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**What positive impact does cultural diversity have on team outcomes? Ways of increasing its advantages. Systematic Literature Review.**

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This thesis was a great opportunity to research and understand the field of business, which I like most. I hope that it can be a decent contribution to the findings of culturally diversified teams' effects on their outcomes and ways for improving the positive outcomes.

## **Abstract**

In a rapidly changing, unforeseeable and uncertain business environment (and not only in the business environment) not to lag and follow business processes are one of the essential tools for achieving success. One of the discussable topics is whether a culturally diversified workforce is useful or harmful for the organization. Using the right ways for operating culturally diversified teams can be a key for success in different industries, but it is not easily achievable and measurable. This systematic literature review was conducted in order to understand the positive impact of culturally diversified teams on the outcomes of the team and determine some factors that can increase these advantages.

In this writing, systematic literature review was conducted based on PRISMA checklist and important articles were selected by using PRISMA flow. This study identified new framework of factors effecting culturally diversified teams' outcomes (Figure 6). I have identified that creativity/innovation is one of the main advantages of culturally diversified teams and the outcome is generating various ideas. In this paper, framework shows the important variables, which have effect on multicultural teams' outcomes – task complexity, team size, cultural intelligence, diversity climate perception, communication effectiveness and language fluency. Therefore, this master thesis will show that promoting diversity climate perception and cultural intelligence in the team and correct use of above mentioned aspects can strengthen the positive sides of multicultural teams.

**Keywords:** Teams, Multicultural Teams, Culture, Cultural differences, Cross-cultural differences, Cultural Intelligence, Creativity/Innovation, Diversity Climate Perception.

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## **Introduction**

Nowadays, the XXI century is the period of globalization, when the borders of countries have been vanished. Globalization is the main word in today's world. Beck states: "the notion of "globalization" refers to an open, multidimensional, and multicultural process" (Beck, 2000). Therefore, this trendy concept is related to the culture and to the process of merging different cultures. Moreover, the high percentage of migration in all the countries has hastened the globalization process (World Migration Report, 2020).

Multinational companies' number is increasing day by day. More and more companies are trying to enter the foreign market after they conquered their homelands, especially trying to identify countries that have huge opportunities. Therefore, after entering new market, they are trying mostly to use the local workforce rather than to bring all of them from their country. Companies even are trying to attract decent labor force from the other countries.

In addition, cost reduction chances motivate companies to use the workforce of the countries, where the wages are lower (Khanna et al., 2005; Bottini et al., 2007). All these issues have stimulated the cultural diversification process at the workplace in recent years (Adebanji et al., 2020).

However, based on McKinsey research, culturally diversified employees are struggling most during the Covid 19 (Ellingrud et al., 2020). These diversified employees became more demanding in the last two years. When Covid19 forced companies to say "no" to the office work and started the digitalization process of the work. Due to technological breakthroughs, everyone can work in a different country, while being on the other end of the Earth. Even after a little bit stabilization of the epidemic situation, many companies found it very acceptable to work from home and try to eliminate the cost of the office rents (Lund et al., 2020).

Therefore, as I have already mentioned, this intensified process of cultural diversity at the workplace was even strengthened within the last several months.

For some companies having the team consisting of the representatives of several countries is perceived as the strength and they benefit from it (Grant & Rock,

2016; Maznevski et al., 2010). However, for some companies working with people, who have different values and culture can be perceived as a threat and a “Mission impossible” task (Martin, 2014).

Therefore, all these events have intensified the cultural diversification of the employees at work, however it is still the controversial issue, whether it is beneficial or not (creating the huge headache for the company). This master thesis will be focused on the diversified teams at the organization and what effects they have on the organizations’ outcomes.

### **Research question, aim of research and reason for choosing this topic**

The main aim of this paper is to develop a systematic review on the positive effects of culturally diversified teams that they have on team’s performance. I have conducted a systematic literature review in order to understand the effect of multicultural teams. There are many researches regarding diversified teams and culturally diversified teams too, however nowadays Covid 19, rapid technological breakthroughs and globalization issues have changed the culturally diversified teams.

The objective of this systematic literature review is to expand knowledge in cultural diversity, the positive sides of working process of culturally different teams and understand factors effecting the positive outcomes of culturally diversified teams. I have created the framework, which depicts the findings of this paper (figure 6).

Research suggested that the main positive side of the culturally diversified team is creativity/innovation. However, there are factors that can enhance these positive effects of outcomes. The correct use of task complexity increases the chances of decent outcomes from the multicultural teams. Complex task can motivate the members to fulfil the given task and be more dedicated to the success of the team. Helping team to increase the awareness of cultural diversity, by selecting team members with high cultural intelligence or diversity climate perception, can improve the openness and trust between them. All these factors can increase communication effectiveness.



Another important factor is the size of the team. The big number of the team can increase the number of decent ideas and creativity/innovation level, however it can create conflict in the team. In the big size team, not everyone can have time to express their opinions or if they express them then arises the problem with decision-making process. Therefore, based on selected articles, this paper shows that there are factors, which can enhance the positive outcomes from the teams.

I have reviewed in the literature part the previous articles and findings for the useful concepts. In this part I differentiated from each other group and team, covered Trompenars levels of culture, Hofstede's cultural dimensions, Trompenars cultural dimensions, Hall's 3 dimensions and levels of culture. Moreover, this part includes the multicultural team's definitions, challenges, and positive sides of it. The next part is research methodology. My master thesis is based on the qualitative method and I have used systematic literature review. This method was chosen due to the chance to discuss many articles and to be more open ended that give more freedom to identify books and articles from different journals and databases. There are different tools for structuring the systematic literature review. This paper uses PRISMA checklist (see attachment 1). For identifying the relevant articles, I have conducted search strategy by using PRISMA flow (appendix 1).

Therefore, I find out the important researches regarding the benefits of culturally diversified teams on their outcomes and ways to improve these benefits. After that I analyze them, identify all essential issues and create research paper with different gathered researches. I have found several articles that are relevant for my research question.

This topic can cover two types of the teams: distributed teams and local teams. Thanks to technological improvements "distributed teams are formed to work together across space, time and even organisational boundaries to increase the availability of scarce skills, reduce travel costs, and increase worker job satisfaction " (Hinz et al., 2010). Therefore, their members can work from any place in the world. Whereas local teams are formed in the same geographical location and mostly they have face-to-face interaction (Hinz et al., 2010). This paper will cover briefly both types of culturally diversified teams, however, it will be more concentrated on the effects of local teams.

As I have already mentioned, this paper identifies the effects of cultural differences on the teams and their performances. Can it be represented as the advantage or the reason for the conflict in the team? What important aspects are needed for increasing advantages of multicultural teams? Therefore, this paper assess how positively cultural difference effects the performance of the teams and the company itself. There are several reasons for choosing this topic.

As I have already mentioned, the interest in this topic is expanding day by day and nowadays, all the organizations (even the small ones) have the duty to fulfil this task, which is managing the individuals with different cultural backgrounds (Dierendonck et al., 2013; Adebajji, 2020).

Sometimes it can be land mine that can be exploded any time if you have the representatives of two countries, which are not very fond of each other. However, correctly chosen individuals can be a decent base for cooperation and future success. So understanding the relationship between the cultural difference at the workplace and the performance of the team is very interesting topic.

Next reason that can be used as an argument for opting this topic is controversy around this topic. Whether it is beneficial or it is the beginning of ruining the team spirit in the workforce. There is the lack of the meta-analysis of this topic that specifically concentrates on the positive effects of the cultural diversity on team performance, however there are a lot of writing about the diversity influence on group members. So the controversy and a little bit uncertainty will help this topic to become more and more attractive during next years.

Therefore, these reasons strengthens the desire to research the positive impact of cultural differences on team outcomes.

# **Literature Review**

## **Teams**

Sometimes human beings encounter the problems in their daily life, which cannot be solved individually, so there is the need of joint contribution to deal with the certain tasks. There are many definitions of the team, however one we use most is Hackman's work that is based on the works of Alderfer (Hackman, 1987; Alderfer, 1977). Cohen & Bailey define team as "a collection of individuals who are interdependent in their tasks, who share responsibility for outcomes, who see themselves and who are seen by others as an intact social entity embedded in one or more larger social systems (for example, business unit or the corporation), and who manage their relationships across organizational boundaries." (Cohen & Bailey, 1997, p. 241)

Kozlowski and Ilgen have approximately the same definition: "A team can be defined as (a) two or more individuals who (b) socially interact (face-to-face or, increasingly, virtually); (c) possess one or more common goals; (d) are brought together to perform organizationally relevant tasks; (e) exhibit interdependencies with respect to workflow, goals, and outcomes; (f) have different roles and responsibilities; and (g) are together embedded in an encompassing organizational system, with boundaries and linkages to the broader system context and task environment" (Ilgen & Kozlowski, 2006, p. 79).

## **Group and Team**

Nowadays most of the scholars find the difference between the concepts of team and group. However, in the late 1990s, Cohen and Bailey were using interchangeably these terms in their paper. They preferred more mentioning team rather than group. In their paper they state that:

"The popular management literature has tended to use the term "team", for example, empowered teams, quality improvement teams, and team effectiveness. The academic literature has tended to use the word "group", for example, group

cohesion, group dynamics, and group effectiveness.” (Cohen & Bailey, 1997, p. 241)

A team requires the joint work in order to fulfil the task, while the group completes task and produce working output individually, and then group’s supervisor collects the work. Teams are “based on mutual accountability” and “on more than group discussion, debate, and decision; on more than sharing information and best practice performance standards” (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993). As it is shown in Table 1, group has outlined leader, who is responsible for giving the directions. However, in teams this role is shared between the members (Halverson & Tirmizi, 2008, p. 5).

**Table 1: Differences between teams and groups**

| Teams   | Groups   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared leadership roles</li> <li>• Individual and mutual accountability</li> <li>• A specific purpose that the team itself delivers</li> <li>• Collective work products</li> <li>• Open-ended discussion and active problem solving in meetings</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong, clearly focused leader</li> <li>• Individual accountability</li> <li>• Purpose is the same as the larger organizational mission</li> <li>• Individual work products</li> <li>• Focus on efficiency in meetings</li> </ul> |

(Halverson & Tirmizi, 2008)

## Types of teams

There are several types of teams, which are created based on the task, size, availability and other factors. Halverson and Tirmizi has identified several typologies of teams:

**Formal team** – It has more strict organizational structure. It is created in order to fulfill task in the specific time and members have high level of interdependence.

**Informal Team** – The main difference with the formal team is the members’ low level of interdependence and less rigid structure.

**Task forces** – It is the team, created for the specific project and is managed by the created organization.

Committees – group of people, who are trying to perform the decision-making process or the searching process. They have more autonomy than task force.

Self-managed team – They have the highest degree of autonomy and take the responsibility on their own management. In self-managed teams, the decision-making process is given to the group.

Virtual – this type of team gives opportunity to create and operate the team electronically by using different online platforms. Therefore, face-to-face communication does not have high importance in this type of teams. (Halverson & Tirmizi, 2008). Especially, During Covid 19 period virtual teams were very popular and unchangeable due to many reasons. After the end of pandemic many companies are trying to come back to traditional working process, however there are still companies who prefer virtual teams.

Hinz et al. state that generally there are two types of teams local and distributed. Since this paper will be related to the local teams and will touch a little bit the distributed ones, I would like to define local and distributed teams. As it was written above, distributed teams can work together from different locations, while local teams should have the same location to perform the tasks (Hinz et al., 2010).

## **Team size**

Team size is one of the important indicators for measuring the success of the team. It can have a huge impact on the working process of the team. Even in 1970, Jackman and Vidmar stated that as the team size increases the performance level and complains from the team members go up. The dissatisfaction was caused by the increasing size and the members thought that the effectiveness of the team and performance level decreased (Hackman & Vidmar, 1970).

Scientists on team size argue that the ideal size and the team is most effective, when the team has sufficient number of members and not more than sufficient number (Hackman, 1990). However, Jackson states that small groups may have

the lack of confidence and ideas for innovation (Jackson, 1996). Therefore, there should be decent balance regarding the team size.

Based on the business and education literatures the ideal number of team is 5 to 7. Despite that larger team have higher level of creativity and intelligence, smaller groups have higher group cohesion. Therefore, smaller teams can quickly and faster start working on the task (Anderson et al, 2015).

## **Diversity**

Diversity is a very trending concept today and this term is used in many fields. It is one of the discussable issues in all industries during previous several decades. However, diversity can be expressed in several ways. There are many definitions, some of them are very detailed ones and some of them are very broad (Nkomo & Taylor, 1999 p. 88). Therefore, diversity is very broad and wide term. Sometimes people relate this concept just to the race and ethnicity. However, it covers more than just these two fields. Nkomo and Taylor describe diversity as the all differences that individuals have (Nkomo & Taylor, 1999).

As I have already mentioned, diversity is a very general term and to get more understanding of it, some researchers have divided this concept into several categories. For example, Loden and Rosener believe that diversity has primary and secondary dimensions (Loden & Rosener, 1991, p.18). These two categories are very essential to understand how people perceive themselves and others.

The first one includes inborn things that are related to unchangeable differences and is very vital for development, such as gender, ethnicity, age, race sexual orientation and physical features (Loden & Rosener, 1991, p.18).

Secondary dimensions are differences that can be changed during the life, education, geographical location, marital status, religious beliefs and income (Loden & Rosener, 1991, p.18).

Parvis states that diversity includes not only culture and ethnicity, but also other concepts too. He believes that it exists in every society and organization (Parvis, 2003, p.37).

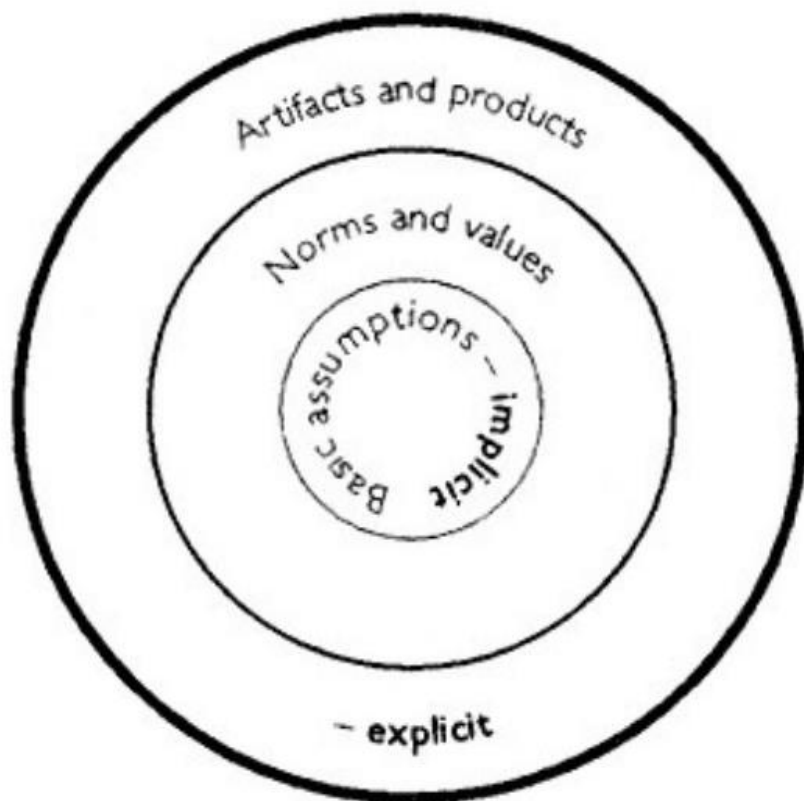
As it was already mentioned, this paper will be based on the cultural diversity. Uncertainty and importance of this topic for the company increase complexity of it. According to 2015 McKinsey report (on 366 companies), it was identified that ethnic or racial difference at work has generated 35% more financial return than there was industry mean. There are many findings stating that diversity increases the level of innovation, thinking out of a box and attention to the details (Grant & Rock, 2016). While some studies identify the positive effects of culturally diversified teams (Thomas et al., 1996; Earley & Mosakowski, 2000), others state that they have the negative effects (Kirkman et al., 2004). This topic is so complex and rapidly changing that it needs updates and deeper analyses.

## **Culture**

Culture is one of the types of diversity and is the complex concept with several definitions. However, those explanations have approximately the same essence. Tylor described it as “that complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871). Herskovits states, “Culture is the man-made part of the environment” (Herskovits, 1948). Schein defines culture as “how people feel about the organization, the authority system and the degree of employee involvement and commitment”. He believes that culture has shared values, ideas and beliefs, which will lead to success (Schein, 1990). However, this paper will be concentrated on the cross-cultural aspects of the individuals. Cross-cultural differences focuses on the “study of the behavior of the people in organizations located in cultures and nations around the world” (Adler, 1983, p. 226).

Hofstede defines culture as “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others”. He identified the different dimensions for cross-cultural variation and sorted it by the countries (Hofstede, 1980).

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner have developed onion model of culture, which consists of 3 layers: the outer layer, the middle layer and the core (Figure 1) (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993).



**Figure 1: Model of Culture**

(Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993)

Outer layer covers visible, observable things and includes: food, language, agriculture, houses, buildings, shrines, markets, monuments, art and fashion. Prejudices take place on this observable level (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993).

Middle layer includes key norms and values. Values give the view and describe good and bad. Norms give understanding of what is right and wrong to the group. They can be in the written (formal) and non-written forms (informal) .

Culture can be perceived as decent when norms express the values. When situation is vice versa, then tension arises. Norms give us the idea how normally should I behave, however values expresses our will, “it is how I desire to behave” (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993).



The core is related to the existence, fighting for survival. People daily are trying to cope with nature. They organized themselves to solve this kind of problems with resources they have. Culture comes from the word “to cultivate”, which means to till the soil (how people act on nature). Daily problems are dealt in such obvious ways that they disappear from our to do list. The best way to understand basic assumption is to understand if question provokes confusion or irritation (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993).

Basic assumptions are things that is done unintentionally but have never been asked before. People form and organize groups in certain way for increasing the effectiveness of problem-solving. Because different group of people developed in different regions have different logical assumptions (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1993).

Clifford Geertz defines culture as an instrument, which helps people “to communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life”. He states that culture is “the total way of life of a people” and “a way of thinking, feeling, and believing” (Geertz, 1973).

Therefore, culture is the more than just one definition. As I have already mentioned, there are a lot of definitions and interpretations of this concept. However, all of them agree that it is more complex than it seems at first glance.

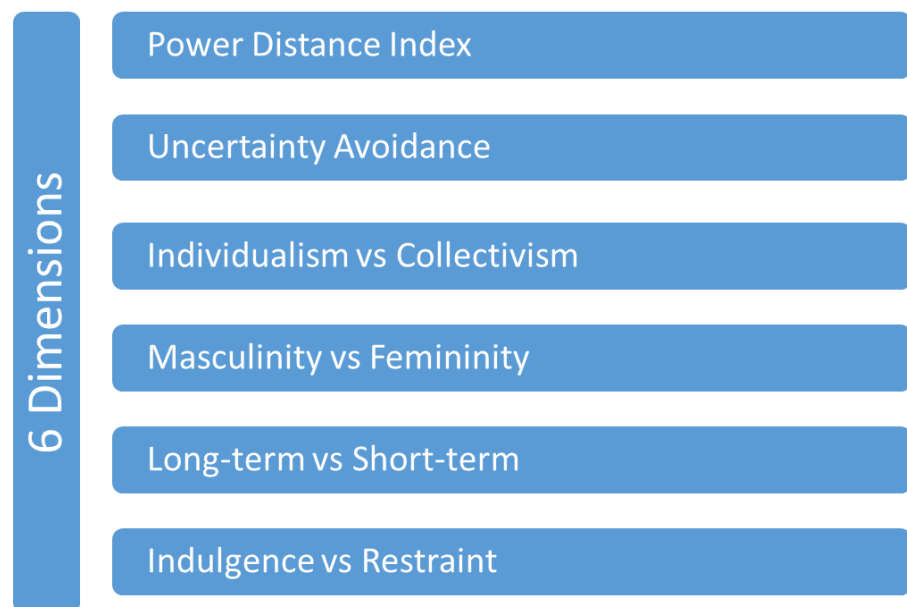
## **Cultural differences**

As I have already mentioned, culture is the broad notion with different interpretations.

### **Hofstede**

The well-known scientist in the field, Geert Hofstede got access to the big survey database about values and related characteristics of the people from more than 50 countries. He analyzed the employees from 1970s. These individuals worked in the multinational corporation – “IBM”. Database contained more than 100 000 surveys and participants were surveyed 2 times over 4 years interval (Hofstede, 2011).

He published his findings in the book, which gave the base to his cultural dimensions. Geert Hofstede's theory of cultural dimension is the approach for understanding cultural differences across the countries and finding ways for doing business in different countries. He tries to describe these cultural dimensions in the context of family life, education, employment, health care, corruption, income distribution and child rearing process (Hofstede, 2011). Initially he had 4 dimensions, which distinguished cultural aspects from each other, however later was added 2 more and now Hofstede's theory has 6 dimensions (Figure 2). Countries can have the score on each of them on a scale of 0-100 (Hofstede, 2011).



**Figure 2: Hofstede's 6 Dimensions**

(Hofstede, 2011)

### **Power Distance Index**

One of the important factors of Hofstede's book written in 1980 was – the dimension scores correlated with external data. Power distance correlated with the dimensions from the study of economic development of Adelman and Morris and

correlated with a dimension from analysis of political systems of Gregg and Banks (Hofstede, 2011).

This concept gives different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality. Power distance concept states that less powerful members of the organizations expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. All societies are unequal and power and inequality are essential parts of it. However, some of them are more unequal than other societies. For a low power index culture, power and inequality are not acceptable, which means that respect for authority is not on the same level as it is in high power index societies. For instance, in low power distance societies, children are treated as equal, however in high power distance societies, children are more taught obedience by parents (Table 2). However, these statements are extremes and scores describe the level of their extremeness on the scale of 0-100.

**Table 2: Hofstede’s Power Distance Dimension**

| <b>Small Power Distance</b>   | <b>Large Power Distance</b>  |
|---|--|
| Use of power should be legitimate and is subject to criteria of good and evil | Power is a basic fact of society antedating good or evil: its legitimacy is irrelevant |
| Parents treat children as equals  | Parents teach children obedience   |
| Older people are neither respected nor feared                                 | Older people are both respected and feared   |
| Student-centered education  | Teacher-centered education   |
| Hierarchy means inequality of roles, established for convenience              | Hierarchy means existential inequality   |
| Subordinates expect to be consulted   | Subordinates expect to be told what to do  |
| Pluralist governments based on majority vote and changed peacefully           | Autocratic governments based on co-optation and changed by revolution                  |
| Corruption rare; scandals end political careers                               | Corruption frequent; scandals are covered up   |
| Income distribution in society rather even                                    | Income distribution in society very uneven   |
| Religions stressing equality of believers                                     | Religions with a hierarchy of priests  |

(Hofstede, 2011)

## **Uncertainty Avoidance**

It shows level to which individuals accept controversial events and can cope with uncertainty in the future. Therefore, it gives the information how uncomfortable or comfortable the members of society are in uncertainty. It “measures the extent to which a culture can accept ambiguous situations and tolerate uncertainty about the future” (Chen & Starosta, 2005, p. 52).

High uncertainty avoidance countries are minimizing, diminishing such kind of uncertainty by strict rules, laws, guidelines, behavioral codes and disapproval of different ideas. Societies with lower score are more open and accept risk.

Research shows that such societies are less stressful and have lower anxiety (Hofstede, 2011).

## **Individualism vs Collectivism**

It is the dimension that shows the preference of the society to work in groups or individually. In Individualistic cultures, people work individually and are more self-centered. Opposite of individualism is collectivism. Collectivistic societies are more integrated into the strong extended families and they have higher loyalty toward the group (Hofstede, 2011).

However, high individualistic societies are more expected to look after themselves. Therefore, individualism is focused on self-realization and achieving personal goals. But in collectivist countries, they are tend to put group’s interest and well-being over their interests. This means that they are using more “we” than “I”. Developed and Western countries are more individualism oriented, while less developed and Eastern countries are collectivist oriented (Hofstede, 2011).

## **Masculinity vs Femininity**

This controversial issue takes place from the human creation period. Therefore, differentiation and distribution of the values between the genders is the essential issue for the community.

Hofstede’s study from IBM showed that “women’s values differ less among societies than men’s values” and “men's values from one country to another

contain a dimension from very assertive and competitive and maximally different from women's values on the one side, to modest and caring and similar to women's values on the other” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 12).

Feminine is more perceived as modest and caring, while masculine is more assertive. For example, in feminine societies, there is the balance between work and family, however in masculine societies, work takes over the family and there are overtimes. Latin countries and Japan have high masculinity culture, while Nordic countries have high femininity culture (Hofstede, 2011).

### **Long-term vs short-term**

This dimension is used to understand the preferences of the members of the country. Do they prefer to plan beforehand and achieve big goals in the future? Or immediate satisfaction in the present is enough (Dainton & Zelle, 2011).

During long-term goals, societies aim to achieve well-being in the future and consider that achieving the success, which they want, is impossible in short-term. However, short-term orientation points out the importance of the present or near future. They are oriented on quick results and traditions are too important, while long-term societies are more adaptable to changes (Hofstede, 2011).

### **Indulgence vs Restraint**

This is one of the dimensions that was added in 2010. Hofstede defines indulgence culture as “society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 5). Restraint culture is described as “society that controls gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 5). For this term, freedom of speech is not as important as it is for indulgence.

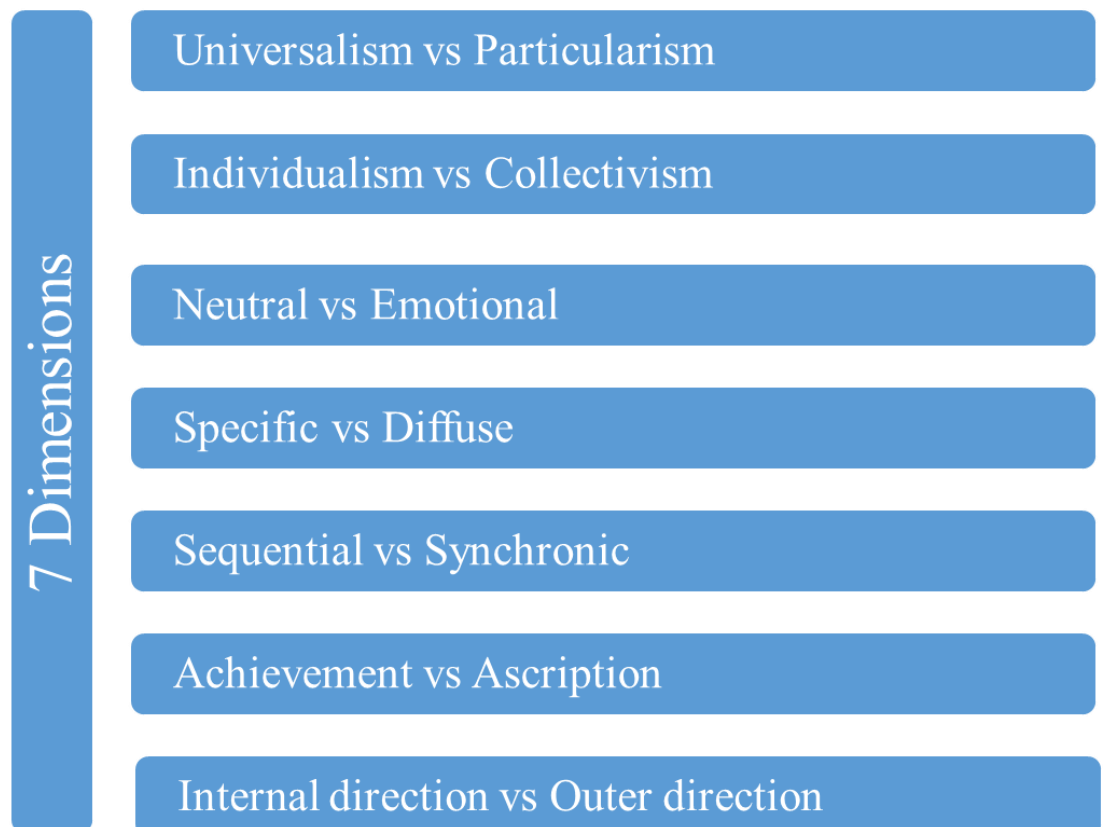
Indulgence can be met in Western Europe, in South and North America, and in parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. Restraints prevail in Asia and in Eastern Europe (Hofstede, 2011).

These dimensions are very essential in understanding and analyzing process of the individuals thoughts, behaviors and actions.

### **Trompenaars cultural dimensions**

In 1993, Trompenaars tried to use Hofstede's cultural dimensions and offer the alternative view. He wanted to complete it and did the survey of 3000 companies in over 50 countries (Hampden – Turner & Trompenaars, 1993, Dwivedi et al., 2017).

Therefore, he created 7 dimensions of culture (Figure 2): Universalism vs Particularism, Individualism vs collectivism, Neutral vs Emotional, Specific vs Diffuse, Time orientation: Sequential vs Synchronic, Achievement vs Ascription (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).



**Figure 2: Trompenaars 7 Dimensions:**  
(Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998)

### **Universalism vs Particularism**

In Universalist societies, rules, codes, standards are very important. They help members of culture to determine what is good and what is bad. For them these codes have higher place than the needs of their friends and personal relationships (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

However, particularistic societies are more open and they try to solve difficulties according to particular case. Therefore, personal relationships takes a big role during the decision making process. They are more concentrated on human friendship (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

### **Individualism vs Collectivism**

Trompenaars and Hofstede's opinions on this particular issue are approximately the same and they share this view, which I have already discussed. However, Trompenaars claims that Protestant countries are more individualistic than catholic countries. He believes that religion takes a big role in determining the preferences of the society, working in groups or act individually (Jost et al., 2009). He argues that in collectivism countries, decisions are made in the favor of collective well-being (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

### **Neutral vs Emotional**

In neutral emotion countries, emotions are controlled and maximally restricted and in most cases, individuals do not reveal what they are thinking, while in emotional cultures, members are more open, unpredictable and they are free to express emotions and their feelings. One of the high emotional countries are Spain, Mexico, where people often laugh, express their opinions and attitudes loudly. Neutral emotion culture can be met in Asian countries. For example, Japan. Therefore, individuals' country origin can say a lot about their expression of emotions (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

### **Specific vs Diffuse**

This dimension measures the degree of separation personal life from professional life. In the specific-oriented cultures, members try not to engage their colleagues into their personal life and have totally different relations with them. It is not easy to be open to the colleagues for the members of such cultures. Therefore, there is the big line between these two relationships (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

In the diffuse-oriented societies, individuals are more easily adaptable and are trying to vanish that big line. They think that these elements of life are interrelated and cannot be separated. Therefore, there is no clear distinction between private and professional lives (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

China could be a good example for highly diffuse-oriented culture, while USA could be the example of highly specific-oriented culture (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

### **Time orientation: sequential vs synchronic**

People use to evaluate time with different measurements: seconds, minutes, hours, weeks, months, years. This dimension is related to the time management and identifies the ability of members to work on general tasks simultaneously or working task-by-task (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

Completing task after task is more convenient for sequential-oriented societies and they do not like to be involved into several tasks at the same time. They like strict deadlines and following their schedules. However, synchronic-oriented societies are more open to work on several issues and for them schedules and plans are not so strict and important. They are selecting current activities based on their wishes and they are prioritizing tasks (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

### **Achievement vs Ascription**

In some cultures, status is attributed (Achievement), but in some cultures status is gained (Ascription). Therefore, this part is related to the social status, which is



similar to Hofstede's power distance dimension (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

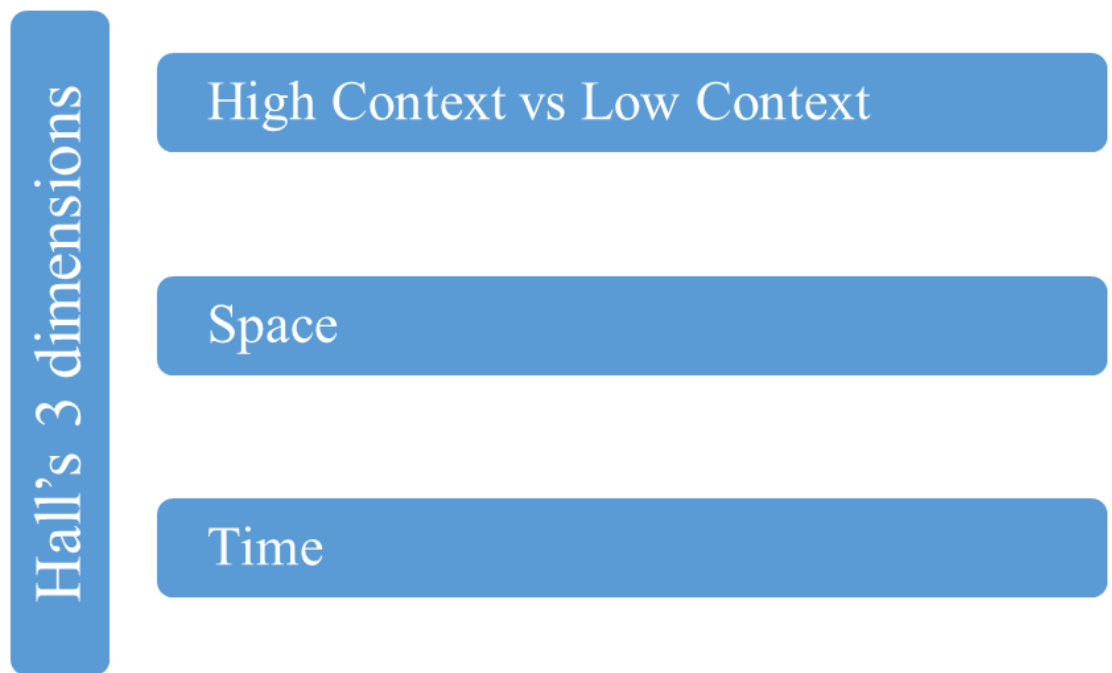
In the ascription-oriented societies, the individual receives its status based on the gender, age, family status, position. Therefore, in such kind of cultures, the question is "who this person is". In most cases, older people have higher status in such kind of culture. However, in the achievement-oriented culture, the status is given based on his/her accomplishments and rewards. So, the workload is measured by their performance of the task. In most cultures, there is the mix of these two terms. USA is highly achievement-oriented society, while china is highly ascription-oriented society (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

### **Internal direction vs Outer direction**

Last but not least, this dimension is related to the environment and the society. It shows the degree of environment control. In some societies, people prefer to control everything and have the impression that despite the complexity of nature, environment, they have the power to control it (internal control). However, some societies prefer to harmonize, adapt with environment rather than try to control it (external control). Asian countries are good examples for external direction-oriented cultures, while Western countries are more internal direction-oriented (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 1998).

### **Hall's 3 dimensions**

One of the famous scientist in cross-cultural field was American anthropologist and researcher Edward T. Hall. He is known for his 3 dimensions – how the behavior and communication differ between cultures (Figure 3). Those 3 dimensions are context, space and time (Hall & Hall, 2000).



**Figure 3: Hall's 3 dimensions**

(Carpenter & Dunung, 2018)

### **High context vs low context**

“Context is the information that surrounds an event” (Hall & Hall, 2003). Cultures are compared to each other and measured on the scale of high and low:

“A high context (HC) communication or message is one in which most of the information is already in the person, while very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message. A low context (LC) communication is just the opposite; i.e., the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code. Twins who have grown up together can and do communicate more economically (HC) than two lawyers in a courtroom during a trial (LC), a mathematician programming a computer, two politicians drafting legislation, two administrators writing a regulation.” (Hall, 1976).

In the high context cultures, people are not expecting too much information, because in the most cases, they have relationships with the people they know and have some background information about them. Therefore, they can understand each other with fewer words. However, in low context countries, individuals separate their job, personal life and other aspects of their life. So, “each time they

interact with other they need detailed background information” (Hall & Hall, 2000, p. 201).

The low context countries are USA, Scandinavians, Germans. However, high context countries are Arab countries and Japan (Hall & Hall, 2000).

Communication between these two cultures representatives can be tough, because low context countries listen only to words and sometimes body language signals can be missed (Hall & Hall, 2000).

### **Space**

This dimension is referred to physical space distance. It includes even the standing distance between people while they communicate. This standing distance varies between cultures. Space also covers the distances or boundaries at the workplace and etc. For example, representatives of some cultures (USA) prefer not to stand too close while talking. For Latina American countries, safe distance is closer than for USA people. Therefore, they tend to share their space with the colleagues at the workplace (Hall & Hall, 2000).

### **Time**

For this dimension, Hall has divided culture in two parts: polychronic (many time) and monochronic (one time). For monochronic cultures, exact timing is very important. If appointment is scheduled at 4 p.m., it means that it would start 4 p.m.-4.05 p.m. Even if they have not covered all topics during meeting from their agenda, they still can finish meeting on the agreed time (Carpenter & Dunung, 2018).

In polychromic culture, relationships and individuals are more important than time. Latin American countries have more loose timetables and finishing a task is very important, which means that meeting can last until completing task (Carpenter & Dunung, 2018).

## Levels of Culture

Culture consists of some levels and in order to understand culture, we should look deeper. There are 5 basic levels (figure 4): national, regional, organizational, team and individual. All of these levels are important but it should be understood that each of them can be expressed in subcultures or in smaller groups (Livermore, 2010).



**Figure 4: Levels of Culture**

(Livermore, 2010)

### National culture

This level consists of traditions, values, cultural traits, behaviors, beliefs, which are shared within the country. These are cultural characteristics, which were formed unconsciously throughout the childhood. There are even regions in the country, which have different cultural aspects, but national culture are values on which most of the population can agree and share them (Livermore, 2010).

Therefore, there are some core values for the country, which are shared between regions. Kottak has described core values as “the key, basic or central values that integrate culture and help distinguish it from others.” (Kottak, 2012, p.21)

For example, Germans tend to be punctual and when they arrive for business meeting in Italy, they can find very weird how Italians perceive the time (more relaxed) (Livermore, 2010).

### **Regional culture**

All nations consist of several regions. The same is with national culture and they consist of regional cultures. It means that even in one nation we can identify differences between regions. Therefore, there are smaller groups, which share the culture within the nation (Livermore, 2010).

It is created and developed by interacting with each other. All nations have many subcultures. For example, in USA you can face thousands of subcultures (Livermore, 2010).

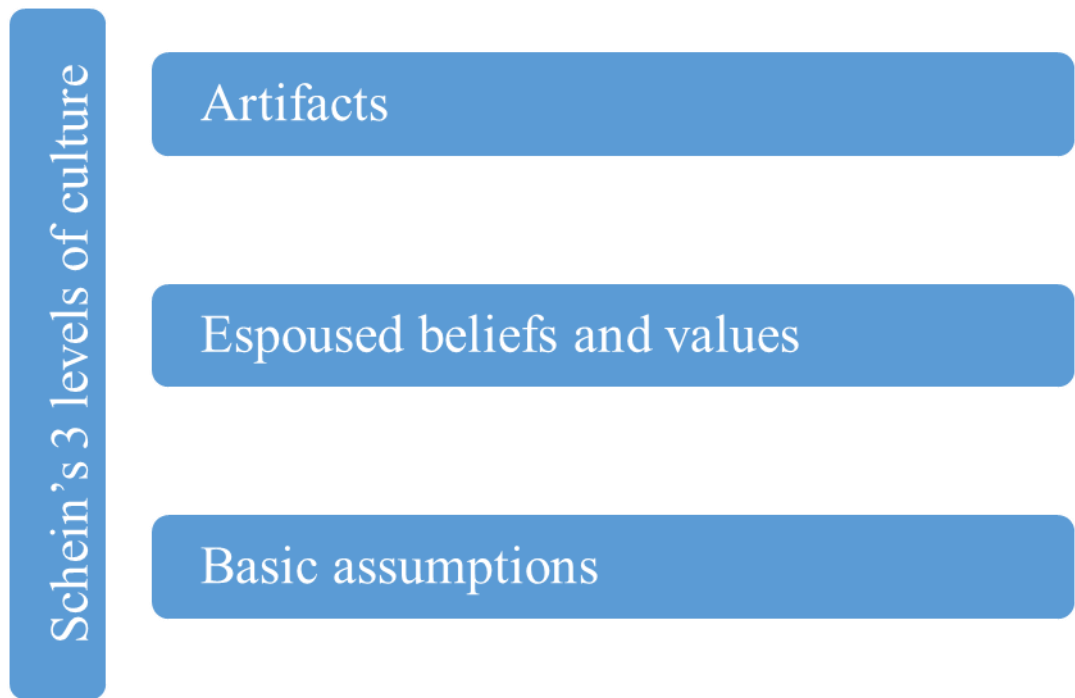
### **Organizational culture**

This level of culture is referred to the specific organization. It is often called “corporate culture” and means values, beliefs, assumptions that characterize the certain company from other competitors and non-competitors (Livermore, 2010). There many ways of perceiving this term. Schein has divided organization culture into 3 levels (Figure 5): artifacts, espoused beliefs and values, and basic assumptions (Schein, 2004).

Artifacts are the elements that are the obvious and easy to identify. Even the outsider of the organization can see them: office, interior, jokes and etc. Schein states that it “includes all the phenomena that one sees, hears, and feels when one encounters a new group with an unfamiliar culture” (Schein, 2004, p.25).

The second level of culture is the set of values and norms, which are shared in the organization. In most cases, these norms are written in the company’s code of conduct or core values. We can find them even in their mission statement (Schein, 2004).

The last level is assumptions. They are the behaviors of the organization member, which they perceive as the normal and can be unnoticed in most cases (Schein, 2004; Burkus, 2014).



**Figure 5: Schein's 3 Levels of Culture**

(Schein, 2004)

### **Team culture**

More narrow level of the culture is team culture. Beliefs, values, and norms of the culture are dictating the team members how to act or what decisions to make.

Dress code, language and even their appearance forms team culture. It can be perceived as the subculture of the corporate culture. As I have already mentioned, in the national culture there can be several subcultures, the same is in the organization. It can have team, department, or workgroup culture (Livermore, 2010).

### **Individual culture**

On the bottom of these levels of culture is located individual culture. Some of the aspects of culture is developed by the nation, environment and the society around the individual. However, some of the characteristics are inborn. All individuals have these kind of characteristics, which are formed and developed based on their beliefs and views (Livermore, 2010).

## **Multicultural teams**

Nowadays companies have the headache of dealing with the multicultural teams. Multicultural teams can be defined as task-oriented group of people of different nations and cultures (Matveev & Miller, 2004). Cross-cultural teams “may bring creativity, new ideas in the projects, collaboration and new approaches to problem solving”, therefore, cultural backgrounds “influence the team members’ behavior in the cross-cultural projects” (Borca et al., 2014, p. 526).

Maznevski with his colleagues, in their meta-analyses, concluded that “cultural diversity in teams can be both an asset and a liability. Whether the process losses associated with cultural diversity can be minimized and the process gains be realized will ultimately depend on the team's ability to manage the process in an effective manner, as well as on the context within which the team operates” (Maznevski et al., 2010).

### **Challenges**

As I have already mentioned, nowadays this topic is very trending and many companies are trying to use multicultural teams due to different reasons (Covid 19, remote work, globalization...). However, it creates many problems and there are challenges that should be overcome.

Bahfar, Kern and Brett have published in their article 9 different challenges, which can arise in operation process of multicultural teams (Behfar et al., 2006):

- Direct versus Indirect Confrontation;
- Norms for Problem Solving and Decision Making;
- Time, Urgency, and Pace;
- Differences in Work Norms and Behaviors;
- Violations of Respect and Hierarchy;
- Inter-Group Prejudices;
- Lack of Common Ground (Language and Credit);
- Fluency (Accents and Vocabulary), Thought you had Agreement? Implicit versus Explicit Communication.

These 9 categories of multicultural teams’ challenges were reached by using concept map analyzing (Jackson & Trochim, 2002).

After several years, these researchers narrowed their findings and in Harvard Business Review article, they have identified 4 main challenges for multicultural teams: Direct versus indirect communication, Trouble with accents and fluency, Differing attitudes toward hierarchy, Conflicting decision-making norms.

### ***Direct versus indirect communication***

In the western countries, the communication is direct and explicit. They are saying directly what they think and you should not start thinking what is hidden behind those words. However, not in all countries this kind of communication type is accepted. In indirect communication cultures, directly saying something can be understood as the rude behavior (Behfar et al., 2009).

The representative of indirect communication culture can understand direct communication, however individual from direct culture could have problems to establish a connection through indirect communication. He/she can mislead some important information. The good examples are American (direct) and Japanese (indirect) societies (Behfar et al., 2009).

### ***Trouble with accents and fluency***

Language can be a huge problem. Although 2 representatives of different cultures can talk in English, it does not mean that they can perfectly understand each other. For example, Welsh and individual from England – both of them talk in English, however, their English still is different from each other. More problems arise with nonnative speakers. They could not understand some expressions, phrasal verbs or language, which is used locally in that country. Sometimes this problem can lead to the inactivity of nonnative speakers, they may prefer to be silent rather than express their opinions (Behfar et al., 2009).

### ***Differing attitudes toward hierarchy***

One of the main challenges in the multicultural team can be the structure and hierarchy. Some of the countries are used to the flat structure, however individuals from the countries who are more comfortable hierarchical structure can cause



some misunderstanding and can be uncomfortable. Because individuals from the countries in which they are treated according to their hierarchy and status can be not happy with flat structure, they may not feel that high status anymore (Behfar et al., 2009).

### ***Conflicting decision-making norms***

When it comes to decision making, even individuals from the same culture can have different opinions about the options. The decisions can be more diversified through different cultures. It means how much time and analyzing process is needed during international negotiations of the 2 companies from different cultures. One can be very quick, while another may need more time. For example, “U.S. managers like to make decisions very quickly and with relatively little analysis by comparison with managers from other countries.” (Behfar et al., 2009, p. 92)

### **Positive sides**

Adler states that “to manage effectively in either a global or a domestic multicultural environment, we must recognize which differences are operating and learn to use them to our advantage, rather than either attempting to ignore the differences or simply allowing them to cause problems” (Adler, 2008, p. 65). He believes that we should identify the positive and negative sides of multicultural teams in order to avoid the problems caused by them.

One of the main advantages of multicultural teams are creativity and innovation. Cultural diversity has the positive effect on the team performance. It increases the creativity and innovation level in the team. Chen and his colleagues in their article: “Team Creativity/Innovation in Culturally Diverse Teams: A Meta-Analysis” identified the relationship between cultural diversity in the team and its effects on innovation/creativity. The researchers discuss the surface and deep-level diversity in culturally diversified teams. This writing is decent base for identifying the relationship between these two terms (Chen et al., 2019).

This fact is also depicted in the Palgrave Handbook of Creativity and Culture Research. In the chapter of Cultural Diversity and Team Creativity, there is shown

the correlation between cultural diversity and team creativity. In this writing, the author shows the importance of the diversified workforce and how it can become an advantage regarding the creativity issue. He argues that cultural diversity such as ethnicity and race have positive influence on creativity level of the team (Glăveanu, 2016).

The experiment of left-brain and right-brain people shows that creativity depends on the right hemisphere of the brain. These differences can be caused by the diversity. It gives a decent evaluation of how diversified team members can have the effect on the team outcomes. One of the reasons for such differences in the teams are the cultural diversity. Right-brain people are more creative and innovative, while left-brain people are stronger in analytics and logic (Erickson, 2017).

## **Research Methodology**

After the literature review and analyzing the key concept for this research, one of the steps are to define research method. I have conducted qualitative systematic literature review and I identify the reasons for choosing qualitative method. After that I discuss the methods and framework based on which I conducted this research. And lately in this part, I mention the characteristics of each chosen article and the reasons why I chose them. Selecting methodology is not the easy step and the whole research is based and is built on this step.

## **Research philosophy**

As I have already mentioned above, this research is focused on the positive sides of the multicultural teams. The objective of this research is to underline the advantages of culturally different teams and ways to improve the benefits. It will show some factors that can influence the positive performance of the multicultural teams. This paper will answer the questions, such as: What kind of impact cultural diverse members have on the team? What are the challenges of multicultural teams? What are positive sides of culturally different teams? What variables will help to increase the positive sides of multicultural teams? There are two methodology approaches: quantitative and qualitative.

This research will be based on the qualitative approach. According to Bryman and Bell, “qualitative research tends to be concerned with words rather than numbers”. It is more based on the natural settings, interpretation, and “understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants” (Bell & Bryman, 2011). It is more related to the open and flexible design rather than the quantitative approach. Gubrium and Holstein (2008) suggest that qualitative research’s “naturalism seeks to understand social reality in its own terms” and identifies “rich descriptions of people and interaction in natural settings” (Bell & Bryman, 2011).

Quantitative research is more based on numbers, charts and statistics. Therefore, it is more numerical approach (Bell & Bryman, 2011). This research is systematic literature review that have identified important articles in the field of cultural diverse teams.

There is the lack of qualitative researches in the field of culturally diversified teams' impacts on the outcome of the team in the leading international business journals. Therefore, not using qualitative method can be perceived as the loss (Birkinshaw, et al., 2011; Asbrock & Granow, 2021). It can have a crucial part and help to understand the complexity and plurality of different contexts in culturally diversified teams. I have decided to choose qualitative method for this research, because it has questions that are more open-ended and have opportunity to be more flexible than quantitative method. You are very limited and of course, it is very difficult when you are expressing everything in numbers for the topic of cultural different teams and its positive sides. This theme needs more inductive reasoning, which involves to transform raw data into the brief format, establish clear links between the research objectives and the findings derived from the raw data, and develop a framework, model or theory of the underlying structure of experiences based on the raw data (Thomas, 2006). Researchers state that qualitative method expresses the deep understanding of social phenomena than quantitative method (Chadwick et al., 2008).

### **Inclusion criteria**

I included researches that (1) studied culturally diversified teams effects on the outcomes of the team, (2) were published after 2019, (3) have the ranking of Q1 and Q2. The publication year exception has just one article (2010), which was the base of another article that was published in 2021. This exception was made in order to compare the findings of the same researchers after 11 years.

### **Exclusion criteria**

I excluded researches that (1) were not from peer-reviewed journals, (2) language was other than English, (3) studies that were not focused on the positive sides or were not concentrated on the moderators that can enhance the advantages of multicultural teams, (4) have used survey-based method. Because even open-ended surveys cannot report widely this topic.

## **Method of data collection and information sources**

There are different types of data collection methods for qualitative research. As I have already mentioned above, the aim of this study is to understand the positive sides of culturally different team and the ways for improving it. In order to identify a lot of information about these issues and look deeper in this phenomenon, I decided to get data from secondary sources. So, this research paper is based on analyzes of the secondary data, which means gathering existing articles, books related to the topic.

Since this topic is very trending, I preferred to analyze already existing literature in this field and understand what is already researched and what should be researched in the future. Another reason for choosing literature review method is availability of many sources: books, articles, journal, databases and etc. I have done manual and computerized searches. In the computerized searches I have used different online platforms and databases for finding relevant information for my research question. I identified key information sources, where I wanted to search different studies. I have used Web of Science, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, JSTOR, SpringerLink, and relevant books.

## **Search strategy**

Search strategy is the plan for defining relevant articles and research question. For identifying them, key words are needed. For the research, I have used different sources: internet sources, research journals, searches from the relevant books and screening of the bibliography and online databases. Search strategy identified search strings for databases: Teams, groups, cultural difference, diversity, cultural diversity, multicultural teams, cross-cultural differences, culture, cultural intelligence, creativity/innovation, diversity climate perception.

As I have already mentioned I conducted searches in several databases. I have used PRISMA flow to visualize search strategy (Appendix 1). For Web of science database, I have used string “team cultural diversity”. This search identified 1253 studies. Then I have applied English language criteria and the publication date after 2019. The result was 520 research papers. After the screening process of abstract and the title, I have removed 433 articles and 87 were left for full text

analyses. Then after analyzing process of full texts, I have removed 82 articles and reasons were (1) not the field of business and management, (2) journal ranking (just selected Q1 and Q2), (3) not relevant content for my research question. Therefore, just 5 studies left and added 1 more article which I have already mentioned in inclusion criteria. Totally, I have identified 6 articles for my research. The searches was done from February of 2022 until June 2022.

## **Validity**

### **External**

It is very important to evaluate the validity of the sample. External validity “asks in what contexts the findings can be applied” and it should depict the “transferability with generalizability” in qualitative research (Malterud, 2001). So this part checks whether this study can be applied to other samples and to what extent it can be generalized. External validity can be limited with such research method, because there will be chosen several relevant articles for this topic. Another reason why this research can not be applied to all other cases is that you can make the different combination of culturally diversified teams, because there are many nations. Therefore, different combinations of cultures may give slightly different outcomes.

### **Internal**

Internal validity identifies the causality - if one variable causes another, can we be sure that the second is responsible for the change of the first variable? Therefore, it evaluates, whether independent variable is responsible for variation showed in the dependent variable (Bell & Bryman, 2011; Cook & Campbell, 1979). For strengthening internal validity, all the articles maximally will be related to the research question.

## **Research samples**

As I have already mentioned I have found many researches that are related to the culturally diversified teams, their definition and how to manage them, however there are lack information about the effectivity and the pros and cons of them in the team.

Especially nowadays, after globalization, post-covid19 period the borders of the countries have been vanished for the labor force due to technological breakthrough. This pandemic situation was the booster for it.

After identifying so many information about culturally diversified teams, I decided to more deeply concentrate on the advantages of it.

The next step was to find most recent researches about this topic. Mostly articles are published after 2019. I have chosen just one important article from 2010 (Maznevski et al., 2011), because another research article (Maznevski et al., 2021) was based on it. Then I looked at their citation numbers and the status of the journals, where they were published.

I have selected articles from leading journals in Business studies: Journal of International Business Studies, Journal of Organizational Behavior, International Studies of Management & Organization, Journal of management, Measuring Business Excellence. After that, I checked the generalizability of those researches, if they were fitted to one particular country or not. Finally, as I said above, I identified six articles that are relevant and accept components of my research (Table 3).

**Table 3: Selected articles for research**

| <b>Authors</b>                          | <b>Topic</b>  | <b>Year</b> | <b>Google scholar citation</b> | <b>Journal</b>                                     |
|---|---|-------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Maznevski, Stahl, Jonsen, & Voigt.      | Unraveling the effects of cultural diversity in teams: A meta-analysis of research on multicultural work groups.                                  | 2010        | 1279                           | Journal of International Business Studies          |
| Maznevski, & Stahl                      | Unraveling the effects of cultural diversity in teams: A retrospective of research on multicultural work groups and an agenda for future research | 2021        | 19                             | Journal of International Business Studies          |
| Chen, Cheng, Leung, & Wang              | Team creativity/innovation in culturally diverse teams: A meta-analysis   | 2019        | 62                             | Journal of organizational behavior                 |
| Asbrock & Granow                        | A framework for culturally diverse teams and the importance of agility: findings from a qualitative study   | 2021 (late) | 3                              | International Studies of Management & Organization |
| De Jong , Gillespie, Williamson, & Gill | Trust Consensus Within Culturally Diverse Teams: A Multistudy Investigation   | 2020        | 22                             | Journal of management                              |
| Kadam, Rao, Abdul, & Jabeen             | Diversity climate perceptions and its impact on multicultural team innovation and performance   | 2020        | 13                             | Measuring Business Excellence                      |



### **Unraveling the effects of cultural diversity in teams: A meta-analysis of research on multicultural work groups. (2010 & 2021)**

One of the interesting articles that tries to depict the situation in the culturally diversified teams performance is “Unraveling the effects of cultural diversity in teams: A meta-analysis of research on multicultural work groups” (Maznevski et al., 2010). It examines if the level and type of cultural diversity affect the team differently through the processes of gains and losses. The interesting fact is that after 11 years, these researchers released the updated version of their work. In their initial article, they believe that culturally diversified team members have an effect on the outcome of the team. Given study’s hypotheses were tested based on the meta-analysis of 108 empirical studies on performances of 10 362 teams. This particular article identifies what effects cultural difference has on the team and their results. As it was already mentioned, in 2021, these researchers published a new article about this issue, where they highlighted remaining gaps, wrote about the progress in the research of culturally diversified teams over the last decade and left some space for future research (Maznevski & Stahl, 2021).

### **Team creativity/innovation in culturally diverse teams: A meta-analysis (2019)**

These authors have researched the relationship between team creativity and cultural diversified teams. They conducted literature review study and used several relevant studies to discuss this issue. Authors have identified the relationship of creativity/innovation with two different levels of diversity: surface level and deep level diversities (Chen et al., 2019).

The first one includes the visible traits that can a person notice from the appearance such as age, race/ ethnicity, and sex. Therefore, surface level diversity is the combination of “biological characteristics that are typically reflected in physical features” (Bell et al., 1998, p. 97).

The deep level diversity “includes differences among members' attitudes, beliefs, and values. Information about these factors is communicated through verbal and nonverbal behavior patterns and is only learned through extended, individualized

interaction and information gathering” (Bell et al., 1998, p. 98). They have found that deep level diversity is positively related to the creativity/innovation, however surface level diversity is negatively related to them (Chen et al., 2019).

I will extract from this paper the effects of diversity level in multicultural teams and the factors that moderate their performance. I need information if task characteristics: complexity and intellectiveness have the effect on the outcome of the team members performance.

### **A framework for culturally diverse teams and the importance of agility: findings from a qualitative study**

This article gives the information about the factors, which increase the collaboration in culturally diversified teams. Authors have interviewed 19 international managers of German big car manufacturer companies. They have used semi-structured interviews for this research (Asbrock & Granow, 2021). Semi-structured interview is one of the suitable for qualitative research paper, because it has open-ended questions, “relatively detailed interview guide or schedule” and “may be used when there is sufficient objective knowledge about an experience or phenomenon, but the subjective knowledge is lacking” (McIntosh & Morce, 2015, p. 1).

Authors in their finding have identified new framework, which underlines the importance of agile behavior in multicultural teams for analyzing them. Therefore, this article gives decent insights for understanding this issue (Asbrock & Granow, 2021).

### **Trust Consensus Within Culturally Diverse Teams: A Multistudy Investigation (2020)**

This research paper gives the insights about the trust issues of culturally diversified teams. It describes how trust can positively effect team performance and I will collect information from the article if this concept can be used in the good way.

Trust can be low between the members of multicultural teams. Because Even the difference in the nations can create some hesitation. Members does not know the habits and behavior patterns of each other and it can be the challenge. They have conducted the research with the sample of 120 people, which was followed with another study of 95 members of the team. They have identified the importance of trust issues for achieving high performance in multicultural teams (De Jong et al., 2020).

### **Diversity climate perceptions (DCP) and its impact on multicultural team innovation and performance (2020)**

Authors of this article wanted to underline the diversity climate perceptions effects on multicultural teams' performance (Abdul et al., 2020). They generated data of 217 members from 43 teams by structured questionnaire. Researcher identified that multicultural team's performance is effected positively when diversity is promoted in the team. They also state that cultural intelligence have direct effect on teams' innovation (Abdul et al., 2020). This term (CQ) is defined as "the ability to interact effectively in multiple cultures has recently been labeled cultural intelligence (CQ)" (Crowne, 2008, p. 392). This article identifies the reasons for increasing positivity of multicultural tams regarding their performance (Abdul et al., 2020).

This table below shows all the important aspects that were extracted from the articles (Table 4). I have grouped some of the factors that influence team performance. Communication effectiveness and the trust are interrelated to each other. When the trust is within groups, the communication becomes easier and better. Cultural intelligence and diversity climate perception are discussed in my paper as the factor for increasing the knowledge about diversification in the team. Authors use creativity and innovation as practically the same concepts, especially when they are talking in the field of cultural diversification (Anderson et al., 2015).

Therefore, this table depicts the important aspects extracted from the selected articles for my systematic literature review paper.

Table 4

|                         | Creativity/<br>Innovation | CQ and<br>DCP | Task<br>complexity<br>and<br>intellectiveness | Communication<br>effectiveness<br>and trust | Team size |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---|---|-----------|
| Maznevski et al., 2010  | X                         |               | X   | X   | X         |
| Maznevski & Stahl, 2021 | X                         | X             | X   | X   | X         |
| Chen et al., 2019       | X                         |               | X   | X   |           |
| Asbrock & Granow, 2021  | X                         | X             |   | X   |           |
| De Jong et al., 2020    |                           |               |   | X   |           |
| Abdul et al., 2020      | X                         | X             |   | X   | X         |

**Factors influencing team performance – extracted from the selected papers**

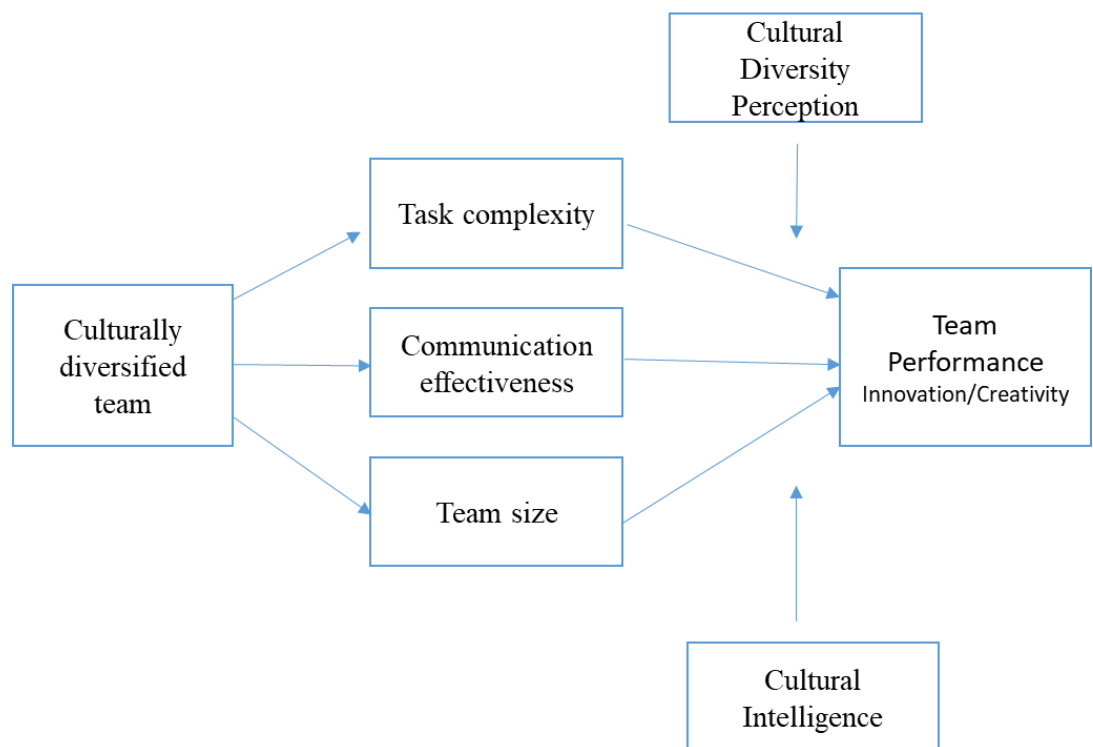
## Findings

As reported in table 4, cultural diversity plays a big role in increasing creativity/innovation in the team (Maznevski et al., 2010; Maznevski & Stahl, 2021; Chen et al., 2019; Asbrock & Granow 2021). I have extracted just relevant information for my paper.

Maznevski et al. has explored that cultural diversity effects are moderated by the task complexity and structural aspects – team size (Maznevski et al., 2010; Maznevski & Stahl, 20221; Chen et al., 2019). Abdul et al. give insights on the cultural diversity perception. This term includes the level of understanding diversity issues in the team. If the diversity is shared between team members

(Abdul et al., 2020). Exactly, these increased diversity climate perception and cultural intelligence lead to the increase of the trust issues (De Jong, 2020), which is responsible for improved communication (Maznevski et al., 2010; Maznevski & Stahl, 2021; Chen et al., 2019 ;Asbrock & Granow, 2021; De Jong et al., 2020; Abdul et al., 2020). Because high trust within team increases the openness and help team members to freely state all their positions.

Therefore, correct selection of task complexity level, applying the correct use of communication and deciding the appropriate size of the team can have positive impact on the performance. Cultural diversity perception and cultural intelligence can enhance the diversity environment in the team (Figure 6).

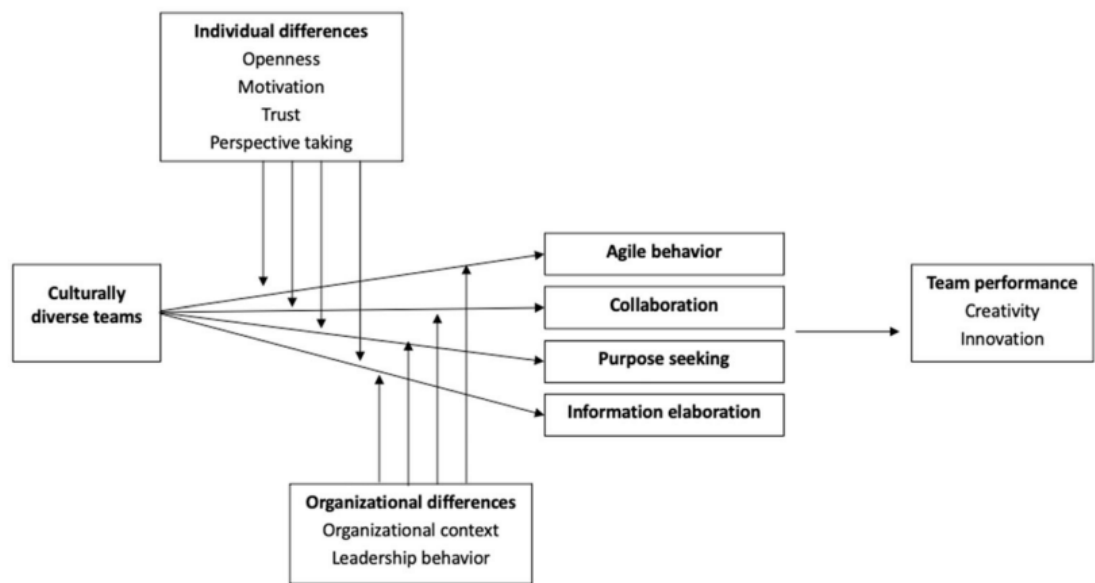


**Figure 6: Framework of factors effecting culturally diversified teams' outcomes**

Asbrock and Granow have developed the framework that gives relationship between performance and culturally diversified teams. Their Research gives information about the culturally diversified teams. It was the qualitative research,

where international managers of the large German car manufacture company were interviewed. They have analyzed how they worked in multicultural teams and understand the reasons for collaboration. Authors contributed with this research in order to show the levers that promote the positive effects of the multicultural teams. They found to interview managers from 8 different countries. There was the diversity of the continents – Africa, Asia, North and South America and Europe. 6 women and 13 men managers.

All those aspects of the framework finally lead to the team performance. It shows the moderators, mediators and their effects on the team performance (Figure 7). According to their framework, understanding and then reasonable use of the aspects – individual differences, organizational differences and team processes, can lead to the positive outcomes of the team. This positivity is measured by the creativity, innovation and better results (Asbrock & Granow, 2021).



**Figure 7: Asbrock and Granow’s Framework  
for culturally diverse teams**

(Asbrock & Granow, 2021)

Openness can play a big role in the multicultural teams and create the ideal atmosphere in the team. It mean to freely express and accept the ideas. This term help teams members to diminish the stress level that is high especially in the culturally diversified teams, where all members are nervous due to many factors

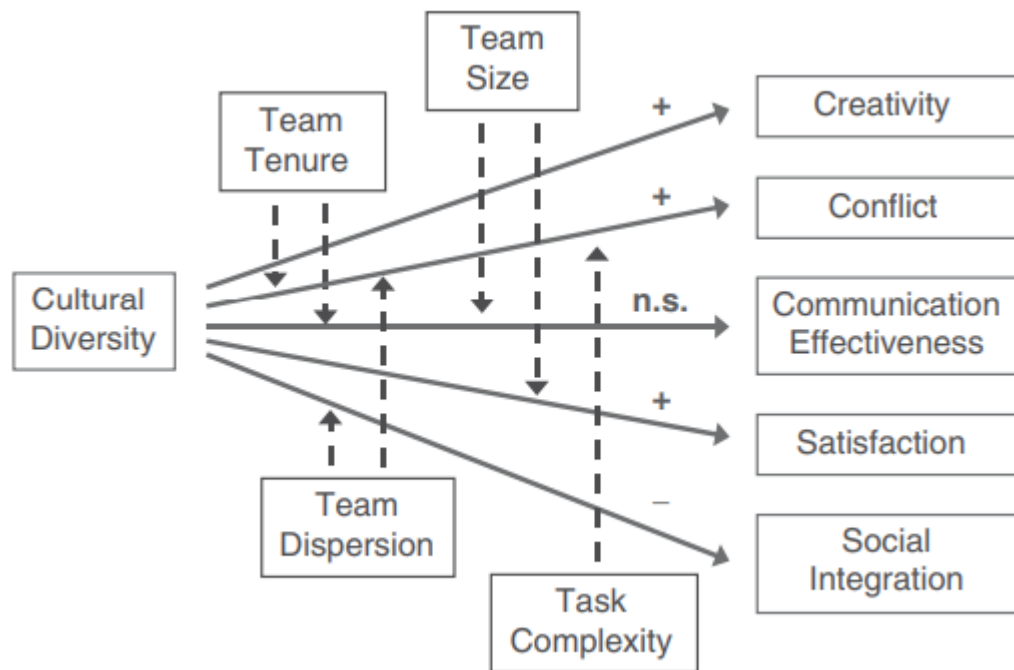
(Language barrier, fluency and etc.) in the beginning (Asbrock & Granow, 2021). Another important aspect for the openness is the trust issues. This concept can be perceived as the measure of openness.

De Jong et al. based on their research have suggested the importance of the trust in the culturally different teams. They have done 2 studies which are related to these issues. Based on these researches, authors' hypotheses were supported and they suggested that national culture diversity has negative impact on trust consensus and team performance is positively effected by trust consensus. Therefore, trust issues are very important part for decent performance of the team (De Jong et al., 2020).

However, cultural diversity has negative impact on trust consensus, because in multicultural teams, especially in new ones, team members do not know each other and cannot rely on their partners in the teams. More person trust to a person, more open he/she becomes to him/her. It is ingredient of the collaboration and it can reduce tension, conflict, anxiety and facilitate the good base for interaction (Ashkanazi & Kasper-Fuehrera, 2001). This is one of the important issues in multicultural teams (Siakas & Siakas, 2015).

Motivation is the need or wish to do something. This feeling gives person the power to fulfil the certain task. Nowadays working in the multicultural environment is already the motivation for many individuals. They are motivated to study something new, understand new cultures and this motivation creates the chance of increasing the productivity of the team.

The idea of the team is the collaboration. Therefore, all these small factors creates the wish to help the team and to increase the effectiveness of their operations. All the leaders of the teams want to see how their team is sharing the ideas between each other and participate in the elaboration process. One of the ways to achieve this is the agile behavior. This skill helps to “proactively create opportunities, anticipate change and respond in a timely and effective way, when changing circumstances require it” (Asbrock & Granow, 2021, p. 56).



**Figure 8: Conceptual model of research on multicultural work groups**  
(Maznevski et al., 2010)

Maznevski et al., have used in their meta-analysis the most influential framework that depicts team effectiveness is input process output model, which mostly concentrates on culturally diversified teams. Their model is hugely admired in this field. It states that different aspects of the team have effect in culturally diversified teams, such as: size, task complexity, tenure, dispersion. Authors have tested their hypothesis in the meta-analysis of the 108 empirical studies, where they observed the performance of 10 362 teams. Despite the fact that Maznevski et al. have identified small relationships between their variables, they still they have found that there are some processes that connect cultural diversity with performance. Especially they have identified the variables that intensifies this connection (Maznevski et al, 2010). After the investigations, they have found the benefits of culturally diversified teams and the negative sides of it.

In the summary of their work, they showed cultural diversity effects on creativity, conflict, communication effectiveness, satisfaction and social integrations. This relationship was moderated by given variables (Figure 8).



## **Discussion**

During the last decade, there were made many empirical studies in the field of culturally diversified teams. There are researches that have distinguished no relationship between the cultural diversity and its effectiveness, some show miserable negative effects on outcomes of the teams (Bell et al., 2011). Joshi and Roh state that there is no relationship between team's performance and cultural diversity (Joshi & Roh, 2009). However, there are also findings that shows small positive influence of cultural diversity on the creativity/innovation (Maznevski et al., 2010; Chen et al. 2019).

## **Creativity/Innovation**

In most articles, authors consider creativity/innovation concepts as practically similar terms in their research when researchers give the insights and investigate the relationship between cultural diversity and the innovation/creativity of the team. Some researchers suggest that the difference between these 2 concepts are unclear (Anderson et al., 2015).

Some researchers associate cultural diversity with more innovation and creativity. Authors believe that one of the positive sides of the multicultural teams is improving innovation and creativity levels. They argue that culturally different teams give them differently thinker individuals, who were born, raised, treated differently. Their understandings and conceptual views on the same subject can be not similar due to many factors. Maznevski et al. suggested several hypotheses and one of them stated that the higher cultural diversity is associated with more creativity, conflict and less effective communication. After their research, they found out that cultural diversity is positively related to creativity (Maznevski et al., 2010).

This positivity is even shared in the deeper aspects of the cultural diversity level (deep level and surface level). As I have already mentioned above, surface level includes age, race, while deep level is more related to the characteristics that can not be identified at the first glance (Bell et al., 1998). Maznevski et al. argues that the creativity level is high for deep level diversified teams (Maznevski et al.,

2010). Even other researchers share this position (Chen et al., 2019). In their paper, they hypothesized that deep level diversity is positively related to creativity/innovation, while surface level diversity is negatively associated with them. However Based on Chen et al. investigations, they opposed to one of their positions, because they could not find any relationship between surface level diversity and creativity/innovation in multicultural teams. But they identified that in deep-level diversity teams, the relationship between deep level diversity and creativity/innovation is significantly positive in culturally diversified teams (Chen et al, 2019). It means that based on their research beliefs, views and characteristics, which are not visible at first glance have direct effect on the creativity. This level of cultural diversification gives more opportunities to produce more innovative ideas.

The next important aspect in the evaluation process of the multicultural teams is cross-national diversity or intra-national diversity. Authors state that cross-national diversity is more related to creativity than intra-national diversity (Maznevski et al., 2010). Because cross-nationality gives the mix of several nations and brainstorming of different minds give higher creativity level than just one nation.

Maznevski et al. have published the discussion of their previous work and have added the points what have changed during this decade and left some space for future research. In the new article, they have highlighted their previous research, discussed what happened during this decade in the research of their field and added some new concepts that they have not used in the previous research (Maznevski et al., 2021).

Even after 11 years, they stated that deep level diversity is more related to creativity, because it is associated with the bigger diversity of information. This result is better when there is convergence in the team and the cohesion between the members is high.

However there are some important variables and correct use of them can positively effect culturally diversified teams' outcomes.

## **Cultural intelligence and Diversity climate perception**

In the last decade, the new term became very trendy which is cultural intelligence (CQ). As I have already mentioned above, it is the skill to effectively interact with the representatives of different cultures (Crowne, 2008).

One study has showed that the team members can more freely speak up or express their disagreement when they know that the team members have high cultural intelligence. This skill opens and simplifies communication (Ang et al., 2019).

Maznevski et al. believe that high cultural intelligence in the team can improve the performance of the team (Maznevski et al., 2021). The research of Abdul et al. show the same results. They state that cultural intelligence and diversity climate perception plays a big role in multicultural team's performance (Abdul et al., 2020). These terms increase understanding of cultural differences and create fair environment for everyone. Therefore, team members have positive perceptions regarding the team.

Abdul et al. have conducted the research where they wanted to understand the impact on multicultural teams on their performance. They gathered data through structured questionnaires and consisted of 43 teams created from 217 individuals (Abdul et al., 2020). They have introduced another concept – diversity climate perception (DCP). This term is related to employee's perceptions how much team, group, organization recognize diversity at the workplace, try to promote fair personal practices and involve minorities in the working process (Avery et al., 2007; Berkman et al., 1998). Authors think that important aspect for building up the performance level is increasing the diversity climate perception in the team (Abdul et al., 2020). Their research have supported mostly all their suggestions. Researchers have identified that diversity climate perception have effect on team performance and on their innovation too (Abdul et al., 2020). This means that promoting diversity in the team, convincing team members that everyone is equal, their idea matters and they can state their opinions without hesitation can increase their openness and creativity level.

## **Conflict**

Researchers believe that cultural diversity can increase the level of conflict in the team. The level of diversity have influence on creativity and task conflict in the team (Maznevski et al., 2010). As I have already discussed multicultural teams lead to the creativity and generation of many different ideas. However, this flow of many ideas can create the huge conflicts, even in communication issues.

### ***Task complexity and Task intellectiveness***

Another important aspect is the complexity of the task. Understanding the relationship between creativity/innovation and cultural diversification. Researchers have identified the moderating effects of task complexity between creativity/innovation and surface level diversification. However, there was no evidences of this relationship regarding the deep level diversity. They have argued that the task complexity had miserable effects on these two terms (Chen et al., 2019).

Maznevski et al. hypothesized that more complex is task, more diversity is related to more creativity. Moreover, it increases the conflict level and decreases communication effectiveness (Maznevski et al., 2010). However based on the research, task complexity has influence just on the conflict. It could not be tested for creativity and communication effectiveness. Therefore, conflict level is high in the culturally diversified team when task complexity is high. However, they are no relationship when complexity is low (Maznevski et al., 2010). For simple tasks, surface level diversity is negatively related to the innovation and creativity and these terms are not related to each other for complex tasks (Maznevski et al., 2021).

Next important issue was the task intellectiveness. It is the term that involves beforehand planned decisions and solutions based on certain system, such as mathematics or logic (Adamopoulos & Laughlin, 1980).

Leung and Wang believe that intellectual tasks can eliminate the negative effects in culturally diversified teams (Leung & Wang, 2015). There is the small chance

of misunderstandings or making mistakes, because this term has the already written guidelines and system how to act in certain situations (Chen et al., 2019).

So there is no space or small place for improvisation. Contributions of the members are more recognized, less disagreements between them take place and progress of the task is expectable (Chen et al., 2019). Therefore, it means that all team members should choose and accept the correct ideas, which minimizes the risks of the negative social processes.

These actions can diminish misunderstandings, disagreements and encourage cohesion in the group. Working on such kind of tasks helps to promote diverse knowledge and increase the idea sharing level between team members.

### *Language and Communication effectiveness*

Based on the research it was found that deep level and surface level diversities moderate the communication level, however level of the culture does not moderate conflict (Maznevski et al., 2010). Therefore, we can suggest that the level of the culture has influence on effectiveness of communication.

Authors also suggested that communication effectiveness depends on the type of diversity. However, the difference was so small between cross-nationally and intra-nationally diversified teams, it can be assumed that these hypotheses were not supported (Maznevski et al., 2010).

Cramton et al. identified that in culturally diversified teams there is the complexity between the language differences, communication and fluency level. It shows that culture and language are related to each other and therefore it have effect on the communication issues in the team (Cramton et al., 2014).

### *Size of the team*

The next essential aspect is the size of the team that I have already mentioned. In most cases, the size of the team predicts the level of their performance. If it is too big, there arises different problems – decision-making, listening to all opinions

and etc. Therefore, the size of the team influences the effectiveness of its operation and functionality (Hackman & Vidmar, 1970).

Maznevski et al. share approximately the same idea. They proposed that the size of the culturally diversified team moderates the conflict, communication and satisfaction levels. The larger the group, conflict risk is higher, communication level is lower and therefore, there arises satisfaction issues (Maznevski et al., 2010). In the big teams, the high level of creativity level does not always mean that everything is good. In most cases, there is the problem of expressing and sharing out loud the ideas of the team members. Their study research justified their hypotheses, which states that the increase of the culturally diversified team is decreasing communication effectiveness and satisfaction level.

## **Conclusion**

Therefore, after the discussion part we can say that cultural diversity has its positive effects on the team outcomes. Cultural diversity promotes divergence in the team and creates the barriers for convergence. Therefore, the unity of the team is not strong. However, we cannot say this to all them teams. It is very difficult to measure the meaning of the culturally diversified teams. But we can say that cultural diversity has its gains and losses.

The framework of factors effecting culturally diversified teams' outcomes, shows that the correct use of the certain aspects can transform them into the positive sides (Figure 6). It is obvious that this type of diversity increases the creativity level in the team and gives more chance to create various ideas. Multicultural team members have various minds, who were born, raised and treated differently during their life, therefore on the particular subject they can provide totally various solutions.

However, these various solutions can lead to the misunderstandings and conflict in the team. Sometimes it is even impossible to listen to all the members' ideas during the meeting. This means that some of them can be not satisfied, especially when the size of the team is too big. Team size arises the big dilemma. On the one side, big team can be the benefit for generating many various ideas, however on

the other side, team cohesion can be a huge problem in the big size teams. It is obvious that managers or leaders should wisely choose the size of the team.

This can lead to another problem – communication effectiveness that can be transformed into the opportunity. The big size of the team can create the difficulty of expressing all team members' ideas and communication effectiveness can be low. However, there are some ways to solve this problem. One of them is cultural intelligence skills, which can ease and vanish communication barriers. Another way is to have multicultural individuals in the team, who have experience of working or living in several cultures. Therefore, thinking about the improvement of communication effectiveness and dealing with the problems of language fluency can generate more positive outcome from multicultural teams.

Assigning the correct difficulty of the task can become benefit. Another important variables are cultural intelligence and diversity climate perception. When there is the high cultural intelligence in the multicultural teams, the members are more open and can speak up freely and state their positions.

Therefore, this study suggests that cultural diversity can be assumed as the asset and as the liability too. However, there are some variables (task complexity, cultural intelligence, diversity culture climate, team size) and correct use and relevant selection of them can become the benefits rather than problems.

## **Limitations and future studies**

Despite the research method, all the studies have their limitations. One of the main limitation can be the scope of the study and insufficient sample size.

Understanding these concepts and variation of the team structure and members, based on their culture, will need conducting more thorough and detailed research.

This study was based on the selected relevant articles in the field of multicultural teams and their effects on teams' outcomes. Although all the articles' research samples had the combination of the members from different cultures and even their working field varied, there can be the problem of generalizability. Because

there are many possibilities of forming the teams with different cultures and they can give slightly different results.

This study was conducted in order to analyze the positive effects of culturally diverse teams and what are the ways to strengthen these positive sides. However, in the future, after the Covid 19 pandemic, it will be reasonable to identify the same effects in virtual teams and what traces Covid 19 will have on the multicultural teams. Because this pandemic situation have changed many issues in the operation processes of the teams and organizations too.



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# Appendix 1



PRISMA Flow Diagram

