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Introduction

The exchange of products, services, intellectual property, and expertise across several national boundaries is known as international business. It involves the transfer of commercial operations across more than one border in at least two different nations (Dasgupta, 2018). The communication practices carried out in various countries worldwide are collectively referred to as international communication. This paper will address the cultural differences between the United Kingdom and India, which are the primary factor behind Next Plc's reluctance to relocate its activities.

This report will provide a general overview of a developing country, India, and a basic introduction to the ideas of international business and international communication. The next phase involves researching and analysing the country's culture in light of the similarities and contrasts between it and the United Kingdom and the impact that recent business openings have had on the local culture. The research will conclude with an in-depth examination of new company owners' difficulties in communicating with their staff and suggestions for overcoming those obstacles.

A brief introduction to India

India is a developing nation home to the second largest population in the world (Nations online, 2022). It is recognised as the Republic of India.

Population Density

A significant increase can be seen when comparing the population of India in the year 2020, which was 1.38 billion, to the population in the year 2022, which was 1.41 billion. People who live in cities make up 35.39 per cent of the total population (Myers, 2022).

Indian Culture

The notion of harmony, the most significant Indian traditional value, is incorporated into India's diplomacy and other Indian conventional cultural values of compassion, righteousness, courtliness, wisdom, honesty, loyalty, and filial piety.

Indian Languages

Hindi is recognised as the country's primary language. Hindi is spoken by more than 43.63 per cent of the country's population. Still, India is also home to several other significant languages and dialects, including Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, Punjabi, and Telegu, amongst others (Dasgupta, 2018).

Indian Economy

According to the World Bank (2022), India's GDP increased dramatically from 2021 to 2022, from 3.18 trillion pounds to 3.47 billion, putting it in fifth place globally, only behind the United Kingdom. The service industry and the telecommunications and computer industries have been at the forefront of the increase in exports. Most of the country's labour force is employed in the service industry, which accounts for over half of the country's GDP and is expanding quickly (Myers, 2022).

Technological Advancement

According to recent research, India has had phenomenal development in the area of technological innovation. Some of the most prominent examples are the country's gross

expenditure on research and development as a proportion of its gross domestic product (GDP), which is 0.65%. As a result of the accessibility provided by the internet, the number of people in India who use social media is expected to reach 926.8 million by the year 2021 (Nations online, 2022). This will be followed by India surpassing 85 billion internet users in the same year, which will position the country as the third-largest online market in the world.

Workforce and Unemployment Rates

In April 2020, when the COVID pandemic was at its height, the labour force and the unemployment rate both climbed somewhat, reaching roughly 20.9% from 8.9% in the same month of the previous year. The unemployment rate in December 2020 was 10.3%, higher than the 7.9% rate in December 2019 (Statista, 2022).

Cultural Differences (Hofstede)

According to Hofstede's models, the following are the key cultural differences:

Power Distance Index

The index assesses the amassing of power and riches by the people that compose the general population, business, and culture (Hofstede Insights, 2018). Regarding the PDI that was measured, India has a substantially higher PDI than the rest of the globe, coming in at 80, whilst the average for the world is 59, and the PDI for the UK comes in at 35. It indicates that the distribution of income and power in India is unequal compared to that of the UK (Hofstede Insights, 2022).

Individualism vs Collectivism

India has a high level of collectivism (a score of 20) relative to individualism. In the UK, an 89 indicates that individuals are prioritised above the group (Hofstede Insights, 2022).

Masculinity vs Femininity

The score of 66 that India received for its masculine culture compared to its feminine culture indicates that India is an intensely masculine society. This shows that the expectations of being successful, forceful, and materialistic are put on males rather than women in India. The score for the United Kingdom is 66, which is the same as it is for India. This unequivocally indicates that masculinity is strongly followed in the United Kingdom (Hofstede Insights, 2022).

Uncertainty Avoidance Index

According to this notion, people can adjust to stressful situations (Hofstede Insights, 2018). The Uncertainty Assessment Index score for India is 30, which indicates a low level of uncertainty. This is because different persons are allowed to have different levels of flaws. The United Kingdom is considered a happy country with a low score of 35 since its citizens do not worry about the possibilities of each day's existence (Hofstede Insights, 2022).

Long vs Short term Orientation

A long-term perspective means thinking forward, whereas a short-term one means focusing on the here and now. India has a long-term focus and a score of 87 in this dimension, indicating that this is India's preferred way of life. The United Kingdom scored 50, showing that its citizens value long-term and short-term planning equally (Hofstede Insights, 2022).

Indulgence vs Restraint

Indulgence refers to providing individuals with unrestricted latitude to make choices based on what is most favourable to them in terms of their level of comfort. The term "restraint" refers to a state in which a person voluntarily limits their freedom to act (Hofstede Insights, 2018). India's score of 24 suggests that its people are generally reserved. Britain received a score of 69, indicating that its culture encourages its citizens to unwind and live their best lives without interference from too rigid rules (Hofstede Insights, 2022).

Cultural sensitivity in India

The following are some examples of some of the culturally sensitive problems that arise in India:

Problems of Caste System

Regarding the Indian economy, caste discrimination is still an issue, even in the workplace. Caste-related several problems have arisen in modern workplaces due to long-held attitudes and practices passed over from earlier eras. The problems develop when an employee is insulted based on caste or race during operations, meetings, or operations, which may escalate to violence and disrupt the everyday workings of that organisation (Samanta, 2013). There have even been cases of an individual puffed up by their sense of superiority, analysing and judging the whole universe according to their caste. Even more, roadblocks are placed in the way of promotions when workers organise unions to protect the privileges of their social class in the workplace (Kala and Sharma, 2010).

Gender Discrimination

In Indian society, the practice of discriminating against people based on gender dates back centuries. It has also established a foothold in the world of labour. In the context of unequal treatment, gender discrimination refers to differences in priority and advantages given to individuals based on their gender (Walusinski, 2010). In many of India's companies, discrimination against women based on gender is common. As a result, many women are prevented from advancing their careers or increasing their salaries. According to research conducted in the Asia Pacific Region, the level of gender prejudice reached up to sixty per cent. Because of gender disparity, even qualified workers may be prevented from taking advantage of opportunities that would otherwise be available, while less skilled workers may be given more priority (Sinha and Kumar, 2014). This might result in communication barriers. If a company in the UK intends to establish a presence in India, this issue should be a significant source of worry for that company.

Importance of networking

A company's potential may be expanded by collaboration with foreign partners. A multinational corporation expands into the market of another country. A company is responsible for enhancing the standard of living in each of the communities it operates in, both at home and abroad (Varnum, 2021). Just as there are cultural differences in business etiquette, so is how people from various nations conduct trade. Businesses have to adapt to the tastes of consumers. Companies may learn more about their market, their prospective customers, and how to tailor their choices to an ever-growing clientele by linking up with the worldwide web of commercial activity (Simmons and Johnston, 2017).

Foreign languages provide challenges, opportunities, and political leverage for a global enterprise. Language may be a barrier to communication when employees from various branches of a firm who speak different languages communicate with one another and those at headquarters who speak the common corporate language. Consistently catering to a buyer's linguistic preferences has several benefits (Evason, 2021).

Increasing sales. The language used in customer service is crucial in determining a company's success. The fact that a company's sales rate may improve by as much as 75 per cent just by mentioning things in depth in the local tongue is not a well-kept secret.

Increased customer satisfaction. If a company can provide after-sales support in the client's native language, the level of customer satisfaction and interest will increase by a factor of two (Sinha and Kumar, 2014).

Gaining brand loyalty and customer trust. Developing a comfort zone with the customer and increasing the likelihood of winning the customer's trust can be accomplished by communicating in the customer's native language (Sandy, 2022).

Getting a competitive advantage. For some, the inability to communicate in a foreign language may be very embarrassing. It may also create a wedge between your company and prospective clients by appealing to their emotions. Any multinational corporation (MNC) that uses the local language will have the edge over its competitors (Varnum, 2021).

Constantly using the native language can have some negative consequences.

Problems of collaborating with different nations. The MNC will attract more customers if its employees everywhere speak the local language. The reason is that communication between them will be hindered by their linguistic difficulties (Sandy, 2022).

India has a dearth of professionals with specialised knowledge in finance, engineering, chemistry, information technology, international law, journalism, and tourism who are fluent in English (Farver et al., 2007). Preferences in presenting vary from culture to culture and population to population. Brands that want to break into new markets and become household brands worldwide must adapt their materials to the specific requirements of those countries (Simmons and Johnston, 2017). The brand's name and logo must be adjusted for each region's culture. It is common practice in India for a product's original language and cultural allusions to be relied upon by consumers to recognise the brand (Evason, 2021). Next PLC would heavily use its buyers' language in its networking activities given that the way people communicate may significantly influence their thoughts, judgments, and purchases.

Different communication barriers experienced by foreign businesses in India

Language Barriers

When working in India, particularly those from the United Kingdom, they face difficulties communicating due to language barriers. For a British entrepreneur setting up a shop in India, failure to acquire the language or to interact with locals is a significant barrier to success (Evason, 2021).

Differences in the cultures

Respect for elders and family members is highly valued in Indian society, as is the custom of travelling with one's immediate relatives wherever possible. A person from

the United Kingdom may find it challenging to adjust to these cultures since this is an entirely new experience for them (Sinha and Kumar, 2014).

Body language

Herein lays the actual deciding factor. A considerable gap exists when comparing the body language of persons from India with the United Kingdom. The reactions of Indians are quite different from those of the British.

Gender discrimination

When it comes to internationalising their enterprises, Indian women have faced significant barriers due to bias against them. When relocating from the UK to start a firm, an entrepreneur cannot accept the sexism she may encounter in the workforce. The resulting breakdown in communication is enormous (Samanta, 2013).

Usage of back-dated technology

According to studies, the technology used in India is relatively dated. As a result, there is a decrease in staffing levels, which in turn causes inaccuracies in disseminating information (Varnum, 2021).

Emotional Barrier

One of the biggest problems has been the prevalence of emotional decision-making, which is detrimental to the success of businesses. When people in India make judgments based on their feelings instead of their heads, it may have disastrous consequences for international companies, including those in the United Kingdom (Simmons and Johnston, 2017).

Communication Strategies and Recommendations

Next, PLC's success in India depends on the company's ability to communicate effectively with partners, suppliers, and customers from various cultural backgrounds. The firm may utilise multiple strategies to get beyond the stumbling blocks of

cross-cultural communication (Sinha and Kumar, 2014). Examples of effective cross-cultural corporate communication include:

- The UK employees interacting with Indian employees who speak English are urged to use simple, grammatically sound English. Workers whose first language isn't English may have their instructions translated using the Google Translate app (Tuli, 2012). Indians have a "high context" culture, meaning they value informality in communication. It's possible that the company would employ a local speaker while doing business in India (Evason, 2021).
- Cross-cultural training is essential when it comes to assisting workers in adjusting to new situations and cultures. The workers of Next PLC may benefit from one another and improve their ability to collaborate and learn from one another if they share their cultural expertise in India (Varnum, 2021).
- An understanding of India's cultural values is essential for the success of any business operating there. Those working for the British side of the company should avoid saying or doing anything that may be taken the wrong way (Sinha and Kumar, 2014). Managers who are skilled negotiators understand both their own culture's norms and differences and those of their counterparts. Managers should be aware of their body language while negotiating between the British and Indian cultures. The British staff has to remember the value of time and utilise suitable hand signals and words while communicating with the other side (Farver et al., 2007).
- Next PLC's upper echelons need to hone their ability to hear out their staff and customers. It's possible that things won't go as planned in a market with a language barrier like India's. PLC's British staff must remember to be patient and aware that some processes may take longer than they're used to (Samanta, 2013).

Conclusion

According to the above analysis, India is the most populous and culturally significant country globally. In terms of GDP, it is the fifth biggest, only behind the United Kingdom, which gives it a relatively robust economy for a developing nation. It's a sea of linguistic

diversity with good job prospects. Cultural differences between the Indian and British people were studied using Hofstede's five dimensions of culture. The results showed that the Indians are more restrained than the British, who are more hedonistic, and that the British place more value on the individual's autonomy than the Indians. The following section examines the challenges any firm established in the United Kingdom would encounter if it decided to build a branch in India, including language obstacles, gender discrimination, cultural differences, etc. Finally, a short examination of the answers and tactics suggested to deal with communication issues in the workplace is presented.

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