| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Importance of Intercultural Communication in an Organization

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| ABSTRACT

Communication is the bridge that can unify cultures, but it requires continuous tweaking, buy-in, and also excitement from all teams. Communication is the process used by people to transmit, interpret, and share information. Effective information communication among the organization's employees is essential to increase employee engagement and motivation to encourage fulfillment. Communication requires reciprocity; it includes speaking and listening, making feedback one of the most imperative tools to direct the organization in a culturally diverse environment. Providing the necessary tools to guide, teach and train employees to navigate through a culturally diverse organizational environment successfully is an organization's responsibility so that it can cultivate employee growth and success. The purpose of this short article is to show the significance and utility of the concept of business society for scholars and practitioners in the field of information studies. It offers an academic as well as empirical assessment of the results of society on interaction and info in companies. First, the ideas of organizational society, information as well as communication are quickly discovered. Then a case study of the impacts of business culture on communication as well as details exists. Particularly, we make a thorough assessment of exactly how perspectives to communication and info that had their origins in a leading business culture were a strong impact on the death of the firm. It has been concluded in this review that educating the employees in an organization can help provide a better understanding of intercultural differences, organization-appropriate behaviors, and conflict resolution. Recognizing the complexities involved between communication and culture has become a need for most organizations to gain a competitive advantage and shape a positive workplace environment.

| KEYWORDS

Intercultural communication, conflict management, feedback, employee training

1. Introduction

Communication is sharing information and exchanging ideas and opinions to transmit a message successfully. It is an exchange between people that requires reciprocity in both listening and speaking to be effective. Two key elements are involved in the process of communication. "The elements of the communication process are the sender, encoding the message, transmitting the message through a medium, receiving the message, decoding the message, feedback, and noise" (Lunenburg, 2010). Communication has been an essential tool to transmit and decode information from the beginning of time. It is a necessary tool for people to express their emotions and opinions and lead to passing them across. The report itself can be shared using a variety of mediums ranging from face-to-face to telephone, email, and virtual channels.

The process of communication between two people cannot be successful without using practical tools to make it more efficient. Communication effectiveness can be measured and assessed using different tools and techniques. However, to make the communication process effective, It is essential to understand what effectiveness in communication is. For communication to be effective, the ideas and information shared by the sender must be clear and concise, with enough room to listen and understand feedback from the receiver. "Effective communication is about more than just exchanging information, and it's about understanding the emotion and intentions behind the information. As well as clearly conveying a message, it would help if you

had to also listen in a way that gains the full meaning of what's being said and makes the other person feel heard and understood" (Robinson et al., 2020).

Communication in an organization is essential to convey official information between an organization and its employees. "Communication in organizations encompasses all the means, formal and informal, by which information is passed up, down, and across the network of managers and employees in a business" (Johnson, 2020). There are many challenges that an organization tackles daily to make this communication efficient and effective. These challenges range from incoordination between the organization's strategy and communication to communicating through hierarchies, teams, and misinterpretation of information due to its lack of clarity and concision in communicating the organization's mission among the employees.

Communication among management can be disrupted because of a myriad of reasons, including lack of clarity in the organization's mission, insufficient knowledge of organizational culture and its values, diversity in an organization, and many more from both leaders and employees of an organization. "Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving" (Li & Karakowsky, 2001). Cultures are specific and variable for different groups of people, depending upon their shared set of knowledge and belief systems. Like all other social units in the world, an organization develops its own culture based on the rules and regulations, expected behaviors, ethical belief systems, leadership styles, diversity, and many other internal and external factors that define the way an organization does things.

"Organizational culture is a system of shared values, beliefs, customs, written and unwritten rules developed over the time, which governs how people behave in an organization and contributes to the social environment in an organization. Organizational culture involves expectations, experiences, philosophy and values that express the company's image, both internally and externally, and how it is viewed by colleagues and clients" (Alexe, 2020). The presence of diversity in an organization impacts how the culture is defined as a culture in an organization that is constantly adjusted with a shift in an organization's management led by the presence of diversity in organizational culture. It is an organization's responsibility to effectively communicate with its management and navigate its employees through the complexities involved in intercultural communication that brings an organization to culturally diverse individuals.

"The term intercultural communication refers to the communication process between people of different cultural backgrounds, whether from different countries or subcultures within the same country." (Shibata, 1998). With the growth of the business world among all industries, most organizations require an understanding of intercultural issues that come with diversity among employees. Organizational management and leaders share the responsibility to understand some of the common intercultural issues they could face and find different approaches to tackle these challenges. The focus should be placed on creating an environment in the organization for its employees to ensure a smooth transition into the changes that may occur in the social environment from time to time. This paper will explore the factors that impact intercultural communication in a culturally diverse organization, its challenges, and its approaches to successfully navigating an organization through this transition.

Organizational focus and operations have shifted a lot over the past few years mainly because of the demand by increasing number of stakeholders that an organization interacts with within their daily operations. The success of an organization is obtained by streamlined processes and clear and concise communication of organizational goals and mission between its leadership, management, and other stakeholders. Clear intercultural communication in an organization can provide an organization with a distinct competitive advantage that sets a company apart due to the efficiency in its operations which is essential for rapport building in the market. This makes it necessary for an organization to adapt to a culturally diverse means of communication to understand, motivate, navigate, resolve, and manage its employees.

1.1 Culture and Communication

As mentioned above, an organization's culture is responsible for how things are getting done. Organizational culture includes shared values and belief systems among its leadership and employees. Corporate culture is based on a robust and widely shared set of values and belief systems strategically and structurally, as it is the fundamental key to an organization's success. A strong organizational culture is contingent on a clear direction to employees from top management to initiate expected responses, shape employee perception, conform to their behaviors and motivate them to perform better when demonstrating the organization's values. An organization's culture is essential to set a tone for its operations which varies for every company and industry. Different practices and belief systems are accepted and expected as a common perception that shape an industry's cultural values. The sector comprises a group of organizations that become a part of it due to their shared interests, cultural perceptions, and practices are then further sub-divided into different categories for each organization depending on a myriad of factors.

"Organizational culture is shaped by and overlaps with other cultures — especially the broader culture of the societies in which it operates" (Watkins, 2014). Culture and communication in an organization and society share a close and complex relationship. Cultures since the beginning of time have been developed through communication, making communication the center of all interactions, operations, and processes. However, both culture and communication cannot exist without the other as cultures result from human interactions, whereas communication cannot be possible without understanding and transmitting shared cultural values. Culture and communication in an organization are not a one-time process; for it to be effectively incorporated into the management, continuity of the process is required. A well-adapted culture is responsible for shaping communication practices that direct employees of an organization towards success.

Cultural awareness and practices constantly evolve with the presence of new cultures in the industry and organization, which justifies the organization's need to understand and successfully navigate its employees through the challenges in the communication practices. Intercultural communication has been widely becoming a part of increasing competition and communication channels between people. It is now more accessible for people to move from one place to another, which has enabled the need to understand different cultures and be aware of them when channeling communication with a group of people within the organization or society. The organization's ability to claim a global presence has become more accessible; however, setting up an effective workforce with an awareness of intercultural differences in communication is necessary to be defined and understood.

1.2 Challenges of Intercultural Communication
Intercultural communication can be tricky for many organizations as it comes with its own set of issues and challenges that an organization needs to tackle from top to bottom. When not managed well, intercultural communication can pose a significant threat to an organization's success, making it imperative for organizations to understand the challenges that could potentially arise from it. Intercultural Communication issues range from verbal & non-verbal communication gaps, genders, ethnicities, and religions of employees and the social cultures they previously observed, which relate to employees' tolerance and acceptance of social and organizational changes. It also includes stereotyping, discrimination, and communication barriers among different levels of management and employees. Some of the intercultural issues in an organization, like discrimination and cultural awareness, can be caused by putting insufficient emphasis and focusing on minority groups, which often creates a gap between an organization and its employees.

"It is common for people to freely communicate with those who share a similar language, culture, and attitudes, and the opposite is also true in that they avoid communicating with people who have a different linguistic and cultural background since it is more likely that intercultural communication breakdown will occur" (Jhaiyanuntana & Nomnian, 2020). These issues can be resolved by learning about the new cultures, creating awareness, mentoring employees, and customizing organizational behavior to adapt to the changes arising in the societal and corporate cultures.

1.3 Leadership in Intercultural Communication
"Top management visualizes the objectives. They put the first stone to the corporate culture, the primordial values, and afterward, the best leaders try to implement and align the employees' mindset to their vision, mission and values" (Alexe, 2020). Leaders oversee effective communication of the organization's values, vision, and mission among management to set one coherent tone. Communication has been a critical skill requirement for great leaders. It helps them establish credibility, form connections, implement changes, and streamline operations to produce the best and most efficient results.

The five essential elements of effective communication between an organization are empathetic leaders towards its employees, concision, clarity of the message shared, positive communication, assurance, and feedback. "Leaders who are empathetic, positive, assertive, communicate clearly and devote time to their self-reflection will have a better chance at developing an effective communication schema and environment within their organization" (Eliadis, 2020). Leaders in an organization share the most important responsibility of shaping the culture of the employees; within a culturally diverse organization, employees often look up to their leaders for guidance and direction. Leaders are expected to be equipped and ready to resolve any issues from cross-cultural communications. They are responsible for recognizing and providing necessary training to their employees.

1.4 Conflict Management in Intercultural Communication
Conflicts commonly arise in organizations with culturally diverse workforce due to differences in thought processes, norms, belief systems, traditions, trends, and opinions formed based on personal experiences. An organization needs to evaluate and recognize some of the common issues that majority and minority employees encounter so that managers and employees can be adequately trained to create a healthy, competitive, and positively creative workplace environment. "Managing conflict by bringing all parties together to discuss their differences in a safe, moderated environment is an important function of organizational communications" (Zink, 2021). Unresolved conflicts can lead an organization to lose talented and valuable employees.

To successfully manage conflicts that arise in intercultural communication in an organization, the leadership should understand its employee's cultural backgrounds, equal value to each culture, major or minor, employee training, and cultivation of empathy among employees to resolve. Understanding where the conflict comes from makes it easier for leaders to effectively create a culture that supports employee growth and boosts morale.

1.5 Feedback
"Feedback occurs when an individual, environment, or system gives its reaction to an activity. For instance, when customers provide feedback, it is their reaction to a product or service of a company" (Bhasin, 2021). An organization's leaders need to gain compliance among their employees to follow the instructions of their leaders. To successfully achieve compliance, feedback from both the staff and management with an appropriate reflection of the employee sentiments is necessary. Feedback helps leaders in clarifying what the expectations are from their control. It allows room for growth by learning from their mistakes and helps in building employee confidence to boost their morale.

Improvements in an organization are not continuous without an effective system of feedback, as it helps in optimizing employee performance and guides an organization towards success in the industry.

1.6 Employee Training
Capitalizing on cultural diversity is essential to promoting personal and organizational growth. Multiple tools can be utilized for this purpose, including training programs on developing soft linguistics, awareness against discrimination, and measuring the performance to look for areas with gaps to be covered. "An awareness of culturally formed identities and any similarities and differences can be seen to promote tolerance and cooperation in educational environments and later on in workplaces" (Hatakka, 2021).

Employee training is a tool for continued learning and growth as it helps create better strategies that align well with the organization's mission and values. The primary focus of an organization with this intercultural communication training should be on raising cultural awareness, aligning behaviors, a sense of equity, improving communication skills, and diversity and sensitivity among its employees. "Training is a way for employees to explore the concepts and understand how they apply in everyday conversations, interactions, and decisions. Diversity and sensitivity training also serves as a dynamic tool to communicate an organization's goals and expectations for workplace conduct" (Glavin, 2018).

2. Conclusion
The purpose of this short article is to show the significance and utility of the concept of business society for scholars and practitioners in the field of information studies. It is now within the norm for most organizations to have diverse and multicultural employees, the impacts of which can be monitored and controlled to avoid adverse outcomes. Educating employees in an organization can help provide a better understanding of intercultural differences, organization-appropriate behaviors, and conflict resolution. Recognizing the complexities involved between communication and culture has become a need for most organizations to gain a competitive advantage and shape a positive workplace environment. It is suggested that the organizations promote efficient cross-cultural communication in the workplace, which subsequently assists in increasing worker retention rates and minimizes absenteeism. Good intercultural interaction is additionally vital in every degree of the business framework. Moreover, the companies shall promote the gender-diverse top-level administration teams to carry out far better than organizations that are less diverse. It is further suggested to make a comprehensive assessment in the future on how attitudes to communication and information among the employees have an impact on the growth of the organization?

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