



A Study on Cross - Cultural Management Strategies Followed by MNCs across the Globe

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this research is to learn about the cross-cultural management practises used by multinational corporations to deal with cultural variations around the world. The descriptive research approach was employed to perform the study, which included WALMART, IKEA, NESTLE, FeDEX, and P&G. For data collecting, secondary sources such as websites, journals, textbooks, newspapers, universities, and research institutions were consulted. As a result, it was determined that a company can build a product that will provide it a competitive advantage, perfect it, advertise it creatively, and push it into the market. Because international companies employ people from a variety of geopolitical, religious, linguistic, political, and economic backgrounds, cultural contrasts outnumber commonalities. As a result, in a company where cultural differences are overlooked, the negative repercussions can cause employees to become alienated from one another. Employees become closer to one another and more committed to their workplace in an organisation where such differences are viewed as significant and well managed.

MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES

Companies that operate in two or more countries, earn a portion of their revenue from overseas operations, and have assets in other countries are considered multinational. As communication and transportation technologies advanced, the supranational economic and technological institutions arose from the free flow of money, products, and services. As a result of the employment of people of various cultures and beliefs, some businesses require not only the traditional management of output outlets, but also the management of cultural and religious differences.

Multinational corporations can be viewed as operating independently in the voids between state-to-state relations or as a tool of foreign policy for the countries in which their parent companies are based. The nature of work within organizations, on the other hand, has become increasingly dynamic, complex, and often unpredictable. The demand for adaptable individuals who are capable of dealing with the challenges of adjusting to and working effectively in a diverse environment is obvious.

Multicultural teams, for example, have become a reality in business and government around the world, and success in these culturally diverse settings is heavily influenced by an individual's ability to work effectively in a variety of countries and with people from various cultural backgrounds. Individuals in new work settings must adapt to changing environmental demands and opportunities in order to function effectively.

Therefore, cultural differences are a phenomenon that no one can afford to overlook when dealing with the realities of today's business world, regardless of where they are physically located, where they work, or what their specific discipline or function is. However, given the concept of culture's pervasiveness, frequent use, and similarity of terms used to define it, practitioners in the field of international and cross-cultural management must critically examine how they treat and use the concept of culture.

After all, understanding culturally specific factors as a manager, but also as an employee, is required when working in a multinational company in order to reap the benefits and reap the rewards. Multinationals are thus "multicultural" systems, and the need for a distinct administrative and organizational management concept stems from the need to better deal with the challenges posed by cultural differences. In this sense, being multicultural entails being receptive to the positive influence of all cultures and developing new and significant interaction strategies. The most important aspect of being multicultural from an organizational standpoint is having a positive attitude toward cultural diversity and seeing various cultural values as an important part of belonging to a society and being human.

Companies can operate in foreign countries alone or in collaboration thanks to common investment agreements with various countries, but cultural differences must be managed.

In terms of ownership and management nationalities, as well as a workforce made up of people from various cultural backgrounds, multinational operations differ from those of small businesses. Multinational companies' multicultural employee profiles necessitate the alignment of these employees' preferences with company values, which necessitates the management of cultural differences.

To maintain a competitive advantage in the global economy, multinational corporations often manufacture goods and services in other countries rather than selling them. Multinational corporations live in this reality.

Multinational corporations differ from other businesses in that they employ managers from various cultural backgrounds. They can be found in almost every economic sector. Administrators, consultants, and staff in charge of managing a multinational's offshore investments must be assigned to countries with different cultural, legal, and political systems on the one hand, and their interactions with employees in the host country on the other, in these organizations, cultural management is required.

Thus, culture is important because it reflects one's mentality, shapes one's thinking, and influences one's subsequent actions. During the MNC period, people of various nationalities, cultures, philosophies, views, values, languages, and expectations collaborate. Managers and CEOs must be able to assess and quantify cultural differences among employees and team members as a result. Cultural differences can be seen in contact styles, working styles, mannerisms, approach and attitude, human treatment, and relationships. The importance of managing cultural differences in terms of language, faith, beliefs and attitudes, education, politics, and legislation is underscored by the fact that the "cultural climate" is one of the most significant factors influencing organizations on both a local and international scale.

As a result, in order to effectively demonstrate their functional expertise, global executives require personal training to recognize their own personal values, social training to consider others' values as desirable and beneficial, job training to focus on organizational performance, and cultural training to appreciate, manage, and evaluate cultural differences. One of the top managerial concerns in multinational corporations, which are now present in almost every sector of the economy, is the management of workers from various cultural backgrounds.

To put it another way, cultural differences management is the process of guiding and controlling the attitudes and behaviors of employees from various cultures in order to achieve organizational goals. In order to gain a competitive advantage, it is the process of using managerial and organizational tactics to support cultural differences rather than melting them away in organizational environments.

Further, understanding what a culture entails is necessary before learning how to deal with cultural differences. The word "culture" comes from the Latin word "cultura," which literally means "cult, religion, or society." Culture consists of explicit and implicit patterns of and for behavior acquired and transmitted through symbols, forming the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts; the essential core of the culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their associated values; culture systems may be conditioning element

Simply put, culture is a set of ideas, beliefs, assumptions, and other characteristics that distinguish one person from another, can be passed down through generations, and thus help an individual understand how to behave in a society

MULTINATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CULTURE

Multinational corporations are the result of economic structures that adapt to the global economy; these corporations prefer to produce goods or services in other countries for a variety of reasons, one of which is financial, as most of the time it is more cost effective. This method is less expensive. Furthermore, the labor force is less expensive, as are the services and products that result. goods outperform expectations Multinational corporations are multiethnic organizations. which, on the other hand, necessitates a different management strategy due to the Cultural differences can and do pose a number of challenges.

Keeping this in mind, being multicultural entails being optimistic and open to beneficial effects, as well as interaction with various cultures, which leads to the development of major interaction strategies. The most significant component of being multicultural is having a favorable attitude toward ethnic diversity, which can result in more revenue for the firm.

Multinational corporations operate in practically every industry, and they require management and personnel from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Managers, professionals, and workers are sent to nations with differing legal systems. On the one hand, cultural and political structures, as well as their relationships with the environment. Workers from the host country, on the other hand, are responsible for the cultural management. Differentiation is unavoidable in these organizations.

Because of the employment of people from various cultures and beliefs, these firms require not only typical production management, but also genuine management of these disparities. Investment, on the other hand, deals with a variety of issues. Countries permit multinational corporations to operate in international markets both alone and in collaboration countries, resulting in the inevitable appearance of cultural disparities.

FEATURES OF CULTURE

The following are the key characteristics of culture:

- **Dynamic:** Culture evolves throughout time; it may be gradual, but it is almost always consistent.
- **Learned:** Culture is a learned trait, not an inherited one. It must be learned through interaction with one's environment.
- **Non-uniform:** Cultural components such as traditions, concepts, moral systems, and convictions differ widely across society. In addition, they change through time.
- **Transferable:** Culture is passed down via the generations.
- **Patterned:** The cloth is weaved with culture. If one half is changed, the other is almost certain to alter as well. Culture is a community-produced product.
- **Shared:** The culture of an organization is something that all of its members share.

Furthermore, understanding dynamic cultures is critical since different cultures have different perspectives on things. Such perspectives can be beneficial to one individual while neutral to another. Things and concepts that matter to one community inside an organization may not matter to the other.

Four Dimensions of Culture:

- ✓ Individualism/collectivism
- ✓ Masculinity/femininity
- ✓ Uncertainty avoidance
- ✓ Power distance.

The degree to which the self is seen as fundamental to behavior is known as individualism. Individuals are seen as the shapers of their own lives and as the primary drivers of their own fates, according to the individualist viewpoint. Individuals, on the other hand, are centrally related to the groups to which they belong in collectivism. Individualism-collectivism refers to the degree to which individual needs and aspirations are prioritized over the needs of others and collectivities. The amount to which differences in hierarchy, rank, and class are welcomed and kept is referred to as power distance. In low-power-distance cultures, efforts are made to decrease inequality, and people in lower positions find it easier to communicate with people in positions of authority, and equal rights are emphasized.

Individuals with power, on the other hand, are entitled to privileges in cultures with a high-power distance, and equal rights are less emphasized. Uncertainty avoidance refers to how much uncertainty and ambiguity are viewed as a threat in a society, whereas masculinity-femininity refers to how much society values gender roles distinction. Masculine civilizations have firmly defined gender roles, whereas feminine societies, which are more interdependent, have fewer defined roles.

CULTURE AND CULTURE DIFFERENCES

Because of globalization, firms now have staff from all over the world. Management, which makes doing business a difficult task. Culture is something that exists outside of you. since every organization has a source that might affect behavior on a daily basis. At work, each person brings something new. Culture influences the individuals' behavior and shapes group identity. The culture represented distinguishing members of one category from people of another, as well as a collective programming of the mind. There are geographical boundaries that contain culture or regional levels where diverse elements of culture characterize a country or a specific area, such as individualism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance index, masculinity, and long-term vs. short-term orientation.

A cultural system can be stated to hold a lot of sources as diversity and identity because of these complicated views of culture and notions. These socially formed and meaning-laden normative categories are socially formed. Intercultural influence occurs when individuals from culturally normative groups contact with one another. Individuals without prior multicultural experience may endure miscommunication, misunderstanding, and misinterpretation.

Understanding, awareness of each individual, and appreciation of a certain group's cultural component are all part of cultural knowledge. The ability of a group or an individual to negotiate cultural views, meanings, beliefs, and values in order to have effective communication practices is referred to as intercultural competence. It also allows for optimal functioning in the face of cultural differences, as individuals come to terms with their many identities in a multicultural setting.

These examples of cultural difference knowledge, abilities, and attitudes help people avoid cultural conflict by increasing their awareness and comprehension of different cultures. Management of cultural differences is creating an environment that allows employees of various cultures to use their abilities while also managing their differences. After all, it's about controlling and controlling the actions and attitudes of individuals from various cultural backgrounds in order to achieve organizational objectives.

Therefore, if cultural diversity is not neglected, it can provide multinational firms' processes a lot of meaning and significance. An organization must recognize and appreciate the requirements of distinct groups of people as a result of this contrast and diversity. It is vital to respond to the needs and desires of distinct groups in a sensitive and substantive manner. Efforts must be made ahead of time to bridge the gap between persons from different cultural backgrounds who work together in a company.

CROSS – CULTURAL MANAGEMENT

Cross-cultural management can be described as the management of individuals and activities with a different cultural context and complex background. The analysis of cross-culture focuses on important concepts such as educating and motivating people to cope with cultural clashes and implement viable and sound management.

The major purpose is to devise a practical management system as well as the executive's position in regard to the various cultural foundations. It also intends to make use of project assets, particularly to effectively and efficiently apply potential estimation of projects. When it comes to the relative importance of cultural cognizance in the sphere of international business, there are various factors and angles to consider, such as some enterprises and

organizations requiring more cross-cultural awareness than others, and many countries requiring more robust cross-cultural sensitivity and inspection than others.

THE CULTURAL PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES

I. Time Relationships

Varied cultures have different perspectives on time, which has an impact on issues like timeliness and timetables. While Americans consider tardiness to be a sign of contempt, other Latin American cultures believe that arriving late is a gesture of respect. Americans believe that engaging in a commercial negotiation is the natural sequence of events. Conversation and relationship-building are part of the process in other cultures, such as Japan's.

II. Language Barriers

For a small business that grows into a worldwide corporation, language can be a big barrier. It isn't merely an issue of learning the language to solve the problem. For example, the dialect, slang, and pronunciation of Spanish differ from one Latin American country to the next. Contextual subtleties and nonverbal factors influence the meaning of language. Not all foreign words and phrases can also be translated

III. Traditions

Customs, taboos, and superstitions exist in every community. A business owner should study more than only the holidays of a foreign market; they should also learn about local business etiquette.

IV. 1.6.4 Business Etiquette

Gift-giving, the use of business cards, and procedure during business meetings all have cultural variances. In some cultures, goods that are considered meaningful gifts are improper or even banned in others. Giving a Chinese person a clock is equivalent to wishing him death, while giving knives and scissors denotes the end of a relationship. When it comes to exchanging business cards, there are some guidelines to follow. As a symbol of respect, the Chinese exchange business cards with two hands and expect cards to be translated. During meetings, many hierarchical cultures adhere to rigid etiquette and defer to the highest-ranking individuals.

V. Norms and Values

Different religions and beliefs can make it difficult to communicate in the workplace. With certain employees who pray many times a day, managers may find it difficult to plan meetings, arrange training, and coordinate team activities. Women may find it challenging to interact as equal members of a team or to fully engage in business meetings in conservative societies.

VI. Diversity Training

Employees can benefit from training programmes that teach the value of diversity by better understanding the variables and barriers to effective communication, as well as strengthening work teams. By boosting staff awareness and comprehension of cross-cultural communication problems, this training can help support a company's customer-service function.

EXISTING MNC'S WORLDWIDE

- **WALMART**
- **IKEA**
- **P&G**
- **NESTLE**
- **FEDEX**

Ikea

Management is in charge. Internally, outwardly, and in the corporate world of stock market and public image, communication is regarded as a vital component in an organization's total performance. This is understandable given that the aspects of communication aim to not only communicate management goals to the audience, but also to acquire their support in order to improve the organization's performance and achieve a competitive advantage in the target market. Marketing communication, shareholder communication, supplier relationship management, and, most importantly, developing business identity in the real world are all considered as part of management communication.

➤ **Cross-Cultural Communication**

Social interaction is one of the most important factors that might influence an organization's overall effectiveness in a certain target area. This is not only because increasing the organization's visibility to the target audience will boost familiarity, but it will also raise the organization's overall acceptance by the people in the target location. The communication element is a vital factor that affects the organization's overall effectiveness in the target market.

Another intriguing aspect of social interaction is that an organization attempting to obtain market share in a new territory requires senior management efforts to promote the organization's existence as a positive factor in the economy's overall business in the target territory. As a result, from a strategic standpoint, it is critical for social interaction to build a positive image of the business in order to grow its market presence as a possible rival.

One of the primary crucial success factors for a firm to establish exposure in a new target market is cultural empathy. The obvious reason for this is that a new-entrant firm may easily discover potential clients in the target market if they have a good awareness of the target market's culture and the broader picture of the target geography.

Cultural empathy and cross-cultural communication is the fact that, as a new entrant to the target market, the parent organization must appeal to the cultural background of the target audience (customers, suppliers, and stakeholders alike) to justify their contribution to the development of society in terms of business development.

In addition, understanding the cultural characteristics associated with the target market is critical for a new entrant in the market because the customer's natural propensity is to rely on the seller who can grasp the customer's wants.

Multinational corporations entering China for business face four major challenges in gaining a competitive advantage in China's chosen target market. These are:

1. A lack of supporting infrastructure that inhibits a business from capitalizing on its competitive edge in the new target market, such as managerial effectiveness, technical advancements, and so on.
2. In the Chinese market, supply chain management is also a major concern, owing to weak infrastructure and managerial performance, as well as the inherent disadvantage of a communication gap due to a lack of local expertise.
3. The inability to benefit from economies of scale, as well as a lack of flexibility in spreading the higher fixed costs imposed by the requirement to integrate operations in China
4. Finally, most Chinese marketplaces are still in the early stages of development, making market penetration with high-end items impossible.

Given the aforementioned limits, it is evident that cross-cultural communication can not only create a competitive advantage through local expertise, but also bridge the communication gap, allowing the organization to strategically position itself in target markets and determine the market growth stage at which to offer innovative product lines.

➤ **Communication Competence**

Because cross-cultural communication components including social connection, ethnic communication, cultural empathy, and local knowledge are demonstrated in the organization's communication competency, it is a vital component in the overall success of the business in a new target market. To establish a competitive edge, senior management representing the organization in a new region must be able to communicate effectively in the local language while incorporating the aforementioned.

The lack of knowledge of the local language, which is required for competency in communication for negotiation and sales, is a huge disadvantage for an enterprise entering China. As a result, it's apparent that communication skills are the most important factor in bolstering the strategy's overall strength and generating competitive advantage for the company.

Finally, it's worth noting that the Chinese furniture market is not only booming, but also expanding in demand, thanks to a growing awareness of western fashion and trends among the target market's clients. The company under investigation (IKEA) is one of the world's largest retailers of flat-pack furniture and home furnishings.

➤ **IKEA and China**

In 2003, IKEA opened its first store in Shanghai, China, to join the Chinese furniture retail industry. This was followed by expansion of the firm into other prominent Chinese geographies such as Beijing and Hong Kong. The use of cross-cultural communication is discussed in this section.

In the Chinese market, IKEA's procurement strategy focuses on developing local channels and small-scale enterprises that produce specific product

lines and made-to-order product lines. This highlights IKEA's ability to retain good supplier relationships and boost efficiency through good cross-cultural communication.

The corporation employs local workers at all levels of the organization, as seen by the Chinese national's shop manager positions in Shanghai. The aforementioned demonstrates the concept of cross-cultural communication and appealing to the employee culture in addition to typical human resource management strategies. Furthermore, the company's rewarding approach, which is not only intended to inspire employees but also to establish the general organizational culture among the staff members in the Chinese branches, demonstrates good human resource management. This method encourages employees and is successful due to the organization's local knowledge.

In the Chinese retail market, the aforementioned are demonstrated as follows:

1. IKEA, China's understanding of the host culture is justified by the organization's advertising and promotion strategy, which employs the services of local advertising agencies to appeal to demographic cultural variables.
2. The company's innovation methods, such as its contribution to the Hong Kong target market's space challenges, are a typical example of the company's ability to participate in and resolve host social challenges.
3. The company's top ranking in brand loyalty and customer loyalty in the Hong Kong and Beijing marketplaces attests to its ability to establish a good relationship with the host.

WALMART

➤ **Early global expansion strategy and First Enter strategies**

Walmart has been a global leader in retail for the past two decades. Its main sources of success are supply chain management, customer service, and the ability to keep pricing low.

Walmart has a monopoly on the US market, with sales coming from 15 different countries. It had early success in Mexico, Canada, and later in China and the United Kingdom, but it failed to break into the German and Japanese markets.

It was critical for Wal-Mart's expansion that it explore markets outside of the United States. There are three major causes for this: For starters, Walmart determined that the United States' population accounts for only 4% of the global population, limiting itself to a little slice of the pie. Second, even though it was a small market, it had become saturated, and growth had slowed. Finally, some experts believe that bargain retailing has a bigger promise in emerging nations.

Meanwhile, "Low Price Promises" is a well-known advertising tactic in any language. Walmart has implemented a successful business model in which each country's stores will be known by a distinct name, and the products sold will be of varying quality depending on the preferences of local customers in each region. The sale of high-quality products at the lowest possible price is part of Walmart's corporate management strategy.

Walmart has a variety of regional alternatives, including entering Asia, Europe, or other nations in the Western Hemisphere. Walmart, on the other hand, lacked the financial, organizational, and management capabilities to pursue a number of nations and areas at the same time at the time. Instead, Walmart opted to enter the market in a logical sequence that would allow it to apply what it learned from its first forays to subsequent ones. For the next few years, Walmart has opted to concentrate on establishing a footprint in the Americas, specifically Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Canada.

Obviously, Canada and Mexico are the neighboring markets with the most favorable business climates and the simplest entrance routes to the United States. Because most Canadians reside near the US border, they were already familiar with the brand. Canada is a mature market with considerable income and cultural parallels between the US and Canadian markets. As a result, Wal-Mart had little need for fresh training. Mexico and Canada are two excellent markets for Wal-Mart to begin its international expansion.

Walmart, on the other hand, has plans to expand into the European and Asian markets, but they acknowledge that the Asian markets, such as China and Japan, are vastly different from the US market in terms of distance, entrance obstacles, and cultural differences.

Otherwise, the European retail industry was mature, which meant that new entrants would have to take market share away from existing competitors. However, there were some well-entrenched competitors in the European market, such as Carrefour in France and Metro in Germany, who would likely retaliate vehemently against new entrants, which would be detrimental to Wal-Mart's strategy implementation.

The way people think of passionate Latinos isn't like Wal-Mart's "daily Mart's cheap pricing" campaign. As a result, Weekend procurement is a duty that people in industrialized countries like the United States and Canada must finish as soon as possible, so Wal-Mart's low-cost strategy can help people do this onerous work in the shortest possible time and in the most efficient way. Customers go to retail stores in droves on a regular basis to

meet each other and recommend their shopping discoveries and tips, and those occasional discount goods and shops increase their social fun, thus Wal-Mart's price strategy in Latin America lost their attractiveness.

As the economic and political situation has improved, retailers from wealthy countries, such as Wal-Mart, have become more aggressive in their targeting. Wal-Mart decided to enter the Mexican and Brazilian markets through a joint venture because of cultural differences, consumer preferences, and a relatively stable economic and political environment. The concept has been implemented in Mexico and Brazil, as well as other Latin American regions, as a strategic platform for further expansion.

The successful implementation of the "Everyday Low Prices" concept in Mexico in 1991 was the first strategic move toward the company's broader goal of becoming the top player in Latin America.

Wal-Mart has taken advantage of strong performance in Brazil, Mexico, and Chile, and has set out to capture the remainder of Latin America. The company targeted that it has open stores in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

➤ **Potential, culture challenges and opportunities of future global expansion**

Wal-Mart's strategy has made it a popular shopping destination, but this time it was fueled by a credit card service in addition to the lower-priced goods. This proposal will surely be implemented in the United States. This is also a successful example of Wal-Mart's expanding into other overseas markets. Furthermore, Wal-Mart established the Banco Walmart in Mexico, which is the world's first Walmart bank, as well as the successful creation of new formats in Mexico, such as the Fair-Price Shop Bodega Aurrera Express.

This business structure is designed for fill-in excursions that occur on a daily basis, with the primary trip drivers being price and convenience. Walmart expects this format to grow the fastest in terms of the number of stores added in the next 3-5 years as part of their future expansion. While expanding in Latin America, Walmart may face cultural and economic challenges. Each country is a completely separate market with vastly different economic realities. It will have to rely on the experience of its business partners in many countries to attain this goal.

Wal-Mart's entry into international markets is quite aggressive, and it frequently encounters numerous challenges during the process of entering another country. For example, this company's efforts to penetrate Argentina were not very effective as a result of cultural influences in this country. This suggests that customers in Argentina do not accept American supermarkets, putting Wal-Mart in a difficult position. An organization's success or failure is usually determined by its culture. Furthermore, cultural influences have an impact on the company's success, and they vary from location to location and throughout time.

Product quality is the most essential component in the purchasing decision-making process for Brazilian customers, followed by product price, customer service, store cleanliness, and store distance.

Because of its culture, economy, and infrastructure, Latin America has a lot of potential for expansion. Latin America is a crucial area with significant development potential for Walmart in the next years. One of the most appealing prospects for Wal-Mart in Latin America is to expand by acquiring grocery chains at low prices, as the corporation has done in Chile. Wal-Mart will have to reproduce this tactic throughout the remainder of Latin America.

PROCTER AND GAMBLE (P&G)

Every company nowadays is attempting to expand its market to the rest of the world. Many aspects contribute to a company's success in the business world, such as developing new products, developing a strong marketing strategy, and understanding the importance of cultural diversity in each region. Procter & Gamble (P&G) is one of the world's most successful corporations. P&G has become one of the most successful companies as a result of strong business operations based on cultural diversity. P&G is the world's largest consumer goods manufacturing corporation, with a long and illustrious history. P&G is concerned about cultural diversity, and it is a priority for them.

Procter & Gamble (P&G) is a multinational consumer goods company. For the beauty, grooming, and domestic care industries, the company builds brands and packaging products. P&G is the world's largest corporation, with 4.6 billion customers worldwide, more than 300 brands, and operations in more than 180 countries. P&G reorganized its regional organization into four regions to better support the global marketplace: North America, Asia, Latin America, and Europe/Middle East/Africa.

➤ **Managerial Issues**

The P&G management team was faced with a number of difficult decisions in the early 1990s, including whether and how to penetrate the newly free economies of Eastern Europe. While many Communist regimes in the region were allowing foreign businesses to expand their economic activities in newly opened markets, P&G's progress would be hampered by a number of government rules.

As a result, the company decided to abandon its usual country-by-country entry strategy in favor of a regionally coordinated and sequenced strategy to occupy the largest markets in significant categories as quickly as feasible. P&G's management, on the other hand, was still scratching its heads ten years later over fresh cultural difficulties.

P&G's management was confronted with yet another culture-related management challenge in 2001.

Due to the company's foreign prosecution costs, which accounted for about 40% of the company's international prosecution expenditures, the procedure of submitting patents had become exceedingly expensive due to language variety. This was owing to the company's decision to pass over their patents to international agents and translators. It's worth noting that this occurred during a period when the corporation was having financial troubles. After only 17 months in command, the financial troubles sparked fear in the boardroom. In response to language translation and international patent concerns, the new P&G management devised a policy that required independent translators to have technical understanding and experience in the subject matter being translated, as well as to be native speakers of the target language.

Next, the company was able to reduce some translation costs while also increasing profit margins from international operations. Today, P&G's management is still encountering some challenges arising from international operations. P&G's main rival, Unilever, has, for instance, surpassed it in most overseas markets in terms of market share and products' visibility, while high operating costs have reduced the firm's profit margins in some regions.

While not all of these challenges can be blamed on culture, a good amount of them, particularly those in overseas, can be linked to management and the firm's handling of cultural differences. The high level of uncertainty in Japan also explains P&G's initial cultural issues in the country, which stemmed from the company's failure to investigate and tailor the products it released in Japan to the requirements and culture of that market.

➤ **The particular issue the company has to face in global workforce**

Other aspects that have contributed to P&G's global success include its personnel, customer behavior, and cultural variety over its 175-year history and professional experience. Despite the fact that P&G is an American firm, it saw strong international expansion from the mid-1940s until the year 2000. North America, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, Western Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, New Zealand, and Australia are all served by P&G. As a result, P&G's single most important challenge is a global workforce.

Despite P&G's experience with a global workforce and cultural diversity, understanding the differences and issues of cultural diversity, as well as the context of international business, can assist the company succeed in the global market. Furthermore, for success in the business world, a company must have learned how to improve and solve problems.

Employees must comprehend and consider the culture of each country when the organization wishes to work in a different culture. Employees should examine whether a country has a low or high context by examining the conduct of its citizens.

Understanding the culture and how it differs from one another is a crucial step toward completing intercultural competency and increasing the capacity to function in a global company.

If a corporation wishes to succeed in global business, there are a number of behavioral suggestions that should be implemented and avoided in order to improve intercultural communication performance. As a result, the following suggestions will assist the firm in improving and developing the culture diversity barrier, which is a hindrance to the firm's success in international commerce.

➤ **Obstacle of intercultural communication**

One of the main reasons can be a Stereotype. A stereotype is a skewed perception of a group of individuals based on their ethnicity, nationality, or sexual orientation. Stereotypes should be avoided since they lead to bias and ignore the diversity among groups. Language differences are when persons from a different culture or country learn up a new culture's language. When someone from a different culture or country learn a new language, they are referred to as linguists.

➤ **P&G manages a global workforce**

1. Seeking training

Understanding the culture and behavior of customers is difficult since diverse cultures, different groups, and different ages result in various client demands. Employees at P&G must learn about the benefits of a diverse culture through a programme called "Cultures at Work." This programme teaches on culture context, which includes high context cultures like Asia, which are more likely to be thoughtful and instinctual, as well as low context cultures like German and North American communicators are more likely to use linear logic.

2. Understanding the value of difference

Many businesses, such as Wal-Mart, have failed to grow into other countries due to cultural differences. P&G's major issues, like P&G's, include diversity workers and communication issues among multinational personnel. The most important aspect of the firm plan is that P&G wants to foster employee culture diversity by forming seven corporate affinity groups to learn more about each group's culture and behavior.

3. Making fewer assumptions

Procter and Gamble rejects the notion that a product that is available in one place will also be available in others. Due to earlier mistakes, such as in Mexico, P&G developed the Downy Single Rinse. This product aids in the cleaning of textiles. P&G, on the other hand, did not consider the differences in how clients in the United States and Mexico washed their clothes. The United States uses a washing machine, whereas the Mexicans wash their clothes in rivers.

The challenge of P&G's worldwide workforce can be overcome if the company seeks to comprehend and enhance cultural diversity and international communication. Furthermore, P&G is implementing strategies for improving communication between varied workplaces, which will assist the corporation in dealing with the global workplace problem improve employee's ability to work in international market.

NESTLE

The globe has seen a growth in the number of multinational corporations in recent years. It is now usual for some of the world's largest corporations to spread their product lines across multiple countries, resulting in massive growth in both size and revenue.

Nestle has subsidiaries in a number of other nations, delivering products and services to customers in a variety of nations and locations. When it comes to foreign marketing, one of the most significant considerations is cultural differences. Culture can be defined as "the sum total of taught beliefs, values, and conventions that help to drive consumer behavior in a given country's market" in terms of international marketing. Beliefs, values, and practices are frequently deeply embedded in a culture, with noticeable disparities between countries.

Henri Nestlé created Nestlé in 1866, and it is now the world's largest food and beverage corporation. Nestlé's history began in Switzerland in 1867, when pharmacist Henri Nestlé introduced his product FarineLactée Nestlé, a healthy gruel for kids. In both the firm name and the logotype, Henri employed his surname, which means 'small nest.' The nest, which represents security, family, and nourishment, is still prominent in Nestlé's branding.

Nestlé's success with product advancements and business acquisitions has propelled the company to become the world's largest food company since its founding over 130 years ago. Nestlé's portfolio has expanded through time to include chocolates, soups, coffee, cereals, frozen foods, yoghurts, mineral water, and other food items. Nestlé has been steadily expanding its product line since the 1970s, including pet foods, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetics. Nestlé today sells a wide range of products, all of which share one thing in common: the exceptional quality for which the company has become known across the world.

Nestlé is built on the decentralization principle, which means that each country is responsible for the efficient operation of its business, including personnel recruiting.

➤ Cross Cultural Communication

Several aspects may be learned from Nestle's cross-cultural communication, including the critical link between communication within a large multinational organization and the ability to understand each culture. Indeed, as businesses become more international, owing largely to globalization issues, it becomes increasingly important for enterprises to show their ability to adapt a worldwide awareness of various cultures, both internally and externally.

Therefore, if a firm has subsidiaries in other countries, such as Nestlé, the key is to recognize that each culture has its own way of working in order to achieve the best results inside the firm. Further, it is equally critical for a corporation to understand its clients in other nations from an external perspective in order to better meet their needs.

It's important to remember that a top management team's mission is to guarantee that they understand and are understood across cultural borders. Knowing this, one may then categorize certain lessons to be taken into consideration in order for a firm to provide the greatest possible communication tools in its multicultural process:

1) Giving Written Instructions

The significance of taking notes in order to share information more effectively. Furthermore, even if the company does not need its subsidiaries to follow its instructions to the letter, it is necessary to establish a guideline that is manifested through written instructions. Subsidiaries will be able to

customize these instructions to their own needs and cultural considerations based on these instructions.

2) **Making Sure People Understand**

This lesson builds on the previous one in those written instructions are used to assist people comprehend a company's concepts and spirit. It must, however, be validated. It is then critical for a corporation to obtain regular feedback and questions concerning the papers it has delivered. Furthermore, this process is recognized at Nestlé when participants from diverse markets tell what they did to make the communication effort in their territory a success.

3) **Benefiting from a Multicultural Top Management Team**

Nestlé then provides a superb representation of global understanding by placing people from various countries at the helm of its Swiss headquarters. Indeed, two Austrians, one Spaniard, one Swiss, one Mexican, two Americans, one British, and one Swedish make up its "Group Management."

4) **Be Flexible, Tolerant and Aware of Cultural Taboos**

Tolerance is an important concept in intercultural communication: it's not just about respecting each other's ideas; it's also about being tolerant of diverse practices and methods used in other countries. At the same time, cultural taboos must be understood in order to avoid communication issues between a corporation and its subsidiaries. In the case of Nestlé, the Human Resource Director in each country determines the technique and technique of disseminating the "Principles."

5) **Encouraging Interaction**

Encouragement of interactivity inside the firm is also critical. The International Training and Conference Centre was established at Nestlé with the goal of allowing employees to express themselves about the application process and to engage with one another in order to better exchange knowledge about how to accomplish things.

➤ **CROSS CULTURE DECISION MAKING – NESTLE**

The Nestle Corporation created some of the world's best instant formula. It is a global corporation with a high-quality product, exceptional marketing skills, and a strong code of ethics. Nestle has been successful in a lot of markets around the world, including Europe, North America, and Asia. In Singapore, it claims to have saved the lives of thousands of infants whose mothers were unable to feed them.

Nestle neglected to consider a new perspective in this new climate a situation in which most customers are unable to understand the directions on the formula labels, where clean water to mix the formula is scarce, and where poverty levels are so high that moms dilute the formula to the point of starvation. Furthermore, Nestle overlooked the fact that different cultures frame their experiences in various ways. Medicine men are revered as gods by a number of East African tribes.

Nestlé makes significant efforts to fulfil its ambitions of being the world's leading nutrition, health, and Wellness Company by providing consumers with higher-quality products. Nestlé also conducts periodic research on consumer needs in order to provide the best possible service. Above all, Nestlé focuses on its missions and guarantees consistency by making the best business decisions to provide the promise of Good Food, Good Life to people all over the world.

FEDEX

FedEx was chosen as the organization to accomplish the work. FedEx's corporate culture was built on providing exceptional customer service and a philosophy of "doing whatever it takes to satisfy clients" from the top down. As a result, FedEx could use the growth of the Internet to expand its client base while also gaining a competitive service edge. It allowed FedEx to not only allow its clients to pull real-time information and data into their internal systems, but it also allowed FedEx to get more involved in their internal processes. It is a contributing aspect in the conversion of FedEx to an e-trade.

FedEx is well-known for its complete fidelity and meticulous attention to detail. FedEx achieves this by becoming the various pieces that make up the company plus functioning together, rather than being a mass of bodies moving in one direction. FedEx guarantees on-time delivery and 100% customer satisfaction. The image that the company has worked so hard to develop helps it preserve and expand its market share. FedEx Logistics is a global provider of specialized, integrated logistics and warehousing solutions.

Clients wanted to deal with a single company for all of their transportation and logistics needs. The announcement was made to bring the group's

marketing, sales, customer service, information technology, and electronic commerce resources together to provide a variety of trade solutions.

FedEx has always relied on technological advancement to add value because it can reduce costs by inventing new ways to establish competitive advantages.

FedEx has demonstrated that it is concerned about the global community. Thousands of organizations around the world benefit from its resources. Their aircraft and vehicles provide massive amounts of relief to disaster areas. Employees give numerous hours of their time to make their communities better places to live, play, and work. FedEx donates money to help safeguard the safety of children and improve their education.

FedEx is dedicated to all of its workers as well as the communities where they live. In comparison to the MNC's home country, managing variances in languages, traditions, cultures, and faiths inside the host nation is a challenging and complex task. Cultural variety among human resources and customers affects not only the social environment, but also the psychology and personality of the stakeholders. Setting up an organizational culture that is in step with the host country's culture is tough for any MNC, as business culture differs significantly from the host country's social culture.

The UAE is regarded as a country with a rich cultural legacy that is heavily affected by the uniqueness of its people. Though the UAE is regarded as the world's most important economic hub, multinational corporations (MNCs) find it challenging to adapt to the country's cultural shifts. The UAE has its own set of cultural etiquette and principles, which MNCs must adapt to with patience and flexibility.

➤ **Fedex and UAE**

UAE is an Islamic country with a distinct culture in terms of greetings, worship, prayers, looks, religion, conduct, communications, workplace environment, women at work, eating and drinking habits, and so on. Thus, MNCs doing business or wanting to do business in the UAE must adhere to such cultural norms in marketing and all other operational activities in order to comply with legal duties while also instilling a sense of belonging in the market. The global leader must encounter a variety of problems in the global business environment, and by overcoming these problems, it rises to the top of the worldwide market to gain a competitive edge.

As the world's leader, the corporation has a variety of problems when trading in foreign nations, the most significant of which is cultural. FedEx also had a number of cross-cultural hurdles in order to establish itself and earn the loyalty of its clients, as FedEx is a US-based firm and the UAE is an Islamic country, therefore there is a significant cultural divide between the FedEx's home nation and the FedEx's host country.

➤ **Cultural Challenges faced by FedEx in UAE**

FedEx, as the global market leader in the express sector and even in the UAE express business, has a variety of environmental problems, including cross-cultural issues in the workplace and marketing to customers in the host country. Religion, language, working style, women in the office, behavior, attitude, and appearances are all examples of cultural obstacles. These factors play a significant influence in organizational culture as well as customer satisfaction and loyalty, as local nationals choose businesses in which they feel trust and belonging, and the most culturally connected organization can reach an increasing number of local customers.

The official religion of the United Arab Emirates, Islam, encompasses all aspects of life in the country. Disrespectful feelings toward Islam are a serious and severe violation in the country.

The most essential concept in the UAE is hierarchy, which focuses on a top-down approach with all decisions, powers, and authorities centred in one person. Males are the only ones who shake hands during meetings and when leaving; women normally avoid shaking hands and men greet women by placing their palm over their own heart.

The status of a person within the company is highly valued, and the most senior member of the group is greeted first, whether by first or last name or by titles. Within Arab culture, hospitality is regarded as a source of pride, and the prestige of the host is preserved.

The culture of the UAE encompasses a wide range of concepts and characteristics, with dress being one of the most important. Men in the Arab world used to wear the Thobe, Women wore Abaya, a long ankle-length white cotton gown that covers them from shoulders to feet. For business, foreign men dressed formal business clothes, while western ladies wore western apparel that covered their legs, arms, shoulders, and legs because it is considered courteous to leave them uncovered.

Alcohol is highly forbidden in the culture, and having an alcohol license is considered a criminal offence. Tourists, expats, and residents with a license to purchase a set amount of alcohol every month are served by bars and hotels. Public display of alcohol use is a serious offence that can result in a fine or jail depending on the severity of the offence. The UAE's working week differs from that of Christian countries in that it spans from Saturday to Wednesday, with the Muslim Sabbath falling on the weekend.

Although Arabic is the official language of the UAE, English, Hindi, and Persian are widely spoken in the country, and Urdu is the commercial

language. More over 80% of UAE nationals and expats follow the Sunni branch of Islam, while the rest follow the Shia branch. The constitution guarantees religious freedom, and Hinduism and Christianity are among the other religions prevalent in the country.

➤ **Strategies and Measures to manage such challenges**

Such cross-cultural issues as those faced by FedEx in the UAE can have an impact on the company's worldwide business in the host country, since they directly affect the work environment, organizational culture, and marketing strategy. Because FedEx is in the express industry, it must contact directly with local UAE consumers. Managing the cultural influence of direct marketing and interactions with consumers, as well as other stakeholders, is a challenge for the organization.

Some tactics and actions can be used in order to battle such obstacles and to evolve as the UAE's local and worldwide market leader in the Express sector.

Thus, every manager faces a challenging dilemma when it comes to managing employees in international organizations. Many problems develop in these businesses as a result of varied personnel management systems, organizational systems, and supervision systems. As a result, good multinational firms must construct an effective system to promote healthy development, including language training, foreign knowledge acquisition, and the construction of a corporate culture. Traditional enterprises that operate only within the limits of a single country are becoming increasingly rare. In foreign companies, multicultural teams, and international meetings, culture and cultural differences play a significant influence.

FINDINGS

- ✓ It was necessary to make adaptations when entering a new market with so many cultural differences as IKEA. In order to adapt to the Chinese local market, IKEA needs to comprehend the culture and market in order to recognise the distinctions between IKEA, corporate culture, and Chinese national culture. In order to adapt to the local markets, IKEA made changes in marketing and human resource activities in China.
- ✓ Chinese coworkers at IKEA have the Chinese method of working in mind, which reflects Chinese culture. As a result, they don't always follow the IKEA Way. As a result, IKEA's challenge was to handle cultural differences in order to collaborate effectively with Chinese coworkers and guide them in the direction of IKEA's principles. This was a protracted process since changing people's minds that have been set for a long period when they were born is difficult. As a result, IKEA conducted a rigorous recruitment process in China to identify the ideal employees who can adapt to the IKEA Way.
- ✓ Among the obstacles were the potential incompatibilities between IKEA's cultures and Chinese culture. The next stage was for IKEA to train Chinese managers who would subsequently serve as IKEA ambassadors, delivering the IKEA Way to Chinese coworkers in their own language. This was an excellent choice because Chinese managers share the same ideals as their Chinese coworkers. As a result, they were more comfortable with the Chinese manner of doing things. Furthermore, IKEA cultural training was provided in order to bridge the cultural gap between Chinese and Swedish cultures, allowing employees from two different national backgrounds to work together and boost productivity.
- ✓ When it came to entering overseas markets, Walmart had to deal with cultural differences. Geographical, regional, and taste and preference variances are all factors that Walmart considers. When Walmart, for example, acquires a company in Germany, it faces a number of hurdles. There was a significant cultural divide. Walmart hired an American manager to run a business in a culturally diverse area like Germany. The American boss couldn't deal with the Germans' differing shopping habits. Germany is already known as the discounter's home. As a result, the low-priced modal didn't work there. The acquired company's stores were fairly far away. The majority of them were in low-income neighbourhoods. Customers in Germany are quite price vigilant, therefore low pricing mode did not yield much profits in German marketplaces. Walmartrealised in Japan that bulk offers are not suited for Japanese customers. The company was harmed by overcrowding wholesalers. Bad costs were frequently linked with low quality products among the Japanese.
- ✓ Walmart has taken several lessons from its development into the German and Japanese markets. Walmart hired a Japanese manager to oversee the operation after learning from the German market expansion. The manager was able to recognise and respond to a variety of issues. He freed up floor space, got rid of butchers, boosted private-label sales, and offered everyday low prices. In the Japanese market, these methods were a huge hit. Walmart's overseas expansion strategy taught them that they couldn't adopt a single formula to fit into every business and cultural situation.
- ✓ Walmart's initiatives in Latin America have proven to be highly successful. Rather than creating something entirely new, Walmart chose to join the Latin American market via acquiring existing businesses. Walmart was able to overcome cultural gaps and develop a strong competitive position thanks to acquisitions. Brazil and Chile were chosen as expansion destinations. Walmart used an acquisition strategy in both nations. The expanding middle class with limited resources is Walmart's biggest opportunity in Latin America. This category favoured things with a cheap price tag. Walmart's biggest potential came from the emerging middle class. Unavailability of labour due to the growing middle class, bad store

location as a result of acquisition strategy, and uncompetitive prices were some of the issues facing the Latin American market.

- ✓ Following initial disappointments in the French and Japanese markets, P&G's executives adopted a less ethnocentric management approach, bringing in some local managers to address the cultural issues. In reaction to the disappointments in France and Japan, P&G executives understood that most of the cultural problems that arise in multinational firms' efforts to develop their global market may be avoided by conducting extensive study on the culture and habits of target market consumers. Indeed, P&G's cheer product sales climbed dramatically in the Japanese market after the company's executives modified their strategy, paid more heed to local culture and traditions, and promised excellent cold-water washing. P&G, for example, discovered that marketing campaigns that criticise competitors offend the Japanese, who cherish harmony and avoid open conflict. They also discovered that Japanese customers place a higher value on product performance than American customers, who place a lower emphasis on price. Japan is now one of Procter & Gamble's most important markets worldwide.
- ✓ Managers at P&G also took a collaborative approach to management. The corporation hired a team of specialists from the target markets to help it comply to local cultural preferences and stay up with shifting trends and preferences. To counteract the negative consequences of its early ethnocentric approach to internationalisation, P&G now employs a mix of expatriate managers from the United States and local managers sourced from the host country, or forms joint ventures with local enterprises.
- ✓ Procter & Gamble, for example, used joint ventures as a technique for overcoming cultural barriers in China. In joint ventures, local partners frequently assist P&G through uncertain situations and provide opportunities for it to learn from them, allowing it to overcome cultural difficulties. In 1988, P&G established its first joint venture in China to manufacture detergents and skin-care products.
- ✓ Nestle is a well-known international corporation. As a result, it's unsurprising that international strategy is at the centre of its tactical focus. Nestle is a decentralised organisation, with operational responsibility distributed among local divisions. Pricing, marketing, and distribution are all handled independently by the local entities. Nestle, for example, has abandoned its usual distribution strategy of operating from a central warehouse in Nigeria due to the country's weak road system. Instead, Nestle has built a number of tiny warehouses across the country, demonstrating the company's adaptability to varying local conditions. Nestle even hires local people to work in their regional offices since they are more able to deal with business processes and clients. As a result, the company is able to adapt to local demand more effectively and efficiently, resulting in increased market share and profitability.
- ✓ Nestle's activity in Syria is another illustration of the company's proclivity to adapt local products. Tomatoes and related ingredients are in high demand in Syria. It was employed by the corporation to increase sales. The company has generated a solid rate of return in those locations by employing local ingredients and focusing on local demand. However, this is not always the case. In Japan, Nestle had a lot of troubles. Nestle's failure to adapt its coffee brand to the changing climatic conditions resulted in major market share losses to Coca-Cola.
- ✓ FedEx, as the global market leader in the express sector and even in the UAE express business, has a variety of environmental problems, including cross-cultural issues in the workplace and marketing to customers in the host country. Religion, language, working styles, women in the workplace, behaviour, attitude, and appearances are all examples of cross-cultural problems. These factors have a significant influence in organisational culture as well as customer satisfaction and loyalty, as local nationals choose businesses in which they feel a sense of belonging and trust, and the most culturally connected organisation is able to reach an increasing number of local customers. FedEx must attract UAE nationals and employ local Emiratis within the host country in order to comply with the UAE's Emiritization strategy and lower operational costs.
- ✓ FedEx has therefore demonstrated that it is concerned about the global community. Thousands of organisations around the world benefit from its resources. Their aircraft and vehicles provide massive amounts of relief to disaster areas. Employees give numerous hours of their time to make their communities better places to live, play, and work. FedEx donates money to help safeguard the safety of children and improve their education. FedEx is dedicated to all of its workers as well as the communities where they live. They show this through providing financial and voluntary assistance to organisations that promote educational, artistic, cultural, civic, and humanitarian well-being. As a result, they have a strong grasp on cross-cultural distinctions.

SUGGESTIONS

- It's always a good idea to do some preliminary research on different nations' cultures. Cross cultural disparities should be detected and preemptive hand-holding exercises should be carried out for key corporate, financial, and legal choices that pose significant risks.
- First and foremost, cross-cultural differences must be accepted, and only then can they be addressed.
- Don't make snap judgments about the scale and significance of cross-cultural differences at first; sticking to your vision and ethical business practises always helps.

- When cultural diversity is viewed in the proper light, it creates synergy in efforts and leverages a shared vision. The first step is to identify and investigate opportunities, as well as to eliminate hazards.
- Instilling intercultural competency as a means of overcoming gaps converts problems into possibilities.
- Open and constant communication is essential for gaining advance notice of potential events and limiting the negative effects of differences.
- Negotiations play an essential role as well, referring to the process of bargaining to arrive at a solution that is agreeable to all parties.
- Finally, good HR procedures and sufficient training are critical in achieving the best results from cross-cultural variations. Training could take place on three levels: first, to familiarise expatriates with local culture, second, to familiarise local personnel with foreign culture, and third, joint sessions to synergize cross-cultural activities.
- In addition, careful execution of change management can make a big difference.

CONCLUSION

The dynamic system of shared values, beliefs, philosophies, experiences, habits, expectations, standards, and behaviours that differentiates a firm is known as organisational culture. The culture of the organisation acts as a foundation for its operations, as well as an unwritten code of conduct and a shared sense of identity. It is widely known that no one is perfect, hence there can be no perfect organisation, community, or culture. An organisation, on the other hand, may create a product that will provide it a competitive advantage, refine it, sell it creatively, and launch it. Cultural differences outnumber commonalities in international firms since employees come from a variety of geographic, religious, linguistic, political, and economic backgrounds. As a result, negative ramifications might cause employees to become estranged from one another in a firm when cultural differences are ignored. In an organisation where such disparities are viewed as significant and successfully managed, employees become closer to one another and more committed to their employment.

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