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RESEARCH TITLE: A study on the importance of managing the cultural differences in International business- A case study based on the Fast-Food industry

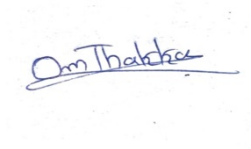
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Declaration

Myself ,Om Akshaybhai Thakkar declare that this dissertation has been composed by myself, that the work contained herein is entirely my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification whole or in part, except as specified.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Om Thakkar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Signature_____

Date: 13th May 2024

Acknowledgement

I highly appreciate all those who in one way or another supported this studying process. While my supervisor deserves immense recognition for her priceless guidance and encouragement, I extend my utmost gratitude to her as well. Among the many things I am grateful for, I would like to give credit to the respondents who so generously shared their thoughts and experiences and also to the authors whose work formed the very basis of this study. Moreover, I am thankful to my family and friends for their encouragement and to them for the understanding. It would not have been possible to carry this research out were it not for the dedicated group effort and helpful spurring one of those involved. Thank you.

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Keywords

- Cultural intelligence (CQ)
- Geert Hofstede
- Trompenaars' dimensions of culture
- International business
- Cultural adaptation strategies
- Organizational outcomes
- Cross-cultural communication
- Leadership style
- Cultural diversity management
- Research methodology
- Cultural differences
- Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory
- Multinational corporations (MNCs)
- Market expansion
- Communication barriers
- Decision-making
- Leadership practices
- Training programs
- Diversity and inclusion
- Organizational culture

Chapter 1

Introduction

The change in the business context and external environment is forcing the organisations to operate globally. With the increase in the level of competition in the fast-food market, the organizations are penetrating on different countries to capture the market share and revenue. With the increase in the ease of market entry offered by several countries to the organisations, the opportunities for international business are increasing. However, the international expansion brings the attention to manage the cultural differences in the organisation to ensure that the operations are smooth and efficient (Luo and Tung, 2018).

Managing cultural differences is very crucial due to many reasons including the impact of culture upon the communication and building the trust. It is imperative for the organisations to ensure that the cultural norms and sentiments of the foreign countries are not affected through the operations of the organisation. For example, McDonald's do not offer their bestselling item Big Mac which is beef burger in India as the country is predominantly place of resident of Hindu individuals. In Hindu cultural believe worshipping cow is very common and hence McDonalds' is not offering beef burger in India (Kerzner, 2018).

1.1 Background & Problem Statement

The fast-food industry globally is facing the exponential growth due to the increase in the customer awareness and globalisation. The increase in the multinational corporations (MNCs) establishing globally is leading towards the unique cross border challenges in terms of managing the cultural differences. Cultural factors influence various aspects of international business including operations, consumer behaviour, marketing strategies, workforce management, and intercultural communication. This research aims to explore the challenges associated with all the aspects of managing the multinational fast-food organisation in terms of the cultural differences (Otto *et al.*, 2022).

XYZ Company is British sandwich shop franchise chain founded in United Kingdom in the year 1983. XYZ is operating with more than 400 shops in United Kingdom and more than 100 franchisee shops in the countries like United States of America,

France, Switzerland, Canada, Hong Kong, India, Ireland, United Arab Emirates, Belgium, Germany, Kuwait, Italy, Luxembourg, and Singapore. Being an international fast-food chain, it is important for Pretto manage the prevailing cultural diversity. Global operations of the company require Pretto understand and absorb various cultural nuances that impact its operations, customer interactions, and employee dynamics. Understanding and effectively managing these cultural differences will help the company in managing their international business more effectively and will also create the company ready for further international expansion. Exploring the importance of managing the cultural differences and understanding various strategies for managing cultural diversity will allow Pretto overcome the cultural challenges such as communication, building trust and gaining acceptance from the customers and employees (Crane *et al.*, 2019).

Though the focus on managing the cultural differences has increased, there are still many gaps prevailing in understanding the granular aspect of managing the cultural differences in fast-food industry. While multinational fast-food organisations are building the support system for managing various cultural difference aspects, many fast-food organisations operating in foreign countries are still struggling to mitigate the cultural differences effectively. Most significant challenges faced by the multinational organisations are designing the marketing strategies through understanding the local culture, managing culturally diverse workforce and understanding the customer preferences which are influenced by their culture.

Furthermore, existing literature largely focuses on broader aspects of cross-cultural management and international business strategies, with limited research precisely addressing the fast-food sector's unique challenges and opportunities in managing cultural differences. Consequently, there is a need for inclusive research that investigates the importance of managing cultural differences in international fast-food operations and presents practical insights and recommendations for multinational companies in this industry.

This thesis aims to attend this gap through an in-depth study on the significance of managing cultural differences in international business, with a focus on the fast-food industry. By studying real-world case studies and empirical evidence, this research expects to identify key challenges, best practices, and strategies for effectively

navigating cultural diversity within multinational fast-food companies. Finally, the findings of this study will contribute to enhancing the understanding of cross-cultural management in the fast-food sector and provide valuable insights for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers in the field of international business and cultural studies (Damdinova, 2020).

1.2 Research aim

The aim of this research is to investigate the importance of managing cultural differences in international business specifically for XYZ Company. This requires analysing how XYZ Company currently addresses cultural diversity, identifying challenges related to cultural differences, and proposing strategies to enhance cultural sensitivity and adaptability within the organization.

Research objectives

1. To identify specific cultural challenges faced by XYZ company in different international markets.
2. To examine the impact of cultural differences on various aspects of XYZ Company's business, including customer service, marketing, and employee relations.
3. To explore best practices and strategies employed by other multinational companies in managing cultural diversity.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How do cultural differences affect operations of fast-food chain in international markets?
2. What are the challenges faced by fast-food chains in managing cultural diversity within their workforce and customer base?
3. How do cultural differences influence the menu offerings and product localization strategies of fast-food companies operating in diverse cultural environments?

1.4 Significance of research

The importance managing cultural diversity and difference for the global organisations is very high. Through this research, the strategies for managing the cultural differences will be explored which will allow the organisation to foster it for

future expansion. Through understanding how important it is to manage the cultural diversity and use to for the advantage of the company, Pret will be able to enhance competitiveness and mitigating the risks associated with the global expansion. Understanding the cultural nuances and tackling them will help Pret is creating and managing customer centric approach in different countries. Exploring the strategies for managing the cross cultures in the organisation will allow the organisation to create better organisational culture for the employees (Kostova *et al.*, 2020).

1.5 Rationale of the research

According to Khan *et al.* (2022) In the world of today in which nations and the people who make up nationalities are so diversified culturally, the cultural differences of international businesses are largely taken as a yardstick in (determining) the success or failure of international businesses. Supporting this thought Adamczyk (2017) opined that the fast-food industry is the case study at an international level of business, that not only is this industry popular across nations having different cultures but it is also the most known brand in the world. Aziz *et al.* (2021) support this by adding that the food industry deals with special food cultures related to having food allergies, important prayer times, language varieties, and societal norms that are affected by culture. Anitharaj (2018) opined that an investigation into how leading quick-serve restaurants respond to diverse cultural constraints will be conducted to further investigate these and showcase effective strategies for conducting business internationally. Alawamleh *et al.* (2022), discovering the way cultural adaptation works for the fast food business makes one expect similar results and strategies from different areas of influence, thus, strengthening the overall cultural understanding and business efficiency on the international scene.

1.6 Problem statement

According to Aziz *et al.*, (2021), although globalisation is in progress and border barriers have now almost disappeared, pale multinational companies (MNCs) still face challenges in providing organisation management on their international business operations. The hierarchy it creates is a real problem, especially in areas with a high share of foreign make-up such as fast food, where people's choices and habits are tightly linked to cultural phenomena. Shcherbakova (2020) added that the absence of the cultures of e.g. Low Context and High Context and of the diversity of

motives on both sides is one of the critical problems leading to miscommunication, lowered customer satisfaction, and finally business failure (Bagnato *et al.*, 2023). Consequently, Khan *et al.* (2022) support the thought by adding that it is a compelling matter to consider the issue of cultural differences in national economics with the fast food sector as an example. This research will determine the main obstacles and also, discover the successful tactics of leading fast-food chains successfully operating in various cultures. This research is meant to stand as a basis for practical suggestions that can aid MNCs in enhancing their cross-cultural competence and doing well in dynamic global markets.

1.7 Scope of the research

The focus of this study is on uncovering the details of the impact of managing cultural diversity in international business with the fast-food industry as a prime consideration. According to Majabadi *et al.* (2016), this entails an examination of the cultural aspects that affect the functioning of fast-food chains' operations, marketing approaches, and interactions with customers in diverse global markets (Bagnato *et al.*, 2023). The research will cover issues related to dietary options, religious requirements, culture, language, and social norms, and decide if those matter for the operation and the satisfaction of the customers.

Further, the research will look into successful cultural adaptation strategies adopted by the top fast-food restaurant chains to transcend these challenges smoothly. In this section, the use of case studies and data analysis will take place to discover the best practices and lessons learned from real-world instances. The investigation will enrich the knowledge of cross-cultural management in the fast-food industry and equip multinational companies with some practical advice that they can learn from and use in other sectors operating in a similar cultural environment.

1.8 Brief Research Methodology

This research topic is in-depth as it plans to cover multiple facets of the fast-food industry and organisations operating in international market. The selected research strategy is case based methodology which will help in understanding prevailing context in fast food industry as well as allows the research to be more focused upon one or more than one fast food companies operating in the international market. This research will be primarily driven by secondary data sources such as journal articles,

research papers and news. The journal articles and research papers will be searched through using several key words from the research objectives and research questions at the academic platforms such as Google Scholar and EBSCO. Since this research involves gathering information and generate theories related to the fast-food organisations operating in the international market and facing challenges due to cultural diversity, inductive approach will be adopted for data collection and analysis. The data collected from the newspapers, journal articles and research papers will be qualitative. Hence, thematic analysis will be used for analysing the collected data.

1.9 Structure of rest of project

Chapter 2 will be the literature review which will primarily focus upon reviewing at least 25 journal articles and research papers. The chapter will focus upon creating the conceptual framework through the existing theories and prevailing phenomena that are studied by different authors in terms of the how the cultural differences influence the strategy and operation of the fast-food firms operating in the foreign markets. Chapter 2 will work as the foundation for the research as the paper studied and reviewed in this chapter will create the base for the research and findings.

Chapter 3 will be the in-detail chapter on how the research was undertaken. For converting the important nuances of the research methodology, research onion framework will be used as the frame for developing the research methodology chapters. Research philosophies selected for the research will be described in detail with the justification. The research design adopted for the research will be assessed in details and the reasons for selecting the research approaches will be highlighted in this chapter. Data collection method will be described in detail in this chapter also with the ethical consideration opted for undertaking the research.

Chapter 4 will be the result analysis and discussion. In this chapter, the challenges faced by the fast-food organisations operating in international markets will be covered. This chapter will also focus upon recommendation for the various strategies that can be adopted for overcoming the challenges that the brand faces while operating in different culture-oriented countries. This chapter will focus upon analysis and discussing the findings from the previous chapter and deducting recommendations based on it.

Chapter 2 Literature review

2.1 Introduction

Definition of culture

As noted by Alofanet *et al.* (2020), culture refers to be the collective process of thinking, feeling and acting in a way that differentiate an individual or a group from others. The behaviour, attitudes and practices are driven by the culture from which the individuals belong to. Alexander *et al.* (2020) noted that cultures are defined by symbols, heroes, rituals and values. Out of these four elements, three elements are tangible while value is intangible. Drobot (2020) mentioned that the symbols, gestures and rituals can be identified by individuals from the similar culture. He also mentioned that these symbols and jargons changes over a period to incorporate the changes that are happening in the culture and community. Ikhtiyorovna (2023) added that culture influences the individual ability to differentiate good and bad.

Culture includes the overall way of personality, inclinations, and standard manner of life which distinguish one individual or group from another. As per the narration of Liu and Lin (2020), it is a manifestation of specific preferences, attitudes, observances, norms, and symbols used to preserve solidarity within a given society or a group of people. Khan *et al.* (2022) support the thought by adding that Culture does not limit itself to language only, it is involved in the manner of communication, decision-making, attitude to society, and judgments of one's differences. Therefore, Shcherbakova (2020) opined that language is learned and shared amongst the people in a group, and it goes on to adapt to the changing internal and external factors. According to Adamczyk (2017), culture shows itself as being dynamic and multilayered, describing the variety and wealth of the human experience that is manifested in different groups of people: regions, ethnicities, religions, and different historical periods. Supporting this thought, Aziz *et al.*, (2021) that cultural dynamics comprehension is key to effectively eliminating diverse social environments and creating the foundation for meaningful relationships in a globalised society.

2.2 Theoretical perspectives

Geert Hofstede Theory on cultural dimensions

Geert Hofstede coined the cultural dimension theory to differentiate the culture from one country to another country based on six primary dimensions including Power distance index, collectively or individualism, uncertainty avoidance tendency, masculinity and feminist ratio, short term and long-term orientation, restraint and indulgence (Sent and Kroese, 2022). Jackson, 2020 argued that power distance index refers to the difference in social or economic power. He argued that the higher power index means more inequality in terms of social and economic status. Pirlog (2020) noted that individualistic approach signifies the tendency to work alone for the individual progress and collectivism prefer to the tendency of working together for the progress of the company and achievement of organisational goals. Talalova and Werthschulte (2020) addressed that uncertainty avoidance tendency matrix is the capacity of taking risks. The paper noted that lower uncertainty avoidance index indicates higher risk-taking capability and higher index indicates lower risk-taking behaviour. Gerlach and Eriksson (2021) noted that masculinity and felinity refers to the patriarchy dominance. The paper also addressed that restraint and indulgence focuses upon the freedom given to individuals.

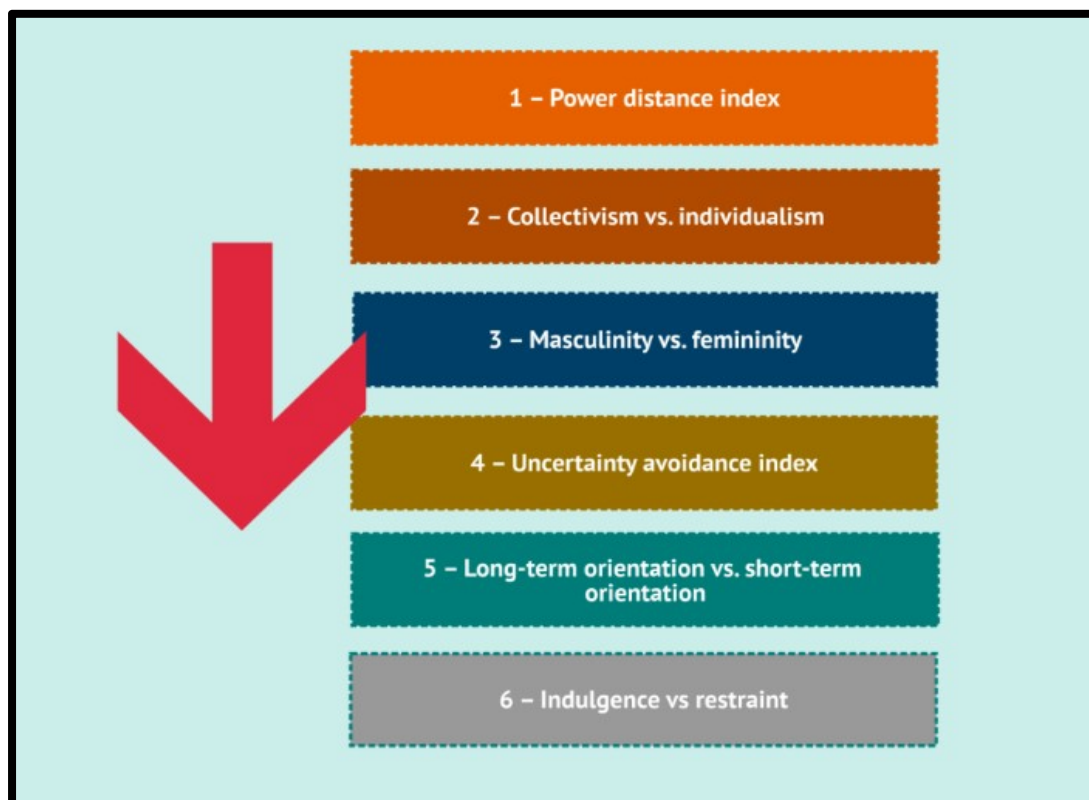


Figure 2.1: Geert Hofstede Theory on cultural dimensions

(Source: Cuofano, 2021)

According to Adamczyk (2017), Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory comprises six primary dimensions that distinguish cultures from each other. Therefore, the PDI – Power distance index is a measure of the society's behaviour where less powerful members accept and expect unequal power distribution. Santos and Sotelo-Drequito (2024) mentioned that by Hofstede's theory, these countries have PDI of more than 60 units which means that they are fine with the hierarchical demarcation in social relationships. In contrast, Khan *et al.* (2022) argued the thought by adding that nations for example Sweden and Denmark have low PDI scores (less than 40), indicating a preference for an egalitarian nature of relationships among kinsfolk. These elements give us information about the cultures values and behaviours that have great influence on all the business and social interactions within the different countries

Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions of Culture

Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions of Culture helps in assessing and addressing the cultural differences across various aspects. The seven dimensions of differences address by him are Universalism vs. Particularism, Individualism vs. Communitarianism, Neutral vs. Emotional, Specific vs. Diffuse, Achievement vs. Ascription, Sequential vs. Synchronic and Internal vs. External Control (Pirlog, 2021).

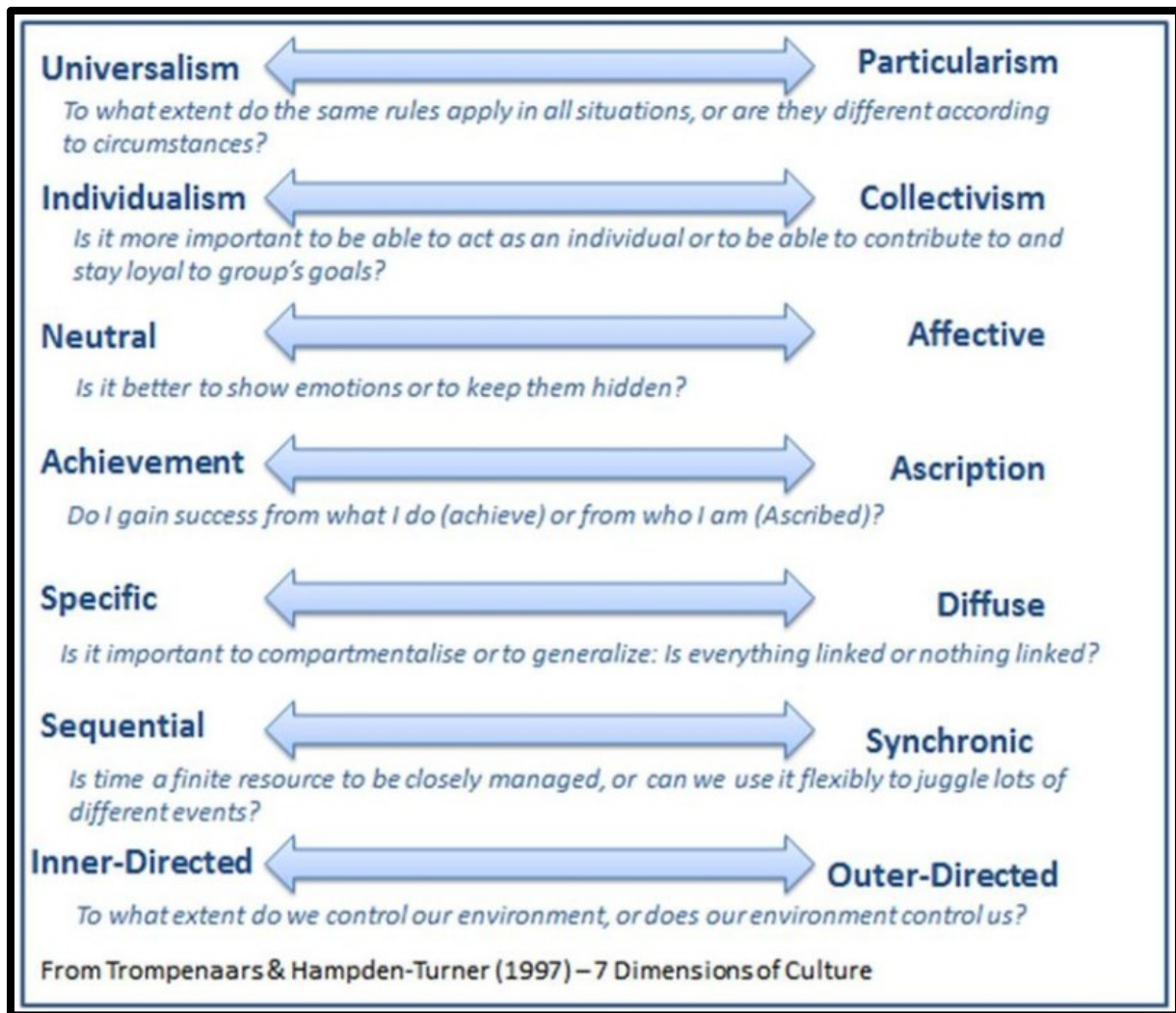


Figure 2.2: Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions of Culture

(Source: McLaughlin, 2017)

Barker (2020) argued that the culture with universalistic orientation insists on application of common rules, laws, and norms and do not consider the individual context. In contrasts particularism focuses upon prioritising the influence on individual culture and decisions are based on the social connection and specific contexts. Koyuncuet *al...* (2020) addressed that individualism culture is more inclined towards the personal independence while the group harmony and team motive are not focused upon. Adding to that Sapuarachchi (2021) noted that communitarian cultures emphasis on achievement of collective goals which are in favour of the group or team rather than focusing upon the individual context. Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars (2021) argued that countries with neutral culture believe in regulating the social interactions and expressions of emotions and sentiments are inappropriate.

The paper also addressed that in the emotional culture orientation individuals are more expressive and display of emotion is desirable as it helps in building more effective interpersonal relation. Trompenaars (2021) argued that in specific culture the clarity of boundaries in terms of work and family life is prevailing and hence the communication is more focused however in the diffuse culture the boundaries and compartmentalisation is not prevailing leading to the work dynamics influenced by interpersonal relationships and personal connections. Helfrich (2024) noted that the orientation towards the achievement lead to more inclination towards individual achievements and qualification valued more. The paper also noted that the culture with ascription orientation is more inclined towards social networking and connections rather than individual achievement such as individual merit and performance. KIZRAK (2023) identified that in sequential cultures time is considered as valuable resource and hence the punctuality and schedules are valued highly while in synchronic cultures more flexible approach is adopted where the timelines are fluid and not static. Rodolakiet al. (2023) addressed that the culture with internal control will focus upon the individual's efforts and abilities while the external locus of control-oriented culture will be more focus upon external factors including luck and social influence governed by the individual.

According to Khan *et al.* (2022), The Seven Cultural Dimensions of Trompenaars denotes important cultural disparities in different societies. Take, for example, the Universalism dimension of Rawls's veil of ignorance principle. Particularism, on the one hand, determines if regulations are applied evenly to everyone or also account for the unique features of every individual. Supporting the thought, Montagna (2023) opined that countries mainly lean toward the universalistic approach. This is especially true if you compare this approach to the particularistic one that is, for example, the case of China or Japan. Entrenching this knowledge allows one to move through cultural issues in the international business arena. As an illustration, Adamczyk (2017) argued that more flexible individual connections may take priority in a particularistic society while in a universalistic culture, the contracts are followed strictly.

2.3 Cultural Intelligence in International Business: Navigating Diversity for Success

According to Abdelhakimet *et al.*, (2023), on the contemporary worldwide stage of business, cultural intelligence (CQ) has proven to be crucial corporate skills that will help firms achieve excellence in plural markets. CQ is referred to as the ability of people to understand, adapt to, and have the capability to work in multiple cultural contexts. Regarding this Adamczyk (2017) stated that a business that expands internationally is faced with different cultures that may result in various intercultural aspects and influence business success. Thus, employees and leaders alike must acquire a certain level of cultural intelligence to leverage these complexities into long-term success.

One important component of intercultural intelligence understands other cultures. The research by Earley and Ang (2003) brings to the fore the centrality of having a deep cultural awareness of cultural uniqueness and clustering's across regions/areas. Let us take, for instance, an MNC with its operations to spread in Asian countries. As per the narration of Rahman *et al.*, (2021), for the business to reap success in this, the company's leaders may have to understand factors including Hofstede's cultural dimensions to grasp the values, norms, and communication patterns of the Asian countries. Through the acknowledgement and respect of cultural differences, Khan *et al.* (2022) argued the thought by adding that companies can establish better connections with local communities thus creating a positive corporate reputation in new markets.

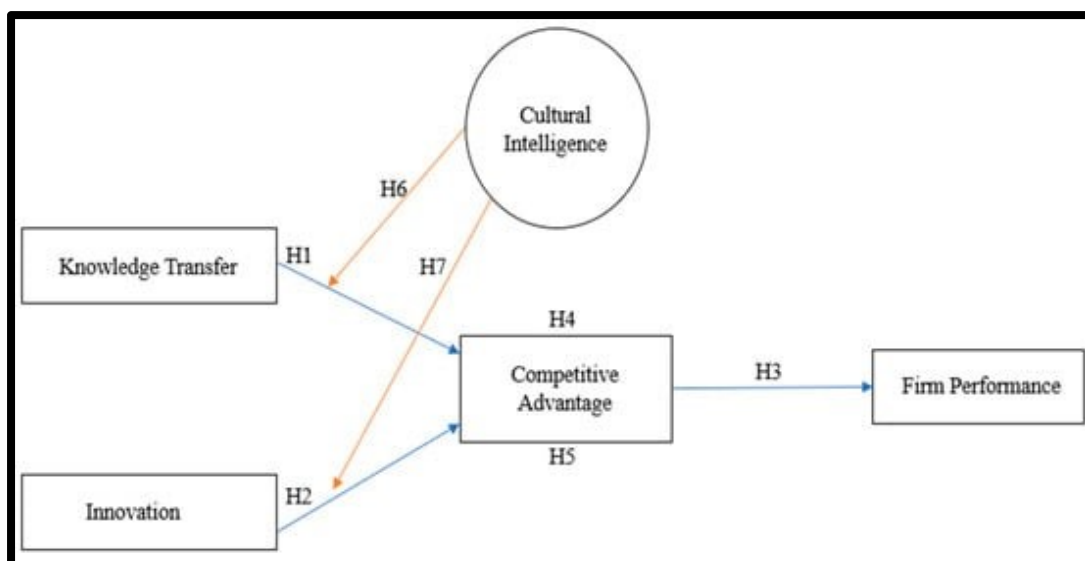


Figure 2.3: Cultural intelligence on firm performance

(Source: Cortes and Ooi, 2023)

Statistical evidence explains the big role of cultural smartness in international entrepreneurship. The research conducted by Adamczyk (2017) shows that organisations with culturally intelligent employees are prosperous in the market and generate high levels of innovation, creativity, and performance. It was discovered that teams composed of members high in CQ can work across the border more efficiently and effectively, thus bringing productivity and efficiency to organisations. For example, according to an investigation done by The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), 89 per cent out of the total number of HR professionals appreciate cultural intelligence and see it as a crucial factor for success on international assignments.

Moreover, cultural intelligence is very significant for communication that goes beyond cultural borders. A research team led by Thomas (2008) showed that high managers' level of cultural intelligence was accompanied by superior communicative performance when dealing with persons from different cultural backgrounds. Frequently, Adamczyk (2017) supported that these specialists were proficient in overcoming communication obstacles and deciphering non-verbal clues as well as adjusting communication styles to meet the preferences of their associates from different cultures. As another illustration, Khan *et al.* (2022) argued the thought by adding that European companies opening the frontier to the Middle East MUST adapt their communication plan to match the high-context culture where indirect conversations are highly appreciated.

The role that cultural intelligence plays in overall organisational efficiency cannot be ignored. The research by Livermore (2011) indicates that culturally intelligent leaders lead more profitable organisations with greater market share than other organisations. Alawamleh *et al.* (2022) added that these leaders have skills enough to manage cross-cultural teams and to use cultural diversity for innovation, advancement, and swift resolutions of cross-cultural conflicts. Canet (2023) opined about the case study of Boston Consulting Group. It was discovered that companies with diverse management teams had 19% higher revenue due to increased innovation.

Besides, the cultivation of cultural intelligence is one of the key factors in organisations but still, it comes with challenges for companies. Kolhe (2023) argued that one of the greater difficulties is the non-existence of cultural training and the lack of general cultural awareness among staffers. According to an ASTD poll, only 32% of enterprises have a cultural competence training program for their staff. Function of the language in human relations may be impaired when this essence is missing, which will lead to miscomprehension, disagreements, and inefficiency in intercultural contexts (Butler and Hammer, 2018). For instance, Cabaguing (2021) mentioned that if trained insufficiently, expatriate workers might face challenges in adjusting to the cultural and business practices of the host country over time which may lower productivity rate and morale.

In order to address these challenges, there is a need to emphasise organisational culture training and development programs. Abdel hakim *et al...* (2023) argued that through participation in initiatives like multicultural training workshops, language courses, and cultural exchanges, employees can acquire the knowledge and skills they will require to succeed in such a diverse environment. According to Adamczyk (2017), their Cultural Fluency Program gives their employees adaptive ways to manoeuvre different cultures. Also, the matchmaking program for employees from various cultural backgrounds through which knowledge sharing and mutual learning will take place.

Therefore, cultural intelligence is an integrating skill of enterprises in the global market now. Samaddare *et al.* (2020) commented that through the establishment of interracial communication, cultural exchange, and empowered leadership, it becomes apparent that organisations can leverage cultural diversity to propel innovation, build efficiency, and reinforce sustainable growth. From the training course to development, companies can train and equip their people and leaders to thrive in diverse markets and better tackle cultural complexities.

2.4 Cultural Adaptation Strategies in International Business

According to Majabadi *et al.* (2016), Cultural adaptation strategies become the centre of the strategy of multinational corporations (MNCs) running a business abroad. These methods imply the implementation of modifications to products, services, and marketing practices to adjust them to cultural norms, and values, and probe to those consumers. Santos and Sotelo-Drequito (2024) support the thought by adding that

businesses efficiently dealing with cultural diversification tend to be more competitive and are likely to build stronger relationships with prospects, which in turn are a major factor that supports business development.

According to An (2020), international businesses are notorious for cultural adaptation, one of which McDonald's is one of the prominent business chains in the fast-food industry worldwide. McDonald's customises its product mix for the consumer's variety of diets and food preferences in different localities. Khan *et al.*, (2022) added that McDonald's introduced the McAlooTikki burger and Veg Maharaja Mac for vegetarian Indians who are into vegetarians due to their cultural and religious beliefs. Conversely, Butler and Hammer (2018) argued that in predominantly Muslim countries, McDonald's undertakes that their meat products are halal-certified to fit in with Islamic food traditions.

Statistical data lends a plausible argument to the significance of cultural adaptation in international business. Per the study by McKinsey & Company, 70% of consumers around the globe claim they make purchases from brands that the brands have embraced their culture populations' values and preferences (Francis and Hoefel, 2018). This shows a reflection on the relevancy of a cultural sensitivity factor in consumer behaviour, and its influence on the final buying decision.

Majabadiet *al.* (2016) added that another subject of cultural adaptation may be tailored marketing campaigns for a particular audience. Nike, the world's pre-eminent sportswear brand, received accolades for its culturally-appropriate advertising techniques. Likewise, Nike's "Just Do It" advertising campaign which uses athletes from different backgrounds and cultures, celebrates determination and mental strength, and thus appeals to people around the world (Davis *et al.* 2014). Through the integration of elements from the local culture and storytelling methods, Nike can reach the emotional level of the consumers, something that underpins loyalty and engagement.

Majabadiet *al.* (2016), Along with product adaptation and marketing customization, MNCs has the time to recruit and retain teams with cultural diversity to manage the diversity effectively. Alawamlehet *al.* (2022) opined that Deloitte's report shows that diverse teams are more often innovative and versatile in meeting the requirements of the varying customer groups. Abdelhakimet *al.* (2023) argued that by establishing an inclusive and diversified culture, MNCs can make the most of the employees' wide cultural views and skills for business development.

Further, cultural adaptation strategies go beyond the customer-facing aspects and spread to the operational procedures, and the organisational culture. Abdelhakime *et al.* (2023) commented that equally, organisations like Google and Microsoft are adopting flexible work arrangements in addition to cultural sensitivity training that respects employees from all cultures. These brands, through cultural recognition and the creation of an inclusive work culture, do improve employees' job satisfaction, efficiency, and retention.

To summarise, cultural adaptation strategies are essential elements of success for MNCs that are active in international markets. Cases of companies, such as McDonald's, Nike, Google, and Microsoft reflect that the manufacturing processes, marketing campaigns, and organisational practices ought to fit the cultural context of different countries. Studies show that cultural adaptability is not only a competitive advantage in today's globalised world, but it is vital for sustainable growth and market expansion. Data on the preferences of world consumers and the benefits of diversity in the workplace also point in the same direction without a doubt.

Cultural differences and its impact in international business

Selmer (2020) studied the psychological barriers to adjustment of western organisational in China. The study argued that the unwillingness to adjust to the new country and culture and lack of acceptance of cultural norms of foreign country are the key barriers. Based on the findings of the research, it is implied that the adjustment in the culture is significant. The differences in the culture in term of the operations such as communication, negotiation, decision making style and leadership strategies are key sources of barriers. For the organisations trying to do the business in China, language is the most crucial barrier only less than 1% (Eild and Wild, 2019).

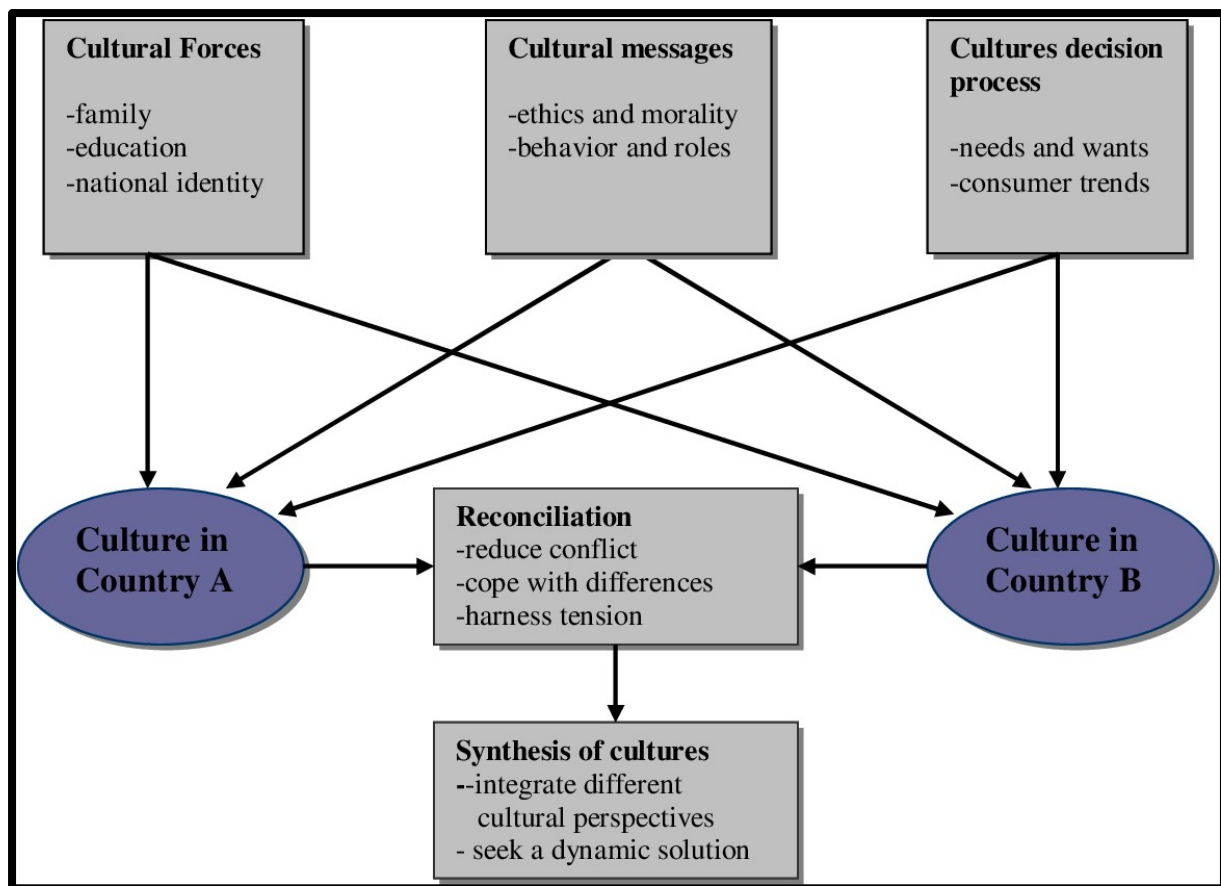


Figure 2.4: Impacts of cultural differences in global business

(Source: Srivastava *et al.* 2020)

Communication

Ado and Wanjiru (2018) noted that differences in communication style such as direct or indirect and high context and low context is very common barrier for international business. The paper addressed that the communication difference may result into misunderstandings and misinterpretations as the influence of culture is very high on the way one perceives the message. Farndale *et al.* (2019) argued that to overcome the communication barriers, it is important for the global organisation to absorb the cultural differences for effective communication across multicultural teams and stakeholders.

Decision making

Iammarino (2018) noted that negotiation and decision making in the organisation is influenced by the culture which makes it crucial challenge for the global organisations. The paper addressed that conflict resolution in the organisation is

driven by the cultural norms and hence organisations with different culture will be negotiating differently. Kraudeet *al.* (2018) proposed that to mitigate the differences in negotiation and decision making, it is important for the organisation to understand the cultural norms in terms of hierarchy, power distance, and decisiveness.

Leadership style and management practices

Krudeet *al.*, (2018) identified that leadership style and management practices and employee- employer relationships are influenced by the organisational culture, team dynamics and employee motivations. Leadership style and management approaches in the international organisations needs to adopt the cultural expectations and norms.

Best practices and strategies employed by other multinational companies in managing cultural diversity

Fitriasari (2020) argued that cultural awareness amongst the employees working in the cross border is the key to manage the cultural diversity in the global organisations. Organizing the training interventions for the managers, employees and leaders for managing cultural diversity helps in increasing the awareness about the organizational culture norms, style of correspondence and business practices prevailing in the organisation. This will automatically solve most significant cultural diversity challenges.

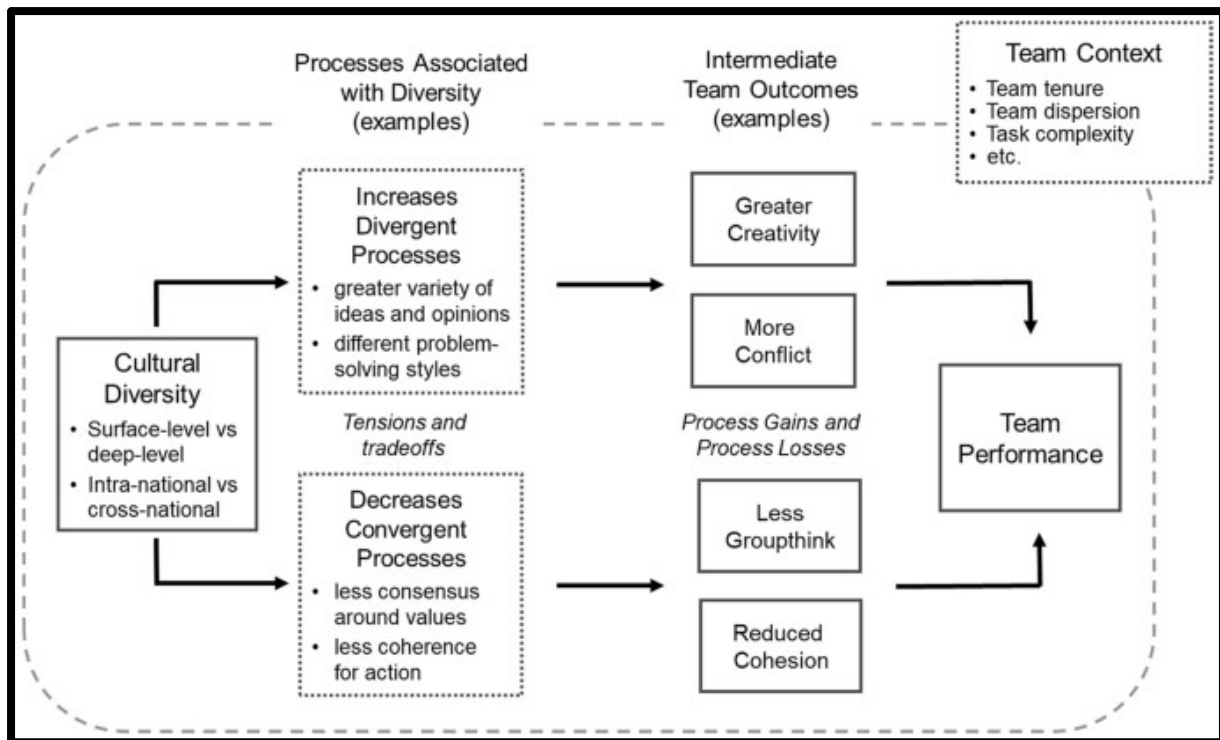


Figure 2.5: Cultural diversity in team work

(Source: Stahl and Maznevski, 2021)

Welch *et al.* (2020) noted that global organisations operating across multiple countries and continents need to implement the diversity and inclusion practices as core policy and practices in the organisation. The paper mentioned that taking diversity and inclusion initiatives will in creating mutual respect for different cultures and individuals from different cultures.

Adding to the above point Sarala *et al.* (2019) argued that cross culture team building, and collaboration is significantly used by global organisations to manage the culture differentiation and diversity. The paper assessed that cross-culture teams will help in encouraging collaboration among employees from different cultural backgrounds. Establishing cross culture teams will benefit the organisations through leveraging diverse perspectives, skills, and experiences which will help in problem solving and decision making.

2.5 Literature Gap

Despite the important contributions existing research makes to shed light on the significance of cultural intelligence (CQ) in international business. Santos and Sotelo-Drequito (2024) stated that a missing link in understanding the complex

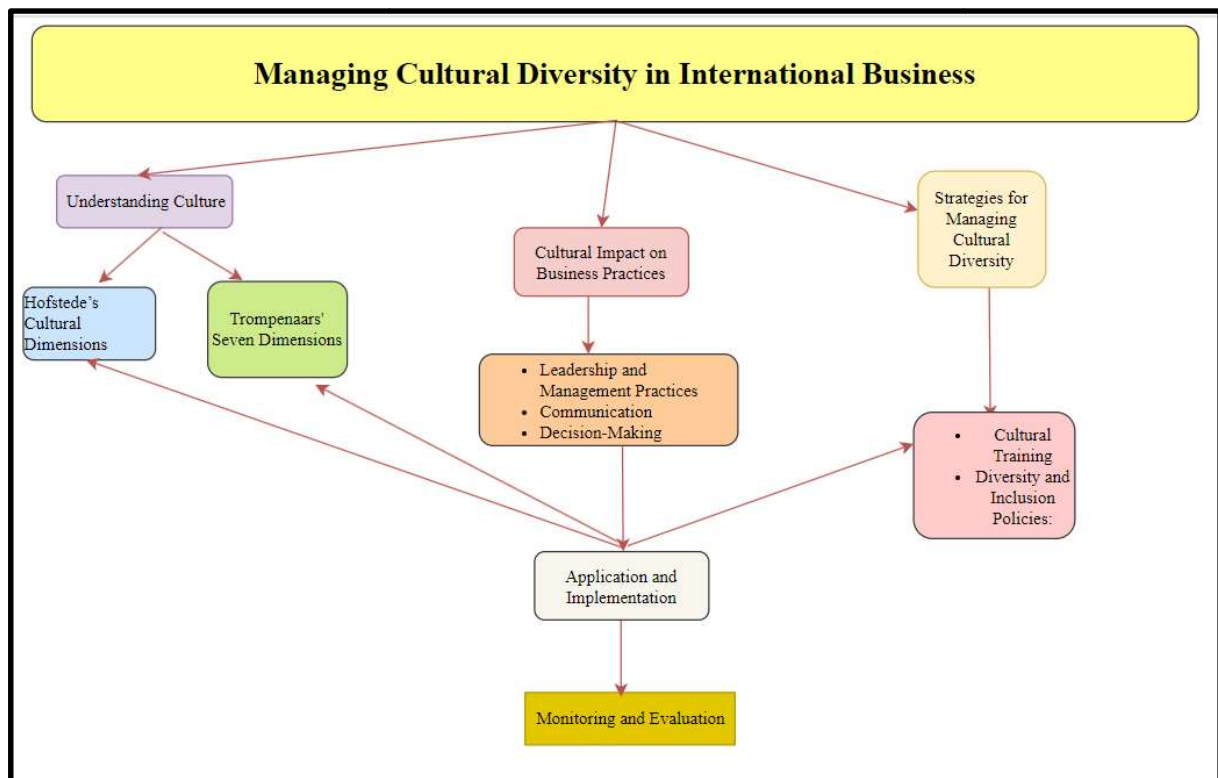
relationship between CQ and specific organisational outcomes such as innovation and market widening is still felt. Samaddaret *al.*, (2020) argued that cross-cultural competencies (CQ) in general and their overall contribution to organisational performance, there is a gap in research on how CQ precisely affects key business metrics like market share growth, customer satisfaction, and employee turnover.

Additionally, the literature on the subject mainly addresses the individual competency known as cultural intelligence, while overlooking the leadership or strategic level factors that shape CQ development and implementation. Adamczyk (2017) argued that Research ought to be done to identify the relations between organisational culture, leadership, and HR policies in an attempt to unveil cultural intelligence among staff. On get *al.* (2022) argued that cultural intelligence also does not provide sufficient focus on the influence of industry-specific factors on the relevance and efficacy of such programs.

On the other hand, Kolhe (2023) highlights the key role of cultural intelligence training in employees' and managers' enhancement, but there is a lack of research about the best methods to improve it. Future research could probe innovative training methods that use virtual reality, gamification, and immersion to find their efficiency and the extent to which they contribute to improving CQ skills.

These gaps in the literature would render data for organisations based on which they could use cultural intelligence for competitive advantage and growth. It would happen in this globalised world.

2.6 Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework of this research would implement Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, Trompenaars' 7 dimensions of culture and cultural intelligence theory (CQ). These frameworks provide a theoretical foundation for the understanding of cultural differences, adaptation strategies and they impact the international business. Through engaging these theories, the study intends to uncover the intricate and multifaceted interplay between cultural intelligence, organizational outcomes, and the administration of cultural diversity. The conceptual framework is used to examine main entities, their links with each other, and the consequences they have on enterprise policies with the aim to provide a complete picture of the situation.

2.7 Conclusion of Chapter

In summary, the literature review enables a clear comprehension of the importance of cultural intelligence in international business. Through theorization of several theoretical frameworks such as Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory as well as Trompenaars' seven dimensions of culture, it becomes clear how the different cultural elements and their impact on organisational outcomes is as varied as they are complex. Moreover, the assessment has emphasised the effectiveness of

communication, decision-making, and leadership in the management of cultural diversity. The already existing research provides many important findings yet there are knowledge shortages in organisation-level coverage of cultural intelligence development as well as training method effectiveness. Closing up on these gaps through additional research will be vital in ensuring the organisation's ability to manage cultural diversity and use it as a strategic niche in the international marketplace.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The present Methodology chapter provides insight view regarding the selection of all the methodological tools and their justification regarding the research topic. By selecting the research philosophy, approach, design, data collection method, and data analysis technique research can be developed appropriately. On the other hand, here, in this chapter proper justification of each of the selection of methodological tools has been developed that helps the research to become authentically established. Additionally, proper knowledge regarding ethical maintenance has been understood here based on which entire research can be developed.

3.2 Research Onion

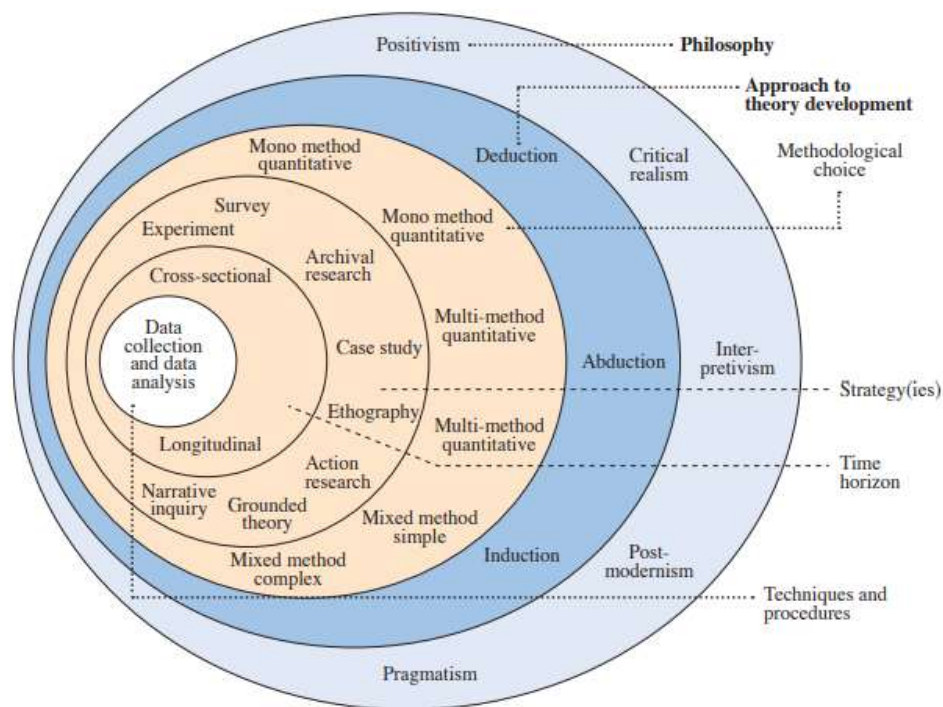


Figure 3.2: Research Onion

(Source: Melnikovas, 2018)

Figure 3.1 suggests several layers of the research onion which incorporates different kinds of methodological tools regarding the research topic. Additionally, it needs to be stated that research onion is a kind of structured framework that has been

accepted globally (Alturki, 2021). Through developing the research onion selection of all methodological tools can be done appropriately and that helps the research to become successfully conducted. An onion has several layers such as methodology has different kinds of aspects based on which the research is conducted (Deshpande and Magerko, 2024). In the research onion research philosophy lies in the outermost layer and the innermost layer data collection method of the research is established. In this way, it can be stated which aspect of the methodology can be developed first and which last.

3.3 Research Philosophy

Research Philosophy is an effective framework that helps the research to become developed through understanding and explanation of nature of knowledge as well as the way through which it can be obtained (Kirongo and Odoyo, 2020). Additionally, philosophy can consist of a set of principles and potential beliefs that guide the research for its overall processes. Research philosophy can be of three types and those are positivism, interpretivism, and realism. Here, in this research interpretivism research philosophy has been selected. It has been observed that interpretivism philosophy is generated based on subjective reality as well as its social structure development (Mauthner, 2020). On the other hand, interpretivism has been applied to qualitative study that has been developed here. In a contradiction, positivism develops with quantitative study and is based on scientific knowledge which is not required in this study. To manage the cultural differences in international business, in the fast-food industry, it is important to gain subjective knowledge from articles, and journals, thus the choice of interpretivism is completely justified.

3.4 Research Approach

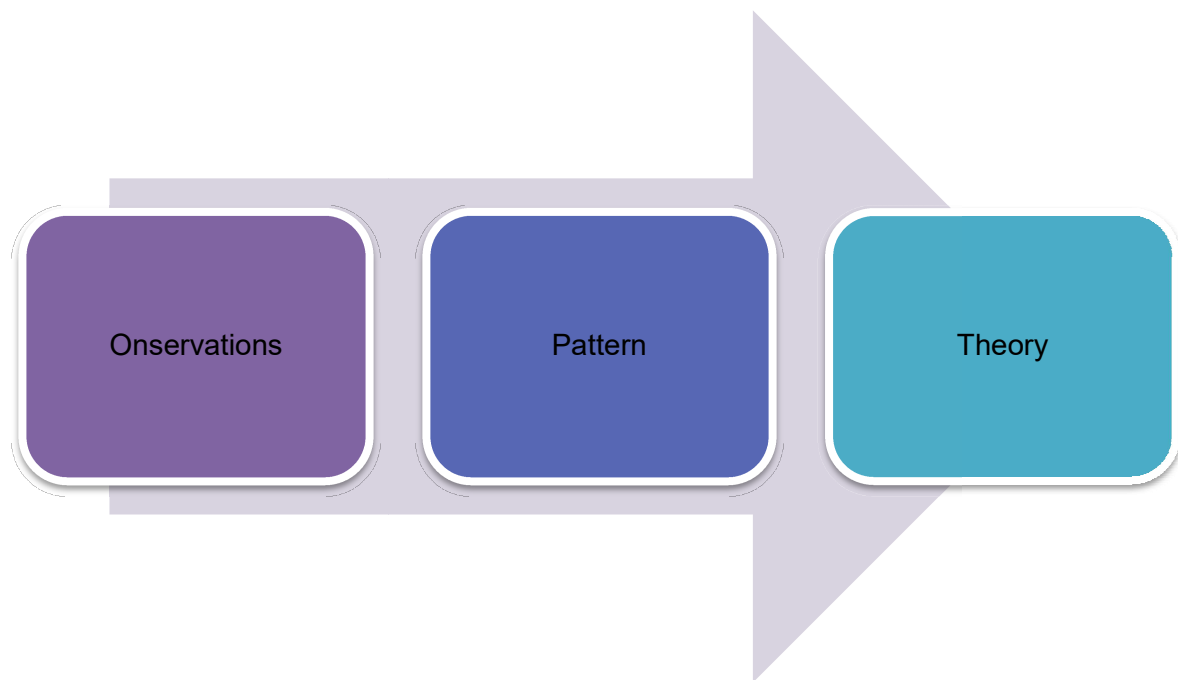


Figure 3.4: Inductive research approach

It has been described by Taherdoost (2022) that a research approach can be described as a kind of plan as well as procedure regarding the research that spans and steps from a wide range of assumptions regarding detailed methods of collection of data, analysis, and interpretation of those data. On the other hand, the research approach provides an effective roadmap for the research to follow the studies that have been conducted in a systematic as well as objective manner (Sibeoniet *al...*, 2020). The research approach can be divided into three sections and those are inductive, deductive, and abdicative. Here, an inductive research approach has been followed which is justified for the research topic. The inductive research approach is effectively helpful for the qualitative data collection method which has been followed here. On the other hand, the inductive approach has been developed through the generation of theories and exploration of several kinds of phenomena regarding the research topic. Apart from that deductive approach leads to quantitative study and based on hypotheses testing the entire approach can be developed (Corley, Bansal, and Yu, 2020). Thereby, it can be stated that understanding the management of cultural differences in the international business formation of theory is extremely important so the choice of inductive method is appropriate.

3.5 Research Design

A research design can be described as a kind of strategy that has been developed for answering all the research questions by using empirical data (Enget *al.*, 2022). Moreover, the development of a research design helps to make decisions regarding research objectives and approaches. Research design can be divided into three sections and those are descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory. A descriptive design helps to depict different kinds of situational problems about the research topic while an exploratory research design delves with insightful ideas regarding innovative research phenomena. Hypotheses development has been avoided in exploratory research design as it follows the qualitative research method for data collection (Nakash, Baruchson-Arbib, and Bouhnik, 2021). Here the research topic of understanding cultural differences in international business develops with a qualitative method so that the selection of research design is appropriate.

3.6 Data Collection Method

The data collection method is one of the integral and important parts of the research based on which the entire dissertation can be developed as well as analyzed and interpreted effectively (Lobe, Morgan, and Hoffman, 2020). An appropriate data collection method helps the researcher to collect data and information related to the research topic from different kinds of sources. Data collection methods can be of three types and those are primary, secondary, and mixed methods. Both primary and secondary data collection methods can be of two types and that involves qualitative and quantitative (Posada-Quintero and Chon, 2020). Here secondary qualitative data collection method has been followed. The secondary data collection method is less cost-effective as well as takes less time compared with the primary data collection method (Mazharef *al.*, 2021). As the research follows a secondary qualitative data collection method, all the data and information have been collected from articles, journals, and newspapers effectively. In the context of international business and cultural differences, information from articles is extremely important, which ensures data can be analysed accurately. As any kind of particular company has not been taken here, the conduct of a survey or interview is difficult, thus the primary data collection method has not been followed here. Therefore the choice of secondary data collection method for this research is justified enough.

3.7 Data Analysis

The collection of data needs to be analysed and evaluated properly so that insight view of the research topic can be understood effectively (Nguyen, Gardner, and Sheridan, 2020). Apart from that through analysing data properly opportunities for the success of the research have increased a lot. Data analysis can be of different types and those are thematic analysis, statistical analysis, case study analysis, and some others. Here in this research through developing a PRISMA table some of the research articles have been selected based on which the thematic analysis has been conducted. The secondary qualitative data collection method has been entirely connected with thematic analysis which has been generated (Lester, Cho, and Loch miller, 2020). On the other hand, to understand the insight view of each of the articles article analysis in a systematic formation has been done here effectively. Apart from that statistical analysis has not been chosen here as the primary method of data collection has not conducted here. Additionally, a case study analysis has been formulated here shortly as the research topic has been developed based on the case study of the fast-food industry globally. Thereby it can be stated that the choice of thematic analysis type for data analysis is appropriate and justified.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

In research, proper maintenance of ethics is extremely important as based on this research can be developed successfully and authentically. On the other hand lack of maintenance of ethics in the time of research can lead it into the way of become a failure. It needs to be remembered that the research must follow the “Copyright Act 2020”. The “Copyright Act” defines that any kind of copyright must not be followed in the context of writing the research paper so that authenticity can be maintained properly (Copyright. 2023). As the research follows the secondary method of data collection, avoiding copywriting is the primary focus of the research. Additionally, all the articles from which the information will be collected need not be older than 5 years and must be written in the English language. Besides that, all the references need to be cited appropriately in the reference list; in the context of direct quoting from the author’s writing it is important to give appropriate credit to those authors by citing their name with the year in the way of front citation. Additionally, each of the articles that have been selected must be topic-oriented and some of those must be

oriented with case studies from the fast-food industry for analysing the importance of cultural differences in international business.

3.9 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
- Articles need to be topic-related - Must written in the English language - Must not be older than 5 years - Articles must be focused on the fast-food industry	- Outside of the topic related articles need to be excluded - Except for the English language other languages in articles must be excluded - Older than 5 years articles cannot be taken - Except for the fast-food industry other industries need to be excluded from the subject of the article

Table 3.1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

(Source: Self-developed)

3.10 Prisma

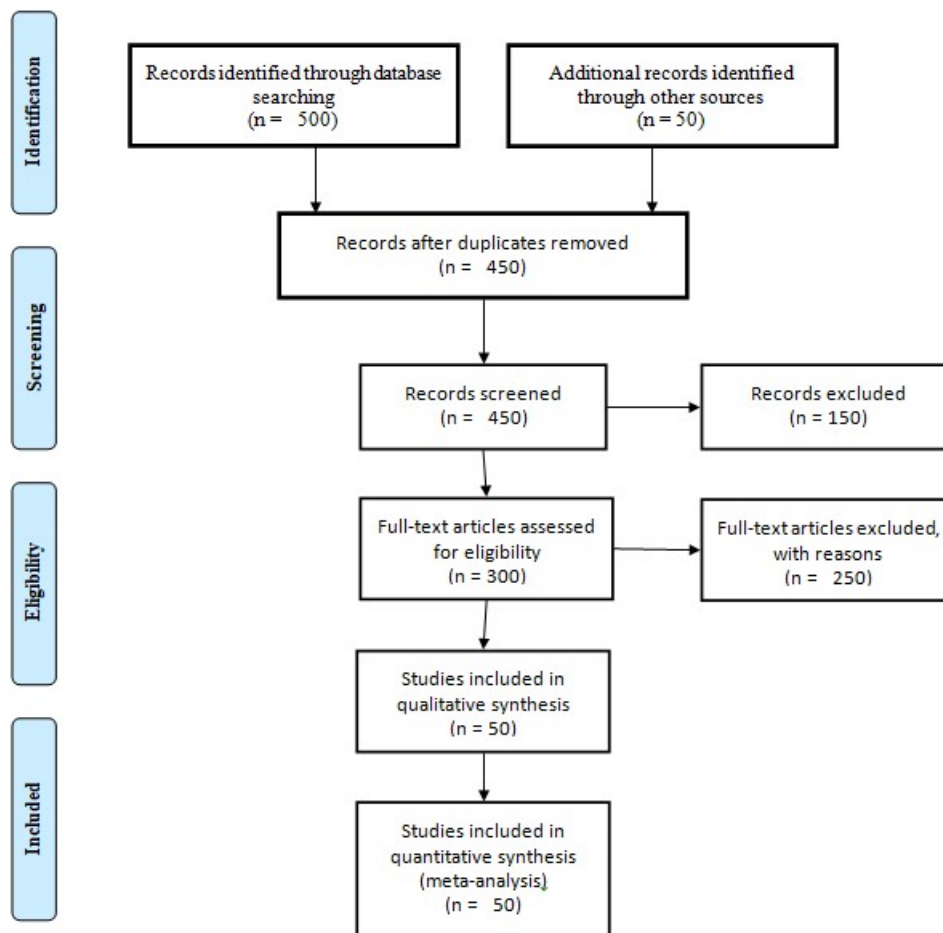


Figure 3.2: Prisma

3.11 Conclusion

It can be concluded that this chapter with all justification of research methodological tools emphasized the validity and reliability of the research. Additionally, it has been found that the secondary data collection method helps the researcher to gain knowledge regarding international business which provides insight view to the research. On the other hand maintenance of ethics may provide great success to the research.

Chapter 4: Findings / Results, Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The chapter on findings and analysis, discussion relates to the entire findings of the research that has been collected from articles, and journals. Additionally, through developing systematic thematic analysis with article reviews it has been understood that cultural differences can able to impact international business in the fast-food industry. After finding the entire data by developing themes based on research questions and objectives the data has been analysed. Based on the analysis final discussion over the research topic has been placed here effectively.

4.2 Presentation of Findings

Here, in this section through presenting the below-mentioned table article analysis has been conducted. From the article review prime focuses of the literature and prime findings of that literature have been established here enabling the research to become more prominent and accurate. From the key literature analysis, it has been found that managing cultural differences is extremely important for the development of international business; on the other hand in the fast-food industry sometimes the quality of services differs due to the reason of gender-biased behaviour and other relatable cultural differences. It may impact the international business and its growth as well as long-term sustainability in the fast-food industry.

In de x	Auth ors	Year	Title	Key themes or keywords
1	Zhong and Moon	2020	What Drives Customer Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Happiness in Fast-Food Restaurants in China? Perceived Price, Service Quality, Food Quality, Physical Environment Quality, and the	It has been found from the article that customer satisfaction as well as happiness can apple to lead the sense of loyalty of the customers. In the context of international business managing cultural differences can be developed through customer

			Moderating Role of Gender.	satisfaction and loyalty also. Additionally, it also has been observed that the quality of fast food as per the viewpoint of customers, can differ due to the reason of price and service quality can differ significantly between the genders.
2	Shar ma <i>et al.</i> , 2020	2020	Managing uncertainty during a global pandemic: An international business perspective. <i>Journal of Business Research</i>	Due to the pandemic international business has been affected a lot, it has been found that as a result of the pandemic global trade and GDP have decreased recently which has increased from 2008 to 18. Different kind of uncertainty occurs during the time of the pandemic and that affects worst on international business.
3	Quoq uabet <i>al.</i> , 2020	2020	Driving customer loyalty in the Malaysian fast food industry: The role of halal logo, trust and perceived reputation.	It has been found that a halal logo has a great effect on customer loyalty, though the effect can be direct as well as indirect. Here, it has also been found that perceived reputation as well as trust also becomes positively related to customer loyalty. Through the enhancement of customer loyalty, cultural differences can be reduced which is beneficiary

				for international business development in the fast-food industry. The study focuses on the effect of a halal logo on the loyalty of customers in the aspect of the fast-food industry in Malaysia
4	Srivastava <i>et al.</i> , 2020	2020	Culture and International business research: A review and research agenda.	It has been found that through Hofstede's cultural dimension model impact of cultural differences on international business can be understood effectively. It also has been found that the role of national culture, different kinds of uncertainty and interaction can able to provide an impact on the way of internationalisation
5	Couch and Rose, 2020	2020	Coaching culturally different members of international business teams - the role of cultural intelligence.	It has been measured in this article that a team that works internationally, has different kinds of perspectives related to cultural differences. According to all of the team members, it can be assisted that cultural differences can able to impact international business effectively in the context of both positive and negative impacts. Mostly it has been observed that cultural differences can able to create

				communication style and language barriers in international business.
6	Adiguzel, 2020	2020	<i>Competitiveness of International Business: Management, Economics, Technology, Environment, and Social Study of Cultural Perspective.</i>	It has been observed that a strong management approach can able to enhance the quality and productivity of the international business, management approach is necessary for creating the organisational structure. In this context, cultural differences may lead international business to become a failure. The aim of the research has been developed based on the way and impact of the world economy which can determine the balance regarding the power of competitive advantages.
7	Caliguriet al., 2020	2020	International HRM Insights for Navigating the COVID-19 pandemic: Implications for Future Research and Practice.	From the findings of the article, it has been observed that there are three critical domains for future research on IHRM which include managing the uncertainty, redefining performance related to the organisation, and many more. Cultural differences may impact international businesses also.

8	Khan et al., 2020	2020	Cultural differences and McDonald's: a multi-country	The study focuses on the differences in the perceptions of McDonald's services across the countries. It suggests that the global business, mainly the food and beverage sector, should consider the cultural differences significantly when entering a new market. The primary focus of the literature is to access and explore how cultural differences across four different countries including the US, VIETNAM, MALAYSIA and Egypt influence local perceptions of McDonald's services
9	Canet, 2023	2023	The Effect of the Company's Cultural Diversity on Restaurant Employees' Performance.	The key findings of this study are that diversity in the workplace permits a vast range of knowledge and ideas sharing which may increase task outcomes and problem-solving abilities of workers.
10	Adamczyk, 2017	2017	The Importance of Cultural Differences in International Business.	This research confirms that cultural differences have a satisfactory impact on global business actions. Understanding these differences is significant for fast food companies that are operating in the global market to gain success and avoid existing cultural conflicts.

11	Leonavičienė et al., 2022	2022	Accelerating Cultural Dimensions at International Companies in the Evidence of Internationalisation.	This research addresses strong correlations between different cultural dimensions and the global operations of firms. It shows the impact of Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory on global fast-food companies. The study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of Hofstede's cultural dimensions in connecting global companies and their subsidiaries in Baltic and Scandinavian countries. It examines how these cultural models influence the internationalisation process of multinational enterprises (MNEs) operating within these areas.
12	Abdelhakim et al, 2023	2023	The fast-food employees' usage intention of robots:	The implemented UTAUT model successfully discusses a notable portion of the variance in employees' behavioural intentions towards adopting robots. The key focus of this study is to examine the acceptance of service robots among fast food employers in two different cultural contexts Malaysia and Egypt.
13	Tsiotso u, 2019	2019	Rate my firm: cultural differences in service evaluations.	This study found several cultural differences in how tourists from various European regions access hotel services. These differences were statistically validated by

				applying multivariate analysis of variance and analysis of variances. It highlights the impact of cultural factors on service evaluations.
14	Sahadevan and Sumanaga, 2021	2021	Effective Cross-Cultural Communication for International Business.	Thai study identifies stereotypes, for language, non-verbal signals, anxiety, emotional displays, perception, and uncertainty as various invisible barriers that impact the cultural aspects within firms.
15	Kocaman, 2018	2018	A cross-cultural comparison of the attitudes of employees towards the presence of traditional foods in business menus.	The study found that food and beverage industry's employees mostly held positive attitudes toward the inclusion of traditional foods in business menus across various countries
16	Chun and Ochir, 2020	2020	The Effects of Fast Food Restaurant Attributes on Customer Satisfaction, Revisit Intention, and Recommendation Using DINESERV Scale.	The study identifies four foundational factors that significantly influence consumer satisfaction in global fast food chains and Mongolian food quality, price, service quality, and the atmosphere of restaurants.
17	Samad daret <i>et al.</i> , 2020	2020	Capturing diversity and cultural drivers of food choice in eastern India.	This study finds the majority of catalogued dishes significantly belong to the scratch food group. It indicates a high reliance on carbohydrate-rich foods in regular meals.

18	Butler and Hammer, 2018	2018	'Minute's a Life-Time in Fast Food!': Managerial Job Quality in the Quick Service Restaurant Sector.	The review assesses how administrative situations in the fast food sector meet QWL rules, uncovering a complex interaction between work requests and the arrangement of significant work encounters.
19	Montagna, 2023	2023	Cross-Cultural Communication in Business: The Impact of Cross-Cultural Communication from Marketing and Advertising Perspective.	It shows that effective communication adds more than just speaking different languages. It needs a deep understanding of different cultural aspects which influence business interactions and interpersonal relationships.
20	Wang et al., 2016	2016	A Review of the Growth of the Fast Food Industry in China and Its Potential Impact on Obesity.	This study finds several factors related to the rapid growth of the fast food industry in China such as increased urbanisation, business lifestyle, income and the quick service provided by fast food outlets.
21	Jiaheng et al., 2023	2023	Influence of Thai Street Food Quality, Price, and Involvement on Traveller Behavioural Intention: Exploring Cultural Difference (Eastern versus Western).	This context outlines the role that the cultural experience of street food plays in attracting global travellers. The authentic cultural experiences provided by street food effectively increase tourists' entire engagement and satisfaction with the destination.
22	Rahman et al.,	2021	Cross-cultural perspective on sustainable	This research addresses cultural value orientation as a critical

	2021		consumption: implications for consumer motivations and promotion.	antecedent motivating sustainable consumption behaviour.
23	Ghai, 2015	2015	Effects of cultural differences on the working of a virtual team	The research ensures that cultural differences mostly motivate team member attitudes in a virtual setting. These cultural dimensions impact how team members perceive time, and conflict and establish trust and communication.
24	D'Angel oet al., 2020	2020	Food Consumption in the UK Trends,	The report identifies rising trends in how consumers approach food such as increasing interest in play-based food, concerns and organic diet over food sustainability.
25	Deyet al., 2019	2019	Towards a framework for understanding ethnic consumers' acculturation strategies in a multicultural environment.	This study addresses four distinct strategies among ethical consumers such as rarefaction, rebellion. Refreshment and resonance.
26	Bagnat oet al., 2023	2023	The impact of fast food marketing on brand preferences and fast food intake of youth aged 10-17 across six countries.	Fast food consumption was significantly higher in the UK, Chile and Canada when you were revealed to general fast food marketing at least twice a week. It shows very low levels of attraction across different cultural and regulatory areas.
27	An, 2020	2020	Analysis of Marketing Segmentation of McDonald's. 2020 The 4th	This study finds that McDonald's adopted its various menus for offering to local customers based

			International Conference on their cultural differences and on E-Business and Internet tastes.	
28	Anita Raj, 2018	2018	Global Fast Food Retailing In India -A Way Ahead.	The key findings based on its localisation strategy that is crucial in attracting Indian customs
29	Hashim , and Kasana , 2019	2019	Antecedents of brand hate in the fast food industry.	It finds that supreme bad experiences with the brand effectively influence the development of negative feelings toward it.
30	Chico <i>et al...</i> , 2023	2023	Organisational Culture and Employees Performance Among Selected Employees in Fast Food Chain.	It concludes that organisations should choose their culture effectively for collaborating with each kind of worker.
31	Chitnis, 2019	2019	A Study on the Scenario of the Fast-Food Industry in India. International Journal of Trend in Scientific	It shows a significant shift in consumer preferences towards fast food influenced by a fast-moving lifestyle.
32	Liu and Kin, 2020	2020	Green Organisational Culture, Corporate Social Responsibility Implementation, and Food Safety.	It finds how organisational culture influences employees' behaviours in food safety areas.

33	Alawamleh et al., 2022	2022	Open innovation in the food industry: trends and barriers — a case of the Jordanian food industry.	It finds that limited and small market sizes hinder the application of open innovation
34	Cabaguing, 2021	2021	Exploring Diversification in Fast Food Chains A Case in Eastern Visayas, Philippines.	It finds a need for rising diversity programs to educate employees.
35	Onget et al., 2022	2022	Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction in Fast Food Restaurant 'Jollibee' during the COVID-19 Pandemic.	It finds that social and cultural influences are important in shaping customer satisfaction.
36	Reddy, and van Dam, 2020	2020	Food, culture, and Identity in Multicultural societies: Insights from Singapore.	It finds that culture influences daily food practices and variety
37	Askari Manabadiet al., 2016	2016	Factors Influencing Fast-Food Consumption Among Adolescents in Tehran: A Qualitative Study.	It finds that certain personal attitudes towards fast food drive customers' inclinations.
38	Shcherbakova, 2020	2020	Importance of Diversified Marketing Strategies for Fast Food Restaurant Chains.	It finds the notable need for fast food chains to adapt to different region's cultural aspects

39	Wright <i>et al.</i> , 2021	2021	The impact that cultural food security has on identity and well-being in the second-generation	It finds that cultural food security is important to maintain cultural practices in fast food companies.
40	Kolhe, 2023	2023	National College of Ireland Exploring the Factors Constraining the Adoption of Multi-Domestic Strategy Among the Fast-Food Chains: A Case Study of Fast-Food Chains in Europe.	It finds that fast-food chains accommodate local preferences and tastes
41	Gallarza-Granizo <i>et al.</i> , 2020	2020	Customer value in Quick-Service Restaurants: A cross-cultural study.	It finds that key dimensions of value are perceived in the fast food industry.
42	Otto, 2021	2021	Moral Entrepreneurialism for the Hamburger: Strategies for Marketing a Contested Fast Food.	It finds that McDonald's workers a story that increases its global responsibility
43	Weeks, and Oe, 2021	2021	Revisiting the global expansion strategy of fast-food brands: Modelling of satisfaction antecedents in	It finds that localisation of the menu is important for success in foreign markets.

			marketing management.	
44	Liu et al., 2022	2022	Comparison of localised and foreign restaurant brands for consumer behaviour prediction.	It finds that the importance of a pleasant dining atmosphere increases brand value
45	Xue et al., 2021		Purchasing Intentions toward Fast Food: The Mediating Role of Consumer Attitudes toward Fast Food.	It finds that knowledge about fast food can impact customers' desires.
46	Davood et al., 2024	2024	Enhancing word of mouth in the quick service restaurants: role of perceived brand globalness and localness.	It finds that both brand globalness and localness influence consumer brand attitudes.
47	Prasetyo et al., 2021	2021	Factors Influencing Repurchase Intention in Drive-Through Fast Food:	It finds that a notable effect of subjective appetite on menu options influences customers' perceptions.
48	Abd Aziz et al., 2021		The Determinants of Global Expansion: A Study on Food and Beverage Franchisors in Malaysia.	It finds that strategic location decisions mostly impact the success of franchises.
49	Santos	2024	The Relationship Between	It finds that a mix of local and

	and Sotelo-Drequito, 2024		Marketing Strategies and Customer Satisfaction in the Fast-Food Restaurant Industry.	international labour can attract a diverse customer base.
50	Martinez-Ruiz <i>et al.</i> , 2023	2023	The influence of food values on satisfaction and loyalty: Evidence obtained across restaurant types.	It finds that providing different added values raises customer satisfaction.

Table 4.1: Systematic thematic analysis

(Source: Self-developed)

4.3 Analysis of Results

Theme 1: There is an effective impact develops through cultural differences on the operations of fast-food chains in international markets

Cultural differences play an important role towards shaping the operations of fast-food chains in the contemporary international market (Bahoo, Alon and Paltrinieri, 2020). All of these differences include a lot of factors such as dietary preferences, religious beliefs and eating habits as well as societal norms. In this context, there are different kinds of primary ways are available through which cultural differences impact fast-food chains in the international market. Those factors include menu adoption, localisation, servicing style, dinner habits, payment methods and many more. In the context of menu adoption, it has been observed by Sewenet and Schwarcz, (2021) that dietary restrictions, taboos and preferences can necessitate menu changes. As an example, it can be stated that in India McDonald's offers different kinds of vegetarian options while beef is less common. On the other hand, Otto, Johnston and Baumann (2021) stated that localisation is another factor of cultural differences that may impact fast-food chains in international business which includes language barriers due to that lack of communication regarding signage and

menus. In this context the fast-food industry in the internationalisation context, visual cues as well as humour utilised in advertising can able to adopt and resonate local cultures. Additionally, Sanders *et al.*, (2020) stated that staff training in the way to appropriate greetings as well as communication is crucial. It has been observed that fast service is valued in the place of US who might be seen as rude for other cultures emphasising patience as well as respect.

On the other hand dining habits and payment methods are also some of the factors which may impact fast-food chains in the international business (Chun and Ochir, 2020). Mealtimes as well as portion sizes vary for the fast-food chain; in some sort of cultures lingering over to the meal has been encouraged requiring different kinds of seating arrangements as well as table turnover policies. As opined by Ng *et al.*, (2021), cashless transactions have been developed rapidly while in some regions, online payment methods have not been working, they are still dependent on cash-worthy transactions which may increase the cultural differences.

Theme 2: There are a lot of obstacles faced by fast-food chains in managing cultural diversity within the workforce and customer base

In the fast-food industry management of a diverse workforce as well as customer base develops new challenges. It has been observed by Al Shamsiet *al.*, (2020) that communication barriers can be increased due to the reason of language differences. Additionally, training programs need to be inclusive as well as cater for varied learning styles. As cultural differences have increased, this can be a problem for fast-food industry operations. Scheduling can be tricky as employees observe different kinds of religious holidays. As stated by Kilders, Caputo and Lusk (2023) customers' dietary restrictions as well as preferences require flexibility in menu options. It has been observed that marketing campaigns may not be able to connect with all the regions and for the sake of that reason troubles have occurred in the way of international business in the fast-food industry. Overall it is important to foster a workplace which respects as well as celebrates diversity which is crucial for the development of staff morale and customer satisfaction (Kiradoo, 2022).

Theme 3: MNCs can able to employ the best strategies for managing cultural diversity

MNCs have adopted a lot of strategies for managing cultural diversity and enhancing their growth and development in the competitive market (Zhong, Zhu and Zhang, 2021). Such strategies are diversity and inclusion programs, intercultural training, global mobility programs employee resource groups, and flexible work arrangements. MNCs need to go beyond the anti-discrimination training as well as they need to create a culture of open communication and address unconscious bias. On the other hand, Pratama and Andika (2022) stated that MNCs must include workshops as well as programs which equip employees with their skills for understanding and navigating cultural differences in communication and work styles. In this way through effective strategies, MNCs can easily mitigate the hurdles regarding cultural differences.

4.4 Discussion of results

It has been analysed from all over the findings that cultural differences have a great impact on the fast-food industry for operating as an international business in the global context. It has been observed that the fast-food industry faces some major obstacles in the way to achieve success as it has to face cultural differences. On the other hand, it has been observed that the language barrier is one of the major challenges for the fast-food industry which leads in the way to the downfall of the industry around the world (Adzovie and Jibril, 2020). There is a communication gap that has been developed which provides insecurities to the industry and customer satisfaction has been affected a lot (Baquero, 2022). Apart from that due to the religious holidays employees were not able to engage completely in the industry which directly affects upon productivity of the industry and international business has also been affected a lot. On the other hand, cultural differences impact the fast-food industry effectively through some of the factors and those are dining habits, payment methods, dietary system and many more. In this context, MNCs must adopt certain kinds of strategies such as different kinds of diversity and inclusion programs, development of flexible work arrangements, and global mobility programs to encourage employees and customers to deliver a cultural diversity problem-free environment in the workplace (Ciuk, Śliwa and Harzing, 2022). It may provide a great chance for the industry to increase opportunities for international business.

4.5 Conclusion

Based on this analysis it can be concluded that the entire thematic analysis helps to understand in-depth analysis for the importance of managing cultural differences for international business in the fast-food industry effectively. Cultural dimensions and differences provide some of the major challenges to the industry while through applying certain kinds of strategies it can be possible to mitigate all the challenges by the MNCs across the world.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of main findings

It can be concluded based on the overall analysis and discussion of the topic that there is significant importance in managing cultural differences for improvement in international business in the fast-food industry potentially. Cultural differences may create serious obstacles in the path of an organisation's success and expansion in the international market (Yousef and Shadi, 2021). Cultural differences include gender, race diversity, communication gap, language barriers, religious issues and many more. Along with all of these issues, an international business could not be able to be developed properly and effectively. Apart from that cultural differences can create less employee engagement and that directly reflects upon a high rate of turnover and less job satisfaction. Religious holidays create one major problem as most of the employees have become absent as per their religious programs which affects the productivity of the company entirely (Ciuk, Śliwa and Harzing, 2022). Additionally, dietary habits, payment methods, dining habits, and taste preferences, all of these are cultural effects that create problems in the way of internationalisation of the fast-food industry. Therefore it can be stated that MNCs must adopt some of the strategies such as diversity programs for employees so that they can become encouraged to work in the workplace. On the other hand, companies need to develop their facility of localisation to connect more with staff and customers to solve the language barrier issues. In this way through developing effective strategies, the fast-food industry can be developed more and reach internationalisation.

Detailed analysis and description of this topic shed light on the weight of the cultural differences management for assessing the international business growth in the fast-food industry. The widening gap in culture embraces a variety of aspects, among which are gender, race diversity, misunderstandings, language barriers, and religious exceptions, to mention but a few. According to Aziz *et al.* (2021), the differences that exist in the operational mechanism and work culture in the countries make it difficult for the organisation to capture the global market.

Worker involvement suffers from cultural diversity which in turn leads to greater staff turnover and diminished work contentment. Among the main causes of productivity is absenteeism during the religious holidays when productivity gets sidetracked and

religious observances are made. Furthermore, the cultural impacts are in the food habits, payment mode, eating preferences, and different tastes, which add up to the complex issues of the internationalisation of the fast-food industry.

The marginalisation problems faced by MNCs can be solved through strategies such as diversity programs which should promote the workplace both in terms of inclusion and involvement. Moreover, efforts for localization must be given more emphasis to do away with lingual hurdles, and hence, connect well with both staff and customers. These tactics may help the fast food business push over cultural obstacles and deliver a boost to its internationalisation strategy, bringing the business to a new level in the global market.

5.2 Conclusion based on the research questions

Based on the research questions developed in this research it can be concluded that cultural differences impact the fast-food chain and its international business contexts widely. It has been observed that due to the reason of several cultural aspects' operations of fast-food chains and international marketing have been affected. Such factors can be understood as dietary issues, payment methods, localisation, menu adoption, and dining habits. All of these lead the industry to face major problems that directly impact international business management and its potential growth. Understanding all of these cultural factors the fast-food industry can able to navigate all the international markets; they need to adopt offerings as well as operations while still maintaining the identity of the brand to win over customers in the global context.

To address the second question, it can be summarized that there are a lot of challenges available for the industry through managing cultural diversity in their workforce and customer base. One of the major problems which have been identified is communication gap and language barriers. Due to these issues, customer satisfaction and loyalty of customers could not be achieved by the industry in the meantime. Another problem occurs due to the reason of religious programs of employees, their absence has increased which leads to the downfall of productivity.

The third question of the research has been answered here in the entire analysis and it has been concluded that veg and non-veg issues affect the menu system in the fast-food industry more. It has been observed that veggie burgers in India to

McRice in China have been affected by cultural differences. Additionally, flavours, species, and religious restrictions provide a great influence on the menu offerings. In this context to overcome this issue fast-food chains must localise menus, and respect all the dietary needs and taste preferences of each religion despite maintaining a core brand identity.

The research question tackled in this research work has simplified the incorporation of cultural points of view on the fast-food businesses practised outside their homeland. Cabaguing (2021) mentioned that Cultural manifestations like preferences in diets, payment methods, localisation, adoption of menus, and dining habits have been included among those factors that comprise major operational challenges confronted by fast-food chains in international contexts. In that aspect, these issues are the direct impediment to effective management of international business operations and thus a blocked growth route.

The second research question intentionally draws much attention to the difficulties linked to staffing and customer interactions given the workforce and customer base of the fast-food industry's cultural diversity. Known issues of communication gaps and language barriers stand out as major barriers that may cause loss of customer satisfaction and loyalty. Employee absences during religious observances do not only affect operations in the business. Rather, the absence also affects productivity hence making the business able to serve clients poorly.

The findings also emphasise the consequences of cultural diversity on the menu selections of fast-food restaurants by where they are the third study research question that is addressed. There will be differences in the tasting menu, flavour, and dietary lifestyle to suit the needs of the culture in that particular place, creating a necessity to localise efforts to accommodate the variety of cultural needs and the brand identity at the same time.

5.3 Recommendations

- The industry needs to conduct market research to understand the local cultural nuances as well as preferences before entering the new international market.

- MNCs must adopt menu offerings to cater to local different kind of tastes as well as dietary restrictions which may ensure inclusivity and acceptance (Cliceriet *al...*, 2022)
- Companies need to develop a great relationship with local suppliers to ensure compliance with religious requirements such as halal certifications (Calder, 2020)
- Needs to train all the employees so that they can become culturally sensitive as well as aware regarding various kinds of customs to deliver excellent customer services
- Marketing strategies need to be developed and connected with the cultural values and norms of the target market

However, it puts some recommendations in details

Conduct Market Research: Deyet *al.* (2019) commented that marketing to foreign markets before the actual entry entails serious studies that need to be performed by companies before they embark on their venture. These studies should comprise knowing how local cultural norms, dietary patterns, and dietary habits are different. Khan *et al.* (2022) support the thought by adding that Cultural awareness on the part of companies provides them with the ability to fashion their products and services to suit their customers and to specifically address any localised needs and consumer preferences within the target market.

Adopt Menu Offerings: Kocaman (2018) opined that further multinational corporations (MNCs) should pay attention to creating diverse menu offerings that go with local preferences and restrictions. These two elements of collaboration with all the stakeholders guarantee their acceptability and cultivation of a good relationship with the customers. MNCs can get hold of a larger consumer population by offering various types of cuisines on the menu. This can help them to be marked in the market.

Develop Relationships with Local Suppliers: According to Santos and Sotelo-Drequito, (2024), developing positive relationships with local supply networks is the key to staying confident when talking about religious demands, like the certification process for halal products. Adamczyk (2017) stated that with ingredients and products that are obtained from reliable local suppliers, enterprises can show a passable picture of sensitivity and authenticity towards cultures. Thus, it proves the

brand's trustworthiness through the advertising campaign and builds consumer confidence in the local community.

Provide Cultural Sensitivity Training: According to Abdelhakimet *al.*, (2023), organisations should dedicate themselves to deploying training programs that are aimed at equipping employees with knowledge of different cultural norms and traditions. Kolhe (2023) argued that making sure that not only staff members but also the client are socially aware and sensitive is the key to achieving customer satisfaction without unintentionally hurting others' feelings while misinterpreting.

Develop Culturally Relevant Marketing Strategies: Otto (2021) opined that marketing strategies have to be designed in a way to fits the cultural values and norms of the targeted market. Through putting cultural aspects into adverts and promotional supplies brands may touch local customers and make them into loyal followers

5.4 Limitations of research

One of the great limitations of this research is the unavailability of primary data, and lack of knowledge regarding the impact of cultural diversity on employee engagement, turnover, and satisfaction of job. In research, in-depth analysis and gaining knowledge about the perspective of concerned personnel of the research is extremely important and for that surveys and interviews have been needed (Madhuriet *al.*, 2022). Additionally, any kind of survey and interview hasn't been done yet which has become one of the major limitations of this research. An in-depth analysis of the challenges faced by the fast-food industry has not been mentioned yet. With all of these limitations, the research may not become successful properly or face many more problems on the path to success.

5.5 Linking with Objectives

Objective 1: To identify specific cultural challenges faced by XYZ company in different international markets

The recommendations on carrying out market research and working on developing relationships with local suppliers are the areas where this purpose could be particularly addressed. It can be achieved by carrying out detailed investigations about the distinct cultural peculiarities and tastes of each foreign market. The

company can thereby learn to identify and take preventive measures ahead of time about cultural obstacles. Furthermore, when building contacts with local suppliers, compliance with both the religious standards and cultural traditions is ensured hence any possible challenge is overcome about sourcing and product offering.

Objective 2: To examine the impact of cultural differences on various aspects of XYZ Company's business, including customer service, marketing, and employee relations

This recommendation of training the employees on cultural sensitivity is linked to this outcome tranquillity. XYZ Company can do this by empowering people to be culturally sensitive and to understand different habits. In this manner, the company can improve customer service, marketing effectiveness, and employee relations. Staffs that are culturally sensitive will be much more efficient in communicating, understanding the needs, and creating a friendly environment among the diverse group of customers. They can customise their marketing campaigns to specific cultural conditions and strengthen their relationships with their co-workers from different backgrounds.

Objective 3: To explore best practices and strategies employed by other multinational companies in managing cultural diversity

Assessment includes market research, choice of meals for the menu, work with local suppliers, cultural competency training, and branding and marketing of culturally related strategies that centre on this goal. Through the implementation of appropriate best practices and strategies from other multinational companies XYZ Company will integrate cultural diversity in their international operations efficiently. They offer specific practical recommendations tailored to XYZ Company's need to navigate different cultures and maintain its competitiveness.

5.6 Recommendation for future work

The entire research study needs to be developed with a primary data collection method along with interviews and surveys so that the opinions of employees and managers of MNCs in the fast-food industry regarding cultural differences can be understood. Additionally, the impacts of cultural differences on employee engagement, productivity and job satisfaction need to be analysed (Yousef and Shadi, 2021). Besides that, challenges faced by the industry need to be elaborated in a wide range effectively so that the research can provide insight view on the topic.

Strategies for development in international business must be added to the research to make it well-balanced for future study and development

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