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CROSS-CULTURAL MANAGEMENT: OBSTACLES FOR EFFECTIVE COOPERATION IN MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

Urgency of the research. *The importance of studying the actual obstacles for effective cooperation in multicultural environment is determined by such modern trends as globalization, informational revolution, technological progress and growing impact of the Millennials.*

Target setting. *It is reasonable to study the attitude of employees to work in a multicultural environment and to identify the most important obstacles for effective cross-cultural cooperation.*

Actual scientific researches and issues analysis. *The scientific works of such scholars as G. Hofstede, N. Adler, A.-M. Søderberg, N. Holden, J. Spencer-Rodgersa, T. McGovern and others deal with cross-cultural management issues.*

Defining of uninvestigated parts of general matters. Scientists have not yet sufficiently explored the correlation between motivation and cross-cultural interactions. It is also important to update any data about actual obstacles for effective cross-cultural interactions which might have changed due to the changes in the mentality of workers in the era of new technologies, Internet, globalization and arising role of the millennials.

The research objective. *The article aims to clarify the link between cross-cultural interaction and motivation of workers and to identify the most important obstacles for effective cross-cultural interactions.*

The statement of basic materials. *The authors use survey results from 273 respondents from Denmark, Portugal and Ukraine who have experience of cross-cultural interactions to study the relation between motivation and work in a multicultural environment. The article proves the link between cross-cultural interaction and motivation of workers. The empirical data analysis let the authors identify the most important and widespread barriers (obstacles) for effective cross-cultural interactions among the following: language barrier, differences in values, differences in standards of behaviour, lack of trust, lack of experience, lack of knowledge about other cultures.*

Conclusions. *Most people working in multicultural teams or projects treat cross-cultural interactions as a factor of additional motivation. On the other hand there are serious barriers (obstacles) for effective cross-cultural cooperation. Cross-cultural management has a wide range of approaches and specific techniques to overcome these barriers. Effective cross-cultural management can help to form diverse teams ready for effective cooperation with representatives from other cultures It gives more opportunities to expand the business to new markets, to form a global "diversity-friendly" brand.*

Keywords: *cross-cultural management; corporate culture; globalization; millennials; Denmark; Portugal; Ukraine.*

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КРОС-КУЛЬТУРНИЙ МЕНЕДЖМЕНТ: ПЕРЕШКОДИ ЕФЕКТИВНІЙ ВЗАЄМОДІЇ У МУЛЬТИКУЛЬТУРНОМУ СЕРЕДОВИЩІ

Актуальність теми дослідження. *Важливість вивчення актуальних перешкод ефективній взаємодії у мультикультурному середовищі зумовлена такими сучасними трендами як глобалізація, інформаційна революція, технологічний прогрес та зростаюча роль покоління Millennials.*

Постановка проблеми. *Доцільним є вивчення ставлення працівників до роботи у мультикультурному середовищі та виявити найбільш важливі перешкоди ефективній крос-культурній взаємодії.*

Аналіз останніх досліджень і публікацій. *У наукових працях таких вчених, як Г. Хофстеде, Н. Адлер, А.-М. Содерберг, Н. Холден, Дж. Спенсер-Роджерса, Т. МакГоверн та інших висвітлені різні аспекти крос-культурного менеджменту.*

Виділення недосліджених частин загальної проблеми. *Науковцями ще недостатньо опрацьовані питання кореляції між мотивацією та крос-культурною взаємодією. Також важливо оновити дані щодо перешкод ефективній крос-культурній взаємодії, які могли змінитися через зміни у ментальності працівників в епоху нових технологій, Інтернет, глобалізації та зростаючої ролі покоління millennials.*

Постановка завдання. *Стаття покликана пояснити зв'язок між крос-культурною взаємодією та мотивацією працівників, а також виявити ключові перешкоди ефективної крос-культурної взаємодії.*

Виклад основного матеріалу. *Автори використовують результати опитування 273 респондентів з Данії, Португалії та України, які мають досвід крос-культурної взаємодії, з метою дослідження взаємозв'язку між мотивацією та роботою у мультикультурному середовищі. Доведено зв'язок між крос-культурною взаємодією і мотивацією працівників. Аналіз емпіричних даних дозволив авторам ідентифікувати найбільш поширені та важливі перешкоди ефективній крос-культурній взаємодії серед наступних: мовний бар'єр, відмінності у цінностях, відмінності у стандартах поведінки, нестача довіри, нестача досвіду, нестача знань щодо інших культур.*

Висновки. *Більшість людей, які працюють у мультикультурних командах або проектах сприймають крос-культурну взаємодію як фактор додаткової мотивації. З іншого боку, існують серйозні перешкоди ефективній крос-культурній взаємодії. Крос-культурний менеджмент може сприяти формуванню розмаїтих команд, готових до ефективної взаємодії із представниками інших культур. Це відкриває можливості розширювати бізнес на нові ринки, формувати глобальний «дружній до різноманітності» бренд.*

Ключові слова: *крос-культурний менеджмент; корпоративна культура; глобалізація; мілленніалс; Данія; Португалія; Україна.*

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Urgency of the research. Modern social and economic trends such as informational revolution, fast technological progress, facilitation of communications along with the growing impact of the "millennials" (generation born in 1980-2000) [1] keep rocketing globalization processes faster and faster. Back in 1980-s cross-cultural management was an issue primarily for large multinational corporations. Nowadays it can be a serious question for any sea-food restaurant in Lisbon, IT-company in Kyiv or a design studio in Copenhagen. Jeannet (2000) [2], Rosen (2000) [3] proved that an effective manager in a modern global World should have a global mindset; he or she should be ready to operate in a multicultural environment dealing with workers, customers, partners from completely different cultures with different values, standards of behaviour and even different ways of thinking. Dealing with such diversity is not a simple task. Modern manager must get the most out of it avoiding possible problems with misunderstanding, barriers of communications and other obstacles on the way to effective synergetic cooperation. Identifying such obstacles and finding the ways to overcome them is one of the core tasks in cross-cultural management.

Target setting. It is important to identify actual obstacles for effective cross-cultural cooperation in a multicultural business environment and develop managerial approaches and specific techniques to overcome them.

Actual scientific researches and issues analysis. Among the most influential researches in the field of cross-cultural management are the works of N. Adler and G. Hofstede. Geert Hofstede's deep fundamental analysis of work-related values in different nations' cultures (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 1997) [4; 5] gave a start to a big-scale interest to cross-cultural relations studies while Nancy Adler was one of the first researchers who gave definition to cross-cultural management. According to Adler cross-cultural management is pointed to describe and compare organizational behavior in different cultures seeking to improve the interaction between co-workers, partners, clients, managers etc from different countries or cultures (Adler, 1991) [6].

Some of the early approaches to cross-cultural interaction described culture mostly as a communicational barrier that can cause many problems to business. In fact, different languages, manners, customs, values, attitudes and aesthetics can be a huge obstacle in a multicultural business environment. But later researchers realized that cultural diversity should be treated as an opportunity to find some new, original solutions (Hoecklin, 1995) [7]. Dealing with the representatives of different cultures is the only way to get access to new markets, learning new ways of doing business, marketing, management etc. From that time on cultural differences are being treated by global, international companies as a competitive advantage (Luo, 2016) [8].

Considering big changes that heavily influenced global business environment Holden and Søderberg updated the definition of cross-cultural management concentrating on its task to "facilitate and direct synergetic interaction and learning at interfaces, where knowledge, values and experience are transferred into multicultural domains of implementation" (Holden & Søderberg, 2002) [9].

One of the core elements of cross-cultural management and cross-cultural relations is communication between representatives of different cultures. Effective cross-cultural communication is highly important for favorable intergroup relations (Dodd, 1995; Gudykunst, 1986) [10; 11]. Intercultural communication barriers can be caused by differences in cognition (e.g. values, norms, etc.), expression (e.g., types and levels of emotional expressivity), and patterns of behavior (e.g., language, customs, communication styles, etc.) (Spencer-Rodgersa & McGovern, 2002) [12], different understanding of social roles, stereotype thinking etc. (Delecta & Raman, 2015; Lifintsev, Maximov & Yakovenko, 2016) [13; 14]. As a result, the effectiveness of cross-cultural interaction can be relatively low.

The growth of Internet usage changed this situation because it allowed the emergence of a global culture where the individual could easily access information that allows him to understand the socio-cultural context of his co-worker (Canavilhas, 2015) [15]. In this situation, the communication process

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can become more fluid, creating an environment closer to the so-called "high-context cultures" (Hall, 1960) [16] that are characterized by a relationship orientation. If so, the generation of millennials should feel more motivated to work in multicultural environments, something that can be confirmed in the empirical study.

Defining of uninvestigated parts of general matters. On the other hand cross-cultural interactions themselves are quite interesting for the many workers involved. Some issues of the correlation between motivation and cross-cultural interactions have been discussed in the works of different scholars (Chen et al., 2010; Ang et al., 2007) [17, 18] but this problem still needs more empirical data and deeper analysis. We must also note that the obstacles for effective cross-cultural interactions might change due to the changes in mentality of workers in the era of new technologies, the Internet, globalization and arising role of the millennials.

The research objective is to clarify the link between cross-cultural interaction and motivation of the workers and to identify the most important obstacles for effective cross-cultural interactions.

The statement of basic materials. We hypothesized that working in cross-cultural environment can give additional motivation to an employee due to forming non-standard, challenging conditions which make workers communicate and cooperate with the representatives of other cultures. On the other hand there are some serious obstacles (barriers) on the way to effective cross-cultural cooperation. They are affected mostly by differences in values and standards of behavior of partners (workers etc) from different cultures. We summarized it in two hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1. Cross-cultural cooperation can be an additional motivation for employees.

Hypothesis 2. Differences in values and standards of behavior are among the most important obstacles (barriers) for effective cross-cultural cooperation.

To test these hypotheses we explored the attitude to cross-cultural relations in three different European countries. Indeed, Denmark, Portugal and Ukraine have very little in common considering key social and economic indicators (Tab.1) and national mentality.

Table 1

Some key social and economic indicators of Denmark, Portugal and Ukraine [19]

Key indicators (incl. most relevant for cross-cultural relations need in business), 2015	Denmark	Portugal	Ukraine
Population, million.	5,676	10,349	45,198
Land area, sq. km.	42.922	92.225	603.550
Gross enrolment ratio, primary, both sexes (%)	101,332	108,512	103,915
Gross enrolment ratio, secondary, both sexes (%)	129,868	116,395	99,237
GDP, billion US$	295,091	198,923	90,615
GNI per capita, US$	58.550	20.530	2.640
Exports of goods and services (% of GDP)	53,4	40,3	52,8
International tourism, receipts (% of total exports)*	3,8	18,9	3,5
Imports of goods and services (% of GDP)	47,2	39,6	54,8
International migrant stock (% of population)	10,1	8,1	10,8

*2014 year data

Being the largest by territory and land area Ukraine is struggling to reach the GDP and GNI per capita levels of the comparatively smaller and less populated Denmark and Portugal. All 3 economies are highly interdependent on foreign trade (both export and import) which raises the importance of cross-cultural interaction for their domestic companies' management. Additional factors pedaling the need for intercultural communication skills are relatively high level of migrant stock in all countries, the high level of importance of international inbound tourism for the Portuguese economy and the active processes of European integration in Ukraine [20].

We used the famous Geert Hofstede 6-D model data to compare the national cultures of the countries analyzed. The results proved big gaps between them at almost all cultural dimensions (Fig. 1).

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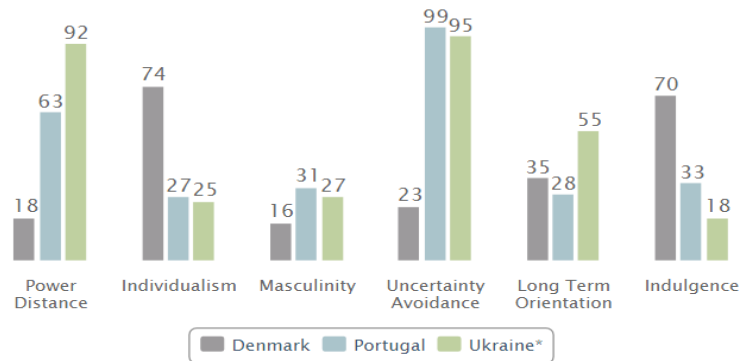
Fig. 1. National cultures dimensions [21]

The egalitarian mind-set of the Danes put them at the very low end of power distance (18 points) compared to all other nations. Ukraine has the opposite situation with 92 points while Portugal is among cultures with a relatively balanced attitude to power distance (63 points). The superiors in Denmark count on their teams, they build a very informal atmosphere in the office, normally communicating on a first name basis. Not many companies in Ukraine use such a model, normally being more hierarchical with more centralized power.

In contrast to Portugal and Ukraine Danish society is much more individualistic and indulgent. Both Ukraine and Portugal have very high scores on uncertainty avoidance while Denmark has the features of a society whose members are not afraid of unknown situations, more flexible, ready to change plans, jobs etc. Ukrainians are little bit more long term oriented than the Danes and the Portuguese. The only dimension with more or less similar scores for all 3 cultures is Masculinity/Femininity. All the countries have feminine societies where such values as "cooperation", "good relationships in group" and "caring for others" dominate over "achievement", "competition" and "success".

A diverse group of participants took part in the study: the representatives of three nations (Denmark, Portugal, Ukraine) who have had the experience of cooperation in multicultural environment (n=273). The demographic characteristics of the sample were as follows: 65 Danes, 106 Portugueses, 102 Ukrainians. The sample consisted of 52% men (141) and 48% women (129). 14,7% of the respondents were high school graduates, 16,8% had bachelor's degree, 47,6% - master's degree, 17,9% - PhD degree or higher. 5,1% of the participants were under 21 years old, 44,7% - 21-30 years old, 27,1% - 31-40 year old, 14,7% - 41-50 years old, 8,4% - >50 years old.

The respondents were asked 3 main questions to explore their attitude to cross-cultural interaction:
1. Does working in multicultural business environment motivate you?
2. How do you feel working in multicultural environment?
3. What are the main obstacles for cross-cultural cooperation?
The results of the survey are presented in the Tables 2, 3 and 4.

Table 2

Attitude to working in multicultural business environment
(Q1. Does working in multicultural business environment motivate you?)

1	Working in multicultural business environment is an additional motivation for me	My attitude to working in multicultural business environment is neutral	Working in multicultural business environment is a factor of demotivation for me
1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Total	69,6%	28,6%	1,8%
Nationality			
Denmark	44,6%	52,3%	3,1%
Portugal	78,3%	19,8%	1,9%
Ukraine	76,5%	22,5%	1,0%
Sex			

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Continuation of Table 2

1	2	3	4
Men	67,6%	29,6%	2,8%
Women	71,8%	27,5%	0,8%
Age			
<21	78,6%	14,3%	7,1%
21-30	67,2%	31,1%	1,6%
31-40	62,2%	35,1%	2,7%
41-50	90,0%	10,0%	0,0%
>50	65,2%	34,8%	0,0%
Education level			
High school	75,0%	22,5%	2,5%
Bachelor's degree	58,7%	41,3%	0,0%
Master's degree	74,6%	23,8%	1,5%
PhD degree and higher	69,4%	28,6%	2,0%
Other	25,0%	62,5%	12,5%

Table 3

Attitude to working in multicultural business environment
(Q2. How do you feel working in multicultural business environment?)

	Absolutely comfortable	Comfortable	Normal	Uncomfortable	Very uncomfortable
Total	46,5%	32,2%	18,7%	1,8%	0,7%
Nationality					
Denmark	43,1%	35,4%	16,9%	3,1%	1,5%
Portugal	43,4%	37,7%	17,9%	0,9%	0,0%
Ukraine	52,0%	24,5%	20,6%	2,0%	1,0%
Sex					
Men	43,0%	33,8%	19,7%	2,1%	1,4%
Women	50,4%	30,5%	17,6%	1,5%	0,0%
Age					
<21	35,7%	57,1%	7,1%	0,0%	0,0%
21-30	52,5%	27,0%	18,0%	1,6%	0,8%
31-40	43,2%	35,1%	17,6%	2,7%	1,4%
41-50	42,5%	35,0%	22,5%	0,0%	0,0%
>50	39,1%	30,4%	26,1%	4,3%	0,0%
Education level					
High school	42,5%	40,0%	12,5%	5,0%	0,0%
Bachelor's degree	50,0%	32,6%	15,2%	0,0%	2,2%
Master's degree	50,0%	30,0%	17,7%	2,3%	0,0%
PhD degree and higher	38,8%	32,7%	26,5%	0,0%	2,0%
Other	37,5%	25,0%	37,5%	0,0%	0,0%

According to the results of the survey, cross-cultural relations themselves can give additional motivation to employees willing to work in a multicultural environment (70% of respondents). The main barriers to effective cross-cultural cooperation are language barriers (28,7%), differences in values (18,5%) and standards of behaviour (18,6%). We can notice strong correlation between the age of the respondents and the problems they have with the language barrier: for younger workers this issue is less worrying. On the other hand youngest respondents (<21 years old) obviously have problems with the experience of business cross-cultural interactions.

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Table 4

Obstacles for effective cross-cultural interactions
(Q3. What are the main obstacles for cross-cultural cooperation?)

	Language barrier	Differ-ences in values	Differences in stand-ards of behavior	Lack of trust	Lack of experience	Lack of knowledge about other cultures	Other
Total	28,9%	18,4%	18,6%	7,8%	8,5%	14,7%	3,1%
Nationality							
Denmark	30,6%	19,4%	20,7%	6,6%	6,7%	12,8%	3,2%
Portugal	31,8%	19,0%	15,4%	7,3%	8,0%	15,6%	3,0%
Ukraine	24,8%	17,1%	20,5%	9,2%	10,3%	14,9%	3,2%
Sex							
Men	29,5%	18,9%	17,6%	7,8%	8,7%	15,0%	2,6%
Women	28,3%	17,8%	19,9%	7,8%	8,2%	14,2%	3,8%
Age							
<21	24,0%	20,7%	12,0%	10,1%	17,1%	9,9%	6,1%
21-30	27,1%	18,8%	20,8%	7,1%	8,0%	15,1%	3,1%
31-40	29,7%	17,3%	17,9%	9,0%	7,8%	14,8%	3,4%
41-50	30,8%	20,2%	16,2%	6,1%	8,4%	15,0%	3,2%
>50	35,1%	15,5%	17,0%	9,2%	8,9%	13,8%	0,5%
Education level							
High school	31,0%	18,9%	14,8%	9,5%	9,4%	13,5%	2,8%
Bachelor's degree	30,7%	16,7%	19,0%	5,2%	7,7%	16,8%	3,9%
Master's degree	27,0%	18,8%	19,3%	8,1%	8,6%	15,1%	3,1%
PhD degree and higher	30,8%	19,3%	19,7%	8,5%	7,5%	12,0%	2,2%
Other	27,1%	12,6%	18,5%	3,2%	14,1%	17,9%	6,7%

It is clear that our World becomes faster and more global. In order to be successful companies must be prepared to work in a global environment, operate in different regional markets, cooperating with foreign partners and involving workers representing different cultures. A cross-cultural manage-ment concept (Fig. 2) can be accepted today by almost any company no matter what the size, industry or country of origin.
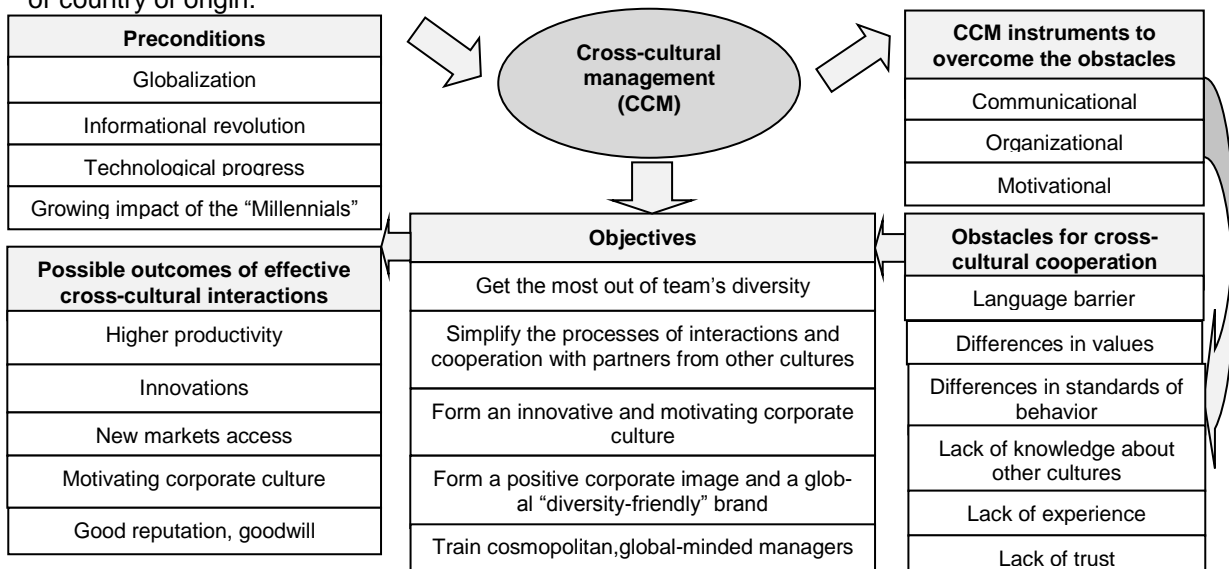

Fig. 2. Cross-cultural management concept

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Accepting a multicultural environment as a given fact, companies must get the most out of it, trying to get higher productivity from multicultural teams. Diversity can become a source of innovations, additional motivation and a global-oriented corporate culture.

Conclusions. The results of our research proved the link between cross-cultural interaction and motivation of the workers. Most employees working in multicultural teams or projects treat cross-cultural interactions as a factor of additional motivation. On the other hand among most serious and most widespread actual barriers (obstacles) for effective cross-cultural cooperation in multicultural business environment are language barriers, differences in values and standards of behaviour and lack of knowledge about other cultures. There is a wide range of managerial approaches and specific techniques to overcome these barriers: communicational, organizational and motivational. The rewards for effective cross-cultural management are high quality diverse teams ready for innovations and effective cooperation with representatives from other cultures; more opportunities to expand the business to new markets and to form a global "diversity-friendly" brand.

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