

Haute Ecole
« ICHEC – ECAM – ISFSC »



Enseignement supérieur de type long de niveau universitaire

The Impact of Cultural Diversity on Management Practices

MLex Case Study

Mémoire présenté par :

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Pour l'obtention du diplôme de :

**Master's degree in Business Management –
International Track**

Année académique 2022-2023

Promoteur :

Solange SIMONS

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have contributed to this thesis. First and foremost, I would like to thank all of the people I met during my time here in Belgium.

I would also like to thank my promoter, Solange SIMONS, who provided me with assistance, guidance, and continuous support throughout the process of this thesis. Her feedback, informed by her expertise in the field of Culture and her great book was helpful in many ways. Besides, I would like to thank my wife Nessrine, whose advice and support were very helpful during the whole process of this thesis.

Additionally, I would like to thank my family back home in Algeria for their love and support, Especially my mother, whose example laid the foundation for my motivation and ambition to strive for higher ideals.

A special thanks also goes to Aurelien RENARD, who challenged me and mentored me in every step of my internship at MLex, and that helped me develop a great work ethic I will cherish for the rest of my life.

I would like to thank everybody that was on my team at MLex, Greta, Romeo, Victor, Marc, Ben, and Alex. It has been a pleasure to work with you and to receive your precious advice and contributions in my master thesis. Thank you for your encouragement and loyalty.

A big thank you to everybody else who was involved in the entire process.

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Introduction :

A company is a group of people who always seek to improve its business, and increase its profit, and one of the best ways to achieve growth is internationalization to reach its business objectives and remain competitive in its market. In such a situation, there are so many factors that influence the decision-making on setting up abroad; those who attract it beyond its borders (pull factors), and others that come from problems in the national market and the need to look for outside opportunities (push factors) and other factors such as political, economic, sociological, technological, etc.

Internationalization and globalization oblige the company to integrate people with different thinking cultures and origins. If the company is aiming for performance, it is required to think about and put in place an organizational scheme that takes these differences into account. These belong to the spheres of the principles governing a way of life, beliefs, habits, and customs, different behaviors. Internationalization forces companies to operate in a more complex way than the one in which they initially started.

This translates into different operations: working with Chinese buyers based in Shanghai or Kuala Lumpur; set up a new subsidiary in Brazil; carry out a project with Russians; enter into an agreement with Nigerians in partnership with a Japanese company; recruit in Mexico or recruit Arab immigrants in Montreal; require accurate reporting from a Taiwanese engineer; manage a project-team in which there are two English, one Polish, a Lebanese and a Dutch management controller... and again, welcoming Indian clients; identify high potential Indonesians; prepare the negotiation with a partner in the USA.

The company is in confrontation with absolute cultural diversity. This situation will cause profound changes within the company; these transformations are of order organizational and managerial. Starting from this postulate, we will try to analyze the impact of one of these phenomena on some managerial practices which have already been studied many times during our international business management masters. I hope that my modest work will allow future students and researchers to further study and research in this area and will be valuable for future professional projects. Our approach will attempt to respond to a question that seems trivial:

Research question :

For this study we will try to answer the following question:

How does cultural diversity manifest itself within companies and what are its impact on management Practices?

In addition, the following sub-questions can be posed:

- What is cultural diversity?
- How does cultural diversity impact business management?
- What is the impact of cultural diversity on management within the company “MLex”?

Research hypotheses:

The main question and the sub-questions above deserve tentative answers. that leads us to making the following assumptions:

- The presence of a variety of cultures within the same organization can cause changes and adaptations in managerial practices. But these changes, if handled correctly, present great opportunities to the company that can help improve the practice and the management of the company, which eventually leads to growth.

The objective of the research:

The main objective of this research is to inform students and researchers what is meant by cultural diversity and whether this phenomenon has effectively an impact on managerial practices within a company by doing a case study on the company “MLex.”

Motivation of the research:

My motivation to do this thesis is the fact of being myself an international student with a different cultural background who is living in a city full of diversity and cultural differences and intending to enter the professional world.

In addition, I want to attract the attention of business leaders and managers to the advantages they can gain by recruiting different workers based on their Culture, beliefs, principles, habits, behaviors...etc. This work will also be submitted to ICHEC’s library as a reference in the field of international management and will therefore be beneficial for future students’ research.

Chapter 1: Definition and basic concepts of cultural diversification

Introduction:

Definitions and key concepts:

Definition of culture:

In our subject we cannot advance without defining and clarifying the concept of culture. No doubt, the authors and researchers have presented a significant number of definitions of the concept but in this thesis, we will try to evoke the best work.

According to the anthropologist Edward Tylor, culture is “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.” (Chevrier, 2003)

“Here he approached the concept of culture in all its aspects; he put his finger on the fact of accepting culture as individual culture and that it includes all the acquisitions of a person; his thoughts, beliefs, lifestyle, behaviors, and the relationship between the individual and his environment. Thus, the acquisition of culture and singular heritage, and ethnography aims precisely to account for the diversity of humanity.” (Chevrier, 2003)

According to anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn, “Culture is the way of thinking, feeling, and reacting of a human group, especially acquired, and transmitted by symbols, and which represents its specific identity; it includes the concrete objects produced by the group. The core of culture is made up of traditional ideas and the values attached to them.” (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952)

In its definition, culture is considered as a phenomenon which helps in the identification of a group, and which is conveyed between its members. He also indicated that the latter's culture is made up of abstract elements (thoughts, feelings, principles, etc.) and concrete elements (habits, fashion, etc.).

In another research according to sociologist and anthropologist Ralph Linton: “There is no uneducated society, not even an individual.” (Linton, 1977)

In Linton’s vision, culture is universal, but not to the extent that, as it is unique everywhere, but rather in the sense that everyone comes from and has their own language. That is to say, culture is everywhere but each society is characterized by its own culture.

The economist Greet Hofstede, (1980) says that “culture is The collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others.” This anthropologist considered culture as an element of differentiation. Or he pointed out that each member of society has a culture that distinguishes him from the other because each has his own principles, values, and thoughts.

According to a study done by the UNESCO, “Culture is considered as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.” (UNESCO , 2009)

Also, Cole hints that “culture is a term that refers to a vast and diverse set of essentially immaterial aspects of social life.” According to this sociologist, culture comprises the values, beliefs, systems of language, communication, and practices that people share in common, and which can be used to define them as a collective.” (Cole, 2019,)

Definition of cultural diversity:

Starting with Dr. Taylor Cox , jr who defines cultural diversity as a “representation, in a social system, of individuals from multiple cultures, countries and linguistic groups.”

According to this author, working in an intercultural environment suggest that a group of individuals is attributed to different modes of interpretation, beliefs, values, principles, and habits, etc. and that everyone has their own culture and especially different linguistics.

According to Dr. John R. Schermerhorn Jr (2002). “the diversity of a workforce results from the differences that the individuals who compose it present in relation to their socio-demographic characteristics such as gender, race, ethnocultural origin, age, physical and mental condition, sometimes even marital and family or religious status. We can see that this professor underlined the term “socio-demographic characteristics” in his definition.

To better understand the term, we will understand the categories of diversity that companies can generally meet them:

“We distinguish between two categories:

1- Primary categories:

Brief explanations follow on the primary categories of diversity, over which people have little influence.

- a) Age: number of years lived by the person and generation in which he was born.
- b) Race: A biological group within the human race, representing superficial physical differences, such as eye shape and skin color. Race represents less than 10% difference that characterizes the genetic heredity of a person.
- c) Ethnicity: identification with a cultural group which has a shared heritage, and in particular, an origin, a language, a religion, a diet, and national customs. While some identify strongly with these cultural roots, others do not.
- d) Abilities and physical qualities: various characteristics, including body type, body size, facial features, special abilities or disabilities, visible and invisible physical and mental imperfections, or talents.
- e) Sexual orientation: feelings of sexual attraction, heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual, towards members of the same sex or opposite sexes.” (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2006)

2- Subcategories:

“Brief explanations follow of the subcategories of diversity, over which individuals enjoy relatively greater influence during their lifetime, through the choices they make.

- a) Education: official and unofficial information of the individual.
- b) Professional experience: employment and voluntary position held by the person and various organizations for which he has worked.
- c) Income: economic conditions in which the person grew up and current economic situation.
- d) Family status: status of the person (ever single, married, widowed, or divorced).
- e) Religious beliefs: fundamental teaching received on the deities and values acquired through formal or informal religious practice.
- f) Geographical location: place(s) where the person was raised or spent a substantial part of his or her life, indicating the types of communities and urban areas, as opposed to rural areas.
- g) Parental status: with or without children and the environment in which they are raised (single-parent family, for example, and family with two adult parents).
- h) Personal style: tendency of the person to think, feel or act in a particular way.” (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2006)

Cultural Diversity in the Workplace:

Diversity in a workplace can seem simple to understand, since we all know the definition of a workplace being a place where people gather and work for a specific goal or organization, such as an office or a factory, but it is much more complex than that.

“The concept of diversity is used in the literature in different ways, with consequences for the direction that research takes, the policies that organizations develop, and our understanding of what dimensions of diversity matter for work, employment, and careers. We identify three main uses of the term: as a descriptor of the workforce; as a policy approach to managing the workforce; and as a theoretical paradigm highlighting the significance of socio-bio-demographic differences.

Diversity as a descriptor of the workforce Noon and Ogbonna (2001) write that diversity can be used as a neutral descriptor of variation at the workplace. As a descriptor of the workforce, diversity can refer to a huge array of differences, from those that are social group based - gender, race/ethnicity, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation/identity - to individual characteristics, including qualifications, lifestyle, personality, personal interests, talents and competences, values and beliefs, and many others. Some authors refer to visible differences (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity) and invisible differences (individual and personal variations). Others refer to surface-level diversity, to describe demographic differences such as gender and race/ethnicity, and deep-level diversity, to describe personal differences.” (Kirtton & Greene, 2022)

Corporate Culture:

During the 1980s, the notion of culture experienced an emergence in the field of management, which gave rise to the concept of corporate culture.

“Corporate culture means the set of ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that are common to the members of the same organization.” (Meier, 2019)

“Corporate culture is a unifying system used by a given organization to unite different types of staff members, in a complex attempt to influence individual and collective behaviors to create a synergy that achieves business goals, individuals of an organization.” (Wilkins & Ouchi, 1983)

In another definition, “Organizational culture is defined as the underlying beliefs, assumptions, values and ways of interacting that contribute to the unique social and psychological environment of an organization.” (Cancialosi C. , 2017,)

“This concept is considered as the original culture of any organization, and they have the same nature especially with regard to the values, rules, reasonings, and criteria, visible in the field, workplaces.” (Rey, 2017)

Characteristics of corporate culture:

According to the author of the book “Management Interculturel” Meier, he distinguished different Characteristics for corporate culture, where we can identify Six key Characteristics which are: “

a) The corporate culture is a collective phenomenon: which brings together a group of individuals around shared thoughts, values, principles, and standards. With the help of this universe, people will be united and differentiated from other actors of another organization.

b) The corporate culture proceeds from an omnipresent symbolic activity: which serves to share ideas, data, and formal rules between the actors of an entity using presentations which must be understandable for other external actors’ business. The production of symbols can, for example, take the form of names, a logo, an emblem, specific colors, locations which evoke by their form or their nature an association of spontaneous ideas with characteristic elements of a business. The formation of a corporate culture is based on the production of these meanings by influencing the social and emotional balance (social identification, stability security) of the workers.

c) Corporate culture is associated with the notions of learning and transmission: through repetition and interaction. The sustainability of the group and its thoughts, values and principles is based on the culture, and this allows the dissemination of these to newcomers. The transmission of this culture to new generations of employees is done through rites, ceremonies, and the promotion of certain myths.

d) Corporate culture is characterized by its internal consistency: it is true that it is a structured system made up of principles and beliefs, but that does not imply that it is unchangeable or closed.

e) Corporate culture is a social construction that evolves over time: throughout the life of the organization, it is exposed to different situations which in turn affect the evolution of corporate culture.

Thus, preferences in terms of security policy growth can also bear the imprint of past situations or experiences that have deeply marked the minds and thus guided the decisions or actions of the company.

f) The corporate culture constitutes an “inside” in relation to an “outside”: the creation of such a universe will bring individuals together in the same skeleton and make it possible to differentiate them from others.” (Meier, 2019)

In addition, Meier introduced a method on how to decipher a corporate culture: “subsequently a method that helps to decipher the culture of any company using criteria visible in the companies studied. This approach is based on previous work.” (Meier, 2001), Which developed a cultural analysis grid that includes the following items:

- History
- The Job
- Dominant values
- Repository in terms of development
- Positioning facing the environment.
- Elements of identification and belonging
- Structure type
- Decision process
- Management style and sources of power
- Human resources policy
- Behavior and attitudes

And we can see the grid in detail on the following table:

Table 1: How to decipher a corporate culture.

Key criteria	Target objective	Possible dimensions
History	Reconstruct the main phases of the development of the company, through the study of its main leaders, the evolution of its legal structures, its internal power links, and the relations that the company maintains with other firms of the sector.	Event, dates, key phases of development, prominent personalities, founding myths and legends, investment policies, period of hiring and dismissal.
The Job	Know the specific skills of the company, by studying its initial know-how and its	Professional affiliation, type of industry, technology and know-how, type of clientele, means and resources, production system.
Dominant values	Look for the foundations on which the company relies to legitimize its actions	Relative weights of major departments (technical, commercial, research, human resources, etc.) Credo/philosophy: quantitative vs. qualitative, production vs.

		customer orientation, cost vs. quality orientation, versatility vs. specialization, efficiency vs. effectiveness.
Repository in terms of development	Analyze preferences in terms of development strategy and their main causes (company size, financial power, choice of leaders, etc.)	Paths of development: specialization, diversification, upstream or downstream integration, innovation. Competitive strategies: cost leadership strategy, differentiation strategy, focus strategy. Preferred modes of development (internal growth, external growth, alliances, partnerships).
Positioning facing the environment.	Analyze the position and image of the company in its economic and social environment.	Geographic location of the company and its main customers, attitude towards external risks or opportunities, relations with environmental players, responsiveness to the unexpected, use of subcontracting and partnerships, openness to the external, sensitivity to social and societal values (local employment, ethics, environment, humanitarian, etc.).
Elements of identification and belonging	Identify the elements that, for the members of the company studied, take on a form of identification and belonging to a social group.	Symbols, signs, names, emblems, historical references, legends, badges, organization of offices, internal layout, location of sites...
Structure type	Identify the structure of the company in terms of its organization and operation.	Legal status of the company, composition of capital, weight of the main shareholders, organization chart, hierarchical line, degree of formalization, horizontal relations and entity-group relations, degree of specialization, level of standardization of work processes, mode of operation (pyramid, network, rake, etc.), weight of the technostructure, operational centers and support activities, control, integration, regulation and coordination mechanisms, degree of functional differentiation, scope of supervision.
Decision process	Study the decision-making mechanisms within the organization.	Nature of decisions (individual/collective) speed of the process, fluidity or rigidity of circuits, level of preparation of decisions, choice of assessment criteria, level of delegation, information meeting,

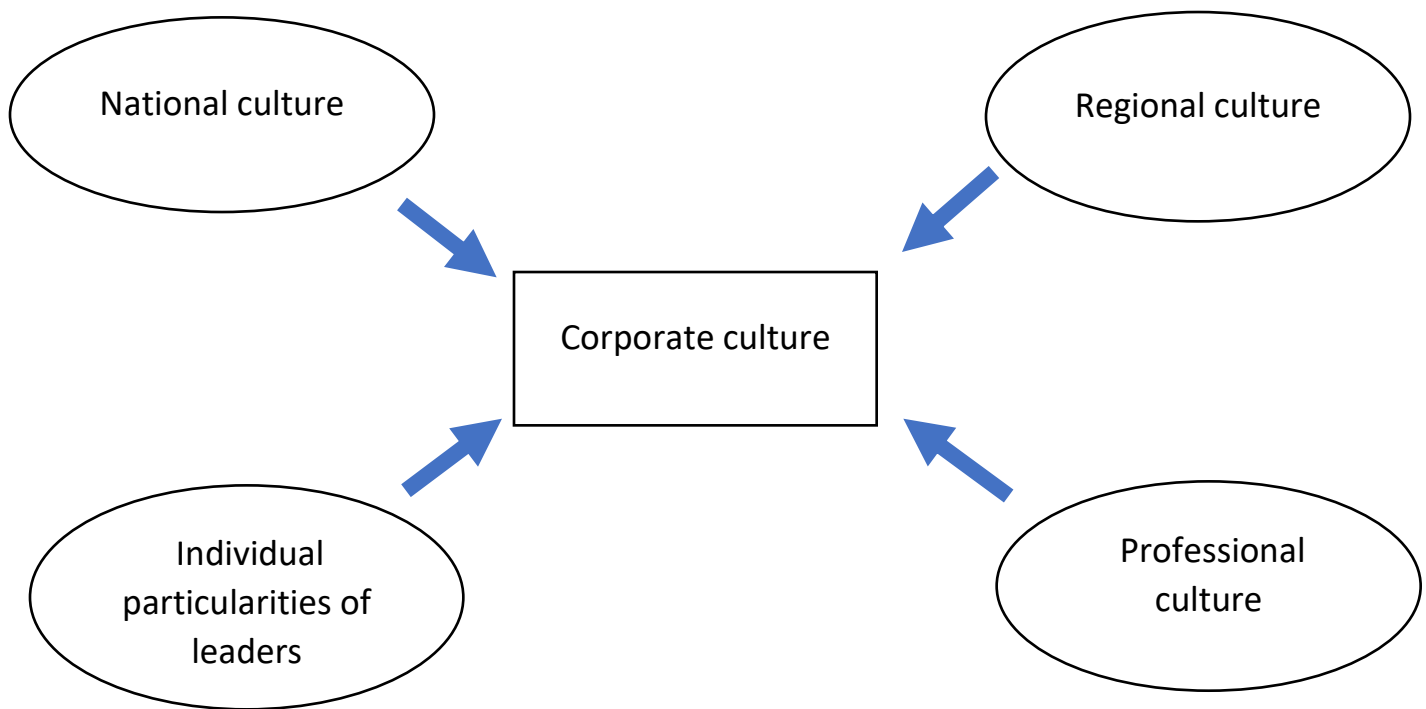
		consultation and coordination systems, settlement of conflicts, role of experts.
Management style and sources of power	Identify how the management of the company supervises and manages its employees and collaborators.	Leadership style: paternalistic, autocratic, democratic, bureaucratic, entrepreneurial, mercenary. Sources of power: power of coercion, power of gratification, power of expertise, statutory power, charismatic power...
Human resources policy	Examine how leaders inform, animate, and control their work teams.	Remuneration and bonus policy, career management, recruitment policy, training policy, profiles and skills sought, leadership style, internal communication policy; evaluation criteria, tools and procedures, importance of the statutes, relations with employee representative bodies.
Behavior and attitudes	Identify the main behaviors and attitudes of employees towards their organization.	Staff attachment, employee motivations, personal and collective commitment, membership, social climate, absenteeism rate, turnover rate, importance of conflicts and strikes, unionization rate, social distance, language, vocabulary used, dress code, rituals , ceremonies, taboos...

Source : (Meier, 2013)

Origins and influences of corporate culture:

“Any company, whatever its size, forms a social sub-group composed of individuals belonging to one or more cultures: national culture, regional culture, culture of professional affiliation, personal culture. These different cultures are at the origin of the formation and evolution of the culture of a company and will influence the behavior of the members of the organization. Each culture therefore brings specific influences that can change depending on the context.” (Meier, 2019)

Figure 1: Influences of corporate culture.



Source : (Meier, 2019)

a) National culture: national cultures... carry all their weight, even where great efforts are made to create, beyond borders, an original corporate culture. (d'Iribarne , 1989)

Since the company works mainly in its country of origin, with national collaborators, its own culture often takes up the features of the local culture, to which are added management methods, principles, values, and standards specific to the organization itself.

The concept of national culture has been recognized as the key to intercultural study and practice. National culture refers to the general attitudes, belief systems, values, and traditions specific to a nation. (Ansah & Louw, 2019)

b) Regional culture: this designates the diversity of cultures within the same country and the points of similarity that may exist between geographical areas legally belonging to several countries.

c) “Professional culture: the corporate culture is also a reflection of a common professional past that unites individuals in a community of professions based on equivalent training and experience. Professional culture presents itself as a specific culture acquired at work.” (Ansah & Louw, 2019). According to the work of R. Sains instead, a person's work occupies part of their identity.

Indeed, “professional identity is made up of the situation at work, group relations linked to hierarchical relationships and the perception that the actors have of the future.” (Ansah & Louw, 2019). It directly affects beliefs, principles, ways of acting.

d) “The individual particularities of the leaders: the personality of the leaders can be considered as a reference for the actors of the organization. In particular, the role of the founder is often of crucial importance, due to beliefs and values it conveys.” (Schein, 1983)

The external and internal roles of corporate culture:

“Corporate culture is formed in part to respond to two sets of essential problems to be solved in order to ensure the development of the company. The first series is related to the adaptation of the organization to its environment and the second is internal, which concerns the establishment and maintenance of working relationships within the unit.” (Schein, 1985)

And in his book, “Management interculturel” Meier explains The external roles of corporate culture as the following:

- "Corporate culture is a factor of identification and differentiation with respect to the environment." (Allouche & Schmidt, 1995) that is to say, which distinguishes the organization from others.
- “Establishment of principles, rules and references on which individuals will identify and stand out, as a particular community.” (Rocher, 1968).
- Allows to bring together its collaborators to face the complexities and constraints of the environment.
- Clarify the function of the organization and the place it should occupy.

“In addition to the internal roles of the corporate culture:

- Corporate culture is an internal factor of integration that allows us to assemble and manipulate people with different beliefs around the same objectives.
- Corporate culture is made up of common foundations that allow individuals to work together despite the differences between them.
- Allows new employees from different backgrounds to quickly acquire the reflexes and practices of the company.
- Plays a major role in the management of the company and facilitates the implementation of strategic decisions.” (Meier, 2019).

Origins and studies on cultural diversification:

Approaches around the concept of culture and cultural diversity:

Evolution of the notion of culture:

“In the 18th century, culture was opposed to nature, thus designating what was learned by education. the concept of culture is then granted a meaning identical to civilization.” (Chevrier, 2003)

“Franz Boas (Franz Boas, 1855-1942) was then the predecessor of American anthropology and a pioneer of the intensive field method, he used these two methods to give a definition of the notion of culture while deepening the notion, in particular with the introduction of concepts such as cultural relativism. Therefore, he tried to formulate the most detailed repertoire of a society's cultural characteristics.

Another researcher, Bronislaw Kasper Malinowski (1884-1942), continued to adopt the Boas method and made a significant contribution to anthropology by introducing the concept of participant observation, This consists in apprehending a culture from within, through immersion and learning the language, and in accounting for the symbolic categories of the observed.” (Chevrier, 2003).

Cultural areas:

Highlighting or choosing a basic definition of a culture is not easy, it was the subject of debates of several authors in order to make a comparison between cultures. The people develop and share culture; from where it reflects a social group, it helps to establish an analysis between the individual aspects and the universal particularities of humans. Each individual belongs to several social groups and therefore to different cultures (national culture, regional culture, corporate culture, etc.). It is at the level of corporate culture that management manifests itself, especially when it comes to mergers or acquisitions between organizations located in the same country. As we have already mentioned, corporate culture has a meaning close to national culture. The national context is considered a very important unit of analysis in intercultural management.

“Geographers have long been fascinated by the existence of a certain homogeneity of behaviors, ways of life, landscapes, and values within often very vast spaces where natural conditions vary. It is after this that the reflections concerning these subjects are developed and led to cultural areas. At first sight, the idea of cultural area first germinated among diffusionist ethnologists at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 2nd century. Their work was based on the idea that each innovation was born in a home from which it spread.” (Claval, 2008)

Universalism and cultural particularism:

“Universal cultures consider that a decision can apply to any problem regardless of the situation or context, They are therefore looking for standards or rules common to all components of the organization. Conversely, “particularism” cultures pay close attention to rational constraints and conjunctural circumstances. Confronted with a given problem, the particularistic culture seeks above all a solution adapted to the situation. Conversely, universalist cultures consider that a solution that has solved a problem can always be applied. For example, when faced with confidential information, an American official will keep it a secret and avoid talking about it even to close people whom he trusts. It

will therefore not consider the particular aspect of the situation. Conversely, the Indonesian or Russian manager will tend to share this information with those who are concerned and with whom he has friendly relations.” (Meier, 2019).

Basic studies on cultural differences:

This section deals specifically with the different methods that study the implication of culture on managerial practices. What distinguishes these studies from each other is: the definition of culture presented by each of the authors as well as the steps followed to obtain the results. The studies we have chosen to address are Geert Hofstede's approach, Edward T. Hall's approach, F. Trompenaars' approach, Philippe d'Iriban's approach, as well as Malinowski's approach .

The study of these approaches makes it possible to highlight the different ways of exploring cultural diversifications and mention to what extent the background and the nature of an individual can be grasped differently. The works of these authors are considered as references.

The Geert Hofstede approach:

Gerard Hendrik Hofstede known as Geert Hofstede, born October 2, 1928, in Haarlem, psychologist, anthropologist, economist and held a management position at the American multinational company IBM.

G. Hofstede is known for his research, studies on cultural differences and for his work published in 1980 “Culture's consequences: International differences in work-related values” where he cited the dimensions of cultural diversity.

Between 1967 and 1973, this economist developed a huge international study based on 116,000 questionnaires from the subsidiaries of the multinational IBM located in seventy-two countries around the world. Although IBM is based on the same corporate structures and cultures, but the problem arises on the change of nationality of the personnel, the aim was to study the national culture of a large number of societies to discover the differences that distinguish them.

“The questions can be divided into four categories:

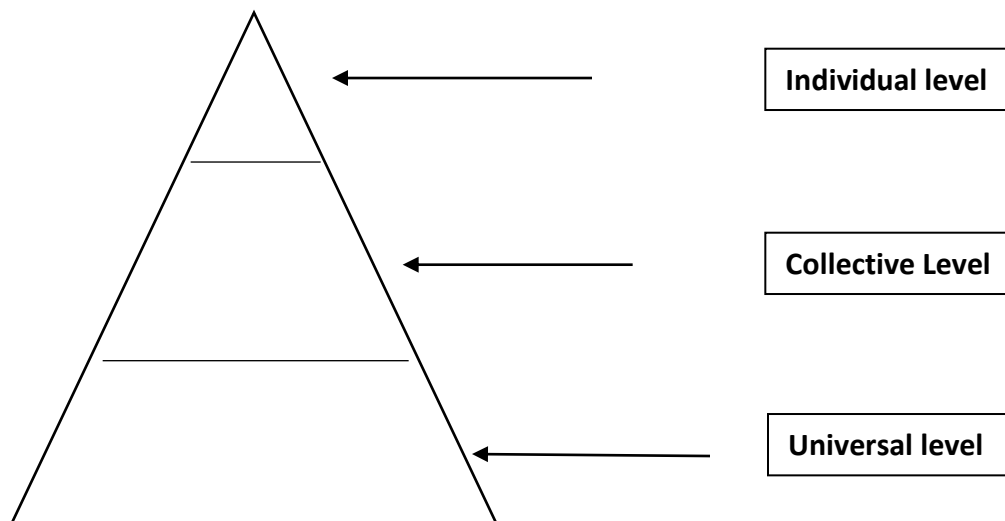
The degree of job satisfaction: personal evaluation of an aspect of professional life

- Perceptions: subjective descriptions of a work aspect or problem.
- Personal goals and beliefs: personal goals relate to desired situations and beliefs to desirable situations.
- The description: these are the socio-demographic characteristics of the people interviewed.”
(Bollinger & Hofstede , 1987)

In this study, he presented an analysis of the behavior of individuals in similar situations, the reaction of these people translates into "mental programming", "we implicitly admit that everyone has a certain mental programming that we know is stable over time. In identical situations, the same individual will probably react in the same way.” (Bollinger & Hofstede , 1987)

a) Levels of mental programming : According to Geert Hofstede, mental programming consists of 3 levels.

Figure 2: The three levels of mental programming.



Source: (Bollinger & Hofstede , 1987)

- **Universal (basic) level:** concerns the biological functioning of humans; behavior of joy (laughing) and sadness (crying) and aggressiveness.
- **Collective level:** relating to a set of individuals who belong to the same group, they are distinguished by their customs, principles, and language. This is where culture takes hold.
- **Individual level:** individuals are not alike, each is identical in its own thoughts, principles, and attitudes. Even if they belong to the same culture, their behaviors are diversifying.” (Dupriez & Simons, 2002)

b) Cultural dimensions

After analyzing the questionnaires, Geert Hofstede developed the following cultural dimensions: “

1st. Hierarchical distance: the question posed is whether inequality is really inevitable, Hofstede (1994) defines hierarchical distance as being the measure of the degree of acceptance by those who have the least power in the institutions of a country of an unequal distribution of power.” (Bollinger & Hofstede , 1987).

Hence the achievement of absolute equality within an organization is not obvious. “Physical and intellectual inequalities can translate into inequalities of wealth and power and tend to be transmitted from one generation to the next. Some societies that accept these differences are characterized by a high-power distance, while others, which try to reduce them, have a low power distance.” (Chevrier, 2003).

“According to Hofstede, the geographical location of the country is the first determining criterion, the closer the country concerned is to the equator, the greater the power distance. Population size is the second correlating element. There is indeed a link between a small population and a short hierarchical distance. Other criteria include the wealth of the country, the distribution of income within the country, the weight of history as significant elements.” (Meier, 2019).

2nd. The control of uncertainty: “the question asked is the degree of freedom of the individual in relation to his future” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000), “corresponds to the degree of acceptance of the unknown that reserves the future” (Chevrier, 2003). “It is a cultural dimension that measures the degree of tolerance that a culture can accept in the face of anxiety caused by future events.” “If tolerance is weak, control is strong and vice versa” (Bollinger & Hofstede, 1987). This dimension reflects the way in which the individuals of a company confront a risk, helps to better understand how the latter behaves in order to properly control this environmental uncertainty. Its application is done through the use of plans and forecasting tools, and also through the use of standardized rules. There are cultures that promote risk taking, there are others that avoid it.

3rd. Individualism or community: according to this author, we can make the difference between national companies through the relationships established by its members among themselves.

“Individualism characterizes societies in which the ties between people are loose, everyone must take care of themselves and the closest relatives. In contrast, collectivism characterizes societies in which people are integrated, from birth, into strong and cohesive groups that continue to protect them throughout their lives, in exchange for unwavering loyalty.” (Hofstede, 1991).

4th. The masculine or feminine orientation of values: “According to (Hofstede, 1991), societies are said to be masculine where the roles are clearly differentiated (where the man must be strong, impose himself and be interested in material success, while the woman is supposed to be tender, more modest and concerned with the quality of life). Are feminine, societies where roles are interchangeable (men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, concerned about the quality of life)” (Duchéneaut & Orhan, 2000) So the sexual division of functions differs from one people to another; “According to Hofstede in modern societies, the more roles are differentiated, the more society will show traits that can be called masculine. The more the roles are interchangeable, the more the society will show feminine traits” (Bollinger & Hofstede, 1987) On the other hand, in primitive societies, they make a huge differentiation between the function of the woman who takes care of the usual work such as caring for children, while the man focuses on economic activity.

c) Comparative approach by country:

“According to the four dimensions discussed previously, G.Hofstede has established a comparative study between 7 countries selected according to specific characteristics. According to him, the closer the indicated figure is to 100, the more the attribute (high power distance, strong Individualism, strong masculinity, strong control of uncertainty) is considered characteristic of a given culture.” (Meier, 2019)

Table 2: Comparative approach by country according to Hofstede.

Country	Hierarchical distance	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty Avoidance
West Africa	77	20	46	54
Germany	35	67	66	65
Denmark	18	74	16	23
United States	40	91	62	46
France	68	71	43	86
Britain	35	89	66	35
Japan	54	46	95	92
The Netherlands	38	80	14	53
Russia	95	47	40	75

Source: (Hofstede , 1991)

“The four cultural dimensions established by G. Hofstede constitute a general framework which underlines the most apparent and most striking facts of cultural relativity.” (Bollinger & Hofstede , 1987)

- Allow a well-defined analysis of the basic problems faced by companies, the variation of the indices that each country operates on these dimensions indicates its choice in relation to the problem posed.
- Are intended to give an overview of the whole and offer a well-defined study of cultural diversities in companies.

The following table will somehow identify these criteria:

Table 3: The cultural dimensions established by G. Hofstede.

Dimension	Meaning
Hierarchical distance	To what extent does a society accept inequality in the distribution of power?
Uncertainty control	To what extent do the uncertainty linked to the future and the ambiguity of situations appear threatening?
Individualism/collectivism	To what extent do people define themselves as autonomous individuals or by belonging to social groups?
Masculinity/femininity	To what extent does a society value assertiveness, material wealth (masculine societies) or caring for others and human relationships (feminine societies), and to what extent does it differentiate between social roles men and women ?

Source: (Chevrier, 2012)

The Edward T Hall approach:

“culture as a communication system”

Edward T Hall is an American anthropologist with a passion for international intercultural relations. “Between 1960 and 1970, he applied his knowledge particularly to business relations between the United States, Japan, France and Germany” (Chevrier, 2012), “He wrote over 20 books, perhaps the best known of his books is ‘Silent Language’.” (Bluedorn, 1988)

According to this anthropologist and cross-cultural researcher, “culture is a set of tacit rules of behavior inculcated from birth during the process of early socialization in the family setting” (Sauquet, 2007). “He develops a deterministic conception of culture, affirming for example that culture dictates our behavior, that it programs each of our gestures, each of our reactions, of our feelings” (Edward T. Hall & Mildred Reed Hall, 1990). According to him, behavior analysis is based on communication, as he quoted in his book: “Culture has many aspects. But it is essentially a system of creating, emitting, retaining, and processing information. (...) We have privileged the analysis of this aspect of culture. We tried to figure out how a culture works and what message it brings. The cultural aspect of communication is infinitely more complex and has a completely different dimension than that of the single message, spoken or written.” (Edward T. Hall & Mildred Reed Hall, 1990). Hall brought the essential notions to decipher the messages of a different culture. Based on his own research, he developed three dimensions of culture: rich context and poor context, monochronic or polychronic time, and relationships to space or proxemics.” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

a) Context rich and poor in communication: “As Hall was interested in communication patterns, he pointed out that a group sharing the same culture is aware of the same things and therefore the culture shapes the selectivity with which it sees and analyzes the reality.” (Warner-Søderholm, 2013)

The best communication requires an identification of all circumstances of this act essentially the context, because without it the message is not complete. “According to E.T.Hall, this context presents the elements that surround the act of communication, such as during a conversation, the attitude of a person speaks as much for him as the words he uses, his voice, the expression of his face, the attitude of the body, the silence...etc. From the point of view of the communication strategy, it is important for any interlocutor, in order to be understood effectively, to identify the type of context in which he will have to question his message.” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

“E. Hall implements two types of contexts characterizing two types of societies: rich where the attitude of the actors of the communication and the physical supports which convey information whereas the “text” is secondary” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000), “These are the countries of the Middle East and the Japanese” (Meier, 2019). “And the other poor where all information is contained in the terms of the message in the text” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000). “It is essentially about the cultures of the Scandinavian countries (Germany, Switzerland).” (Würtz, 2005)

Table 4: Rich and poor communication context according to Edward T. Hall

Features	Rich background	Poor background
Mode of communication	Informal and subjective Vague Importance of silences and gestures	Formal and objective precise and written. Clear and concise language
Type of message	Ambivalent Qualitative Implicit	Unique Quantitative Explicit
Materials and content	Objectives will evolve with circumstances (emergent process). Use of non-verbal (gestures, smiles, silence, expressions, voices, etc.) Flexibility of procedures and planning Frequent interruptions	Quantitative objectives Specific questions/detailed answers Frequent use of figures (statistics, indicator, evaluation) Importance of procedures and planning Compliance with dates and deadlines
Information exchange	Extensive network of informants Permanent exchange of information at all levels Information spreads quickly and freely.	Precise and detailed management of information, if possible, in one go. Exchange of information with a limited number of people Information circulates slowly and in a channeled way
Legal arrangements	Not important	Very important
Attitudes	Patience Sophistication Flexibility	Search for short-term efficiency Incisive and voluntary behavior
Relations with the other	In-depth links to better understand and know the other. (phenomenon of empathy)	Formal ties of limited duration separation between professional and private relationships

Source : (Meier, 2019)

b) Monochronic or polychronic time:

“According to E. Hall, time is an aggregate of concepts, phenomena and rhythms covering a very broad reality” (Deschamps, 2018). “Each culture has its own form of time, the most important of which are monochronic and polychrony. These two systems of organization are logically and empirically completely distinct (...) I called “polychrone” the system which consists in doing several things at the same time and “monochrone” the system (...) which consists, on the contrary, do one thing at a time.” (Hall, 1984)

“According to his research and studies on the diversity of cultures and its relationship with time, the Anglo-Saxon countries, Germany, the countries of Northern Europe and Japan follow a monochronic system” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000), that means people in this system are on time, anxious, slow, not

close to their colleagues, respect contracts and are on their promises. “While the countries of southern Europe, France, Latin America and India belong to the polychronic system.” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

This means that the individuals of these countries are fast, untidy, have little patience, have tough relationships with their collaborators, and these relationships take priority over the set objectives.

Comparison between monochronic and polychronic approaches:

Table 5: Comparison between monochronic and polychronic approaches.

Monochronic approach	Polychronic approach
Performing one task at a time	Performing multiple tasks at once
Ability to focus exclusively on the task at hand	Ability to switch from one task to another, with the possibility of frequent interruptions
Commitment perceived as a constraint (an imperative)	Commitment perceived as a point of reference that can be adjusted depending on the situation
Relationship oriented on the execution of the task	Relationship oriented on the people concerned by the task
Methodical, fast-paced, and sustained work	Intense work with moments of creativity or personal initiative.

Source: (Meier, 2019)

These gaps between monochrony and polychrony constitute a great concern in the organization and management of a multinational group, because a polychronic individual who works in a subsidiary belonging to a monochronic country must make a great effort to adapt to values, rules, and principles of the other system.

c) Relationships to space or proxemics: “In human interactions, interpersonal physical distance is used to communicate.” (Chevrier, 2019); for example, a strong distance can present a non-intimate relationship, whereas people who know each other approach each other. “The study of the ways of using space is the object of the proxemic, therefore, how to define interpersonal distance depends on the cultural context.” (Chevrier, 2019). E. Hall assumes that each individual places unobservable borders which constitute his space, the size of which is linked to the nature of the relationship with another and linked above all to culture. “In South America, strangers are more comfortable interacting and get closer than those in North America” (Chevrier, 2019). “In Germany, for example, the workplace is laid out so that it preserves a large personal space for managers and thus marks their status, while in Scandinavia, this space is more modest, reflecting an egalitarian conception of hierarchical relationships.” (Chevrier, 2019)

The following table summarizes in a way the three dimensions of culture developed by E.T.Hall:

Table 6: The three dimensions of culture according to Edward T. Hall.

Rich background Implicit communication long term relationship Verbal agreements	Poor background Explicit communication Short-lived relationships Written agreements
physical proximity Low physical distance between people in social life	Physical distancing Large physical distance between people in social life
Polychrony Cyclic time Time is unlimited. Flexible planning and improvisation Several activities are carried out simultaneously. Social relationships take precedence over tasks	Monochrony Linear time Time is a rare resource to be valued. Strict planning of activities Activities are separated. Tasks take precedence over relationships

Source: (Chevrier, 2012)

“These three dimensions studied above, relation to context, time, and space, are not independent. It clearly appears that the polychronic character of a culture which makes it give more importance to relationships than to tasks goes hand in hand with a rich context which refers precisely to a dense network of relationships which constitutes the backdrop to understand allusive exchanges. And this web of relationships goes hand in hand with a space in which we move easily and stay close.

On the contrary, doing only one thing at a time as in a polychronic culture necessarily impoverishes the context and calls for a high level of verbal explanation in communications. Similarly, compartmentalized activities according to the precise division of linear time fit easily into a partitioned physical space. We can therefore distinguish at one end of the spectrum polychronic cultures with a rich context and short interpersonal distance and at the other end monochrome cultures with a poor context and strong interpersonal distance. Every culture is somewhere on this axis; it is the observation of the dominant behaviors that makes it possible to determine where more precisely.” (Chevrier, 2019)

The Fons Trompenaars approach:

Fons. Trompenaars Dutch anthropologist and sociologist born in 1953.

“F. Trompenaars (1993) highlights seven aspects of establishing cultural differences between countries. These dimensions impact the management style of the company, the ideals of the employees, the organization, and the operations. F. Trompenaars visited 30 companies and their subsidiaries in more than 50 countries. He has set up a database that consists of the results of the survey of 15,000 people. In order to have comparable data in each country, we took a sample of at least 100 people, representing people with identical experiences and activities, belonging to management (75%) and administrative services (25%).” (Meier, 2019).

“Trompenaars' investigation is based on the problem and its opposite. Each country has a certain percentage of positive answers to a question, it is these ratios that determine whether a country has the characteristics of the research or the opposite. There are three types of problems that people encounter:

- Relations with others (universalism and particularism), (collectivism and individualism), (neutral or affective relations), (specific or diffuse culture) and (accomplishment or status).
- Time (sequential or synchronic).
- The way they deal with the outside world (emission to nature/controlled nature).

The constructs of individualism and collectivism have been widely explored and linked to the behavior, cognition, motivation, emotion and personality of individuals and groups, and to communication.” (Wilczewski, Gut, & Gorbaniu, 2017)

Here is a table that encompasses the 7 dimensions of culture:

Table 7: Summary of F. Trompenaars' model.

Dimension	Definition
Universalism/particularism	Regulation by general rules and principles or by relations and according to circumstances
Collectivism/individualism	People see themselves as members of a group or as autonomous individuals
Neutral/affective relationships	Emotions are contained or expressed
Specific/diffuse culture	The separation between the private sphere and the public sphere is strict or porous
Achievement or status	The attribution of a status is based on the achievements or on the person and his insertion in the social system
Sequential or synchronic time	The activities are programmed according to a strictly respected linear sequence or carried out in parallel with last minute changes
Emission to nature/controlled nature	Nature is controlled or given free rein

Source: (Chevrier, 2012)

The Philippe d'Iribarne approach:

"Philippe D'Iribarne is a researcher of French nationality, who studies the impact of national culture on the functioning of companies. "the contexts of meaning approach, defines culture as a system of shared meaning" (Chevrier, 2013), According to this author, culture encompasses all concepts or notions that allow people to make sense of what they live....

Philippe D'Iribarne (1989) explains the differences between countries by taking into account their management process rooted in history. "P. D'Iribarne launched the idea of the need for intercultural management, including a form of management which takes into account the traditions of each country, and which draws inspiration from the attributes of each national culture as resources in order to have effective management." (Segrestin , 1993).

This research has allowed people to understand the importance of culture on management practices to facilitate these in the local context. This work was based on interviews conducted in factories with different actors (services, departments, etc.)

"The founding work is "The Logic of Honor" 1989, this work clarifies the structure of social relations in three countries (France, United States, and the Netherlands). P.d'Irbarn made a comparison between organizations in the metal industry located in France, the United States and Holland. As a result of this work, he identified three patterns of organizational and hierarchical relationships derived from national culture and tradition. " (D'IRIBARNE, 1997)

a) The logic of honor: (the title of this book refers to the French context of management) Since the Middle Ages, French society has been organized in a different order (Aristocrats, bourgeoisie, torture, etc.), and the "authoritarian" system continues to exist, Prohibit the filing of personalized activities attached to the commands Below. Therefore, it is not recommended that the leader interfere with his subordinate privileges. The rights and obligations granted at each level determine an air of responsibility for each. To do a good job in the French environment is to assume the responsibilities that custom has set for its category.

b) The logic of the contract characterizes American society: American society is considered as an equal society united by contractual and negotiable relations. Hierarchical rules are specified. Thus, the manager has the right to supervise the tasks carried out.

c) The logic of consensus is that of the Dutch context: it is expressed through strong listening and ongoing conversations. Great importance is placed on the thoughts of all employees in the company and the hierarchical lines are clearly defined. This context is also characterized by the absence of practices that require punishments or rewards." (D'IRIBARNE, 1997)

The Malinowski approach:

“Bronislaw Malinowski English ethnologist of Polish origin is one of the pioneers of anthropology” (Gras, 2000), and he is considered one of the first founders of functionalism of anthropology research.

“Functionalism assumes that all aspects of the culture of a population, past or present, are intended to sustain that society for a long time. Functionalism also affirms that each culture cultivates a balanced and functional coherent whole and where all the elements intersect in a functional harmonic, in the latter, the various elements of a culture have the function of satisfying the essential needs of man.” (Bayili, 2008)

According to Bohannon and Glazer (1973), Malinowski considers that functionalism is based on the seven basic human needs: nutrition, reproduction, physical comfort, security, relaxation, movement, and growth. “He also proposed that instead of studying and constructing the history of a culture, it can be better understood if we study the interrelationships of different elements.” (Lukac, 2019)

Consequently, Malinowski thought that the researcher should be better oriented towards practice, which is to say towards comprehensive and detailed fieldwork. He uses a variety of techniques to actively collect information and is known for the details of the data collected, but he believes these are insufficient. Thus, Malinowski is generally considered the creator of the method of participant observation of anthropological fieldwork with the major concern of minimizing the biases and preconceived ideas of the researcher with the aim of objective and scientific understanding of human behavior and social organization in a foreign culture.

“The ethnographer in the field has taken seriously and soberly to cover the full extent of the phenomenon in every aspect of tribal culture studied, making no difference between what is commonplace, or dull, or ordinary.” (Malinowski, 1922)

Limits of the comparative approach of culture:

In the book « Au Cœur de la Dimension Culturelle du Management » by Pierre Dupriez and Blandine Vanderlinden it is not surprising that the comparative approach is great. However, this approach has some drawbacks, “No one will be surprised by the success of the comparative approach. Observing and quantifying the differences and similarities suggests an image that appears as an irrefutable truth that reassures and suggests the possibility of mastering a complex and plural reality. This approach, however, faces several limitations.” (Dupriez & Vanderlinden, 2017)

Where we can see the weaknesses of the approach as it is logical to say that each culture is different than the other, “A major weakness is related to the claim to the universality of the comparative approach. It corresponds to the question of whether it is legitimate to transpose and use in another culture a dimension defined for a given culture. Thus, terms like hierarchy, authority, fear, or respect have very different connotations from one culture to another.

It happens that certain manifestations of a retained dimension exist only in one culture and not in others; it also happens that some of them have a universal and macro-social scope in one country, whereas they come under the intimacy of interpersonal relationships in other countries. Reasoning as if their meaning

were the same everywhere amounts to situating all the dimensions retained in the etic order (Triandis, 2002). However, many of the criteria used come under the emic order.

Each cultural formation is to be understood and judged by its own logic in relation to its model, which comes from the emic point of view as opposed to the ethical point of view which makes it judge from the outside (Camilleri, 1996).” (Dupriez & Vanderlinden, 2017)

“It also runs the risk of attributing cultural differences to situations whose origins are due to other factors, which is questionable from an ideological standpoint. Furthermore, by focusing on certain dimensions, the comparative approach can neglect the other elements of the environment, “...by focusing on certain dimensions, the comparative approach can neglect the other components of the environment. It thus runs the risk of attributing to a difference in culture differences in situations whose origin is due to other factors. This approach is also questionable on the ideological level.” (Dupriez & Vanderlinden, 2017)

“Firstly, "mental programming" induces a determinism that leaves little room for free will and free behavior (Dupriez & Simons, 2000). On the other hand, the analysis of the results often results in a classification, a kind of hierarchy of cultures, the most "advanced" which would be adapted to the contemporary world and the others which would leave countries lagging behind in economic development (Livian, 2013).

Finally, because it is centered on universal criteria measured with the aid of standardized instruments making it possible to position all the cultures observed on scales of comparison, the comparative approach cannot account for the complexity and specificity that make up the richness of each culture. In the best of cases, it can lead the researcher to the threshold of culture but does not allow him to penetrate to the heart of it. (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)” (Dupriez & Vanderlinden, 2017)

Conclusion :

Emphasizing a single definition of the notion of culture is not easy because this concept has been studied by a number of authors, each according to his vision and according to different dimensions.

However, we can conclude that the culture would first be affected by the environment of the person and then by what has been acquired throughout his journey. Managing in a multicultural context means managing a multitude of thinking and behaviors, i.e., absolute cultural diversity.

Moreover, The national culture is considered as a pillar of the culture of the organization, the latter plays a major role which makes it possible to unite the employees of different cultures around the principles and rules defined by the company itself in order to facilitate their manipulations to achieve a common goal.

The work carried out by the authors and researchers concerning the involvement of culture in managerial practices, helps to properly separate and distinguish one company from another and how this can constitute a significant advantage in the management of multicultural teams by helping the manager to target, analyze and deal with differences easily and rationally.

Chapter 2: Relations between cultural diversity and management within companies

Introduction

Managing cultural diversity in multicultural companies needs a defined and an appropriate management approach; intercultural management is made up of several components and helps to identify this complexity clearly. The manager is therefore faced with managing multicultural teams with different cultures.

There are two sides to every dimension - one positive, one negative - and diversity is no exception since it can generate wealth and progress for a company or cause conflict and obstacles.

The management of a company in a mono-cultural context is completely different from managing in a multicultural setting, and therefore certain aspects such as marketing, human resources management, negotiation, and communication will be affected accordingly. Consequently, we will try to go into greater detail in this second chapter.

Cultural diversity and management:

Intercultural management:

We begin by defining and understanding what Intercultural management is, in recent studies we find that: "Intercultural management aims to identify ways to ensure cooperation despite differences, even to take advantage of the potential resources offered by cultural diversity." (Chevrier, 2013)

"While managing a business is rarely easy, the difficulty increases even more when it comes to operating in a different context, because all the parameters change: the structures of the kinship, social structures, human relationships, perception of time, cults and beliefs, history, habitat, etc." (Schmoll, 2016)

"Managing a company in a culture other than the one from which someone is originally, involves questioning some of its approaches, in order to adapt its operation to realities structured differently from those to which we are accustomed." (Schmoll, 2016)

"Since the end of the 1990s, intercultural management has tended to be encompassed in the management of diversity, which widens the field of differences taken into account: differences in gender, generation, sexual orientation, physical abilities, etc." (Chevrier, 2019)

Faced with the internationalization of business, companies from different countries try to adapt a strategy of merger, alliance, partnership or joint venture between them, a Dutch subsidiary imports a management tool developed in Germany, researchers work within the European Union, organizations that recruit workers of different nationalities, etc. These acts have multiplied the interactions between cultures in the professional environment so much that it has become necessary to adopt a tool which underlines these differences as well as the way of dealing with them. "It is therefore a question of ways of understanding these differences linked to cultures and of dealing with them so that they are as little as possible obstacles or obstacles to good cooperation between those who have to work together, so that they can of their meeting on the professional field a positive contribution, a factor of enrichment of the ways of working rather than of misunderstandings, frictions and losses." (Rey, 2017)

In the book “Le management interculturel” by Sylvie Chevrier explained that “Intercultural management is made up of three factors: the diversity of cultures, the notion of interaction and the organizational context.

a) The diversity of cultures: Linked to the differences between nationalities, even those of culture in the same country and of corporate cultures.

b) Interaction: In fact, it is the meeting of cultures, during international transfers of management tools, the cultural shock, not very visible, is no less frontal. Even if it does not take the form of direct contact between people, intercultural encounters will take place.

c) Organizational context: Involves technical efficiency and economic performance.” (Chevrier, 2013)

Therefore, "Intercultural management would be a form of management that is recognizes the existence of local cultures, attempts to integrate the values on which these cultures are based in the exercise of the various corporate functions and at the same time, tries to coordinate these functions within a corporate policy. Thus, this company policy, alongside the strategic imperatives to which it must respond, would also take into account the cultural specificities of the country or region where it is implemented. On the operational level, the objective is to consider cultural diversity as a relevant variable to be taken into account in the design and implementation of management decisions.” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

“In general, practicing intercultural management means understanding otherness and taking it into account in management decisions.” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000).

“The challenge of intercultural management is to escape the double fatality of a unifying conformism without regard for cultural wealth on the one hand, and an inhibited and paralyzing respect for particularities on the other hand.” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000).

The management of multicultural teams:

“A multicultural team can be defined as a group of people from different cultures who work together and put their experience and their vision at the service of the company” (Aoun, 2004.). therefore, the difference between a unicultural work team and the other multicultural is the level of cultural diversity.

“Diversity is one of the inherent points of a multicultural team. It is important to be able to take advantage of this cultural richness without stigmatizing the nationals of a specific national culture. This is how the different teams manage this diversity:

- The team members respect different points of view and are tolerant when one of them makes fun of the cultural peculiarity of a certain country.
- They are aware that their experience is unique within the group and allows them to be prepared for a future mission abroad
- They are aware that the rate of diversity has an impact on group dynamics.” (Dziatzko, 2016)

And now days cultural diversity is more common with the different teams of an international / Global organization, where Adler and Gundersen described on their research that the “impact of cultural diversity increase markedly. In global firms, the effective management of Cultural diversity, which was once a concept that was merely “nice to understand,” becomes imperative for the firm’s survival, let alone its success.” (Adler & Gundersen , 2007)

Types of multicultural teams:

In fact, Adler identified three types of multicultural teams.

- **Token Teams:** the members of the team represent the same culture, except for one. “In token teams all but one member comes from the same background. In a team of Australian lawyers and one British attorney, for example, the British attorney would be the token member. In such a token team, the British attorney would probably see and understand situations somewhat differently from his Australian colleagues. In the last decade, predominantly male management teams have begun to pay considerable attention to their few, often token, female members. Today many corporations focus significantly more attention on leveraging the potential contributions of their token ethnic members.” (Adler & Gundersen , 2007)
- **Bicultural Teams:** the members of the team represent two different cultures. “In bicultural teams, members represent two distinct cultures; for example, a fifty–fifty partnership between Peruvians and Bolivians, or a task force composed of Saudi Arabian and Jordanian managers, or a committee of seven Spanish and three Portuguese executives. Bicultural teams must continually recognize and integrate the perspectives of both represented cultures. If the team has an unequal number of members from each culture, the culture of the group with more representatives is likely to dominate.” (Adler & Gundersen , 2007)
- **Multicultural Teams:** the members of the team represent three or more cultures. “In multicultural teams, members represent three or more ethnic backgrounds. United Nations agencies offer good examples of multicultural organizational structures, as do the committees of the European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Today, an increasing number of corporate task forces are globally distanced teams—that is, teams composed of members from around the world who meet electronically. The economic and political power structure of the represented members moderates a multicultural team’s dynamics and, therefore, its effectiveness. To perform most effectively, multicultural teams need to recognize and integrate all represented cultures.” (Adler & Gundersen , 2007)

Managing a multicultural team:

“Examining the decisions and tasks performed by teams in companies reveals different managerial realities, depending on the cultures involved” (Meier, 2019). Indeed, team management is based on practices and behaviors that can be different depending on the cultural origin of the members of the organization. “The culture of the actors can have an impact on the way in which they will foresee, plan,

decide, but also control and coordinate their activities. Similarly, depending on the culture, the way of managing and resolving conflicts will be different.” (Meier, 2019)

a) Foresee, plan, and decide

- **Predict and plan:**

“The establishment of work teams requires a minimum of preparation on the part of those in charge, to manage and organize the activities. Planning plans and processes help build effective inter- and intra-group relationships. In its broadest sense, planning consists of analyzing and then forecasting, for a given time horizon, all the orientations and actions to be considered, in order to carry out the mission to be carried out in good conditions. This requires in particular the following tasks.” (Meier, 2019)

Table 8: Descriptive table of prevention and planning.

Predict and plan	Nature of the tasks	Examples of determinants cultural
Goals definition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What is the mission of the team? -What are the fundamental issues? - What are the priorities? - What are the actions to be taken? -What is the expected time horizon (CT/MT)? - What skills are needed? - What resources are allocated? - What are the performance criteria? - What are the deadlines (schedule of operations)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Degree of uncertainty control - Willingness or refusal to control nature - Relation to time (present/future) - Mono-chronic versus poly-chronic time - Behavior in front of procedures and rules
Establishment of the action program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the tasks to be carried out? - Who is involved in the project? -What's the calendar? -What is the budget? - To what extent should we formalize the actions to be carried out? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication in rich or poor context - Relationship to time
Assignment of roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the roles assigned to - Who is in charge of carrying out a given task? - What are the hierarchical positions within the team incorporated? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hierarchical distance - Individualistic or community orientation - Status assigned acquired - Attention given to people or stains - Relation to others

Source: (Meier, 2019)

“The control and coordination of activities are actions that make it possible to distinguish between different modes of cultural approaches, depending on whether one subscribes to a strict ex ante control approach or whether one favors a logic of experimentation (cf. will or refusal to control nature). In this area, the importance given to procedures and tasks (compared to people) is also a determining criterion of cultural differentiation.” (Meier, 2019)

c) Motivate and mobilize

“Motivating and mobilizing the actors of the organization constitutes an essential act of management, because of the difficulty of encouraging the participation of all the members. The essential objective is to unite all the players around a project, by making the most of their respective capacities. It is therefore a question of recognizing the contributions of each one.

Depending on the culture, the weight given to the context and to social relations can differ greatly and produce differences in motivations.” (Meier, 2019)

Table 9: Descriptive table of motivation and mobilization.

Motivate and mobilize	Nature of the tasks	Examples of cultural determinants
Motivation and reward systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relative importance of the work to be done in relation to social relations - Priority given to working conditions or set objectives - Valorization of collective or individual work - Nature of rewards (salaries, bonuses, recognition, promotion, consideration, etc.) - Highlighting the enterprising (responsibilities) or reassuring aspect of the work to be done. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individualistic or community orientation - Attention given to people or stains - Relationship to others

Source: (Meier, 2019)

“The systems of motivation and rewards can reveal cultural oppositions between actors of different nationalities, depending on whether one privileges the relationship (climate, atmosphere, feelings) or the result (economic valuation of work).” (Meier, 2019)

d) Arbitrate and manage conflicts

- “The notion of conflict takes many forms and arises in different circumstances. It occurs when individuals or social groups have incompatible goals, opinions, or feelings, which lead them to oppose each other. We can thus distinguish three types of conflict: - conflict of objectives: situations in which the ends (or outcomes) sought by the parties diverge.
- Cognitive conflicts: situations in which the analysis and reflections carried out by the two parties reveal incompatibilities at the level of the formulation of the hypotheses or the mode of reasoning.
- Affective conflicts: situations in which the feelings (or emotions) expressed by the parties prove to be incompatible.

If the conflicts can have serious consequences on the functioning and the management of the teams (loss of time, waste of energy, expenditure of useless resources), it can also, in certain situations, have a positive influence. This is particularly the case when the parties discover that beyond their disagreement, there is the possibility of finding themselves at the level of common values and deciding together to change their representations. Avoid any form of conflict, even if it means favoring the social climate (harmony) over the results (task to be accomplished). Thus, for a Brazilian manager, it is better to adopt a flexible and adaptable behavior, which makes it possible to temper the ardor (and therefore to avoid conflict) than to resort to a polarization of positions. In a situation of conflict, calming things down, giving the manager time and the possibility of postponing the decision, will therefore be the approach generally followed by a Brazilian manager, unlike the Americans who will opt for a clear and offensive style in order to quickly resolve the conflict.” (Meier, 2019)

Table 10: Descriptive table of conflict management.

Arbitrate and manage conflicts	Nature of the tasks	Examples of cultural determinants
Attitudes and Perceptions of Conflict	The different perceptions of conflict: - A normal situation - A positive situation - A negative situation Possible behaviors: - Stir up conflict - Manage the conflict - Avoid conflict	- Degree of uncertainty control - Relationship to others - Universalism/particularism - Will or refusal to control nature
Solving methods	- Conflict resolution: - By dominance - By compromise - By circumventing the problem - By collaboration	

Source: (Meier, 2019)

“Conflict management and resolution make it possible to identify cultural gaps between individuals, depending on their attitude towards the problem posed (universalism/particularism) and their desire to influence or act on situations.” (Meier, 2019)

“In fact, managing multicultural teams is one of the biggest challenges facing businesses today. These teams generally play a key role in their development and competitiveness in the international market.

In what follows a method of managing intercultural differences in a team.” (Rey, 2017)

that managers and organizations can adopt them in order to simplify the management and work of these teams, and ensure strong collaboration despite the presence of cultural diversity:

“To fully understand the team's "framing" needs: according to its heterogeneity, its possible geographical spread, its profession, its organization, and the concrete needs for cooperation between members. Identify where team members must have common codes and practices, and where they need autonomy, to do things in their own way, or according to the standards of the country where they are placed. This assessment is specifically the responsibility of the team manager.

Identify classic intercultural risks:

- Lack of understanding hinders collective functioning.
- Prejudices and effects of cleavage, of compartmentalization with withdrawal into one's "community", of rejection with scapegoats...
- Take advantage of existing cohesion assets (professional or corporate culture that imprints more homogeneous behaviors) and strengthen them (by reviewing and promoting).
- Open spaces for exchanges on the intercultural situation: to open up the floor on cultures; visualize their differences in a peaceful, respectful, and positive climate, demystify their strangeness, their irrational and disturbing appearance; make it a game of mutual enrichment and dissipate reactions of defense and hegemony.
- Also leave room for mutual adjustments between people through informal exchanges, while establishing a strong and toned team life.
- Check in performance that the deadlines and quality criteria explicitly prescribed in the team are met, and that the control of the activity of each can be carried out regularly.” (Rey, 2017)

This method is not an absolute recipe because each company can use it in its own way while respecting a level of openness and adjustment towards other participants.

Potential advantages and disadvantages of implementing culturally diverse teams in a Company:

When talking about the advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity in a company, we will find ourselves focusing on what does not work and the problems and the complexity that come with diversity, but in reality, it is quite the opposite, or we can say its equal or maybe subjective and depends on the company and its management. "Culture is generally invisible and, when visible, we usually see it as causing problems. People rarely believe cultural diversity benefits organizations." (Adler & Gundersen , 2007)

Advantages:

In the 5th edition of International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior by Adler & Gundersen, they divided the advantage to "Synergistic and Culture-Specific.

- Synergistic Advantages: Organizational Benefits Derived from Cultural Diversity.

Expanding meanings:

- Greater openness to new ideas.
- Multiple perspectives.
- Multiple interpretations.

Expanding alternatives:

- Increasing creativity.
- Increasing flexibility.
- Increasing problem-solving skills.

Culture-Specific Advantages:

Benefits from Working with Costs Inherent in Working with a Particular Culture

- Better understanding of local employees.
- Better able to work effectively with local clients.
- Better able to market effectively to local customers.
- Increased understanding of local political, social, legal, economic, and cultural environment.

In addition, other research shows that diversity in the workplace gives the impression of equality it also builds an environment where everyone is treated in fairness and justice." (Adler & Gundersen , 2007)

Thereafter, we will present a summary table of the expected benefits of cultural diversity:

Table 11: Expected benefits of cultural diversity.

Areas concerned	Expected benefits
Marketing and trade	Ability to respond quickly and directly to the expectations and preferences of local markets
Human Resource Management	Ability to personally enrich the employees of the company and to develop new skills and sensitivities in them. Ability to recruit and retain people from diverse cultures and backgrounds.
Management and organization	Ability to reduce costs and increase organizational flexibility through better resource allocation and greater responsiveness to varying needs and changes in the environment.
Decision making	Increased ability to solve complex problems, thanks to the confrontation of points of view within teams.

Source (Cox & Blake, 1991)

Disadvantages:

While there are many benefits associated with workplace diversity in organizations, indeed diversity while proactively pursued presents issues that sometimes hinder its effective implementation and maintenance in organizations. And in the book Adler & Gundersen distinguished the following: “

- **Disadvantages:** Organizational Costs Caused by Cultural Diversity, Diversity increases:

- Ambiguity.
- Complexity.
- Confusion.

Difficulty converging meanings:

- Miscommunication.
- Harder to reach agreement.

Difficulty converging actions:

- Harder to agree on specific actions.

Culture-Specific Disadvantages: Costs Inherent in Working with a Particular Culture

Overgeneralizing:

- Organizational policies
- Organizational strategies
- Organizational practices
- Organizational procedures
- Ethnocentrism (having or based on the idea that your own group or culture is better or more important than others).” (Adler & Gundersen , 2007)

The following table summarizes the risks driven by cultural diversity:

Table 12: Risks led by cultural diversity.

Areas concerned	Potential risks
Marketing and trade	Risks of internal competition Risks of cannibalization of offers
Human Resource Management	Conflicting relationships Susceptibility issues Them - us divide logic. General deterioration of the social climate
Management and organization	Constitution of "baronies" (logic of clans) Disruption risks. Lack of synergy-limited cooperation.
Decision making	Conflicts of objectives and interests. Slowness of the decision-making process.

Source: (Meier, 2008)

Influence of cultural diversity on managerial practices:

The intercultural dimension of international marketing:

The concepts of culture and marketing are intertwined, International marketing is typically the business function most affected by cultural factors. The problem arises in the possibility of the integration of the latter in operational marketing and the other strategies. "Multicultural markets represent a new type of market with new challenges and opportunities for marketers and researchers." (Demangeot, Broderick, & Craig, 2015)

As a result, the manager must be aware of the richness that he can draw from this interactivity between culture and marketing by putting his finger on the significant variables. Thereafter, we will try to approach these notions starting with marketing strategy then marketing research and management.

"Marketing is the process of identifying market needs, creating, and providing (to the consumer) a satisfier. The goal is to satisfy the consumer and convince him of the adequacy of his act of consumption to a societal environment and of his contribution to an economic and/or social profit. Satisfactory is an integrated set of attributes that turn into satisfaction in the act of consumption. (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

As mentioned in the first chapter, culture is "a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and all other capacities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." (Chevrier, 2003)

As a result, "culture significantly influences consumption (habits, values, and symbols), decision-making and the capacity for persuasion which intervenes in the decision-making process and the relational dimensions. These extend to those established between members of sub-groups (hierarchy, individualism, masculinity, security) whether or not they are members of the same society." (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

Marketing Strategy :

We mentioned above that culture plays a big influencer role on consumer behaviors and habits, and to go even further, “Marketing and advertising will only be successful if the values of consumers match the values of the product or brand, which means that strategies successful in one culture can be extended only to other cultures with similar relevant values. New strategies have to be developed for cultures with different values.” (De Mooij, 2010)

Hence why in international marketing and global organizations the choice of what strategies they follow is extremely important to the success of the products, “The choice is not between global and local but between ineffective global standardization and effective cultural segmentation strategy.

Any global corporate or brand strategy, to be effective, must incorporate not the values of its leaders but the values of all stakeholders - the shareholders of the company and the consumers of the brand in all countries where the company operates.” (De Mooij, 2010)

Marketing research:

“The process of identifying needs is a fundamental step in the strategy applied by the company, here cultural differences are seen as obstacles; the questions that arise: should we standardize research methodologies in different cultural situations? can choosing a single sample be a source of conflict? does the cultural environment have an adequate relationship with the interpretation of the results?

- **Methodology :**

Is the traditional method of determining and analyzing needs (the questionnaire as an example) suitable for different cultural contexts? The answer is no because we must take into consideration the culture of each market during this operation.

Changing the research method will automatically lead to changes in the budgets needed, the research team and the time needed to reach valid conclusions. Neglecting such a change can lead to so many losses for the company.

- **Choice of sample:**

Opting for a representative sample can be an obstacle where the diversity of culture plays a very important role, hence it is first necessary to identify the managers supposed to develop this operation, and secondly to choose the sample well.

- **Context :**

In a fuzzy situation like ours, the social context plays a significant role in the interpretation of a need and the solution to be provided, even if scientifically this need looks the same or seems to be (need for security in the face of technological progress).

- **Respondent-investigator relationship:**

If managers do not take the necessary adaptations into consideration, such a relationship will automatically have a cultural influence on the survey method, but also on the consequences and results.” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

To better understand the concepts discussed, the following table summarizes these interactions in a way:

Table 13: Cultural impact on marketing research.

	Level of education	Hierarchical relationship	Groups	Language
Methodology	Significant impact on the use of abstract concepts	Significant impact on compliance of responses to accepted standards	Choice of a representative sample and freedom of opinion of survey participants	Value of "yes" in different cultures is deeply relative
Tools	Significant impact on the method of collecting information	The perception of confidentiality and the trust projected by the survey is decisive	Choice of sample representativeness techniques (1 man, one voice or one leader, one community)	Significant impact on the ability to communicate what we feel
Interviewer / respondent relationship	Ability to communicate and establish a climate of trust	Important impact on the choice of subjects and confidentiality of results	Important impact on the sincerity of the answers and the accessibility of the groups	Mutual understanding and validity/interpretation of results

Source: (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

Marketing Management :

“Diversity between cultures in international marketing management affects two essential points of the international management of an organization: the function of sales, promotion and advertising and international negotiation.” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

Having acquired these elements, it is still necessary to ensure the implementation of the adopted strategy. This is the area of sales functions, promotion, advertising, and international negotiations. This requires an analytical framework that links business functions to cultural characteristics.

Although some cultural characteristics can be easily discovered, one should be aware of methods that rely only on intuitive knowledge.

Table 14: Areas of cultural influence on marketing management

	Values	Habits	Hierarchical relationships	Communications
Seller	-Social Recognition	- Function - Activities (administrative, commercial, merchandising)	- Responsibility - Authority - Bargaining level - Supports to the function	- Titles - Recognition clues (offices, cars)
Negotiation	- Search for solutions or gains	- Social or professional act - Transparency, partnership, or maintenance of informative secrecy	- Orientation solutions, functions, or social approaches	Orientation solutions, functions, or social approaches
Operational management	- Creation of corporate culture - Or looking for productivity - Or management support	- Operational monitoring: oral, reports by objectives. - Budgeting: time, results, methods	- Hierarchical, paternalistic, or participatory - Group or individualist - Recognition system	- Levels of formalization - Valorization of people and/or results, activities
Advertising and promotion	- Orientation towards the other or for oneself -Homogenization or individual differentiation Material or immaterial	- Consumption context (which values the act of consumption, family, friends, host, children)	Decision context (who participates in the decision and who influences the decision, how the decision is made)	- Choice of coding: image, text, comparison, realism, impressionism - Strategic entry choices: professional, humor, ethos, logos, affective... - Choice of reference media: ordinary man, expert or conn (actor, well-known personality: politician, scientist, sportsman, etc.)

Source: (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

“These considerations lead us to see the intercultural as a fundamental dimension, less visible and less obvious than physical differences. But it is more important than the latter in a process of choice because the customer wants to identify with his purchase and the cultural dimension becomes essential. Developing an intercultural approach where one can identify cultural differences, interpret them, and assess their importance in a process of social identification becomes one of the great challenges in a world that is inexorably in the process of strategic and operational globalization but surely not cultural.” (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

Corporate communication in the intercultural environment:

“You cannot in fact, spend more than 65,000 hours of your life in the office, or in the factory, without communicating... And yet, these workplaces are also places conducive to... conflicts! The company is in itself in a fundamental situation of conflict.” (Lehnisch, 2013), Such a problem arises in a unicultural company, but the degree of difficulty increases in the case where the company is multicultural.

Nowadays, communication has become a pillar of a company's strategy. With the globalization of business, the companies will have relationships with players from different countries, teams with a different background, and more diversified, hence these firms cannot neglect the intercultural aspect whether in internal communication, or external.

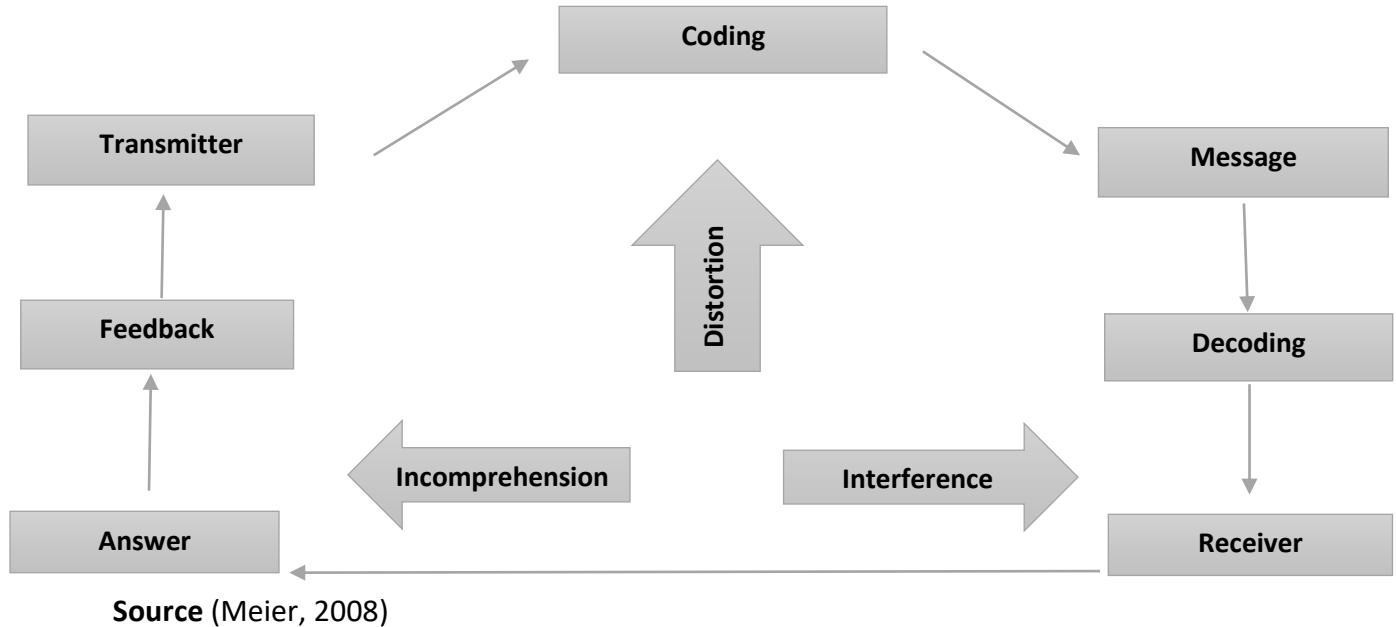
However, intercultural communication is not straightforward, It requires skills to exploit the styles and codes appropriate to each culture, in order to ensure a successful relationship with others.

It includes “external communication: which aims to promote the product and/or services of the company, through its brand and using commercial techniques; to develop institutional communication internally and externally in order to enhance the image of the company.” (Joly, 2009), And “internal communication responsible for disseminating information within the organization (service, unit, department).” (Meier, 2019)

“Corporate communication must include messages from the same system, but in the case of a cultural variety, this can cause contradictions, misunderstandings, negative reactions, and conflicts. This can affect all the actors who can directly or indirectly impact the development process of the company: sales team, project managers, partners, suppliers, customers, etc.” (Meier, 2019)

Communication process :

Figure 3: Communication Processes.



“A communication process can undergo an imbalance caused by misunderstandings due to the cultural context. Consequently, culture impacts the operation of coding and decoding of the actors, because a message cannot be conceived in the same way, because of the presence of a diversity of cultures and in the end generated discrepancies, obstacles, oppositions, and value judgments, etc.

The following is a list of questions that show the issues and challenges faced by internal and external communications when faced with actors with different profiles:

- 1- “What are the desired objectives (establishing a climate of trust, promoting cohesion, providing clarifications, etc.)?”
- 2- What are the priority targets (internal/external, cultures concerned, number of actors, concerned)?
- 3- What is the nature of the message (technical, social, commercial)?
- 4- What is the expected and perceived affective part of the content of the message (part of the imagination, importance of emotional factors, etc.)?
- 5- What is the expected and perceived part of the cognitive in the content of the message (level of precision, degree of structuring and formalization, etc.)?
- 6- What is the purpose of the message (gather, motivate, coordinate, etc.)?
- 7- What are the risks associated with the message (difficult decoding, incomprehension, misunderstanding, etc.)?

8- What are the preferred communication channels and modes (formal/informal; unilateral/bilateral, direct/indirect, etc.)?

9- What are the expected results?

10- How to react to a misunderstanding of some of the target actors?" (Meier, 2008)

In fact, the leader must be aware of what is involved in time and space management because they present criteria for differentiation between cultures especially when it comes to non-verbal communication, hence it is necessary to analyze them well and master them in order to communicate perfectly with people of different nationalities.

Faced with the development of multicultural teams, the function of managers is changing and plays a significant role in the success of diversity management. At the same time, they must ensure that they communicate internal and external harmony by proving to stakeholders that this differentiation is an advantage for the organization's strategy.

The roles of the manager in terms of intercultural communication:

a) "At the level of internal communication:

- Role of symbol: he must here embody and represent the cultural diversity of his organization, by asserting strong values accepted by all the teams.
- Role of leader: he must, through his messages and words (speech, letter, intervention,) motivate his teams, by setting an example and showing that differences are a vital asset for the success of the company.
- Liaison agent role: he has an essential role to play in the development and continuity of the links between the different components and units of his organization if he wants to achieve synergies between the teams.

b) At the level of external communication:

- Observer role: he must seek and receive any information that can strengthen the external coherence of his company, paying attention to contradictory statements or actions from the different components of his organization.
- Disseminator role: it is to ensure that actions and information reach the right people, in order to improve the firm's relations with its various partners.
- Role of spokesperson: he must represent his organization, its collaborators, and its employees, taking care to promote the values of the company." (Meier, 2008)

"In this context, Edward Hall's approach, distinguishing rich or poor cultural contexts, depending on whether it is a poly-chronic or mono-chronic culture, proves to be particularly stimulating and fruitful for the analysis of business communication." (Dupriez & Simons, 2000)

Intercultural negotiations:

“In negotiation, the issue of cultural differences comes into full play, due to the existence of values and styles of behavior specific to each of the parties, Beyond the content of the negotiation (subject of the agreement), the existence of marked differences between partners can lead to misunderstandings, even to conflicts between the parties concerned.” (Barabel & Meier , 2006)

“The number and complexity of the dimensions of culture as well as the number of its components, such as subcultures, context (national/ethnic or strong/weak according to Hofstede, 1980) etc. make it a difficult variable to pin down and an inadequate concept to explain the conduct and outcome of the negotiation.” (Dellech & Debabi, 2017)

“Studies on intercultural negotiations most often lead to tangible results when the issues relate to the analysis of the failure and/or success of an international negotiation according to the impact of factors of various kinds (social – cultural, demographic, psychological, etc.)” (Dellech & Debabi, 2017)

Cross-cultural Communication in Negotiations:

“The key to effective cross-cultural communication in business negotiation is knowledge. First, it is essential that people understand the potential problems of cross-cultural communication and make a conscious effort to overcome these problems. Second, it is important to assume that one’s efforts will not always be successful and adjust one’s behavior appropriately. It is also important to respect the negotiators and their culture.

For example, one should always assume that there is a significant possibility that cultural differences are causing communication problems, and be willing to be patient and forgiving, rather than hostile and aggressive, if problems develop. One should respond slowly and carefully in cross-cultural exchanges, not jumping to the conclusion that you know what is being thought and said.

The suggestion for heated conflicts is to stop, listen, and think, or to put it "go to the balcony" when the situation gets tense. By this it means withdrawing from the situation, step back, and reflecting on what is going on before you act. This helps in cross cultural communication as well. When things seem to be going badly, stop or slow down and think. What could be going on here? Is it possible I misinterpreted what they said, or they misinterpreted me? Often misinterpretation is the source of the problem.” (Huang , 2010)

Impact of cultural diversity on International Human Resources management:

In his research Schmoll explains that “In all the activities that you will have to perform, you must recruit, manage, and fire staff. The staff happens to be, as in any business, the basis on which something can be built. If in your own culture personnel management is already not easy, I let you imagine what it gives in a culture where the perception of time, work, the meaning of work, human relations, hierarchy , power, the role of a leader and the very conception of life are radically different.” (Schmoll, 2016)

In fact, most multi-cultural organizations are multinationals, so when we talk about the impact of cultural diversity on HRM we need to talk about International Human resource management.

International human resources management:

“Nowadays, human resource management (HRM) is considered a key function in the development and implementation of strategic issues and as a tool that provides quality in all organizations. However, these practices vary by region and depend on society, social culture, nature of government, regulatory framework, etc. To remain competitive, companies must have an understanding of HRM practices and cultural diversities around the world.

It was noted that many aspects of HRM are affected by differences in national culture, The success of HRM activities across cultures largely depends on managers' ability to understand and balance the dichotomy of diverse cultural values and practices. If a subsidiary's practices and values do not fit locally, or if local employee expectations do not match organizational practices, the results are often more destructive than constructive.” (Lee, 2022)

The difference between Domestic HRM vs International HRM:

In simple terms, “domestic HRM refers to the management of human resources that is conducted locally in a business’s home country. International HRM refers to the management of human resources globally.” (Lee, 2022)

Similarities between the two:

“Both involve key HRM functions including talent management, training and development, performance appraisal and compensation. However, International HR Managers deal with unique issues arising from internationalization which go beyond the ordinary scope of domestic HRM, for example, expatriating staff to a foreign country and dealing with cultural differences and practices.” (Lee, 2022)

As a result, IHRM has a greater level of complexity and challenges taking into account the different factors that come when managing employees and staff over national borders.

“Activities and considerations unique to IHRM include:

- Understanding the labor laws and cultural practices in each host country and ensuring compliance with these.
- Being more involved in staff’s personal lives if expatriating from the home country. For example, an Expatriate Manager might organize visas, housing, spousal support and/or childcare for employees moving overseas. This is extremely important in helping them settle in their host country and complete their expatriate assignment for the business.
- Determining appropriate international salaries that account for the cost of living in each host country while ensuring a level of parity with those in similar roles elsewhere. Depending on the location, various other rewards such as the provision of medical insurance might also be necessary.

- Facilitating effective communication for employees working with one another across different geographies and time zones.” (Lee, 2022)

The different approaches to IHRM:

In her article Angela Lee explains that “Multinational corporations (MNCs) take different approaches to IHRM, starting with the way they choose to structure their HRM functions. This might be:

1. Centralized

A structure in which all HR administration is conducted centrally, typically from a business’s headquarters. According to Mercer, 50% of MNCs control HR centrally. Generally speaking, HR policies will not vary significantly across subsidiaries.

2. Decentralized

HR administration is handled regionally, and policies and procedures reflect local differences. Mercer reports that 15% of MNCs follow a decentralized structure.

3. Hybrid

Finally, Mercer reports that the hybrid structure is used by 35% of MNCs and involves a mix of both centralized and decentralized HR management.

MNCs also have different approaches to international recruitment, which is typically influenced by the HR structure they have adopted.

For international roles, MNCs might choose to hire:

- Home country nationals: employees from the country where the business’s headquarters are located. These employees will be relocated overseas on an ‘expatriate assignment.’
- Host country nationals: employees from the country where the company has set up a subsidiary.
- Third country nationals: employees who work in either the home or host country for the company, but who are not nationals of either.

Multinational corporations may also choose to combine these approaches, adopting a ‘geocentric’ style of recruitment that involves hiring the most suitable candidate for the job, irrespective of their current location.” (Lee, 2022), Therefore, “at the subsidiary level, multinationals should compare the cultural advantages of the home country with the host country in terms of various value-added activities to determine the dependency of the subsidiary on the resources of the parents or local cultural resources, Various forces are at work, in addition to culture, to determine the extent to which HRM practices in a country conform more to a rational/analytical or social/intuitive approach.

Several theorists propose multi-level models in an attempt to explain variations between HRM cultures. Organizations can differ in the same way as cultures. Some have a tight culture (lots of rules and punishments for not doing what the rules specify) and some have a loose culture. Some are collectivist and others individualist. The other dimensions of cultural variation can also be present in organizations.

Of course, many positions exist between the two poles of each of these dimensions. In general, national culture influences organizational culture.

However, many additional factors reflecting the macroeconomic environment, competition, organizational history, and the legal and political environment will also have an influence. A major factor is management's decision to have an organization that will reflect universal standards or local standards.” (Narkhede, 2011)

The objectives and challenges of international recruitment and selection:

Table 15: The objectives and challenges of international recruitment and selection.

	International recruitment	International selection
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop means and techniques that allow the organization to attract a sufficient number of qualified and motivated international candidates. - Identify people likely to occupy international positions at the best possible cost. - Increase the "pool" of international candidates at minimum cost in anticipation of positions that the organization will offer in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allow the company and the employee to assess whether the candidate has the skills and motivation to successfully complete the proposed mission. - Minimize the risk of failure and the costs associated with it - Assign candidates to appropriate positions in a way that maximizes the interests of the organization and the individual
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of knowledge of local labor markets, the difficulty of attracting talented candidates in countries where the company has little visibility. - Lack of knowledge of the local education system and the different qualifications, the variability of experiences and qualifications of graduates. - Taking into account national differences in system structures and salary differences as well as remuneration expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determination of criteria and choice of selection methods

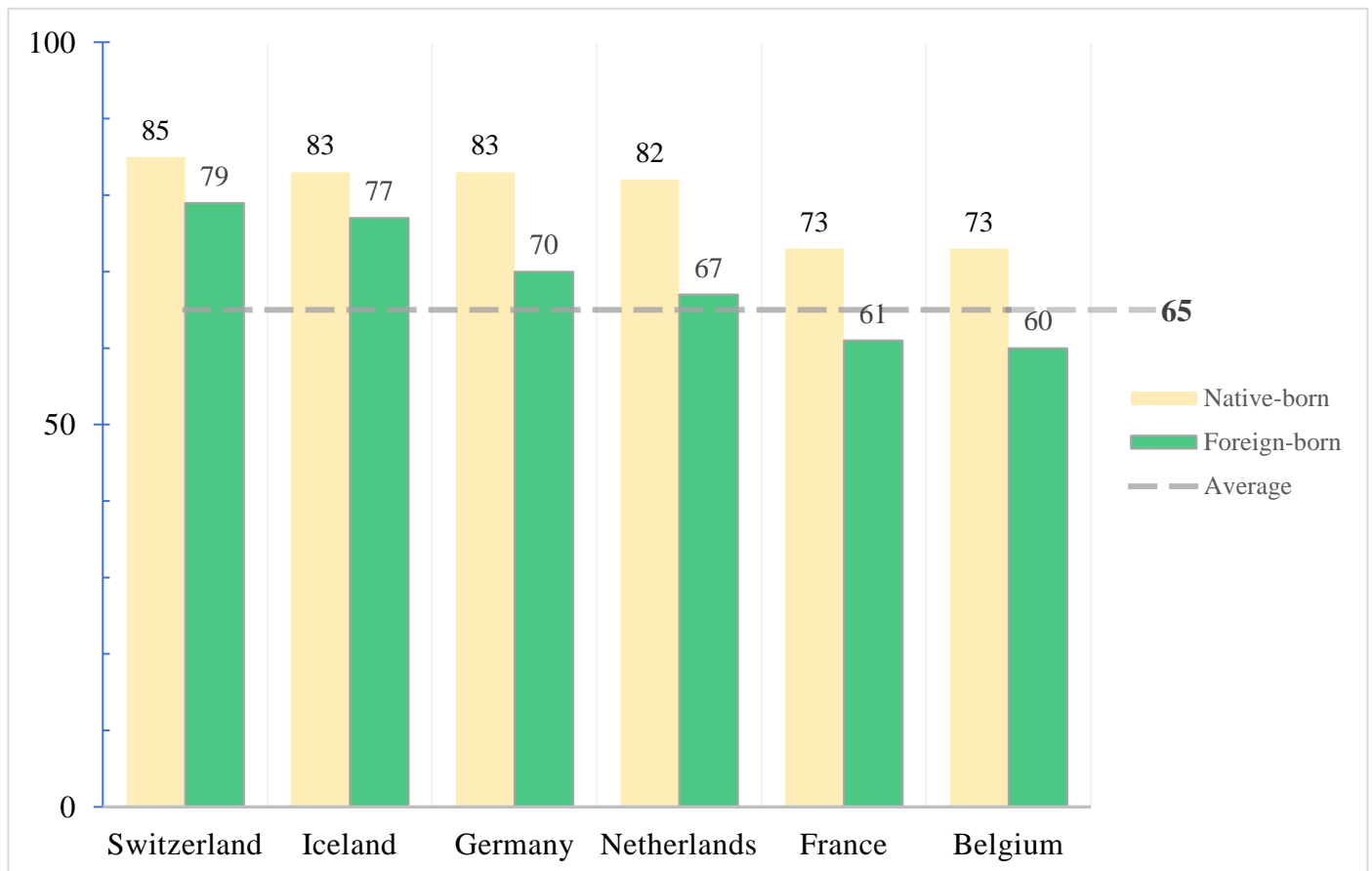
Source: (Barmeyer & Waxin, 2008)

Cultural diversity in Belgium:

When we talk about cultural diversity in Belgium, we find ourselves in a very significant situation, a country that has 3 different official languages, 3 different regions, and a long list of ethnic Groups and nationalities. Consequently, there is no need for further investigation to conclude that Belgium is a place of cultural diversity.

However, a recent study by BCG (Boston Consulting Group) shows quite the opposite when it comes to Belgian workforce diversity; “The participation of foreign-born people in Belgian employment is approximately 13pp lower than that of native-born people. This equates to a 60% foreign-born employment rate, which is about 5pp below the European average. Despite similar disparities in employment rate between foreign-born and native-born in neighboring countries like The Netherlands (~15pp. gap), Germany and France (both ~12pp. gap), the overall employment rate of foreign-born people is the lowest in Belgium.” (BCG, 2022)

Figure 4: Employment rate for foreign-born people compared to European average.



Source: (Untapping the True Potential of Belgian Workforce Diversity, 2022).

Although Belgium is considered a diverse country when it comes to Languages, Nationalities, and Ethnicities, it does not reflect the diversity of the workforce inside the companies and the market.

In a non-diverse team, you may find it easier and faster to make managerial decisions, but Diversity and inclusion, has shown a greater positive outcome in Performance, Innovation, and Longevity, which are considered in our globalized world a crucial quality and a key for success, that companies cannot ignore, in addition to the race to acquire talent is now getting harder than ever before, it is the time to embrace and give diverse workforce the chance to secure long term growth and success in business.

Conclusion:

As we have already specified; managing in a diverse environment requires a well-defined approach in order to make the most of this complexity. Intercultural management is a management model that takes into consideration all the cultural particularities of the personnel in operations management within the company. To say that this organization is made up of multicultural teams is not enough; Also need to specify which type.

To manage a multicultural team, Cultural diversity can be a significant advantage if managers well exploit it, but that does not prevent it from presenting a challenge and posing disadvantages for the whole company. Such an atmosphere and cultural interactions will first change the marketing process, communication within the company, human resource management and negotiations.

Chapter 3: Case Study of the impact of cultural diversity on the company MLex

Introduction:

In the past, everyone worked within their own environment, country, and culture, today with globalization and with changes in economies and technology this has led to the creation of more culturally diverse teams and organizations. Specifically in Belgium, which is one of the most diverse countries and the fact of being in the center of Europe and home of the EU commission.

In order to concretize our theoretical research, and to study the impact of cultural diversity on managerial practices in the field, I opted to choose a multinational organization that operates globally to do my internship. In this chapter we will take a look at the results of our case study and explain the methodology of research and analysis.

Presentation of the research methodology and the method of analysis followed:

Research methodology:

In this case study we tried to explore the Impact of cultural diversity on different departments at MLex concerning some managerial practices. Thereafter both quantitative and qualitative research was conducted to assure adequate and relevant results.

To do this, we used two research methods:

Interviews with: the Head of Business Development and Sales for CEMEA & LATAM region, the Director of Product Marketing and her team, and the Senior Business Development Manager for Belgium.

In addition, a questionnaire intended for Employees of MLex working in Brussels or other teams and staff with activities and roles related to the Brussels branch.

Results analysis methodology:

In order to analyze collect the results, I used the online form editor "Google forms" and Microsoft Excel software. For the purpose of analysis and treatment of the results, I used Descriptive statistics to analyze and describe data to identify trends relationships and produce final results. These are simple mathematical calculations which make it possible to identify from the data a positive or negative trend in the results as well as generate figures and graphs to support the statistical analysis.

Presentation of MLex:

“MLex was founded in 2005 by Robert McLeod and Duncan Lumsden, who had both been working as EU regulatory journalists in Brussels. Rob and Duncan’s extensive experience of this space allowed them to identify gaps in what other news outlets were providing. They understood the market’s need for an independent newswire that covered antitrust and regulatory merger reviews in more depth, and also honed in on the business impact of court decisions.

Initially set up with the Brussels-based EU Antitrust lawyer in mind, MLex covered merger reviews, cartels, and some adjacent, trade-related stories. After proving the value of its journalistic ethos, MLex replicated that model across other areas of regulatory risk. More than a decade later, MLex’s main aim remains to add value with insights that are not publicly available in other sources. MLex’s coverage goes to a level of depth that is valuable to its readership and helps them make business decisions. Within a short period of time, MLex has built trust among its readers.

MLex’s journalistic style and approach to news is unique. With a singular focus on regulatory risk that could affect a business decision, MLex forgoes coverage that follows a political or lobbying agenda and instead goes deep into stories that will move the needle for businesses in terms of financial impact. MLex does not distort editorial coverage by chasing readers with attention-grabbing headlines. The focus is always on where the regulatory risk lies and who may be impacted. As added value, the journalists connect the story to the specific companies or sectors that could be most impacted and provide forward-looking analysis to guide readers’ decisions.

As MLex expanded, it identified the need to cover new geographies where regulatory decisions were having a global impact. After establishing itself in the EU, MLex expanded into the United States then Hong Kong and Brazil, then later adding bureaus in other parts of the globe. Each of these local regulatory decisions had potential global impact as more and more regulators were working together.

Expansion into the field of Financial Crime, International Trade, Data Privacy & Security, and other areas happened naturally as market needs evolved. Despite its rapid growth, MLex’s focus remained on providing trustworthy insights that identify business risk or opportunity, to help readers make decisions.

In 2015, LexisNexis acquired MLex, to complement other market-leading legal news offerings in its portfolio. This move has enabled MLex to expand its readership in markets where LexisNexis has a strong brand presence and commercial operations.” (MLex a LexisNexis company, 2023)

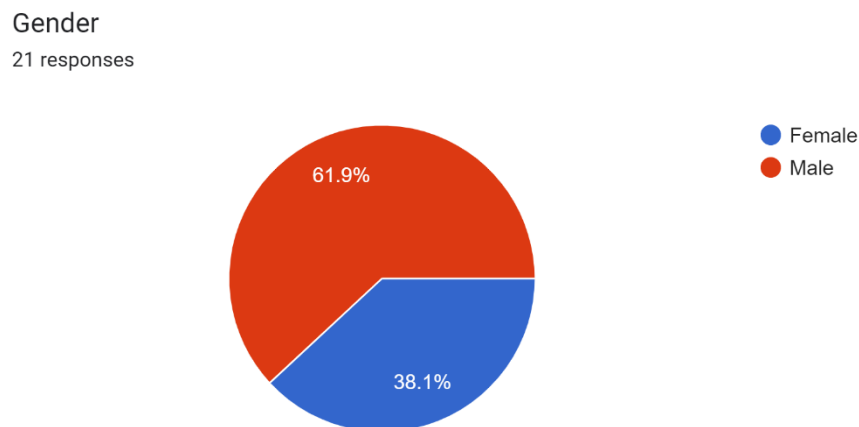
Results obtained by the questionnaire intended for Employees:

With this questionnaire intended for Employees of MLex working in Brussels, we aim to identify the level of diversity at MLex but also look at how the workforce sees diversity in the workplace and how it is impacting them and the company.

1. General Information:

Gender:

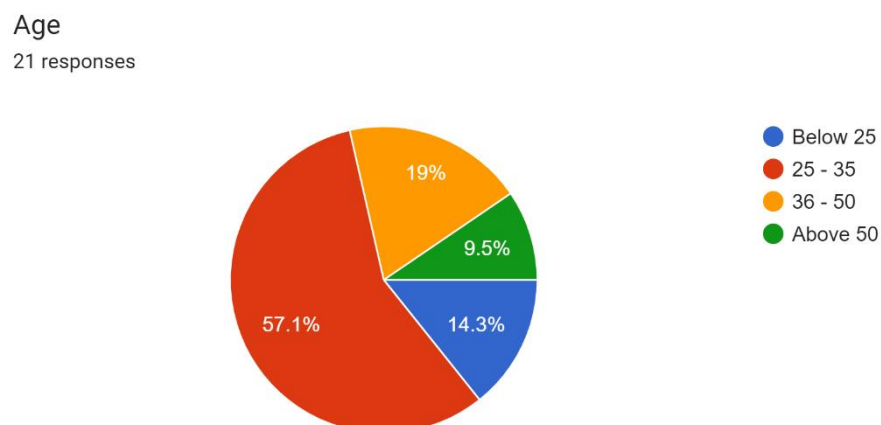
Figure 5: Proportions of the workforce at MLex by gender.



According to these results, it can be seen that the proportions of male and female sex is different, as the majority are male employees **61.9%** were recorded, and **38.1%** female of a total of 21 employees.

Age:

Figure 6: Breakdown of the workforce at MLex by age group.

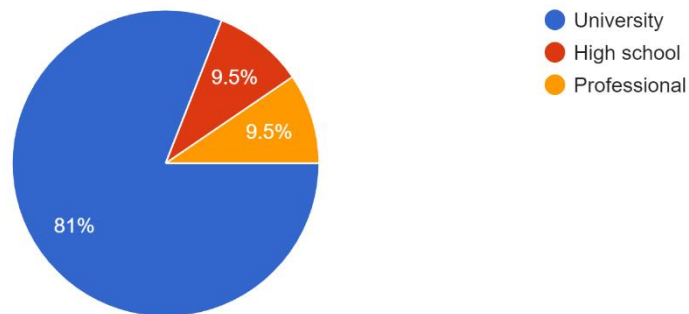


The values of the workforce classified according to the age group were recorded as follows: **14.3%** [under 25], **57.1%** [25, 35], **19%** [36, 50] and **9.5%** [over 50] respectively. We can see that the workforce dominantly young at MLex.

Education:

Figure 7: Distribution of the workforce at MLex according to their level of study.

Education
21 responses

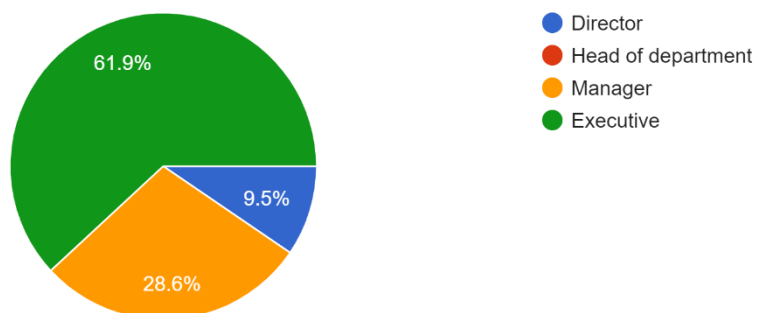


According to the graphic representation by level of study above, Employees with a university degree represents **81%** of the workforce, and **9.5%** each for High school and professional Degree.

Position held:

Figure 8: Distribution of the workforce at MLex according to position held.

Function and role
21 responses

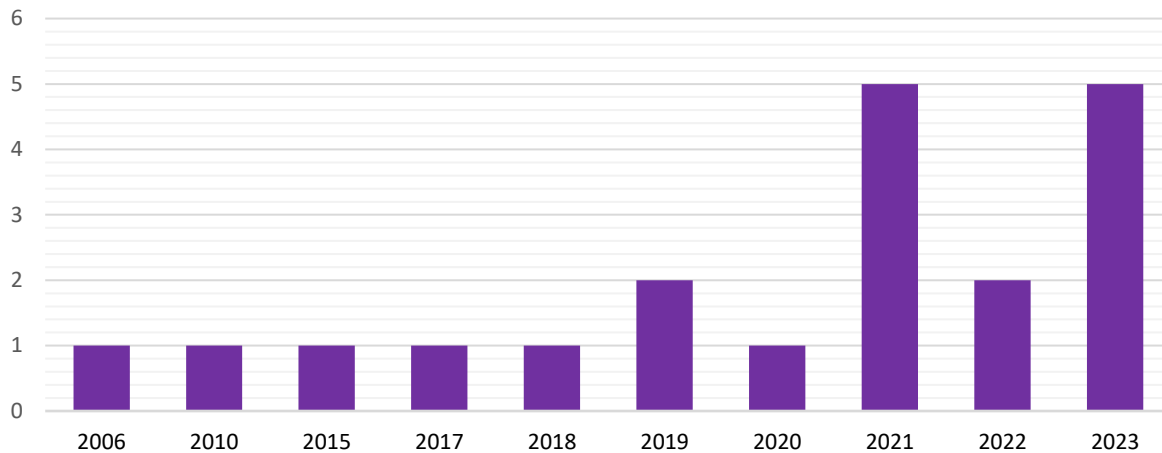


We see from the chart that the majority of the workforce occupies the positions: Executive by **60%** and **30%** Manager, on the other hand a minority of **10%** occupies the position of Director, and no one is head of department.

Year of recruitment:

Figure 9: Distribution of the workforce at MLex according to the year of joining the company.

Year of joining your company?
21 responses



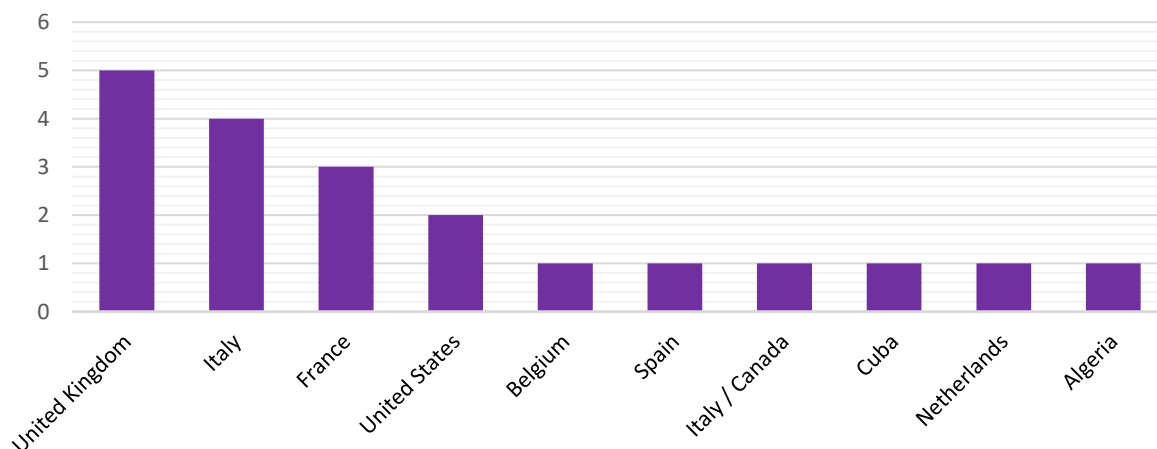
The graphic representation above shows us that the largest workforce has been recruited between 2021 and 2023 which shows that the majority of the workforce are impartially new.

Culture diversity related Information:

Country of origin:

Figure 10: The distribution of the workforce at MLex according to their country of origin.

Country or/ Countries of origin?
21 responses

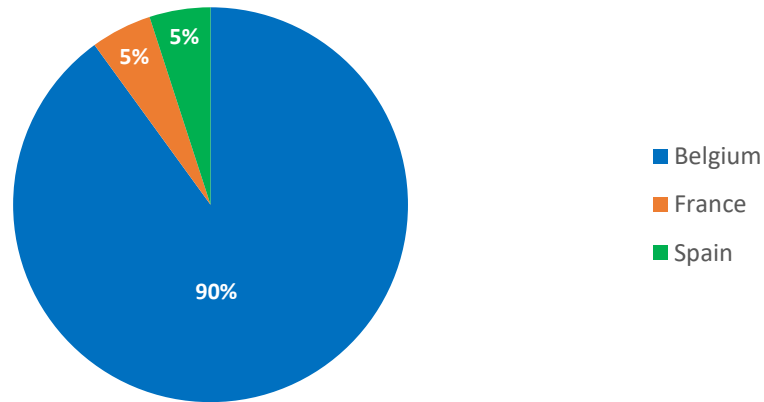


What we see from the above graph represents the origins of the workforce at MLex, with the majority from the UK, Being where the parent company is located, the rest is a mix of countries, we also notice that although the company is based in Belgium, we only have one Belgian Employee, and that shows the diversity within the company.

Country of residence:

Figure 11: The distribution of the workforce at MLex according to their country of residence.

Country of residence?
20 responses



Unlike the country of origin, we see that the majority of the workforce are residing in Belgium where the company is based.

Cultural Diversity understanding:

Figure 12: Definition of cultural diversity according to the workforce at MLex.

In this question, we suggested three different definitions of cultural diversity where each employee must choose only one, the goal was to understand their reasoning and see how they view cultural diversity.

According to you, cultural diversity is
21 responses

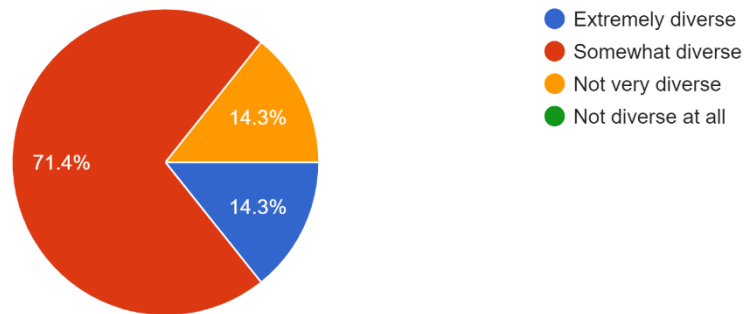


From the chart we see that **47.6%** of the workforce see cultural diversity at its heist complexity, while **38.1%** see it less complex and with fewer aspects of differences that defines diversity, and the rest of the **14.3%** defines cultural diversity as a simple & limited concept within societies and nations.

Level of Cultural Diversity at MLex:

Figure 13: Level Cultural diversity according to the workforce at MLex.

How would you rate the level of cultural diversity within your company?
21 responses

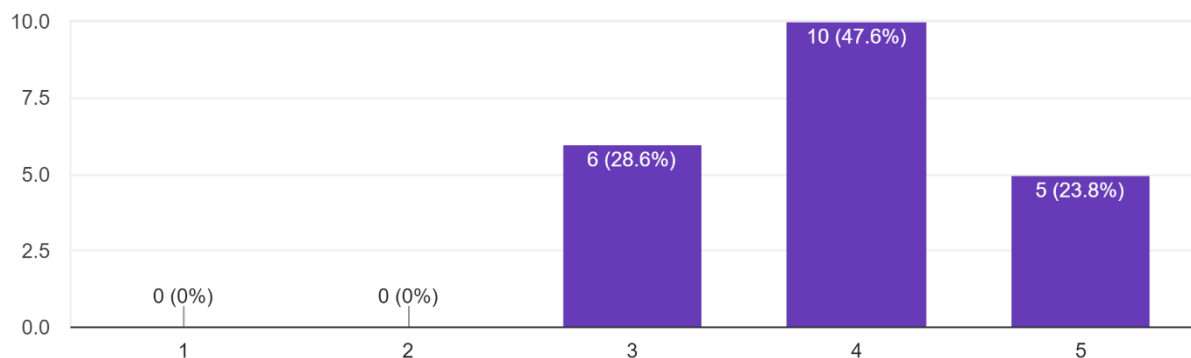


From this chart we see that **71.4%** of the workforce sees MLex “Somewhat diverse,” and **14.3%** of the employees says that is “Extremely diverse,” and the rest sees that its “Not very diverse,” and we see that there was no response registered for “Not Diverse at all.” So, it is safe to say that the workforce sees cultural diversity present in the company at a high level.

Importance of Culturally Diverse teams at MLex:

Figure 14: Importance of Cultural diversity within teams according to the workforce at MLex.

How important is it to you to work in a diverse team?
21 responses

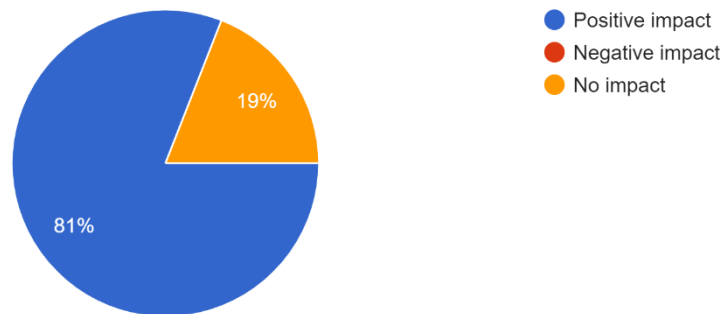


In this question we asked the employees at MLex to rate on a scale from 1 to 5 how important it is for them to work in a diverse team of people: We see from the results that over the half of the workforce at MLex thinks that it is important to be working in a diverse team.

Impact of Cultural Diversity on MLex:

Figure 15: Impact of Cultural diversity on the company according to the workforce at MLex.

In your experience, how does cultural diversity impact the overall performance in the company ?
21 responses

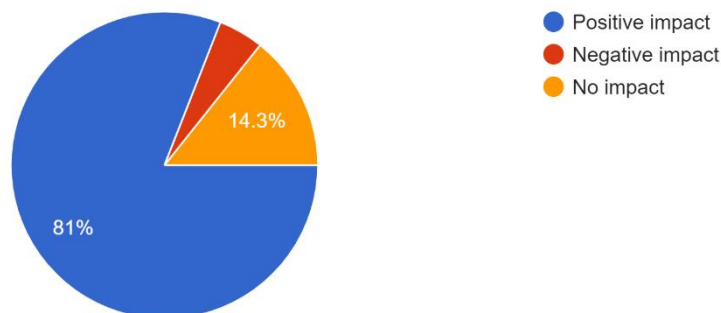


81% of the Employees at MLex believe that Cultural diversity has a Positive impact on the company, while the rest **19%** believe that it has “No impact”, and interesting to see that no one thinks it has Negative impact.

Impact of Cultural Diversity on Individuals at MLex:

Figure 16: Impact of Cultural diversity on the individual according to the workforce at MLex.

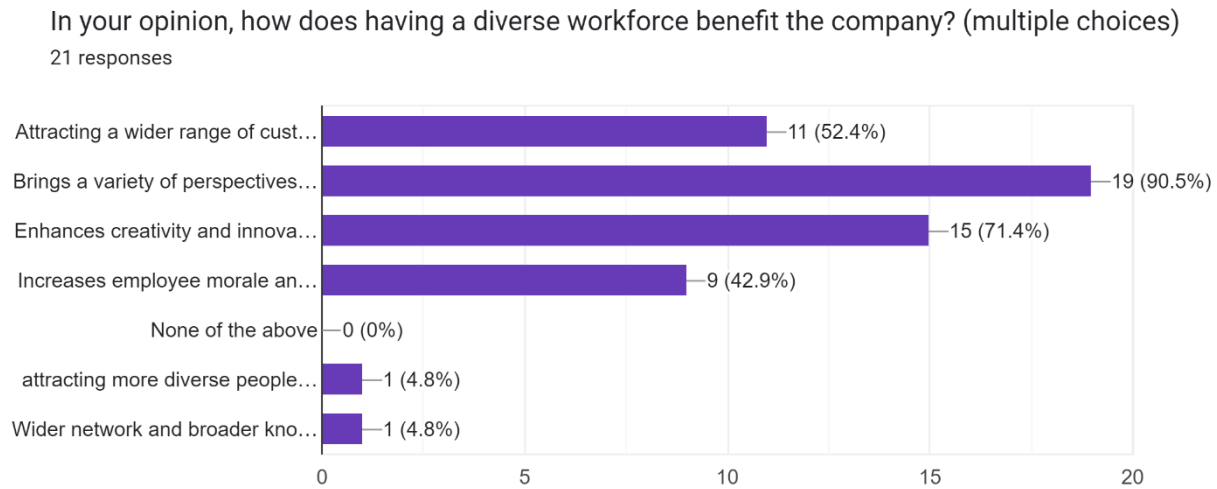
Overall, do you feel that cultural diversity has a positive or negative impact on you and your work ?
21 responses



We see the similarity between the previous results where the majority **81%** of the workforce believe that Cultural diversity has a positive impact on them individually, while **14.3%** sees that it has no impact, and only **5.7%** which equates to **1** individual believes that it has a negative impact on them.

Benefits of Culturally Diversity on MLex:

Figure 17: Benefits of Cultural diversity on MLex according to its workforce.



In this question we listed a set of benefits that can be present in a company because of cultural diversity, to see what is the most dominant and agreed upon.

We saw that the majority of the workforce **90.5%** agreed that cultural diversity “Brings a variety of perspectives and new ideas,” **71.4%** agreed that it “Enhances creativity and innovation”, **52.4%** agreed that it helps “Attracting a wider range of customers and clients,” **42.9%** agreed that it “Increases employee morale and satisfaction,” and we also registered few suggestions from the employees.

Analysis of the results from the questionnaire:

First of all, by summarizing the results we can generate an overview of our study using the questionnaire.

Starting by general information, we see that the majority of the workforce at MLex are male employees **61.9%** and **38.1%** are female employees, where **81%** of them have a university degree and occupy an executive role and are below 50 years old, where half of them joining MLex over 2 years ago.

When it comes to culture, we see a mix of countries of origin and nationalities although the UK is the most dominant one, however **85%** of employees are residing in Belgium, and we also see that the majority of the workforce have a high awareness of cultural diversity where they acknowledge its complexity, and believe it is present in the company at a high level, in addition they think it's important to be working in a diverse team. While **81%** of the Employees at MLex believe that Cultural diversity has a Positive impact on the company and on them individually.

From these results and what we saw in chapter two of our research regarding types of culturally diverse teams, we can conclude that MLex has a "Multicultural team" a heterogeneous workforce made up of employees from more than three different cultures, and we also conclude that the workforces at MLex sees diversity as a positive attribute to the company and themselves.

Results obtained from interviews with relevant Managers and Employees:

As a part of our qualitative research for the case study at MLex, we focused our interviews with managers that are relevant to our subject and we mainly tackle aspects that we mentioned previously in chapter two, Which are:

Intercultural teams Management, Intercultural Negotiation, International Marketing, Corporate Communication, and Recruitment.

We had the chance to interview regarding the subjects mentioned above, key managers at MLex (see annexes):

- The Head of Business Development for CEMEA & LATAM at MLex
- The Director of Product Marketing at MLex and her team.
- The Senior Business Development Manager Belgium at MLex
- An Account Manager at MLex

1. Intercultural teams Management at MLex:

After seeing the cultural diversity that is present at MLex and concluding that the team is a multicultural one, we now dive deeper into how the management looks at the cultural diversity in the company and how they manage it in a day-to-day basis.

After our interview with the Head of Business Development for CEMEA & LATAM at MLex who manages 6 people in his team that are all from different cultures, we asked about how he takes into account their cultural background into account in his planning and how he motivates and mobilize his team, from his answers (see annexes) we conclude that:

- Management encourages the team to be diverse and they consider it a good asset to the company, but not a requirement.
- In the planning, motivating, and mobilizing the workforce they take into account the cultural diversity factor into account, but only to a certain extent, such as Language factors and Different personal Experiences and try to fit them into the different objectives of the company. The other factors like, nationality, Origins, Sex..., are always welcomed but not taking into account.
- Management gives priority to skills, work experience, and how the individual fits in the team, culture and diversity comes naturally given the fact that the industry and the location of the company is international and culturally diverse.
- Management sees the benefits of having a culturally diverse team, in the different perspectives and ideas, and the good work environment it can bring, but do not take it as the only factor of success for the company.
- Management see disadvantages only when it comes to language barriers, which can affect the company sometimes.

2. The impact of cultural diversity on Marketing Management at MLex:

In our interview with the Director of Product Marketing at MLex and her team, we discussed the different activities of International marketing at MLex and how cultural diversity plays a role in defining the different practices they implement in their : Marketing Research, Marketing Strategy, Marketing Management/Activities, we ended up with the following results:

- The marketing department at MLex is centralized and manages all the different regions and the marketing activities across the world and different offices.
- Marketing at MLex takes into consideration some aspect of cultural diversity when managing the different activities, Time zones, Calendars (National holidays, Religious holidays) depending on the targeted regions and countries, and in some cases language when it comes to the UK, USA, and Australia.
- They take into account cultural diversity in the marketing research, but it is dependent on the scope of the projects in hand.

- The Marketing strategy of MLex is unified across the different regions and countries they operate in, Thanks to the products specifications being: (Online Platform, Only in English language), so cultural aspects are rarely taking into account.
- When it comes to marketing activities like Promotional offers, Advertising, Events, the main cultural aspect taking into consideration is language.
- In general, the industry MLex is operating in has a certain level of diversity where it is not necessarily taking into account, and Marketing gives priority to segmentation, niche market trends rather than culture, but they do address Cultural diversity when they face it.

3. Intercultural Corporate communication at MLex:

Since Corporate communication is an aspect that touches all the departments within a company, we made sure to bring it into the conversation in all the interviews, and we understood about MLex Intercultural corporate communication the following:

- Managers finds internal communication as one of the challenges they have to deal with while managing their team regardless of cultural diversity, but adding the latest to the existing difficulties only makes it more complex and increases the chance of failed communications.
- Language is an important factor of corporate communications, at MLex English is the company's official language and with the multicultural teams within the organization from different parts of the world, language barriers can make effective communications difficult to obtain.
- External communication at MLex are also mostly done in English given that the product is in English as well, and we can the same issues of language barriers.

4. Intercultural negotiation at MLex:

In sales and business development, good and effective negotiations are key to the success of the company, in our interview with the Head of Business Development for CEMEA & LATAM, the Senior businesses Development manager and an account manager at MLex we explored the Intercultural negotiation aspect of their activities:

- When it comes to same culture negotiations the managers tend to not take into account any factors of cultural differences or similarities.
- When it comes to Intercultural negotiation the managers keep it in mind but try not to assume anything in advance and stay open to where the negotiations take them regardless of the cultural difference.
- Similar to the previous conclusions, language barriers can also affect the outcome of the negotiations, Managers also take into account economic factors by regions and countries into account when entering into a negotiation.

5. HR and recruitments at MLex:

On the topic of HR and recruitment we tried to focus on how MLex does its recruitment and how HR looks at cultural diversity and are they trying to build and implement policies to create a corporate culture for the people within the organization:

- The HR department is centralized, similar to the marketing department, and we see that the parent company encourages and roots for diversity and inclusion but does not implement or try to establish the same corporate culture policies in all the subsidies across the globe, but rather let it happen naturally.
- In recruitments, Managers give the priority to skills and talent and how an individual can fit in with the team and grow with the company, they take into consideration the cultural aspect of candidates but not as a key requirement but as a good to have.

Analysis of the results from the Interviews:

From the interviews we conducted with key managers from the different departments at MLex, we can get an overall result about how cultural diversity is impacting their management practices and the company as a whole.

First of all, we saw that management is very welcoming and supportive of cultural diversity within the company, and they are advocates to equality and inclusion in the workplace, and that is a great asset to have and a healthy way of managing teams within an organization.

Furthermore, the workforce at MLex, we saw that the managers are aware and understanding of the diversity and multiculturalism present in the teams and understands how it can be an advantage and beneficial to the company, but at the same time they believe it is not a requirement or a must that they are pushing for to be present in the company, but they rather let it form in a natural and instinctive way. For planning, mobilizing, motivating and team management, we saw that managers take into consideration the cultural aspect of the team to a certain and limited extent, and not as the base of how manage the team.

In International Marketing management, we also see that managers are considerate and mindful of cultural diversity by trying to adapt to it and include it in their research and strategic planning when its present, but at the same time it is also limited depending on targeted regions, segments, and industry.

When it comes to Communication in an Intercultural environment, it is a common fact that it is challenging and hard to manage and MLex is no exception, and the main challenge they face is Language barriers wether in Internal or External communications, English being the official language of the company and also the product helps increase the effectiveness of MLex Intercultural communications .

For Intercultural negotiations, managers are also aware of the complexity that comes with dealing with other cultures, and similar to what we said previously, Language is one of the main challenges that take place, but overall managers try to adapt to the situation and always stay in an open position without assuming the culture difference outcomes but be mindful of it.

Last but not least, HR and recruitment at MLex follow the same trend of the previous aspects we mentioned above, there is awareness and acknowledgement of cultural diversity and the benefits it can bring to the organization, but MLex is not trying to push people into diversity, especially in recruitments where they focus on skills and talent and how an employee can fit within the team based on his experience, personality. Cultural diversity is a great asset to have but not the only factor of being the right candidate.

Recommendation:

Regarding research, this humble case study at MLex can be interpreted as a door opener and an introduction to Cultural Diversity and its impact on managerial practices within companies. However, the results and conclusions should be taken into account with caution due to the small sample size of participants in the study, and the unique characteristics of MLex and the market it operates in.

Future research could further examine different industries and sectors to identify where cultural diversity is present at a higher level and how it is affecting the market.

For MLex we find the following recommendations helpful to manage the impact of cultural diversity on the company:

- In Multicultural team management, I recommend taking advantage of the diversity existing within the teams, it can bring greater results if the team is mobilized not just by their skills but also by language and cultural background.
- In International Marketing management, decentralizing the department from the source country to the host countries is vital, and can improve marketing efforts significantly, it will improve decision making to be faster, Marketing research more accurate and focused, and makes MLex overall closer to its clients and cultures around it.
- In Intercultural Communication, Investing in a Language & Communication training can increase the effectiveness of the communication in the company, and can only Improve other aspects like Intercultural negotiations as well.

Conclusion:

At the end of the study, we learn valuable insights and information's about MLex and how it manages cultural diversity and its impact on the workforce and the different departments, we concluded MLex is a company rich of cultural diversity and managers are open to it and encourage people to be diverse. However, it's not considered as a must or a strategy to be followed, but it's a natural phenomenon that comes with the nature of the work they do and the location they operates in.

We also saw a lot of similarities between our theoretical research done in the first two chapters of this thesis, and the practical case study done in this last chapter, this has allowed us to see the limits of our research and also to generate practical recommendations to the company that can help further improve its managerial practices.

General conclusion

This thesis aimed to study the impact of cultural diversity on managerial practices within companies. We set ourselves the objective of identifying manifestations of cultural differences within companies and what are their repercussions on management.

In regards of our main research question **“How does cultural diversity manifest itself within companies and what are its impact on management Practices?”** we can validate the following proposed research hypotheses presented in the beginning of our thesis:

- The presence of Cultural diversity within an organization can cause changes, adaptations, and challenges in managerial practices. Therefore, if it is handled correctly, Cultural diversity can positively impact the company and present great opportunities that can help improve the performance and the results of the company and the workforce, which eventually leads to growth.

In other words, Diversity in the workplace has different impacts and influence on companies and management, and in my personal point of view I see diversity as a sword with two edges. One edge is the advantages of expanding your perspective and ways to reach different stakeholders with an environment full of innovation and new ideas. And the other edge is disadvantages of complexity of people management, communication challenges and risk of falling into the pits of toxic environments full of conflicts and disagreement. Therefore, it all comes down to the swordman, who is the one that needs to find the perfect balance and learn different ways and styles of wielding his sword to gain a competitive advantage that will allow him to conquer his enemies and win the battles of management and hopefully the war of market domination.

Now back to reality, It was first necessary to present basic definitions on cultural diversification and culture according to the approaches of researchers on intercultural management. Then, we deepened the relationship between the notion of cultural diversity and management by studying the influence of culture on some key managerial practices.

And in the end, we concretized our study within the multinational MLex a LexisNexis company, an investigative news agency in Brussels, which is made up of a multitude of cultures from different regions and countries.

By applying qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, in a form of a Questionnaire to the general workforce, and Interviews with key relevant managers within the company, The aim was to address these cultural differences and analyze their effects on management within MLex, and how managers react in such a situation.

Finally, we concluded by affirming that MLex is indeed culturally diverse, and managers and the workforce consider it as an asset and an advantage to their practice. We also recommended managers to adapt their practices with the cultural atmosphere in the company concerning Team management, Marketing, Communication, and negotiations.

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