

# Cross cultural communication skills



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In today's world, way of doing business is constantly changing. This rapid shift could be due to integration of world market through globalization, mergers and acquisitions, Multinational Corporation, legal and regulatory pressure, diverse customer base, and increase in complexity of jobs (Williams and O' Reilly, 1998; Seymen, 2006; Langevoort, 2004; Sturm, 2001). Specifically in UK the composition of working population and employment criteria has changed too fast within last 20 years (Mavin and Girling, 2000). Perhaps, these essential change drivers came into existence by consistent disturbance in external environment or macro forces but there intensity has also molded workforce composition along with change in business trend. Depending on domestic workforce for positive organizational outcomes seem no longer a favorite choice and large numbers of organizations are moving to diverse or cross-cultural workforce (Miroshnik, 2002).

During the 21st century, one of the most crucial terms affecting the workforce is consistent increase in diversity (Lavaty and Kleiner, 2001). Looking outside the national boundaries and acquiring multicultural workforce would be more effective in dealing with a diverse customer base for purpose of attaining maximum competitive advantage (Kidder et al., 2004). Grossman, 2000 states that, organizations have spent millions of dollars on diversity programmes. Where diversity is introduced for organizational outcomes their concerns about the effective management of culturally diverse workforce becomes automatically high. Thus, the researcher is curious to investigate the importance of efficient technique or

skill which could help to manage diverse workforce for positive organizational outcomes.

Firstly, it should never be ignored that the concept of workforce diversity contains inevitable facts. Bhadury et al (2000) declares that, diversity can have both pros & cons but the nature of the impact depends upon the question that, how diverse workforce is managed? With regards to diversity there are different viewpoints. Researchers suggest that, diversity has performance driven features, including: continuous penetration of creativity and innovation, providing different approaches about the problem solution, the attraction and retention of talented people, flexibility within organization, competitive edge over competitors and improve understanding of business environment ( Jayne and Dipboye, 2004; Konard, 2003; Giscombe and Mattis, 2002).

On the other hand some believe that combining different cultures at workplace could create difficulties in communication because one group may feel detachment when other group is highly prioritized by organization (Chevrier, 2003; Allen et al, 2008; Gillian, 2000; Frances et al, 2002; Akova, 2000; Karoc-Kakabadse and Kouzmin 2001). Some views put forward the idea that, culturally diverse workforce could reject the working style and traditions of organization and also chances of disharmony between social values and beliefs are higher when unwillingness and poor management towards understanding of different cultures occurs (Lee and Chon, 2000; D'iribarne, 2002; Simeon and Fujiu, 2001; Joiner, 2001; Yavas, 2001; Iverson, 2000; Moore, 2002). These mixed opinions and variation in perspectives

about workforce diversity demands further research in relation to diverse workforce management.

Today world is unpredictable due to fast pace of change which demands new approach. The field of food retail business becomes more competitive when it contains diverse workforce. So, this food retail store needs to understand the importance of such skills which can definitely help it to manage diverse workforce for organizational benefit. Finding an effective skill to manage workforce diversity which helps to provide effective customer services is very challenging for both researchers and managers of any business who acquires culturally diverse workforce.

## **1. 1 Background to industry**

In this research, food retail store which is a franchise of the world's famous retail company and located in Hackney London is taken as a case study. The selection of this food retail store is appropriate because its workforce and local area people both consist of culturally diverse people. In Britain, equal opportunities of participation are given to create a diverse working environment without any discrimination on the ground of religion, color, belief, origin, sex in employment, training and promotion (for British E&D legislation please see Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006; Disability Discrimination Amendment Act 2005; Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulation 2003; The Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005; Equality Act 2006; Race Relations Amendment Act 2000; Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006; Equal Pay Act 1970 Act Amended). Hackney is one of the most diverse areas full of culturally diverse community (Hackney Council). It is one of the most sensitive tasks to deal with diversity

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in such area where working arrangement and population both are diverse in large numbers. However, an effective technique or skill could help management in better way to manage culturally diverse workforce for positive organizational outcomes.

## **1. 2 Problem Definition and Research Focus**

In the context of food retail business when it comes to organizational image, most companies find it competitive to introduce and promote diversity at workplace. However, to manage diverse workforce effectively for positive organizational outcomes is challenging. While some retail companies have used effective methods to manage diversity, but many of others are lacking behind. In food retail store Hackney London, it is not yet clear, whether store and line manger have any strategy or method to manage the diverse workforce effectively or do they understand the message from headquarter and pass it to employees in original format. In addition to the above, whether the employees have good communication skills to inform management about any task and personal conflicts. Overall, this study intends to examine the diverse workforce management in food retail store Hackney London. This research aims at examining the importance of cross-cultural communication skills to manage diverse workforce in food retail store Hackney London for the purpose of better customer service or to find out that how can cross-cultural communication skills benefit the food retail store Hackney London in terms of culturally diverse workforce management and better customer services. 1.

### **3Research Question**

How much of the workforce diversity management research is carried out using the cross-cultural communication skills?

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Has the above research resulted in effective customer services?

Are the above research results being utilized in determining the strength of relationship between employer and employees?

Has the above research result in competitive advantage?

## **1. 4 Significance of Research**

Several efforts have been made to investigate that how cultural variety in organizational context should be managed effectively for the purpose of positive organizational outcomes? So the question here is that, why writer is conducting his research in context of diverse workforce management when it has already been investigated? The writer is so concern because there is a little understanding of a matter that up to what extent the FRSHL is using cross cultural communication skills for managing diverse workforce and what is the role of effective CCCs in determining the effective customer service in terms of organizational benefit. Also findings about the effective skills for diverse workforce management have been largely inconsistent and there is a lack of implicit agreement between different perspectives (for reviews please see Jackson, Joshi, and Erhardt, 2003; Mannix and Neale, 2005; Stewart, 2006; Webber and Donahue, 2001; Williams and O'Reilly 1998).

A recent survey of HR consultants conducted by (SHRM) suggests that only about one-third of organizations involving in diversity initiatives evaluate their techniques or skills used for the management of diverse workforce (Esen, 2005). Improper management of diverse workforce which dissatisfies workers could be very destructive for organizational performance and directly affects customer services. Hanging a poster of effective diversity in <https://assignbuster.com/cross-cultural-communication-skills/>

HR department or labeling a diversity statement on company website is meaningless if effective skill is not used to manage diverse workforce (Ewing, 2007). Culturally diverse workforce has an important part in communicational problem at workplace within employees themselves and with management because of difference in interaction process and different types of dialogue (Karoc-Kakabadse and Kouzmin 2001). However, it is up to management that what type of methods and skills they use to decrease the negative impact of diversity. To ensure the validity and reliability this dissertation is aimed at filling the gap that is found in the research conducted so far around the topic and tends to explore the level up to which the FRSHL is emphasizing for workforce diversity management and the use of that research to determine the organizational benefit in terms of effective customer services.

### 1. 5 Goals of Study

The study is aimed at investigating the importance of cross-cultural communication skills in relation to the management of culturally diverse workforce within food retail store for the purpose of effective customer service. In this regard the study tends to analyze the current situation of that store with respect to adopting of diversity management skill and then impact of diversity on line manager and employees.

## **1. 6 Research Objectives**

The main objectives of the study are:

To identify the possible opportunities and threats of WDM.

To analyze the impact of diversity on line manager and employees within FRSHL.

To find the evidence about the importance of CCCs in terms of DWM.

After assessing the available data, provide useful suggestion to the management of FRSHL to better handle the 21st century challenges in relation to the workforce diversity management and to satisfy store management in order to improve customer services by emphasizing on CCCs.

### 1. 7 Rationale of the study

The study is developed on the rationale of the gap point mentioned under heading (1. 3) that even there is significant amount of study is done about effective management of diverse workforce, but there are few researches that discover the connection between cross-cultural communication and effective customer services in context of workforce diversity management. In the highly competitive business of food retail it is very crucial to look at most sensitive aspect which could affect customer services. Hence this dissertation is based on the aim of emphasizing on the need of cross-cultural communication skills to deal with issues related to diverse workforce management within food retail store Hackney London.

### **1. 8 Research Assumptions**

Management of food retail store Hackney London is interested to know about any issues related to their way of managing diverse workforce.



Positive response and cooperation is expected from participants in order to support research because they are a part of diverse working environment and aware of diversity management sensitivity.

Being colleague of diverse workforce in FRSHL, researcher has good understanding with management and staff.

Required information will be provided by FRSHL with confidence and trust to researcher for the purpose of valuable recommendations about how to manage diverse workforce effectively by using cross-cultural communication skills for the purpose of effective customer services.

The selected methods or techniques are cable enough to gather required information in order to lead food retail store Hackney London towards the solution of issues related to diversity management.

## **1. 9 Keywords**

**Globalization**

**Multinational Cooperation**

**Mergers and Acquisitions**

**Diversity:**

**Diverse Workforce:**

**Customer Services:**

**Cross-Cultural Communication:**

**Diverse Customer Base:**

FRSHK: Food Retail Store Hackney London.

CCCs: Cross-Cultural Communication skills.

DWM: Diverse Workforce Management.

SHRM: Society of Human Resource Management

HR: Human Resources.

E&D: Equality and Diversity.

## **1. 10 Summary of Chapter**

This chapter introduces the background information of industry on which research is being conducted in context of diverse workforce management. After explanation about problem statement in relation to food retail store, this concept outlines research questions which need to be investigated. The final part of the chapter will deal with the significance of study and will outline main goals and objectives of this research. The concept is further divided into sub-concepts.

Information about history of diversity.

Interest of researcher in field of diversity management for further investigation.

View of diversity at workplace from positive and negative perspectives.

Background of researched industry.

Importance of research topic.

Goals of research.

Objectives of study.

Problem statement and research questions.

Rationale of the research study.

Research assumptions and Keywords.

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