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Essay

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1. Introduction

British Business Communication mainly refers to different ways that allow organizations or individuals to communicate in different business settings. This study is going to evaluate the most effective ways that can help Kingfisher expand its business in Estonia and Slovenia. In this context, it will demonstrate different factors that can take place during the time of operating the business in the counties. Therefore, a Hofstede cultural dimension framework will be discussed that can help in identifying the most suitable country in which the company can expand its business. Apart from that, common issues that can hinder business operations will be also identified and then some effective solutions will be provided in the recommendations section. These activities can help the company to deal with the communication barriers.

2. A brief introduction to Kingfisher Plc

Kingfisher Plc is a well-known British multinational improvement retailing company headquartered in London, United Kingdom (Kingfisher, 2024). This company was established in 1982 and the retail brands include B&Q, Castorama, Screwfix, Estonia and Slovenia. Brico Dépôt, and Koçtaş. This company operates in different countries in order to satisfy customers worldwide. B&Q is considered one of the largest DIY retail chains that offers a wide range of products for gardening projects as well as home on the other hand provides a comprehensive range of hardware and tools that build supplies to such trade professionals as well as DIY enthusiasts. Moreover, Kingfisher operates through brands including Castorama and Brico Dépôt in France and also focuses on expanding the business in other countries through its retail brands. The main focus of the company is to deliver value, innovation, as well as customer service to remain competitive in-home improvement in this retail sector.

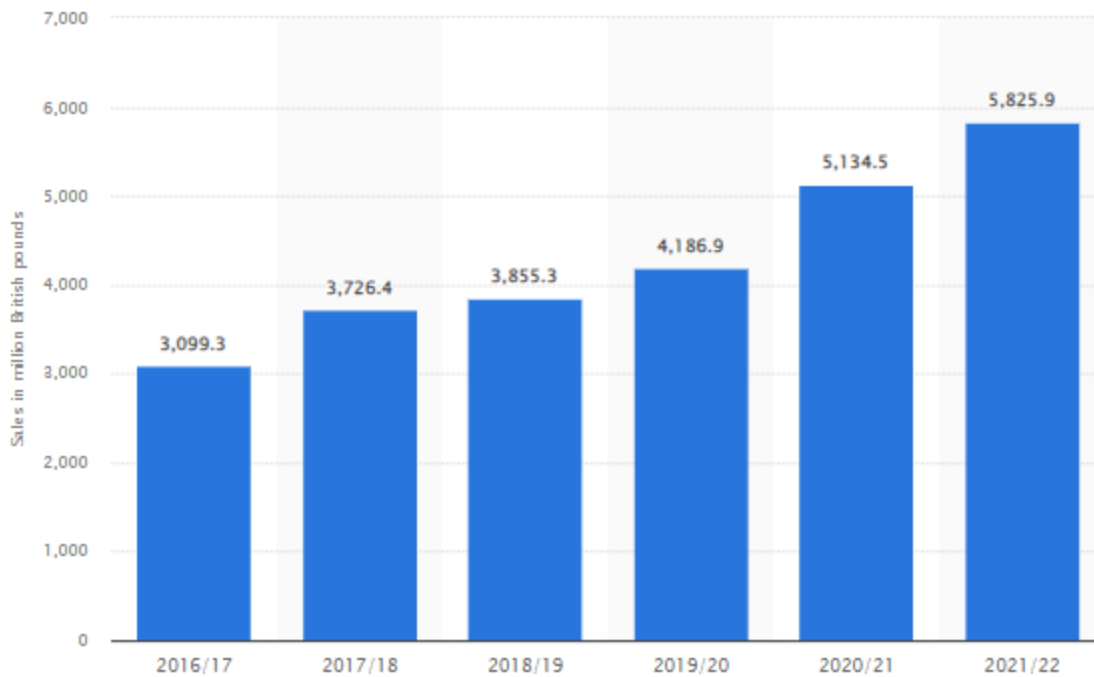


Figure 1: Product sales of Kingfisher Plc

(Source: Sabanoglu, 2022)

As per the above figure, the sustainable home product retail sales in 2021 and 2022 were 5.8 billion British pounds that will be expected to grow by more in recent years (Sabanoglu, 2022). Kingfisher plc further continues to expand its positive presence globally mainly by maintaining the position of a trusted provider of home improvement solutions. The company is committed to sustainability as well as responsible business practices by aiming at minimizing the environmental impact and supporting local communities. Apart from that, this company also focuses on maintaining corporate social responsibilities hence, meeting carbon emission goals will be achieved within 2025 to 2026 (Kingfisher, 2024). These initiatives help the company to be more effective with its brand positioning in this competitive marketplace.

3. Evaluation of two EU countries

3.1 Country facts to understand Cultural Differences

Social Contexts and Profile:

Estonia is a country located in Northern Europe that had a population of about 1.3 million people in 2020 (statista, 2023). The cultural history of this country is mainly influenced by Nordic, Slavic and Germanic, and traditions. There is a Russian-speaking minority in urban areas like Narva and Tallinn. Slovenia is a country situated in Central Europe and has a population of approximately 2.1 million people (Statista, 2023). This country has a diverse cultural heritage which is influenced by the historical connections with countries including Italy, Hungary,

and Austria. The population here is also known for their hospitality, appreciation for outdoor activities and strong family ties.

Language:

The official language of Estonia is Estonian, which is closely related to Finnish. Russian is yet another widely spoken language among the Russian-speaking minority (Liina Lindström, Risberg and Plado, 2023). On the other hand, Slovenian is the official language of Slovenia and is a South Slavic language and also shares similarities with Serbian and Croatian. These languages are also recognized as minority languages in different regions that reflect the diverse linguistic landscape.

Possible Risks:

Estonia has a stable political as well as economic environment, that demonstrates the risk of cyber threats. As the country is highly reliant on digital technologies. Apart from that, the small size as well as limited domestic market can also pose challenges for different companies who are looking forward to expanding their operations. Slovenia is also politically stable, however, there may be risks associated with economic fluctuations as well as dependence on foreign investment (Glova, Bernatik and Tulai, 2020). It is seen that the economic condition of this country is export-oriented, hence fluctuations in global markets may impact the economic stability.

Labour Outlooks:

The labour force in Estonia is diverse, as the local Estonians have Russian-speaking minorities, as well as other ethnic groups. Such diversity in culture may hamper the business's operations. The country has also made efforts to attract efficient and skilled labour from other EU countries (Oliinyk et al., 2021). On the other hand, Slovenia has a well-educated workforce and also organizes strong vocational training programs. In this labour market, this country is characterized by local Slovenians as well as migrant workers from neighbouring countries including Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this context, brain drain is considered a significant challenge, as the young population seek employment opportunities due to limited prospects.



Figure 2: Country comparison

(Source: Hofstede insights, 2024)

The power distance score of Estonia is 40 and Slovenia is 71. That shows that people easily accept hierarchical order. The individualism score of Estonia is 62 which denotes convention regarding personal responsibilities and Slovenia is 81 which shows that here individuals can take care of themselves. Motivation towards Estonia's success score is 30, which means the society is driven by transparency and modesty (Hofstede insights, 2024). On the other hand, it scores 19 in Slovenia which means people value the quality of life. Uncertainty avoidance score is higher in Slovenia and long-term orientation is higher in Estonia which can cope with intolerance. Atlas indulgence score is higher in Slovenia which means there is no preference is required.

3.2 Communication Barriers

Communication barriers directly have a negative impact on business. As per the point of view of Rejeb et al. (2022) **language barrier** is one of the most significant barriers that hamper the business activities of an organisation in the time of expanding its bruins in different countries. Business expansion is a primary requirement of an organisation that allows every organisation to gain the utmost outcomes from this competitive landscape. Apart from that, language barriers take place at times when different parties are involved in communication but do not share a common language. Kingfisher plc is one of the recognized brands in the UK market hence the main language of the staff as well as other business leaders is English. However, the official languages of Estonia and Slovenia Are Estonia Slovenia, however, English varies significantly among

individuals. As the company services its product in the competitive marketplace. In this context, in the time of operating its business in Estonia and Slovenia, they may have faced this particular issue.

On the other hand, **cultural differences** are yet another barrier that takes place while dealing with business activities in different countries that have different norms, and beliefs due to geo[political differences. According to Kucharska and Bedford (2019) significant differences in cultural values, norms as well as communication styles may hamper the business outcomes of an organisation. Such a barrier further leads to business losses along with other damages as well. It is seen that Estonia and Slovenia have different cultural backgrounds that are mainly influenced by historical, geographical and social factors as well. Apart from that the culture of the UK is totally different from both the countries hence Kingfisher Plc may find it difficult to cooperate with the cultural differences of the countries. This issue further leads to poor decision-making. Lack of communication as well as poor hierarchical structure as well. Furthermore, the organizational culture and internal environment of the company can also be damaged further resulting in poor performance as well.

In present times, every organisation focuses on implementing advanced and effective technologies that can help organizations to be more productive and enhance the overall performance of the company as well. **Limited access to innovative technology** is yet another barrier that can hinder effective communication of the company as well. Akpan, Udoh and Adebisi (2020) stated that the implementation of advanced technologies while operating business operations required additional financial resources. It is seen that Estonia is Avant at technological advancement whereas Slovenia is not that effective with this kind of business tool. In this context, Kingfisher may face difficulties while communicating with business stakeholders as well. It is beloved that it is a must to spend on technologies that can help organizations with their supply chain activities, and inventory management as well. Apart from that with the help of such activities, organizations can easily demonstrate their business operations in the competitive marketplace.

An effective and productive workforce plays a vital role in organizational growth and development. The HR team always looks forward to hiring employees who are skilled, efficient, productive, experienced and also have great business knowledge. In this context, the **Lack of availability of a growing workforce** is an issue that can hamper the business outcomes. Organisations will find it difficult to expand their business in other countries as it takes time to hire the most eligible employees from those countries (Boniol et al., 2022). Apart from that, the personality and work experience may differ from the present organizational work activities of the company. At present Kingfisher has an effective workforce that helps the company to identify business opportunities and potential issues that the organisation may face in its long-term team goals. Apart from that the workforce is also liable to meet the business objectives as well, moreover, it is seen that employees from locals help in building a positive workplace environment.

Differences in organizational hierarchies as well as power dynamics also hamper the business operation along with the decision-making of the company. It is seen that Estonia and Slovenia both have low power distance scores as per the Hofstede dimension framework. It also indicates the requirement of equality in the society. As per the viewpoint of Waizenegger et al. (2020) hierarchical structure of an organisation denotes communication patterns as well as collaboration activities. Furthermore, cross-cultural aspects also influence these factors that further hamper business outcomes.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Recommended Nation with Justification

On the basis of Hofstede's Cultural dimension model, it is seen that **Estonia** mainly prioritizes individual autonomy, adaptability and egalitarianism. The analysis suggested that the managers from this country always feel overwhelmed as the employees are always encouraged by the opportunities provided by the company. Hence, Kingfisher can also provide opportunities and facilities to motivate its employees. Such collaboration also can help them to be more effective with their business deals. Apart from that achievements are also reflected within the responsibilities hence, it could be a raider for the HR team to recognise employees' efficiency.

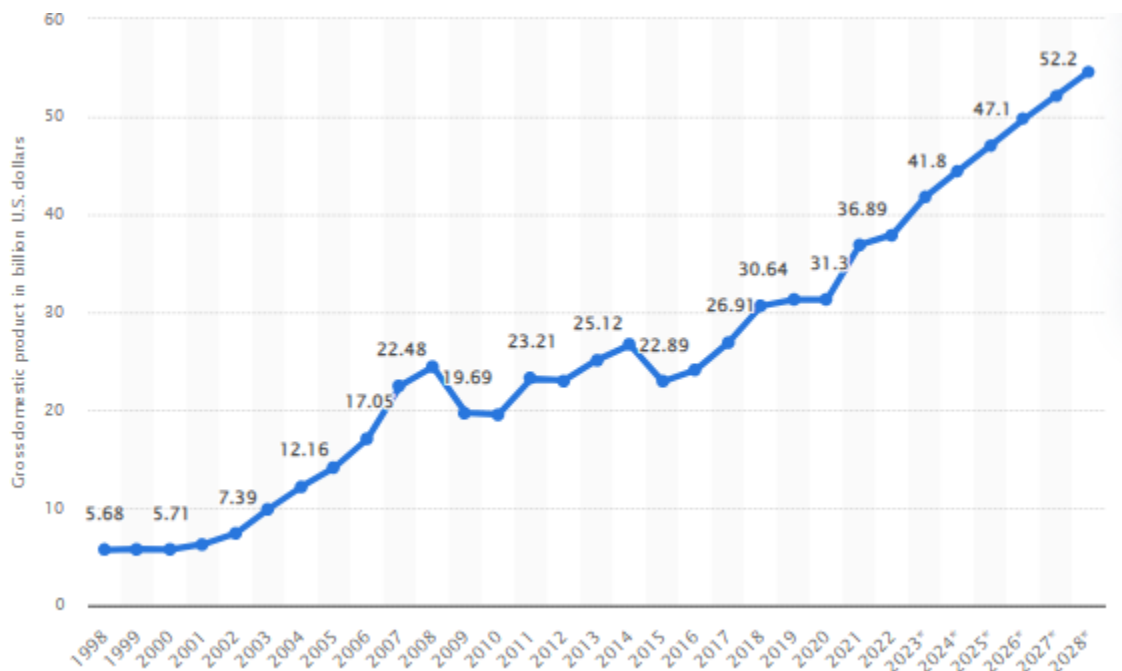


Figure 3: GDP rate in Estonia

(Source: O'Neill, 2023)

As per the given figure, it is seen that the GDP rate of Estonia is expected to increase by 54.6 billion USD. Therefore, it is seen that this country indicated potential business opportunities as well. Therefore, selecting the company for the business expansion plan of Kingfisher Plc will be a successful one (O'Neill, 2023). Promoting fairness as well as transparency can also be involved within the organizational activities as it promotes better workplace culture as well. Hence, with the help of such aspects, Kingfisher Plc can deal with the organizational activities in the most effective ways. Moreover, people from Estonia believed in solution-based activities, hence, encouraging building employment that can help the company to achieve ultimate success can be involved.

4.2 Strategies to Overcome Communication Challenges

The organisation must provide **language training** to the employees in order to make them efficient while communicating with others internationally, additionally, encouraging employees with this phase will help in keeping them engaged and motivated as well. According to Kwame and Petrucka (2021) adjusting effective communication styles also helps in resolving language barriers. Moreover, it is very important to **conduct effective cultural awareness programmes** in order to promote inclusion and diversity within the organisation which helps in solving the issues related to cultural differences. Educating employees regarding the different cultural norms, values and beliefs helps in fostering a sense of collaboration that helps enhance team performance and leads to better productivity and performance of the company.

Moreover, **providing additional training classes** associated with it can help in making the employees confident as well. Such training can help them to solve technology-related issues. The HR team of Kingfisher PLC is suggested to **identify the most efficient employees** for the new marketplace, in this context, they can use social media platforms to attract the new talents (Grewal et al., 2021). This organisation is already known for its employee's satisfactory services as the company believes in providing opportunities and scopes to the overall growth and development of its employees. Moreover, the company always considers its workforce as the backbone of the company as it helps the company to gain its desired outcomes. Apart from that, **fostering open communication** also encourages employees to feel wanted as well. It further encourages transparency that empowers employees to share their points of view, establishing a clear communication channel is also required to ensure an effective flow of information that can be easily used in decision-making activities.

It is observed that the HR team of Kingfisher must be involved in such initiatives and activities at the time of operating its business in the selected country. Furthermore, effective communication skills, techniques and a positive work environment directly enhanced the overall performance of the company as a whole. Investing more in research and development can help an organisation to be more effective with technological implementation (Glova, Bernatik and Tulai, 2020). At present times, Kingfisher already invests in enhancing digital infrastructure

within the organisation which can help the company enhance its customer service activities as well. The organisations in order to deal with supply chain and inventory management activities.

6. Conclusion

Kingfisher Plc is a well-known organisation in the UK that is focused on expanding its business in different countries which can help in enhancing overall business growth and development. In this context, this study has identified two different EU countries Estonia and Slovenia in which it can expand its business. The Hofstede cultural dimension model shows the different aspects that must be taken into account in the time of analysing the cultural differences between two different countries. As per the Hofstede cultural dimension model, it is seen that Estonia is the best-suited country for the expansion plan of Kingfisher Plc. It is seen that people from this country always encourage hardware and can be easily encouraged by providing opportunities, Hence, it could be easier for Kingfisher to build an effective and efficient workforce that further can't help it to achieve organizational outcomes. Moreover, lack of workforce, and poor technological adoption. Language barriers and differences in hierarchical aspects are the most common barriers that may hamper the business activities of a company. Additionally, the company can provide additional training classes, encourage open communication, and conduct cultural awareness programmes to overcome its communication challenges.

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