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Managing cultural diversity in the workplace (care homes and cleaning services)

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(care homes and cleaning services)

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This study examines how cultural diversity is managed in the work environment in care homes and cleaning services in Finland. The health care and cleaning services sectors were chosen primarily due to the high number of immigrants working in these sectors. The Finnish Labour Ministry projects that the number of immigrant workers will increase by the year 2025 particularly in the health care and other services sectors due to the aging population of the Finnish labour force and the low birth rate among Finns. As Finland becomes multicultural, the need for management of workplace diversity needs to be looked into.

The study used a descriptive research design and adopted qualitative methods to gain an in-depth knowledge from the experiences of people who have personal knowledge of the issue. Fifteen respondents were involved in the study: 7 managers, including 4 managers from care homes and 3 from cleaning services firms; and 8 employees, including 4 each from care homes and cleaning services. Both primary and secondary sources of information were used and a qualitative content analysis and inductive data analysis approaches were used.

The main challenges associated with managing cultural diversity were: language barrier; cultural differences; discrimination; underemployment and lack of career growth; adaptability of migrant workers to Finnish work culture; and the need for government agencies' intervention in integrating migrant workers. Cultural diversity is seen as an asset. Given equivalent qualifications and experience in would-be job applicants, employing workers with different cultural backgrounds will result in: creating an international work environment, pooling together the requisite skills, talents, and experiences towards the growth of the company; and stimulating competition among workers to achieve high productivity. Findings are limited to the study area and cannot be generalised. Also, the researchers were time-constrained to explore in detail cultural differences of immigrants and how these cultural differences affect their work as well as Finnish immigration policy and company HR policies.

The study recommends that a holistic integration programme is undertaken to ensure that immigrants are accepted and their professional skills and educational achievements are utilized. In particular, the Ministry of Labour and Employment should liaise with relevant stakeholders to promote acceptance of immigrant workers.

Keywords Workplace diversity, Management of diversity, cultural diversity, Shortage of labour, Aging population

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1 Introduction

In recent years, Finland is fast becoming a multicultural country due to increase in immigration. The inflow of immigrants and migrant workers are on the rise year by year. During 2013, approximately 31,940 foreigners immigrated to Finland. This is the highest number recorded since the nation's independence in 1917. The rise in immigration is attributed to family reunions, asylum seekers, foreign students and migrant workers (Statistics Finland).

However, studies suggest that one of the major problems confronting the developed countries, including Finland is aging population (Heikkilä 2012, 2). As the population aged, there will be short-age of labour force as a result. Moreover in recent past, the shortage of nurses in the Finnish healthcare sector resulted in hiring of foreign nurses from abroad in 2010 to make up for the deficit. As at 2008, there were approximately 36,424 foreign nurses working in Finland (Kilpeläinen 2010, 4).

A research conducted by The Finnish Union of Health and Social Care Professionals (Tehy), shows that immigrant workers face difficulties in the Finnish language and the effects of cultural differences. In addition, they also face discrimination and inequality from their working colleagues in the workplace. Lack of guidance and inadequate information, mentoring, support in learning the Finnish language and appreciation for their professional competences were some of the issues the survey came up with (Koivuniemi 2012, 4).

Furthermore, as Finland becomes multicultural, there would be workplace diversity and management of diversity would become a necessity. As the workplace become culturally diverse, it is therefore essential to assess the needs of migrant workers by gathering relevant information about their experiences and expectations. This information may help in assessing their strengths and to also address any challenges they face in the workplace.

In this research, the challenges involved in managing cultural diversity in the workplace specifically in care homes and cleaning services will be investigated from managers and employees perspectives to gain more understanding into the Finnish work culture and the work environment.

Moreover, adequate knowledge about the difficulties managers are faced with in managing culturally diverse work force is required to provide appropriate framework on how to handle these challenges. The thesis also aims to investigate the benefits that could be derived from cultural diversity if effectively and efficiently managed.

According to Heikkilä 2012 14, the cleaning services sector offers the most employment opportunities to immigrants in Uusimaa region, in the southern part of Finland. The health care and

cleaning services sectors were chosen for this thesis primarily due to the large number of immigrants working in these sectors.

1.1 The background

This thesis is being undertaken in partial fulfilment of bachelor's degree programme. The study is to conduct a research on managing cultural diversity in care homes and cleaning services in Finland. The thesis will cover some selected care homes and cleaning services firms within the Helsinki metropolitan regions of Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa. The findings of this study were based on interviews conducted in selected care homes and cleaning services companies in the municipalities of Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa (interview transcripts of managers and employees of these institutions). However, the purpose of the survey questionnaires was to seek for reliable information from the organizations concerned to support this study.

1.1.1 Aim and target

The aim of this thesis is to conduct a research on how cultural diversity is managed in the work environment (care homes and cleaning services) in Finland.

In addition, the study aims to find out the challenges involved in managing cultural diversity in the workplace mainly in care homes and cleaning services in Finland, (Espoo, Helsinki, Vantaa regions). It also seeks to investigate the benefits that could be derived from cultural diversity if effectively and efficiently managed. The health care and cleaning services sectors were chosen for this thesis primarily due to the large number of immigrants working in these sectors.

1.1.2 Research questions

What are the challenges of managing cultural diversity in care - homes and cleaning services?

What are the benefits of cultural diversity in care - homes and cleaning services?

1.2 Justification for the thesis

Recent demography shows that, Finland is fast becoming home to thousands of immigrants from around the world and as such, many of these immigrants live and work permanently in Finland (Statistics - Finland). The study shows that in 2013, approximately 31,940 foreigners immigrated

to Finland. To confirm this assertion however, a recent data obtained from re-cruitment department of Lassila & Tikanoja (L &T), indicate that out of 8000 employees, approximately 17 per cent of the workforce are foreigners from 80 different countries across the globe (Lassila-Tikanoja oy). The correspondence further revealed that a study by the Finnish labour ministry projected that the number of immigrant workers in Finland would increase by the year 2025, particularly in the health care and other services sectors respectively (Lassila - Tikanoja oy).

The impending demand for foreign workers is attributed largely to the aging population of the Finnish labour force and low birth rate by Finns (Statistics - Finland). A research by Heikkilä, from the Institute of Migration on Labour Market Participation of Immigrants in Finland and its Regions shows that, the number of aged people from 65 years and above would rise. This is estimated to rise from the current 18 per cent to 26 per cent by the year 2030 and to 28 per cent by 2060. The working labour force would decrease by 30,000 per year and by the year 2030 to 117,000 persons based on current trends. This would be caused by the retirement of large number of the baby - boomers (Heikkilä 2012, 2). In addition, this will lead to increase in the number of elderly people who would require care in care homes and other health care facilities respectively. This will also result into shortage of healthcare and other professionals to care for the elderly and the sick. The study projected that the immigration of foreign labour force would increase in Finland in the near future as a result. Studies suggest that the population age structure of immigrants in Finland between the ages of 20 to 44 is high in relation to the share amongst Finnish citizens. Moreover, from the labour market point of view, this is seen as a positive indicator to supplement the labour shortage in Finland for the short term (Heikkilä 2012, 4).

As Finland becomes multicultural, there would be workplace diversity and management of diversity would become a necessity. This may require that managers, supervisors, training professionals are able to effectively employ, train, manage and promote a culturally diverse workforce as effective management of diversity promotes harmony and organizational growth. For Henderson "It takes effective communication, conflict resolution and creation of an inclusive organizational culture to succeed" (Henderson 1994, 13).

One can see from this view that administrators will be required to have better understanding of the problems cultural diversity presents in order to find realistic ways to deal with them. However, the issues of cultural differences also present various forms of challenges and opportunities in the work environment. This will however require both effective and efficient management of diversity in the workplace in order to create enabling environment for all to develop and to give out their best.

Furthermore, from personal experience(s) as immigrants and that of other working immigrants in the healthcare and cleaning services sectors, there is the need for stakeholders and managers to develop policies aimed at managing cultural diversity in the workplace. The need for this policy is to address variations in working cultures, to bridge communication gap and to help understand the Finnish work culture. This will promote equal employment opportunities and create good working conditions for all irrespective of individuals' race, gender or background.

1.3 The structure of the thesis

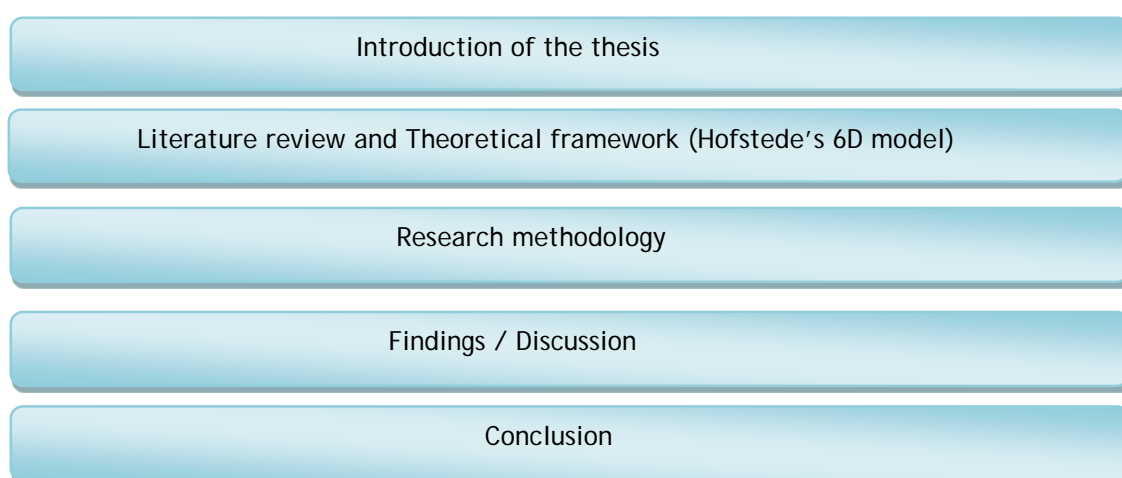


Figure 1. The structure of the thesis

The structure of the thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one presents the background, aim and target, research questions. Chapter two discusses the literature review which focuses first on the concept of diversity, specifically the concept of foreign culture, the concept of integration, challenges and benefits of cultural diversity in the workplace. Chapter three discusses Hofstede's six dimensions of national cultures from which culture is understood followed by Chapter four which emphasize on model of for diversity management. However, chapter five discusses the methodology adopted while chapter six presents analysis of data gathered. Lastly, chapter seven presents the conclusion, limitations, areas for future research and recommendations.

2 The concept of diversity

There have been numerous attempts at setting the definition of diversity mainly due to its subjective nature. According to O'Reilly, Williams, & Barsade's (1998, 186), "A group is diverse if it is composed of individuals who differ on a characteristic on which they base their own social identity." Following this definition, Mazur (2010, 5) defines diversity as "a subjective

phenomenon, created by group members themselves who on the basis of their different social identities categorize others as similar or dissimilar”.

A number of studies have showed that diversity is a complex and multidimensional concept which requires deeper analysis; nevertheless, it simply refers to a human characteristic that differentiates one person from the other (Gómez-Mejia, Balkin, & Cardy 2001, 124). Loden and Rosener (1991), define diversity as “that which differentiates one group of people from another along primary and secondary dimensions”.

The primary dimensions of diversity are those human selected characteristics which influence our identities (such as values, opportunities, and perceptions of ourselves and others at work). These are gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age and mental self-image as well as our fundamental world views (Hayes & Niemeier 2009, 14; Mazur 2010, 6). They have the most impact on groups in the workplace and society (Mazur 2010, 6).

The Secondary dimensions of diversity shape one’s values, experience and expectations. They are less visible, exert a more variable influence on personal identity and add a more subtle richness to the primary dimensions of diversity. They include: educational background, geographic location, religion, first language, family status, work style, work experience, military experience, organisational role and level, income and communication style (Hayes & Niemeier 2009, 15; Mazur 2010, 6). The secondary dimensions impact our self-esteem and self-definition (Mazur 2010, 6).

The tertiary dimension as posited by Arredondo (2004) encompasses historical moments experienced. Mazur (2010, 6), argues that the “tertiary dimensions are often the core of individual identity and lie deeper below the surface. It is the vast array of qualities that lie beneath the surface that provides the real essence of diversity to be tapped into, and these have not until recently been acknowledged.” A summary of the possible dimensions are shown in Table 1 (the lists are in no way exhaustive).

Primary dimensions	Secondary dimensions	Tertiary dimensions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race • Ethnicity • Gender • Age • Disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion • Culture • Sexual orientation • Thinking style • Geographic location • Family status • Lifestyle • Economic status • Political orientation • Work experience • Education • Language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliefs • Assumptions • Perceptions • Attitudes • Feelings • Values • Group norms

	• Nationality	
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Table 1. Dimensions of diversity

Source: Mazur (2010)

As seen in Table 1, diversity has many dimensions. These may work together to produce unique blends of human profiles, including both differences and similarities. The dimensions interact with and influence one another, and emerge or are displayed differently in different contexts, environment and circumstances, making analysis and management complex. Hence, the position and dominance of each dimension are not static, but dynamic, making the concept of diversity more complex (Mazur 2010, 6).

Given the importance of what diversity is, it is imperative to know what it is not. According to Vo (2014, 7),

- * diversity is not affirmative action
- * diversity is not quotas
- * diversity is not about changing people's attitudes
- * diversity is not mandatory.

2.1 The concept of foreign culture

Culture can be defined as "the inherited values, concepts, and ways of living which are shared by people of the same social group" (Kawar 2012). According to Lavaty and Kleiner (2001, 45), culture is "our routine of sleeping, bathing, dressing, eating and getting to work. It is our household chores and actions we perform on the job, the way we buy goods and services. It is the way we greet friends or address a stranger and even to a larger extent what we consider right or wrong". Otherwise, according to the much-cited phrase of Hofstede, culture is "the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from another." Researchers such as Smith, Peterson, and Schwartz (2002, 189) assert that culture consists not just shared interpretations of behaviours but also actual differences in behaviours.

Culture can be divided into two kinds: the first is generic culture which is a shared culture of all humans. The second is local culture which refers to symbols and schemas shared by particular social groups (Kawar 2012, 105). Focusing on a broader definition of culture, two meanings are derived. First is civilisation which encompasses arts and crafts, education and manners while the second refers to the way people think, feel and act in accordance with the values and norms dominant in their society (Kawar 2012, 105).

Following the above discussion, foreign culture may thus refer to the situation where one is exposed to different behavioural patterns than those one is accustomed to. These may include,

but not limited to, communication aspects, purchase behaviour, and product preference. Inferring from the levels at which a culture can work (Kawar 2012, 105-106), foreign culture can be seen at certain levels: national level; organisational level; occupation level; and gender level.

At the national level, "the national cultures differ at the level of unconscious values which are acquired during childhood and these national cultures are stable, the afterward changes that occur are practices whereby the underlying values are left untouched." At the organisational level, "organisational cultures differ at the level of practices which can be described as superficial and they are to some extent manageable. These organisational cultures differ from one company to the other within the same country." At the occupational level, culture comes between the national and organisational cultures. For instance, getting into an occupation such as teaching requires the social values acquired with the practices of the organisation. Finally, at the gender level, gender differences are recognized; there is what can be called men's culture that differs from women's culture. Though men and women have the ability to perform the same tasks, differences (which are highly dependent on the national culture of the country) arise when men and women respond to the symbols used in society (Kawar 2012, 105-106).

Hofstede, a sociologist who studied employees working in a multi-national corporation, describes four ways to help analyse and understand other cultures. First is individualism vs collectivism. Here, certain cultures emphasize more on the individual while in others the group is emphasized. Second is power distance. This scenario is present in cultures that believe that organisational power should be distributed unequally. Third is uncertainty avoidance which suggests that some cultures tend to accept change as a challenge while others do not. The final approach is masculinity vs femininity. In this approach, Hofstede tends to reject the terms "masculine" and "feminine". This suggests that these two terms should be overlooked so as to value other important issues, such as achievement and assertiveness, to the organisation.

2.2 The concept of integration

The past five or six decades have seen the development of integration which was initially designed and introduced to include immigrants in their host countries. Integration could be described as "a set of approaches, concepts, measures, programmes and policies". According to Žagar, these concepts and policies of integration of immigrants and persons belonging to marginalized communities were conceived as alternative concepts that would replace (or at least complement) diverse concepts of assimilation and segregation that had not produced the desired results in environments where they had been implemented. These developments are connected to the evolution of human rights after World War II, which had established international (universal and regional/continental) and national standards of human rights and protection of minorities. Accordingly, the EU and many European states have declared (social) integration to be their desired goal (Žagar 2006/7, 315).

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) define integration of immigrants from 1952 as “a gradual process by which new residents become active participants in the economic, social, civic, cultural and spiritual affairs of a new home land”. It is a dynamic process in which values are enriched through mutual acquaintance, accommodation and understanding. It is a process in which both migrants and their compatriots find an opportunity to make their own distinctive contributions (cited in Žagar 2006/7, 317).

The above definition illustrates the main goal of integration which was to replace the concepts of segregation and assimilation of immigrants and all ‘others’ that were different (in terms of characteristics and identities) from the majority population or dominant social structures. Despite the differences, the several concepts, models, policies, and practices of segregation and assimilation in different environments and historic epochs all aimed at the reduction of diversity and homogenization of specific environments and communities.

Žagar’s definition of (social) integration provides a broader understanding than most ‘traditional’ definitions that would limit this concept to integration of immigrants. He defines (social) integration as “a continuous process of voluntary, equal and full inclusion of all individuals, especially those who are marginalized, such as immigrants, persons belonging to ethnic and/or other minorities or deprived (social) groups, as well diverse distinct communities (as collective entities) into societies where they live”.

In this definition, human rights and the principles of democracy, solidarity, and equality and (social) justice underpin this gradual and continuous process. The main goal focuses on the (social) inclusion of all individuals, especially of immigrants and persons belonging to minorities, distinct and marginalized communities, as well as of these communities, into a democratic society that recognizes the existence of all diversities and pays adequate respect to them. The process of integration should recognize their different starting positions and their specific interests, ensure equal inclusion processes and relations, and establish their equal position (Žagar 2006/7, 315-316).

Following Žagar’s definition, it is imperative that integration policies focus on the individual, as well as collective, dimensions of inclusion and integration. However, efforts should be made to prevent and combat discrimination, social exclusion, isolation and marginalization of individuals, minorities and distinct communities/groups. Again, efforts should be made to spell out, determine, develop and promote measures, programmes, activities and active policies that facilitate equal and voluntary integration without assimilation pressures (Žagar 2006/7).

2.2.1 Benefits of cultural diversity in the workplace

When looking at the benefits of cultural diversity in the workplace, there are six units worth mentioning according to the European Institute for Managing Diversity (2003). Their benefits are the reduction of absenteeism, employee turnover, and loss of best talents. These units are:

- Society: by creating a supportive social climate that allows all employees to harmonize their professional and private lives makes the whole society benefit from diversity.
- The individual: he or she benefits from diversity through the sponsorship of promotion and development to advance in their profession which diversity efforts provide.
- Enterprises: they receive their benefits from the reduction of absenteeism, employee turnover, and loss of best talents.
- Consumers: efforts promoting cultural diversity contribute to the external image and social accountability of the company towards its external publics, which makes the consumers benefit from diversity as well.
- Economy: it benefits from the increase of the efficiency, creativity and participation of the human capital in the corporate objectives.
- Administrations: the stability of employment and work environment makes them benefit from managing cultural diversity.

The benefits of cultural diversity are divided into two categories which are internal benefits and external benefits.

2.2.2 Internal benefits of cultural diversity in the workplace

The internal benefits are positive effects that evolve and exist within the organisation, whereas the external benefits are the result of these internal benefits, which in turn affects the organization's response to the surrounding environment (Moore, 1999).

One of the major sources of task group ineffectiveness is groupthink that often exists in organizations with a homogeneous workforce. Diverse groups are less vulnerable to groupthink since they are less likely to subconsciously limit their perspectives, ideas, conclusions, and decisions to that of the majority or group leadership. If properly integrated, effective diversity initiatives enhance the productivity within their organizations (Adler, 1991) due to the increased complexity of the process that must take place in order for a group to realize its full potential (Moore, 1999). The outcome of this is that the wide range of human resources allows the group to become more creative and by effective handling of the confrontations of these different views is said to lead to ideas that are superior in creativity and in quality (Adler, 1991). In diverse groups, the decision making is more likely to generate a higher number of possible solutions and have more inventive alternatives compared to homogeneous groups (Swanson, 2002) before finalizing their decisions. Accordingly, diversity is said to lead to a greater capacity for problem solving than homogeneity (Iles, 1995; Mavin & Girlin, 2000).

Also, diverse groups with the skills and support systems to integrate effectively are likely to be considerably more effective than non-diverse or homogenous groups involved in the same activities (Moore, 1999). When given an appropriate organization context and an effective range of integrating skills, diverse groups can enhance their performance to a level that exceeds that associated with homogeneous groups. The main difference is that heterogeneity in groups leads

to better group performance, while homogeneity leads to better group process (Swanson, 2002).

Then again, by introducing an organizational culture in which the talent of all employees is realized, flexible working provisions are vacant, employees are valued, motivated, developed, and encouraged to progress in the organization; the result will lead to reduced absenteeism, and in turn increased productivity (Mavin & Girling, 2000). Consequently, benefits of diversity include reduction of costs associated with turnover and absenteeism (Maxwell, 2001). Effective diversity management will give results of decreased tension and conflict, and instead create a more satisfying work environment with enhanced creativity and improved innovation (Ago'cs & Burr 1996, Iles 1995, Mavin & Girling, 2000).

Furthermore, an organization with a reputation for developing all their staff, despite what their backgrounds are, and one which seeks to recognize the diversity of the workforce may more likely be better able to attract and retain minority employees since they will be able to more effectively meet their needs. This is especially important as the ethnic minority markets is growing and requires employees who display a sophisticated understanding of it (Iles, 1995). This ensures a healthy return of investment from human capital that in turn can contribute to organizational success (Maxwell et al, 2001). When preferring heterogeneous workforce, it enables selection from a wider pool of talent and thereby the organization has better ability to attract and retain employees with valuable skills (Moore, 1999) which in turn enables the best talent to be recruited and retained (Maxwell et al, 2001).

Also, by practicing cultural diversity at workplace, organizations may increase corporate profits by enabling every employee to fully contribute and develop to his or her professional potential (Moore, 1999), that is, in line with corporate objectives (EIMD, 2003). There are also some cases where this managerial philosophy of cultural diversity has reduced the overall costs of the organization (Iles, 1995; Moore, 1999) and thereby lead to a positive impact on measures of organizational efficiency (EIMD, 2003).

2.2.3 External benefits of cultural diversity

Cultural diversity in an international organization may lead to a greater understanding of diverse markets and customer preferences (Iles, 1995). This includes the perception that culturally diverse employees are more in tune with diverse customer base, and thus give better customer service that in turn lead to client satisfaction and stronger customer relationships (Mavin & Girling, 2000). In addition, promoting diversity issues have appeared to improve the public image of the company among those who value cultural diversity (Maxwell et al, 2001; Mavin & Girling, 2000).

It is important to understand the extent to which diversity is a multidimensional concept, and how it, in its broadest sense, impacts on all members of a particular organizational setting. By

bringing diverse groups together, an organization can create a more dynamic, more diverse and more complete organizational settings (Mavin & Girling, 2000).

The ability of a company to adjust rapidly and successfully to market changes improves when having a diverse workforce due to the previously mentioned understanding of customers (D'Netto & Sohal, 1999), which in other words means increase organizational flexibility and adaptability (Iles, 1995).

2.2.4 Challenges of cultural diversity in the workplace

We cannot explore the full benefits of the diversities in the workplace without mentioning any challenges. Hence some of the challenges associated with cultural diversity in the workplace are:

- Implementation of diversity in the workplace policies: This can be the intervening challenge to all those who advocate for diversity. Diversity makes collaborative group functioning more difficult because it becomes harder for everyone involved to see situations, understand them and act on them in similar ways. Hence, management must build and implement a customized strategy to maximize the effects of diversity in the workplace for their organizations using results of employee assessments and research data.
- Human qualities: such as prejudice and failure to recognize people's strengths becomes a major challenge in the workplace as indicated by Philips, (1993). A study conducted by Moore (1999), suggested that there are limits to which certain characteristics are perceived to be acceptable and there is a persistence of diversity based stereotypes in most workplaces. Thus in some settings it has been found that attitudes towards others at work reveal that it is acceptable to display a certain level of diversity. To further it, when an individual's characteristics fall outside a range of perceived normality he or she is usually exposed to a much higher possibility of being labeled as different and also being treated differently within his or her social contexts. In sum, people can be evaluated negatively by displaying a level of diversity that is deemed inappropriate.
- Communication barriers: Perceptual, cultural and language barriers need to be overcome for diversity programs to succeed. Ineffective communication of key objectives results in confusion, lack of teamwork, and low morale. Good communication may be suffering in diverse group when members are not fluent in the group's working language and must have to employ translators. Speed in communication will decrease and the risk for mistakes will increase. Owing to lack of trust and communication inaccuracies, level of tensions in culturally diverse groups often exceed those in homogeneous groups. An example is diverse groups often exhibit signs of considerable social stress, including bickering, apathy, single culture-party domination of discussion, stubbornness, and reprimanding.

- Employees Resistance to change: There are always employees who will refuse to accept the fact that the social and cultural makeup of their workplace is changing. Different people in the workplace have their own ideologies and expectations about work as well as differences in communication styles, how they use technology, what motivates them on the job, and how they deal with others in positions of authority. These differences, if not addressed, can be disruptive and lead to serious misunderstandings. The idea that this is how it is always done, silences new ideas and inhibits progress (Diversity Officer Magazine, 2010).

3 Hofstede's six dimensional models of culture

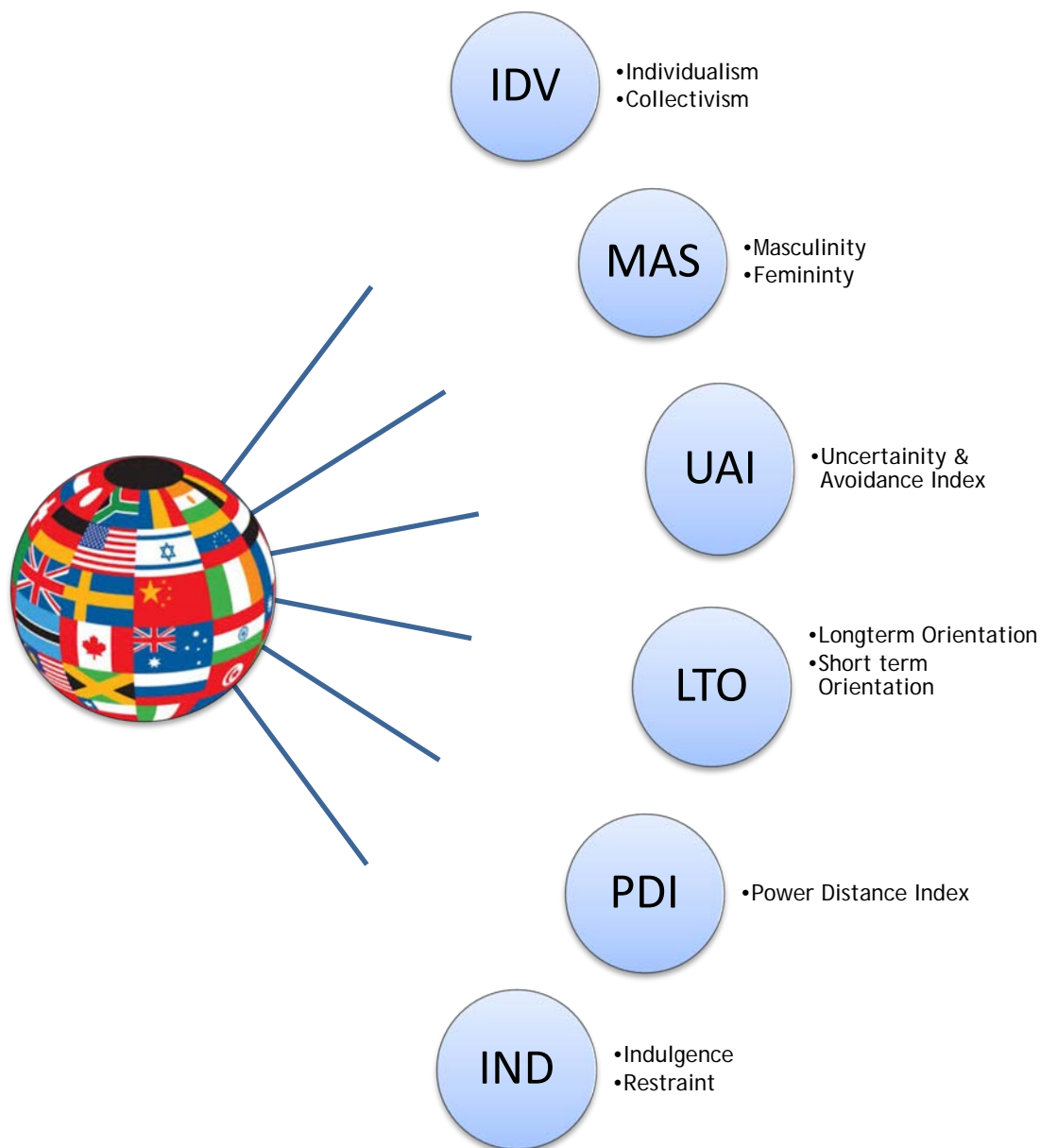


Figure 2: Hofstede's six dimensions model (6D Model) of culture

The Hofstede's six dimension models applied in the theoretical framework from which culture is understood. To address the issues surrounding managing cultural diversity in the workplace, for that matter care homes and cleaning services, Hofstede's 6D models and the model for studying diversity management are used as the theoretical basis.

3.1 Hofstede's 6D model

In order to comprehend the people one is working with, it is imperative that one understands where these people are coming from, and on what bases do they found their assumptions on. This certainly helps to understand their unique values, norms, and working procedures that that are different from our own. Getting a deeper understanding of these differences in core values leads to proper management of people and improved working relations, among other things. Professor Geert Hofstede conducted a research and theory about five dimensions of national culture that can be used to compare the value differences between countries and categorizing cultures. His study, although carried out in 1967, is still considered as a ground-breaking theory in cultural studies. Hofstede discovered first four dimensions of national culture: Power Distance (PD); Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV); Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS); and Uncertain Avoidance (UAI). Following Michael Bond's research, the fifth dimension called Long Term was added in 1991. Later, in 2010, a sixth dimension called Indulgence versus Restraint (IVR) was included to the model based on Michael Minkov's analysis of 93 countries (Hofstede 1967; Häkli 2010; The Hofstede Culture - Geert Hofstede; Tervonen 2012).

3.2 Power Distance

Power Distance Index measures to which degree there is inequality in a society. This can be seen in different forms: some people have more power than others; some gain more wealth than others; and some have more status and respect over others. Power Distance is defined as "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally." Following this definition, countries may be grouped into two - high power distance (unequal) and low power distance (equal). In countries with high PDI score, it is expected that children respect and obey their parents and other elderly persons through their lives and seek for their advice. There is a stricter hierarchy system where bosses and superiors have privileges and are not very easily accessible. Subordinates are expected to be told what to do. Examples of countries with high power distance include eastern European countries and most Asian countries. Countries with low PDI scores (equal), children are taught to be responsible for their actions and are treated as equals to their parents as soon as they are old enough. Hierarchy system exists for convenience and

superiors and subordinates regard each other equal, except that their roles are unequal. Managers and superiors are easily accessible. Examples of countries with low power distance values are the Nordic countries and in German-speaking countries (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 40-58; The Hofstede Centre - National culture; Tervonen 2012).

In particular, Finland scores low (33) on this dimension with the following characteristics: being independent, hierarchy for convenience only, equal rights, superiors accessible, coaching leader, management facilitates and empowers. Power is decentralized and managers count on the experience of their team members. Employees expect to be consulted. Control is disliked and attitude towards managers are informal and on first name basis. Communication is direct and participative (The Hofstede Centre - National culture).

3.3 Individualism versus Collectivism

This refers to the role of the individual versus the role of the group. High individualism means "I" and taking care of oneself and the closest nuclear family only. Everybody is accountable only for him/herself. With collectivism, emphasis is placed on the group or "us" consciousness rather than the "I" consciousness. In countries with the "us" consciousness, people are born to extended families with grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins; thus family and other in-groups (e.g. organisations) are important to individuals and they remain loyal and to these groups as well as taking care of each other. Harmony is essential for the group's survival and any inappropriate behaviour is seen to affect the group. Hence, there are obligations towards the family and other in-groups. Countries with high power distance are associated with collectivism while low power distance is associated with individualism. Countries with high individualism generally include wealthy countries such as the United States, Australia, and Great Britain while collectivistic countries are usually poor countries like Indonesia, Colombia and Guatemala (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 40-58; The Hofstede Centre - National culture; Tervonen 2012).

Finland is seen to be an individualistic society (score = 63) with a high preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. In individualistic societies offence causes guilt and a loss of self-esteem, the employer/employee relationship is a contract based on mutual advantage, hiring and promotion decisions are supposed to be based on merit only, management is the management of individuals (The Hofstede Centre - National culture).

3.4 Masculinity versus Femininity

A masculine society is one where achievement, success and recognition are highly valued whereas relationships, taking care of others and the quality of life are common to a feminine society. In a masculine society, male and female roles are distinct; men are supposed to be tough, ambitious, and assertive while the women are supposed to be tender, show feelings and

carrying for the weak and quality of life. High masculinity countries are characterised by competition and need to excel, importance on getting money and other possessions, and the belief that people live in order to work.

On the contrary, in a feminine society, emotional gender roles overlap suggesting that both men and women should be modest and both genders can be tender and show feelings. High feminine countries respect striving for consensus, small and modest things are considered beautiful and leisure time is preferred to more money based on the belief that people work in order to live. In other words, "masculine culture countries strive for a performance society, feminine countries for a welfare society". The most masculine countries include all the Anglo countries and some German-speaking countries, while the most feminine countries were found among the Nordic countries and some Latin countries (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 120 - 147; Häkli 2010; The Hofstede Centre - National culture; Tervonen 2012).

With a score of 26, Finland is considered a feminine society. Emphasis is placed on well-being, status is not shown, managers strive for consensus, people value equality, solidarity and quality in their working lives. Conflicts are resolved by compromise and negotiation. Incentives such as free time and flexibility are favoured. For a manager to be effective, s/he has to be supportive, and decision making is achieved through involvement (The Hofstede Centre - National culture).

3.5 Uncertainty Avoidance

This refers to the tolerance/intolerance of ambiguity in a society. Hofstede defines uncertainty avoidance as the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations. Countries that scored high in uncertainty avoidance have people with a need for certainty and rules, and they strive best to avoid failures. People in countries that scored low in uncertainty avoidance consider uncertainty a normal feature in life; hence people are willing to take risks and there is a low level of anxiety in general about what will happen in the future. People in strong uncertainty avoidance cultures stay longer in one employer's service, have an inner urge to work hard and they consider time being money. On the other hand, weak uncertainty cultures have more ethnic tolerance and a more positive attitude for foreigners and immigrants than their counterparts, and support human rights for everybody. Countries that scored high in uncertainty in avoidance included Latin American, Latin European and Mediterranean countries as well as Japan and South Korea. All other Asian countries scored low values together with the African, Nordic and Anglo countries (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 167 - 203; Häkli 2010; The Hofstede Centre - National culture; Tervonen 2012).

Based on the score of 59, Finland has a high preference for avoiding uncertainty. This suggests that the prevailing cultures generally seeks to maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour and are intolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas. There is an inner urge to be busy and work hard, precision and punctuality are the norm, innovation may be resisted and security is an important element in individual motivation (The Hofstede Centre - National culture).

3.6 Long term Orientation

Long Term Orientation refers to fostering of virtues oriented toward future rewards whereas the opposite short term orientation is about fostering of virtues related to the past and present. Characteristics of long term orientation are acceptance of change, thrift, persistence and saving for tomorrow while striving for slow, long term results. Short term orientation looks at, including but not limited to, concern for stability and traditions, spending for today and expecting quick results. Countries associated with short term orientation scores are concerned with one absolute truth and universal perception of what is considered right/wrong and good/evil.

On the other hand, countries with long term orientation can have many truths and that which is considered good or evil can be judged based on the occasion. East Asian countries are examples of the long term oriented countries while the Anglo countries are short term oriented together with Zimbabwe, Nigeria, and Pakistan (Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 210 - 212, 232; Häkli 2010; The Hofstede Centre - National culture; Tervonen 2012).

Finland recorded a score of 38 and can be classified as normative. There is a strong desire to establish the absolute Truth and people are normative in their thinking. They exhibit great respect for traditions, a relatively small propensity to save for the future, and a focus on achieving quick results (The Hofstede Centre - National culture).

3.7 Indulgence versus Restraint

The latest dimension, Indulgence versus Restraint, is linked with happiness, leisure, having control of one's life and the importance people attach with the freedom of expression. Characteristics of people in countries that scored high in restraint have: little or no importance attached to free expressions by individuals and they often suppress the feelings of satisfying their needs and desires; and regulate these with social norms. There are no such restrictions concerning enjoying life, freedom of expression and having fun in societies scoring high in indulgence (The Hofstede Centre - National Culture; Tervonen 2012).

On this dimension, Finland can be described as an indulgent country (score = 57). The culture allows individuals to maintain a positive attitude and tendency towards optimism. People place much importance on leisure time, and do whatever they deem right for their own happiness (The Hofstede Centre - National culture).

Having discussed Hofstede's cultural dimensions, other scholars have identified fundamental cultural dimensions as well. In Parson's five relational, Individualism versus Communitarianism is basically the same as Hofstede's Individualism versus Collectivism. There are also Universalism versus Particularism, Neutral versus Emotional, Specific versus Diffuse, and Achievement versus Ascription. In Universalist cultures, what is right/wrong or good/bad is defined and this is always applied. Particularist cultures, rather judge each situation differently according to the circumstances. The neutral versus emotional reflects how strongly feelings are shown and

expressed. Emotional cultures are characterized with both verbal and non-verbal expressions of feelings using strong gestures and facial expressions whereas in neutral cultures such strong expressions and touching are taboos and people are rather calm and do not reveal what they are thinking. In specific cultures, different areas of life are considered specific cases and apart from each other whereas in diffuse cultures everything are joined together. Thus, specific cultures are very precise, direct and transparent while diffuse cultures are indirect, ambiguous and evasive. Achievement versus ascription describes how we accord status to people in our societies. In certain cultures, status is granted based on the individual's personal achievements while in some cultures this is done based, including but not limited to, the person's age, gender or education (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1997, 29, 48-49, 69-102; Tervonen 2012).

A review of Hofstede's and other scholars' findings on these cultural dimensions reveal that there are several different aspects affecting national cultures which determines people's behaviour at home, workplaces and organisations. It is of great importance to note that management practices, models and theories are constrained by their cultural context. Hence, they should be applied with caution.

4 Model for diversity management

Cox and Blake (1991, p.45) define diversity management as a "variety of management issues and activities related to hiring and effective utilization of personnel from different cultural backgrounds" Diversity management has begun to gain a robust position in the human resource strategies of international companies and organisations. This is mainly due to the globalisation and international mergers having influenced the movement of workers around the globe. The concept of diversity management is about fundamentally and comprehensively changing the procedures and ways of thinking, by focusing on new abilities, skills, attributes and experiences without prejudice. It is connected with inclusion, cohesiveness, and synergy between the employees rather than individual performance (Lahti 2008, 17-19, 32-33).

The development of an organisational culture is a fundamental requirement for diversity management success (Cuomo & Mapelli 2007), which must have the integration values (Pless & Maak 2004). This calls for the need for competencies which allow integration values as well as instruments for diversity management.

The success of diversity management rests on the shoulders of the supervisors. Hence, implementing diversity management should begin at the management level, making the management culturally more diverse. Other crucial factors for success include the ways of interacting, the behaviour towards employees, networking, justness and overall respect for the individuals. Numerous studies have suggested a number of benefits in diversity management as such many companies are striving for it to gain competitive advantage. As companies are becoming more diversified due to natural change, care should be taken in preferring minorities and ignoring

the qualifications for the job which may turn out to be a discriminating act towards the majority of job seekers (Lahti 2008, 20-22, 25, 33).

4.1 Motives for utilizing diversity management

Motives for utilizing diversity management can be divided into internal and external possibilities and problems. Internal possibilities include higher productivity, innovativeness, inspiring atmosphere and thus constancy of personnel while external possibilities propose new customer segments and recognizing their needs, social responsibility and a reputation as a pioneer on this field. The internal problems could be conflicts and frustration among the employees, high staff turnover and problems with the quality of work. The external problems include, but not limited to, recruiting problems, losses in the amount of customers and strong competitors. The companies should focus more on both internal and external possibilities and opportunities to increase the utilization of diversity management (Lahti 2008, 35-39).

4.1.1 Steps of organizational change

There are various different theories about what kind of strategies is appropriate in acquiring diversity in a company. However, there seems to be a unanimous view among the theorists about the levels of organizational change. It is argued that structural change, cultural change and behavioural change are crucial to the development of diversity in the company. These three changes interact, reinforce and complete one another; thus, there should be a sufficient amount of each to maximize the change towards diversity (Holvino et al. 2004, 250-256).

Structural change refers to the policies, practices and other formal systems, which affect achieving diversity. Examples include reviewing the recruitment process, organizing career development programs, implementing pay equity, job sharing and arranging work schedules and vacation policies to be more flexible (Holvino et al. 2004, 250-256).

Cultural change is a very complicated transformation as it is associated with the organization's values, beliefs and perceptions that contribute the forming of the organizational culture. The images, perceptions and informal rules of individuals influence the way they think and act. Through cultural audits, the characteristics of the organizational culture can be reorganized and their impact on various groups and individuals can be examined. The audits analyze values, rituals, symbols and behaviour and the kind of effects they have on the company's atmosphere and performance (Holvino et al. 2004, 250-256).

Behavioural change refers to the attitudes and assumptions of the individual employees as well as various groups and how they behave towards each other. The manner of communication, stereotyping and humor are interpreted differently based on the group or individual that could limit increasing the benefits of diversity. To sustain behaviour change, diversity training can be organized to reduce stereotypes and negative attitudes towards other cultures as well as preparing staff for the change. In addition, multicultural teams can be created to encourage tolerance and enhance innovativeness (Holvino et al. 2004, 250-256).

5 Research methodology

5.1 Research design

The descriptive research design was used for this thesis. It provides answers to the questions of *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *how* in line with the research problem. Though it cannot conclusively ascertain *why* responses, nonetheless it can be used to gather information regarding the prevailing status of the phenomena and to describe “what exists” in line with the variables or conditions in a situation. (Anastas 1999; McNabb 2008). Thus, it goes beyond exploratory research by ascertaining and describing the characteristics of the pertinent issues.

5.2 Study design

The qualitative method was employed to find out how cultural diversity is managed at the workplace in the care-homes and cleaning services. This is to gain an in-depth knowledge from the experiences of people who have personal knowledge of the phenomenon (Polit & Beck 2010).

According to Polit and Beck (2010, 565), qualitative research is “the investigation of phenomena, typically in an in-depth and holistic fashion, through the collection of rich narrative materials using a flexible research design”. Qualitative research method is acknowledged for its ability to study people in their natural environment without manipulation, and the benefits associated with this method is evident when there is little knowledge or the issues are sensitive (Bowling 2002, 352).

5.3 Sampling

Alston and Bowles (2003:66) argue that “a qualitative sample is usually chosen purposively to reflect the situation under review.” This is because qualitative studies do not lay claim that the sample is representative of the whole population. Researchers employing this method are less interested in recognizing patterns of behaviour, attitudes or other phenomena than they are in understanding social reality (Alston & Bowles 2003). Bowling (2002) also argues that in conducting qualitative in-depth interviews, the sample sizes are small because of the complex nature of the data and their ability to provide rich insights rather than statistics.

In this case 30 respondents comprising 15 employees and 15 managers were purposively selected from the care-homes and cleaning services companies in Helsinki metropolitan region. The selected care homes are namely, Aurora-Koti (home) in Espoo, Leenankoti (home) in Helsinki and Hoitokoti Tellus in Vantaa. For the cleaning services, Lassila-Tikanoja and ISS facility services companies were chosen. The researchers are of the opinion; these selected respondents can provide in-depth information on the issue of managing cultural diversity at the workplace.

5.4 Data collection instrument

According to Alston and Bowles (2003, 67), "Qualitative methods are far more flexible and allow the researcher to change and develop the methods employed. For example, survey methods may be structured or semi-structured, with topic areas specified and questions varying depending on the issues being explored. This allows the researcher to move into new areas of inquiry and to better understand the perspectives and priorities of the subject."

Some of the data collections used in qualitative research are semi-structured interview, focus group discussion, and interview guide. A semi-structured interview allows the researcher to explore certain designated areas of inquiry with the interviewees while focus group discussion allows interviewees to 'brainstorm' over issues raised in the group situation. The interview guide is a structured data collection instrument which guides the researcher in probing the issues of concern. This thesis adopted the interview guide to gather the data.

According to Whiting (2007, 36), it is required that semi-structured interviews should be face-to-face and "open, direct, verbal questions are used to solicit detailed narratives and stories". Even though it was initially agreed among the respondents to have interviews in person, the participants declined to do so for fear of being victimized but were willing to complete the questionnaires in private and sealed in envelopes the researchers provided. They cited an "undercover" programme aired on Yle Television station (The Finnish National Television 2) as their main reason not to grant interviews in person.

5.5 Data collection

The data collection process took place in the winter of 2015 lasting over a period of two months from 12th February 2015 to 13th April 2015. However, in line with what the study seeks to achieve, two types of interview guides were created, one targeting managers of selected case companies and the other for their employees. This is to ensure accurate data gathering from target groups for analytical purposes. The interview guides were created in English and for privacy reasons, individual respondents personal details such as name and ethnicity were not included but basic information's such as gender, education were included.

In all, 30 interview guides and envelopes (15 for employees and 15 for managers) were given out for data collection from selected care homes and cleaning services companies in Espoo, Helsinki and Vantaa municipalities. These were delivered in person at the front desks of chosen institutions. The two separate forms were to be distributed by contact manager's in these organizations to their workers and colleague managers. It was agreed that the forms could be collected after two weeks (14 working days) for analysis.

However, after the agreed period of two - weeks, the completed semi-structured interview schedules (sealed in the envelopes) were picked from the front desks of the case companies. In all, 15 participants took part in the interview out of initial target of 30. The number of managers that participated were 7 that is, 4 managers from care homes and 3 from cleaning services firms. On the other hand, 8 employees took part in the survey with 4 each participating

from care homes and cleaning services. As already mentioned qualitative studies rely on gaining rich insights on the issue of interest rather than providing statistics. For that matter, the researchers were not worried about non participation of some of the interviewees during the data collection phase.

5.6 Sources of information

The thesis information was gathered from primary and secondary sources for data analysis.

5.6.1 Primary sources of information

Primary sources are original, uninterpreted experiences which are created by witnesses or participants of an event (Twin Cities Library, 2013). These sources enable researchers to offer their personal view by interpreting the original data gathered rather than relying on the interpretations of others. Sources of primary information include, but not limited to, scholarly journal articles, interviews, and data from research study, and websites.

The primary source of information was gathered by the semi-structured interviews (and interview guide) that was presented to managers and employees of selected care homes and cleaning services companies in Helsinki metropolitan region. The selected care homes are namely, Aurora-Koti (home) in Espoo, Leenankoti (home) in Helsinki and Hoitokoti Tellus in Vantaa. For the cleaning services, Lassila - Tikanoja and ISS Facility services companies were chosen.

Brief background information on case organizations

Care Homes (Aurora Koti, Leenankoti and Hoitokoti)

The three care homes mentioned - above are owned and operated by the department of Social and health care services of their respective municipalities but frequently rent services (logistics and labour) from private organizations. The care homes are publicly funded and are open to every citizen when they are of old age (elderly) and require care. (Ministry of social affairs & health of Finland)

Lassila - Tikanoja oy Limited (L&T)

Lassila -Tikanoja is a multiservice company established in 1905 in the town of Vaasa, as a wholesale business entity in Finland. The company evolved through many phases into an international corporation with a focus on environmental management and support services for properties and plants. The firm operates in Finland, Sweden and Russia. The company provides services in waste management (recycling), cleaning and support services, property maintenance and sewer maintenance. Other services include, damage repair services, process cleaning, environmental construction and bajamaja as well as event services. The firm has a labour force of 8000 persons with net sales of EUR 639.7 million in 2014. The firm is listed on Nasdaq Helsinki stock exchange. (Lassila-tikanoja)

ISS Facility Services Limited

ISS facilities services Finland is part of international ISS group with operations in over 50 countries. It founded in 1901 in Copenhagen in Denmark. The firm provides services in facility management, security services, catering services, cleaning services and property services as well as support services. ISS facility services operate all over Finland with a labour force of 12,000 people. Furthermore, the firm's annual turnover in 2013 amounted to EUR 534 million. (ISS Finland)

5.6.2 secondary sources of information

on works written by others. Secondary sources are used by authors to present evidence, back up arguments and statements, or help represent an opinion by using and citing multiple sources" (Twin Cities Library, 2013). Some of the secondary sources of information used are literature reviews, websites, textbooks, dictionaries, and encyclopedias. These helped the researchers to uncover the issues surrounding the research topic as well as broaden their understanding via other authors' perspectives, interpretations, and conclusions.

5.7 Data analysis

The first step required in the data analysis process is transcribing. As interviewees preferred responding to the issues raised in the data collection instruments in the absence of the interviewer, the researcher moved a step further by reading through the responses to have an overview.

The next step was data analysis. The purpose of data analysis focuses on organizing, providing structure to, and eliciting meaning from data (Polit & Beck 2004). Boeije (2009) explains that one cannot present raw data alone but rather re-interpret them and decide on the preferred message to be communicated to the reader.

The typed interview data were thoroughly read to identify meaning and to gain comprehension. The data were transcribed via Microsoft Word. The method of data collection was applied by breaking down and labeling large amount of information into meaningful units (Macnee & McCabe 2008, 70).

This thesis adopted the qualitative content analysis which required that the data were broken down into small units. They were then coded and named according to their content. The inductive data analysis approach which allows reasoning of specific observations to general rules was also used. Subsequently, themes were formulated which were examined and compared repeatedly. (Polit & Beck 2008, 573,576,713.)

The results of the study describe what was found by organizing the data into seven themes and by providing examples of certain sentences used by participants to support and clarify the meaning of those themes (Macnee & McCabe 2008, 69).

6 Findings/ Discussions

This chapter presents the findings and discusses them in line with the reviewed literature. The results are presented along the two main research questions; - challenges of managing cultural diversity and benefits of cultural diversity in care-home and cleaning services. In all, eight employees and seven managers were interviewed.

The results are presented based on the objectives of the study: identify challenges of managing cultural diversity in care - homes and cleaning services; and explore the benefits of cultural diversity in care - homes and cleaning services.

Seven managers were interviewed comprising five females and two males. Two of the females and a male were aged between 20 to 35 years. The rest were all aged between 36 to 45 years. The least level of education was Vocational school while the highest was masters' degree. Two of the males as well as a female was working in the cleaning-services industry. The rest were working in the health-care industry.

The interview involved eight employees with six males and two females. Five of the employees were aged between 26 and 36 years while the rest were aged between 37 and 48 years. The level of education was bachelor's degree while the highest was masters' degree. All the female employees interviewed were working in the health-care industry including one male employee. The other male employees were working in the cleaning industry. The interview revealed that the employees had a fair level of fluency in both written and spoken Finnish language although two of them indicated poor.

6.1 Challenges of managing cultural diversity

With the first objective, the main challenges found were: language barrier; cultural differences; discrimination; underemployment and lack for career growth; adaptability of migrant workers to Finish work culture; and need for government agencies intervention in integrating migrant workers.

Language barrier

The thesis probed challenges that managers encounter when managing culturally diversified employees. It was found that one common challenge was language barrier. It was revealed that some workers are unable to express themselves or properly understand instructions. Since some workers lack the basics of the Finnish language, managers spend time in explaining to them which is quite time-consuming.

Language barrier poses a challenge to employees at the workplace. The employees explained that they are unable to express themselves as they wished and at times do not understand

instructions given which makes them act contrary. This sometimes makes their supervisors angry and creates a negative impression. Sometimes, they feel isolated and are not confident in themselves. This scenario confirms Hofstede's assertion that in individualistic societies, offence causes guilt and a loss of self-esteem. One respondent indicated that calling on other employees to explain things makes one look odd. This phenomenon is not unusual to Finland's score on Hofstede's power distance index measure. Because there is a greater sense of independence, communication is direct and participative, and managers count on the experience of their team members, an employee's inability to communicate properly deviates from the norm. Also, since Finland is seen to be an individualistic society, it is expected that employees should be able to take care of themselves including the ability to communicate properly.

Due to the language barrier, workers lack professional career growth. This could be attributed to their lack of mastery skills in the language making it difficult for them to write report as expected. This tends to affect their level of productivity as they cannot effectively work on their own as well making the work stressful as reported by one respondent. Also, skills and creative abilities are not utilized as one would have wished for. In particular, one respondent stated that my skills and talent are being wasted. Another also stated that there is no career growth insight even though I have master's degree in health care (Nursing).

Cultural Differences

Another challenge is the cultural differences in areas such as work, time management, and family life. According to one female manager, what is normal in Finland maybe rude in some cultures vice versa. Another male manager explained that workers sometimes come to work late or call late to explain why they can't make it. Another challenge identified is the difficulty of immigrants adapting to Finnish work culture.

The above explains Finland's high preference for avoiding uncertainty. This suggests that the prevailing culture generally seeks to maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour and are intolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas. There is an inner urge to be busy, hardworking, precise and punctual.

Discrimination

The responses showed that all the managers were in agreement that there had not been discrimination or unfair treatment among workers. However, a male and female manager indicated yes. The following are quotations from the managers.

"I will say yes and no because, sometimes some of the workers complain about one bad experience or the other. Finland is getting use to the idea of working with people from other countries so it can be understood from this point."

(Male manager)

"Many of our clients are very old and are not use to the idea of being cared for by other nationals they are not use to, there have been occasional issues here and there but we try to solve it as quickly as possible." (Female manager)

This was further emphasized by the employees. They that they had faced some form of discrimination at work while performing their duties. Some had received unfair treatment from colleagues as well as abusive, negative, and racial comments from the clients especially the aged people. In particular, the following were reported:

"I have experienced unfair treatment from work colleagues and abusive comments from the clients (old people am caring for) such as black people go back to your country in Finnish. Others do not want to be touched." (Male employee with masters' degree at Health-care industry)

"Migrant workers are usually of the least priority when workers welfare are being considered during change or planning in the company I work for." (Male employee with masters' degree at cleaning industry)

"They create internal groups (Finnish) and they do not want to associate themselves with foreigners in the work place and this affects me psychologically resulting in low productivity."(Male employee with bachelor's degree at cleaning industry)

Preference for Finn employees by clients was also seen as a challenge by the managers. A male manager explained that clients are sometimes not comfortable when someone other than a Finn is coming to work in their premises due to security reasons.

The issue of discrimination confirms Finland's normative stance on long term orientation as well as high preference for avoiding uncertainty of Hofstede's 6D model. There is a strong desire to establish the absolute truth and people are normative in their thinking as well as exhibit great respect for traditions. The culture seeks to maintain rigid codes of belief and behaviour and are intolerant of unorthodox behaviour and ideas.

Underemployment and lack of career growth

Issues of utilization of qualification and professional skills were probed. The employees unanimously agreed that their qualification and professional skills were not being fully utilized. This was because some were not working in their field of studies, working in an area that only requires physical strength with little or no education. There were some interesting issues that were reported.

"I am over qualified for what am currently doing. All the duties I perform only require physical strength. Even though I have many years of experience as a health worker and holds master's degree, I am not applying any of these skills in my work." (Male employee with masters' degree at Health-care industry)

"No, Even though I have master's degree in social work, I work as a care giver due to difficulty in the Finnish language. All the tasks I perform do not require writing." (Female employee with masters' degree at Health-care industry)

"No, my professional skills and educational achievements are not recognized at my work place." (Male employee with masters' degree at cleaning industry)

"No, I am underemployed as what I do at work do not require any mental skills. I work as assistant care giver even though I have many years of experience and the required qualifications." (Male employee with masters' degree at Health-care industry)

"No, I am a trained Nurse but I'm not practicing. I work as a care giver which requires little training or sometimes no qualification at all." (Female employee with bachelor's degree at Health-care industry)

"No, I am underemployed as what I do presently requires little or no education at all. I have a degree in Business Administration." (Male employee with bachelor's degree at cleaning industry)

On career development plans as indicated by the managers, the interview revealed that in the cleaning services industry, there was no career development plans for workers. However, in the case of the health-care industry, there were career development plans. Training courses (including refresher courses) are organized from time to time to all workers. These are geared towards equipping workers with techniques on day-to-day care of clients (older people). Though the managers mentioned career development plans, the employees were of the view that they do not foresee any career development in their current job in the near future.

Adaptability of migrant workers to Finnish work culture

From the discussion with the managers, it was evident that workers with different cultural backgrounds had fairly adapted to the Finnish work culture. There was a positive response on the acceptance of workers from other cultural background to the Finnish work culture by clients/customers. Four of the managers indicated that clients had a fair acceptance of workers with non-Finnish background while three managers indicated good acceptance.

The employees felt comfortable working with people from other cultures. The employees revealed that they were okay with the way they had adapted to the Finnish work culture. The respondents indicated a fair acceptance level of their respective company's clientele/customers towards them.

Acceptance of migrant workers

There was a unanimous agreement among the managers that the ministry of labour and employment needs to do more in promoting the acceptance of workers from other cultures. It was suggested that the ministry of labour and employment collaborate with the ministry of culture to educate or create awareness on the need to accept employees with different cultural backgrounds through television and other mediums. In particular, the following statements were made:

"Most management positions are held by natives/ Finns so I think they should encourage management to consider immigrants who have the required experiences and skills into management positions." (Male manager, cleaning-services industry).

"The ministry of culture and the labour ministry can adopt some strategic campaigns to educate the Finnish population on issues of diversity and globalization." (Female manager, Health-care industry).

Employees too were of the opinion that the ministry of labour and employment needs to do more in promoting the acceptance of workers from other cultures. The responses gathered showed that the ministry of labour and employment needs to initiate policies aimed at absorbing immigrants into the job market as well pursuing a gradual approach backed with action to change the perceptions and behaviours of people towards other nationals.

Specifically, the ministry should: encourage various industries to give immigrants professional jobs with focus on their proven skills, experience, and educational qualifications; educate the Finnish society about the acceptance of new cultures in their society because globalization and technology is bringing the world closer; and collaborate with the immigration service to make work permits easily accessible and flexible.

Integrating migrant workers to working life

Though the employees stated that there is no integration programme at their respective companies for immigrant workers, managers had in mind some measures that will be put in place to help workers adjust to working life in Finland. These include insisting that workers have work/residence permit and tax card, organizing work orientation week, encouraging them to attend Finnish language courses to aid their communicative skills, maintaining an open-mind towards different culture, explaining some Finnish culture, and giving them pieces of advice when needed. The underlying reason to these measures is that cultural diversity is seen as an asset rather than challenge. One of the female managers indicated that *"I consider it cultural diversity] an asset because it is good to learn from one another"*.

6.2 Benefits of cultural diversity in care - homes and cleaning services

Managers were of the view that cultural diversity is seen as an asset rather than challenge. One of the female respondents intimated that *I consider it [cultural diversity] an asset because it is good to learn from one another.*

The managers were also of the firm belief that given the equivalent qualification and experience, they will hire a person from a different culture. The objective for employing such a person is to get the job done. Managers are motivated to hire or work with people from other cultures. These include: creating an international work environment; pooling together the skills, talents, and experiences of workers towards the growth of the company; and stimulating competition among workers to achieve high productivity. This finding reflects the six units (society, individual, enterprises, consumers, economy, and administrations) of the benefits of cultural diversity in workplace as stated by the European Institute of Managing Diversity (2003) as well as the internal (Moore 1999, Iles 1995, Ago'cs & Burr 1996, Mavin & Girlin 2000, Swanson 2002) and external (Iles 1995, D'Netto & Sohal 1999, Mavin & Girling 2000,) benefits of cultural diversity.

6.3 Comparing results of care homes and cleaning services

The employees had similar understanding of the concept of cultural diversity which is about people with different cultural backgrounds living or working together in an organization or in a country.

One difference the thesis found was that whereas there are career development plans, as indicated by the managers, in the health-care industry, there is none for those in the cleaning services industry.

The discussion with the managers concluded with areas that non-Finnish workers need to improve upon in order to remain attractive to prospective employers. One common area is the Finnish language course. This is because being able to learn the language makes it easy for a non-Finnish worker to be integrated into the Finnish society. The second area is to register with the Finnish employment, seek for career guidance and counseling, as well as frequently checking for available job offers. Another area is to upload their CVs to the Finnish CV data bank called CV-Netti. Finally, employees are expected to attend career fairs or recruitment seminars to meet potential employers. This enables them to have discuss in person with the employers what they can offer.

6.4 Validity and reliability of the findings

Validity refers to the degree to which a research study measures what it intends to measure. To address the issue of managing cultural diversity at the workplace, the interview guide was developed to elicit information per the phenomenon under study.

In qualitative studies, data is checked for reliability with the objective of confirming that the findings reflect accurately the experiences of the respondents (or participants) rather than the

viewpoints of the researchers (Polit & Beck 2004, 539). The researchers ensured that respondents were willing to share their experiences and feelings. Though, the respondents could not grant a one-on-one interview with the researchers, the interview guide which was given them was responded to accordingly.

Based on Lincoln and Guba's framework for quality criteria in their book, the following criteria for developing reliability were adhered to: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Polit & Beck 2012, 584-585). Respondents who were qualified workers at the respective workplace were interviewed; hence, credible data was obtained. Dependability means that data obtained is reliable and stable over a period of time and under different conditions. Since data obtained was credible, it also lends itself for dependability. To achieve confirmability, respondents' views were gathered and presented rather than the researchers' motivations and perceptions. The findings of the thesis is similar to other studies carried in abroad; hence, it is transferable.

7 Conclusion

The study examined how cultural diversity is managed and its associated challenges and benefits at the work environment in care homes and cleaning services in Finland. The health care and cleaning services sectors were chosen for this thesis primarily due to its large number of immigrants working in these sectors. According to the Finnish Labour Ministry, the projected number of immigrant workers would increase by the year 2025 particularly in the health care and other services sectors (Lassila - Tikanoja oy) due to the aging population of the Finnish labour force and low birth rate by Finns (Statistics - Finland). As Finland becomes multicultural, there would be workplace diversity and management of diversity would become a necessity.

The study reviewed the concept of diversity, foreign culture, and integration. It also looked at benefits and challenges of cultural diversity in the workplace. The theoretical framework was based on Hofstede's six dimensions model to address issues surrounding managing cultural diversity in the workplace. Further, the model for diversity management was reviewed.

The study used the descriptive research design and adopted the qualitative method to gain an in-depth knowledge from the experiences of people who have personal knowledge of the issue. Thirty respondents were purposively selected from the care homes (Aurora care home, Leenankoti care home and Hoitokoti Tellus care home) and cleaning services (Lassila-Tikanoja and ISS facility services companies). However, 15 respondents were involved: 7 managers with four managers from care homes and three from cleaning services firms; and 8 employees with four each from care homes and cleaning services. Since qualitative studies rely on gaining rich insights on the issue of interest rather than providing statistics, the researchers were not worried about non participation of respondents during the data collection phase. Both primary and secondary sources of information were used to obtain relevant data on managing cultural diversity at the work environment. The qualitative content analysis as well as inductive data analysis approach were used to analyse the data.

The main challenges associated with managing cultural diversity were: language barrier; cultural differences; discrimination; underemployment and lack of career growth; adaptability of migrant workers to Finnish work culture; and need for government agencies intervention in integrating migrant workers. The main benefit of cultural diversity is that it is an asset. Given the equivalent qualification and experience, employing workers with different cultural background will result in: creating an international work environment, pooling together the requisite skills, talents, and experiences towards the growth of the company; and stimulating competition among workers to achieve high productivity. The study also found that whereas career development plans exist in the health-care industry, the cleaning services industry has none.

7.1 Limitations

The study focused on management of workplace diversity in the home care and cleaning services sector. Hence, findings are limited to the study area and cannot be generalised. Also, the researchers were time-constrained to explore in detail cultural differences of immigrants and how these cultural differences affect their work as well as Finnish immigration policy and company human resource policies.

7.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

- There should be a holistic integration programme at the industry level. Focus should be placed on:
 - insistence on work/residence permit and tax card;
 - organizing orientation week to ensure acceptability of non-Finnish workers;
 - encouraging workers to attend Finnish language course;
 - organising career fairs and/or recruitment seminars to meet potential employers;
 - maintaining an open-mind towards workers with different culture; and
 - explaining some Finnish culture and giving non-Finnish workers pieces of advice when needed
- Management of home care and cleaning services should make it a part of their policy to inform their clients of their culturally diverse workers and the need to treat them with respect.
- Management should take the necessary steps to utilize the professional skills and educational achievements of its employees irrespective of their cultural background.
- The Ministry of Labour and Employment should liaise with relevant stakeholders to promote the acceptance of workers from different cultural backgrounds.

7.3 Future research

Future research should focus on adopting a quantitative approach to present a general overview of how culturally diversity is being managed at the workplace. Also, a study on the contribution of the Finnish Immigration Policy in ensuring a harmonious culturally diversified workforce is a possible area of future research.

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Figures

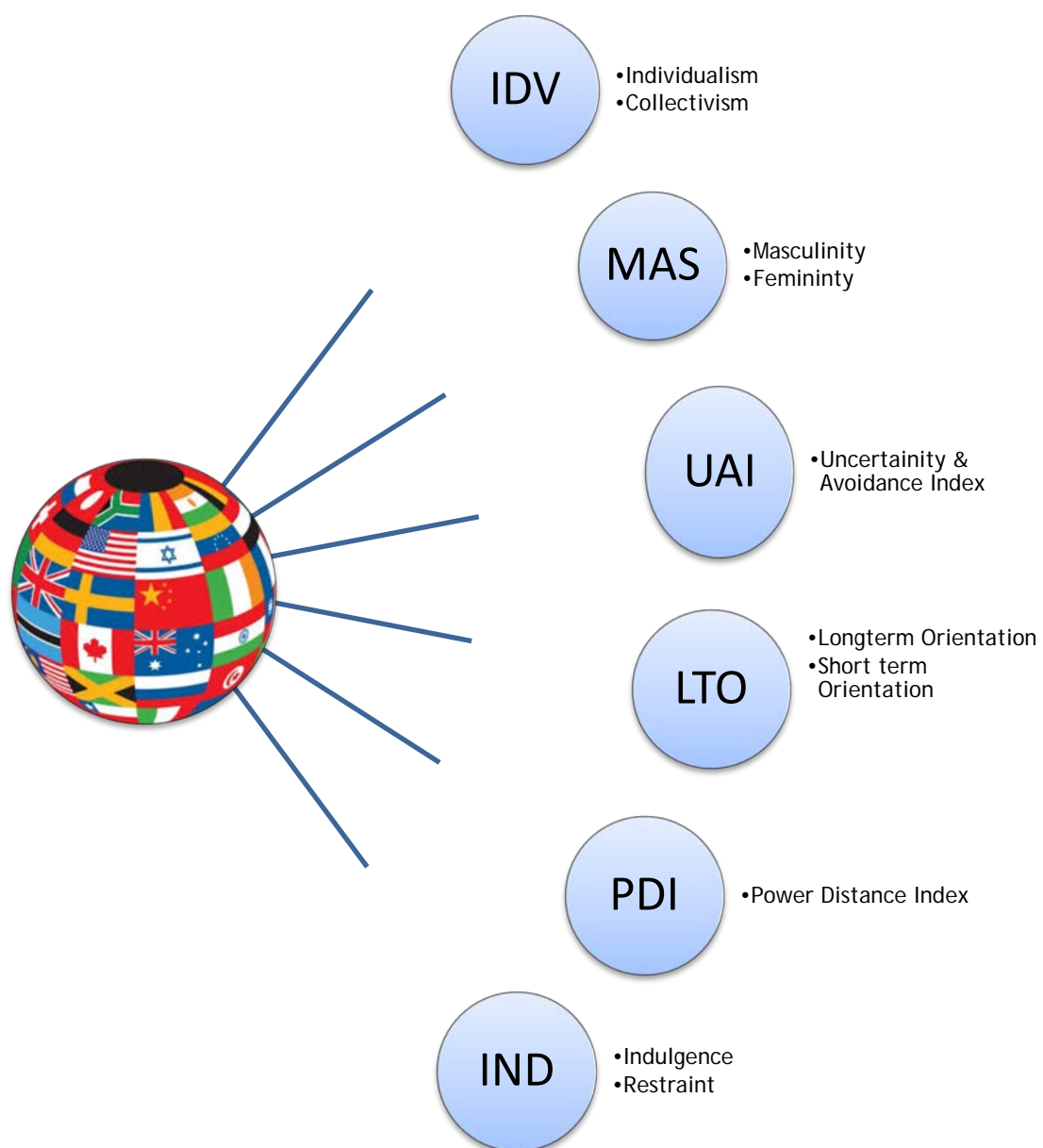


Figure. 2 Hofstede's six dimensional models of culture

Tables

Primary dimensions	Secondary dimensions	Tertiary dimensions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race • Ethnicity • Gender • Age • Disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion • Culture • Sexual orientation • Thinking style • Geographic location • Family status • Lifestyle • Economic status • Political orientation • Work experience • Education • Language • Nationality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliefs • Assumptions • Perceptions • Attitudes • Feelings • Values • Group norms

Table 1. Dimensions of diversity

Appendixes

Appendix. 1

A survey on Managing Cultural Diversity in Care - homes & Cleaning services (M)

1. What is your gender? (I) Male (II) Female
2. What is your age group?(I) - 35 (II) 45 (III) 46 - 55 (IV) 56 - 63
3. What is your level of education? (I) High school (II) Vocational school (III) Bachelor Degree (IV) Master's Degree (V) Other please specify:
4. Which industry do you work in? (I) Health - care industry (II) Cleaning - services industry (III) Other, please specify:

5. There is shortage of workers in Finland and as a result, the government decided to recruit workers from abroad to make up for the short fall. The workers are coming from different cultural backgrounds. As a manager, what measures will you put in place to help these workers adjust to working life in Finland?

6. Do you consider cultural diversity an asset or a challenge?

- (I) Asset (II) Challenge

7. What challenges have you encountered managing culturally diverse employees?

(I).....
.....

(II).....
.....

(III).....
.....

(IV).....
.....

8. How have you solved the challenges mentioned above?

(I).....
.....

(II).....
.....

(III).....
.....

(IV).....
.....

9. Given equivalent qualification and experience, will you hire a person from a different culture instead?

(I) No (II) Yes

If yes, please explain:

10. What motivates you to hire or work with people from other cultures?

(I).....
.....

(II).....
.....

(III).....
.....

11. Has there been any issue of discrimination or unfair treatment among the workers?

(I) No (II) Yes

If yes, please explain:

12. If yes, what steps have you taken to address it?

(I).....
.....

(II).....
.....

(III).....
.....

13. Do you have any career development plans for your employees? If yes what are they?

(I) No Yes

If yes, please explain:

14. How would you rate the adaptability of workers from other cultural background to the Finnish work culture?

(I) Fair (II) d (III) Excellent

15. How would you rate the acceptance of workers from other cultural background by your clients/ customers? (I) ir (II) d (III) llent

16. Do you think the ministry of labour and employment needs to do more in promoting the acceptance of workers from other cultures?

(I) No (I) Yes, please explain:

17. What areas do you think workers from outside Finland need to improve to enable them to be attractive to prospective employers?

(I).....
.....

(II).....
.....

(III).....
.....

(IV).....
.....

A survey on Managing Cultural Diversity in Care - homes and Cleaning services

(E)

1. What is your level of education?
(I) High school (II) Vocational school Bachelor Degree (IV)
Masters' Degree (V) Other, please specify: _____

2. What is your gender? (I) Male (II) Female

3. What is your age group (I) - 25 (II) 26 - 35 (III) 36 - 45 (IV) 46 - 60

4. Which industry do you work in?
(I) Cleaning industry (II) Health care industry (III) other, please specify: _____

5. What does cultural diversity mean to you?

6. What is your level of fluency in both written and spoken Finnish language?
(I) Native speaker (II) Fluent (III) (IV)

7. What are some of the challenges you face in working in a multicultural environment?
(I).....
.....
(II).....
.....
(III).....
.....
(IV).....
.....

8. Do you feel cultural difference present a challenge at your workplace?
(I) Yes (II) No

9. How does cultural difference affect you in the workplace?

(I) Positive (II) Negative

10. Does language barrier pose a challenge to you in the workplace in any form? If yes, how has it affected you?

(I).....
.....

(II).....
.....

(III).....
.....

(IV).....
.....

11. Is there any integration programme in your company for immigrant workers?

(I) Yes (II) No

12. Have you faced any form of discrimination at work while performing your duties? Yes, please explain.

13. Do you feel your qualification and professional skills are being fully utilized? Yes, if No, please explain.

14. Do you see any career development in your current job in the near future?

(I) Yes (II)

15. Do you feel comfortable working with people from other cultures?

(I) Yes (II)

16. What is your adaptability strength to the Finnish work culture?

(I) Good (II) Okay (III) Struggling

17. How would you rate the acceptance level of your company's clientele / customers to you as a foreign worker?

(I) Excellent (II) Good (III) (IV) Poor

18. Do you think the ministry of employment needs to do more to encourage acceptance of foreign workers? If yes please explain: