

The influence of cross-cultural adjustment on job performance

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ABSTRACT: Given the international nature of teams and guests in the hospitality industry, cross-cultural adjustment and awareness are crucial at both personal and organisational levels. The purpose of this study is to understand the factors underlying cross-cultural adjustment and how it influences job performance. Qualitative research was conducted, focusing on the characteristics of the different cultures, as well as the perception of job performance, satisfaction and overall working atmosphere. Ten participants were interviewed to assess the differences between high-context and low-context cultural norms and identify their influence on different dimensions. The transcribed data were analysed thematically, patterns were identified and the most relevant relationships discussed. Findings concluded that poor cross-cultural adjustment is influenced by a lack of inclusiveness and cultural balance in the teams, leading to communication challenges and a difficult working atmosphere which can interfere with the employees' job performance and engagements. Recommendations included an additional focus on improving the current recruitment strategies to create more culturally balanced teams, as well as assessing time-management skills in the team, an aspect that makes it difficult for the team members to engage in cross-cultural activities.

KEYWORDS: high-context culture, low-context culture, job performance, job satisfaction

Introduction

This article examines cross-cultural adjustment and its impact on job performance. It first categorises culture into low-context and high-context cultures, explaining the differences. It then explores the factors influencing cross-cultural adjustment, emphasising cultural intelligence. These factors affect job satisfaction, motivation and the perception of corporate culture and therefore job performance ultimately.

As people increasingly travel and experience different cultures, the hospitality industry faces the challenge of catering to international guests. To thrive in this competitive market, companies must prioritise cultural awareness and understanding. Everyone's cultural background shapes their opinions, perceptions and behaviour, thus people seek acceptance and recognition for these attributes. This applies not only to guest services, but also to the multicultural work environment. Failure to accept and adapt to different cultural norms can lead to issues such as miscommunication, low job satisfaction and decreased job performance, therefore impacting on a company's reputation and operation. Knowledge of cross-cultural behaviour is essential for achieving organisational objectives and maintaining a positive work environment (Ma & Allen, 2009).

This article's primary focus is to highlight how appropriate cross-cultural behaviour and engagement may benefit job performance, and therefore create a productive and constructive working environment where employees can thrive through improved communication and increased job satisfaction.

Literature review

To enhance comprehension of the concepts, the distinction between high-context and low-context cultures is explored, emphasising people's preference for certain communication styles, and cultural norms. The process of cross-cultural adjustment is described, highlighting its facilitators, such as cultural intelligence. Additionally, the article compares theories related to job performance, and its primary influences: job satisfaction and working culture.

Cross-cultural adjustment

In today's globalised world, people frequently commute, change jobs and work in multicultural teams (van der Knaap, 2017). Adapting to new cultures is a challenging and ongoing process, encompassing national, religious and work-related factors (Lewthwaite, 1996). When individuals experience a foreign culture, they lack familiarity with social conventions, leading to a subconscious evaluation of new behavioural models and an attempt to integrate new norms into their values and actions (Wang, 2016; Killick, 2008). Halim et al. (2019) describe this process as a fluctuating U shape of emotions, starting with excitement and initiative during the honeymoon phase, but quickly dropping to stress as new cultural rules are subconsciously denied, resulting in social isolation. Cross-cultural adjustment can be achieved by reintegrating after adopting a new lifestyle (Wang, 2016), although research shows variations in individual experiences of the U curve

depending on psychological condition, experience and personal characteristics (Evans & Danglish, 2008). Cultural adjustment, defined as the psychological outcome of adaptation, is influenced by factors such as local food, safety perceptions, accommodation and financial situation, which can either benefit or demotivate expatriates, influencing their mental and physical health (Koveshnikov et al., 2014). Therefore, it is essential that individuals find value in adapting to other cultures and aim to improve their communication skills in multicultural settings.

According to the existing theory, cultural adjustment seems to be influenced by one's adaptation capabilities as well as motivation to engage in social interaction. Cultural intelligence was identified as a potential influential factor for an increased cultural adjustment.

Cultural intelligence

Internationalisation presents opportunities, but organisations must develop skills to navigate cultural differences for a healthy working environment (Brancu et al., 2016). Cultural intelligence, as defined by Fang et al. (2018), involves four dimensions: metacognitive, cognitive, behavioural and motivational. The metacognitive dimension relates to awareness and understanding, while the cognitive dimension guides the adoption of practices and values (Ang et al., 2012). Behaviour encompasses flexibility and adaptability in cross-cultural engagements (Ward et al., 2011). The motivational factor drives cultural adjustment, impacting well-being, engagement and performance (Ward et al., 2011; Sternberg et al., 2022). Those with high motivational cultural intelligence seem to adjust effortlessly, maintaining a positive attitude and meeting expectations (Wang, 2016). This ability promotes engagement, positive experiences and adherence to new cultural standards, facilitating cross-cultural adjustment.

Previous experiences and cultural norms were presented as influential in adjusting culturally, thus a distinction between high-context and low-context cultures is presented to facilitate a better understanding of opposing cultural backgrounds.

High-context cultures

Context categorisation as low-context and high-context cultures is based on communication preferences and the use of context in message interpretation (Dey, 2001; Hornikx & le Pair, 2017). High-context cultures rely on circumstances, body language, tone and the surroundings to convey messages, emphasising metaphors (van Everdingen & Waarts, 2003; Nishimura et al., 2008). Examples include Latin nationalities and Asian countries, which value long-term relationships and harmony in exchange for trust and loyalty (Soares et al., 2007; Nam, 2015). High-context cultures exhibit tolerance of ambiguity and avoid conflict to preserve relationships, expressing their feelings in a diplomatic manner (Nam, 2015).

Low-context cultures

Low-context cultures, characterised by a task-oriented attitude, employ explicit communication and respond quickly to challenges (Barkai, 2009). In low-context cultures, it is common for individuals to summarise discussions at the end of a meeting to ensure full understanding among participants. Direct communication allows people from low-context cultures to express their needs assertively, enabling them to handle potential conflicts while pursuing their goals (Klagge, 2016). Examples of

low-context cultures include the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Scandinavian countries and the United Kingdom. These cultures have a distinct communication style, emphasising the explicit expression of needs and wants. Their task-oriented mindset helps them stay focused, while their informal approach ensures a decreased hierarchy. By recognising and adapting to the communication preferences of low-context cultures, individuals can foster effective cross-cultural interactions in diverse teams.

Job performance

In the hospitality industry, the employees are the core of the business. Therefore, acknowledging job performance and identifying the factors influencing it can benefit the organisation. Job performance is defined as a set of attributes, initiatives and behaviour in relation to the company's core values, assessed from the perspective of three dimensions. Firstly, task performance is directly linked to the core tasks of the job and encourages the activities, behaviour and technical knowledge that facilitate the completion of assigned tasks (Ramos-Villagrasa et al., 2019). Secondly, contextual performance focuses more on how the employees contribute to the organisational goals. For instance, an employee's initiative to voluntarily help the team, the enthusiasm with which the tasks are handled, and how they go the extra mile and engage in tasks apart from daily job duties (Koopmans et al., 2011) reflect this. Lastly, counterproductive work behaviour is explained by Rotundo and Sackett (2002) as any purposeful harm or maltreatment towards the organisation as well as colleagues. For example, an individual voluntarily conducting a task wrongly or acting unethically at work is an act of counterproductive behaviour.

Job performance can therefore be analysed from different perspectives and has a direct influence on the company's processes, efficiency and core goals. Job performance seems to be related to the employee's initiative and attitude towards daily duties. Therefore, job satisfaction is worth investigating.

Job satisfaction

New generations, including Millennials and Generation Z, are more likely to search for jobs that make them happy, with a good atmosphere, tasks that interest them and incentives (Dziuba et al., 2020). Job satisfaction is subjective and reflects how individuals perceive their daily duties and align them with their personal needs (Pushpakumari, 2008). Satisfied employees tend to perform better, displaying increased proactiveness and enthusiasm (Abuhashesh et al., 2019). Employees assess their own job satisfaction by balancing the workload and leadership style with the compensation (salary, benefits, flexibility) (Abuhashesh et al., 2019). Job satisfaction also fosters a sense of meaning and commitment to the organisation (Wolniak & Olkiewicz, 2019). While organisational commitment is influenced by factors beyond job satisfaction, such as motivation and company culture, high job satisfaction reduces employee turnover and positively impacts commitment and job performance (Sugiono et al., 2021). Khan et al. (2011) partially contradict this statement, as organisational commitment is not merely influenced by job satisfaction, but also by employee's motivation to stay with the company and their identification with the company culture. Even though job satisfaction may not directly influence employee turnover, it is essential in preventing employees from switching jobs frequently (Sugiono et al., 2021). Job satisfaction is a critical factor in assessing job performance

as it keeps employees engaged in their tasks and fosters positive relationships in the workplace, contributing to a productive and harmonious environment. The study focused on a hospitality operation in the Netherlands, thus understanding the Dutch work culture proved to be valuable for the clear interpretation of the findings.

The work culture in the Netherlands

The Netherlands attracts a significant number of immigrants, with up to 19% of the population from other nations (Smulders & van den Bossche, 2006). To avoid misunderstandings, it is crucial for these individuals to understand and adhere to Dutch cultural standards, which serve as guiding principles, practices and norms aiming to distinguish acceptable from inappropriate behaviour (Rosemann, 2021). In Dutch work culture, a flat hierarchy fosters equality, encourages innovation and expects active participation in decision-making (Selvarajah et al., 2018). Prompt issue resolution and on-the-spot problem-solving are valued, creating an open and relaxed working environment that facilitates development through try-out sessions (Rosemann, 2021). On the other hand, the high expectation for efficiency together with a demanding job lead to increased burnout rates, mostly among the young workers in the Netherlands (Wielers et al., 2021). According to Airila et al. (2012), increased work engagement is a determinant for frequent sick leave, which is influential for the productivity of the company. Compared to southern European countries, such as Italy, Spain or Portugal, communication in Dutch organisations is direct, informal and productive (Kosse, 2022). Understanding and adapting to these cultural nuances is essential for successful integration into the Dutch workplace.

Problem statement and research questions

The study identified miscommunication as a key issue at a 5-star branded hotel in a major city in the Netherlands, assessing the influence of cross-cultural communication on job performance. Multiple dimensions of job performance were evaluated to understand the situation, with the main question being: "How does cross-cultural adjustment influence the employees' job performance in the international team of Hotel H?". A number of sub-questions were used to investigate this:

- How do preconceptions and cultural intelligence interfere with the cross-cultural adjustment of the employees in Hotel H?
- How is employee job performance perceived in high-context cultures and in low-context cultures?
- How is job satisfaction perceived by the employees of Hotel H?
- How does the communication between low-context cultures and high-context cultures influence job satisfaction in Hotel H?

Methodology

The article focused on describing the cross-cultural adjustment of both high-context and low-context cultures and its influence on job performance. Qualitative research was conducted, with the purpose of exploring and gaining insight into the differences and similarities between the two cultures, as well as how they perceived cultural adjustment and job satisfaction. Descriptive

research was conducted, since the topic focused on human behaviour and perception (Dudovskiy, 2022).

In line with the qualitative nature of this research, interviews were conducted with both employees and management. According to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006), semi-structured interviews are common and effective in qualitative research, as they facilitate engagement and insight into social and personal matters, such as cross-cultural adjustment. Therefore, they helped us understand how the interviewees perceived the topics analysed and revealed any underlying needs and previous relevant experiences. The interviews focused on the job performance dimensions, similarities and differences in relation to the opposing-context culture and the participants' perception towards these factors' interdependence. The interviews were recorded with the approval of the participants, who completed a consent form. Subsequently, the data were transcribed in text form and further analysed.

The population consisted of Hotel H's national and international teams, comprised of employees and management from different nations and cultures. A purposeful sampling method was used to retrieve the potential interviewees, as specific characteristics were necessary in the participants to ensure their value with regard to the study's purpose (Palinkas et al., 2015). A criterion for selection was the level of experience in Hotel H, with service of at least one year in the company. This is thought to be the least amount of time that an employee can acclimatise to a company, making it easier to gain insight into the underlying problem (Ferrazzi, 2015). Lastly, the participants had to work entirely in Hotel H, full-time, not in clusters, as the study was solely focused on this property. Therefore, the sample included 10 participants, from both low-context and high-context cultures, with full-time experience in Hotel H (Vasileiou et al., 2018).

The participants were contacted via personal interaction and were offered a brief description of the topics to be discussed, and the study's relevance for the company. Once enough volunteers were gathered in accordance with the criteria, interviews were scheduled in person on the hotel property during the work day. One day prior to the interviews, each participant was handed a participant information sheet, including a small description of the focal points and a set of possible questions. The interviews were recorded as described on the signed consent form.

The data were gathered after informed consent was obtained. Thus, the people were informed that observations were going to be conducted, and they could give their permission, or not to be observed. The participants had the right to withdraw at any time in the research process and could stop the interview if they were not comfortable answering the questions.

Data analysis

For this qualitative research, an inductive approach was thought to be the most effective, as it focuses on the self-disclosure of personal beliefs and attitudes in relation to certain actions, in this case, the participants' perception of cultural norms, job performance and their dimensions. The data were analysed following the open coding method, which has three phases: open coding, selective coding and axial coding. The interview transcripts were reviewed, relevant quotes were extracted and coded, aiming for an in-depth representation of the participants' interpretations. The codes were then compared, grouped based on the identified patterns and the axial codes were reviewed

(Guest et al., 2014). The thematic framework encompassed the sub-themes that showed as influential to specific dimensions.

Discussion

This section focuses on elaborating on the results in connection with the literature reviewed to understand whether the results of the data analysis for this research paper agree with the available literature.

How is job satisfaction perceived by the employees of Hotel H?

Job satisfaction is an important facilitator for good job performance, but it is a rather complex topic, as individuals show different perspectives. Employees thrive in challenging situations and enjoy the learning process while completing tasks according to the deadlines. The findings agree with the existing theory on how employees measure their own job satisfaction by balancing the job responsibilities with their own wishes (Pushpakumari, 2008).

The results also showed concerns regarding a recent increase in staff turnover. This event is causing frustration among current employees, due to the hiring of young, inexperienced individuals who are appointed to management positions without an adequate understanding of current procedures in the company. Thus, they need extensive training to gain task independence, affecting their efficiency and engagement with others.

The majority of the team members have no experience at all. So, you really have to start from the beginning to train them and the managers are also very young (Participant 7).

Current employees are therefore affected by an increase in workload. The results support the literature since a greater workload has been shown to affect job satisfaction (Abuhashesh et al., 2019), but the participants are more concerned with how a heavy workload might make it difficult to accomplish professional goals.

It is always too much to do by yourself with the tools that we have, and therefore I believe I was not able to perform as well as I was hoping to...I was in a constant stress and the job was never done (Participant 1).

Another sub-theme is the importance of the working atmosphere. A majority of participants mentioned that the working atmosphere is too tense, hectic and lacks structure, and the reasons behind this are poor communication and lack of engagement.

Since we do not communicate, people start assuming things...And I think if you keep an open communication, the tension will get less (Participant 1).

Wolniak and Olkiewicz (2019) mention that job satisfaction is co-dependent on the working atmosphere and commitment to the company, thus the results support the existing theory. Based on the observations and the results, the employees from both high-context and low-context cultures that feel empowered to do their job are seen as more open towards the team and thus create a positive atmosphere. In contrast, the employees that seem to struggle in daily tasks feel overwhelmed and thus show stress, therefore decreasing the cooperation in the team and contributing to an unfavourable working atmosphere.

I do see that for some people, it is really tense. They cannot really deal with the stress, with the amount of work that they get (Participant 3).

According to Khan et al. (2011), job satisfaction is also influenced by employee motivation as well as their identification with the company culture. Currently, the employees of the hotel are motivated to develop themselves, but they find themselves in a culturally imbalanced team. The results showed the need for inclusiveness and the preference for a challenging multicultural environment in which the employees can thrive.

It is an imbalance, and it affects the daily operations, because it creates a culture within a culture and it spreads rapidly in terms of work ethics, language barriers (Participant 9).

The findings serve as an addition to the existing theory, since the expectations of the employees regarding the cultural standards are not fulfilled, leading to decreased satisfaction.

To conclude, the findings on job satisfaction support the current theory. The theme is complex and though it is influenced by all the factors elaborated in the literature, their level of influence is experienced differently by everyone.

How do preconceptions and cultural intelligence interfere with the cross-cultural adjustment of the employees in Hotel H?

The results suggest that low-context cultures are appreciated for their strengths, but high-context cultures find it hard when confronting the opposing culture, due to fear of being misunderstood or feeling offended in the process. In this sense, they have a poor cultural intelligence, as according to Fang et al. (2018), they do not engage in social interactions and do not show interest in discovering the cultural backgrounds in the team. The findings correspond to the theory. If the employees do not address their frustration and instead avoid communication with low-context cultures, the cross-cultural adjustment is hard to achieve.

From the perspective of the low-context cultures, the high-context cultures are displayed as less structured and lacking organisational skills. They revealed that it is rather difficult working together, as they are accustomed to a certain level of job performance, which they assume the high-context cultures do not have.

We do have the preconception that they are less structured in their approach and that's something that is harder for us to work with them (Participant 8).

Findings showed that high-context cultures also value structure in their work. Thus, both cultures are guided by preconceptions and show decreased cultural intelligence as they are focused on differences, rather than overcoming them (Brancu et al., 2016). The findings are therefore in line with the existing theory, as there is clear evidence of how preconceptions are a subconscious guide in cultural interactions.

The participants also mentioned that the personal factor is a big influence on cross-cultural adjustment, explaining that to understand others, people have to actively engage with other cultures and identify what behaviour is appropriate.

You need to observe them...You try to understand them, so try to be open for them (Participant 3).

Sternberg et al. (2022) suggest a similar point of view, elaborating on the ways people should adapt in a trial-and-error process. Evidence to support the theory is shown in the results, which show that the participants who were more at ease adjusting culturally, interacted more with other cultures, and thus they were able to identify the differences and eventually overcome them.

Another aspect was that the employees are sometimes not mentally prepared to work overseas. The participants that showed the highest level of cultural adjustment often had previous experience in working internationally and, before starting the position, had had some preparation in terms of what to do, how to engage with others, based on what the company culture looked like at that certain moment. *"I mentally prepared myself"* (Participant 2). They mentioned that by doing this, they were motivated to keep a positive attitude at work and engage with other cultures, while delivering good quality work. Wang (2016) shows a similar opinion in his research, as cultural intelligence influences efficiency at work, better adjustment and overall well-being.

To conclude, some employees at Hotel H are facing challenges when it comes to participating in social interactions with other cultures. Their focus primarily revolves around the distinctions between high-context and low-context cultures, rather than making an effort to comprehend others' cultural norms and find common ground to grow their relationships. To create a better atmosphere at work and facilitate better cultural adjustment, the employees should develop their cultural intelligence skills and act less on preconceptions.

How is employee job performance perceived in high-context and low-context cultures?

The results show that the low-context cultures are rather pro-active and aim to finish their work on time, according to the quality standards. They communicate efficiently, follow up on important matters and focus on task completion rather than the process. Barkai (2009) shares the same opinion, highlighting their quick responsiveness to tackle challenges. They have a clear goal in mind and see themselves on the next step, thus confrontation on the way to success is not avoided but encouraged to complete the tasks on time. Klagge (2016) in his paper gives a similar description of the low-context work style.

In contrast, the results show that the high-context cultures are more group oriented, and their main goal is not to be punctual, but rather focus on their growth in every project. They set some internal goals and want to achieve them through valuable work and teamwork in a pleasant atmosphere. Some participants from high-context cultures mentioned that they perform well when they find satisfaction in their tasks. Nam (2015) explains how they strive for harmony, and the participants had a similar opinion. They would avoid confrontation and rather express their feelings in a diplomatic way.

It is worth noting that both cultures agreed that their performance at work is different and more fulfilling in an international environment. The low-context cultures mentioned that working in their own culture is more productive, as they do not have opposing opinions and there is structure and clear communication, but having similar aspirations raises competition among the employees and thus creates tension in the work environment. The high-context cultures describe that job performance suffers, because even if they are risk-takers, people do not take the lead to follow up on important matters, and it is harder to innovate since they are more prone to follow certain procedures without questioning their efficiency or effectiveness. Therefore, both cultures agreed that a multicultural environment is beneficial for personal growth, innovation and creativity.

To conclude, both cultures measure job performance differently, and thus even in a multicultural environment, they

expect the same standards as they are accustomed to. Working in a cross-cultural setting is seen as less productive, but as more engaging and beneficial due to the challenges and exchanges of different opinions.

How does the communication between high-context and low-context cultures influence the job satisfaction in Hotel H?

The participants were asked to elaborate on the communication style for the opposing context culture. The low-context culture was described as concise and direct, but as too demanding.

Dutch people, German people are quite direct. So, I think a lot of people will find themselves attacked. But 98%, it's never personal (Participant 10).

Therefore, they partially disagree with Kosse (2022) who states that the low-context cultures express their opinions in a friendly manner.

The high-context cultures are more expressive of their feelings and aim to create personal connection with the team members. They come out as open and friendly, but they are described as overwhelming by the low-context cultures that believe they share unnecessary details and get too personally involved in their interactions. This causes misunderstandings, as the high-context culture intends to achieve harmony by expressing their emotions, but low-context cultures feel overwhelmed of the volume and ambiguity of the information.

The communication between the two cultural groups can be seen as ineffective. The participants explained that while low-context cultures want to complete their tasks on time and expect a follow-up on the last-minute changes, high-context cultures are focused more on their departmental tasks, and lose sight of urgent emails lacking information, as they react better to personal interaction.

HR sends an email about something very important, finance as well, and people do not read it, they think they have something better to do (Participant 7).

Rosemann (2021) states that low-context cultures are quick to react to certain challenges and want to always be updated on time with regard to last-minute changes, so that they can plan.

My [low-context culture] team member would like to know three days in advance and just have that confirmation (Participant 5).

In contrast, high-context cultures' priority is not revising the plan and including the urgent matter in the handover, they would rather adapt to the process. *"We'll see on the day itself. That's our area of expertise. Trust us"* (Participant 5).

Another issue mentioned was the language barriers. Since the interaction between team members is usually in English despite working in the Netherlands, misunderstandings occur from talking in a foreign language, mostly when some team members do not have strong professional English skills.

A lot of us do not speak good English, so that also makes it difficult to communicate with others, so they do not understand us (Participant 4).

The miscommunication influences job satisfaction because the workload increases due to the incorrect completion of tasks, which is seen as an obstacle for the employees to focus on their daily tasks and personal development as desired.

It brings frustrations. People can get left out, get more work on their plate because something was not communicated, and it also separates you as a team (Participant 3).

Therefore, the working atmosphere is difficult, because the high-context culture would rather keep their frustrations to themselves, not to cause any harm, but this action influences how they perceive the opposing culture and how frequently they interact with each other.

They do not speak up. And maybe they want to make a decision, but they are afraid to do so (Participant 10).

To conclude, communication between the high-context and low-context cultures does not directly influence the job satisfaction, but rather serves as a negative influence on the working atmosphere factor measuring job satisfaction. The employees need to agree on clear communication procedures to help reduce misunderstanding and aid the performance and well-being of the employees.

Limitations

Since Hotel H is a multicultural environment, misunderstandings occurred while conducting the interviews. The interviewees were offered a summary of the research's topic and value to both Hotel H as well as the wider hospitality industry. However, the data were presented as a written document, offered to the participants one day prior to the interview. In retrospect, the participants were not given sufficient time to familiarise themselves with the topic and ask follow-up questions. The definitions of the concepts of high-context and low-context culture were not sufficiently clearly explained, thus creating some confusion for the participants. As a recommendation for future research, meetings prior to the interviews should be scheduled, where the participants are presented with the focal points of the research, clear definitions on the concepts are given, and thus more in-depth answers can be offered with regard to the focal points of the study.

Conclusion

A recurring issue mentioned in the results was that Hotel H is challenged by a high level of staff turnover. Therefore, there are always new recruits that must quickly become confident in their daily tasks, while also trying to adapt culturally. This is challenging, as according to Koveshnikov et al. (2014), people in this situation are challenged by a psychological fluctuation associated with experiencing the new culture, denying their own cultural background, and thus experiencing conflicting feelings and a drop in productivity. The process is complex, and it is experienced differently by each individual, based on previous experience and their level of cultural intelligence. As the participants mentioned, the new workers are not offered enough time and resources to culturally adjust and are expected to deliver high performance in their daily tasks, instead of prioritising the cross-cultural interactions. This comes across as an impediment, because the lack of interactions and engagement with other cultures creates misunderstandings and tension, thus negatively influencing the job performance in the end.

Another frequent response in the results was that the environment is not as inclusive as expected. In the hiring process, the food and beverages department is confronted by a large increase in employees from one nationality, making it hard to adjust to the Dutch work culture. They formed a community where they shared the same values and beliefs and thus they found comfort in their own team. As explained by Sternberg et

al. (2022), cross-cultural adjustment is achieved when people engage with other cultures. However, if the team member is only surrounded by their own culture, the cross-cultural interaction is low. This also influences job performance, since they cannot adapt to the different context of work style, cannot comprehend the reasons behind their actions, and they keep working according to their own familiar standards.

To conclude, cross-cultural adjustment is a big influence on job performance, and Hotel H should focus more on inclusiveness to decrease the chances of creating a culture within a culture and negatively impact employees' adjustment. The management needs to acknowledge the importance of the topic and encourage the new workers to interact with other cultures to perform better.

Recommendations for future research

Further research is recommended to gain better insight into the reasoning behind current processes. Some themes worth investigating are the increase in staff turnover, the lack of engagement in the team and the hiring strategies of the HR department.

Hotel H is currently experiencing an increased staff turnover, due to the resignation of experienced employees. Since it is a factor affecting the morale of the team, further qualitative research should be conducted, where (for example) exit interviews can be studied. On this basis, the causes of the rise in resignations can be investigated, and input can be used to address the challenges faced by employees.

The participants in this study showed their disagreement with the current company culture, as they felt Hotel H does not show enough inclusivity. Therefore, further research should be conducted on the current recruitment strategy, evaluating both its benefits and limitations. A combination of qualitative and quantitative research is recommended, as the qualitative component could include interviews with the management on what they perceive a good selection process to be, while the quantitative side could benefit from a questionnaire, shared in the company, analysing the past and current recruitment strategies, such as screening time, the complexity of the selection interviews, as well as the use of any psychological tests. These methods together would facilitate identifying the differences between the current strategy and the expectations, and aid in creating new procedures.

Participants showed concern that, regardless of the situation, lack of time is a common justification for resisting change in Hotel H. Therefore, staff do not attend training courses or follow up on inquiries. It is worth investigating why people believe that and whether there are small actions that everyone can take to feel more in charge of their own time at work and benefit from ongoing training that serves as personal and professional development. Qualitative research can be conducted, interviewing and observing the employees and the management, focusing on time management, job performance and internal motivation. With these results, an action plan could be developed to increase productivity and employee well-being.

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