

PORTFOLIO CONTAINING SIX ELEMENTS

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Module Code – BMIH5009

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the work contained herein is original, and no assistance from any form of artificial intelligence or automation in writing has been sought. Everything has been written by me, and this paper has been completed in compliance with the requirements of my university. All sources that have been used have been properly cited, and I confirm that this paper adheres to the Academic Integrity Policy set by this institution.

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ELEMENT 1: REFLEXIVE ESSAY

Introduction

Cultural identity is therefore a complex construct that is a function of historical influences, geographical location, family and social environment to mention but a few. Being a Nepali turned Portuguese and being a Hindu Brahmin ethnically, my cultural background is pluralistic in nature thereby encompassing a wide range of values as well as beliefs. Within this essay I discuss what comprises my culture in terms of cultural roots, culture features, family and community identity, cultural assimilation, and how all these factors define my culture perception and interactions with the surrounding world.

Cultural Origins

In my opinion the culture of Nepal has been influenced by history, geography and social factors at large. Nepal is steeped in tradition being the land of Hindu and Buddhism, whereby people have a high respect for the spiritual world and other spiritual activities (Akkermans et al., 2021). From the Hindu religion specifically as a Brahmin my culture from the Veda is dominated by the principles of order, study, and ethos duty. Nepal's geographical formation is mountainous in which it develops the traits of resistance and is affiliated with nature and these two factors are the part of my perspective towards life. Finally, gaining Portuguese citizenship diversified my orientation, and was also a beginning of Western exposure to me while reinforcing my Nepali roots. In social context, collectivist culture of Nepalese migrants emphasizing on family and community reared the seed of interpersonal value promoting interdependence.

Key Characteristics of My Culture

This makes the Hindu Brahmin culture linked with several peculiarities: spirituality, education as well as tradition.

- ❖ **Language:** Sanskrit & Nepali became use in performing Hindu rituals & as a means of communication thus representing culture. Although I have Realized that I mostly get to communicate in the Portuguese language in the working area as well as in the day today social interaction, Nepali is very crucial to me most especially since it's my origin language.

- ❖ **Traditions:** Dedication along with religion and kinship are the key features of Nepali festivals like Dashain and Tihar. The beliefs foster the idea of identity and cultural enshrinement.
- ❖ **Values and Beliefs:** Karma (actions and their consequences) ahimsa (nonviolence) concepts form the basis of my ethical system and guide me.
- ❖ **Customs and Art Forms:** Symbolism derived from Hinduism still resonates in the aesthetics of rituals, Mandalas, temple architecture among others.

By critically evaluating the aforementioned elements it is comprehensible that my culture values spirituality, unity and a process of self and community enlightenment, which in return constitutes my and our individual and collective identity (Alam *et al.* 2020). The major features are getting a deep-rooted sense of religious belief, more focus on education, and respecting family and ancestors. Language is central, Nepali and Sanskrit are the main channels of religious activities and also the main way people interact with each other.

Influence of Family and Community

The two have played an important role in defining who I am in the cultural perspective. I grew up in an orthodox Hindu Brahmin family hence I embraced acts like prayer, temple going and even celebrations accompanying particular events in one's life. They belonged to kinds of stories that were handed down from one generation to another and were a tool to set the values such as respect, discipline and compassion.

People in Nepal relied heavily on interdependence that was well expressed through communal ceremonial or social occasions (Naveed et al., 2022). Coming to Portugal was another experience which put lots of opportunities and differed with a lot of challenges since I could shift from the collectivist nature in the country but was still able to maintain my family values and norms. These influences impacted my perspective; I have learned how to move between the collectivist organizational culture and the individualist Western culture.

Cultural Adaptation

Cultural adaptiveness has been quite an addition to my process all these years. Learning with and from the Portuguese people broadened my horizon toward different aspects of individualism,

freedom of speech, and modernity. These have helped me develop my cultural assets since the influences have helped me know different dimensions of cultural practices. For instance, although I remain a Hindu and go through my usual prayers, I adopted the Portuguese festivities, for example, by celebrating Christmas with friends.

Qualitative Transformation Knowledge of living in a bicultural environment has greatly affected my cultural self-identity, especially regarding view on tradition/modernity outlook. I personally have a lot of respect for my origin, but I also understand how to take some things from Western culture that would be desirable to me (Şafak-Ayvazoğlu *et al.* 2021). This kind of cultural identity has helped me to develop and to assimilate the culture of multiculturalism and, therefore, approach multiculturalism issues with sympathy and tolerance.

Personal Reflection

Exploring my personal cultural background has influenced my relationships with people and ways of relating to them in a huge way. Educational background was a strong influence which came along with a special attitude towards other people, being respected, enjoying being a host, and humility when it is needed. Also, talks with different individuals have improved my cultural knowledge and skills to work in multicultural contexts.

Regarding cultural values, I also decide to choose issues with references to ethical decision-making based on Hinduism. First of all, principles like ahimsa will be implemented in a conflict solving strategy where I will avoid using violent words while responding to my counterpart. Further, the experience of growing between two cultures has created multidimensional personality, liberty and flexibility to lock up inter briefed personalities and relations.

Conclusion

The discussion on cultural identity therefore shows a complex interaction between Nepali, Hindu Brahmin, and Portuguese cultures. All together these elements create my perception about me and the environment, my behavior and interactions with other people. From the analysis of several cultural constructs, such as cultural backgrounds, cultural profiles, role of family and community, and the notion of adaptation, I discovered more about my identity. This awareness with respect to myself, among other things, avails me an opportunity to participate fully in a world characterized by increasing internetworking and diversity.

ELEMENT 2: WRITTEN REPORT

1. Introduction

Culture and communication become critical factors for the hospitality industry to create better guest experiences and satisfaction. Moreover, in the globalised environment, hotels are to deal with guests of different cultural backgrounds and communication patterns. Knowledge of these differences is important for providing individual and high-quality service.

The purpose of this report is to examine culture and communication to determine how they impact guest service with specific attention to culture including expectation, communication and training and case studies. Through these theories, the report endeavours to give more emphasis to cultural sensitivity and proper communication in order to be successful in delivering the best quality guest satisfaction.

2. Cultural Influences on Guest Expectations

Cultural antecedents influence the perception and choices of guests in hotel environments. Culture decides the type of hospitality that the guest is willing to accept or expect. For example, warmth, politeness, and rituals like bowing are characteristic for intercultural communication of Asian peoples (Kiaer and Kim, 2024). On the other hand, Western cultures appreciate practicality, clear communication, and custom-made relationships, which mean individualism. These examples clearly bring out the need for hotels to change their service delivery styles to reflect on the cultural clients.

Cultural considerations are critical to learning guests' needs in the hopes of attending to their needs most satisfactorily in order to provide a positive guest experience (Bharwani and Mathews, 2021). For instance, serving only halal food or translating into local language shows understanding of some cultural standards. Excellence of work delivery and care for the manners and customs of different cultures creates satisfaction of guests by giving them courtesy feeling of being appreciated.

In addition, it minimises misinterpretation that can reduce comfort of the guest in the restaurant. For example, restraining from using some gestures when communicating or shifting the manner of interaction in accordance with culture, can be very beneficial. If hotels pay attention to culture,

they will be able to have a better understanding of their guests hence benefiting from guests' loyalty and recommendations. Knowing and appreciating these cultural beliefs and practices, hotels can make better and more profound impacts to the clients.

3. Communication Styles and Guest Interaction

Reliable communication is vital in creating quality in the guest service department. It brings out effective communication, reduces conflicts and build confidence between the hotel employees and guests (Yang et al., 2020). These interactions may be severely influenced by cultural differences in communication patterns. Many countries with high context cultures, like Japan and India, are expected to be of high context where the content is not as important as the frequency and the direction of the message. Low-context cultures like the USA, Germany prefer straight and unambiguous information where little importance is given to the words spoken and lot of emphasis is laid on the verbal content.

Both oral and non-oral communication are important in the interactions with the guests (Kavakcı et al., 2023). While active listening shows that one is paying attention, tone modulation portrays concern and courtesy. Features including gestures, body postures and facial movements either support or reduce the effectiveness of verbally transmitted messages (v et al., 2021). People always bear in mind that there are differences in a number of ways they communicate – especially the those that do not involve spoken or written words. Eye contact demonstrates confidence when making presentations to an audience of western people.

Creating more meaningful guest interactions is possible while hotels train their staff to know these differences. Warm welcoming statements and gestures are essential for guests and it is also important that communications are relevant to the culture (Islam, 2022). Hotels can facilitate the gap in communication by making guests feel accepted and valued, making them more loyal.

4. Training and Development for Cultural Competence

Various guests need different ways of handling and addressing them, and therefore staff training in cultural competence is of paramount importance. Empowering employees to act professionally in accordance with certain cultural insights and having the knowledge of how to act appropriately during business communications enhances their capability to interact more assertively (BOCHAROVA, 2024). One particular aspect of cultural sensitivity training is that training

programs frequently involve workshops and teaching role play sessions, easy linguistic lessons, and other programs.

Culturally sensitive employees add value to people's stay as they understand their cultural expectations and preferences (Yeşiltaş et al., 2022). For example, training on diet, or some practices in religion guarantees equal service provision. Understanding cultural differences enables employees to deal with respective grievances, misunderstandings and establish positive rapport with guests of all cultural backgrounds.

The implementation of such training helps to increase customer satisfaction and ensure their loyalty, as well as create a positive image for the hotel in the market and gain a competitive advantage in the hospitality sector.

5. Case Studies and Real-World Examples

The Ritz-Carlton is a sign that these luxury hotels are able to accommodate guests' cultural differences, whether through halal kitchens, or culturally tailored rooms (Abdrakhmanova and Moghavvemi, 2022). These services improve accommodation accessibility and the quality of guest experience. Similarly, mid-contemporary hotels such as Holiday Inn use employees with excellent language skills and mobile applications to enhance communication with different guests.

These practices underpin the Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions theory where change is nurtured depending on cultural differences in individualism or uncertainty avoidance (Alqarni, 2022). Furthermore, the SERVQUAL Model shows how culture's service scale enhances the quality of services that are provided out to customers through offering reliability, empathy and responsiveness (AlOmari, 2021). These cases show how cultural competence and communication management ensure that the hospitality industry provides positive guest experiences and assuages competitive threats.

6. Conclusion

In the hospitality industry guests satisfaction can be improved through culture and communication. Informing staff about cultural competence and dealing with cross cultural communication help the hotels provide service to customers differently. The strengthening of these elements enhances

guest care, creates guest loyalty; and raises the standard of services delivery in the face of globalisation.

ELEMENT 3: STAFF GUIDE



RESOURCES FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- **TRAINING WORKSHOPS:** REGULAR CULTURAL DIVERSITY TRAINING SESSIONS.
- **REFERENCE MATERIALS:** PROVIDE STAFF WITH QUICK GUIDES TO COMMON CULTURAL NORMS.

WHY IT MATTERS

- **HAPPY GUESTS:** PERSONALIZED SERVICE BOOSTS SATISFACTION.
- **STRONG REPUTATION:** DIVERSITY-FRIENDLY HOTELS ATTRACT LOYAL CLIENTELE.
- **TEAM GROWTH:** UNDERSTANDING CULTURES FOSTERS TEAMWORK.



RESOURCES

- **TRAINING:** ATTEND DIVERSITY WORKSHOPS.
- **QUICK GUIDES:** USE REFERENCE SHEETS FOR CULTURAL NORMS.
- **FEEDBACK:** ENCOURAGE GUEST SUGGESTIONS FOR INCLUSIVITY.





WHY CULTURAL COMPETENCE MATTERS

IMPROVES GUEST SATISFACTION: PERSONALIZED SERVICE MAKES GUESTS FEEL VALUED AND RESPECTED.

BOOSTS REPUTATION: POSITIVE GUEST EXPERIENCES CAN ENHANCE BRAND LOYALTY AND ATTRACT DIVERSE CLIENTELE.

ELEMENT 4: CULTURAL MISUNDERSTANDING SCENARIO

Experience

During one of the visits to a normal restaurant in Japan I seemed to do something improper and put my chopsticks into the bowl of rice after finishing the meal. This act has profound meaning in Japanese culture, it is a funeral rite for the bodies. The server looked vaguely embarrassed but recovered her composure carefully and another patron could later enlighten me on the reasons for my particular signal.

I was concerned that I must have blushed because I was not aware of such culture for which I regret. The server probably felt uncomfortable and probably they felt like I disrespected or saddened them by my mistake or blunder (Desai *et al.* 2020).

Reflection

This incident revealed how cultural practices when not well understood are usually perceived to be a form of disrespect. Several factors contributed to the misunderstanding:

- **Lack of Cultural Knowledge:** As for the chopstick placement, I was completely oblivious of this culture of the Japanese.
- **Assumptions:** I thought behavioral practices concerning orders were like what I was used to forgetting the cultures related to such practices (Marja and Suvi, 2021).
- **Non-Verbal Communication:** In my turn, the reaction of the server, while quite mild, was rather an expression of nervousness or, at least, discomfort, which I did not notice or, if I did, did not manage to notice in time to do something about it.

Cultural misunderstandings may take place because people make assumptions generalizations about the other or are unaware of the differences in the standards. Thinking over this episode I understood how important it is to come to a new culture with an open mind and no prejudice. I also acknowledged the necessity to pay more attention to nonverbal communication and to act according to the situation.

Action

Based on this experience, I have identified actionable steps to improve my cultural competence:

- **Research and Preparation:** As a person who intends to visit another country, I will ensure to take my time and learn about the culture of the people of that country and their etiquette especially when it comes to eating and related activities. For instance, I will investigate the manner of eating, guidelines to eating and other signification actions within the region (Melendres, 2022).
- **Active Listening and Observation:** While communicating with other people I will be aware of most verbal and non-verbal signs in order to avoid the expression of culturally inappropriate behaviours.

- Cultural Sensitivity Training: Using many offered courses or materials on diverse cultures to advance my knowledge regarding multicultural communication.
- Adaptability: Avoiding assumptions about what is acceptable behaviour when in doubt one should ask the representatives to explain why some things are done in a certain way.

This course will assist me in dealing with fellow human beings especially from different cultural backgrounds as I aim at getting closer and being a better friend or workmate.

Conclusion

In the process of trying to understand the ERA cycle, the issue of cultural sensitivity has been deemed noble. In this way, with the help of training in anticipating cross cultural interactions, paying attention to nonverbal communication and altering personal behaviour I avoid misleading and be part of effective and amiable cross-cultural communications. This experience proved the point that conceiving cultural competence is a lifelong process that warrants constant practice.

ELEMENT 5: PRESENTATION

Slide 1



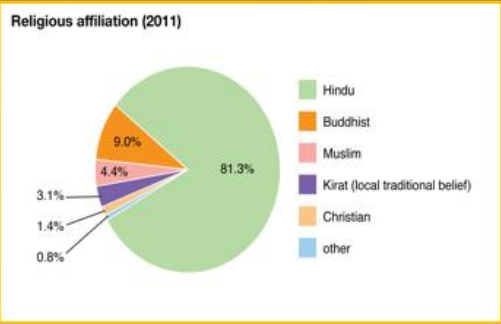
Slide 2

Introduction

- Name: Govinda Khanal
- Current study: International Hotel Management student
- Nationality: Portuguese citizen with Nepali origin
- Ethnic identity: Hindu Brahman
- Blend of cultural influences: Nepali traditions, Portuguese experience
- Focus: Understanding hospitality from a multi-cultural perspective

Slide 3

Cultural Background



Religion	Percentage
Hindu	81.3%
Buddhist	9.0%
Muslim	4.4%
Kirat (local traditional belief)	3.1%
Christian	1.4%
other	0.8%
Unlabeled	0.8%

- Nepali cultural roots: Deep in Hindu traditions
- Hospitality importance in Nepali culture: Guests as gods
- Portuguese influence: More relaxed, informal communication style (Dawson et al., 2023).
- Hindu customs: Focus on respect, honor, and collectivism
- Blending of two cultures: Hospitality as both a formal and casual experience
- Hospitality relevant to international settings: Understanding diverse guest needs

Slide 4

Nepali Hindu Traditions & Hospitality

- **Namaste/Namaskar:** Traditional greeting, a sign of respect.
- **Atithi Devo Bhava:** Guests are treated as gods in Nepali culture (Guan et al., 2022).
- **Respecting elders:** Guests, especially elders, are given priority and respect.
- **Offering food & drink:** Common practice to serve food or tea to guests.
- **Family involvement:** Entire family partakes in welcoming and honoring guests.
- **Festivals & Celebrations:** Major events like Dashain and Tihar are centered around hospitality.



Slide 5

Festivals and Family Gatherings

- **Dashain:** The biggest festival in Nepal, centered around family and hospitality.
- **Tihar:** Festival of lights and giving, where guests are honored.
- **Food offerings:** Special meals prepared for guests during these festivals (Kim and Spears, 2022).
- **Guest as family:** Guests are treated as part of the family during celebrations.
- **Respect for food:** Food is a key part of hospitality, symbolizing abundance and care.
- **Shared meals:** Meals are shared with guests to create bonding and unity.



DASHAIN



TIHAR

Slide 6

Communication Styles in Nepali Culture



- **Verbal communication:** Formality is key, especially when addressing elders.
- **Honorifics and titles:** Use of respectful titles and forms of address.
- **Indirect communication:** Often indirect to avoid confrontation or disrespect (Mariani et al., 2020).
- **Non-verbal cues:** Respect shown through gestures and body language.
- **Namaste gesture:** Non-verbal sign of respect and greeting.
- **Portuguese influence:** Informality and warmth influence communication style.

Slide 7

Values and Beliefs in Hospitality

- **Respect for elders:** Central value in Nepali culture, influencing guest treatment.
- **Hospitality as a sacred duty:** Treating guests with utmost respect and care.
- **Food and drink:** Integral to showing respect and honoring guests.
- **Collectivism:** Emphasis on community and family over individualism.
- **Contrast with Western cultures:** More individualistic approach in the West.
- **Expectation as a guest:** Warmth, respect, and attentiveness are essential.



Slide 8

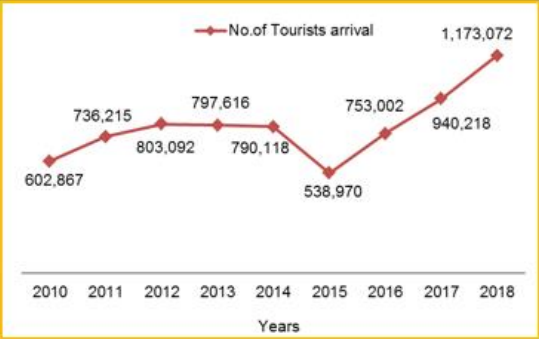
Hospitality Norms as a Guest

- **Warm welcome:** A greeting with warmth and respect is crucial.
- **Offering water or tea:** Essential for hospitality, especially in Nepali culture.
- **Clear introduction:** Hosts should introduce guests to the space and the environment (Ying et al., 2020).
- **Traditional hospitality gestures:** Such as offering a seat, taking coats, and making guests feel comfortable.
- **Respectful communication:** Hosts should engage politely and attentively.
- **Personalized touches:** Hosts who remember small preferences show thoughtfulness.



Slide 9

Cultural Sensitivity as a Guest



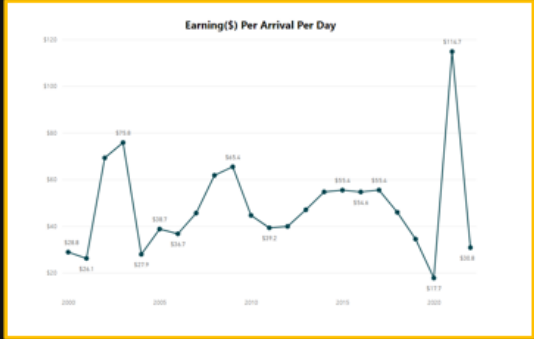
Years	No. of Tourists arrival
2010	602,867
2011	736,215
2012	803,092
2013	797,616
2014	790,118
2015	538,970
2016	753,002
2017	940,218
2018	1,173,072

- **Dietary restrictions:** Acknowledging vegetarian preferences or avoiding beef.
- **Cultural understanding:** Respecting dietary customs and practices.
- **Sensitivity to religious practices:** Understanding the need for prayer spaces or quiet time.
- **Respect for rituals:** Understanding and accommodating hospitality rituals.
- **Being mindful of beliefs:** Consideration for beliefs like fasting or special dietary needs.
- **Non-intrusive questions:** Hosts should ask, but respect boundaries when it comes to culture (Guan et al., 2022).
- **Openness to learning:** Hosts who show curiosity about cultural norms make the experience richer.

Slide 10

Shared Experiences as a Guest

- **Cultural exchange:** The opportunity to share and learn about customs.
- **Sharing stories:** Engaging in meaningful conversations enhances the experience.
- **Learning about traditions:** A chance to teach and inform hosts about cultural practices.
- **Shared meals:** A key part of Nepali hospitality and bonding (Mariani et al., 2020).
- **Mutual respect:** Valuing each other's background enhances interactions.
- **Creating lasting memories:** Cultural exchanges through meals and conversations create deep connections.
- **Building friendships:** Shared experiences foster a sense of belonging and camaraderie.



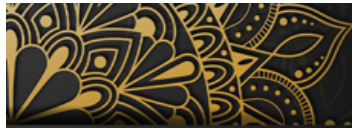
Year	Earning (\$)
2000	\$28.4
2001	\$36.1
2002	\$150.9
2003	\$77.9
2004	\$36.7
2005	\$154.4
2006	\$77.2
2007	\$77.2
2008	\$77.2
2009	\$77.2
2010	\$77.2
2011	\$77.2
2012	\$77.2
2013	\$77.2
2014	\$77.2
2015	\$77.2
2016	\$77.2
2017	\$77.2
2018	\$77.2
2019	\$77.2
2020	\$196.7

Slide 11

Conclusion

- **Cultural background:** Nepali Hindu heritage with Portuguese influence.
- **Role of hospitality:** Central in both Nepali and Hindu cultures.
- **Traditions and customs:** Hospitality as a sacred duty, offering food and care.
- **Communication styles:** Importance of formal, respectful verbal and non-verbal cues.
- **Respect for elders:** A core value that influences expectations.
- **Shared experiences:** Cultural exchange enhances guest experiences.
- **Cultural understanding:** Leads to mutual respect and enriched hospitality.

Slide 12



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Slide 13



Thank you

ELEMENT 6: REFLECTIVE ESSAY

Introduction

Culture is very important in the hospitality industry because it determines the guest expectations, the way that people communicate and their preferred way of serving their guests. Cultural sensitivity thus enhances the ability of the hospitality professional to serve the customer's needs to the best of his/ her capabilities by fully addressing his/ her cultural needs (Hsiao et al., 2023). Guests are from different cultures and therefore it is important that facilities prepare themselves in dealing with people from different cultural backgrounds.

The cultural background elucidates their perception regarding everything in life and how they handle themselves, how they communicate, among other things (García-Rodríguez et al., 2020). Cultural self-awareness and cultural sensitivity always have a positive impact in hospitality organizations as people respect those who respect them (Stoyanova-Bozhkova et al., 2022). Cultural competency is useful to assist professionals learn how to serve the international guests properly depending on their needs. This assignment applies Gibbs' Reflective Cycle to analyse how this understanding has changed throughout the module and how it will be possible to apply in the future to guest service in multicultural hospitality contexts.

Reflective Cycle

In a cultural diversity training held in a recent workshop on cultural awareness in a hospitality organization, attendees were encouraged to discuss a topic of their choice regarding intercultural relations. This particular workshop was conducted on an online platform, where students from different cultural backgrounds can discuss their experiences of the field of customer services. One peer focused on the differences in cultural communications expounding on indirect/straightforward communication style in-depth. This led to further interaction among other members in the group, who also described some real-life experiences with clients from other countries.

In this conversation I realised how culture played a part in the way people treated the guest in terms of polite language, how close they allowed the guest to be and whether they had to bow or

not (Islam and Kirillova, 2021). The discussion made a good example of showing how satisfying some cultural aspects affect customer satisfaction in service provision.

This was insightful as it gave a perspective of how cultures can be seen in operations particularly in hospitality and how keen one should be to cater for such differences. It directly linked into the very heart of the module's curriculum, along with emphasizing the importance of cultural competence as a means of bettering relations and experiences with guests and design of services. This is important for the establishment of culture-specific adjustment of the service delivery models for clientele population.

Feelings

In the groups' discussion during the workshop, I faced the conflict arising from regions of the world and cultural differences, particularly in terms of communication. Since I grew up in an environment where such cultural differences hardly exist, I was not conscious of the effect they could have on service encounters. I also had some concerns about how to manage all these cultural differences and if I have enough cultural competency to make some sense of interacting with people of different cultures. The most enlightening example was the narration of the peer from Japan regarding the indirect communication; that made me immediately realise how easily service can be misinterpreted in the hotel industry (Järvi et al., 2020).

The impacts of the module, over the period, enhanced my self-conviction in relation to making communication with people of different cultures. I felt more confident with the ability to identify and work with issues of cultural sensitivity by participating in practical exercises and group work. I began to change my perspective and view cultural diversity as an opportunity instead of a problem.

I believe that my perceptions concerning cultural interactions have transformed over the course of the given module. This diversity encounter made it easier for me to embrace the new opinion, which I didn't manage to do before. This change was facilitated by the understanding promised by the module and which focused on the issue of culture and its implication on the reception of guests within the hospitality industry.

Evaluation

During the discussion, I paid much attention to the way I would engage different individuals from other cultures hence practicing active listening technique to clients with a disposition of asking them questions with a view of understanding their cultural values. The nature of the language in the implementation of this approach ensured that my audience was receptive and we engaged in a positive conversation (Kilag et al., 2023). Most importantly, I practiced tolerance and acceptance which helped me embrace other people. Further, I used simple speech activities such as adjusting my language, and the kind of words to ensure clarity and avoid misunderstandings (Ezeh et al., 2021).

However, there were areas where the performance could be optimised. In some cases, I was not able to assess the full cultural impact of certain communications strategies. I should have been more insistent on asking follow up questions in order to get a better grasp of these cultural differences.

From this reflection, I derived the value of listening, being culturally sensitive in the face of differing communication methods. I learnt that there is a need for an exchange system of learning about other cultures in order to have an idea of what needs to be done in order to make the guests feel welcome and valued.

Analysis

Cultural assessment module featured a number of concepts that are directly relevant to the presentation during the group discussion. The first concept discussed in the guide was cultural relativity, which pays attention to how people from various cultural backgrounds perceive things, how they behave, how they communicate, and other related issues (Österman, 2021). This theory can be underlined in connection with the appreciation of the cultural background in the hospitality environment to make the guests feel welcome and secure.

Another topic that was under discussion was the concerning communication concept of direct and indirect communication. As stated in the discussion however, guests from indirect communication culture like Japan will not state their needs or show their discomforts as assertively as the ones from direct culture (Suhonen, 2021). This means that hospitality professionals have to spend more time observing behaviour and context.

Hospitality norms were also discussed with the understanding that the expectations differ from culture to culture. For example, some cultures may frown on informal or non-professional approach, while others may consider it beneath their dignity to be treated informally (Lin et al., 2022). Knowledge of these norms enables the satisfaction of guests' expectations and, therefore, increases their satisfaction.

The knowledge acquired from the module, especially understanding cultural differences and how to avoid offending other people, will be useful in future practice of hospitality. Being more informed on culture, specifically in terms of communication and expectations from the service provider, I can be more sensitive to the customers from a cultural point of view. This is not only good for meeting the guest needs but also for creating a culturally sensitive atmosphere.

Conclusion

This module has been useful in the understanding of the relevance of cultural sensitivity in the business of Hospitality. In my case using Gibbs' Reflective Cycle the lessons drawn are that it is important to acknowledge and embrace; cultural diversity, communication manners and norms in the provision of hospitality services to guests. Other lessons are on multicultural understanding, and they have leaned on effective listening, and how to change the communication techniques due to different customers. I also discovered that features of non-verbal communications and an understanding of indirect messages are crucial when honouring the customers.

This new perception of cultural factors will go a long way to shape my practice in the coming future in the hospitality industry. In communicating with the guests, I will gain more respect for culture to see how best to address people from different parts of the world. If I learn about guests; their cultures and practices or learn to adapt my communication style to their levels, I will have made the guests happier. Success in utilising cultural sensitivity for the purpose of creating a culturally sensitive environment and providing quality services for a multicultural clientele, therefore, will clearly depend on the ability to adapt to the needs of a multicultural clientele in various hospitality contexts.

Action Plan

To enhance my cultural competence in the hospitality industry, I plan to focus on the following key areas for personal and professional development:

1. **Learn More About Cultural Differences:** Participate in additional cultural competence workshops and training to deepen my understanding of global cultural norms and values.
2. **Improve Communication Skills:** Focus on improving my ability to recognise and adapt to different communication styles.
3. **Seek Feedback:** Actively request feedback from colleagues and guests regarding my approach to cross-cultural interactions to continuously refine my service delivery.
4. **Build Empathy:** Engage in activities that expose me to diverse cultures, helping me develop a more inclusive mindset and better understanding of guests' expectations.

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