MULTICULTURAL SALES TEAMS

MASTERS DISSERTATION

How to manage the multicultural sales teams in interdependent environment to get competitive advantage?

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of International Masters in Business Administration at Dublin Business School & Liverpool John Moores University.

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Word Count: 20950

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April 2010

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Declaration

I hereby declare that no portion of the work referred to in this dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of these or any other university or other institute of learning. Further, all the work in this dissertation is entirely my own, unless referenced in the text as specific source and included in the bibliography.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Acknowledgements:

A thesis is a complicated piece of work that requires the support and direction of key individuals. I was fortunate enough to have the support and guidance of some very special people throughout this research and I would like to acknowledge their contributions.

First and foremost, I offer my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Catherine Rossiter, who has been a great support throughout my thesis. It is only because of her patience, knowledge, suggestions and directions; I was able to complete this piece of work. I really feel fortunate for having her as my supervisor. I would also like to thank my lecturer Mr. Alan Graham for the support and input to this research.

The Masters course at Dublin Business School has given me a lot of confidence and has tapped the hidden potential latent within me. I feel indebted to the lecturers, staff and professors at Dublin Business School.

I am grateful to individual participants and organisation who gave their time and input to this study. I would also like to thank all my well wishers and batch mates who have directly or indirectly helped me to complete this dissertation with their suggestions, feedback and prayers. It is being a long enjoyable time and your support, help and friendship will not be forgotten.

My deepest gratitude goes to my mother and father who always supported me not only for my studies but all through my life. I am ever grateful for the generous support given by my family members in terms of my ambition to do my Masters abroad and helping me cope up with life. Therefore I dedicate this dissertation to my parents.

Last but not the least, I humbly thank the almighty God who has been with me constantly guarding, guiding and helping me sail smoothly through this ocean of life.

Jagjit Singh

Abstract:

Over the last decade, organisations have started to change the way they do business. Every day more and more companies are trying to cover different markets and establish their brand globally. In the current business environment, cultural diversity is rapidly becoming a day to day reality for more and more managers. Many scholars like Hofstede, Lewis, Parker, Rouse & Rouse etc. have founded that presence of culturally diverse workforce brings up two fold impacts on an organisation. If managed efficiently, it could do wonders and mismanagement of cultural diversity might result in failure. The research undertaken as part of this project may help to develop a management style in order to improve the overall results of an organisation.

The purpose of this dissertation is to answer the question of how to manage the multicultural sales teams in interdependent environment to get competitive advantage. In order to answer this question, research was undertaken to analyse various factors that influence the team performance both positively and negatively. The other objective of this research is to identify the key factors and competencies that will increase participation, energy and productivity in multicultural teams. Once these objectives were met, researcher proposed the optimum management style and required factors for managing culturally diverse teams. The population selected for this research project is made up of managers and employees from multicultural teams employed in well known Retail Sector Company in Ireland.

In short, the results from the questionnaire showed that cultural diversity can have both positive and negative impact on team performance and ultimately on productivity.

The reader(s) would be able to understand the fundamentals of cultural diversity management in an organisation at the time finding some interesting but important aspects cultural diversity invites in an organisation.

The researcher concludes with quite interesting conclusion and some special recommendations.

CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

Contents:

1.1 Background of the issue
1.2 Need for the present study
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1.9 Scope and Limitations of the Research

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the issue:

With the increasing trend of globalisation, the impact of globalization has lead to a fast changing environment. The boundaries for business are diminishing day by day and so is the movement of people between different countries and cultures. With cross border mobility becoming much easier, the number of people moving from one country to another has grown significantly. This has also led to more people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds intermarrying. Their children could be born and grow up in different countries and have hybrid cultural identities. Globalisation and advances in communication and transportation technology have reduced trade barriers and increased interaction among people. Diversity is one of those few things that do not need any explanation as we can see it and feel it at every moment in the reality that surrounds us.

Cultural Diversity: UNESCO (2005) defined cultural diversity as "Cultural diversity refers to the manifold ways in which the cultures of groups and societies find expression. These expressions are passed on within and among groups and societies. Cultural diversity is made manifest not only through the varied ways in which the cultural heritage of humanity is expressed, augmented and transmitted through the variety of cultural expressions, but also through diverse modes of artistic creation, production, dissemination, distribution and enjoyment, whatever the means and technologies used".

Multicultural Teams: According to Adler (1997), a precise definition of multicultural teams does not exist but generally the term multicultural refers to teams where three or more cultures are represented among members. Multicultural teams have become very common in recent years due to increased globalisation and diversity in the workplace, and the clear trend is towards even more of them in the future.

The question is not whether we are diverse or not, it is whether we are capable of understanding what this means and more importantly, taking advantage of it, so that the diversity can become a major asset for this century. Diversity, meaning putting

different people in different positions, does not necessarily guarantee success. If the different points of view and opinions are not handled well, then the decision making process can become enormously difficult. Diversity has to be managed in such a way that differences are transformed into a catalyst of business success. Investigations show that multicultural teams face significantly greater hurdles than culturally homogenous teams. So the question is whether multicultural teams are curse or blessing. With this challenging question, Roembke (2000) presents in a rather drastic manner the spectrum of the possible outcomes of multicultural teamwork. What makes this remark so powerful is that it applies not only to missionaries, but to any groups which may include members from several cultures or nations: diplomats, soldiers, consultants, marketers, sportspeople, flight attendants, scientists, or engineers. Indeed, managing multicultural teams can be a tightrope walk: on the one hand, when not handled properly, such teams can turn into extremely irksome stumbling blocks for a company or a project. On the other hand, companies and leaders who recognise the potentials of cultural diversity and find the right cultural mixture among the team members can achieve some substantial comparative/ competitive advantage.

In their study of 70 global teams, Govindarajan and Gupta (2001) found out that only 18% of multicultural teams perceived their own performance as 'highly successful', while a third felt that their cooperation had been utterly unsuccessful. Obviously, the ambiguity related to multiculturalism does not prevent managers from employing it extensively, constituting more and more multicultural global teams and continually increasing their diversity. The rationale behind such enthusiasm is usually one of hope for outstanding results, be it in knowledge creation, creativity, or innovation. Hence the whole issue is crucial for research. Many studies have shown that diversity in human capital actually leads to increased creativity and efficiency in many cases. Studies have also shown that the failure to successfully integrate diverse workforces has negative implications for organisational performance. Managing across cultures is not an easy task and it has been a challenge for the companies to manage across different geographic boundaries and with multi-cultural teams.

It is above all the increasing globalisation of business that requires employees from various cultures to work together. Shaw and Power (1998, p1308) states that even in

purely domestic operations, firms are being forced to form cross-functional, inter-departmental, cross-divisional, and inter-organisational alliances in order to make maximum use of scare resources and thus increase their competitive advantage.

1.2 Need for the present study:

Cox T. (2001) emphasises on planning and implementing organisational systems and practices to manage people so that the potential advantage of diversity are maximised while its potential disadvantages are minimized. Our communities are like rainbows, every colour is unique, every colour is pretty when used right but it can appear quite ugly when misused. A diverse, multicultural work environment is the same; it needs to be handled well to be effective just as the rainbow looks pretty in the order it is, but if you put colours together without considering their individuality or their role in the whole, the end product would be signify chaos instead of perfect beauty.

A people driven business, the retail industry defines the needs of its consumers. Populations in many countries today are culturally, socially, and demographically diverse. Understanding consumer diversity is one of the greatest challenges. In order for retailers to attract diverse customers, they must work to establish a relationship with those customers. Companies are trying lots of things to achieve their targets and retain their customer base. But even with the right merchandise at the right time, price and location, companies that lack diversity in their employee base or ineffective diversity management will remain a step behind their competitors who have built diversity into the framework of their corporate culture. Customers/Consumers are more likely to shop and spend where they feel most comfortable and welcomed, which is reflected not only in the merchandise displayed but also in the environment. But this doesn’t mean that just employing diverse workforce is enough to get the edge in competition. So to get benefit of employing diverse workforce, managers within the organisation must be capable of capitalizing on the mixture of genders, cultural backgrounds, ages, and lifestyle present in the workforce to respond to business opportunities more rapidly and creatively. Investing in a diverse leadership team will help retailers recruit and retain a diverse employee base, as well as connect with a rapidly growing, diverse consumer-base.

This study is also investigating the factors that boost the performance of multicultural teams along with the negative impacts of such teams on the business. In the present literature on multicultural teams, researcher found that the suggested approaches and models are only applicable to managers who need to deal with just one culture at a time, which is generally external to organisation. The literature fails to address the manager's approach and management style needed when managing a multicultural team consisting of employees with more than five or six nationalities. This study will highlight all those issues that create obstruction to the success of such teams and provide solutions to those problems as well.

1.3 Research Aim

The aim of this research is to identify all those factors that affect the performance of multicultural retail teams and outline a strategy to manage the team effectively. With the ever increased market globalisation and increased competition from corporations around the world, the strategic importance of diverse teams becomes more critical for success. So this study is going to contribute to the existing store of knowledge.

1.4 Research Question

According to Saunders et al (2007), the key criteria of research success will be whether a set of clear conclusions could be drawn from the data collected. The extent to which this could be done is determined by the clarity with which initial research questions are posted. The research question of this dissertation is defined as:

"How to manage the multicultural sales teams in interdependent environment to get competitive advantage?"

Managing across culture is not an easy task and it has been a challenge for the companies to manage across different geographic boundaries and with multicultural teams. Studies have shown that failure to successfully integrate diverse workforce has negative implications for organisational performance

1.5 Research Objectives

According to Saunders et al. (2007), objectives are more generally acceptable to the research community as evidence of a researcher's clear sense of purpose and direction. The research objectives are likely to lead to greater specificity than research or investigative questions. With these ideas in mind, the researcher defines the following objectives:

- **To get a better understanding of those factors that influence group cohesion in culturally heterogeneous teams.**
- **To investigate how cultural differences within multicultural teams impact positively on the effectiveness and innovation.**
- **To investigate how cultural differences within multicultural teams impact negatively on the effectiveness and innovation.**
- **To identify the key factors and competencies that will increase participation, energy and productivity in multicultural teams.**

1.6 Research Hypothesis

Kumar (1999: 64) explains that hypotheses bring clarity, specificity and focus to a research problem. They tell a researcher what specific information to collect and thereby provide greater focus. On the other hand, Brannick and Roche (1997) explain that hypothesis is designed to develop, extend or refute an already established body of knowledge.

The hypotheses presented by the researcher are:

- **Individuals from different cultures experience the same behaviour in multicultural teams differently.**
- **Multicultural diversity can be source of competitive advantage when it is well managed.**

1.7 Research Methodology

Aiming to answer the objectives and research question of this research involves use of both primary research and secondary research. Although there exist many approaches

to consider the research methodology, the approach proposed by Saunders et al. (2007) seems quite logical. Saunders et al. compares the research process to an onion by highlighting the layered approach to research. The empirical method in this research is based on survey. Utilizing survey as the research method enables to collect quantitative data which provides more control over the research process. Survey will be performed using questionnaires method to determine the employees' satisfaction regarding diversity in workforce.

The researcher aims to adopt a positivist approach as the source of data for this research has existed before the research and would continue to exist. During the course of research, data was collected and analysed to arrive at an answer to the research question. Data was collected from both secondary sources and primary sources. More emphasis was given to primary data; however secondary data was used to access the current scenario. The researcher has decided to follow the deductive approach for the design of his project. To test the research hypothesis, quantitative data will be collected. Data analysis will be done based on the data collected through survey method using questionnaire. So the researcher is using deductive approach because it is more specific on task in terms of findings answer to the research problem area.

This dissertation is done for academic purpose and the research carried out is cross-sectional in approach. In this dissertation, the population selected is retail sector company's employees. The sampling strategy for this research is largely modelled around the various constraints on the availability of data likes the access to the respondents of the selected company, the time respondents would like to spare to participate in the research and discomfort towards sharing sensitive information. There are 10 stations of company in Dublin city and the target population would be 150. Considering the research objectives, research questions, sampling frame and time constraint, researcher has decided to choose the non probability sampling for this study. In non probability sampling, the sampling technique to be used is Convenience sampling technique.

Data collection method to be used is quantitative and questionnaires are used as a data collection tool. The researcher has created two sets of questionnaires with different

questions: one for managers and the other one for employees. In order to promote a less influenced response and to maintain respondent confidentiality, the researcher has decided to leave the questionnaires anonymous. These questionnaires will be self-administered, with both open and close questions. Secondary data came from the various sources available to the researcher such as books, journals and industry reports etc. To analyse the quantitative data, the researcher will use Excel Spreadsheets to create tables and diagrams which will show the frequency of occurrence through establishing statistical relationships between the variables. A brief of the research design is as follows:

Research Philosophy	:	Positivism
Research Approach	:	Deductive
Research Purpose	:	Descriptive
Research Strategy	:	Survey
Time Horizon	:	Cross-sectional
Data Collection	:	Questionnaires
Sampling Design	:	Convenience sampling (non-probability)
Sampling Unit	:	Employees of retail sector company
Sample Size	:	Total sample size is 95
		Employees- 83
		Managers- 12

1.8 Organisation of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Chapter one is the introduction to thesis. This chapter contains background and need of the study along with the overview of research question, objectives, hypothesis and research methodology.

Chapter 2: Chapter two is concerned with the literature review. In this section a significant number of authors are introduced in order to identify and examine the different areas that are relevant to this research study.

Chapter 3: Chapter three outlines the research methodology that will show the research approach, research philosophy, and research strategy used in this dissertation.

Chapter 4: Chapter four presents the data analysis and the findings from the primary research. The findings are a combination of the perceptions of managers and employees in relation to team work, communication and relationship in diverse environment.

Chapter 5: Chapter five is the conclusion of this dissertation. Here, the researcher answers the initial question and addresses the objectives by summarising the results obtained and drawing conclusions from the findings of the primary research.

Chapter 6: Chapter six is a self reflection on own learning and performance. This chapter reflects the personal learning achievements and their application to his personal and professional life.

Chapter 7: Chapter seven is Bibliography mentioning all the references from books, journals and internet websites as per Harvard referencing style.

Chapter 8: Chapter eight is Appendix containing the Questionnaires for employees and managers.

1.9 Scope and Limitations of the Research

The research study presented in this dissertation was conducted with the aim of filling the gap which the researcher considers to exist throughout the literature reviewed. The researcher has addressed how managers approach culturally diverse teams consisting of employees with more than five different nationalities. This research gives an overview of the current management situation of culturally diverse teams, which the researcher believes could be useful to any manager who would like to approach a culturally diverse team.

The main limitation of this research was the sample size used which was primarily due to tight time constraint.

CHAPTER – 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

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2.3 What is Cultural Diversity?
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    2.4.1 Why is it important to manage diversity?
    2.4.2 What is the present scenario of managing diversity?
2.5 Cultural Diversity in Ireland

2.1 Introduction to literature review

In a global context the management and development of people inevitably leads to considerations of diversity and related challenges. Experts discuss the challenges facing organisations which are intending to work effectively across borders. They identify the major challenges as being able to develop practices which balance global competitiveness, multinational flexibility and the building of a worldwide learning capability. They maintain that achieving this balance will require organisations to develop the cultural sensitivity and ability to manage and leverage learning to build future capabilities. For global organisations there is an increasing needs to get groups of managers from different nationalities to work together effectively either as enduring management teams or to resource specific projects addressing key business issues. Many organisations have found that bringing such groups of managers together can be problematic and performance is not always at the level required or expected. Multinationals see the cultural diversity within their operations as an area of difficulty rather than as an opportunity to build competitive advantage. Laurent and Adler (1983) illustrated this point in their exercise that International executives attending management seminars in France were asked to list the advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity for their organisations. While 100 percent of participants were able to identify disadvantages less than 30 percent could identify any advantage. Frequently understanding the nature and value of cultural diversity is not well embedded within company thinking and practice. In many ways thinking in this area has not developed in line with the trend to globalisation. In an article in the *Financial Times* in April 1995, Houlder commented on the apparent inability of organisation to develop managers with cross-border capabilities and points out that making someone aware of cultural diversity is something that has to start at day one when they join the company. However, it is important not only to understand differences between cultures. It is essential to identify the potential advantages and disadvantages likely to be brought to a team by managers

The literature review section will examine recent or historically significant research studies, company data, or industry reports that would act as a basis for the proposed study. The literature review provides a solid background for the research investigation as it is totally based on academic sources. The literature review includes culture,

cultural diversity, and diversity management, cross cultural management and intercultural competence.
The literature told that diverse teams have a lot of potential. Diversity is one of those few things that do not need any explanation as we see it and feel it at every moment in the reality that surround us.

2.2 What is culture?

The word 'culture' derived from Latin word *cultura* means "to cultivate" (Cox T. : 1994). The phenomenon of culture doesn't have a single definition. Culture may be defined as the values, beliefs and behaviour shared by a group of people. A group may be identified by many criteria such as nationality, religion geography or language. Although nationality may include several cultures it is the most commonly used notion of culture. Culture plays a significant role in workplace assumptions, behaviour and organisational cultures. As the culture represents a particular characteristics that develop within a group of people over a period of time- it means that any person over his lifetime becomes a part of a multitude of cultures: family culture, school culture, professional culture, national culture, etc. Each time a person becomes a part of a certain community, he/she brings along a load of his/her own beliefs and values gained throughout his life. By bringing in his own culture a person contributes to the formation of a new culture and to the changing of his own.

According to Rouse and Rouse (2002), Culture is regarded as the combination of behaviours, norms, attitudes, values, beliefs and basic assumptions that differ from society to society. They believe that culture can look different depending on who does the looking, when they look and from what direction. Black and Porter (2000) further add to this definition by explaining that culture begins to form when a group of people face a set of challenges. The assumptions, values and behaviours that are successful are taught to newcomers.

Briscoe and Schuler (2004) explain that every country has at least some differences compared with others, such as its history, government and laws. They define the culture as a way of behaving and something that a group of people in a country or region have evolved over time and share. To further clarify they quote Schell and

Solomon who believes that culture is learned and absorbed during the earliest stages of childhood and is reinforced by literature, history, and religion. They believe that, expressed in instinctive values and a view, culture is a powerful force that shapes our thoughts and perceptions. They explain that culture affects the way events and other people are perceived, judge, and how they are interpreted.

Throughout the literature researched there is a considerable emphasis placed by authors, such as Briscoe and Schuler (2004) and Rouse and Rouse (2002), on the fact that culture, with all of its implications, differs in every society and that these differences might be profound or subtle; they might be obvious or invisible and that while an individual can be a carrier of culture, one person can not create culture. Culture is a powerful group or social phenomenon.

Freeman and Browne (2004) explain that according to anthropologists Kluckhohn and Kroeber, the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and their attached values. They add that culture is a way of life based on a system of shared meanings that are passed on from generation to generation. In other words, culture defines the values that lead people to prefer certain states of affairs over others. These values influence how people judge behaviour or situations and shared values direct people of same culture to react in a similar way to a certain situation. They also refer to culture as a collective programming of the mind which distinguish members of one group from another and explain that the programmes people have in their minds affect the way in which they process any new information that they receive.

On the other hand, Harrison et al (2000) introduce the nature of culture explaining that the basis of any business activity whether domestic or international, is to satisfy human wants and needs. They believe that people around the world share the same basic wants and needs, but the manner in which they try to fulfil these wants and needs and the order in which they rank them vary significantly, even between individual members of the same society.

Hofstede (1983) identified four key dimensions which impact on national cultural differences. These are:

- *Individualism/Collectivism:* This dimension reflects the extent to which individuals' value self-determination as opposed to their behaviour being determined by the collective will of a group or organisation.
- *Power-distance:* At the core of this dimension lies the question of involvement in decision making. In low power-distance cultures, employees seek involvement and have a desire for a participative management style. At the other end of this scale, employees tend to work and behave in a particular way because they accept that they will be directed to do so by the hierarchy of the organisation.
- *Uncertainty avoidance:* This dimension is concerned with employees' tolerance of ambiguity or uncertainty in their working environment. In cultures which have high uncertainty avoidance, employees will look for clearly defined, formal rules and conventions governing their behaviour.
- *Masculinity/Femininity:* This is possibly the most difficult dimension to use in an organisation context. In practice, the difficulty is more to do with terminology and linguistics. In highly "masculine cultures" dominant values relate to assertiveness and material acquisition. In highly "feminine cultures" value focus on relationships among people, concern for others and quality of life.

2.3 What is cultural diversity?

Cultural diversity is not just a natural fact that we need simply recognise and respect. It is about plurality of knowledge, wisdom and energy which all contribute to improving and moving the world forward. The United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2001) define cultural diversity as fact. In a *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions;* UNESCO (2005) defined cultural diversity as "Cultural diversity refers to the manifold ways in which the cultures of groups and societies find expression. These expressions are passed on within and among groups and societies. Cultural diversity is made manifest not only through the varied ways in which the cultural heritage of humanity is expressed, augmented and transmitted through the variety of cultural expressions, but also through diverse modes of artistic creation, production,

dissemination, distribution and enjoyment, whatever the means and technologies used". UNESCO (2001) states that the world has approximately 6000 communities and as many distinct languages. These differences naturally lead to diversity of vision, values, belief, practice and expression.

Farrer (2004) said that the world diversity is increasingly becoming integrated into management and human resources circles and organisations of all sizes and types are discussing the benefits of embracing diversity within their policies and procedures. Holt and Wigginton (2002) argue that diversity encompasses differences in human characteristics that arise from national origin, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, language, age, socio-economic status and cultural values.

According to Cox (1994), cultural diversity means the representation, in one social system, of people with distinctly different group affiliations of cultural significance. He defines diversity as the variation of social and cultural identities among people existing together in a defined employment or market setting. He believes that the increase in diversity presents a double-edged sword; hence the challenge of managing diversity is to create conditions that minimise its potential to be a performance barrier while maximising its potential to enhance organisational performance

Morley et al (2004) introduce diversity as something that has existed throughout the world from the beginning of time. They explain that ethnic, cultural and racial differences were found within tribes and among other groups of people across the continents before recorded history. They add that the history of humankind is a story of multiculturalism and diversity.

Kandola and Fullerton (2000) explain that people are different from one another in many ways such as age, gender, education, values, physical ability, mental capacity, personality, experiences, culture and the way each approaches work. Gaining the diversity advantage means acknowledging, understanding and appreciating these differences and developing a workplace that enhances their value to create a motivating and rewarding environment. They believe that managers need to understand that there are differences among employees and these differences are an asset to work being done more efficiently.

To define cultural diversity, Hodgetts and Luthans (1997), state that there are many ways of examining cultural differences and their impact on international management. They add that culture can affect technology transfer, managerial attitudes, managerial style and ideology, and even business-government relations. Bell and Smith (1999) explain that when there is a meeting of diverse cultures and the different people's backgrounds from different cultures come into contact, something new emerges, a middle ground. In this new middle ground, sensitive and often un-stated rules and understanding guide behaviour result.

Emphasizing the positive side of diversity, Schuler et al (2004) add that other forms of diversity are associated with membership in various demographic groups. They believe that in any organisation, differences in individual personality and behavioural style contribute to cultural diversity. They further say that the content and structure of cultural diversity are viewed as a determinant of the way people feel and think about themselves and each other. They expand on this by explaining that the content of cultural diversity simply refers to the specific values, norms, languages and other elements of a culture. Multiple levels of cultural content will be relevant in most situations. Societal, organisational and industrial cultures are particularly salient. However they believe that demographic cultures are also likely to play an important role in shaping the interactions between individuals and groups within an organisation. Therefore the structure of cultural diversity refers to how cultural differences are distributed within the different organisational teams.

2.4 Diversity Management

Diversity management refers to the voluntary organisational actions that are designed to create greater inclusion of employees from various backgrounds into the formal and informal organisational structures through deliberate policies and programs. It is a strategy to promote the perception, acknowledgment and implementation of diversity in organisations and institutions. The globalising economy and the increase in the number of multinational corporations make diversity management a necessity for companies that want not only to survive but thrive during this time of economic, social and cultural changes. The reason for implementing diversity management

include having to adapt to a new reality of a workforce that is increasingly diverse, doing the right and moral thing and gaining a competitive advantage.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) define the diversity management as “Managing diversity is about valuing people as individual, as employees, customers and clients- everyone is different”. This definition develops the definition used by one of the most influential and well-received definitions of diversity management in the UK given by Kandola and Fullerton (1998) that the basic concept of managing diversity accepts that the workforce consists of a diverse population of people consisting of visible and non-visible differences including factors such as sex, age, background, race, disability, personality and work style and is founded on the premise that harnessing these differences will create a productive environment in which everyone feels valued, where all talents are fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met.

Roosevelt (1992) defined managing diversity as “a comprehensive managerial process for developing an environment that works for all employees”. It is a tool for capturing diversity dividend. Diversity management focuses on managing the difference within a company’s workplace, capitalising on the benefits of diversity and minimising workplace challenges.

Dessler (2001) explains that managing cultural diversity means planning and implementing organisational systems and practices to manage people so that the potential advantages of diversity are maximised, while its potential disadvantages are minimised. Morley et al (2004) adds that currently, diversity management refers to a strategic organisational approach to workforce diversity development, organisational culture change and workforce empowerment. They believe that it represents a shift away from activities and assumptions defined by affirmative action to management practices that are inclusive, reflecting the workforce diversity and it’s potential.

2.4.1 Why is it important to manage cultural diversity?

In the 1960s', when one thought of an American worker, the image that came to mind was a white male in their mid 40s' in either a professional or blue collar position. The majority of employees within an organisation had similar backgrounds, life styles and beliefs. Managing a homogeneous workforce was not difficult, what motivated one employee generally motivated all employees. Workers generally had comparable needs, communication styles and behaviours. Less than 50 years later, we see a much different landscape in the American workforce and in the other world as well. Due to globalisation and immigration, changes in the economy and population, there are more woman and minorities in the workforce today. Managers can no longer rely on one method of communication or motivation to reach the diverse workforce. Frey-Ridway (1997) and Briscoe and Schuler (2004) explain that as commerce becomes more global, greater number of people are conducting business across national and cultural boundaries. Culture colours peoples' sense of identity and their perceptions of others. Most of the time, differences in management style and organisational behaviour can often be traced back to cultural influences. The more countries with which a firm interacts, the more complex and difficult conducting business will become. The primary cause of this complexity is the importance and critical nature of the differences between various countries' cultures.

Black and Porter (2000) add that it is important to manage cultural diversity because it can influence how people observe and interpret the world around them. Even when viewing identical situations, cultural diversity can influence whether individuals see those situations as opportunities or threats. Rugman and Hodgetts (2003) also explain that the management of cultural diversity can influence strategic decisions, from the management style used when dealing with international employees to the type of work attitudes that personnel exhibit and the way in which they manage their time.

Ignoring diversity issues costs time, money, and efficiency. Some of the consequences can include unhealthy tensions between people of different gender, race, ethnicity, age, abilities, etc; and loss of productivity because of increased conflict; inability to attract and retain talented people of all kinds; complaints and legal actions; and inability to retain women and people of colour, resulting in lost investments in

recruitment and training. Briscoe and Schuler (2004) emphasise the importance of cultural diversity and acknowledge that the lack of knowledge and sensitivity about differences between cultures within the organisation can result in frequent mistakes in both business and personal interactions. This statement is supported by Darling and Fogliasoo (1999) when they comment that managers and employees need to be aware of the laws and social customs of the different countries involved. Even if a business operates solely within a single branch, it is possible that its employees will come from several different countries.

Wild et al (2001) explain that understanding and managing cultural diversity is crucial when a company does business in its own country, and it is even more crucial when operating across cultural borders. From entrepreneurs to huge global firms, people inhabit the core of all business activities and this is the reason why it is essential for business people to understand how to communicate and interact with their counterparts in other cultures. Management of cultural diversity improves the ability to manage employees, market products and conduct negotiation in other countries. This concept is shared by Dessler (2001) who believes that cultural diversity management is crucial for an organisation as it can have practical consequences, such as affecting how disagreements are resolved and considering the challenge of negotiating with people abroad.

Members of the same culture share common views and they are likely to interpret and evaluate situational events and management practices in similar ways while members of different culture are more likely to respond differently to the same event or managerial approach. When people belonging to different cultures are drawn in one team in order to work together on the same tasks and to solve common problems they may soon realise that their ideas of how should problems be solved and how the work should be done differ significantly from person to person. In support of this fact Hodgetts and Luthans (1997) emphasise the importance of managing diversity that it can affect technology transfer; managerial attitudes, managerial ideology, business-government relations and perhaps even the way in which people think and behave, if not managed properly.

What managers' fear from diversity is a lowering of standards, a sense that "anything goes". Of course, standards must not suffer. In fact, competence counts more than ever. The goal is to manage diversity in such a way as to get from a diverse workforce the same productivity we once got from a homogeneous work force, and to do it without artificial programs, standards or barriers. Managing diversity doesn't mean controlling or containing diversity, it means enabling every member of your work force to perform to his or her potential. Miroshnik (2002) adds that management practices that are suited to one cultural environment may bring about undesirable, perhaps terrible, consequences in another culture. For this reason she believes that managers should understand the core concept of cultural diversity and its importance in avoiding such problems.

Mullins (2005) identifies seven areas which, if cultural diversity is not properly managed, may affect aspects of the organisational behaviour:

- Relationship and rules.
- Societies may be more oriented to the individual or collective.
- Societies differ to the extent it is thought appropriate for members of a team to show emotion in public.
- Differences in more diffuse or specific cultures.
- Valuation of success.
- The view of time.
- Difference in the attitude towards the environment.

Several authors have analysed the advantages and disadvantages of managing cultural diversity. According to Cox (2001), Miroshnik (2002) and Hodgetts and Luthans (1997), the researcher has summarised the advantages and disadvantages below:

Advantages:

Cultural diversity cause most advantages in divergent processes, for example when the organisation wants to expand and extends its perspective, its approach, its range of ideas, its operations or its marketing strategies. The advantages include enhanced creativity, flexibility and problem solving, improved effectiveness with culturally distinct client groups and a heightened awareness of the dynamics and communication

patterns within an organisation. In addition to fulfilling organisational value, well-managed diversity can add value to an organisation by improving the quality of personnel through better recruitment and retention, improving marketing strategies, especially for organisations that sell products or services to end-users.

Disadvantages:

A lack of cultural diversity management results in people from different cultures failing to understand one another as they do not work in the same way or at the same place. Cultural diversity also results in problems when employees over-generalise organisational processes and when the organisation must reach a single agreement. In general if cultural diversity is not well managed it may cause a lack of cohesion that may result in the inability to take concerted action, be productive, and create a work environment that fosters both efficiency and effectiveness.

Roosevelt (2006) believes that diversity managers feel uncomfortable with diversity tensions. Diversity managers have tended to focus almost exclusively on the 'isms' as the barriers to the diversity success. He further adds that diversity managers presume that if racism sexism or other "isms" are eliminated, there will be no tensions. When tensions persist in spite of their efforts, they feel they have failed. He emphasise that managers must accept the reality "*With diversity comes diversity tensions*" and develop an ability to make quality decisions in spite of the existence of tensions. He mentioned few action steps that must be taken to develop a diversity management capability:

- *Affirm your organisation's commitment to racial and ethnic representation*. This means working proactively to create and maintain a representative workforce.
- *Work to depoliticize affirmative action within your organisation*. If this doesn't happen, the win-lose environment will hinder the progress.
- *Develop race-neutral, gender-neutral, and ethnic-neutral people processes for attracting, selecting, and retaining a representative workforce*. The organisation must ensure that each criterion and standard is based on absolute requirements and not on personal preferences, conveniences, or traditions.

- *Build a collective and individual diversity management capability*. Collectively and individually, organisational participants should work to acquire diversity skills (i.e., the ability to recognise, analyse, and respond appropriately to diversity mixture) and to maintain diversity maturity (i.e., the wisdom and judgement necessary for using the skills effectively).

According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), managing diversity is about ensuring that all employees have the opportunities to maximise their potential and enhance their self-development and their contribution to the organisation. It recognises that people from different backgrounds can bring fresh ideas and perceptions, which can make the way work is done more efficient and make products and services better. Managing diversity successfully will help organisations to nurture creativity and innovation and thereby to tap hidden capacity for growth and improved competitiveness. It requires systematic management action, with focus on the development of an open workplace culture in which everyone feels valued and can add value. It is a continuing process, and is at least partly about managing conflict, complexity and ambiguity. Ultimately organisations should aim to make managing diversity a mainstream issue, owned by everyone so that it influences all employment policies and working practices. (www.cipd.co.uk).

Hodgetts and Luthans (1997) recommended a number of guidelines for effectively managing culturally diverse reams:

- Team members should be selected for their task-related abilities and not solely based on ethnicity. They suggest that if the task is routine, homogeneous membership is preferable; on the other hand, if the task is innovative, multicultural membership is typically a better option.

- Team members should recognise and be prepared to deal with their differences in order to facilitate a better understanding of cross-cultural diversity and generate a higher level of performance and rapport.

- Management should help the culturally diverse group to identify and define its overall goal, in order to minimise the difficulties experienced when trying to reach an agreement between team members.

- Members of a culturally diverse team should have equal power so that everyone can participate in the same way without any cultural dominance which could result in a lack of productivity and have a counterproductive effect.

- It is essential and crucial that all members have mutual respect for each other.

Jones and George (2003) support these guidelines when they state that managers have or develop certain attitudes, values and the skills required in order to be able to influence other peoples' attitudes and values. They recommend a number of steps to change attitudes and promote the effective management of cultural diversity, such as secure top management commitment, strive to increase accuracy of perceptions, increase cultural diversity awareness and encourage flexibility among others.

Black and Porter (2000) conclude that cultural diversity presents both managerial challenges and opportunities. Challenges that, if ignored, can have negative consequences for individuals and their organisations, and opportunities that, if taken advantage of, can lead to superior outcomes and organisational competitiveness. Finally they recommend that managers need to thoroughly understand cultural diversity as it can help accomplish managerial responsibilities, since it serves as a constant guide to influence on behaviour.

2.4.2 What is the present scenario of managing diversity?

The diversity of the stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, colleagues and shareholders as well as the diversity of immediate and not so immediate social and political environments are becoming increasingly complex and as a result, more difficult to manage. Markets and customers are changing rapidly. Currently corporations are not only competing locally and regionally, but also worldwide. Whether it is in production, sales, marketing or HR, corporations are increasingly

being forced to act and think globally. Customers as well as staff are becoming more internationally, interculturally and biographically diverse. People from an ethnic background which are different than those of the dominant group in a society are becoming increasingly demographically significant in most parts of the world.

Morden (1995) explain that it is becoming increasingly unrealistic to take a universalistic view towards the principals and practices of management as they are applied in other countries and cultures. He believes that what works well in one country may be entirely inappropriate in another, and that this apparent logic has at least two implications- *Best Fit* and *Polycentricity*. “Best Fit” is where managers may need to take a ‘best fit’ or contingency approach to the organisation and management, and to develop activities associated with them. “Polycentricity” is where the organisation and management have somewhat adapted to the local culture; however other cultures are free to take the best from any one locality and to adapt it to their own circumstances.

In the present scenario of business world, managers are increasingly challenged by the many sweeping changes taking place in the global business arena. Harris et al (2003) adds that the emergence of team working has become accepted as a key means of coping with the highly complex and dynamic nature of the work in the twenty-first century, and internationalisation strategies now require managers to work through multinational team networks. Experienced managers thrive in the international context, intuitively understanding how to gain the cooperation of their foreign partners and workers.

Kandola and Fullerton (2000) states that managing cultural diversity is seen as being the concern of all employees, especially managers within an organisation where the responsibility lies with all the employees, but managers have a crucial role to play. They believe that managers need to be developed appropriately to ensure they have the skills to manage a diverse workforce.

2.5 Cultural diversity in Ireland.

Ireland of the late 1990's is a distinctly different place to that of the late 1980's, having encompassed the global economy and adopted the 'Celtic tiger'. The phenomenon of prosperity, which exists, has lead to a reversal of Ireland as a land of emigration to a land of immigration. Irish emigrants have returned to their country of birth during this period and a new aspect to immigration has appeared- the emergence of ethnic populations in Ireland. The recognition of asylum seekers, refugees, immigrants and other nationalities born in Ireland is directing Ireland towards its first acknowledgements of the country becoming a multicultural society. Cox (2002) describe the management context in the Irish society during the twentieth century, where emigrants' remittances were a prominent feature on the external payments side of the annual budget and played an important role in the day to day minimum requirement for existence. He explains that in the 1950s' Ireland was still a young state, unsure and tentative, still affected by the effects of the Civil War, a country on its own, dealing with many issues and, as the first- colonial nation of the twentieth century, without models to follow.

Talking about the diversity of country, McDowell (2005) explains about changes in Irish Society that Ireland is no longer a homogenous society and that practically every Irish city and town has persons of other nationalities and, having cultures within their communities. The evidence that society is becoming a much more cosmopolitan society is clear, within the last decade, turned the economic corner from being a country of net outward migration to one of the net inward migration. People who are not Irish have long been coming to Ireland to make their new lives here, but for years the numbers were outweighed by Irish people who were obliged, often by economic necessity, to go abroad and make their own lives and future elsewhere.

Emphasizing the transition from emigration to immigration, Monshengwo (2001) states that Ireland in the past was characterised by high levels of unemployment and emigration was the norm. He further adds that Ireland was never known as a land of immigration but rather as a land that produced emigrants. This is strengthened by the fact that almost every Irish family does have a relative abroad and that in the past there has been very little recognition of cultural diversity in Ireland.

Cox (2002) adds that the lack of opportunity in Ireland bred a sense of hopelessness in the young causing almost an entire class to emigrate within a few years of leaving school. Large number of young men and women saw their future, not in Dublin, Cork or Galway but in Liverpool, Coventry or Kilburn.

According to National Economic and Social Council of Ireland (NESC) (2006), the recent substantial increase in migration to Ireland poses a number of opportunities and challenges for the Irish economy and society. In the year up to April 2005, over 70,000 people moved to Ireland, resulting in net immigration of just over 53,000 nearly double the net level of 2000. A distinction feature of immigration to Ireland in recent years is the growing proportion of non-nationals. Recent research by Central Statistical Office (CSO, 2004) indicates that between April 2004 and April 2005, 70 percent of non-Irish immigrants arriving in Ireland were from other EU countries. (www.entemp.ie).

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), migrant workers have played an important role in contributing to sustained economic growth in Ireland, a view that is also supported by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI). The National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) mentioned in their article on 'migrant workers' that because of skills and labour shortages, Irish businesses and employers and state agencies have been actively recruiting outside of the European Economic Area in recent years. The number of work permits increased from 6,000 in 1999 to over 47,000 work permits issued by the end of 2003. The top ten countries from which the new work permits originated were Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Philippines, South Africa, Romania, China, Brazil and Australia. The total work permits issued by year and by category are listed below:

Fig. 2.1: Work permits issued by Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

Year	New Permits	Renewals	Total
1999	4,328	1,653	6,250
2000	15,434	2,271	18,006
2001	29,594	6,485	36,436
2002	23,326	16,562	40,321
2003	21,956	25,039	47,551
2004	10,020	23,246	34,000
Jan-July 2005	4,221	11,135	15,826

Source: Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, available at: www.entemp.ie

With the improvements in economy, Ireland becomes a more diverse place and the workplace is now a key interface for people of all backgrounds to interact with each other. This modern workplace can be a place of great challenge and opportunities, but should provide an environment where there is reasonable accommodation for diversity and in which all employees can make their full contribution.

CHAPTER – 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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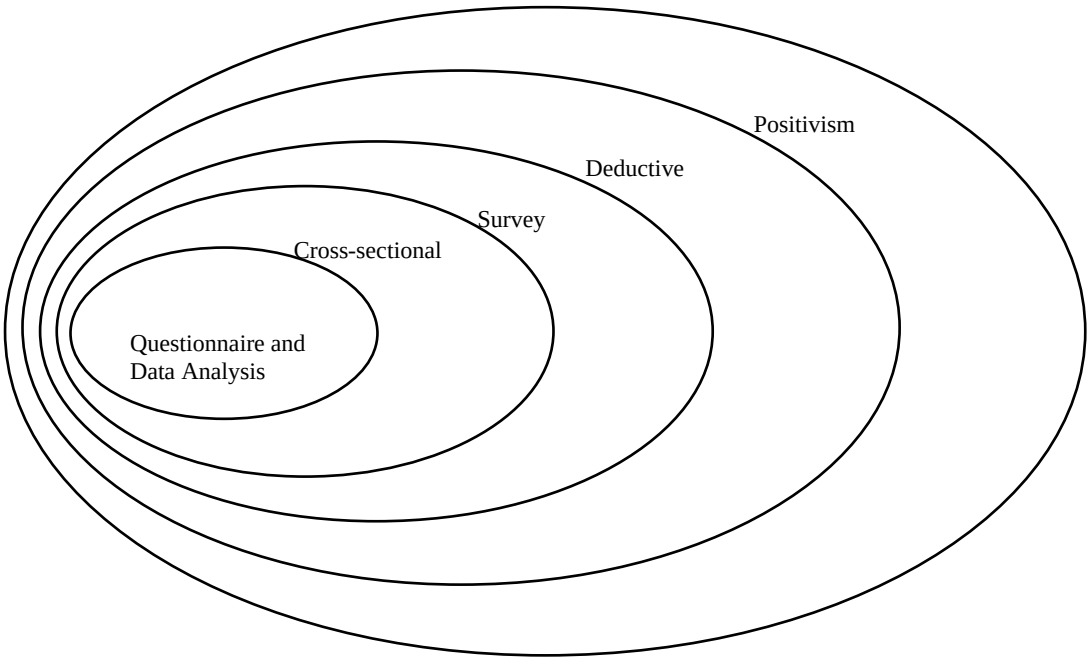
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction:

To get to the stated aim of the research in questions, a combination of both primary research and secondary research was carried out. Nachmias and Frankfort-Nachmias (1996) explain that a discussion of the methodology would provide a framework for constructive criticism and replication of the research. Aiming to answer the objectives and research question of this research involves use of both primary research and secondary research. Mixtures of different tools used in the research are described under separate headings with a rationale behind choosing each of the tools with appropriate options.

Saunders et al. (2007) defined research as something that people embark on in order to establish more information in a systematic way and in doing so, increase their knowledge. Brannick and Roche (1997) define research methodology as a decision making process where each decision is affected by other decisions previously made. They explain that it is a system of interrelated decisions where the researcher focuses on one particular decision that results in the rest, which at a later stage becomes the definition of the research questions. Another author Riley et al. (2000) states that research may be defined in terms of a review of existent knowledge in a particular area together with the creation of a new slant on this knowledge.

Although there exists many approaches to consider the research methodology, the approach proposed by Saunders et al. (2007) seems quite logical. Saunders et al. compares the research process to an onion by highlighting the layered approach to research. This chapter follows this approach, each layer of the research onion are discussed in the following sections of this chapter.



Source: The Research Process Onion (Saunders et al, 2007, p132)

The empirical method in this research is based on survey. According to Saunders et al. (2007), survey is a popular strategy in business and management research which allows the collections of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way. Utilizing survey as the research method enables to collect quantitative data which provides more control over the research process. Survey will be performed using questionnaires method to determine the employees' satisfaction regarding diversity in workforce.

3.2 Research Philosophy

The role of research philosophy in the research relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge. According to Saunders et al., (2007), the research philosophy contains important assumptions about the way in which you view the world. Each philosophy contains important differences which will influence the way in which you think about the research process. Saunders et al. (2007) proposed three research philosophy methods: Positivism, Realism and Interpretivism.

The researcher aims to adopt a positivist approach as the source of data for this research has existed before the research and would continue to exist. The research

philosophy of Positivist approach reflects that researcher will probably adopt the philosophical stance of the natural scientist. Saunders et al. (2007) further explain that researchers who reflect the principles of positivism prefer working with an observable social reality and that the end product of such research can be generalisations similar to those produced by physical and natural scientists. They add that researchers with this type of philosophy assume the role of an objective analyst, who separates interpretations from the data collected.

In this particular research, a research question has been developed. During the course of the research, data was collected and analysed to arrive at an answer to the research question. Data was collected from both secondary sources and primary sources. More emphasis was given to primary data; however secondary data was used to access the current scenario. According to Hussey and Hussey (1997), "The positivist philosophy, the objects of the research should have existed before the research process and should continue to exist after the research". The business processes, which act as the source of data for this research, have existed before and would continue to exist. It would therefore, support the assumptions of the positivist philosophy.

3.3 Research Approach

Saunders et al., (2007) said that research process will involve the use of theory. That theory may or may not be made explicit in the research design but the theory will be usually made explicit in the conclusion and findings. In their notion, research approach means the extent to which you are clear about the theory at the beginning of your research, whether the research should use the 'Deductive approach', in which you develop a theory and design a research strategy to test the hypothesis or the 'Inductive approach', in which you would collect the data and develop a theory from the result of data analysis. Saunders et al., (2007) says that study of small sample of objects might be more appropriate for inductive approach where as compared to deductive approach which involves study of large quantitative data which would be collected to test the hypothesis.

This research work is based on the **Deductive Approach.** Gill and Johnson (2002) state that a deductive research method involves the development of a conceptual and

theoretical structure prior to being tested through practical observations. They quote Kolb's experimental learning cycle to illustrate that deduction corresponds to the left hand side of his model since it begins with abstract conceptualisations and then moves to testing through the application of theory so as to create new experiences or observations. Robson (2002) proposed five sequential stages through which the deductive research will progress, they are:

1. deducing a hypothesis from the theory;
2. expressing the hypothesis in operational terms, which propose a relationship between two specific concepts or variables;
3. testing this operational hypothesis(measuring the variables using different strategies);
4. examining the specific outcome of the inquiry;
5. If necessary, modifying the theory in the light of the findings.

According to Bryman (2001), "Deductive theory represents the commonest view of the nature of the relationships between theory and social research. The researcher, on the basis of what is known about in a particular domain and of theoretical considerations in relation to that domain; deduce a hypothesis that must then be subjected to empirical scrutiny." Furthermore, Saunders et al (2003) explain that the deductive approach involves developing a theory and hypothesis, and then designing a research strategy to test the hypothesis. On the other hand, Cooper and Schindler (2003) define this approach as a form of inferences that gives the impression of being true and conclusive. They add that a deduction is valid if it is impossible for the conclusion to be false when the premises are true.

The researcher has decided to follow the deductive approach for the design of his project. To test the research hypothesis, quantitative data will be collected. Data analysis will be done based on the data collected through survey method using questionnaire. The empirical research strategy used in this method is survey. The researcher is using deductive approach because it is more specific on task in terms of findings answer to the research problem area.

3.4 Research Design

According to Saunders et al. (2003), Research design will be the general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research questions that have been set. It will contain clear objectives, derived from the research questions, specify the sources from which researcher intend to collect data. The design of Research Strategy for this dissertation involves three elements: Survey using questionnaire method, Cross sectional studies as time horizon and Descriptive as the study of research process.

3.4.1 Research Problem Area

Marchington and Wilkinson (2005) explain that a number of questions need to be addressed when selecting a research topic or area. They emphasise the importance of having a clear purpose for the project and a realisation as to how practical it is to investigate further. They add that the research should contribute to the existing store of knowledge.

On the other hand, Riley et al (2000) argue that the main issue that the researcher needs to take into consideration when choosing a topic is whether or not that subject can sustain interest over the necessary period of time. They believe that while preparing the dissertation, researchers will face moments when they lack motivation; however, if the topic has been chosen correctly, it will retain the interest of the writer.

In order to define the research topic, the researcher used Saunders et al's (2003: 16) checklist of attributes for good research to confirm the following:

- The topic meets the specifications and standards set by Dublin Business School.
- The topic is something in which the researcher is really interested.
- The topic presents issues that have links to theory, such as diversity, culture and competitive advantage.
- The researcher has the time, resources and skills to undertake the research topic.
- The researcher is able to gain access to the data required for this research.
- The questions and objectives clearly defined.

- The proposed research of this dissertation will provide insights into the topic area.
- The researcher topic matches the researcher's career goals.

The research area selected by the researcher is multicultural teams in retail sector. The researcher believes that this research can contribute to general knowledge by better illustrating the underlying theory found in the literature dealing with this area. Managing across culture is not an easy task and it has been a challenge for the companies to manage across different geographic boundaries and with multicultural teams. In the current business environment, where cultural diversity is rapidly becoming a day to day reality for more and more managers, this research may help to improve current management of multicultural teams in order to improve the overall results of an organisation.

3.4.2 Research Question

It is important to clearly define the research questions at the beginning of the research process. According to Saunders et al (2007), the key criteria of research success will be whether a set of clear conclusions could be drawn from the data collected. The extent to which this could be done is determined by the clarity with which initial research questions are posted. The research question of this dissertation is defined as:

"How to manage the multicultural sales teams in interdependent environment to get competitive advantage?"

Many studies have shown that diversity in human capital actually leads to increased creativity and efficiency in many cases. Studies have also shown that the failure to successfully integrate diverse workforce has negative implications for organisational performance. The skills needed for managing with people from diverse backgrounds at work or outside the workplace can be very different because in the workplace we are in our work roles and there are many external constraints to our behaviour. So to manage the multicultural teams, the first and the foremost thing is to identify the key factors that affect multicultural team leadership or management like national culture,

work culture, personal attributes etc. and then work on these factors to achieve a sustainable work performance.

3.4.3 Research Objectives

Riley et al (2000) explain that the setting of the research objectives involves undertaking two activities simultaneously. Firstly, the researcher needs to express the purpose of the research and define the variables that are being used; and secondly, the researcher needs to set the parameters for universe that he is working on.

With these ideas in mind, the researcher defines the following objectives:

- **To get a better understanding of those factors that influence group cohesion in culturally heterogeneous teams.**
- **To investigate how cultural differences within multicultural teams impact positively on the effectiveness and innovation.**
- **To investigate how cultural differences within multicultural teams impact negatively on the effectiveness and innovation.**
- **To identify the key factors and competencies that will increase participation, energy and productivity in multicultural teams.**

3.4.4 Research Hypothesis

Kumar (1999: 64) explains that hypotheses bring clarity, specificity and focus to a research problem. They tell a researcher what specific information to collect and thereby provide greater focus. On the other hand, Brannick and Roche (1997) explain that hypothesis is designed to develop, extend or refute an already established body of knowledge.

The hypotheses presented by the researcher are:

- **Individuals from different cultures experience the same behaviour in multicultural teams differently.**
- **Multicultural diversity can be source of competitive advantage when it is well managed.**

The researcher has verified his hypotheses, making sure that it follows the characteristics recommended by Kumar (1999). Kumar (1999) argues that the following characteristics are essential when constructing a hypothesis:

- A hypothesis should be simple, specific and conceptually clear.
- It should be capable of verification.
- A hypothesis should be related to the body of knowledge.
- It should be operational.

3.5 The Research Purpose

This section highlighted how the way in which researcher asked research question would result in descriptive, descriptive and explanatory, or explanatory answers. According to Saunders et al. (2007, p133), the classification of research purpose most often used in the research methods' literature is the threefold one of exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. This research project follows the descriptive studies of the research. According to Robson (2002, p59), the object of Descriptive research is to 'portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations'. This is an extension of exploratory research. The researcher has a clear idea on which to collect data prior to the collection of data in order to answer the research question and research objectives. Emphasising the descriptive study of research, Saunders et al. (2007) says that descriptive study lets you to go further and draw conclusions from the data you are describing. This will encourage researcher to develop the skills of evaluating data and synthesising ideas. He adds further that description in management and business research has a very clear place.

The design of research strategy is based on three elements. First being use of survey method to collect the quantitative data. The data from the survey strategy method would be collected using a questionnaire. Due to the reason that survey method involves time consuming, enough time has been allocated in the research process for data collection. Second, the time horizon would be involving Cross-sectional as this research would be carried out at a particular point of time and third, adopting descriptive research study to get a clear view to answer the research questions.

3.6 Research Strategy

There are many research strategies available to employ in the research. According to Yin (2003), mentioned in Saunders et al. (2007, p135), each strategy can be used for exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research. Some of these clearly belong to the deductive approach, others to the inductive approach. Saunders et al. (2007) emphasises that no research strategy is inherently superior or inferior to any other. Therefore what is most important in choosing a particular strategy is that the particular research strategy used should enable to answer the research questions and objectives. Various research strategy methods available are:

- Experiment
- Survey
- Case study
- Action research
- Grounded theory
- Ethnography
- Archival research.

Survey:

The research strategy used in this dissertation is Survey method. The reason for using survey strategy is that, it enables to collect large amount of data in an economical way. Saunders et al. (2007) says that survey strategy is usually associated with the deductive approach. This statement support researchers' decision to choose survey strategy as the research approach of this dissertation is deductive. Survey strategy is a popular and common strategy in business and management research and is most frequently used to answer who, what, where, how much and how many questions. Surveys are popular research strategy method as they allow the collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population. Saunders et al. (2007) adds that the survey strategy allows you to collect quantitative data which you can analyse quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics. He adds further that the data collected using survey strategy can be used to suggest possible reasons for particular relationships between variables and to produce models of these relationships. Using a survey strategy should give more control over the research process, when sampling is

used; it is possible to generate findings that are representative of the whole population at a lower cost than collecting the data for whole population. Survey strategy used in this dissertation by adopting the data collection technique: questionnaire to measure employees' satisfaction over multiculturalism.

3.7 Time Horizon:

Saunders et al. (2007) says an important question to be asked in planning the research is that, "Do the research want to be a snapshot taken at a particular time or do the research want to be similar to a dairy and be a representation of events over a given period?" The snapshot time horizon approach refers to Cross-sectional research while the diary time horizon approach refers to longitudinal.

According to Saunders et al. (2007), a Cross-sectional research is the study of a particular phenomenon at a particular time. Most research projects undertaken for academic courses are time constrained and the researchers follow the cross-sectional study method. Cross-sectional studies often employ the survey strategy. This dissertation is done for academic purpose and the research carried out is cross-sectional in approach.

3.8 Credibility of the Research Findings

The credibility of the research findings depend on reducing the possibility of getting the answer wrong. For this reason, research design is very important. According to Saunders et al. (2007), reducing the possibility of getting the answer wrong means attention has to be paid to two particular emphases on research design: reliability and validity.

Reliability refers to the extent to which data collection techniques or analysis procedures will yield consistent findings. Researcher has to be careful of getting possible errors and faults during the research process for the reasons, when identifying the research population, use of wrong data collection method, interpretation of data, and developing the conclusions.

According to Saunders et al. (2007), Validity is concerned with whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about. There are chances to get errors related to information gathering from secondary data, collection of primary data where data validity becomes a question. In this dissertation, each and every stage is carefully planned and the research is carried out according to the plans in a view to avoid the errors and ambiguity. The credibility of this research finding is reliable and valid under all contexts.

3.9 Population and Sampling/Sampling Design

Whatever is the research question and objectives, the researcher needs to consider whether sampling or census should be used. Both methods offer facilitation of data collection. According to Saunders et al (2007), it may be possible to collect and analyse data from every possible case or group member; this is termed as Census. They further explained that for many research questions and objectives, it will not be possible to collect and analyse the data available owing to restrictions of time, money and other access. To overcome this, sampling techniques provide a range of methods that enables to reduce the amount of data to be collected by considering only from a subgroup rather than all possible cases or elements.
In this dissertation, the population selected will be employees of a retail sector company. The sampling strategy for this research is largely modelled around the various constraints on the availability of data likes the access to the respondents of the selected stations of company, the time respondents would like to spare to participate in the research and discomfort towards sharing sensitive information. There are 10 company stations in Dublin city and the target population would be 150.

As per Saunders et al's (2003) recommendations, researcher has chosen one sampling technique which will enable him to reduce the amount of data needed to be collected by considering only data from a subgroup, rather than all possible cases. According to Wisker (2001), a sample is being chosen to represent the larger whole of which they are but a small part. She adds that a research method will depend initially on the researcher's ability to find and work on a sample. Regarding the benefits of using a

sampling method, Cooper and Schindler (2003) explain that it provides greater accuracy and results, greater speed of data collection, and availability of population elements. In of these benefits, Saunders et al (2003) suggest that a sample is needed as it would not only impractical to survey the entire population, but also that the budget and time constraints would prevent the researcher from being able to collect all the information required.

Considering the research objectives, research questions, sampling frame and time constraint, researcher has decided to choose the non probability sampling for this study. According to Saunders et al (2007), a non probability sampling provides a range of alternative techniques to select samples based on your subjective judgement. In non probability sampling, the sampling technique to be used is Convenience sampling technique. According to Saunders et al (2007), the convenience sampling technique is based on the need to obtain a sample as quickly as possible where you have little control over the contents and there is no attempt to obtain a representative sample which will allow you to generalise in a statistical sense to a population.

Convenience sampling involves selecting haphazardly those cases that are easier to obtain for your sample. Saunders et al (2007) explains that although this technique of sampling is widely used, it is prone to bias and influences that are beyond your control, as the case appear in the sample only because the ease of obtaining them. But he further adds that these problems are less important where there is little variation in the population. The later statement that compensates the bias in samples is perfect for the present study.

In this study, the targeted company has 10 stations in Dublin. All these stations follow the same process and same business and also driven by same management. So it is obvious that there is no or little variation in the population. This situation is perfect for using a non probability sampling as there are very low chances of sample bias and easy to collect data.

Using convenience sampling technique, researcher has decided to choose 6 stations which are convenient to collect data. The total members in those 6 stations are 95. The researcher has decided to select all these members i.e. total population of the

selected 6 stations. So the sample size is made up of 95 people out of which 12 managers and assistant managers in 6 stations i.e. 83 employees and 12 managers. As explained earlier, there are two types of questionnaires: “Questionnaire for employees” and “Questionnaire for managers”. So 83 employees will respond to employee’s questionnaire and 12 managers will respond to manager’s questionnaire. The researcher believes that this sample is representative and it is possible to study within a limited timeframe.

3.10 Data collection method

The quantitative and qualitative are two widely used data collection methods in business and management research. According to Saunders et al (2007), quantitative is predominantly used as a synonym for any data collection technique or data analysis procedure that generates or uses numerical data while qualitative is used predominantly as a synonym for any data collection techniques that generates or uses non-numerical data. Saunders et al (2007) emphasise that there is inevitably a relationship between the data collection technique you choose and the results you obtain. In short, your results will be affected by the techniques and procedures used. So selection of suitable and effective data collection method is vital to the success of dissertation.

In this dissertation, data collection method to be used is quantitative and questionnaires are used as a data collection tool. Questionnaires, as defined by Hair et al (2003), are predetermined set of questions designed to capture data from respondents. Wisker (2001) adds that questionnaires are used to gather information directly from people by asking them questions and then using their responses as data for analysis. She also mentions that they are used as a method of gathering large number of responses, although in some cases the response rates are often quite low. There are number of different reasons for this, such as the fact that some respondents may dislike completing questionnaires, they may lack the necessary time to do so and so on.

In the initial stage, the questionnaires will be distributed among the employees and managers of selected retail sector company. The researcher has created two sets of questionnaires with different questions: one for managers and the other one for employees. In order to promote a less influenced response and to maintain respondent confidentiality, the researcher has decided to leave the questionnaires anonymous. These questionnaires will be self-administered, with both open and close questions. Hard copy questionnaires will be distributed and collected by the researcher. (Please refer to the appendices for a draft version of the questionnaire.)

Bryman (2001) explains that self-administered questionnaires are those in which respondents answer by completing the questionnaire themselves. He also mentions some of the advantages of this type of questionnaires. For example, they are cheaper and quicker to administer, the responses are not influenced by the interviewer, and they are more convenient for the respondent in that they can complete the questionnaire in their own time. The disadvantages, on the other hand, are that respondents can not ask for help if they need it, the interviewer does not have the chance to ask for clarifications in the case of open questions, it is difficult to ask a lot of questions, and the interviewer does not know who actually completes the questionnaires.

With regards to the edition and collection, the researcher will follow Cooper and Schindler's (1998) recommendation on editing. They explpain that editing detects errors and omissions and corrects them where it is possible, in order to achieve an acceptable level of data quality. They add that the editing helps the researcher to guarantee that the data is accurate, consistent with other information and uniformly entered to simplify coding and tabulation.

To analyse the quantitative data, the researcher will use Excel Spreadsheets to create tables and diagrams which will show the frequency of occurrence through establishing statistical relationships between the variables. All the quantifiable, categorical and missing data will be coded. In addition, Cooper and Schindler (1998) explain that coding involves assigning numbers or other symbols to answers so that responses can be grouped into a limited number of classes and categories. They add

that coding helps the researcher to reduce several thousand replies to a few categories containing the critical information needed for the analysis.

Most of the coding has been included in the questionnaire, where the researcher has worked with both quantitative and qualitative variables. Riley et al (2000) define a 'quantitative variable' as an item of information that a researcher is interested in evaluating or monitoring, which can be described in one or few words, and which assumes different numerical values. They add that 'quantitative variables' are situations where the information related to a particular characteristics or phenomenon naturally assumes a non-numerical value.

The researcher will follow Saunders et al's (2003) analytical process, which includes the categorisation of data, the allocation of the relevant parts of data to the different categories that have generated the recognition of the relationships and the development of hypothesis and conclusions. The researcher will use a combination of both computerised and manual approaches to undertake such analysis.

3.11 Framework of the Questionnaire

The questions are designed based on the literature review and the hypothesis made in this dissertation. They are concerned with the experience and satisfaction of employees working in multicultural environment. All these questions reflect the effectiveness of multicultural team management. There are 14 questions in manager's questions while employee's questionnaire consists of 16 questions. First 9 questions of both questionnaires are same.

Question 1 and 2 are general questions related to the designation, age, sex, nationality and length of service with present company. Both questions are same for employees and manager's questionnaires.

Question 3, 4, 5 and 6 reflects the interest of employees in multiculturalism and positive and negative impacts of multicultural teams. These questions are almost same for manager's questionnaires.

Question 7, 8, and 9 are related to the team performance. These questions reflect the efficiency, communication and relationships among multicultural team members.

Question 10 and 11 are about competitive advantage and expectations from team in manager's questionnaire while question 10 to 14 in employees' questionnaire are about the opportunities they get in a team and their opinion on competitive advantage.

Question 12 and 13 in manager's questionnaire are about the problems they face in managing team and how they overcome that situation while question 15 in employees' questionnaire is about barriers to multicultural teams.

Last question of both the questionnaires is about future improvement in managing teams and what could they do if they get chance to improve the management of multicultural teams.

3.12 Pilot Test

A pilot study has been included to test the validity of the interview questions. According to Saravanavel (1987), the pilot study enables the researcher to gain some systematic knowledge of the universe and its population, on which would be based the main or principal study. He further explained that it plays a vital role in identifying the various variables involved in research, the nature of the problem, the nature of the respondents, possible difficulties in the procedure of interview/questionnaire, kind of response that are likely to be available, etc. Such preliminary analysis helps the researcher in identifying certain aspects that the researcher may be unaware of before the pilot study but may become aware of during the pilot test/study and can incorporate the same in the final questionnaire.

For these very reasons a pilot test has been incorporated in this research. The pilot test was conducted on a sample taken from a pool of friends and colleagues having multicultural experience. To validate the pilot test, researcher choose the pre-test group similar to the main group of respondents in their key charteristics. The result of

the test indicated that the questions asked had to be more elaborative in nature so that the respondents could understand the concept and give adequate responses. Another reason for conducting the pilot test was to test the validity of the questionnaires as data collection tool.

3.13 Secondary Data

Secondary data came from the various sources available to the researcher such as books, journals and industry reports etc. A description of each source is presented below. The exploratory desk research included a wide range of sources including books, journals, newspapers etc.

Books- Books gave a background to the concept that the researcher undertook to study. Here they have helped to understand the concept of multiculturalism, cultural differences, impact of culture, competitive advantage, and various aspects of multicultural teams and its relation to competitive advantage in retail sector.

Journals- Journals frequently updated and therefore provide insight into the thought behind the concept of multiculturalism, multicultural teams in current period of time, advantages and problems of multicultural teams in these days, different strategies to manage diversity. Since journals bring together views of a lot many writers in a concise way and revolve around a specific topic alone, they provided insight to the research in question because they were approached in balanced way.

Websites- Websites play a major role in secondary data. In this research, only academic websites have been used for secondary data with proper Harvard style referencing. Websites are very important to collect secondary data especially when a data is required on specific topic or concept.

A proper list of references of all these sources has been provided at the end of the report. All the references are according to the Harvard referencing style.

3.14 Conclusion:

This chapter explains the framework of research and how the researcher will go about answering the research questions that have been set. With positivism research philosophy, researcher follows the deductive approach and survey strategy using questionnaire method to collect the primary data. The nature of the study is descriptive and performed within the cross-sectional time horizon. This chapter also explains the sampling design and framework of the questionnaire.

CHAPTER – 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

4.2 General Questions

4.3 Performance related questions

4.4 Objective related questions

4.4.1 Objective 1

4.4.2 Objective 2

4.4.3 Objective 3

4.4.4 Hypothesis 1

4.4.5 Hypothesis 2

4.5 Conclusion

4.1 Introduction:

According to Saunders et al (2007), quantitative data in a raw form, that is, before these data have been processed and analysed, convey very little meaning to most people. The data therefore need to be processed to make them useful, that is, to turn them into information. Quantitative data analysis techniques such as graphs, charts and statistics allow us to do this; helping us to explore, present, describe and examine relationships and trends within our data.

Regarding the different categories of quantitative data, Saunders et al (2007) explains that quantitative data can be divided into two distinct groups: categorical and quantifiable. Categorical data refer to data whose values cannot be measured numerically but can be either classified into sets (categories) according to the characteristics that identify or describe the variable or placed in rank order. They can be further subdivided into descriptive and ranked. He further adds that quantifiable data are those whose values are measured numerically as quantities. This means that quantifiable data are more precise than categorical as you can assign each data value a position on a numerical scale. All these types of quantitative data are a part of the questionnaires.

The aim of this chapter is to present the findings from the primary research that was planned: firstly to analyse and comparing the liking and disliking of multicultural teams by employees and mangers; secondly their opinions on different aspects of multicultural teams; and finally future improvements in managing such teams so as to get competitive advantage. The researcher will follow Saunders et al's (2003) Analytical Process, which includes the categorisation of data, allocation of the relevant parts of data to the different categories that have been generated, recognition of the relationships and the development of hypothesis and conclusions. The researcher will use a combination of both computerised and manual approaches to undertake such analysis. Most of the coding has been includes in the questionnaire, where the researcher has worked with both quantitative and qualitative variables.

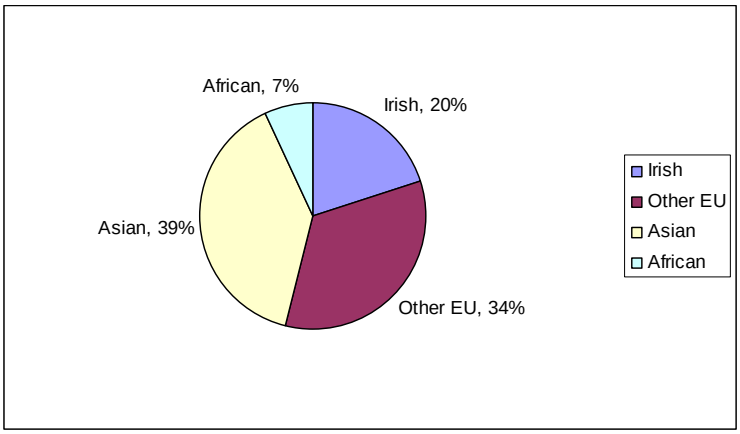
As mentioned earlier in the data collection subchapter, the researcher used the questionnaires as data collection method for primary research. During the first stage of data collection, a questionnaire was distributed among 95 participants: consisting of 83 employees and 12 managers. Questionnaires were distributed in hard copies among managers and employees at different sites of the organisation. The respondents were given four weeks to complete the questionnaires. In order to maintain confidentiality, completed questionnaires were left in a box at the different reception desks and later collected by the researcher.

On the closing date for the submission of questionnaires, the researcher obtained 67 completed questionnaires from employees and 11 from managers, which represent a response rate of 81% and 92% respectively. Although the researcher had explained the purpose of the research and had assured confidentiality in the covering letter, the response rate was initially slow. To improve the response rate, he sent a reminder to all the sites. This rate is considered excellent by the researcher, considering the holiday season and short timeframe for the distribution and collection of the questionnaires.

4.2 General Questions:

Among the 67 employees who completed the questionnaires, 20 % were Irish, 39 % Asian, 07% African and the remaining 34% from other EU countries, such as Poland, Lithuania and Britain.

Figure 4.1: Questionnaire respondents- Employees

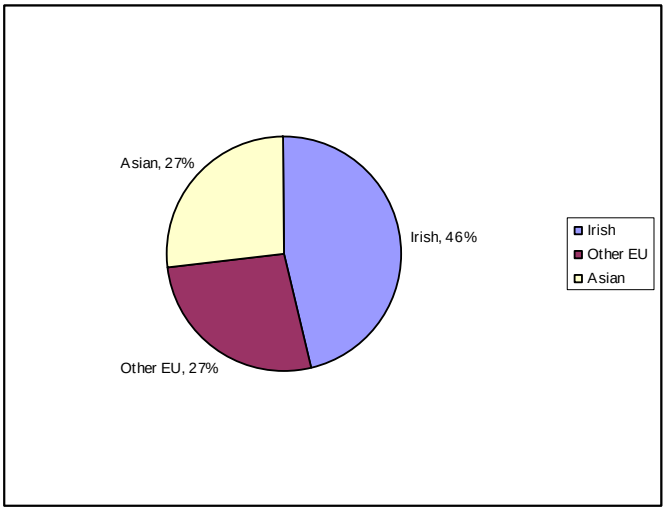


54% of the employee respondents were men and only 13% women. The age range was from just under 20 to over 45, with the average age falling between 25 and 30.

Regarding the number of different nationalities working in teams, researcher found that 20% of employees are working with 4 different nationalities while 64% of responded employees working with 5 different nationality workers.

Among the managers surveyed, 5 were Irish, 3 were Asian while remaining 3 were from other EU countries such as Lithuania, Portugal, Poland. Regarding the length of service within present countries majority of the managers, 82 % were working for more than 2 years. Similar to employees' gender percentage, 73% of managers were men.

Figure 4.2: Questionnaire respondents- Managers



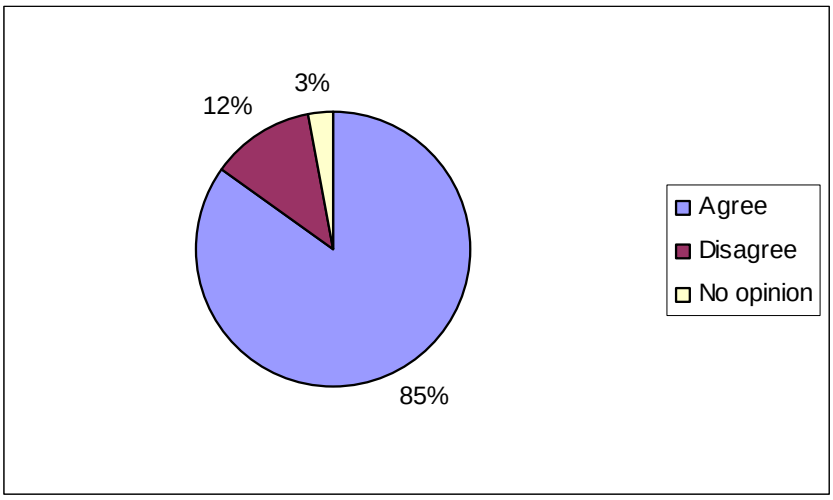
The employees who answered the questionnaire held different job titles, such as Sales Assistant, Sales Supervisor and Sales Assistant Manger.

4.2.1 Employees' response regarding 'working within a multicultural team':

The question 4 in employees' questionnaire was regarding their perception of working within multicultural teams. Out of the 67 respondents, 57 employees agree with the

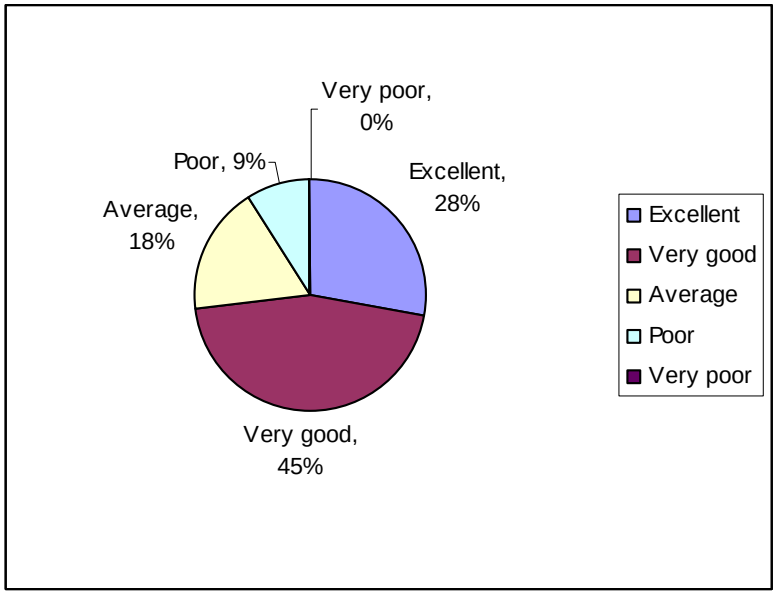
researcher's argument that they enjoy working within multicultural team while only 8 employees disagree with the statement. So 85% employees like to work within such teams.

Figure 4.3- Enjoy working within multicultural team.



Question 4 in mangers' questionnaire was also regarding their experience about working with such teams. 28% of respondents feel 'excellent' about working with multicultural team while 45% feel 'very good'.

Figure 4.4- Mangers' feeling about working with Multicultural team

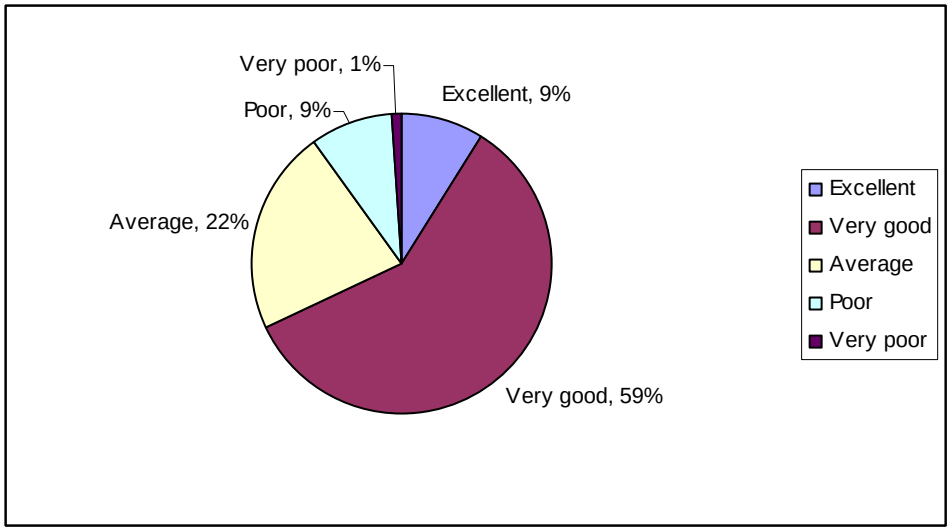


As the analysis represents that among managers, only 9% of respondents don't feel good about working in multicultural teams which means majority (91%) of respondents don't have a problem in working with such teams. So it's a clear verdict in favour of multicultural teams.

4.3 Performance related questions:

As the performance related questions in both questionnaires were same, so there will be a combined analysis regarding these questions. In relation to questions such as how they rated the efficiency, communication and relationships with the team, the answers were as follows:

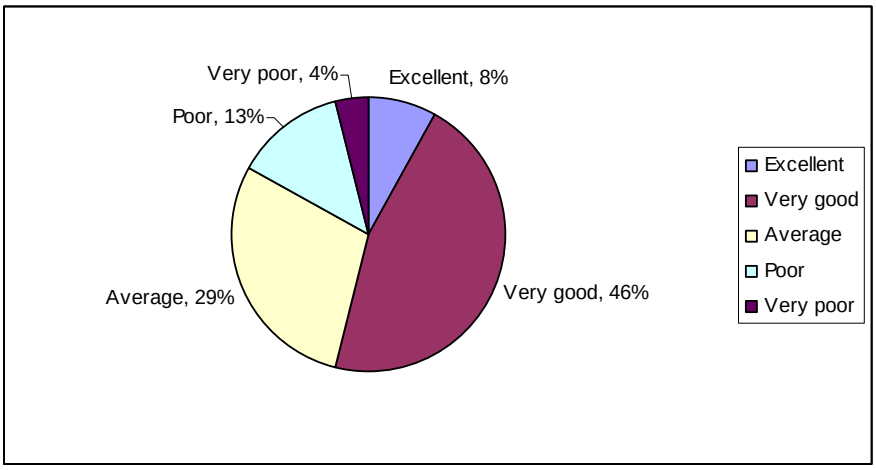
Figure 4.5: Efficiency of the Team



Even though the majority (59%) of the respondents rated the team as ''Very good' in relation to efficiency, there was a significant number of respondents (22%) who rated it as 'Average' while just 9% of respondents rated it as 'Poor'. So majority of the respondents feel satisfied regarding the efficiency of the team.

In the next question, when the respondents were asked about communication with their peers, the answers show bit rise in respondents rated as 'Poor'. The majority (46%) of the respondents rated communication with their peers as 'Very Good' while a significant number of respondents (29%) rated it as 'Average' while 13% were not satisfied with the communication factor and rated it as 'Poor'.

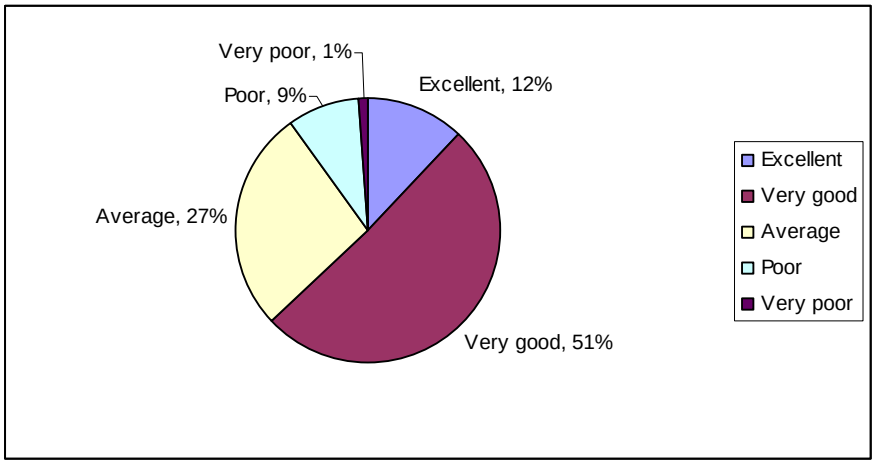
Figure 4.6: Communication with Peers



Although again majority of respondents feel satisfied regarding their communication with their peers but comparatively dissatisfied respondents' proportion increases which means there are factors that create obstruction to the communication in the team. Respondents have expressed all these factors in the questionnaire which will be analysed later.

Regarding the relationship with their team members and peers, again, the majority of respondents (51%) rated it as 'Very Good', while the number of respondents who rated it as 'Average' (27%) decreased. The response rate of respondents rated it as 'Poor' also decreased to 9%.

Figure 4.7: Relationship with Peers



In this particular question, the response rate of respondents who rated it as 'Excellent' increases to 12% which means overall 63% of respondents are fully satisfied with their relationships with peers excluding 27% of respondents rated it as 'Average'. Relationships among multicultural team members is very sensitive issue as everybody has different background, different culture and such a high response rate in favour of relationships is very vital to the success of multicultural teams.

4.4 Objectives related questions:

4.4.1 Objective 1: Positive impacts of multicultural teams on performance.

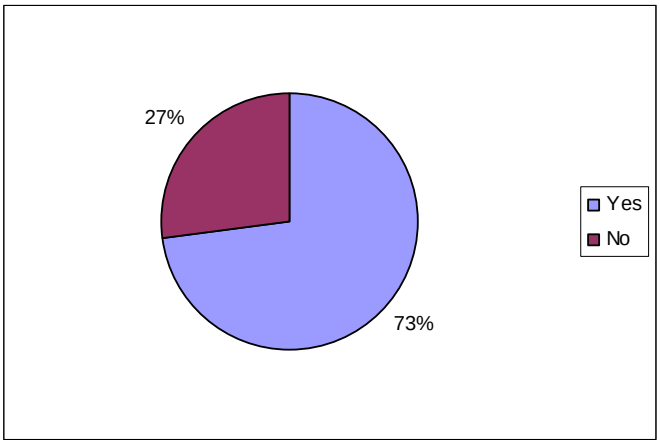
In both the questionnaires, there were questions related to objectives of the thesis. These questions highlighted all the factors that affect the performance of multicultural teams both positively and negatively. Depending upon the answers of the respondents, the researcher finds out the factors that are beneficial to the team work in multicultural environment. The following statements were used by employees to explain the advantages of diverse team and why they enjoyed working in such a team:

- "Good communication and very friendly relationship".
- "It is helpful to share ideas and experiences".
- "Different backgrounds give new insights".
- "We can learn from each other".
- "We can learn about different languages and cultures".
- "Variety is good in the workplace".
- "This is the way for business going forward".
- "Improves the understanding of styles and behaviour".
- "It gives different outlooks and opinions".
- "It is a good experience and you don't feel so ignorant".
- "It is important for progression that many different views can be seen".
- "You can increase your capacity to understand different ways of thinking".
- "It generally opens minds".
- "You can have a better idea of the work and a better understanding".
- "Different approaches generate different and creative ideas".

All the above listed comments are more frequently given statements in the questionnaires. Many of the respondents mentioned that a well trained multicultural sales team is of much importance, as in retail sector there is a direct relationship among employees and customers. As they have to interact face to face, an understanding of each other's cultures is important to have good relations. In these days, multi-culture is a part of every country and so the customers. So it could be very beneficial for retail sector companies to employ diverse team to interact with diverse range of employees. But the condition is that such teams are well managed and well trained otherwise it will have adverse effects.

In a question related to the contribution of individual in the team performance, 73% of respondents feel that everyone can contribute to the team performance while just 27% of respondents oppose to the argument.

Fig 4.8: Individual's contribution to team performance.

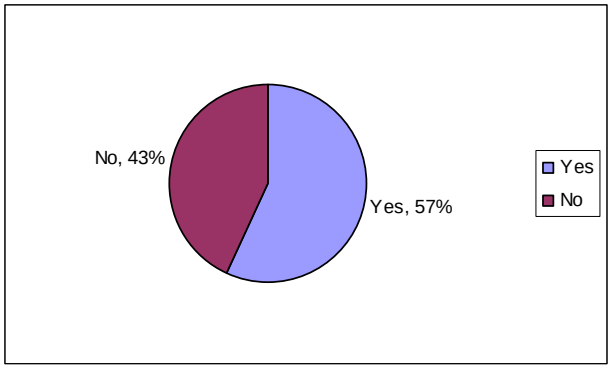


The above response shows that majority of employees appreciates other's contribution which is a good sign of cohesion in culturally heterogeneous group. When the employees feel that their colleagues can also contribute to the team work, they would welcome all the ideas given by their team mates and feel free to share the ideas and knowledge among other members.

4.4.2 Objective 2: Negative impacts of multicultural teams on performance.

In the next question, employees were asked about whether they get opportunity to share ideas with peers. The response of this question shows a bit negative side of diverse work group. Only 57% respondents said that they get opportunity to share ideas while a significant 43% said 'NO' in response to this question.

Fig 4.9: Opportunity to share ideas with peers



This response rate shows that there are problems in information flow among the multicultural team members. After analysing mangers questionnaires, the researcher find out, the major reason behind this low response is "Language problem", "attitude", "confidence level" and "lack of fluency in English lead others to underestimate their competence". Employees who aren't fluent in the team's dominant language, usually English, may have difficulty communicating their knowledge. This can prevent the team from using their expertise and create frustration or perceptions of incompetence.

In spite of all the appreciation and advantages, employees and managers have also expressed few negatives of such environment. Those employees who did not feel that multicultural teams were more effective argued that multicultural teams required more time to train and different languages involved could sometimes cause communication barriers. Some of the respondents commented that they did not understand why there was a need to involve different nationalities, as opposed to employing local staff with foreign language skills, since by involving different nationalities more resources and training were usually required. They also mentioned that the lack of fluent English from some of the team members was problematic. Some of the actual comments given were as follows:

- “They do not understand local humour”.
- “Some of comments misunderstood”.
- “Problem of attitude”.
- “Standard and style of presentation”.
- “Understanding the different personalities can be sometimes a fit frustrating”.
- “Not all of our skills are used and maximised”.
- “It is a bit stressful”.
- “Communication Problems”.
- “Sometimes my actions are misunderstood”.
- “Some people are not very punctual”.

Some of the respondents also expressed a problem regarding decision making. In such situations, someone who prefers making decisions quickly may grow frustrated with those who need more time and more analysis beforehand. These problems often make the manager and team members frustrated. Another problem seems a natural reason. Majority of the employees expressed a concern over the problem that a natural human tendency is to work closely with members of their own culture and not to trust people who are from different cultures. Also another tendency of team members is to communicate more with members of their own cultures and avoid communicating with members of different culture. Few of the respondents even gave the example that sometimes few members of Asian culture start talking in Hindi or East Europeans start talking in their own language- a language which their counterparts did not understand. This type of behaviour leads to suspicion and destroys the trust between team members.

4.4.3 Objective 3: Key factors and competencies to increase participation, energy and productivity of multicultural teams.

In a question regarding problems encountered in multicultural team’s performance, managers have mentioned these problems as follows:

- Problem with training.
- Lack of understanding.
- Language difficulty.

- Misunderstanding.
- Time keeping, meeting deadlines and discipline.
- Problem of attitude and personality issues.
- Lack of cooperation.
- Standard and style of presentation.
- Inability to fully integrate to the team.

Regarding the solutions to these problems, managers have mentioned there efforts as follows:

- By explaining the company's methodology.
- Explaining what team work means and how each of the members of the team depends on the other's work.
- Generating activities to facilitate interaction.
- Open to ideas suggested by team members to reach an agreement.
- Find someone else to explain things in a different way.
- Repeating the explanations again and again.
- Clarifying what needed to be achieved and the contribution expected.
- Writing down instructions and creating timetables.
- Organising one to one meetings through disciplinary procedures.
- Encourage more responsibility from staff.
- Talk to people directly if there is a problem.
- Be more people focused and less aggressive in times of conflict.
- Organise meetings to get feedback from the team and improve communication.

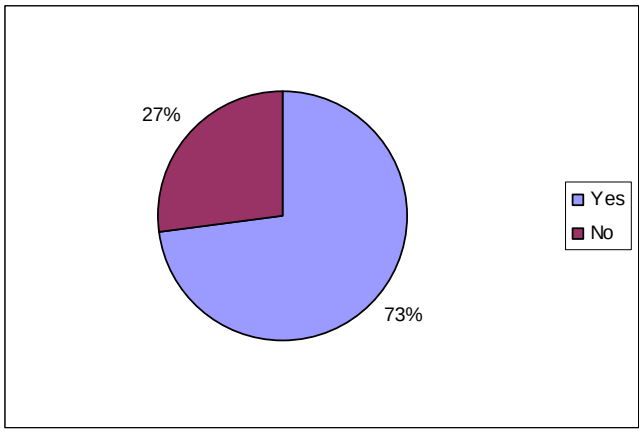
Above all, they mentioned that these problems are not so complicated and could be easily solved through a proper management and information flow.

4.4.4 Hypothesis 1: Multicultural teams can be a source of competitive advantage when it is well managed.

In a next question related to Hypothesis, respondents were asked whether multicultural teams provide competitive advantage to company or not. Majority of the

respondents (73%) agreed with the statement that multicultural teams provide competitive advantage while 27% of respondents disagree with the statement.

Fig 4.10: Multicultural teams provide competitive advantage to company.



Although the positive response rate regarding competitive advantage is not so high, but it is very much satisfactory. To support their argument, respondents had mentioned so many reasons that lead to benefit the company and provide a competitive advantage. The researcher has summarised all those reasons as:

- A diverse team offers a variety of different ideas and thoughts that can result in better customer service.
- The unique cultural backgrounds of a team can better identify and resolve problem. The outcome will improve service to community.
- The diversity of each community needs to be represented so that the individuals in the community can be better served. The customers from various cultural backgrounds will be better understood by an employee that knows their cultural background in such areas as language, customs, beliefs etc.

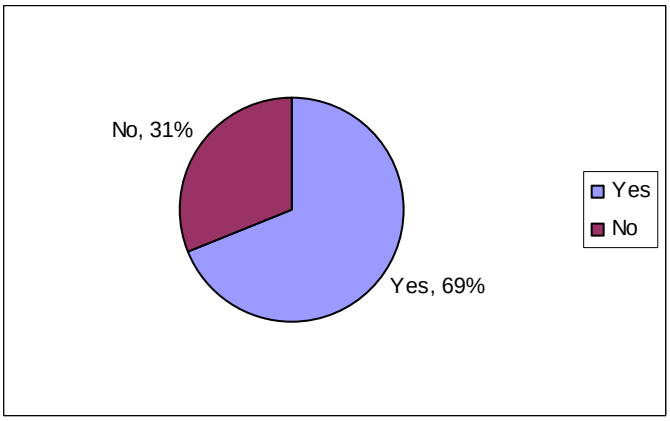
Ultimately it provides the ability to better understand all members of the community in terms of their thoughts and meanings. As well, there is increased creativity within the sales team that better generates problem solving ideas with more alternatives to finding solutions which ultimately leads to better decisions and improved service. All these things improve customer service which results into retaining the present

customers as well as attracting new customers and finally leads to provide a competitive advantage to a company. All the above discussion validates the research hypotheses: H: Multicultural Teams can be source of competitive advantage when it is well managed.

4.4.5 Hypothesis 2: Individuals from different cultures experience the same behaviour in multicultural teams differently.

The next was related to 2nd hypothesis: H: Individuals from different cultures experience the same behaviour in multicultural teams differently**.** In reply to this question, 69% of respondents said 'YES' while a significant figure of 31% said 'NO'.

Fig 4.11: Members from different cultures respond differently to same event.



When employees were asked about the difference they noticed between their way of working, responding to situation and perception of others action as compared to their colleagues of other nationalities, the majority of the respondents made reference to variations in their approach, style, sense of humour, intensity of work, the way they dealt with customers, working hours, hierarchy, respect towards their peers, stress and time management, organisation of the work and above all the cultural background. Researcher also finds out that the respondents, who marked the performance of team as 'Average', mentioned that even though they enjoyed it, there was often conflict regarding the different approaches and they didn't understand the way in which others worked. So the 2nd hypothesis also proved valid through a majority of the respondents (69%).

4.5 Conclusion:

All the above discussion concludes that cultural diversity can have both positive and negative impact on team performance and ultimately on productivity. While diversity can vastly improve productivity via increased creativity, better understanding of the problem, better solutions, better decisions, and increased effectiveness. However the challenge of managing a diverse team leads to faulty management process, which reduces team performance and thus productivity. These relationships of team performance with diversity factor can be expressed as:

Actual productivity of diverse team= Homogenous team productivity + Gains due to diversity – Losses due to faulty management process.

Managers of culturally diverse teams must therefore understand the problems caused by cultural diversity. The detailed discussion on these research findings will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER – 5

CONCLUSION

Conclusion:

5.1 Discussion

5.2 Conclusion

5.1 Discussion:

At the beginning of this research project, the researcher explained that he had identified a gap in the literature, which was then investigated further through the primary research. With this conclusion, the researcher intends to answer the initial research question and address the objectives previously set out in this dissertation by summarising the findings from the primary research.

The researcher found that both managers and employees perceived a multicultural working environment to be favourable. The majority of employees believed that this type of environment not only gave them the opportunity to learn from different cultures, but also improved their understanding of the way in which others worked. Almost all of the managers agreed on that with the employees, and some of the managers added that this type of working environment facilitated the development of their management skills and gave them the opportunity to learn from other member's experiences. However they argued that organisations had to be more flexible at management level in order to be able to take on board new ideas and processes.

On the other hand, there were number of employees and managers who considered this type of environment to be just "Average" or "Bad". Employees justified their answer by explaining that, from time to time, there were some conflicts regarding the different approaches and that they did not really understand the way in which some of the other employees worked. It is important to note that the majority of these managers were local managers. They also mentioned that the lack of fluent English was often problematic and they commented that they did not understand why there was a need to involve different nationalities, instead of employing local staff with foreign language skills.

Local managers considered the lack of fluent English among some members of their team to be a major issue; they believed that this was the main cause of the problems they encountered while conducting training. They added that this also contributed to the general lack of understanding regarding tasks and deliverables which, in turn, had an effect on the overall efficiency of the team. While language is a main element of the teams' cultural diversity, it is not the only factor that can affect the understanding,

and therefore, the efficiency of a team. The way that managers approach and manage culturally diverse teams can influence their development and efficiency. For example, non-Irish managers do not seem to regard the difference in language as the main cause of misinterpretation. This is because the local language is generally not their native language either, and as individuals working in a foreign country, they know that there are other factors that can lead to misunderstandings, such as different ways of meeting management deadlines, different ways of dealing with customers, different norms and problems of adaptation among others. All of these differences, if not recognised, might be considered as a lack of understanding, when in reality they just represent different ways of doing things or of behaving. In other words, even if all non-nationals were able to speak the local language fluently, there would be other issues related to cultural diversity that would affect the way they work.

Additionally, the majority of the employees surveyed considered that colleagues from other nationalities worked differently as compared to them. The main differences identified were concerned with variations in style, approach, intensity of work and time keeping.

In general, both managers and employees believed that multicultural teams were more efficient since more and more companies nowadays have customers distributed in a number of different countries. They also thought that the contribution of the different individuals added value to the organisation and facilitated the generation of creative ideas.

To manage multicultural teams effectively, managers suggested few characteristics as: relaxed, consistent, analytical, efficient, confident, goal-oriented, sociable, understanding, impulsive, good listeners and communicators, open minded, multi-talented, flexible, persistent, motivators, target driven, assertive, polite, supportive, encouraging, trustworthy, honest, calm and respectful.

Regarding the problem solving, managers dealt with the different situations by explaining what was expected of the team and the methodologies that should always be followed when working in teams. They should also be open to ideas or suggestions made by employees in order to reach mutual agreement. Another suggested way is to

get the team together to explain the goals and targets that needed to be met, and then focused on training them accordingly. If the problem persists, they should repeat the explanations several times to ensure that what needed to be achieved and the contribution expected by the team had been understood or even try to find someone else to explain things differently. The primary objective should be to exceed the customer's expectations.

Regular meetings also play important role in managing teams. Managers should organise regular meetings with the intention of getting an update on products and services, set targets and get feedback on activities. Most important thing is to explain what had to be done in order to do the job and check with employees to see if all the guidelines were understood or not. Feedback from employees would provide them with an indication as to how things were going, and if any particular action needed to be taken.

Employees have mentioned that few managers are more concerned with questioning that why they are not being understood, when perhaps it is not that the employees are not capable of understanding them; but that the message that they sending out may not be clear enough. So this lack of understanding between them and their employees can have a knock-on effect on the quality of work and the meeting of deadlines. Although managers considered themselves to be approachable, helpful, understanding, direct, open and target driven with good communication and organisation skills but their different approaches to managing culturally diverse teams generate the different effects.

5.2 Conclusion

This research gives an overview of all the factors that influence the performance and cohesion of multicultural teams and also the current management situation of culturally diverse teams, which the researcher believes could be useful to any manager who would like to approach a culturally diverse team. The main limitation of this research is sample size used which was primarily due to tight time constraint. The researcher suggests that this issue should be addressed if further research is carried out on the subject area.

CHAPTER – 6

SELF REFLECTION ON OWN LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE

6.1 Introduction
6.2 Learning Style
6.3 Background
6.4 Development of Skills
    6.4.1 Academic research and report writing
    6.4.2 Cognitive Skills
    6.4.3 Critical Skills
    6.4.4 Numeric and Quantitative Skills
    6.4.5 Working in Diversified Teams
    6.4.6 Time Management and Personal Organisation
6.5 Future Application of Learning
6.6 Conclusion

6.1 Introduction:

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the approach to learning underpinning the research, while also documenting the personal learning achieved and the planned methodologies for the consolidation and extension of this learning beyond the academic context in which it was acquired. This chapter attempts to explain how the International MBA programme has provided the researcher with invaluable personal development and how such learning has helped him to improve certain skills that will undoubtedly benefit his performance in future employments

Although the researchers' primary degree and the other modules of the MBA involved research activities, none of them have been on the scale of the thesis. The average length for MBA modules written assignments was 5,000 words, while the word requirements for primary degree's reports was 4,000 in total. None of the aforementioned assignments involved primary research. Thus the amount of learning and skills acquired from the research and execution of this thesis is significant. This section analyses the learning process over the two years of the International MBA curriculum and reflects on several skills developed during the course of study. An outline review of the vast literature on learning styles is presented, starting with an investigation into what constitutes learning.

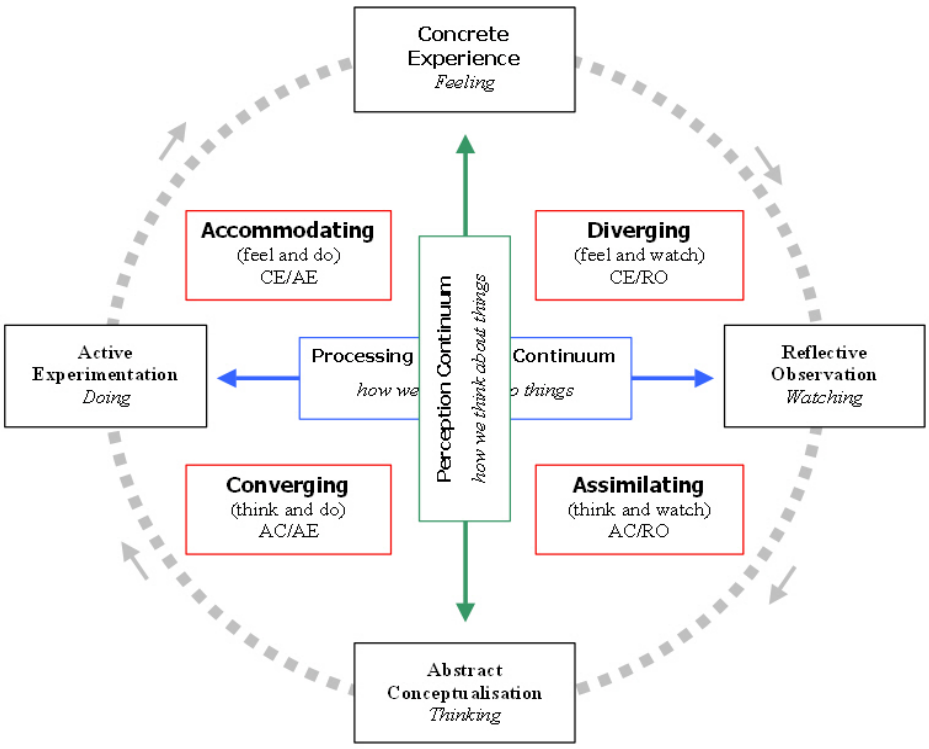
The purpose of this section will be achieved by first of all applying Honey and Mumford's (1986) learning style typology, so that the learning style which best describes that of the researcher can be identified, allowing for the development of weaker styles in order to be able to extend the range of experiences from which learning can occur. Secondly the skills acquired throughout the duration of the thesis will be described, demonstrating the learning which took place. Finally, how the learning will be developed in the future will be illustrated.

6.2 Learning Style:

The term 'learning style' was probably first used by Thelen (1954; cited by Fatt & Joo, 2001) in discovering the dynamics of groups at work. According to NASSP

(1979; cited by Fatt and Joo, 2001), learning styles are characteristic cognitive, affective, and psychological behaviour that indicate how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment. They further defined learning styles as the tendency to adapt a particular strategy in learning. Most students have a preferred learning style but some may adapt their learning styles according to the tasks. Those who adapt are referred to as having a 'versatile learning style'. David Kolb proposed the concept of learning styles that has grown in managerial circles.

Figure 6.1- Kolb's Experiential Learning Styles



Source: Kolb (1984)

David Kolb saw learning as a circular process where learning is viewed as a series of experiences with cognitive additions: concrete experience, reflection and observation, abstract concepts and generalisations, and active experimentation. Kolb's Learning Style Model (1984) in figure 6.1 suggests that there are four stages which follow from each other: the first stage is having a Concrete Experience, which is then followed by Reflection, where the experience is observed and considered. This may then be

followed by the formulation of ideas about the process or Abstract Conceptualisation. The final stage is that of active experimentation, so that the next occurrence of the experience can be improved upon, which will in turn lead to the next Concrete Experience.

Felder and Henriques (1995) define a learning style as 'the way, in which an individual characteristically acquires, retains, and retrieves information'. Mumford (1999) states that learning can have at least two meanings, firstly the process by which we acquire knowledge, skills or insights, and secondly the end result of the process with the achieved knowledge, skills or insights. He explains that most people do not learn things unless there is a purpose to the learning. The researcher has a number of purposes suggested by Mumford (1999), such as his wish to increase his competence at work, develop his competence in the people management area, and improve his career prospects.

Based on Kolb's (1984) model, Honey and Mumford (1986) identified four learning styles namely: Activist, Reflector, Pragmatist, and Theorist, each of which corresponds to a particular stage of Kolb's learning cycle (1984) and are explained below:

- **Reflectors** prefer to view things from different perspectives with an opportunity to plan ahead, attend to detail and look for the meaning of things (Reflective Observation)
- **Activists** enjoy new and challenging activities and benefit most from learning through experience and working with others (Concrete Experience)
- **Theorists** benefit most from learning through model theories or concepts and analysing ideas logically with structured environment (Abstract Conceptualisation)
- **Pragmatists** learn lost easily through immediate practical applications of activities, with an obvious link between subject matter and 'real life' applications (Active Experimentation)

During the course of study, researcher completes a questionnaire which Honey and Mumford (1986) devised to assign a particular learning style to an individual. The

results of the questionnaire can be mapped, allowing for the individual's learning style to be graphically illustrated. Evident from figure 6.2, upon completion of this questionnaire it is clear that the researcher's learning style is predominantly that of reflector, which means, there is a tendency to view a situation from multiple perspectives, while coming to conclusions only after collecting and reviewing the data.

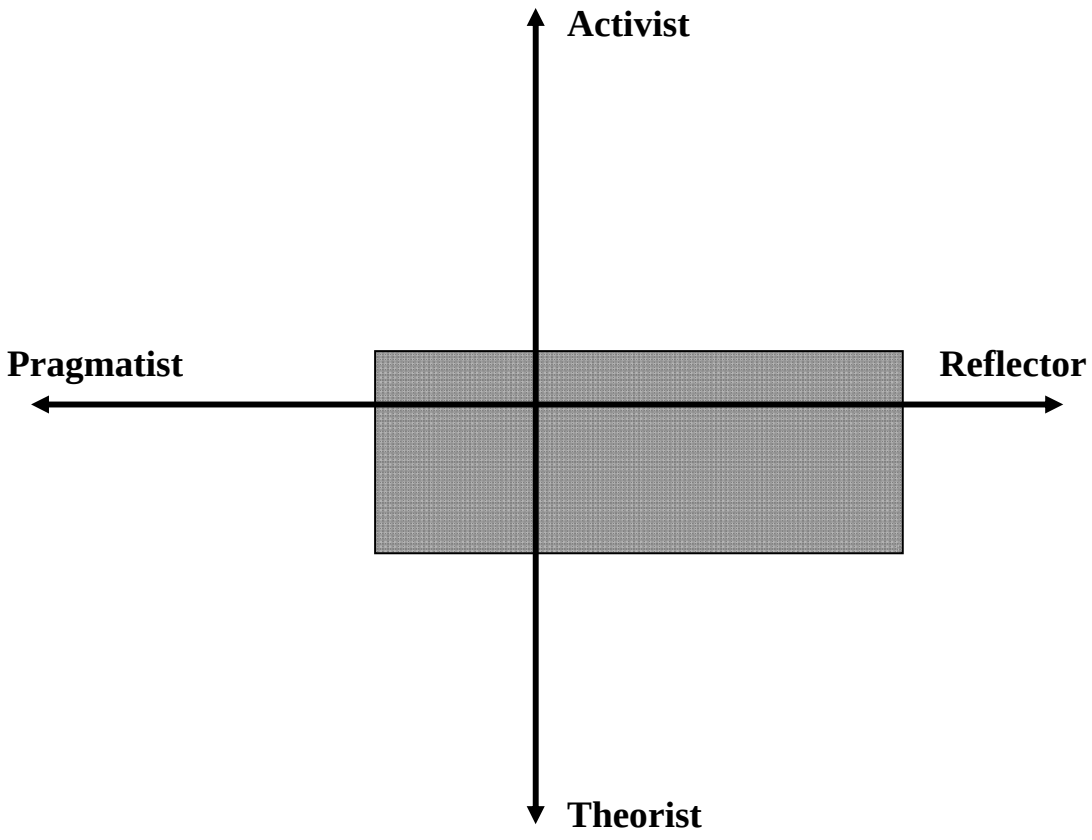


Figure 6.2- Honey & Mumford learning style as applied to Researcher.

Reflectors learn best from activities where they are able to stand back from events and listen and observe: where they are asked to produce carefully considered analysis and reports; where they learn less from activities where they are involved in situations which require action without planning; or where they are worried by time pressure or being rushed from one activity to another. The researcher has realised that over the course of this research, there has been a transformation in his roles. Initially, the researcher was an activist but later he turned out to be a reflector which is primarily

the aim of research. This trait was developed during the course by going through interdisciplinary learning experiences that integrate knowledge from all disciplines like Human Resource Management, IMC and International Business and Trade and keeping abreast with the latest developments in the area of interest. The researcher realised that reflection is an important human activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it. A conscious effort was also made to be pro-active rather than reactive to delicate situations like interviewing a senior manager and trying to get responses from unknown and unseen people. There was also a need to study the perceptions of employees in an unbiased manner for which all the above approaches i.e. Activist, Reflector, Theorist and Pragmatist were adopted ay different stages of the study.

6.3 Background

In 2006, the researcher received Bachelor of Technology in Electronics & Control Engineering from Punjab Technical University, one of the most prestigious institutes in India. After that the researcher got placed in electronics industry named Schneider Electric France. He has gained extensive knowledge of international business with his association for 1 year with the company, thus providing him great exposure to international work culture. This all helped him to develop the so-called “hard skills”. During the course of International MBA, he has gained valuable insights into how international business is done across national boundaries. He realised that business studies and environment is considered more humanistic, involving the development of a large number of “soft skills”. Thus this course offered him new challenges and opportunities to develop extensive skills in many areas. It is important to review all the skills that I have learned so that any weaknesses can be identified and improved. The most significant area that learning took place in were research and time management.

6.4 Development of Skills:

6.4.1 Academic Research and Report Writing

The researcher found academic research and report writing very challenging and enterprising with full of logical imaginations. In due course of time, he realised that academic research and report writing is substantially different from engineering and management briefing/reports.

Formulating the research topic: Conducting an academic research involves logical and sequential steps like formulating and clarifying the research topic, creating the research hypothesis, obtaining and evaluating/reviewing the literature, gathering primary data, designing questionnaire, data analysis and then concluding research with valid recommendations. The key challenge was to find an exciting research topic, which can add value to the self and to the industry under considerations. Saunders et al (2000: p13) argue that research topic chosen area should be an area that researcher is capable of undertaking, that excites their imaginations and fits with their desired career goals. The research area 'Multicultural Teams' is a very suitable topic for researcher to conduct a research. After graduation, researcher remained a part of multicultural teams. In India, researcher worked with multicultural teams. When researcher arrived in Ireland and started the job in Esso Ireland Limited, the workforce employed in Esso Ireland was of diverse nature.

After submission of proposal and early feedback from supervisor for dissertation, the researcher realised that hypothesis and one of the objectives were confusing. He decided to make the hypothesis more specific to overcome this difficulty.

In the future, should the researcher decide to undertake a similar project where the selection of a research topic is needed, he will undoubtedly benefit from his experience with this dissertation.

Reviewing the Literature: In the initial stages of the research project, researcher looked for academic books on the research topic. The majority of the books covered the topic broadly and most of the information was not current. At the start,

researcher's major weakness was the ability to scan journal articles for relevant information. He spends hours on just one journal article and read it cover to cover. He realised that this approach was not good, given the amount of reading and the huge range of material he had to complete in order to execute a comprehensive literature review. The he started to do an initial scan of the articles to determine their relevancy. It involved scanning the articles for introduction and literature review. This approach was priceless as it saved a lot of hassles related with time and effort. Initially, in writing literature review, researcher simply compiled a list of authors and highlighted their contribution to the research topic. Upon reading the initial draft, he realised that there was no particular structure or logical flow to the review and it did not relate clearly to research questions and objectives. In order to provide a clear picture of how the literature had developed to date, it was important to draw out any key points and ideas and present them in a logical flow, and by doing so it provide the reader with a background knowledge to research questions and objectives. With this in mind, researcher was able to draw out the key theories of recognised experts in the research area and was able to highlight the issues where his research would provide fresh insights.

Data Collection: The process of gathering primary data is an area in which researcher have no prior experience. After much consideration, he decided to use questionnaire as he felt this method of data collection would most efficiently enable him to meet his research objectives. *Designing questionnaires* were done as per the laid hypothesis. Researcher made few changes in the questionnaires after pre-test of the questionnaire. The pre-test process proved invaluable as it identified a number of questions that needed to be reworded to avoid misinterpretation.

Data Analysis: Given the fact that researcher had not previously undertaken primary research, administering the questionnaire and the subsequent data analysis was a huge learning curve. For data analysis, researcher used Microsoft Spreadsheet that involves computer skills. This give pictorial representation of data accumulated over time.

All these research skills could be very important for developments in the future when he gets employed. The researcher believes that during his future career endeavour, he might be required to present projects and presentations in relation to various subjects.

This need to be presented on the basis of various researches previously carried out by different scholars or by conducting a self primary research. The research and investigation skills have hence developed this capability for future career developments.

6.4.2 Cognitive Skills

The researcher had some issues in relation to the theory behind the practical working of certain departments in organisation where he previously worked in. The rules were seemed to be drawn but he couldn't figure out the basis on which they were formulated. This was due to ignorance in connecting theory with practice. Various modules and assignments undertaking during the course of the study were designed for students to be able to learn the theory and evolve with the practical implications of the same in the business world. This contributed immensely towards the development of cognitive skills of the researcher. This also validated the decisions taken by the company during his work situations.

Change is now so widespread due to globalisation that organisations have had to make radical changes to their ways of working. The researcher considers this as one of the most important skills that need to be available at the disposal of the business mangers to manage these changes without which it could hamper the growth of any organisation.

6.4.3 Critical Skills

The researcher found himself lagging behind in developing critical perspective of situations based on case studies or real life situations. During his previous work experiences, the researcher felt his inability to learn from the case studies of organisations and critically evaluate them as there was no critical reading involved. The course and this research required the researcher to read a lot of books and critically analyse the material and give descriptive feedbacks but to derive conclusions and work on them which needed critical analysis of the issue.

After successful graduation, companies require their potential employees to listen to speaker at a professional association, read a lengthy report or sit in meeting and perform critical analysis. Nowadays, interviews are framed to evaluate candidates in such skills. Hence the researcher considers this to be a very important skill set for development in the future when he gets employed.

6.4.4 Numeric and Quantitative skills

To be able to function in decision making in any business today, there is a need to understand the financial aspect of business. Against this backdrop, the researcher has acquired skills relating to effective analysis of financial data and as such has the ability to make business projections and reconciliations. This was facilitated by the in depth guidance offered by International Business & Trade (Finance) module. The module also shed light on costing which is germane for the survival of any business.

6.4.5 Working in Diversified Teams

Although the researcher had been working in teams in his previous work environment, but was never involved in a team of culturally and ethnically diversified groups. This was primarily due to the fact that the company he was working was not multinational and the total percentage of the human resource working was from his home country. It was always researchers' desire to work in an environment with culturally and ethnically diversified people. During the course of study and this research, researcher worked in highly diversified groups for completing assignments and exchanging knowledge during group discussions in the class. This enables him to work in diversified teams and outline the following:

- Appreciate the importance of team working.
- Identifying strengths and weaknesses as a team member.
- Identifying roles and behaviours needed to manage group works.
- Becoming influential in a group.
- Contributing effectively to both formal and informal group discussions.

Following the Masters in Business Administration programme, the researcher has learnt and understood the art of formation and building of teams and ultimately understanding how teams work so as to achieve better results in organisation. Also he has learnt how to contribute to teams so as to meet objectives and also learnt to tolerate and manage other people and differences. Above all, the course has sharpened the researcher's leadership skill.

The researcher plans to pursue his career in a multi-national company which requires working in diversified teams with people may be from different nationalities and work culture. This course has contributed immensely in developing this skill for further career development.

6.4.6 Time Management and Personal Organisation

Time management: Time management is not researcher's strong point as he devotes too much time to certain area, while neglecting others. Good time management is a key to success in life and this was realised by researcher when he was trying to balance professional work, academic work, and personal life. He has a tendency to complete easy and enjoyable tasks first and leave more difficult tasks for later. In the early stages of the project, he realised that he was devoting too much time to reading and reviewing the literature. Given that the thesis involved managing multi-tasks over a long period of time, he felt that a project plan was essential to move the project forward and to ensure that it stayed on track. The project plan enabled him to set deadlines for certain tasks, and it also identified certain tasks that required completion before other tasks could begin. He made a point of reviewing the plan on a weekly basis to ensure that he was on schedule. As a result of following the project plan, the questionnaire was sent out well in advance. He had also planned in advance that what areas of the project to focus on before the questionnaire were returned. Holidays from work were also incorporated into the plan as this highlighted to him that when he would be able to devote most time to the project.

The situation and the actions taken can be easily applied to the researcher's role within his organisation. The researcher is convinced of this, as similar situations occur on a regular basis within the organisation every time customers or other managers

make changes to timeframes and deadlines, or when contingencies arise, causing projects or campaign plan to change.

Personal Organisation: The most important thing researcher learned during the course of study is the involvement of self disciplinary action. In the initial stages of the research, researcher found that he was overwhelmed with the information and he had journal articles and various pieces of information relating to research scattered everywhere. He found it very time consuming to locate articles or to even determine what information he had collected on the topic. To overcome this, he started to file the articles into folders. He kept a separate folder for each chapter of literature review. Papers that were broadly related to research topic but less relevant were filed in a separate folder. He also referenced each article in a Word document using the Harvard referencing style. In previous assignments, he found himself trying to collate a list of references at the last minute, which sometimes felt like it was a project in itself. He realised that by updating list of references on an ongoing basis, he would save time and effort in the final days of the project.

The self disciplinary actions developed a positive attitude leading to enormous working environment. This also helped him in managing self-esteem with good conduct and personal ethics. He realised his strengths and working with limitations by overcoming obstacles. Resources like time and money has to be spent in a safer way so as to respect diversity and change in living environment.

Everything learnt from this experience can be applied to the researcher's day to day activities at work, as he is required to manage a number of different campaigns and projects simultaneously, while continuing to meet certain deadlines, organising activities and tasks, managing people and interacting with customers.

6.5 Future Application of Learning

Like any other skill, be they physical or mental, the skills learned throughout the course of completing this dissertation, will become blunted and diminish in potency if not regularly exercised. Therefore it is imperative that these skills be maintained and improved upon. The experiences of this dissertation have not only given the

researcher a worthwhile insight into conducting a research project, but they have also contributed to improve his skills and capabilities, which can be leveraged in both his professional and personal life. These newly learned skills would improve his prospects of getting a high level management position. The researcher likes to say that developments of cognitive, critical, team working, research, personal management skills through this program has contributed immensely in his personality developments and has put forward cohesive lesions learnt by him after acquiring those skills.

The MBA International programme has helped him to extensively develop in key skill areas. Based on his learning and knowledge gained during the course, it has helped him to develop as a better individual both academically and personally. He has extensively developed his numerical and quantitative skills during the course of the programme. Having worked individually and as a member of a team with different people it has helped him to draw different perspective from both lecturers and his peers. It is well known that one never stops learning. The researcher thinks he was always dependent on others to guide him and correct him.

6.6 Conclusion

Finally the researcher believes that he has acquired a substantial number of new skills, keeping all these insights in mind. In his point of view, the development is satisfactory and feels that this all will play a crucial role in his professional as well as academic career. This has considerably brought an instrumental change in his outlook towards life supporting his overall motto of life. He thinks that he has evolved as a mature and integral person, not only in the educational aspect but also because of the every day life experience on living independently in a foreign and multicultural environment. He believes that someone can have plenty of skills, but his own experience has shown that to success in business and in life, your personal values and your capacity to respect, understand and connect with people are as important or even more as any other ability that you can learn. The researcher feels that this research project has been a valuable learning experience and he is confident that it has provided him with a wide range of skills that he will be able to use in his future professional career.

CHAPTER - 7

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7.2 Journals
7.3 Websites

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CHAPTER - 8

APPENDIX

Contents:

8.1 Questionnaire for employees
8.2 Questionnaire for managers

Dear colleagues,

I, Jagjit Singh, conducting a research as a part of my Masters degree and I would like to invite you to participate in a questionnaire as a part of this research. The objective of this questionnaire is to share your experience of working with a multicultural team. All information gathered will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose of this project only. Being a confidential, the questionnaire is anonymous. So please take your time to complete the questionnaire. I would appreciate it if you could complete all questions.

1. Job Title: _____

Age: ○ Under 20 ○ 21- 25 ○ 26- 30
○ 31- 35 ○ 36- 40 ○ 41- 45
○ Above 45

Sex: ○ Male ○ Female

Nationality: ○ Irish ○ British ○ Polish ○ Lithuanian
○ Indian ○ Spanish ○ Dutch ○ Pakistani
○ Other (Please specify): _____

2. How long have you been working for the company?

○ Less than 6 months
○ 6 months to 1 year
○ 1 to 2 years
○ More than 2 years

3. How many people from different nationalities are working with you?

○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 ○ More than 5

4. 'I enjoy working with a multicultural team'. Please tick the appropriate circle:

○ Agree ○ No opinion ○ Disagree

5. What are the advantages of multicultural teams in your opinion?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. What are the disadvantages of multicultural teams in your opinion?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. How would you rate the efficiency of your team?

- ○ Excellent
- ○ Very good
- ○ Average
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor

8. How would you rate the communication with your peers?

- ○ Excellent
- ○ Very good
- ○ Average
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor

9. How would you rate the relationships among team members?

- ○ Excellent
- ○ Very good
- ○ Average
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor

10. What do you like most about working in multicultural environment?

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Do you believe that everyone can contribute to the team performance?

○ Yes ○ No

12. Do you think that members of different cultures respond differently to the same event?

○ Yes ○ No

13. Do you find opportunity to share ideas with your peers?

○ Yes ○ No

14. Do you think multicultural teams provide a competitive advantage to company?

○ Yes ○ No

15. In your opinion, what are the main four barriers that cause destructive conflict within the multicultural team?

. _____

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16. If you were in manager's role, what would you do to manage the multicultural teams effectively?

_____

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_____

This is the end of this questionnaire. Thank you for giving your valuable time to complete the questionnaire. You have the right to gain access to results if requested. Researcher could be contacted at e-mail: *kingz11punjab@gmail.com*

Questionnaire for Managers

Dear colleagues,

I, Jagjit Singh, conducting a research as a part of my Masters degree and I would like to invite you to participate in a questionnaire as a part of this research. The objective of this questionnaire is to share your experience of working with a multicultural team. All information gathered will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for the purpose of this project only. Being a confidential, the questionnaire is anonymous. So please take your time to complete the questionnaire. I would appreciate it if you could complete all questions

1. Job Title: _____

Age: ○ Under 20 ○ 21- 25 ○ 26- 30
○ 31- 35 ○ 36- 40 ○ 41- 45
○ Above 45

Sex: ○ Male ○ Female

Nationality: ○ Irish ○ British ○ Polish ○ Lithuanian
○ Indian ○ Spanish ○ Dutch ○ Pakistani
○ Other (Please specify): _____

2. How long you have been working for the company?

○ Less than 6 months
○ 6 months to 1 year
○ 1 to 2 years
○ More than 2 years

3. How many different nationalities are there in your team?

○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 ○ More than 5

4. How do you feel about your organisation's multicultural environment?

○ Excellent
○ Very good
○ Average
○ Poor
○ Very poor

5. What are the advantages of multicultural teams in your opinion?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. What are the disadvantages of multicultural teams in your opinion?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. How would you rate the efficiency of your team?

- ○ Excellent
- ○ Very good
- ○ Average
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor

8. How would you rate the communication with your staff?

- ○ Excellent
- ○ Very good
- ○ Average
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor

9. How would you rate your relationships with your team members?

- ○ Excellent
- ○ Very good
- ○ Average
- ○ Poor
- ○ Very poor

10. Do you think multicultural teams provide competitive advantage to company?

○ Yes ○ No

Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. What are your expectations from your team regarding the work performance?

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. In general, what are the main problems that affect the performance of team in multicultural environment?

_____

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_____

_____

13. How do you try to overcome such problems?

_____

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14. In your opinion, what things could improve your team's performance in future?

_____

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_____

Thank you for giving your valuable time to complete the questionnaire. The result of this questionnaire would be available upon request at e-mail: kingz11punjab@gmail.com