

# Cultural Diversity at Sea

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## **Abstract**

Cultural diversity is a very important subject due to the multicultural factor of the modern society; in the business and daily commoners' life there is cultural diversity. humans of different continents, backgrounds, culture, and beliefs come toe-to-toe with other individuals of similar differences. Sometimes the result of poor or not at all knowledge of this subject can lead to unwanted conflicts which can lead to severe and unlikable results for a business.

To achieve better management of the human factor all personnel in a leadership position must be aware of the basic principles of management, establishing communication, respect and good ethics in the working place for the best effectiveness and to avoid any misunderstanding.

This thesis aims to highlight the importance of the cultural diversity provide and describe some of the most effective methods organizations use to manage diversity, always remember that a vassal is a small organization with an environment most dominant by cultural diversity.

The sources in which this thesis is based on was personal selected by me with the main factor of selection realism, due to the vast variety of information available to the public in this particular context some individuals tend to provide theories or methods which are unlikely or impossible to be implemented in the real world.

# CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent days, we live in a world with diverse cultural elements. For example, in our work, daily life and educational system cultural diversity exists. There is also some degree of cultural diversity management to defend ourselves against discriminations.

Cultural diversity is not a new phenomenon but now and in the future, we can and will see an increase in multicultural elements in our modern communities due to globalization. Cross-cultural communication events have provided many benefits to humanity in medicine. For example, British Indian colonies acquired Medicinal tonic water in India originally contained only carbonated water and a large amount of quinine which saved countless lives against malaria. There are benefits in other aspects: philosophy, technology, and science. Diversity is not something you should defend against it. It is the exact opposite; we have to adapt to it and we will greatly improve ourselves from it.

At sea, a seafarer in all ranks, like it or not. S/he will have to cooperate with other people of different cultural background, religion, gender, acts. Especially in this line of work, the multicultural element is most present.

According to Julien S. Bourrelle in his public speaking he made to TEDx Trondheim, there are three components of an individual relationship with a diverse or foreign culture. The first component is that the individual confronts the culture. This means that he or she believes that his or her ways are right with the result of not opening up to new ideas and believes, thinking that only his or her way of thinking is right. The second component is that the individual isolates himself or herself from the foregoing culture to protect him or herself. And the third component, which in his opinion is the best, is that the individual conforms to the new cultural environment by observing, understanding, adapting to the new culture. What we perceive as a reality is the light that passes through our cultural lens; those cultural lenses shape our reality. Different lenses see different realities, problems, opportunities, to create different ideas and projects which can be very useful in a problem-facing scenario, innovation, and productivity.

In this light, it is deemed necessary to present some useful definitions which can contribute to a better understanding of cultural diversity. These definitions run through this diploma thesis.

## **1.1. Useful definitions**

### **Cross-cultural communication:**

It is a field of study that looks at how people from differing cultural backgrounds communicate in similar or different ways among themselves and how they endeavor to communicate across cultures.

### **Cultural decay:**

It is when the young generations slowly cast aside their culture because it holds no meaning and value to them in favor of new trends. For example, a small tribe immigrates to a city and slowly adapts to the new cultural environment.

### **Cultural awareness:**

It is the ability to understand the difference between one's own culture and other people's cultures from different cultural backgrounds, beliefs, especially in attribute and value.

### **Culture:**

It is the characteristics of a particular group of people which was created and developed in the passage of time inherited by their ancestors which consists of customs, social habits, way of thinking, cuisine, religion, music, and art.

### **Cultural right:**

It is a movement to protect the rights of people and their culture.

### **Cultural safety:**

It is a safe environment where the cultural identity of an individual will not encounter any assault, denial from the social norms.

### **Social norms:**

It is the acceptable unwritten rules in a group of people or society. Norms can change accordingly to society, culture, and situation.

## **Human resources management**

It is the strategic approach to the effective management of people in a company or organization such that they help their business gain a competitive advantage.

### **Cultural diversity management:**

It refers to organizational actions that aim to promote greater inclusion of employees from different backgrounds into an organization's structure. Depending on a company's goals and the industry in which it operates in, corporate structure can differ significantly between companies.

### **Cultural diversity definition**

The most prominent definitions of cultural diversity are:

1. cultural diversity: Cultural diversity can refer to the variety of different cultures present in a particular region
2. cultural diversity: Cultural diversity also means the respect between different cultural differences.
3. cultural diversity: Cultural diversity is the quality of diverse or different cultures, as opposed to monoculture, as in the global monoculture, or a homogenization of cultures, akin to cultural decay.



## **CHAPTER 2: CULTURAL DIVERSITY DIMENSIONS AND CATEGORIES**

### **2.1. cultural diversity dimensions**

The question arises as to why humans' societies have so many differences. If we consider it for a moment, we can come across many answers in these questions. Some of us may claim that it is because of the different environments where those races grow up, to climate geodetic positions challenges that those early human societies had to face to survive. That is why some nations seem more culturally advanced than other nations. But even if we accept this answer like the sole truth the second question comes in mind: why people of the same race are so different? the concept of cultural diversity is so unique that we cannot give a solid answer. There are so many parts in this peculiar puzzle that we cannot approach this theory with a closed mind guided from what we believe is the truth. Diversity is like a spider web: everything is connected like a net of different concepts. No matter where you start from, you will meet other answers in those why's.

It is deemed necessary to address the previous questions: why do individuals of the same race are so different? Because those people grow up differently, have different parents with different roles to play, and came across with different ways of how to lead the same living style. Beliefs create reality (Melody Beattie), beliefs and ideas forged in our background, culture, and ambition that we have shaped our view of the world that we live in and the identity that distinguishes us from other people of the same race or different.

The most common cultural dimensions of diversity that managers encounter in diverse workforce are:

- 1. Ageism**
- 2. Gender**
- 3. Religion**
- 4. Sexual orientation**
- 5. Race**
- 6. Ethnicity**
- 7. Class**
- 8. Disability**
- 9. Nationality**

## **1) AGEISM**

The most affected in this stereotype are people aged 65 and more. In certain situations, they may be viewed as less worthy members in the organization instead of experienced and knowledgeable individuals who can assist and educate the other members, who can also provide solutions to problems with their huge some of the experience in their life. It is very difficult for people of older age to retain their jobs due to their fragility to illness and weak physical capabilities; as a result, they are subjected to abuses and neglect.

On the other hand, it can be reversed depending on the situation; for example, a younger member of an organization may be qualified to take a leadership position, but people older than him may see him as inexperienced, not qualified enough due to the impulsive and reckless behavior young individuals may have.

## **2) GENDER**

Genderism is discrimination based on the stereotype of gender; the most affected in this situation our women. In some part of the world, women are viewed as less worthy members of society. In certain countries women have been viewed as objects lacking basic human rights, not having access to education, economical right, health or election and vote rights.

The social construction of patriarchal societies gave to male's superior advantages in political systems, education and economical rights. In business organization and some countries statistics have shown that males are paid more than women whose rate of advancement in their carrier are slower than males.

On the other hand, based on the article published by The Guardian, more than 40% of domestic violence victims are male. The study was conducted by the men's rights campaign group parity.

About two in five, victims of domestic violence are men, contradicting the widespread impression that it is almost always women who are left battered and bruised. A new report claims assaulted males are often ignored by the police viewed as second category; victims and their attacker are going free. Men assaulted by their partners have fewer options as refuges to flee to than women.

The statistics on outbreaks of domestic violence indicate that the number of wives and girlfriends' harsh abuse and attack directed towards their male partner is far greater than expected. According to the report, Domestic Violence: The Male Perspective: "Domestic violence is often seen as a female victim/male perpetrator problem, but the evidence demonstrates that this is a false picture."

## **Violence against women and men can fit into several broad categories:**

1. discriminatory abuse
2. financial abuse
3. neglect
4. physical abuse
5. psychological and emotional abuse
6. sexual abuse
7. verbal abuse

### **3) RELIGION**

Religion is a very sensitive subject; some of them contradict others and also most of them describe themselves as the sole truth through a dogmatic approach. Many conflicts have appeared because of religion - wage war to other religions due to their differences in faith.

Religion has a significant impact on the hearts of Man, not only spirituality, in the way we think and treat others but also in physical appearance, in lifestyle, diet. Also, some religions have very restricted codes in the act of who you choose as your life companion.

A religion can impact society and its culture with great disbelief, that with very great difficulty we can separate them from each other.

The relationship between culture and religion is a so tight bond that we cannot imagine that certain cultures would have ever existed without their system of belief and faith. Some countries are so focused in their religion and system of faith that their laws are based on sacred textbooks of religion laws. Discrimination on the faith you choose to believe in may result in your personal life, friend and family disapproving your faith. Also, co-workers may assault you and attack your faith and beliefs.

### **4) SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

Sexual orientation is often confused with sexual choice. Although both refer to ways of sexual attraction, the choice is choice, but the orientation is an unexpected trend of heterosexuality, homosexuality or bisexuality. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning people, bisexual and asexual (LGBTQIA) is different from our social male and female binary system. Because this model predominates in the female/male duality system, there is a strong social prejudice for people outside the system. To protect themselves from harassment and hate-related violence, LGBTQIA people often hide their sexual orientation, resulting in dual lifestyles and psychological trauma. Besides, some LGBTQIA young people commit suicide due to the pressure to maintain dual identities during the critical period of identity formation, or due to severe and short-term bullying by people who dislike their sexual orientation.

## 5) **RACE**

Race is a convenient way to group and identify people based on geographic origin and physical attributes such as skin tone, hair texture, and facial shape. The race is a purely social construct without any biological significance. Racism has become a worldwide phenomenon, and the ability to obtain social benefits depends on a person's position in the ethnic hierarchy of social construction. Education, health care, employment, criminal justice, and political inequality are based on this racial hierarchy, which results in the lowest levels of the hierarchy is the world's poorest, most ill and least educated.

## 6) **ETHNICITY**

Ethnicity is a group identity based on cultural traditions and heritage or religious beliefs. In many cases, physical or cultural characteristics such as custom or dress code, dialects, and religious practices divide a group of people into different ethnic groups. Racial differences can transcend national borders and are often considered minorities in larger countries. Indigenous tribal peoples living in different countries are examples of ethnic groups

## 7) **CLASS**

Social class is a hierarchical system based on economic status. In advanced countries, there are three general categories: lower, middle and upper class. Although social mobility can be achieved through access to employment, education, and fair opportunities, the process of climbing up the ladder of social class can be very difficult.

A person's class or socioeconomic status is a determining factor in their homelessness, hunger, lack of education, unemployment, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual exploitation and crime.

## 8) **DISABILITY**

According to the 1990 U.S. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), disability is defined as "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity." Disabilities can occur from birth or occur throughout a person's life. In the broadest sense, a disability includes obstacles (physical or structural problems), activity restrictions (personal difficulties encountered in performing tasks or actions), and participation restrictions (personal problems encountered in the living environment). Because a person may encounter a combination of these conditions, life with a disability is a complex phenomenon that reflects the interaction between a person's physical characteristics and the social characteristics he or she lives with. The Americans with Disabilities Act not only prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities, but also ensures that persons with disabilities are accessible and inclusive in all public places and work environments,

and provides a way for citizens to participate in society. There other similar acts in other parts of the world like the disability discrimination act (DDA) now only applies to Northern Ireland. The DDA was replaced with the Equality Act 2010 in England, Scotland and Wales. In Greece we have similar laws for example the law 4488/2017 people with disabilities.

## **9) NATIONALITY**

National identity is determined by an individual's citizenship or their country of origin, regardless of where they currently reside. Nationality is determined by the person's nationality or country of origin, regardless of where they are today. Nationality is a membership that can include people of different races, religions, and cultures. Nationality is one of the most powerful forms of group identity and can reflect pride, patriotism, and passion in your own national history and values. Worldwide, discrimination on the grounds of nationality ranges from unfair treatment to physical abuse, imprisonment, and even murder.

## **2.2 Categories of cultural diversity dimensions**

There are three categories in relevant literature: primary, secondary, and tertiary.

### **Primary dimensions**

Primary dimensions of diversity are the most visible among the three categories. The dimensions belonging in these categories are the prime sources of influence in our personality. These are the following:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Disability

### **Secondary dimensions**

Secondary dimensions of diversity are less visible; those elements are less obvious but the impact that they have in the Development of the personality is evident.

The dimensions belonging in this category are:

- Religion
- Culture
- Sexual orientation
- Thinking style
- Geographic origin
- Family status
- Lifestyle
- Economic status
- Political orientation
- Work experience
- Education
- Language
- Nationality

### **Tertiary dimensions**

The tertiary category is the main source of individuality and provides as with a clearer view of the core creation of diversity. The main essence of oneself, identity; in simple words, we can say that the components belonging in this category are the main parts comprising someone's personality.

- Beliefs
- Assumptions
- Perceptions
- Attitudes
- Feelings
- Values
- Group norms

[Source:] The information provided herein is based on R. Rijamampinina, T. Carmichael, A Pragmatic and Holistic Approach to Managing Diversity. Problems and Perspectives in Management, 1/2005, p. 109.

### **2.3. Hofstede's Theory of Cultural Dimensions**

Professor Geert Hofstede's theory came to life after conducting a series of research on a large number of IBM employees working in various countries (at the period of 1967-1973). He defines culture as “the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others”. Hofstede's theory initially included only 4 dimensions, but over time it evolved into a 6-dimensional model. Understanding these 6 dimensions can help us draw useful conclusions about specific trends, behaviors, and choices of the discrete human group we are interested in. Those dimensions are based on research done by Professor Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede, Michael Minkov and their research teams.

#### **POWER DISTANCE INDEX (PDI)**

The power distance index expresses the degree of the acceptance of a hierarchy of power and wealth between members of society. In countries with a high-power index (such as Latin America), hierarchy relationships are considered normal. People accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has a place and which needs no further justification. In societies with a low power index (e.g. Sweden, Israel), people endeavor to balance the distribution of power.

### **INDIVIDUALISM VERSUS COLLECTIVISM (IDV)**

This index determines the degree to which a society prefers to be organized into groups (Collectivism) or not (Individualism). Individualism can be best described as a state where the relationship between the group "we" and the individual "I" are distant, which means individuals are required to take care of themselves and their families. Collectivism is a state where society prefers a tightly-knit between the individual and the group which he belongs to, the society will look after them and their families, on exchange for unquestioning devotion.

### **MASCULINITY VERSUS FEMININITY (MAS)**

The "masculinity" dimension represents favoritism in society for an aggressive and more dominant approach and strives for accomplishment and material rewards for success. Femininity stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty.

### **UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE INDEX (UAI)**

The Uncertainty Avoidance dimension expresses the degree of tolerance to which the members of a society deal with the fact that the future can never be known. People with a high degree of uncertainty tend to be more emotional and need structures, laws, and rules, even if they are plausible. This is because "changes" create stress in those social groups while avoiding uncertainty offers them a sense or illusion of security.

### **THE LONG TERM ORIENTTION (LTO)**

This dimension defines the degree to which a community is oriented to the future or the present. A big score in the Long-Term Orientation means a society takes a more pragmatic path: encourage investing in modern education and hard work as a way to prepare for the future.

Societies with low scores tend to fancy maintaining long-lasting customs and norms while viewing societal change with doubt.

### **INDULGENCE VERSUS RESTRAINT (IVR)**

Indulgence stands for a society that allows its members to be fully content with their desires. Restraint stands for a society that encourages its members to control their desires.



## CHAPTER 3: VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

### Verbal and nonverbal communication

What we call communication is the process of sharing information which falls to those two categories, the verbal and nonverbal, that individuals may use to convey the information to other individuals.

Communication is a very important aspect of our daily life; poor communication between workers can lead to misunderstanding and frustration. In some cultures, the use of certain hand gestures can be deemed not appropriate and can cause conflicts between employees.

Any organization around the world has to communicate an aspect to consider the internal and external communication.

Internal communication is the method of communication between the personnel of the organization.

External communication is the method the organization uses to communicate with its external environments such as customers, competitors, etc.

Communication inside an organization plays a major factor in the success of the organization. Many accidents at sea, not only collusion between vessels have happened due to poor communication. that's why many organizations provide guidelines and training in the importance of communication and how to communicate effectively. Communication is not only important in order to avoid accident; good communication can greatly contribute in the relationship between the organization and the workforce. in simple words, the organization can make clear what its expectation from its employees are, as sun Tzu has said. If the orders are not properly understood, then is the commander's fault; if the orders are simple and understandable then is the soldier's fault. Communication is organized into verbal and nonverbal communication, as discussed below.

### **3.1 Verbal communication**

What is verbal communication? It is the use of sound and spoken language to express yourself or convey information.

Verbal communication contains sounds, speaking language, words and speech.

#### **Verbal communication categories**

Verbal communication is organized into four categories

##### **1. Intrapersonal communication:**

This communication method is completely private and only between oneself with the use of thoughts or verbal communication.

##### **2. Interpersonal communication:**

It is the method of communication between two individuals which will swap roles of transmitter and receiver accordingly.

##### **3. Small group communication:**

This method of communication is used between three or more people involved. Each person should wait for its turn to transmit the message he or she wants to transmit.

(meetings, press conferences)

##### **4. public communication:**

This type of communication is used when an individual transmits information in a large number of people.

(public speech, election campaign)

## 3.2 Nonverbal communication

Nonverbal communication is communication without the use of verbal methods.

The methods of nonverbal communication are:

1. facial expression
2. body movement, for example, hand gestures.
3. posture, that is, how people stand or sit down can indicate many things about their personality or how they feel.
4. eye contact
5. paralanguage, that is, the use of the different tone of voice, sarcasm common examples.
6. proxemics

Personal space people who are in relationship or family or more closed in the distance between 6 to 18 inches' (15cm -45cm) intimate space.

7. physiological change

For example, when someone is anxious, he or she may sweat. or when someone is sad, he or she may cry.

## **CHAPTER 4: CULTURAL DIVERSITY BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES IN THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

### **4.1. Company structural factors before archiving diversity**

When the working force of a company is established by people from different backgrounds, religions, beliefs, ethnicities, gender, sexual orientation, and race, etc. this is called a diverse workforce.

Diversity in a working environment is like a double edge sword: it has its advantages and also its disadvantages. A diverse workforce can be a very useful asset to a company. On the other hand, not all companies will be able to fully utilize and use a diverse workforce in its full potential. When a company aims to reinforce her ranks with a diverse approach in the pursuit of increasing her cash flow, growth and productivity, there will be some factors to take into consideration before moving in the creation of a diverse working force.

Those factors are:

- company type.
- company location.
- organizational culture.

#### **Company type**

Before a company makes her decision on employing diverse employees, the company must be proper for this decision and 100% sure that this particular type of company with diverse employees will achieve far greater achievement and accomplish the organizational goals that the company has set.

The company type is a major factor that must be considered wisely before executing a diverse employment plan for any type of company. Every company is different, other companies are larger in scale and others small, but all of them are created to function in a particular environment with specific tasks and activities to accomplish. Large in scale companies use to employ more workers than companies in a smaller scale or private ones. The same applies to other categories of types such as limited liability companies, unlimited companies, government companies.

## **Organizational culture**

Organizational culture is a set of values that are shared in the organization, which reflects on the company's activities. There are five components to an organizational culture that involves its practices, vision, value, people, place, and history. Each organizational culture is unique and different from any other companies; any decision made by a company about workplace diversity is based on the company's beliefs and norms, and must, therefore, reflect on that company.

## **Company location**

Company location contributes to the decisions of a company to or not to employ a diverse workforce. Companies that have their manufacturing plants situated in most parts of the world do not seem to have much choice but to employ workers from diverse cultures, since workers are needed in each office they operate. However, some companies can decide whether or not to employ a diverse workforce, especially when they are situated only in their country of origin.

## **4.2. Cultural diversity benefits**

In the previous section, we discussed the main factors that a company or an organization must consider before employing a diverse workforce on their ranks. Now suppose we have the suitable ground, we have laid the seeds and we have considered all those factors, and we have accomplished our vision of creating a diverse workforce. One may wonder what is so great about it, why we have to build and maintain a diverse workforce, what are those so-called benefits that an organization or business will enjoy.

Around the world, there so many companies and successful businesses; we see so many global companies spreading their product expertise all around the world and of course, shipping industries are not an exception on this rule. Cultural diversity makes companies more competitive, productive and adaptable to the environment they work to and the economic or political changes.

The most common benefits are:

### **1.Enhances the creativity and the innovation of the workforce:**

A diverse workforce is a useful tool to a company or an organization. First of all, workers of different origin, culture mindset and experience can provide a variety of ideas and innovative project to the company; this can lead to increase of productivity and a new way for companies to increase their income or open doors to new ways in the market that had never existed before.

## **2.Rapid response and adaptability to change:**

A company or an organization may encounter a situation that has never experienced before. In the market and business environment there is a constant unpredictability. No matter how flawless a business plan may seem, there are always variables that can be incomprehensible even to the best business advisor and leaders. The variety of knowledge, diverse cultural influence and the experience of a diverse workforce can increase the chances for a counter-attack to unpredicted changes.

## **3.Improves job satisfaction and commitment;**

Studies have shown that individuals who work in a diverse workforce consisting of different cultural influences can be more easily adapted and accepted, no matter their diverse backgrounds, diversity leads to an increase in the commitment and job satisfaction of the individual.

## **4.Enhances problem solving:**

The ability to solve problems for a business can be vital in difficult times; diversity can provide new ideas for problem-solving scenarios. Quick answers to those obstacles can increase the company's survivability in the deep-water of the global market.

## **5.Improves customer service and business growth:**

The global increase of diversity means that there is an increase in the need of a diverse workforce due to the large population of diverse customer base; this is on a global scale in any industry. With a diverse workforce, you can better target the diverse customer base, increase communication and improve the relationship. The customers or company collaborators will be more relaxed on the warm approach that the company has.

## **6.Improves teamwork:**

If a common ground is established in the workforce, good ethics and excellent communication, diverse workforce can be very efficient due to the acceptance and respect the workers receive from their working environment.

## **7.Variety of ideas:**

Diversity in the background of the individuals, the influence of the different cultural elements, different beliefs and mindset, experiences and knowledge of those workers, can provide the company with a pool of variety of ideas.

#### **8. Improves employees' growth and learning:**

Employees will be greatly benefited, in their exposure to the different cultural elements in their personal and working growth. First of all, they will create cultural awareness, and enhance their ability to communicate with individuals of different backgrounds. Lastly, they will be able to learn to respect other people differences.

#### **9. Effective external communication:**

A successful diverse workforce has developed certain key traits that the homogenized workforce does not seem to have. One of them is the effectiveness of external communication between the company and external or foreign factions, for example, foreign countries administrators and companies.

#### **10. Attract suitable and excellent talents:**

It gives the company the advantage of choosing the best talents of the available pool of work recruitment, and does not limit the company's human capital to a homogenate recruitment which is much harder to acquire talented individuals.

#### **11. Company becomes more competitive:**

The company acquires a more globalized approach by building bridges of communication to a diverse customer base; the increase of innovation, creativity, and productivity of the workforce puts the company in a more competitive state.

#### **12. Improves decision making:**

With a diverse workforce, companies can enhance their decision-making ability due to the pool of variety and different cultural influence ideas which companies become exposed to. Companies can then choose which one of those ideas are better, or to unify them in some degree to create a better strategic plan.

#### **13. Enhances companies' adaptability to the global business environment:**

The diverse workforce gives the company the ability to know the different cultural elements, social norms and prominent factors that exist in other foreign countries or diverse customer base. It gives the company an advantage of enhanced communication due to the full utilization of the company's employees where they are best suitable. The company becomes more adaptable to any environment or obstacle that the company may encounter; this enhances the company's decision making and problem-solving ability.

### **Benefits of cultural diversity inside a vessel.**

First of all, due to the nature of this kind of job at sea many problems can rise in an instant with a diverse cultural workforce due to the difference of perspective and experience we can observe a reach amount of solutions provide to counter attack the issue cultural diversity can be very useful at vessels especially at ports due to the vast amount of jobs demands at this specific industries we can see a Greek captain as a pilot in a European port or in other parts of the world for example if the vessels captain is also Greek origins the pilot may be more respective or productive and communication will be more effective. In a cultural diverse environment, the crew members will be able to acquire new seamanship's skills from the diverse pool of knowledge provided by their co-workers

### **4.3. Cultural diversity challenges**

Diversity, as mentioned before, is a double edge sword; many adversities can arise due to the increase of the complexity in an organizational structure level that may have a negative impact on the reputation of the companies, the productivity of the workforce teamwork and communication. Those issues can negatively influence the effectiveness of the company and can be very costly.

The most obvious issues that may arise in a diverse working environment are:

#### **1. Internal communication issue and misunderstandings:**

Employees of different cultures or foreign origins may find it difficult to communicate with each other; this problem may lead to the increase of misunderstanding or major problems that can be very severe and costly for a company, especially when two or more languages are involved.

#### **2.Restricting innovation, productivity, and individualism in favor of acceptance:**

Employees may find it difficult to express themselves and their idea or raise any disagreement on a project in favor of being more accepted. This situation will negatively influence workers' morale and satisfaction, and reduce individual innovation and productivity.

#### **3.Discrimination:**

Cultural classes and discrimination based on stereotypes can very easily arise in a diverse workforce, leading to lawsuits and breaking up work balance and communication which can be very expensive for the company. Also, it may decrease employees' work satisfaction and lead some employees to leave the company.



#### **4.Great cost of employee's needs:**

A variety in the cultural composition in a workforce can be quite expensive when we try to satisfy all our employee's needs on accommodation level or even hire extra employees. For example, Muslims may choose not to work on Friday because it is a day of pray, which can leave companies behind schedule and require to hire extra staff to finish the work.

#### **5. Negative impact on the company's reputation:**

Lawsuits despite cultural classes, employee's dissatisfaction, can destroy the companies name and reputation which can minimize the company's ability to acquire new requests or can lead to company to lose customers.

#### **6. Corporation issues:**

Some employees may feel threatened, scared or unwilling to corporate with individuals of diverse culture, which can diminish the overall degree of productivity and teamwork in the company's workforce. The corporation issue can be detrimental to the degree of how much company employees are well informed about the current situation of the company or company policies and procedures or work material.

#### **7.Glass ceiling**

An invisible barrier that stops group minorities from reaching the top management position.

### **Challenges of cultural diversity inside a vessel.**

Inside a vessel it is a very common to a counter cultural classes and racial behaviour between different groups. For example, in a Greek flag vessel we can observe racial and cultural classes between Greek and Pilipino groups. Another important issue that should be addressed is the hesitation that seaman's feels when he tries to express an idea or a subjection to his superiors with fear of offending them. Communication problems is a very common issue not only inside but also with external communication due to the poor knowledge of the English language. Women due to the glass ceiling phenomenon have a slower advancement in their career, all those issues can do major damage to the shipping company reputation.

# CHAPTER 5: DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

## 5.1. Diversity management in big companies and small or medium companies

Diversity management may vary between companies based on their needs and what those types of organizations want to achieve and the amount of time and money they are willing to use in this particular concept.

### Here are some interesting facts about big industrial companies:

1. The company operates in many countries.
2. The company employs employees in every country they operate.
3. The company needs more employees for employment.
4. The company workforce covers all diversity dimensions.
5. The company faces many adversities constantly due to their diverse workforce.
6. The company uses mentoring systems and training to educate their employees.
7. The company promotes equality and provides fair opportunities in their working environment.
8. The company employs disabled people.
9. The company provides special equipment and installation to accommodate disabled people needs.
10. The company has diverse educational material which is provided to their employees.
11. The company invests money and time to manage diversity more effectively.
12. The company has a more aggressive and competitive approach due to its size.
13. The company faces many challenges due to their large scale.
14. The company wants to be more flexible and adaptable to the market changes.

### Here are some interesting facts about small or medium companies:

1. The company operates in one or three maximum countries.
2. The company avoids employing disabled people.
3. Their employees are confined in only those countries the company operates in.
4. The company has specific criteria in recruitment considering physical capabilities, geodetical location, and gender.
5. The company faces fewer challenges due to their small size.
6. The company employs employees suitable to execute their job based on company criteria.
7. The company supervisors guide employees.
8. The company uses diversity management meetings to educate their employees.

9. The company invests a minimum or not at all money or time in diversity management.
10. The company managers guide employees to help them perform their tasks.
11. The company manages diversity challenges only when diversity problem arises.

## **5.2. Human resources management**

Human resources management aims to effectively manage the human factor inside an organization to increase organization performance. As a result, organization, are more competitive, profitable and flexible to change. Human resources management is based on the realization of the importance of people inside the organization; if organization employees are happy, satisfied with their jobs and healthy the organization is more likely to survive.

**To be more precise, human resources management aims to:**

1. recruit the most suitable continents based on organization needs
2. make organization more competitive and profitable
3. avoid discrimination
4. comply with legal requirements (employment equity act, affirmative action act, etc.)
5. enhance workforce performance
6. enhance the level of commitment
7. create a fair treatment environment in the organization workplace
8. make the organization more flexible to change.
9. enhance organization survivability
10. assist in accomplishing organizational goals
11. enhance workforce productivity and innovation
12. enhance teamwork and communication
13. manage effectively organization human capital
14. create a safe cultural environment

The categories of human resources management are as follows:

- 1.soft management:** it focuses on communication, motivation and leadership to enhance workforce performance.
- 2.hard management:** it focuses on the management of human capital and compliance with legal requirements.

## **The components of Human resources management are as follows:**

### **1. Recruitment and selection:**

It aims to set criteria for the mental and physical demands of the jobs that the organization provides a track, and select the most suitable employees and give them the most suitable quotation based on their potential, plan the employment position and set the numbers of how many employees the organization requires.

### **2. Enhancing the growth of human capital:**

It aims to educate, increase productivity and innovation and give opportunities to employees to grow.

### **3. Evaluation of human capital:**

It aims to evaluate the capabilities of the organization workforce, identify weak spots and motivate employees to reach their maximum potential.

The captain of the vessel uses human resources management to increase productivity by employing evaluation methods to identify the weak spots, when the main issue has been recorded, the captain educates and provides guidelines to assist his fellow seaman's.

## **5.3. Why diversity management is so important**

All people, no matter of race or nationality, should have the opportunity to work, to be educated and live a decent life. In the end, we are all the same; we are all human beings. Cultural diversity is a prominent factor in our society. Due to globalization this phenomenon is always increasing and nowadays it is so obvious that it is a part of our own reality, in our work or personal life. Governments all around the world have created laws, policies and guidelines to ensure the right to all their people on employment, health treatment and education, and to avoid harassment, discrimination; to overturn past trends of discrimination and correct those mistakes.

Those laws in some cases can be so saver, expensive to a company and can damage the company's reputation or lead it out of business. Those laws can be pretty expensive and some countries take the act of discrimination very seriously, so even for the employees this can be a very serious problem which can lead to jail or very high fines. Companies, government agencies and institutions have a diverse workforce or reserve some job positions to specific group members; especially at the shipping industries the diversity in the working place is so common that sometimes we do not even consider it. Also, companies use diverse workforce to establish a better connection to foreign countries or attract more customers belonging in diverse customer base.

Management systems, laws and guidelines in the passage of time have been created by governments which are different from one country to another. Some companies may have their own management systems but all want to achieve the same purpose. Later on we will discuss the most prominent management systems of diversity which are:

1. affirmative action
2. employment equity
3. diversity management

Those diverse management programs aim to:

1. establish communication and avoid misunderstandings in a diverse workforce
2. utilize the full potential of the workforce
3. enhance creativity, innovation, and teamwork
4. avoid harassment and discrimination
5. create a safe cultural environment
6. protect the company name and reputation
7. ensure that all employees are treated fairly during their employment

# CHAPTER 6: MOST PROMINENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS OF DIVERSITY

## 6.1. Affirmative action

The first degree of diversity management policies, guidelines and laws came into life with the implementation of the affirmative action program. This program was not very effective and had severely damaged the businesses and corporation at that time not only because it forced companies to hire employees with a protective status with no regard to their performance but also because it was the first diversity management at that time which was not able to completely face the challenges that arise.

Affirmative action is an old practice used in companies, government agencies, and institutions. The first affirmative law included a provision that forced companies with government contracts (government contractors) to ensure that their employees are treated fairly without discrimination based on their color, race or national origin by taking affirmative action during their employment.

The first affirmative action law was signed by John F. Kennedy on 6 March 1961.

After 4 years the affirmative action law received a significant improvement which stated that government employees are required to implement affirmative actions on recruiting without taking into consideration the religious nation of original color or race. Later in 1965, gender was added.

Affirmative action is a policy guideline, a set of rules, which aims to counter past events and trends of discrimination to certain groups or minorities which have been historical victims of discrimination.

Affirmative action aims to improve and balance the relationship, bring equality, correct past mistakes, counter discrimination between advantaged and disadvantaged groups (black people, women, other minorities) in society by giving access and increasing opportunities to education, employment, and payment.

Different regions and countries may have different affirmative action laws and policies.

Some countries have created and use a quota system which states that a certain amount of government and school jobs, political positions are reserved for a specific group. In other parts of the world, some minorities or disadvantaged groups are given special treatment in the recruitment selection process.

To give an example, in the UK it is illegal to hire someone only because he belongs to a protected group without taking into consideration his capabilities, knowledge skills and experience.

Affirmative action can be considered the first diversity management measure.

Many people are skeptical about the effectiveness for the affirmative action which can be very expensive for the organization. The key point of criticism against affirmative action is:

- 1) Affirmative action aims to support specific minority groups without any progress in changing their target list.
- 2) There is a probability of employing an underqualified applicant only because they have a protective group status.
- 3) There is high cost for the effective utilization of the program, to satisfy the diverse employee's needs.

## **6.2. Employment equity**

### **6.2.1. Creating the term employment equity**

The imperfection of aforementioned system and the great impact it had on the world forced some countries to create their systems, programs, and guidelines which resulted in the creation of the employment equity act.

The term “employment equity” was created by Canadian Judge Rosalie Adella. She was greatly inspired by the American affirmative action term but due to the criticism of the effectiveness of the American approach at that time, she chose not to use it and create a term more suitable to the Canadian needs.

The employment equity term became the structure and main foundation of the Canadian employment equity act of 1986, which aims to achieve equality, fair opportunities at employment, counter-attack discrimination and correct past mistakes, requiring from organizations and businesses to look after their employees’ needs and ensure that all their employees are treated fairly.

The employment equity system protects and supports four specific groups:

1. women
2. disabled people
3. aboriginal people (non-Indian status, Indian status, Inuit and metis)
4. visible minorities

Employment equity was greatly impactful to society due to the support it had based on moral justification. It gave people belonging in protective status a chance in a decent life and opportunities on employment. The program completely changes the workforce of the organization, institution and government agencies with a mix of people not based on percentages, like quota systems in affirmative action, attracting only the most talented people with no tie-breaking situations. The only drawback of this system is its focus on the differences of people without taking into consideration their similarities and other scenarios of conflict which lead to cases with the protective groups seeming to be more advantageous than others, and its main focus, to support and protect the right only of



the four protective status groups without considering other categories of groups. It may be more effective than the affirmative action but still, it is not perfect.

### **6.2.2. How to achieve employment equity?**

Many companies use employment equity programs to ensure the balance between their workforces, and comply with the government requirements and stop discrimination incidents. Despite the program's disadvantages it still remains a very effective way for companies to achieve a safe cultural environment for their employees and increase teamwork.

By applying the following five steps a small business with a diverse workforce can achieve employment equity.

#### **1) Re-evaluate the requirement of the job your company provides**

You can evaluate again your job criteria that your company has set: think what kind of job it is and what skillset is required, then examine it and see what types of groups can completely fulfill this type of work, for example, if it is an office job not physically demanding, you can employ disabled people. Always remember that for those people, finding a job is very difficult but when someone gives them the opportunity to work, they can be a very useful asset due to the feeling of gratitude they will feel. Also this action can increase job commitment and satisfaction and improve your business reputation and name.

#### **2) Create balance payments**

You can establish wages based on the knowledge, experience or physical demand your job requires and not based on stereotype create. You can balance in your pays and not pay men more than women or based on race and religion; examine your employee's performance and after that, consider the amount of money you will give them.

#### **3) Promote balance in work and personal lives of your employees**

You can promote work/life balance to your employees. For example, if you employ female personnel, provide them maternity leave and consider other costs or challenges that may arise in the conflict between work and personal life.

#### **4) Identify and put an end to discrimination**

The conflict between your employees will arise. There is no way to stop them but you do not let them go too far; establish policies, set of rules that employees should follow. You can encourage them to find common ground and build bridges between them. Trouble makers should not damage the balance of your workforce. You do not have to be merciful to them by letting them harass more your employees but face them; give them a chance if you want or fire them. It may so be better than to let them destroy the image of your company or workplace.

## **5) Employ mentoring systems**

The cultural mentor is a role model to the company; employees who can assist them to solve their problems, teach them company policies and procedures, to the old or new employees, and help them to utilize and be aware of their potential.

## **6) Install special equipment or accommodation to provide for your employees' needs**

Different groups have different needs and some individuals may need special equipment to be able to do their jobs. For example, disabled people will need special equipment to accommodate their needs in their working environment or groups of different cultural backgrounds may feel uncomfortable if the upper management team and lower management teamwork are in the same room or share the same coffee room.

## **Achieving employment equity at sea**

For safety reasons shipping companies don't want to employ disable people first of all the cost to equip all company's vessels with the necessary equipment to look after disable people needs will be extremely high and in cause of an emergency (abandon ship) those people will be at constant danger not only to themselves but also to others due to their inability to survive alone in an emergency other people will have to take care of them which will lead to a situation where to people will bet risk.

The captain can achieve employment equity by:

### **A. ate a balance payment:**

If the vessels crew works hard and do extra-hour of work the captain and chief officer should record those extra hours and the crew members should be paid accordingly based on their performance and hours of work. If the shipping company don't want to pay extra money to the seaman's the chief officer must inform the crewmembers of the situation to reduce the possibility of moral lose.

### **B. Promote work/life balance:**

The stress levels can be very easily increased at a vessel in an instance, the captain should care about the wellbeing of the crewmember's if it is possible in a high demanding job provide the necessary dispatch of crewmembers to complete the job.

### **C. mentoring system**

In order to have a competent and reliable crew all the officers onboard are responsible for the training and education of the rest crew members in order to ensure their safety and increase productivity.

### **6.3. Diversity management**

Diversity management is a program aiming not only on differences but also in the similarities in a diverse workforce, which means its main purpose is to give opportunities not only to those groups which belong to protective status but also on the other employees consisting the human capital of the company. This program evolved after considering the disadvantages of affirmative action and employment equity.

Diversity management made company policies and procedures more adaptable to the environment, the companies offering work and the employees the company recruits. In this system, companies employ the only person that fits their criteria without considering their race or religion, hence recruiting only the best-talented people.

By focusing on all the dimensions of diversity and providing their employees with guides and motivation, this program aims to enhance job commitment and job satisfaction, to encourage teamwork and productivity, to establish good communication in the workplace, to avoid any misunderstandings, to face cultural classes and counterattack discrimination in order to provide a balance between work and life of the employees, so as to make them grow and more productive.

Diversity management program is divided into four parts:

1. motivational process
2. interaction process
3. vision process
4. learning process

Those four steps aim to enhance the performance output of an organization workforce, manage effective diversity without internal conflicts, increase employees' potential and teamwork in order to make companies more effective and profitable.

## **Motivational process**

### Outcome shearing

Managing motivational process aims to increase employee commitment to the level of affective commitment as a result, employee will work with determination to accomplish organizational goals with maximum effort.

Diversity can be beneficial to an organization; on the other hand, diversity can also diminish productivity when a common way of thinking and acting is missing in a workforce.

The main problem when we want to motivate employees to raise their level of commitment is to find what will motivate them to do so.

Organizations willing to achieve an enhancement in the level of commitment in their working force use the method of sharing business outcomes (success and failures) with their employees by making questions and having discussions on how to achieve better results or how to improve a situation. This method aims to increase commitment by making employees aware of the company mission, goals, success stories and past mistakes to motivate them.

### **Requirement to use the motivational process:**

- 1.the organization ensures equality between employees, establishes growth and learning environment.
- 2.the organization makes the employees accountable for their results and performance.

### **Motivational process in those benefits:**

1. encourage healthy competition between employees.
2. enhance performance.
3. employees make organizational goals their own.
4. employees will be willing to share information, knowledge and skills to achieve greater highs of the organization.

## **Interaction process**

### **Mental modelling**

Another way organizations use to enhance commitment in their working force is with the method of mental shearing; this process helps employees to understand, communicate with each other and develop a common way of set meaning and thinking process.

Humans can communicate in verbal and non-verbal way (body language etc.). When people communicate the transmitter (the person who wants to transmit a message) transmit a message to the receiver (a person who will receive the message); the receiver after receiving the message, he or she will try to process it through his or her own cultural filters (mental model) to understand the information that the original message holds. Cultural filters are keys in our mind which were created and developed by our experience, mind-set, values, culture, and education, etc. to help our minds to understand the external factors to create our reality and decode information. When a message is processed by many cultural filters, its original meaning may be lost especially when different language or cultural elements are present; the probabilities are higher. To avoid this situation or unnecessary conflicts and misunderstandings, the first communication between employees consisting of a diverse workforce should be just information shearing, low-risk communication. When their communication evolves through constant interaction the employees will develop a common mental model of understanding each other.

### **Factors to consider before employing interaction process in a workforce:**

1. employees should be aware that they need it's other and they should work as a team.
2. organizations promote cultural awareness and ensure cultural safety
3. organizations promote healthy competition via conflicts (control and use conflicts)

### **Benefits of mental sharing**

1. by promoting healthy competition employees can grow to learn and develop
2. employees will share a common way of thinking and enhance their communication ability

## **The vision process**

### Vision sharing

This method also aims to enhance organizational commitment; it is common knowledge in the field of management that groups knowing how to share a common vision are more effective to achieve it and more productive because they perform the tasks necessary to achieve this vision without any divisions.

Organizations should create an environment in which all employees from any background can use their knowledge skills and experience to work together and aim to achieve the organizational goals.

Managers and leaders in teams must guide employees to leave behind their differences and unity them under the wings of a common vision and this vision will help to complete the goals that the organization sets.

### **Key factors to effectively implement the vision process:**

1. The requirement of the mental model and outcome shearing are satisfied.
2. Ensure equality and cultural safety in their workplace
3. Establish effective communication
4. Promote teamwork
5. Make employees aware of the importance of a shared vision.

### **Benefits of the vision process in an organization**

1. Enhance commitment level
2. Enhance communication and teamwork
3. Give opportunities for employees to learn and grow as team members.
4. Enhance organization productivity

## **Learning process**

### Competence sharing

Diversity in a workforce can be best described as a pool of different talents, knowledge, experiences, and ideas, mindsets, and skills; to benefit from this environment of knowledge companies should create a system to capture, analyze the useful parts of this variety of knowledge and provide it to their employees to help them grow and work more efficient.

The manager should use all the available assets and knowledge. This is a great power to strengthen the foundation base of any organization to construct the company's vision by creating a mechanism that captures and stores knowledge. Organizations can enhance their human capital and become more competent.

### **Requirements to effective use of competence sharing:**

The organization should ensure that the requirements of the outcome sharing, mental model and vision sharing are satisfied with those methods as foundation organizations can very easily create a learning mechanics.

### **Competence sharing benefits**

1. enhance employee commitment
2. give opportunities for employees to grow and learn
3. make organizations more competitive
4. strengthen the foundations of the company's vision
5. enhance teamwork
7. enhance the awareness of their employees
8. diverse workforce becomes more productive

## **6.4. Three components of employee commitment**

The organization wants to raise its employee commitment and job satisfaction to utilize the full potential of their working force and achieve maximum performance output of their assets. Job commitment can affect how people work and what kind of work they produce; some people will do their job in fear of losing it, some others will do it because they love it and others will just do it because they are paid and they will not do anything more from their obligations.

### **What is a job commitment?**

Job commitment is the feeling of responsibility to the company that employees have with high commitment; employees work harder to perform their tasks to help the company to achieve the goals that the company sets.

### **What is job satisfaction?**

Job satisfaction is a degree that indicates how satisfied/self-motivated feels a person with his or her working environment. When employees feel that they have a balance between their work and life and growth in their career we have job satisfaction.

John Mayer and Natalie Allen have developed a model of three components; those three components influence the job satisfaction or job commitment of employees. This which was published in 1997.

#### **1. affective commitment:**

We have an affective commitment when employees have a positive attachment to the organization. An employee who is affectively committed strongly identifies with the goals of the organization and wants to remain a part of it; this employee commits with the organization because he or she wants to. AC component is the most desired for an organization.

#### **2. continuance commitment:**

In this component the individual measures the gains and loss he or she will have in social life or income if he or she leaves in search of another organization membership or choice to stay. Things like social working relationships, friendship and pensions can be key factors determining the decision of the employee.

#### **3. normative commitment:**

The individual has a sense of obligation to the company; this feeling can be driven by the expenses that companies have to invest to train their employees or other factors, for example, a particular organization supported a family of a person and that individual has a sense of moral obligation to the organization "to pay the debt".



### **Most dominant job satisfaction level**

In the shipping industries the most dominant commitment of employment is the continuance commitment due to the nature of the job, because seaman's leave their families and friends behind to work on a vessel and the pressure seaman's experience during their employment they tend to want to make the maximum gains out of this satiations with money being a major factor which can very impactful change their discussion of employment.

## CONCLUSION

The element of diversity is most present in the shipping industries, especially in companies who own and manage vessels. Sometimes in this particular type of industry section even if a company wants to have a homogeny workforce in some situation it is impossible to do so. A vessel is a small organization with its members; this organization belongs to another organization which manages other similar organizations; the organization (company) who manage the smaller ones (vessels). There is no difference between the methods that a vessel will use to manage diversity than the ones used by an organization. The company must ensure equality, fair treatment in their employees during their employment and accommodation to accommodate their basic needs by providing guidelines, policies, training and managing systems to create a safe cultural environment; effective communication methods between the company and its employees and between them in the close quarters in a vessel. Cultural clashes, conflicts and misunderstandings are very easy to happen; the company must provide necessary training to the manager of the vessel (captain) to control the scale of the conflicts and minimize them into a beneficial degree which will promote healthy competition. It is common sense that no ruler can rule alone; no matter how excellent the captain is, a vessel needs teamwork, effective communication, common sets of values and thinking and a shared vision for the vessel to work effectively and reach its destination safely.

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