

# Knowledge transfer based on disseminative capacity, absorptive capacity, and learning: a comparative study between Brazil and Germany

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** This study aims to assess suppliers' learning from knowledge transfers with a global truck manufacturer, considering both source and supplier capacity, and the cultural proximity between the parties. **Design/methodology/approach:** A case study was conducted between two factories, one in Brazil and one in Germany. This study adopted a mixed-method sequential explanatory approach, which involves a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative one to provide a better understanding of the studied phenomenon. Quantitative data were collected from the automaker's suppliers in both countries and analyzed using factor and inferential analyses. Qualitative data were obtained from the automaker's purchasing executives, and from the company's suppliers in both countries. Content analysis was used to analyze data. **Findings:** Results suggest that both the source's disseminative capacity and suppliers' absorptive capacity had a positive effect on suppliers' learning during knowledge transfers. The study also found out that cultural proximity among parties positively moderates the relationship between suppliers' absorptive capacity and their learning. However, cultural proximity does not moderate the relationship between a source's disseminative capacity and supplier learning. **Practical implications:** This study's findings are important to foster knowledge transfers by developing absorptive and disseminative capabilities in the automakers industry, in which the implementation of interorganizational learning is quite challenging due to the large number of strategic providers. **Originality/value:** This study contributes to theoretical and conceptual consolidation of knowledge transfer, which includes cultural proximity among parties and the source's and supplier's disseminative and absorptive capacities, respectively. This study constructs and validates a model of knowledge transfer using a large automaker with a worldwide presence. © 2023, Emerald Publishing Limited.

## Author keywords

Absorptive capacity; Cultural proximity; Disseminative capacity; Knowledge transfer; Learning