effects of competitive forces in the foreign environment. The 21st century is being hailed as one of unprecedented change as businesses conduct operations on an unparalleled global scale (Kanter, 1999). Navigating today's economy relies on organizations' ability to learn, innovate, and "internationalize" (Chiva et al., 2014, p. 687). Overlooking matters of global logistics, not adapting sales and marketing channels, and not effectively soliciting the knowledge and expertise of local teams to lead overseas initiatives, businesses struggle to manage activities internationally (Kelly, 2015).

Organizational senior managers and executives should take this action. Understanding the competition is an important part of any business venture. Competition in the foreign business operating environment, however, incurs a variety of domestic and international competitors. Participants in this study tended to view competition from an external perspective, while

scholarly literature seemed to indicate that domestic competition was more relevant. Perhaps, this dichotomous finding reveals that international leaders and business researchers perceive the foreign environment differently and have much knowledge to gain from each other.

Step 1: Employ a Modified Porter's Five Forces Analysis when newly entering a foreign market or when recent corporate presence is lacking. One participant of this study recommended that international business leaders and team managers conduct a “modified Porter's Five Forces Analysis” prior to entering a new foreign market (October 6, 2018). Porter's Five Forces Analysis refers to the competitiveness of a business environment based on five forces: competition in the industry, potential of new entrants to enter the industry, power of suppliers, power of customers, and the threat of substitute products (Porter, 1980). While these five forces prove as salient today as they were when Porter wrote them, the operative takeaway in this step is “Modified.” Leaders should modify Porter's five forces model in a way that is consistent with their company's objectives and aware of the environment's chief competitive forces. For example, a public agency modification of the Porter's Five Forces Analysis centers on descriptive, instrumental, and normative goals (Vining, 2011). International leaders should similarly maintain a systematic and descriptive way to illustrate the foreign environment's competition.

Step 2: Consider both domestic and international competitors and each's emergent influence on business solutions in the foreign environment. International businesses now confront stronger local marketplaces, which better understand their consumers' cultural, ethnic, and religious reaction to goods and services (Barber, 1995). Moreover, local firms based in large and fast-growing merging markets have become powerful global competitors to Western multinational enterprises who are accustomed to the higher-cost structures of developed

countries (Kumar, 2008). International businesses with robust proprietary technologies and well-esteemed brands were best-suited to compete with local companies (Jones, 2017). Furthermore, international firms that designed global capabilities with local relevance tended to compete well alongside local firms (Jones, 2017). Some successful international businesses have even simply emphasized the superior quality of their products and guaranteed their product's unparalleled safety to both consumers and the environment (Jones, 2017).

Recommendations for Further Study

The researcher found two concepts that lack depth and consistency with regard to the project's general and specific problem. First, the utilization of technology to manage emergent behavior in the foreign environment was not addressed by a single research participant. Despite the researcher's identification of this concept as a thematic trend in scholarly literature, which indicated an increasing reliance on adaptive, computer-based solutions to predict emergent behavior, the participants did not corroborate this finding. Second, a divergence of perspective with regard to the competitive forces acting on the foreign environment emerged from the data. Participants tended to believe that chief competitors existed internationally and acted external to their foreign environment, while scholarly literature implied that today's international businesses are more challenged by domestic competitors. A brief description of these two concepts is provided below and should serve as a preliminary building block to ask the following questions: (a) How (if at all) is technology used to manage emergent behavior in the foreign business operating environment? (b) How do international business leaders describe the competitive forces in the foreign business operating environment?

The utilization of technology to manage emergent behavior in the foreign environment. Andreessen (2011) observed that the reliability, usability and affordability of

software systems serve as the most significant disruptive force in most industries. Software designers now consider how to develop software systems that evolve alongside the evolving enterprises that rely on their use (Fayoumi & Loucopoulos, 2016). These evolving software systems aid businesses who have come to rely heavily on these systems predictive power in an ever-changing and adaptive business environment (Fayoumi & Loucopoulos, 2016). Emergent systems have complicated organizations' ability to fuse traditional business practices with newly developed information systems. Businesses are challenged to align business processes and goals without a developing a clear strategy for how to foster the relationship between business change and information systems implementation (Fayoumi & Loucopoulos, 2016).

Competition's emergent effect in the foreign business operating environment.

Western companies have had to overcome tremendous challenges to succeed in foreign countries (Eyring et al., 2011). Despite globalization's recent homogenizing effects, which have tended to flatten the world and reduce foreign barriers (Friedman, 2005), some believe that ever-maturing global markets have actually given local cultures greater credence and consequently further fragmented existing consumer and social groups (Barber, 1995). Moreover, emergent systems and their behavior have "challenged the fundamental assumption that our complex world can always be understood best through top-down approaches" (Bonobea, 2002, para. 37).

Additionally, emerging countries have become powerful global competitors to Western multinational enterprises who are accustomed to the higher-cost structures of developed countries (Kumar, 2008) and because they are more likely to receive national legislative preference (Jones, 2017).

Organizational strategy is adapting to embrace emergent changes to business operating environments (Liebhart & Lorenzo, 2010) despite the fact that many multinational companies

still simply try to export their domestic models abroad and leave most of their business processes unchanged (Eyring et al., 2011). Today, international firms that designed global capabilities with local relevance in mind tended to compete well alongside local firms (Jones, 2017). These multinational firms also tend to employ robust proprietary technologies and well-esteemed brands, which boast superior quality and unparalleled safety to their foreign customers (Jones, 2017).

Reflections

To the maximum extent practicable, the researcher bracketed his personal beliefs and biases from the research. Having no practical experience in the field of international business, the researcher possessed fairly insignificant preexisting beliefs about the behavior of the foreign environment and the systems management strategies that might be employed in this environment. Moreover, the researcher's lack of practical experience also enabled him to interview research participants with an objective lens. The entirety of the project was posited, framed, and researched from a proverbial blank slate. Consequently, the scholarly literature review and presentation of the findings found within this project benefitted from a general freedom from academic predisposition and was able to maintain a high level of scholarly integrity.

The researcher did, however, develop two preconceptions after conducting an initial literature review but before interviewing the study's participants. First, the researcher thought that culture would prove an integral element of the foreign environment. Participant responses would later corroborate this preconception as the term "culture" was used most frequently among the participants. Second, the researcher supposed international business leaders' management strategies would rely heavily on technological aids (i.e., predictive software and artificial

intelligence programs) to anticipate emergent behavior in overseas operations. Participants' responses did not support this preconception as not a single participant mentioned the utilization of technological aids.

Of surprise to the researcher was the emphasis each participant placed on relationship-building in the foreign environment. The phrase "build relationship" was the most commonly cited phrase among the group of participants. The researcher's preliminary literature review, however, did not identify this concept. Once all the interviews were completed and the significant statements were organized, the researcher reengaged with scholarly literature on the subject of relationship-building in international business. The concept proved fairly new with most articles being drafted within the last decade.

While the idea of relationship-building sounds intuitive and even old-fashioned to the lay person, the initiation of close contacts in the foreign environment prove profoundly difficult and complex. Perhaps, the newness of globalization, worldwide communication, and international supply chain has only now yielded substantive and measurable data on the importance of international relationship building in the modern age. Participants, however, seemed intuitively familiar with the concept, and provided the researcher with a variety of perspectives on the importance, methodology, and complexity of building trusted relationships with foreign clients. Subsequently, the theme of relationship-building in the foreign environment became a major, unforeseen takeaway from the research.

Additionally, the researcher was surprised to receive consistently divergent beliefs from participants on the concept of competition in the foreign environment. Participants commonly believed that competition to their products and business solutions wrested with external or international competitive forces. Scholarly literature, however, tended to illustrate today's

international marketplace as increasingly favorable to domestic products and local firms.

Consequently, international challengers were expected to find stiffer competition from local firms than foreign ones. Addressing the modern competitive forces acting on international businesses in the foreign environment from a narrative-based perspective proposes a refreshing and illustrative spin on an old topic.

Finally, the researcher reflected on how the research melded with the proposed biblical framework. From the onset, the researcher associated international business leaders' challenges in the emergent foreign business environment with those of Jesus's early disciples, who, called to serve "The Great Commission," sought to travel the world and make disciples of all nations. Interestingly, the research participants commonly referenced the importance of gaining knowledge of the foreign client's environment, demonstrating humility, and appearing approachable as key attributes of building a trusting business relationship in the foreign environment. These attributes were also supported in the bible and exemplified Jesus's teachings to his disciples. Furthermore, the participants commonly shared the importance of developing transparent business solutions that addressed prospective disruptions or changes to the foreign client's company. The selflessness and transparency manifested in these actions were also biblically supported. The behavior inferred from the participants' lived experiences in the foreign environment proved consistent with the philosophies derived from a Christian worldview.

Summary and Study Conclusions

At the onset of this project, the researcher endeavored to find descriptive answers to two key research questions. First, the researcher sought to learn "what is the lived experience of international business leaders who have recently managed emergent systems in overseas

operations?” This inquiry was more narrowly focused on two minor questions, which examined how the individual described the emergent business operating environment in a foreign country, and what elements the individual believed contributed to successful or unsuccessful management of emergent systems in this environment. The second major research question sought to learn what types of systems management strategies were being employed by international business leaders in their foreign emergent business environment. This inquiry also focused on two minor research questions, which examined what philosophies underlie business leaders’ selection of specific management strategies, and what assumptions were made by these leaders about the emergent nature of overseas operations and its effect on management strategy development.

The researcher found that the data generated from interviews with six international business leaders from various industries produced four thematic categories: (a) descriptions of the emergent business operating environment in the foreign country, (b) successful elements of systems management strategies in the foreign environment, (c) philosophies that underlie international business leaders’ systems management strategies, and (d) business leaders’ assumptions about the emergent nature of overseas operations. Supported through illustrative, narrative-based descriptions from senior managers and executives, these themes revealed significant discussions about culture’s importance on the foreign environment, business leaders need to gain trust through relationship-building in the foreign environment, and companies’ development of products and business solutions that considered the emergent effects of the foreign environment.

Subsequently, the research yielded the following four actions for organizational senior managers, executives, and international leaders: (a) embrace both emergent and reductionist systems management strategies in the foreign environment, (b) prioritize relationship-building in

the foreign environment to gain trust and foster corporate learning, (c) develop end-to-end business solutions that address emergent behavior in the entire business exchange, and (d) thoroughly analyze the evolving and emergent effects of competitive forces in the foreign environment. Each of these actions addresses the intended audience and provides subsequent steps for practical implementation.

This study sought to fill gaps in the business world's understanding of foreign emergent systems. Namely, this research aimed to place the study of emergent behavior squarely within the context of international business management strategy. Inspired by modern literature's lack of a definitive link between emergent systems and international business management strategy, this project produced high-quality phenomenological research on the subject of emergent systems management strategies in the foreign environment. The project also provided four practical applications for professional use and generated two additional subjects for further study.

Today, businesses' global expansion is more complicated to manage than domestic operations (Stadler et al., 2015) due to the ever-evolving and emergent operating environment, which has made the traditional movement of physical and non-physical resources more difficult (McChrystal et al., 2015). Moreover, international companies often struggle globally because they tend to overlook the effects of emergent properties inherent in global logistics, sales and marketing channels, and knowledge and expertise of local teams in the foreign environment (Kelly, 2015). The modern economy sees organizations continually breaking down physical and non-physical barriers to employ novelty and behavior modification to operations (Chiva et al., 2014). For businesses to survive and lead profitable operations in this new overseas environment, they must possess the right management capabilities (Stadler et al., 2015).

The 21st century has challenged global leaders to embrace an evolving management paradigm, which has continued to move from reductionist to emergent (McChrystal et al., 2015; Menkes, 2011; Baumgartner & Korhonen, 2010). Subsequently, international businesses endeavoring to navigate today's economy must learn, innovate, and internationalize (Chiva et al., 2014). Business leaders' once traditional way of thinking about management as a strictly linear and logical practice is giving way (Alegre & Chiva, 2008) to emergent systems management strategies, which simultaneously adapt and implement strategic processes to confront the evolution of the international business environment (Jamil & Shah, 2015). Nearly two decades ago, Child and McGrath (2001) observed that the challenge of today's organizational leaders was to identify alternatives to conventional bureaucratic decision-making models and develop theories to improve how humans collectively accomplish their goals the best. Today's business leaders continue to tackle this challenge as they prepare emergent systems management strategies that respond to an ever-evolving foreign business operating environment.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Letter

[Insert Date]

[Recipient]

[Title]

[Company]

[Address 1]

[Address 2]

[Address 3]

Dear [Recipient]:

As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research to better understand systems management strategy development and execution in the foreign business operating environment. The purpose of my research is to assist academia's understanding of the foreign business operating environment and explore the type of systems management strategies employed by today's international business leaders to operate in this environment, and I am writing to invite you to participate in my study.

If you are older than the age of 18, currently work for a large, publicly identifiable company involved in international business operations, currently serve as a senior manager or executive of this company, and have been involved in the development and/or execution of international systems management strategies, past or present, and are willing to participate, you will be asked to complete an in-person, telephone, or email interview, and, if necessary, review and clarify particular research discussions from the original interview transcript. The initial interview should take approximately 20 minutes for you to complete and follow-up phone calls, email, or text messages (at the convenience of the participant) are intended to be concise and minimal. Your name and/or other identifying will be requested as part of your participation, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please contact me at 808-352-5724 or khawbaker@liberty.edu to review the screening guide and schedule an interview.

A consent form is attached to this letter and contains additional information about my research. After you have been screened for participation in this study, please sign the consent form and return it to me via a .pdf file at khawbaker@liberty.edu, prior to the scheduled interview. If you prefer, you may also submit it personally at the time of our interview.

I think you will find the subject matter discussed in this study worth your time and very thought-provoking. I am grateful for your participation and look forward to learning from your business experience!

Sincerely,

Kristofer Hawbaker

Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University School of Business

Appendix B: Interview Screening Guide

Examining Emergent Systems Management Strategies in Overseas Operations

Time of screening:

Date/Place:

Interviewer:

Participant:

Introductory Statement: The purpose of this interview is to assist academia's understanding of the foreign business operating environment and explore the type of systems management strategies employed by today's international business leaders to operate in this environment. The following screening questions were designed to ensure that your participation in today's interview satisfies the study's rigorous research requirements.

Questions:

1. Is the participant older than the age of 18?
2. Does the participant currently work for a large, publicly identifiable company involved in international business operations?
3. Does the participant currently serve as a senior manager or executive-level employee at this company?
4. Has the participant demonstrated with this company a work history that includes the development and/or execution of systems management strategies for international business operations?

Concluding statement: Thank you for your participation in this screening. You (do)/(do not) satisfy the study's requirements. (1) I look forward to learning more about your experiences in our following interview! (2) I'm sorry for the inconvenience, but you do not meet the study's requirements. Thank you again for your time!

Appendix C: Consent Form

The Liberty University Institutional
Review Board has approved
this document for use from
9/7/2018 to 9/6/2019
Protocol # 3436.090718

CONSENT FORM**Examining Emergent Systems Management Strategies in Overseas Business Operations**

Kristofer Hawbaker

Liberty University

School of Business

You are invited to be in a research study of the foreign business operating environment and the systems management strategies used in this environment. You were selected as a possible participant because you meet the following criteria: you are 18 years of age or older, you currently work for a large, publicly identifiable company involved in international business operations, you currently serve as a senior manager or executive at this company, and, you possess past or present involvement in international systems management strategy development and/or execution. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Kristofer Hawbaker, a doctoral candidate in the School of Business at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to assist academia's understanding of the foreign business operating environment and explore the type of systems management strategies employed by today's international business leaders to operate in this environment. A study of management strategies used by well-established international business leaders should add depth to the study of the modern international business operating environment and produce current insights into successful foreign systems management strategies.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. **Complete a 20-minute in-person, telephone, or email interview.** In-person and telephone

interviews will be scheduled at your convenience. These interviews will be recorded to ensure responses are reported accurately. If an interview can only be accommodated via email correspondence, I will email you the interview questions for completion and email return at your earliest convenience.

2. **Complete follow-up transcript review of the original interview.** Depending on research insights gained by your interview responses, I may need to reach out to you to clarify specific experiences or information. These discussions can be conducted flexibly in a communication method (e.g. phone call, email, text message, in-person) that is most

convenient for you. In- person and telephone calls will be recorded for reporting accuracy.

Risks: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks one would encounter in everyday life.

Benefits: Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include improving managerial efficiency in the foreign business operating environment through optimized use of emergent systems management strategies. By exploring the emergence phenomenon in international business, the researcher hopes to add depth to the study of emergent system behavior and produce insights about successful foreign emergent systems management strategies.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participants will be assigned a pseudonym. In-person interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Kristofer Hawbaker. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him 808-352- 5724 and khawbaker@liberty.edu. You may also contact the researcher's faculty chair, Dr. Kimberly Johnson at kjohnson61@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional

Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date

Appendix D: Interview Guide

Examining Emergent Systems Management Strategies in Overseas Operations

Time of interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Participant:

Introductory Statement: The purpose of this interview is to assist academia's understanding of the foreign business operating environment and explore the type of systems management strategies employed by today's international business leaders to operate in this environment. A study of management strategies used by well-established international business leaders should add depth to the study of the modern international business operating environment and produce current insights into successful foreign systems management strategies.

Questions:

What has been your role in developing and/or executing systems management strategies for international business operations?

How does this role compare to that of a colleague who must focus on domestic systems management strategies?

What elements of the foreign environment do you confront first when creating systems management strategies overseas?

What elements have surprised you after a systems management strategy has already been employed?

What is an example of a systems management strategy you have developed or executed specifically for an international business operation?

How would you explain this strategy's effect on collateral business processes (e.g., productivity, quality, supply chain, etc.)?

Were follow-up strategies or improvements to the existing strategy required to address these effects?

What differences (if any) did you note in implementing these strategies domestically versus abroad?

What elements of this management strategy proved successful? Unsuccessful?

How were you able to implement what you learned from this strategy into future systems management strategies?

What advice would you give to other international business leaders for preparing systems management strategies in the foreign environment?

If they could avoid making a specific mistake when developing their international systems management strategies, what would that mistake be?

Concluding statement: Thank you for your participation in this interview. I assure you that your confidentiality is paramount during this process. I am so grateful for the opportunity to learn from your experiences.