



The Impact of Cultural Diversity on Multicultural Staff Dynamics in the Restaurant Industry in Denmark

Ema Sýkorová

Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences

Strategic Hospitality Management

Bachelor's Thesis

2025

Abstract

Author Ema Sýkorová
Degree Bachelor of Hospitality Management
Thesis Title The Impact of Cultural Diversity on Multicultural Staff Dynamics in the Restaurant Industry in Denmark
Number of pages and appendix pages 57 + 4
<p>This thesis explores the influence of cultural diversity on staff dynamics within the Danish restaurant industry. The research focuses on multicultural restaurant teams due to the constant increase of diversity and globalization, and the need to understand the effects of culture on teamwork and management methods. This study focuses only on restaurants located in Denmark. The analysis is based on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions, Hall's High-context and Low-context Cultures, and related intercultural theories.</p> <p>A mixed methods approach was used in the study. Quantitative data were collected from structured close-ended and Likert scale survey questions connected to key cultural theory dimensions. Optional open-ended questions provided additional qualitative insights. The research reached 61 participants from various cultural backgrounds, providing a diverse range of perspectives.</p> <p>The results of the data analysis revealed that while cultural diversity contributes to increased creativity and a more dynamic work environment, it can also lead to communication challenges, feelings of exclusion and conflict within multicultural teams. The discussion highlights how organizational culture and workplace norms tend to impact employee behavior stronger than national cultural backgrounds. The study revealed that successful multicultural teamwork requires leadership with an inclusive approach, intercultural competence, and adaptable communication.</p>
Key words cultural diversity, multicultural teams, restaurant industry, team dynamics, Denmark, cultural diversity management

Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Research Questions.....	1
1.2	Relevance of Topic.....	2
1.3	Key Concepts.....	3
1.4	Cover Matrix.....	4
1.5	Delimitations.....	5
2	Literature Review	6
2.1	Understanding Culture – What is Cultural Diversity?	6
2.2	Cultural Diversity in Theories.....	7
2.2.1	Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions	7
2.2.2	Trompenaars’ Seven Dimensions of Culture	11
2.2.3	The Iceberg Theory of Culture	14
2.3	Cross-Cultural Communication.....	14
2.4	High-context and Low-context Cultures	17
2.5	Team Dynamics in a Multicultural Context.....	18
2.6	Tuckman’s Group Development Framework.....	18
2.7	Cognitive Diversity.....	21
2.8	Gaps in Literature.....	21
2.9	Conclusion	22
3	Methodology.....	23
4	Empirical Analysis	25
4.1	Influence of Cultural Diversity on Team Dynamics and Teamwork	26
4.2	Benefits of Cultural Diversity	28
4.3	Challenges in Multicultural Teams.....	29
4.4	Leadership and Management Approaches	31
4.5	Theoretical Comparison of Cultural Dimensions in Practice	33
5	Discussion.....	42
5.1	Implications and Development Proposals.....	43
5.2	Reflection on the Results in Relation to the Theoretical Frameworks	44
5.3	Ethical Considerations and Research Validity, Reliability and Limitations.....	46
5.4	Conclusion and Proposals for Further Research	47
5.5	Assessment of the Thesis Process and Personal Learning	48
	References	49
	Appendices	58
	Appendix 1. Questionnaire	58

1 Introduction

This thesis explores diversity in the workplace, more specifically among the restaurant employees in Denmark. A significant portion of the workforce in the Danish restaurant industry is made up of international employees. Over the past decades, the share of foreign labor in all industries has increased from 3% to 14%. In the hospitality industry of the capital city, Copenhagen, international workers now make up 15,000 out of 20,500 total employees (Kampmann, 2024). According to a recent survey by the InterNations platform (2024), Copenhagen has won the best destination for working abroad, work & leisure, and work culture and satisfaction. As globalization progresses, more restaurants are noticing a transformation towards a diversified workforce (Reisinger, 2009).

The existence of people from various ethnic or cultural groups inside a society, or in this case an industry, is referred to as cultural diversity. Cultural diversity reflects many aspects of work: the way people learn, communicate, and make decisions. This cultural diversity brings out unique perspectives and experiences that can significantly affect group dynamics, organizational effectiveness, and the workplace environment (Canadas, 2024).

Even though diversity presents many benefits and should be considered valuable, it also entails significant challenges. Managers can foster a safe environment with equal acceptance of employees' diversity by acknowledging, understanding, and appreciating their individual differences (Canadas, 2024).

The aim of this research project is to explore cultural diversity among restaurant staff in Denmark using a questionnaire, and to address the research questions and objectives outlined in this study.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To explore cultural diversity among multicultural staff in the restaurant industry in Denmark
- To provide new insights into how restaurants can increase team productivity and create a welcoming environment that values diversity in the workplace
- To explore the advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity among multicultural staff
- To present strategies that emphasize strengths and resolve weaknesses

1.1 Research Questions

The main research question of this study is:

What is the influence of cultural diversity among restaurant staff in Denmark on team dynamics and teamwork?

To further investigate, the following sub-questions have been developed:

- What benefits arise from cultural diversity, and how can these be leveraged to improve team performance and service quality?
- What challenges do diverse teams experience, and what strategies can help resolve them?
- How do restaurant leaders manage multicultural staff dynamics and how can these approaches be improved?

1.2 Relevance of Topic

The importance of this research stems from its examination of cultural differences and their effects on intercultural staff dynamics in Danish restaurants. The restaurant industry is one of the most diverse sectors regarding workforce diversity, as Denmark experiences rising cultural diversity due to globalization and immigration (Kelly, 2020; Selmer & Luring, 2013). This setting provides an ideal context to assess how cultural diversity affects the relationships between restaurant industry workers, team effectiveness and service delivery quality.

Industry Significance

Denmark's restaurant industry is one of its main service sectors, which employs both native and international workers (Statista, 2025). The industry depends on teamwork and communication, thus acknowledging how diversity impacts these team dynamics may guide restaurants in developing collaborative practices, leadership methods and enhancing operational performance.

Workplace Opportunities and Challenges

The integration of different cultures creates opportunities for improved creativity and problem-solving, but it may also lead to communication issues, misunderstandings, and conflicts (Xie, 2024). This study can help organizations provide insights on how to develop successful cross-cultural management approaches for building inclusive workplaces that promote high productivity.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This research presents academic findings and practical recommendations to the industry through its examination of:

- Theoretical frameworks on cultural diversity and multicultural staff dynamics.

- Practical suggestions on strengthening workplace cohesion, employee satisfaction and minimizing interpersonal conflicts within a multicultural work environment.

Globalization and Trends in Hospitality

This research offers insights applicable beyond Denmark, as hospitality sector businesses worldwide encounter similar diversity-related issues in their operations (Lockett, Butler & Wui, 2023). Understanding multicultural staff interactions is vital for maintaining high service standards and customer satisfaction as Denmark increases its popularity as a tourist destination.

The findings of this study aim to contribute to fill a research gap regarding cultural diversity in the Danish restaurant sector while identifying practical methods for business owners to create better work environments for employees with different cultural backgrounds.

1.3 Key Concepts

Cultural diversity is originally formulated as the coexistence and interaction of different cultural identities and systems in a specific context (Hofstede, 1980). In the context of the current research, it means the presence of diversity in terms of the cultural origin of the restaurant employees.

Diversity is the presence of people with different social, physical, and personal characteristics within a group or an organization. Race, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual identity, language, income, and education are some of these characteristics (Qin, Muenjohn & Chhetri, 2013).

Team dynamics is a term used to describe the behavioral, psychological, and social interactions that occur between team members. These interactions include communication styles, decision-making procedures, dispute resolution, roles and duties, and group cohesiveness (Harris-Gray, 2023).

Restaurant industry represents a separate segment within the food service industry, focusing on the preparation and direct serving of meals and beverages for immediate consumption in a dine-in setting. The restaurant sector comprises different restaurant groups including fast food outlets, casual dining venues, fine dining options and cafes offering services ranging from quick service to full-service dining experiences (Symons, 2013). In contrast, the *food service industry* operates as a wider category and extends beyond restaurants to institutions such as cafeterias and catering or delivery options. Restaurants deliver dining experiences to customers at dedicated locations while the food service industry extends its service range to provide food across various places from institutions to events and delivery services (Edwards, 2020).

Communication patterns are the common techniques in which individuals in a group engage and exchange information. These patterns influence the dynamics of group communication, including how ideas are communicated, choices are made, and connections are formed (Watzlawick, Bavelas, Jackson & Norton, 1967).

Conflict resolution refers to the strategies and practices that enable the peaceful settlement of conflict and repercussions. This comprises negotiation, mediation, diplomacy, and other forms of peaceful dispute resolution (Wallensteen, 2019).

Inclusion is the process of creating conditions in which any individual or group may feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to be able to fully participate (Ruchika Tulshyan, 2022).

Service quality refers to the subjective comparison clients make between the service they receive and their expectations (Lewis & Booms, 1983).

Customer satisfaction is defined as a perceived performance assessment that captures the extent to which the products and services delivered by a firm meet the expectations of a consumer (Parker & Mathews, 2001). In this study, customer satisfaction refers specifically to customers who interact with multicultural employees.

Multicultural staff dynamics refers to the ways in which people of different cultures communicate, work together, and handle conflicts in the workplace (Adler, 2002).

Globalization is a dynamic process which involves a transformation of social, economic, and political structures on a global scale. (Archibugi & Iammarino, 2002; Bartelson, 2000; Beck, 2000).

1.4 Cover Matrix

The cover matrix table presents the structure of the study by aligning each research question with its corresponding theoretical background, the chapter where results are discussed, and the relevant questionnaire question numbers. This overview helps clarify how the research was designed and how each component is connected throughout the thesis.

Table 1. Cover Matrix

Research questions	Theoretical framework (chapter)	Results (chapter)	Questionnaire questions
1. What is the influence of cultural diversity among restaurant staff in Denmark on team dynamics and teamwork?	2.3	4.2	13. – 22.
2. What benefits arise from cultural diversity, and how can these be leveraged to improve team performance and service quality?	2.3	4.3	37.
3. What challenges do diverse teams experience, and what strategies can help resolve them?	2.4	4.4	38.
4. How do restaurant leaders manage multicultural staff dynamics and how can these approaches be improved?	2.7	4.5	39. – 42.

1.5 Delimitations

This thesis has several limitations that shape the scope and emphasis. The study focuses exclusively on the restaurant sector and examines multicultural relations among staff in restaurants. This research only covers the restaurant sector, other hospitality sectors such as hotels and travel services are excluded. The research will focus on restaurants located in Denmark, in both urban and rural areas. This allows for an in-depth analysis of staff dynamics within a specific cultural context.

The focus of the research centers around staff dynamics and while customer satisfaction may be affected indirectly, the study does not explore customer experiences or feedback. Additionally, the study's emphasis will be on present multicultural interactions and will not examine historical patterns or anticipated developments.

The research is limited to personnel directly engaged in operational duties, such as kitchen staff, waitstaff, and managers and does not include administration or external stakeholders.

It is important to mention that the analysis, examples, and explanations presented in this thesis cover general trends and may not reflect every case of every individual. Cultural categorizations are inevitably generalizations which may overlook the complexity of cultures. While the frameworks used offer helpful insights, the attitudes and behaviors of individuals can be highly varied. This study acknowledges these limitations.

2 Literature Review

In recent years, diversity in the workplace has emerged as a popular area of study, especially in organizations where there is emphasis placed on teamwork and communication, such as the restaurant industry. With globalization on the rise, restaurants, especially those located in multicultural countries such as Denmark, hire employees of diverse cultures. Although this diversity comes with its advantages in providing specific strengths at the workplace, it also poses challenges in communication, team cohesiveness and productivity. Cultural diversity is becoming the norm in organizations, and thus it is crucial to gain knowledge on the characteristics of multicultural teams and the ways they can affect the general productivity and efficiency of the restaurant staff (Gong, 2008).

The following theoretical framework aims to explore how cultural differences affect staff relations within the restaurant business in Denmark. The literature review will consist of defining cultural diversity, the analysis of its impacts on a team and will also explore how these team dynamics subsequently affect the overall staff performance. Through these aspects, this framework will offer the basis for examining the dynamics of multicultural teams in the restaurant industry of Denmark and identifying the ways managers can benefit from cultural diversity to improve productivity.

Discussed key concepts are cultural diversity, teams, and performance in multicultural settings. Frameworks including Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions and Tuckman's Stages of Group Development will be discussed to analyze how culture affects teamwork. Furthermore, this framework will discuss Danish culture and the way it influences multicultural restaurant employees. Thus, the ground will be set for examining the effects of cultural diversity on staff and the potential ways of enhancing organizational performance in the restaurant business.

2.1 Understanding Culture – What is Cultural Diversity?

Culture represents a powerful and evolving concept that describes how people share their ways of living expressed through beliefs, values, norms and practices which stem from their common background. It affects people's behavior, interaction and views of the world. According to Hofstede (1984), culture can be defined as 'a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from members of another group or category of people'. The way people communicate, develop workplace connections and resolve conflicts is directly dependent on cultural influences. (Martin, 2014).

Cultural diversity is the presence of a variety of cultural expressions, identities, and practices within the same environment (Lin, 2019). It is observed in societies, communities, businesses, and

industries where people of different ethnic, linguistic, and national cultures are joined together. Cox (1993) points out that cultural variety in the workplace can be an obstacle and an asset, it encourages innovation, gives greater perspectives, and improves problem-solving capacities. However, it also requires appropriate management approaches to deal with the differences in communication, values and expectations.

The restaurant industry is marked by significant cultural diversity, with 73% of the workforce in the hotel and restaurant sector in Copenhagen made by international employees (Kampmann, 2024). Workers from different cultural backgrounds create an active workplace that presents multiple perspectives. Such diversity can enrich customer service with more cultural knowledge and language skills. However, it may result in misunderstandings and conflicts if not well administered. Ozgen, Peters, Niebuhr, Nijkamp and Poot (2014) suggest that businesses with inclusive policies and cultural competency training experience collaboration among employees and satisfaction from customers.

It is essential to gain knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity. A work environment which embraces inclusiveness and respect can embrace diverse employee strengths, thus minimizing conflicts in organizational settings. Developing this organizational environment of empowerment enables employees to make meaningful contributions while feeling valued in their achievements for organizational success (Locke & Latham, 1990).

2.2 Cultural Diversity in Theories

The presence of cultural diversity creates substantial influences on social interactions between teams that work together in multicultural settings (Stahl, Maznevski, Voigt & Jonsen, 2010). Multiple theoretical frameworks help explain how different cultures affect communication, hierarchy structures and collaboration. The essential theoretical frameworks analyzed in this section are Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions of Culture, and the Iceberg Theory of Culture.

2.2.1 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede (2011) established six cultural dimensions to study how human behavior varies by assessments of patterns in social behavior: Power Distance, Individualism vs. Collectivism, Masculinity vs. Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long-term vs. Short-term Orientation, Indulgence vs. Restraint.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions offer a structured way of analyzing national cultural differences, and how they affect workplace behavior, communication and teamwork. To illustrate these differences, this study compares Denmark to three culturally different regions: Southern Europe (Spain), East Asia (China) and The Middle East (Saudi Arabia). They have been selected due to the contrasting positions of these countries in Hofstede's dimensions, which provide valuable information on how cultural values affect professional interactions.

Low power distance, high individualism, and low uncertainty avoidance are the main characteristics of Denmark, while the selected country comparison countries are differing regarding hierarchy, collectivism, and risk tolerance. The following figure provides an overview of these cultural differences based on Hofstede's six dimensions.

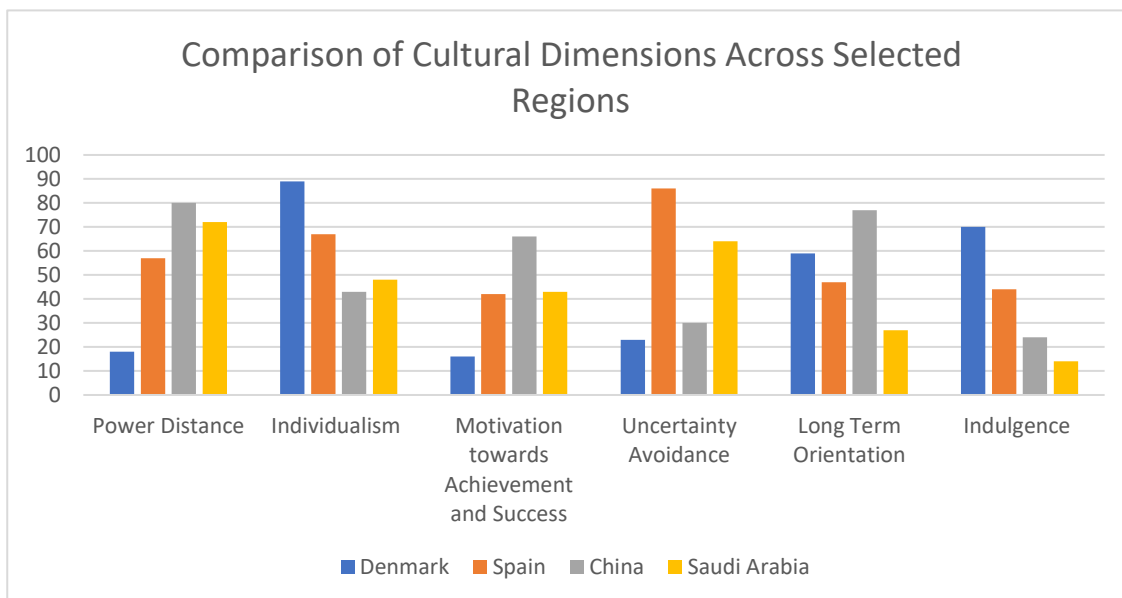


Figure 1: Comparison of Cultural Dimensions Across Selected Regions (adapted from Hofstede, 2011)

Results in Figure 1 show that there are significant cultural differences across Denmark, Spain, China, and Saudi Arabia according to Hofstede's six cultural dimensions.

Power Distance refers to the systematic differences in societal inequality within hierarchical systems. It embraces the accepted power gap between people of different status levels (Hofstede, 2011). Denmark has the lowest power distance score (18) of all selected countries, which confirms its egalitarian social structure of decentralized authority and participative leadership for employees (Laursen, Gumus & Walker, 2024). On the other hand, China (80) and Saudi Arabia (72) show the highest score in power distance, suggesting they have a hierarchical structure and there is a

concentration of power at the top, which leads to a low likelihood of subordinates questioning authority (Hofstede, 2001). Spain (57) leans closer towards a higher power distance, signifying a more highly structured work hierarchy than Denmark.

Individualism vs. Collectivism determines if people choose to prioritize individual goals against collective objectives (Hofstede, 2011). Denmark rates the highest (89) regarding individualism, emphasizing self-reliance, personal initiative, and loose social ties (Xie, Roy and Chen, 2006). Spain (67) is relatively individualistic; however, it maintains stronger group cohesion in comparison to Denmark. In contrast, China (43) and Saudi Arabia (48) have a collective culture with a lower scale of individualism, where loyalty to in-groups (family and workplace teams) is more important than personal autonomy (Gong, Zhu, Gurel & Xie, 2021; Alotaibi and Campbell, 2022).

Masculinity vs. Femininity (Motivation towards Achievement and Success) depicts the distribution of gender roles, with masculinity pursuing achievement and competition, and femininity focusing on life quality and cooperation (Hofstede, 2011). The lowest score is Denmark (16), which stands for a very feminine-oriented culture based on co-operation, modesty, and quality of life over competition and monetary success. This also reflects Denmark's strong commitment to work-life balance and egalitarianism in the workplace (Maher, 2018). Spain (42) and Saudi Arabia (43) have moderate scores indicating that professional environments involve an equal balance of achievement and social relationships (Alza & Isusi, 2018; Alqurashi, 2013). China is the highest-scoring country (66) and places within the masculine category of workplace behavior – where achievement, competition, and success are all key drivers of organizational behavior. China is a highly performance-oriented business culture where people are expected to work hard, show ambition, and be willing to climb the career ladder (Omrane & Khan, 2024).

Uncertainty Avoidance shows the level of tolerance of a cultural society toward unclear or unpredictable situations (Hofstede, 2011). Spain has the highest score (86), which indicates a strong structural preference, predictability and well-defined rules. At Spanish workplaces, the employees rely on clarity in guidelines, regulations and long-term planning to reduce the uncertainty and to prevent unexpected disruptions. This may cause a culture that is risk averse which means lower adaptability to the change as compared to the more uncertainty tolerant nations (Kooyers, 2015). Uncertainty Avoidance also shows a moderate to high level in Saudi Arabia (64), which indicates the preference for religious, cultural and legal rules that provide stability (Alotaibi & Campbell, 2022). China (30) and Denmark (23) score far lower, which shows the two cultures are comfortable with uncertainty and change. While cultures vary from workplace to workplace, Danish workplaces generally tend to promote flexibility, innovation and concise, open-ended problem solving and minimal use of formal structures and hierarchy (Nielsen & Larsen, 2015). Likewise, China's pragmatic

understanding of uncertainty gives greater room for adaptability, as businesses tend to make decisions on a case-by-case basis (Shen, Zhang, Liu & Hou, 2020).

Long-term vs. Short-term Orientation represents cultural preferences between planning ahead and focusing on future benefits versus achieving immediate results (Hofstede, 2011). The highest score (77) shows strong long-term orientation in China. It means that Chinese workplaces and businesses are consistent with persistence, adaptability and strategic long-term investments. Decisions are often made with future benefits in mind and there is a cultural focus on education and perseverance (Fang, Wen & Xu, 2024). The moderate score on future planning in Denmark (59) indicates a balanced approach towards both the future and the present. Although the Danish workplaces value innovation and long-term sustainability, they also value a work-life balance and adaptability, compared to strongly long-term oriented cultures such as China (Maher, 2018). Spain (47), places closer to a short-term orientation, respecting tradition and some element of planning, while also seeking short term goals, relationships and flexibility when it comes to making decisions (Kooyers, 2015). The lowest score of 27 for Saudi Arabia reflects a strong short-term orientation. The attitude of Saudi workplaces is to prioritize traditions, religious values and social stability, often forcing immediate results over long-term strategic planning. Customs, relationships, and the hierarchy take precedence over long term economic forecasting when making business decisions (Almairan & Mclaughlin, 2018).

Indulgence vs. Restraint demonstrates a culture's attitude towards basic human desires through either indulgence or restraint of enjoyable life experiences (Hofstede, 2011). Denmark's score is 70, which means it is a highly indulgent culture. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2023) personal freedom, work-life balance, and striving for happiness is valued in the Danish society. This means that the workplaces are based on flexible schedules, enjoying leisure time with family and an emphasis on enjoying the professional and personal life. Spain (44) is closer to the middle but leans toward restraint. While Spanish culture does include enjoyment and socializing, there are also structural and social norms that regulate behavior. This is reflected in the workplace, where hierarchies and traditions still have a place, although the culture is mainly sociable and expressive (Assens-Serra, Boada-Cuerva, Serrano-Fernandey, Villajos & Boada-Grau, 2021). China (24) and Saudi Arabia (14) are ranked lowest, making them highly restrained cultures. In China, leisure and enjoyment are usually perceived as less important than duty and success and are trumped by self-discipline, hard work and perseverance (Wei, Huang, Stodolska & Yuo, 2015). Similarly, Saudi Arabia (14) scores lowest, operating within a highly restricted cultural framework which is dictated by religious and social norms of personal behavior as well as workplace expectations. People in both cultures are constrained by tradition and authority to how their enjoyment is

experienced and expressed in their daily personal and professional lives (Albugami, Stillwell & Blair, 2023).

In Figure 1, key differences between cultural dimensions are presented in relation to Denmark's lower power distance and individualistic culture versus the more hierarchical and collectivist tendencies seen in Southern Europe, East Asia and the Middle East. Consequently, these distinctions have influence on workplace behavior, such as what leadership is expected, what is the right communication style, and how to work in teams (Cherfan, 2016). For instance, Danish employees may appreciate more egalitarian decision-making and personal autonomy, whereas employees from cultures with higher power distance might be more inclined towards structured leadership and tight authority lines (Langaas & Mujtaba, 2023). These insights create a basis for further empirical analysis exploring how cultural diversity affects restaurant staff in practice.

2.2.2 Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions of Culture

Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner (1997) identified the Seven Dimensions of Culture model to better understand, analyze and manage cultural differences and workplace behaviors such as decision making and teamwork.

Universalism vs. Particularism

This dimension looks at whether a culture prioritizes rules (universalism) or relationships (particularism). Like other Scandinavian countries, USA, Canada, or Switzerland, Denmark is a universalist country, emphasizing fairness and equality through standard procedures and policies (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997). This can be seen in Danish restaurants, with structured workplace regulations, labor laws and clear customer service protocols (Knudsen, 2006).

However, employees from more particularist countries, for instance Russia, Latin America, and China, may put more emphasis on creating personal relationships and workplace decision making based on situational circumstances (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

This could be a source of tension in a Danish work setting if the particularist employee expects a manager to make exceptions for them based on personal circumstances, but the Danish manager would expect all staff to be treated equally (Sattorovich, 2020).

Individualism vs. Communitarianism

This aspect measures the extent of emphasis on personal responsibility (individualism) versus group harmony (communitarianism) and is similar to Hofstede's individualism-collectivism dimension. High in individualism, USA, Canada, New Zealand, and Denmark encourage employees to be self-reliant, independent decision makers, able to take personal responsibility for fulfilling their tasks, which is consistent with the Danish working culture where initiative and autonomy are valued (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

On the contrary, workers from countries such as Japan, and many African and Latin American countries come from more communitarian cultures, where teamwork and consensus are much more important. In a Danish individualized work setting, these employees may feel uncomfortable (Smith, Dugan & Trompenaars, 1996).

Specific vs. Diffuse

This dimension looks at cultures that differentiate work and personal life (specific) and cultures with diffuse boundaries between professional and personal worlds. The culture in Denmark and other countries such as Germany, Switzerland, or the Netherlands is specific, meaning the work and personal lives are separate, with little to no overlap in social contact with colleagues. In contrast, employees from Argentina, Spain, Russia, India, or China might seek stronger bonds with colleagues, developing workplace relationships that surpass work hours (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997).

Such differences may cause misunderstandings in work teams, where employees from specific cultures may perceive after-work socializing as optional, while employees from diffuse cultures might anticipate a closer work family atmosphere (Guirdham, 2017).

Neutral vs. Emotional

This dimension separates cultures that value emotional restraint (neutral) from cultures that allow for open expression of emotions in the workplace (emotional). One of the characteristics of Danish culture is the neutrality of communication – it is a culture of professionalism, avoiding confrontation, and subtly expressed emotions. Other neutral cultures include The Netherlands, Great Britain, Sweden, Finland and Germany. Italy, France, Latin America or Poland, are cultures in which emotions are expressed openly, whether in conflict or enthusiasm (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

Achievement vs. Ascription

This dimension focuses on whether a culture favors status earned through performance (achievement), or status earned by background, age, or social connections (ascription). Denmark, USA, Canada, and Australia are achievement-oriented societies, where people are compared based on skills or contributions and not by seniority or family background. Many cultures, including France, Italy, Japan or Saudi Arabia have ascription-based values, where respect is given based on age, position, or family status (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

This may be problematic in Danish work setting, where younger employees might be promoted over older employees based on performance. In ascription cultures, employees may be uncomfortable challenging authority figures even in situations where they are asked to contribute ideas (Morrison, 2014).

Sequential Time vs. Synchronous Time

This dimension distinguishes between cultures that perceive time as linear and structured (sequential), and those that view time as flexible and fluid (synchronous). In sequential time approach, such as Denmark, Germany, USA, The United Kingdom, and The Netherlands, tasks are done in order, schedules are followed, and punctuality is vital. Employees from synchronous cultures, Argentina, Mexico or Japan, may have a more flexible approach towards time, multitasking, and adapting to change as necessary (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

This gap in time perception may lead to conflict in restaurant scheduling, shift management, and punctuality expectations.

Internal Direction vs. Outer Direction

The last dimension considers whether people feel that they control their environment (internal control), or they adapt to their environment (external control). The work culture of Denmark, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, and The United Kingdom is about internal control, requiring employees to be proactive problem solvers. Employees from external control cultures, such as China, Russia, and Saudi Arabia, may have an adaptive approach, believing that success depends on the external conditions rather than on individual effort (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

The employees from external control cultures may refrain from taking initiative and wait for a manager's direction if present in an internal control work environment such as Denmark (Domnisoru, Ogarca & Dragomir, 2017).

2.2.3 The Iceberg Theory of Culture

The Iceberg Theory of Culture is a framework for understanding how cultural diversity affects behavior in different settings, such as the workplace. This model was developed in the 1970s by Edward T. Hall and is based on the theory that culture is like an iceberg, showing only a small portion of culture above the water line, while a large part is hidden beneath the surface. This metaphor illustrates the complexity and the depth of cultural impact on individuals in a complex, multicultural environment such as a restaurant team (Hall, 1976).

According to the Iceberg model, culture is split into two different layers, the visible and the invisible. The visible layer refers to the elements of the culture which are observable through behavior, dress codes, food, or language. These are the aspects of culture which are obvious to outsiders. By contrast, the invisible layer consists of deeper, less obvious aspects such as values, beliefs, attitudes, thought patterns, and social norms (Hall, 1976).

In a multicultural restaurant environment, the visible aspects of culture can be easily identified through observation, such as the way people communicate, eat, or socially interact. However, while staff members interact and collaborate with one another, deeper ingrained aspects such as individual values, work ethics, and conflict solutions, are more difficult to see, and yet they play an important and more direct role in shaping the way that staff members interact and work together (Hall, 1976; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

2.3 Cross-Cultural Communication

The foundation of any successful team is effective communication, especially those that are culturally diverse. Notable results can be achieved when communication is navigated effectively, creating a productive and collaborative workforce. However, communication within a multicultural team can also bring some challenges when it comes to differences in communication styles, conflict resolution strategies, misunderstandings, and interpersonal dynamics (Meyer, 2014).

Communication in Multicultural Teams

More than just the exchange of information is involved in communication within multicultural teams, it is the process of how information is transmitted, understood and acted upon. To create meaningful interactions, it is crucial to consider the cultural differences between people. Language differences, cultural norms, and non-verbal cues are some of the factors that influence communication in multicultural teams. Expectations regarding direct or indirect communication and context may

vary depending on team members and their culture or upbringing. As a result, misunderstandings or frustrations may arise from misinterpretations of ineffective communication (Hall, 1976; Meyer, 2014).

Language barrier: Communication may become more ineffective and difficult if a language barrier prevents seamless interactions in the workplace. Even though English is the global language for business as well as the mutual language of multicultural staff in the Danish restaurant industry, the contributions and confidence of team members can be undermined by linguistic prejudice and the biases toward dialects, fluency of the language, or accents (Ye, 2024). This can lead to confusion in stressful environments like restaurants, especially during busy peak service hours when effective message delivery is key. In a Danish workplace with a mix of Danish and foreign employees, the employees who share the same mother tongue – Danish, lean towards avoiding English, unless including the other employees who do not speak the Danish language. As a result, it can be difficult for the foreign workers to establish good relationships and feel a sense of belonging to the workplace without experiencing feelings of exclusion (Angouri & Miglbauer, 2014; Lønsmann, 2014).

Differences in communication styles: Every society has their own cultural differences and communication styles, which can lead to misunderstandings of the meaning of messages. Culture influences the tone, volume, and speed of speech, emotional expressivity, formality or directness (Hall, 1976).

Latin, Arab, and African American cultures express themselves with loud, fast, and expressive speech, meanwhile East Asian or Scandinavian cultures favor less expressive speech and softer tones of voice (Meyer, 2014). Emotions are expressed more directly in the United States, Germany, Sweden, or Australia, compared to China, Japan, or Saudi Arabia where emotions are implied rather than openly stated (Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2018).

Etiquette, the use of appropriate respect, titles, names, and attitudes are critical in high formality cultures such as Japan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, or Germany (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). On the contrary, many Latin or African American cultures prefer warmth and personal connection, dressing for comfort, or the use of first names across authority levels (Lewis, 2018). Truthfulness and efficient communication are valued in cultures with a direct communication style, such as Australia, Germany, the United States, or Canada, encouraging open and honest discussion. China, Japan, or Saudi Arabia belong in indirect communication cultures, where openly communicating negativeness is understood as rude and impolite, resorting to polite excuses instead (Meyer, 2014).

Differences in values and norms: Communication problems can arise from the lack of understanding differences in values and norms (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). International relations can be impacted by different cultural attitudes toward time, posing a practical challenge regarding deadlines and meeting schedules. Organizations may find it difficult to estimate the length of tasks and attitude to timelines, depending on the time orientation of cultures (Hall, 1983).

Monochronic cultures such as the United States, Switzerland, or Germany consider time as a limited resource and highly value efficiency. Time is viewed as linear, and schedules, deadlines, and punctuality are prioritized. In polychronic cultures, such as Africa, Latin America, or Middle Eastern countries, the relationship with time is more flexible, relationships and social interactions are prioritized over schedules, and multiple tasks may be handled at the same time (Hall, 1983; Meyer, 2014).

Behavior is guided by communication norms, such as patterns of turn-taking, choice of dialect use, or taboo and humorous topics (Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2018). It is important to avoid judging the ways things are done in other cultures based on own cultural standards, arising from lack of awareness of unknown approaches to expressing ideas, solving problems, or making decisions (Beebe & Redmond, 2020).

Non-verbal communication: For effective cross-cultural communication, it is essential to successfully decode nonverbal messages (Dohen, Schwartz & Bailly, 2010; Manusov & Patterson, 2006). These include eye contact, touch, proximity, gestures, dress, posture, facial expressions, or intonation. Non-verbal communication is one of the key aspects of communication, especially in high-context cultures.

Unintended disrespect or conflict can arise because of inadvertent impoliteness, for instance by expressing a common gesture of one culture, which may be considered disrespectful in another, for example, the “thumbs up” gesture, which is widely recognized as a positive affirmation in many Western cultures but can be seen as an offensive gesture in countries like Iran or parts of West Africa (Samovar, Porter, McDaniel & Roy, 2017; Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2018). Respect may be signaled by avoiding eye contact in some East Asian cultures, especially toward authority figures, whereas in Scandinavian cultures like Denmark, eye contact is often associated with confidence and honesty (Meyer, 2014).

In a business setting, information about authority, respect, and trust can be revealed by non-verbal communication, such as posture, eye contact, and gestures (Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2018). Edward Hall’s studies (1990) reveal that cultures have different preferences for physical proximity in business relationships. Contact cultures such as Mediterranean, Latin American, and Arab cultures

prefer closer interactions with warm handshakes and physical contact, signifying commitment and trust. On the contrary, Northern European or East Asian cultures use more restrained gestures and maintain greater personal distance, fitting in the non-contact culture category (Hall, 1990). Studies by Gamsriegel (2005) reveal that failure to recognize and decode indirect messages creates misunderstandings and misinterpretations, especially when individuals interpret behaviors through their own cultural norms, overlooking the importance of culture.

2.4 High-context and Low-context Cultures

Edward T. Hall introduced a concept of high-context and low-context cultures in his seminal work "Beyond Culture" in 1976, where he explains how communication styles vary across cultures. Japan, China, France, Greece, Italy, Korea, or Arab countries are high-context cultures, where messages are indirect, information is in the context and contextual cues, and internalized understanding is crucial. Messages in high-context cultures are not explicit, relying on the context, values, customs, and background information. The aim of high-context communication is to achieve understanding, often using nonverbal communication and 'reading between the lines'. For individuals from low-context cultures, this may lead to feelings of frustration and annoyance (Hall, 1976).

In low-context cultures, such as Germany, United States, Norway, and Denmark, messages are specific and direct, with the verbal message carrying most of the information. Hall (1976) mentions that individuals from low-context cultures are detail-oriented about the precision of their words, often repeating themselves to ensure clear, explicit, direct and detailed communication.

In a multicultural restaurant team, these differences in communication styles can greatly affect staff interactions and teamwork, as well as the overall success of day-to-day operations. In a team of staff from both high-context and low-context cultures, individuals from high-context cultures might use subtle hints and implicit communication, which could be misunderstood or overlooked by a colleague from a low-context culture expecting clear and direct instructions (Hall, 1976). Ting-Toomey (1999) reports that navigating high-context and low-context communication styles is critical for the improvement of intercultural relationships, helping to resolve misunderstandings and ensuring smooth team dynamics.

2.5 Team Dynamics in a Multicultural Context

Salas, Cooke and Rosen (2008) define team dynamics as “the patterns of interaction, communication, and relationships between team members that influence how well a team functions”. In multicultural teams, the different cultural backgrounds, values, and communication styles of each member shape these dynamics and impact the team’s productivity, cohesion and overall performance.

Research shows that culturally diverse teams often have the potential to achieve more innovative and creative results compared to homogeneous teams (Jones, Chace & Wright, 2020; Wang, Cheng, Chen & Leung, 2019). However, these benefits are not automatic, and effective management strategies are essential to fully leverage them. When cultural differences are not managed successfully, misunderstandings and conflict can arise. According to Brett, Behfar and Kern (2006) there are four categories of barriers that hinder a team’s success. These are: direct vs. indirect communication, problems with fluency and accents, varied perspectives on hierarchy and authority, and contrasting decision-making norms.

2.6 Tuckman’s Group Development Framework

To successfully understand the process of group development, Bruce Tuckman introduced his Group Development theory in 1965, which identified four stages: forming, storming, norming and performing.

In the *forming* stage, team members are not familiar with each other, avoiding serious feelings. It is crucial to create opportunities for relationship-building and social interaction. In this stage, the team leader should clearly outline the mission, vision, roles, objectives, and responsibilities of the team (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977). In a multicultural team, this stage can be affected by differing cultural beliefs about authority, power, status, and social connections. For example, team members from cultures with high-power distance are inclined to be more respectful towards authority and less likely to openly express opinions, while team members with low-power distance will be more open to discussing ideas and practices (Hofstede, 2001; Meyer, 2014). In the restaurant industry in Denmark, team members may come from different cultural backgrounds which could affect the length of this stage. The team leaders must ensure to frame instructions in a mindful way, with all cultural perspectives in mind to develop a work culture that promotes open and supportive team collaboration (Stahl et al., 2010).

In the *storming* stage, conflicts may emerge as team members start to express their opinions. If managed well, this stage can lead to trust and cohesion. The leader must guide the team through

this process (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977). In a multicultural team, this phase can be much more pronounced, as members of the team from different cultures may express different communication styles, work ethic, and decision-making styles. For instance, a team member from a high-context culture may understand a message differently than a team member from a low-context culture (Hall, 1976; Meyer, 2014). In Danish restaurant operations where teamwork and speed are two essential aspects of operations, conflict can emerge around roles, expectations, or the pace of work (Stahl et al., 2010). Conflicting cultural norms in the storming phase can arise from different attitudes toward time, such as punctuality and the hierarchy of task prioritization (Hofstede, 2001). To assist in navigating these issues, leaders must listen and identify the cultural dimensions that are influencing the team members' interactions, respond to interpersonal conflict in a rational way, and mediate the disagreements to develop mutual understanding of all members based on their cultural origins (Thomas & Inkson, 2017).

In the *norming* stage, members of the team begin to develop a sense of cohesion, trust, and collaboration (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977). This phase can be difficult in a multicultural team, because as members of the team make space to find common ground, they also want to honor and show respect for individual specific cultures. For example, in the restaurant industry in Denmark, team members from a collectivist culture may prioritize group harmony ahead of individual performance, whereas team members from an individualistic culture may prioritize individual performance ahead of group harmony (Hofstede, 2001). Navigating this phase may require developing mutual values, clarity in communication, and an understanding that will assist with problem-solving and customer service quality (Meyer, 2017; Thomas & Inkson, 2017). Leaders have an opportunity to create an environment for valuing respect, listening to each other, and valuing differing perspectives. The development of team norms based on fairness and alignment is important for achieving a balanced team (Livermore, 2015).

In the *performing* stage, decision-making becomes collaborative, teams operate autonomously and smoothly as a 'problem-solving instrument', and team members are confident and skilled. The primary responsibility of the team leader in this stage is facilitation and delegation (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977). Multicultural teams that successfully transition through the previous stages can utilize diverse skills to improve overall team performance, for instance by bringing unique problem-solving perspectives, such as when facing difficult customers or improving service delivery (Meyer, 2014; Stahl et al., 2010). At this stage, the multicultural team may have developed a strong level of communication or shared discussion and transformed their mutual understanding of each member's strengths and working styles to help them become more effective together under pressure (Thomas & Inkson, 2017; Livermore, 2015).

The group development framework was later revised in 1977 by Tuckmann and Mary Ann Cono-ven Jensen and supplemented with one more stage – adjourning. The *adjourning* stage, also called the ‘mourning stage’, involves disbanding the team or moving focus to a new task. While not all teams go through this phase, it creates space for celebrating accomplishments and reflecting. In this stage, team leaders should ensure that achievements are formally appreciated and celebrated (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977). In the Danish restaurant industry, the adjourning stage may occur due to high turnover, seasonal work, or the end of a successful service, event or season. This leads to cycles of disbanding and having to form new teams starting from the first stage again. Therefore, it is important to go through the adjourning stage in a mindful way to acknowledge the individuals’ contributions to the team, as well as the group success (Baum, 2006).

Figure 2. shows the five stages of the Group Development Model from 1977 by Tuckman and Jen-sen.

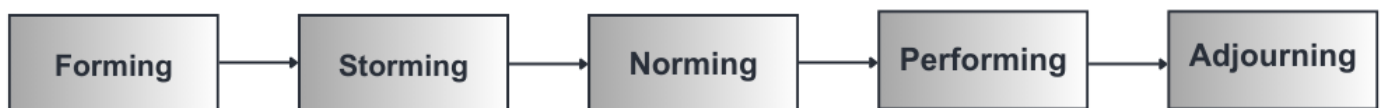


Figure 2. Tuckman’s Group Development Model (Tuckman and Jensen, 1977)

While Tuckman’s group development model is still the most used in relation to teams and team de-velopment (Fritz, Boren & Egger, 2022), it does not account for how cultural diversity affects each phase. In multicultural teams, cultural norms, values, and communication styles could have a sig-nificant impact on how teams move through these stages. For instance, leadership styles and deci-sion making could vary significantly across cultures (Meyer, 2014) and may have an impact in framing how the forming and storming stages play out within teams. Furthermore, the norming and performing stages may become more complex as team members learn to adjust their behavior re-garding the cultural norms of the team (Thomas & Inkson, 2017). In practice, team leaders should consider how the influence of culture on behaviors and team development impacts the team dy-namics and adjust the approach to properly lead team members through the stages of develop-ment. Moreover, the unique cultural backgrounds of team members must be understood to create trust and open communication (Livermore, 2015).

2.7 Cognitive Diversity

Cognitive diversity, also known as ‘diversity of thought’, adds another layer of complexity to multicultural teams, and refers to the different thinking styles and problem-solving approaches of individuals (Milliken & Martins, 1996). Although the primary focus of this thesis is cultural diversity, it is important to acknowledge that every individual is also shaped by cognitive diversity, which plays a crucial role in how multicultural teams interact and perceive tasks and activities (Thomas & Inkson, 2017). The three main factors that influence and shape cognitive diversity are culture, education, and experience (Martins, Schilpzand, Kirkman, Ivanaj S. & Ivanaj V., 2012).

A large factor in how individuals solve new problems is influenced by their educational background, which contributes to the development of their cognitive abilities and shapes their approach to learning and decision-making. Further perspectives are molded by personal experiences, life events, and social interactions (Stahl et al, 2010). The variety of experiences and knowledge can strengthen a team’s ability to offer unique perspectives, reduce stereotypes and biases, and enhance service delivery quality. The different mental processes and thinking styles stem from a broader range of personal experiences and education, unique to everyone (Stahl et al., 2010).

2.8 Gaps in Literature

The existing literature about cultural diversity and team dynamics has mainly focused on general organizational settings, rather than focusing on the restaurant industry. Studies of multinational organizations identified multiple indirect effects of cultural diversity on team task performance, such as the stimulation of innovation, but also increased conflict and reduced team unity (Stahl & Maznevski, 2021). The research on diverse global teams was primarily conducted on large teams, whereas smaller workplaces remain understudied. Existing research provides universal insights into team heterogeneity but fails to explore specific industry sectors such as the restaurant industry (Keizer-Remmers, Ivanova & Brandsma-Dieters, 2021).

Research about the restaurant sector along with studies focused on the Danish environment remains scarce and the current studies mainly originate from different geographical locations. Research by Ab-Latif (2020) about casual restaurants in Malaysia, found that the cultural values of collectivism boosted teamwork among multicultural teams in Malaysian restaurants. This research was “the first to assess” the cultural value diversity on the performance of teams (Ab-Latif, 2020). The research on diversity in Denmark focuses mainly on conceptual and organizational aspects. Kamp and Hagedorn-Rasmussen (2004) emphasized that Danish businesses tend to “focus on the sameness of people, not on the value of difference”, however this research did not study frontline

service teams. A case study performed at a Danish fast-food chain by Holck (2016), revealed that well-established diversity programs led to high staff satisfaction rates, but such single company studies are rare. In general, no published literature focuses on the impact of cultural diversity on teamwork diversity within Danish restaurants.

This gap matters because restaurants are a major service sector, and Denmark's workforce is becoming more multicultural (ALMR, 2023). Research evidence shows that effective management of diversity leads to better problem-solving abilities along with lower employee turnover (Stahl & Maznevski, 2021). Consequently, when differences in a team remain unmanaged, problems and conflicts occur. The absence of Denmark-specific data prevents managers from obtaining practical guidelines for leveraging these effects in daily operations (Stahl & Maznevski, 2021). In summary, the study of cultural diversity among restaurant teams in Denmark serves a purpose to address the existing theoretical gap, while assisting local employers in building high-performing multicultural staff teams.

2.9 Conclusion

The literature review explored definitions of culture, cultural frameworks such as Hofstede, Trompenaars and Hall, communication styles, team dynamics in the Tuckman's stages of group development, and the role of cognitive diversity. These theories provide a foundation for understanding how multicultural teams function in workplaces.

The research indicates that while cultural theories provide explanations for many aspects of team behavior, there is a lack of research focused on multicultural staff dynamics in the Danish restaurant industry. This gap highlights the need for the present study, which aims to connect theory with real-world experiences in a multicultural restaurant environment.

3 Methodology

Research Approach

A mixed methods approach was selected for this research to analyze cultural diversity patterns together with the advantages and disadvantages in multicultural restaurant teams in Denmark. The mixed methods research approach enabled the collection of quantitative data from close-ended questions about shared experiences, and qualitative data from optional open-ended questions sharing thoughts and personal stories from respondents representing various roles within the Danish restaurant industry (Abbas Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

Justification of Method Choice

A questionnaire was chosen as the main research method because it enabled efficient data collection from participants representing diverse geographical areas and cultural backgrounds. An online survey was the most suitable research instrument due to efficiency and convenience in contacting staff from Denmark's restaurant sector. Furthermore, the structured format of the questionnaire aligns with the study's aim to examine the experiences among staff members within various roles and cultural identities (Denscombe, 2021).

The survey questions were derived directly from the theoretical section discussed in Chapter 2 of this research, especially themes such as team dynamics, communication, conflict and cultural diversity theories.

Data Collection Process

The data was gathered using the Webropol platform in a voluntary anonymous online questionnaire. The survey link was shared via Facebook group platforms dedicated to individuals working in the Danish restaurant industry. The survey reached participants from local Danish communities and international members to achieve diverse sample demographics.

Participants had two weeks to voluntarily complete the questionnaire throughout the survey period. The questionnaire utilized English as its language to match the diverse cultural background of restaurant employees. Participants answered single-choice, multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions along with optional open-ended questions in the survey. The open-ended questions gave respondents room to express their thoughts about experiences and opinions together with the structured quantitative responses.

For instance, statements such as "Cultural diversity positively impacts team performance" and "I have experienced communication challenges due to cultural differences" required respondents to

rate their level of agreement using the Likert scale. Additionally, other questions focused on participants' observations regarding how well managers handle cultural misunderstandings among team members.

Sample Selection

A non-probability convenience sampling method was used. The research participants were self-selected by answering the open survey invitation (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). The survey included participants who were presently or formerly employed in the Danish restaurant industry, either in front-of-house, back-of-house, or managerial positions.

The survey's participation reached 61 respondents, and while the sampling size does not fully represent the industry, it provides important perspectives about behavioral patterns that occur within multicultural teams.

Data Analysis Methods

The data gathered was analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as percentages, to identify patterns about teamwork dynamics, communication obstacles, the advantages and disadvantages of diversity in the workplace, and leadership performance evaluation. The survey data was examined through Likert-scale analysis to measure general opinions, and open-ended questions revealed recurring themes to support the quantitative results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

4 Empirical Analysis

A total of 61 respondents from the Danish restaurant industry participated in the questionnaire. Its aim was to gain insight into their experiences regarding multicultural team interactions, communication styles, managerial techniques, advantages and disadvantages of multicultural teams, and personal opinions. The survey's participants represented various backgrounds and nationalities and shared their views regarding the impact of culture on the Danish restaurant industry.

Demographic profile

Among a total of 61 respondents, the majority of 60.6 % identified as female, while 36.1 % identified as male, and 3.3 % chose not to state their gender. The research respondents primarily fell within the age group of 25-34 at 59 %, 34.4 % comprised of 18-24 years, 4.9 % were in the age group of 35-44, and 1.7 % in the age group of 45-51. Most of the respondents worked in the Danish restaurant industry between one to five years, with 41 % of 1-2 years' experience, 31.1 % of 3-5 years' experience, 23 % of less than 1 year experience, and 4.9 % of 6-10 years' experience.

Nationalities

Most respondents originated from Hungary (18 %) and Slovakia (14.8 %), followed by Denmark (8.2 %), Romania and France (6.6 %), Lithuania (4.9 %), Argentina, Greece, Portugal and Poland (3.3 %), Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Canada, China and El Salvador (1.7 %), Estonia, Germany, Italy, Moldova, Myanmar, Philippines, Rwanda, Singapore, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom (1.6 %). The respondents' foreign upbringing provided essential viewpoints about cultural integration and diversity management, as confirmed by the survey data indicating that all respondents were raised in the same country as their nationality.

Work roles and team settings

The respondents worked in various positions, the majority were kitchen staff with 47.5 %, waitstaff followed at 31.2 %, and managers or team leaders accounted for 11.5 %. Other roles such as dishwashing accounted for 9.8 % of respondents.

The biggest percentage of respondents worked in teams consisting of 6 to 10 members (41 %), followed by teams of 11-20 (26.2 %), and teams of 1-5 members (19.7 %). The job locations were primarily concentrated in the city of Copenhagen (32.8 %) along with Aalborg (31.1 %), followed by Aarhus (14.8 %), Odense (8.2 %), Vejle (6.6 %) and Randers, Horsens, and Herning (1.6 %).

Language skills and work experience abroad

The data showed that all but one respondent (98.4 %) possessed fluent English language skills and 24.6 % were proficient in Danish. Apart from English and Danish, 18 % spoke Spanish, 9.8 % spoke French and Russian, 8.2 % spoke Polish and Romanian, 4.9 % spoke Ukrainian, 1.6 % spoke German, Swedish and Turkish, and 57.4 % chose other, which included Hungarian, Slovak, Italian, Lithuanian, Greek, Portuguese, Albanian, Czech, Estonian and Chinese. Most respondents (67.2 %) had experience working in foreign restaurant settings from countries such as Norway, France, The United States of America, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Poland, The United Kingdom, Belgium, China, Sweden, Colombia, Greece, Portugal, or Argentina.

4.1 Influence of Cultural Diversity on Team Dynamics and Teamwork

This section presents questionnaire data analysis related to study's main focus, understanding how cultural diversity influences the team dynamics and teamwork among restaurant staff in Denmark.

Survey respondents shared their insights about multicultural teamwork experiences in the Danish restaurant industry. The questions were evaluated through a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The collected data showed that cultural diversity influenced team dynamics through both favorable and challenging outcomes in how teams operated and communicated with each other.

Team functioning and collaboration

Most respondents confirmed that cultural differences between team members did not prevent their teams from achieving high performance levels. The statement "My team worked well together despite cultural differences" received a rating of 3.9 out of 5 which indicated successful effective collaboration in spite of cultural barriers. Similarly, the statement "Cultural diversity made teamwork more interesting or dynamic" also received a score of 3.9 out of 5, indicating that cultural differences affected teamwork in a positive way.

Respondents were more neutral regarding the creative potential of diversity, rating the statement "Diverse cultural perspectives helped our team solve problems more creatively" a 3.0 out of 5.

Many respondents demonstrated a high level of personal adaptability, with a score of 3.8 for the statement "I adjusted how I communicate when working with colleagues from other cultures", showing that they were willing to change their tone, language, or gestures to improve collaboration.

However, the extent of open communication differed. For instance, the statement "We talked openly about cultural differences in my team" had a lower score of 3.3, and "Team leaders or managers encouraged collaboration between culturally diverse staff" scored 2.9, indicating a lack of support for open communication by leadership.

Respondents indicated a moderate presence of conflicts stemming from cultural misunderstandings with a score of 3.1 for the statement "Cultural misunderstandings sometimes caused tension or conflict".

Inclusion and belonging

The survey included questions focused on workers' feelings of inclusion, the statement "I felt included and respected by coworkers from different backgrounds" received a score of 3.6 which indicated positive experiences with some limitations. Results indicated that employees typically felt comfortable revealing their cultural background at work according to the score of 3.9 for the statement "I felt comfortable sharing my own cultural background at work".

Several respondents used the optional open ended questions to describe how their cultural background shaped their role and interactions within the team. One respondent shared: "I think being from Denmark definitely shapes how I work with others. I'm used to being able to speak my mind, even if it's a manager or someone higher up, so I'm pretty comfortable voicing my opinion." However, other respondent shared a more negative experience: "No one wanted to help me, speak to me, I was given all the [unpleasant] jobs." These comments indicate how workplace cultures and team diversity affect the levels of inclusion that employees experience.

Some respondents pointed out that their approach to communication and teamwork depended on their cultural background. Respondents wrote: "I grew up in a country where I had to stand up for myself... that made me braver to talk to people and face the problems together.", "My cultural background influenced me to be open for teamwork", and also "...there were moments when I didn't feel completely included, especially with colleagues who had very different cultural backgrounds.", and "it was hard to say my opinion, i was feeling low in hierarchy."

In general, the respondents considered cultural diversity to have a positive effect on overall team performance. The score of 3.3 for the statement "Cultural differences had a positive impact on my team's overall performance", revealed that numerous respondents showed positive attitudes toward diversity, despite occasional challenges.

4.2 Benefits of Cultural Diversity

This section presents a questionnaire data analysis related to the first sub-question, exploring the benefits of cultural diversity and how these can be leveraged to improve team performance and service quality.

The questionnaire data revealed that most respondents found cultural diversity to be beneficial for their work environment because it enhanced their professional growth along with team performance.

Learning, growth, and perspective

Most respondents indicated that gaining knowledge about various cultures (68.9 %) along with improved communication skills (63.9 %) and developing cross-cultural friendships (63.9 %) were the most significant advantages of working in multicultural groups. Respondents showed substantial appreciation for cultural exchange by acknowledging that it both expanded their worldview and strengthened their social abilities.

A respondent wrote: "Culturally, in my country, people are usually open to talking with strangers and expressing their feelings. I think this is a good trait, especially when we need to handle situations with coworkers or clients." Another respondent reflected, "It made me become more open-minded and appreciative of culture."

These experiences suggest that working in a multicultural team environment often encourages personal growth, tolerance, and openness, qualities that can strengthen both teamwork and customer service.

Team creativity and communication

A significant number (47.5 %) of respondents found that team diversity enabled them to "learn new ways of thinking or working", and 60.7 % stated that working in diverse groups made a "more interesting and dynamic work environment." These elements can promote better team creativity together with adaptability in fast-paced or guest-facing roles. Some respondents mentioned that they discovered new ways to approach everyday work tasks because they interacted with colleagues who had different work methods and cultural values.

Although creativity and problem-solving were not rated highly in the Likert-scale questions, many participants still described indirect benefits, such as learning insight from others, gaining new ideas, and becoming more creative through team influence.

Service quality and guest interaction

Culture presents advantageous opportunities when viewed from a service delivery standpoint (Mattila, 1999). According to 34.4 % questionnaire respondents, “Better service for international customers” was a benefit. In the hospitality industry, where understanding guests’ cultural expectations is crucial, multicultural teams can offer a broader range of insights and experiences to support better guest interactions (Gannon, Roper & Doherty, 2015).

One respondent shared: “I’ve learned a lot from colleagues with different cultural backgrounds, especially when it comes to customer service and how people from different countries interact with guests.”

Although this thesis does not directly focus on the research of customer satisfaction, it is affected by team performance and communication. References to customer service are included only to highlight how internal team dynamics can impact external outcomes.

According to research findings, restaurant teams in the Danish industry may experience significant advantages from cultural diversity through enhanced employee growth and better workplace communication, creating a dynamic workplace environment. The questionnaire respondents noted that interacting with colleagues from diverse backgrounds improved their communication and language skills together with learning new ways of working, thinking, and gaining insight into different cultures. These positive effects underline the potential for cultural diversity to be a valuable asset in hospitality teams, especially when supported by an open, inclusive environment (Cox & Blake, 1991).

4.3 Challenges in Multicultural Teams

This section presents a questionnaire data analysis related to the second sub-question, exploring the challenges experienced by diverse teams and strategies for overcoming them.

Working in multicultural groups brought positive experiences to many respondents, however numerous respondents faced difficulties with teamwork due to communication issues, working styles and differences in team participation.

Communication and misunderstandings

The biggest obstacles faced by diverse teams were “different work styles or expectations” selected by a large majority – 73.8 %. The respondents experienced “language barriers” in 68.9 %, which

was followed by “misunderstandings due to cultural differences” in 36.1 % of respondents. The research shows that although team members make efforts to adjust their communication, it tends to persist as one of the main obstacles.

A respondent expressed their thoughts in the open comments by saying: “At times it was hard to manage misunderstandings, especially when language barriers made it harder to express ourselves clearly”. Another respondent added, “We all focus on doing the job well, but communication and understanding in teams is more effective by speaking clearly... a common language”.

These comments reflect that ineffective communication may lead to two results, slower decision-making processes and increased risk of team conflicts and performance problems.

Unequal treatment and feelings of exclusion

The survey showed that numerous respondents faced emotional difficulties along with social barriers. The option of “unequal treatment or favoritism” was selected by nearly half of the respondents (49.2 %), followed by “feeling excluded or misunderstood” chosen by 45.9 % of participants. According to these responses, cultural and linguistic differences sometimes resulted in team division.

Comments such as: “It was a [difficult] experience with people making fun of me in Danish, excluding and low-key bullying due to my non-Danish background”, and “While in Denmark everyone is fairly equal, ... Danes tend to exclude you from conversations if you don't speak Danish”, demonstrate that respondents experienced feelings of exclusion because the main language and cultural background was not accessible to everyone on the team.

Cultural conflict management

The survey revealed the theme of conflict with inconsistent results. A total of 39.3 % of respondents agreed with the statement “I've seen or experienced conflict related to cultural misunderstandings”. However, an equal share of respondents (39.3 %) selected the statement “I haven't experienced conflict related to culture”, suggesting cultural conflicts exist but they may not be consistently recognized across teams.

Survey results showed that “cultural conflicts were handled fairly and respectfully” from 16.4 % of respondents, and the same percentage (16.4 %) stated they “felt uncomfortable addressing cultural differences directly”. Additionally, 18 % of survey respondents stated they “avoided talking about cultural conflict”. These results show that teams may struggle to openly address cultural tension,

possibly due to discomfort, lack of support, or an avoidance culture in some teams (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

8.2 % of respondents reported that "cultural conflict led to better understanding afterward", showing that although conflict resolution occurred, it was not commonly seen as an opportunity for growth or learning. One open comment supported the statement: "The conflict led to more open conversations about expectations", suggesting that conflicts pushed some teams to establish better understanding of their roles and norms. However, this open comment " I am not certain whether conflict was caused due to cultural differences", indicated that some team members may struggle to recognize the source of conflict or ways to resolve it. This data suggests that when cultural conflict occurs, it is often not directly addressed in a structured way. The absence of structured conflict resolution strategies allows tensions to stay unresolved, gradually impacting the team performance negatively (Gelfand, Leslie, Keller & de Dreu, 2012).

Even though many multicultural teams function without major conflict, the data demonstrates that cultural misunderstandings along with communication issues persist. The respondents frequently encountered issues due to communication barriers, along with workplace differences, exclusion and unequal treatment. Some teams experienced cultural conflicts but have neither resolved them, nor taken steps to address them. The study findings suggest a need for more open dialogue within teams and stronger managerial involvement in identifying and addressing cultural tensions before they impact collaboration and morale.

4.4 Leadership and Management Approaches

This section addresses the third sub-question, exploring how restaurant leaders manage multicultural staff dynamics and potential improvements to these approaches.

Results from the survey indicated that management strategies differed substantially across different workplaces. Some questionnaire respondents indicated strong leadership support, others highlighted insufficient managerial initiatives to address cultural differences or support team integration.

Inclusion and cultural awareness

The survey asked respondents which methods their managers adopted to foster an inclusive workplace culture within their teams. The survey respondents most often chose "Making an effort

to ensure all team members feel heard and valued” (34.4 %) and “Encouraging team members to share their cultural backgrounds” received 23 % of votes.

However, 26.2 % of respondents said they “did not feel included by their manager” and 23 % stated that none of the listed approaches applied to their workplace, indicating that in many cases, inclusive practices were either missing or inconsistent.

Support for cultural differences

When asking about specific actions managers took to accommodate cultural differences in the team, 32.8 % reported receiving help with language barriers, 24.6 % voted that their managers encouraged open communication about cultural differences, and 19.7 % said managers adjusted their leadership style to suit different cultural backgrounds. Training or workshops about cultural awareness reached only 8.2 % of respondents, and 11.5 % experienced celebrations of cultural holidays at work, according to the survey data.

However, the questionnaire results show that a total of 44.3 % of respondents chose “None of the above” when choosing which actions were taken to address cultural differences, indicating that in nearly half of the workplaces represented in this survey, official steps to address cultural differences were absent.

Respondents shared that, “My manager didn’t seem to care and was set in their ways without being open to discussion” and “I’ve never had any serious issues with cultural differences at work, but I also didn’t notice any specific efforts from management to support it.”

These results suggest that numerous managers failed to recognize the necessity of planned support structures that improve multicultural employee dynamics. Without proper cultural inclusion practices at work, the absence of visible conflict does not guarantee team cohesion or maximum utilization of diverse talent (Ely & Thomas, 2001). In addition, the collected responses demonstrated an existing difference between personal managerial initiatives and structured leadership systems. Some managers demonstrated sensitivity to cultural diversity on a personal level, but many respondents noted the lack of active programs for fostering inclusion or conflict resolution. As a result, these findings identified essential needs for better managerial training combined with clearer communication and workplace protocols dedicated to multicultural teamwork.

4.5 Theoretical Comparison of Cultural Dimensions in Practice

This section presents selected survey data analysis comparing the responses from three culturally different countries, Hungary, Denmark, and France. The respondents were grouped according to both their nationality and upbringing, as all respondents were raised in the same country as their nationality. These countries served as contrasting examples to understand the real-world experiences of restaurant teams in Denmark based on existing cultural theories. It is important to note that the group sizes for the countries were relatively small, and this is considered in the interpretation of the data.

The analysis explores 13 survey questions which represent individual cultural dimensions from Hofstede's six dimensions of culture, Trompenaars' seven cultural dimensions, and Hall's low- and high-context communication styles. The questions were evaluated through a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Score averages for each question compare against theoretical expectations from existing literature to identify matches, partial matches, or contradictions between theoretical and real-life practices.

This comparison has two objectives, determining if theory provides an accurate reflection of multicultural staff behavior, and to determine its practical value for managers as a tool for creating cultural inclusion practices.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

This section analyzes the scores of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions and actual survey data obtained from respondents. The analysis focused on five Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions – power distance, individualism vs. collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity vs. femininity and long-term vs. short-term orientation. Each question was designated to measure a specific dimension, and Hofstede's official scores were converted to the same Likert scale of 1-5 (Strongly Disagree-Strongly Agree) to enable direct comparison. The following survey questions represented each dimension:

Power Distance: "I don't feel comfortable voicing my opinion to managers or supervisors if I disagree with them."

Individualism vs. Collectivism: "I prefer working alone rather than working in a team."

Uncertainty Avoidance: "I don't feel comfortable handling unexpected situations at work."

Masculinity vs. Femininity: “I value personal success over harmony and cooperation.”

Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation: “I tend to prioritize long-term goals and outcomes over immediate rewards or results.”

Table 2 shows the scores of theoretical predictions and actual responses from respondents.

Table 2. Comparison scores of Hofstede’s Dimensions

Country	Power distance Theory → Real Score	Individualism vs. collectivism Theory → Real Score	Uncertainty avoidance Theory → Real Score	Masculinity vs. femininity Theory → Real Score	Long-/short-term Orientation Theory → Real Score
Hungary	2.8 → 3.0	3.8 → 1.7	4.3 → 2.3	4.5 → 1.8	2.8 → 3.1
Denmark	1.7 → 2.8	4.6 → 2.0	1.9 → 2.2	1.6 → 1.4	3.3 → 3.6
France	3.7 → 2.5	4.0 → 2.7	4.4 → 3.0	2.7 → 1.5	3.4 → 3.5

Power Distance

“I don’t feel comfortable voicing my opinion to managers or supervisors if I disagree with them.”

According to Hofstede’s theory, Danish respondents coming from a low power distance culture were predicted to show high comfort with confronting managers (1.7), French respondents with higher power distance values were expected to report lower comfort (3.7), and Hungarian respondents were expected to score in between (2.8).

However, the actual survey results contradicted the original predictions. Danish respondents demonstrated 2.8 on the Likert scale, which showed their tolerance for defying authority was lower than the theoretical model predicted. The survey score from Hungarian participants was 3.0, which corresponded to the theoretical prediction, and the French respondents averaged a score of 2.5, which indicated a higher tolerance of challenging authority compared to Hofstede’s cultural predictions. These findings showed that Hungarian power distance remained relatively aligned with theory, but both Denmark and France exhibited deviations.

Individualism vs. Collectivism

“I prefer working alone rather than working in a team.”

The questionnaire required participants to choose between working in a team or alone. The individualist tendencies of Denmark (4.6) and France (4.0) were predicted to be high, and the individualistic preferences of Hungary (3.8) were expected to be lower in comparison.

Despite these predictions, the survey data showed different patterns. The Danish participants voted an average of 2.0, French respondents voted 2.7, and Hungarian respondents voted 1.7, all indicating a strong preference for teamwork above individual work. The restaurant industry context appears to have dominated cultural preferences, affecting participants' choices and reducing their traditional individualistic inclinations (Taras, Kirkman & Steel, 2010).

Uncertainty Avoidance

“I don't feel comfortable handling unexpected situations at work.”

In this dimension, participants were asked about their discomfort in dealing with unexpected situations at work. The Hofstede theory showed that France (4.4) and Hungary (4.3) align with high levels of uncertainty avoidance, and Denmark (1.9) presents low uncertainty avoidance.

The survey results matched these predictions to some degree. While the score of Danish respondents showed 2.2, aligning with the predicted uncertainty avoidance, the results of France (3.0) and Hungary (2.3) indicated more adaptability than expected. These findings imply that practical experience and training in different environments may increase individuals' flexibility, even in cultures traditionally characterized by high uncertainty avoidance (Taras, Kirkman & Steel, 2010).

Masculinity vs. Femininity

“I value personal success over harmony and cooperation.”

The questionnaire measured this dimension using a question regarding success achievement preferences. The data from Hofstede showed that Hungary (4.5) would choose personal success (masculinity), and Denmark (1.6) and France (2.7) would prioritize cooperation and relationship quality (femininity).

Survey responses of Hungary revealed significant contradictions with a score of 1.8 showing a harmony-oriented approach. The survey results from Danish (1.4) and French (1.5) respondents demonstrated a strong preference for cooperation, which matched their classification as feminine

cultures according to Hofstede. These findings demonstrate that even traditionally achievement-driven cultures may prefer harmony over success in daily operations, influenced by industry context or team values (Taras, Kirkman & Steel, 2010).

Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation

“I tend to prioritize long-term goals and outcomes over immediate rewards or results.”

This question examined whether respondents preferred pursuing long-term goals or receiving instant rewards. The theory indicated that Denmark (3.3) and France (3.4) followed by Hungary (2.8) would show a moderate level of long-term orientation.

The survey data matched these predictions, as Denmark averaged 3.6 points, France 3.5 points, and Hungary 3.1 points. The survey results revealed that most respondents from Denmark, France and Hungary showed preference toward future-oriented approaches and persistence. The scores of this dimension achieved the highest match between theoretical expectations and actual practice across all three countries.

Trompenaars' Dimensions of Culture

This section presents a comparison of scores between Trompenaars' cultural dimensions and the questionnaire responses from respondents who identified both their nationality and upbringing from Hungary, Denmark, or France. Four dimensions were selected from the Seven Dimensions of Culture model – universalism vs. particularism, neutral vs. emotional, specific vs. diffuse and achievement vs. ascription.

Each question was connected to a specific cultural dimension, and Trompenaars' official scores were converted to the same Likert scale of 1-5 (Strongly Disagree-Strongly Agree) to enable direct comparison. Each dimension was analyzed using the following survey questions:

Universalism vs. Particularism: “I believe rules should apply to everyone equally, no matter the situation.”

Neutral vs. Emotional Expression: “I am not comfortable expressing my emotions openly at work.”

Specific vs. Diffuse Orientation: “I prefer to keep my work life and personal life separate.”

Achievement vs. Ascription: “People should be respected at work based on what they have achieved, not their background or title.”

Table 3 shows the scores of theoretical predictions and actual responses from respondents.

Table 3. Comparison scores of Trompenaars' Dimensions

Country	Universalism vs. Particularism	Neutral vs. Emotional	Specific vs. Diffuse	Achievement vs. Ascription
	Theory → Real Score	Theory → Real Score	Theory → Real Score	Theory → Real Score
Hungary	3.6 → 4.8	2.7 → 2.8	3.6 → 4.4	2.5 → 4.8
Denmark	4.4 → 3.8	4.3 → 3.2	4.1 → 4.0	4.3 → 4.6
France	3.2 → 3.3	2.3 → 3.2	3.8 → 4.0	2.0 → 4.8

Universalism vs. Particularism

"I believe rules should apply to everyone equally, no matter the situation."

According to Trompenaars' theory, Denmark's egalitarian background should support an universalist approach (4.4), while Hungary (3.6) and France (3.2) lean towards a particularist approach.

However, the results from Hungary and Denmark contradict these predictions. The Hungarian respondents demonstrated the strongest preference for universalistic values (4.8), while Danish respondents showed an unexpectedly low score of 3.8. The responses from the French respondents averaged a score of 3.3, which corresponds with the theoretical predictions.

These results revealed that multicultural restaurant teams tend to follow workplace norms which support fairness and equality instead of cultural particularist tendencies. Strong universalist attitudes expressed by Hungarian respondents may point to possible generational changes or work-related influences (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

Neutral vs. Emotional

"I am not comfortable expressing my emotions openly at work."

The Trompenaars' theory identifies the Danish society as neutral (4.3), which contrasts with the expected emotional behavior patterns of Hungary (2.7) and France (2.3).

The survey data supported the theoretical scores to some extent, yet showed several contradictions. The results showed Danish participants expressed their emotions more freely than predicted,

scoring 3.2 and matching the French moderate emotional expression with the same score of 3.2. Hungary scored 2.8 which closely corresponds with the theoretical framework.

The results demonstrated that multicultural environments might enable a normalization of emotional expressions across cultures, leading to emotional responses that reflect the professional environment (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

Specific vs. Diffuse

“I prefer to keep my work life and personal life separate.”

The cultures of Denmark (4.1), France (3.8) and Hungary (3.6) are predicted to maintain distinct boundaries between professional and personal matters, according to the Trompenaars’ model.

Consequently, the survey data revealed a unified preference for separating work from personal life in all three countries, Hungarian respondents scored 4.4, and both Danish and French respondents agreed on a score of 4.0.

These findings matched theoretical predictions, demonstrating that individuals maintain a stable preference for work-life boundaries regardless of cultural differences in the workplace.

Achievement vs. Ascription

“People should be respected at work based on what they have achieved, not their background or title.”

The theory suggested that Denmark’s achievement-oriented culture would score the highest at 4.3, followed by Hungary (2.5) and France (2.0), leaning toward status-based ascription.

The respondents from Denmark ranked achievement the highest (4.6) which validated theoretical predictions. Survey results revealed that French (4.8) and Hungarian (4.8) respondents expressed strong tendencies toward achievement, contrasting cultural expectations.

These results demonstrated a strong transition toward achievement-oriented values among participants from all three countries, possibly due to the merit-based structures commonly found in the hospitality industry (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

Hall’s Context Theory

This section compares the theoretical expectations from Edward T. Hall’s high- and low-context cultures theory with the real-life data from survey responses. High-context communication cultures use subtle messages through indirect approach while low-context cultures prefer straight and direct

communication (Hall, 1976). As with the Hofstede and Trompenaars models, the research questions utilized a five-point Likert scale to gather responses. The four following questions were designed to analyze Hall's theory in practice:

Low-Context (Directness): "At work, I usually say things clearly and directly so there's no confusion."

Low-Context (Open disagreement): "If I disagree with someone at work, I usually say it openly."

High-context (Non-verbal understanding): "I often pick up on people's tone or body language to understand what they really mean."

High-context (Subtle feedback): "When giving feedback, I try to be subtle so I don't make the other person uncomfortable."

Table 4 shows the scores of theoretical predictions and actual responses from respondents.

Table 4. Comparison scores of Hall's Context Theory

Country	Low context (directness) Theory → Real Score	Low context (open disagreement) Theory → Real Score	High context (non-verbal understanding) Theory → Real Score	High context (subtle feedback) Theory → Real Score
Hungary	4.0 → 4.4	4.1 → 3.7	3.9 → 4.3	3.5 → 3.9
Denmark	4.6 → 3.6	4.6 → 3.4	2.5 → 4.6	2.2 → 3.2
France	3.5 → 4.3	3.1 → 3.8	4.1 → 3.3	3.9 → 4.0

Low-Context – Clear and direct communication

"At work, I usually say things clearly and directly so there's no confusion."

Hall's research indicated that Denmark (4.6) would exhibit the strongest preference toward direct communication, followed by Hungary (4.0) and France (3.5) demonstrating slightly more indirect communication approaches.

The survey results from Hungarian respondents showed a score of 4.4, which aligns with the predictions of low-context communication theory. The Danish respondents scored 3.6 in the survey

which showed less direct communication than initially predicted, and the respondents from France averaged a score of 4.3 which demonstrated higher directness than predicted by theory.

These results suggest that multicultural teams tend to adapt communication practices, which leads members from indirect cultures to shift toward a more direct communication style (Meyer, 2014).

Low-context – Open disagreement

“If I disagree with someone at work, I usually say it openly.”

Survey participants were asked to indicate whether they expressed their disagreement with co-workers openly. Research predicted Danish respondents to achieve the highest score (4.6), followed by Hungary (4.1) and France (3.1).

The questionnaire revealed that respondents from Hungary scored the highest at 3.7, which matches their low-context communication tendencies. Participants from Denmark (3.4) demonstrated lower open disagreement scores than the theoretical expectations, contrasting with participants from France with a score of 3.8, displaying a higher score than predicted.

Survey results showed that employees from low-context cultures remained cautious about expressing disagreement at work, maintaining harmony with coworkers, especially in positions that require collaborating in teams (Meyer, 2014).

High-context – Reading non-verbal cues

“I often pick up on people’s tone or body language to understand what they really mean.”

Theory indicated that countries like Hungary (3.9) and France (4.1) would demonstrate higher levels of high-context communication compared to Denmark (2.5).

Hungarian respondents selected an average of 4.3 points, which confirms predictions of a high-context communication style. In contrast, the French respondents scored an average of 3.3, which falls below theoretical expectations. The Danish respondents scored 4.6, contradicting theory by demonstrating a strong reliance on non-verbal communication.

High-context – Subtle feedback

“When giving feedback, I try to be subtle so I don’t make the other person uncomfortable.”

This survey question examined whether respondents preferred to deliver feedback through subtle methods. Research indicated that respondents from France (3.9) and Hungary (3.5) would utilize more subtle communication than respondents from Denmark (2.2).

The survey results supported the predicted expectations partly. Consistent with theoretical expectations, respondents from Hungary (3.9) and France (4.0) chose to deliver their feedback in a subtle manner. The Danish respondents rated this question with a score of 3.2, which suggests higher sensitivity than predicted by theory.

These results might be explained by the multicultural nature of the teams, where giving overly direct feedback could risk misunderstandings or tension, leading even traditionally low-context individuals to adapt (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

Summary of the comparative analysis

The analysis between theoretical predictions and survey findings in real life situations produced complicated results. The analysis of findings produced both clear agreements and numerous mixed or contradictory results. These results seem to confirm that national culture continues to serve as an important element, however workplace dynamics, multicultural team environments, and industry-specific demands often reshape how cultural traits are expressed in practice. It is important to note that the relatively small number of respondents may influence the generalizability of these findings.

The research outcome underscores the value of performing a critical analysis of cultural theory approaches when managing multicultural restaurant staff in Denmark.

5 Discussion

This research examined how cultural diversity among Denmark's restaurant staff affects teamwork and their team dynamics. The study also aimed to provide insights into how restaurants can increase team productivity, create welcoming environments that value diversity, explore both the advantages and challenges of cultural diversity, and present strategies that emphasize strengths while addressing potential weaknesses.

This study focused on answering the following primary research question:

- What is the influence of cultural diversity among restaurant staff in Denmark on team dynamics and teamwork?

Additionally, three sub-questions were developed to explore the topic in greater depth:

- What benefits arise from cultural diversity, and how can these be leveraged to improve team performance and service quality?
- What challenges do diverse teams experience, and what strategies can help resolve them?
- How do restaurant leaders manage multicultural staff dynamics and how can these approaches be improved?

The research objectives were successfully achieved through empirical survey data collection from multicultural restaurant staff. The collected data revealed valuable insights about the advantages and disadvantages linked to cultural diversity in Danish restaurants, and allowed for a comparative analysis between theoretical expectations and practical real-life observations.

The main results revealed that cultural diversity generally impacted team dynamics and teamwork positively. A large number of respondents indicated that their teams became more dynamic and creative, and diversity led to enhanced problem-solving abilities, improved team communication and overall performance. Respondents also noted that cultural diversity made teamwork more interesting and improved adaptability within the team.

However, the research findings also presented significant challenges, such as cultural misunderstandings and communication barriers, as well as occasional disagreements or conflicts due to different communication methods and work expectations. The research revealed open communication, respect for different backgrounds, and proactive leadership as essential strategies to address these challenges.

The analysis between Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Trompenaars Seven Dimensions of Culture, and Hall's High- and Low-Context Cultures against the real-world data revealed inconsistent results. Certain theoretical expectations, particularly regarding long-term orientation and work-life

separation, matched well with the survey findings. On the contrary, areas such as individualism vs. collectivism and communication styles, presented substantial deviations from theoretical predictions, which indicates that the reality of multicultural teamwork in the Danish restaurant industry is shaped by both cultural background and situational factors, such as team structures or job demands.

In conclusion, the study aimed to explore the influence of cultural diversity on team dynamics in the Danish restaurant industry. It identified several benefits and challenges and provided practical recommendations for managers. Additionally, the research offered insights into the applicability of traditional cultural theories to modern workplace environments with multicultural teams, although the extent to which these theories can be directly applied may vary.

5.1 Implications and Development Proposals

The study produced various implications for restaurant managers, policymakers, and the broader hospitality industry. The influence of cultural diversity on team dynamics and teamwork has shown to be positive, but also complex, requiring thoughtful management approaches to fully realize its benefits and minimize potential challenges.

Implications for Restaurant Managers

The research shows that multicultural teams drive positive outcomes by improving creativity, problem-solving abilities, employee engagement and boosting adaptability. Restaurant managers should embrace diversity as an advantageous element, not as a challenge to be managed.

The management teams should promote open communication between team members, while building an inclusive workplace where employees feel valued and respected.

The study discovered communication misunderstandings and occasional tensions between team members. To address these challenges, management should focus on:

- Clear communication norms that provide all team members with clear expectations.
- Cross-cultural training programs that build cultural awareness and communication skills.
- Structured conflict resolution practices adapted to different communication styles and authority dynamics.

Furthermore, managers should recognize that theoretical cultural models are helpful tools, but they need flexible adaptation in real-life situations. The ways employees express culture largely

depends on individual differences, generational shifts, and the operational demands of work (Hofstede, 2010).

Implications for Policymakers

For policymakers, the study revealed a need for training initiatives and inclusion programs to support multicultural workplaces. Policies which promote diverse hiring and intercultural competence development would help sustain and grow diversity benefits in the restaurant industry (Meyer, 2014).

Development proposals

The research results support multiple practical development recommendations:

- Regular cultural awareness workshops focused on cultural understanding within the restaurant working environment.
- Onboarding programs which introduce new staff members to the core values about respect, inclusion and collaboration.
- Manager training in intercultural leadership competencies focused on emotional intelligence and communication styles.
- Internal mentorship programs that pair new staff members with experienced staff members to help them adapt to the workplace better.
- Anonymous feedback systems that allow staff members to communicate their concerns or suggestions.

These strategies can help restaurants leverage the multicultural benefits while improving delivery service and building a more resilient and dynamic workplace.

5.2 Reflection on the Results in Relation to the Theoretical Frameworks

This study compared empirical findings and theoretical predictions from Hofstede, Trompenaars, and Hall's cultural frameworks. While these theories provided a valuable foundation for predictions about cultural behavior, the comparison revealed multiple deviations.

Reflection on Hofstede's Dimensions

The research findings showed partial agreement with Hofstede's cultural framework. The theoretical predictions regarding long-term orientation and work-life separation proved accurate within

Hungary and Denmark, as well as France. Significant inconsistencies appeared in the dimensions of individualism vs. collectivism and masculinity vs. femininity.

The survey respondents across all three countries displayed strong preferences for teamwork even though Denmark is known for its individualistic culture. Similarly, Hungarian respondents coming from a masculine classified culture preferred group harmony above individual accomplishment.

Additionally, the survey data gave conflicting results regarding power distance. The results of Hungarian respondents matched predicted observations, while the Danish and French respondents showed differing responses regarding their position toward hierarchy systems.

Reflection on Trompenaars' Dimensions

The reflection on Trompenaars' dimensions revealed similar patterns of partial alignment and contradiction. As demonstrated in the specific vs. diffuse dimension, all three countries showed a strong preference for keeping work and personal life separate. Expectations related to universalism vs. particularism, and achievement vs. ascription demonstrated inconsistencies.

The survey results showed that Hungarian and French respondents disagreed with theoretical predictions by preferring universal rules and merit-based respect. The Danish respondents demonstrated higher levels of emotional expression than what cultural theories predicted.

Reflection on Hall's Context Theory

The comparison analysis with Hall's context theory also revealed inconsistent outcomes. Survey respondents from Hungary displayed communication tendencies which matched both the expectations of low-context and high-context cultures. However, Danish and French respondents displayed communication styles that did not fit neatly into either category.

For instance, the data from Danish respondents indicated a strong ability to read non-verbal cues, although theory predicted a very direct communication style. Similarly, results from the French respondents showed inconsistent behavior regarding direct communication, although they were expected to be high-context communicators.

Reflection Summary

Overall, the results from the empirical data revealed theoretical models should be applied with caution, although Hofstede, Trompenaars and Hall present beneficial starting points for predicting cultural behaviors. The observed cultural behaviors within multicultural teams showed more flexibility than what fixed theoretical models indicated.

These results suggested that the collaborative nature of restaurant work and organizational culture could override national cultural traits, with context-sensitive communication, adaptive leadership and emotional intelligence as more critical factors (Meyer, 2014).

5.3 Ethical Considerations and Research Validity, Reliability and Limitations

Ethical considerations and the reliability of the research were considered throughout the entire thesis process. The study was designed and conducted in accordance with ethical standards, and attention was given to ensure the anonymity, confidentiality, and voluntary participation of all survey respondents.

All questionnaire participants were clearly informed about the purpose of the research and that their decision to participate was voluntary. The study did not obtain any confidential personal information, ensuring the anonymity of respondents. All participants expressed their consent to participate by completing the survey voluntarily, with a right to withdraw at any point without consequence. All survey questions were formulated to avoid any sensitive or harmful topics, and respectful, neutral language was used. All collected responses followed responsible data protection principles for storing and processing.

The validity of the study was supported by the alignment of the survey questions and the theoretical frameworks they aimed to measure. The survey used Hofstede's, Trompenaars', and Hall's key dimensions to directly ensure the data collection was relevant to the research questions and objectives.

Nevertheless, the research faced certain limitations.

The search for voluntary participants faced difficulties, which resulted in a relatively small number of respondents, somewhat limiting the generalizability of the findings.

It must be noted that not all individuals necessarily follow the traditional cultural patterns associated with their national background. Each cultural group contains various subcultures, generational differences, and individual life experiences that affect behavior and personal expressions (Hofstede, 2001). The research findings should be viewed as cultural tendencies rather than absolute representations of national behaviors.

Furthermore, it is essential to consider the impact of broader contextual factors. The study explored individual cultural backgrounds, but the respondents' experiences might have been influenced by the Danish national culture, workplace culture, or the multicultural team environment.

These surrounding factors may have softened or shaped cultural expressions (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1997).

In addition, although the survey was structured to maximize reliability, the use of self-reported survey data increased the risk of possible biases due to subjective perceptions.

Despite these limitations, the study was conducted with commitment to ethical research, critical reflection, and acknowledgement of the complexity of culture in real-world settings.

5.4 Conclusion and Proposals for Further Research

This study aimed to explore the influence of cultural diversity on team dynamics and teamwork among restaurant staff in Denmark. Questionnaire data analysis together with cultural theories enabled the research to achieve its objectives and identify the main benefits, such as creativity and problem-solving, as well as the main challenges, such as communication barriers and occasional cultural misunderstandings.

Research outcomes demonstrated that workplace settings together with leadership approaches and operational needs directly influence team interactions as much as national cultural backgrounds. The study contributed to the understanding of multicultural staff interactions in the Danish restaurant industry and proved that flexible and culturally aware management that leverages diversity can be a source of strength.

Overall, the study provided insights to restaurant managers, policymakers and researchers who study multicultural teams, and helped bridge the gap between cultural theory and practical workplace reality.

Proposals for further research

Future research could broaden the sample size and diversity by including staff from more Danish regions and from other sectors of hospitality, such as hotels.

To understand multicultural team development patterns as time passes, a longitudinal research approach may be beneficial. Long-term observations of teams could produce better understanding of team adaptation dynamics and changes (Maznevski, 1994).

Bringing quantitative surveys together with qualitative interviews would allow to obtain more detailed insights into a deeper understanding of team members' encounters, emotional responses, and communication approaches (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

Investigating these aspects in future research could help improve both theoretical multicultural workplace understanding and effective management practices for the restaurant sector and beyond.

5.5 Assessment of the Thesis Process and Personal Learning

Reflecting on the thesis process revealed some strengths as well as areas for improvement. Overall, the study successfully met its goals by providing findings about how cultural diversity affects teamwork and team dynamics within Danish restaurants.

The study succeeded in obtaining relevant data from respondents with different cultural backgrounds. Although the number of respondents was limited, the collected data still provided valuable information to conduct quantitative and qualitative analysis. By using the cultural theories in the questionnaire, the study maintained a clear connection between research questions, theoretical frameworks, and empirical findings.

Data analysis revealed that theoretical frameworks showed inconsistent results when compared to real-world data. This demonstrated that culture exists beyond established behavioral patterns, and that individuals differ significantly from national stereotypes (McSweeney, 2002). This realization brought valuable insight into the interpretation of the results.

Several challenges appeared throughout the duration of the project. The search for survey respondents proved difficult, which reduced the study's ability to deliver generalizable findings. Additionally, some survey questions were worded slightly differently from theoretical concepts. Direct comparison between theoretical and practical aspects became more difficult to achieve due to conflicting question wording which required additional interpretation during analysis. If this study were repeated, an expanded sample size combined with qualitative interviews would bring deeper perspectives. Also, additional analysis could benefit from incorporating organizational culture as a supplementary analytical element.

Working on this thesis helped the author develop skills in academic writing, critical thinking, and research planning. This study also deepened the author's knowledge and understanding of multicultural teamwork along with the challenges and opportunities that diversity brings.

Overall, the thesis process provided valuable academic and practical lessons, blending cultural theory with real-life observations to improve the understanding of multicultural workplace teamwork.

References

- Abbas Tashakkori and Teddlie, C. (2010). *Sage handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Albugami, R., Stillwell, A. and Blair, A. (2023). Employee Voice in Saudi Arabia. *uen.press-books.pub*. [online] Available at: <https://uen.pressbooks.pub/2023range/chapter/albugami/>.
- Almaiman, S. and Mclaughlin, P. (2018). Investigating the Role of Organizational Culture in Facilitating Continuous Improvement within Saudi Non-profit Organizations. *Journal of Human Resources Management Research*, 2018, pp.1–16. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.5171/2018.724461>.
- ALMR Star.dk. (2024). *The Danish Agency for Labor Market and Recruitment*. [online] Available at: <https://www.star.dk/en>.
- Alotaibi, H.S. and Campbell, N. (2022). Organizational Culture towards Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030: Evidence from National Water Company. *Businesses*, [online] 2(4), pp.562–577. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.3390/businesses2040035>.
- Alqurashi, S. (2013). Cultural values among managers and subordinates: A Comparative study of Hofstede's cultural dimensions between public and private sectors in Saudi Arabia. *J. King Saud Univ*, [online] 25(2). Available at: https://cba.ksu.edu.sa/sites/cba.ksu.edu.sa/files/imce_images/lbthh_lrb_e_4.pdf.
- Alza, A.C. and Isusi, I. (2018). *Quality of life in the Spanish workplace | European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions*. [online] Europa.eu. Available at: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/resources/article/2005/quality-life-spanish-workplace>.
- Angouri, J. and Miglbauer, M. (2014). 'And then we summarize in English for the others': The lived experience of the multilingual workplace. *Multilingua*, 33(1-2). Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2014-0007](https://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2014-0007).
- Assens-Serra, J., Boada-Cuerva, M., Serrano-Fernández, M.-J., Villajos, E. and Boada-Grau, J. (2021). Spanish Adaptation of the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument: Reflection on the Difficulty in Transferring the ad hoc Factor. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.817232](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.817232).
- Baum, T. (2006). *Human resource management for tourism, hospitality and leisure : an international perspective*. London: Thomson Learning.

- Beebe, S.A., Beebe, S.J. and Redmond, M.V. (2020). *Interpersonal Communication: Relating to Others*. 9th ed. Upper Saddle River: Pearson.
- Brett, J., Behfar, K. and Kern, M. (2006). *Managing Multicultural Teams*. [online] Harvard Business Review. Available at: <https://hbr.org/2006/11/managing-multicultural-teams>.
- Canadas E. (2024). *Cultural Identity and the Workplace*. [online] Available at: <https://hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu/cultural-identity-and-hospitality-workplace>.
- Cherfan, J.J. (2016). *Preferred Leadership Communication Styles Across Cultures*. [online] Scholar Works UARK. Available at: <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/etd/1721> [Accessed 5 Mar. 2025].
- Cox, T. (1993). *Cultural Diversity in Organizations*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Cox, T.H. and Blake, S. (1991). Managing Cultural diversity: Implications for Organizational Competitiveness. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 5(3), pp.45–56.
doi:<https://doi.org/10.5465/ame.1991.4274465>.
- Creswell a, J.W. and Creswell, J.D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5th ed. London: SAGE Publications.
- Creswell b, J.W. and Plano Clark, V.L. (2017). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Denscombe, M. (2021). *The good research guide : research methods for small-scale social research projects*. 7th ed. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Dohen, M., Schwartz, J.-L. and Bailly, G. (2010). Speech and face-to-face communication – An introduction. *Speech Communication*, [online] 52(6), pp.477–480. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1016/j.specom.2010.02.016](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.specom.2010.02.016).
- Domnisoru, S., Ogarca, R. and Dragomir, I. (2017). Organizational culture and internal control. *Audit Financiar*, 15(148), p.628. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.20869/auditf/2017/148/628](https://doi.org/10.20869/auditf/2017/148/628).
- Edwards, J.S.A. (2020). An Overview of the Foodservice Industry. *Handbook of Eating and Drinking*, [online] pp.983–1006. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14504-0_65](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14504-0_65).
- Ely, R.J. and Thomas, D.A. (2001). Cultural Diversity at Work: The Effects of Diversity Perspectives on Work Group Processes and Outcomes. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, [online] 46(2), pp.229–273. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.2307/2667087](https://doi.org/10.2307/2667087).

- Etikan, I., Musa, S.A. and Alkassim, R.S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), pp.1–4. doi:<https://doi.org/10.3898/175864316818855248>.
- Fang, Q., Wen, C. and Xu, H. (2024). Long-term oriented culture, performance pressure and corporate innovation: Evidence from China. *PLOS ONE*, [online] 19(5), p.e0302148. Doi: [HTTPS://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0302148](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0302148).
- Fritz, S., Boren, A. and Egger, V. (2022). *Diamonds in the Rough: A Case Study of Team Development Across Disciplines, Distances, and Institutions*. [online] Clemson OPEN. Available at: <https://open.clemson.edu/joe/vol43/iss5/6> [Accessed 11 Apr. 2025].
- Gamsriegler, A. (2005). *High-Context and Low-Context Communication Styles*. [online] Studiengang Informationsberufe. Available at:<https://www.factline.com/fsDownload/communication%20styles%20across%20cultures.pdf?forumid=326&v=1&id=216808>.
- Gannon, J.M., Roper, A. and Doherty, L. (2015). Strategic Human Resource management: Insights from the International Hotel Industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, [online] 47(47), pp.65–75. Doi: [HTTPS://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2015.03.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2015.03.003).
- Gelfand, M.J., Leslie, L.M., Keller, K. and de Dreu, C. (2012). Conflict cultures in organizations: How leaders shape conflict cultures and their organizational-level consequences. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, [online] 97(6), pp.1131–1147. Doi: [HTTPS://doi.org/10.1037/a0029993](https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029993).
- Gong, W., Zhu, M., Gürel, B. and Xie, T. (2021). The Lineage Theory of the Regional Variation of Individualism/Collectivism in China. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11(1). Doi: [HTTPS://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.596762](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.596762).
- Gong, Y. (2008). Managing cultural diversity in the hospitality industry. UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones. [online] Doi: [HTTPS://doi.org/10.34917/1688179](https://doi.org/10.34917/1688179).
- Guirdham, M. (2017). *Communicating across cultures at work*. 4th ed. London: Palgrave, An Imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited.
- Hall, E.T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Hall, E.T. (1983). *The dance of life: the other dimension of time*. Yarmouth, Me.: Intercultural Press.
- Hall, E.T. (1990). *The hidden dimension*. New York: Anchor Books.

Harris-Gray, A. (2023). *Understanding team dynamics*. [online] discprofiles.com. Available at: <https://www.discprofiles.com/team-dynamics/>.

Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's consequences: International Differences in Work-related Values*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's Consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and Organizations across Nations*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.; London: Sage.

Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing cultures: The Hofstede model in context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, [online] 2(1), pp.1–26. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014](https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1014).

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J. and Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: software of the mind: intercultural cooperation and its importance for survival*. 3rd ed. New York; London: Mcgraw-Hill.

Holck, L 2015, *Embedded Diversity: A Critical Ethnographic Study of the Structural Tensions of Organizing Diversity*. PhD series, no. 16.2015, Copenhagen Business School [Phd], Frederiksberg.

hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu. (2024). *How to manage cultural diversity in hospitality - A quick guide*. [online] Available at: <https://hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu/manage-cultural-diversity-hospitality>.

Internations.org. (2024). *Expatriate Insider 2024: Want to Work Abroad? Discover the Best Cities for Your Career*. [online] Available at: <https://www.internations.org/expat-insider/2024/working-abroad-index-for-cities-40489#copenhagen>.

Jones, G., Chace, B.C. and Wright, J. (2020). Cultural diversity drives innovation: empowering teams for success. *International Journal of Innovation Science*, [online] 12(3), pp.323–343. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijis-04-2020-0042>.

Kamp, A. and Hagedorn-Rasmussen, P. (2004). Diversity Management in a Danish Context: Towards a Multicultural or Segregated Working Life? *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, 25(4), pp.525–554. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1177/0143831x04047158](https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831x04047158).

Kampmann, N. (2024). *International employees dominate restaurants and hotels in Copenhagen - The Copenhagen Post*. [online] The Copenhagen Post. Available at: <https://cphpost.dk/2024-10-02/news/business/international-employees-dominate-restaurants-and-hotels-in-copenhagen/>.

Keizer-Remmers, A., Ivanova, V. and Brandsma-Dieters, A. (2021). To act or not to act: Cultural hesitation in the multicultural hospitality workplace. *Research in Hospitality Management*, 11(3), pp.215–223. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1080/22243534.2021.2006915](https://doi.org/10.1080/22243534.2021.2006915).

- Kelly, M. (2020). *Europe's most inclusive companies — as ranked by employees*. [online] [www.ft.com](https://www.ft.com/content/cb8978ea-f901-4842-9957-cca0cb3fe7cc). Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/cb8978ea-f901-4842-9957-cca0cb3fe7cc>.
- Kirkman, B. and Shapiro, D. (2005). The Impact of Cultural Value Diversity on Multicultural Team Performance. *Advances in International Management*, 18, pp.33–67. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1016/s0747-7929\(05\)18002-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0747-7929(05)18002-0).
- Knudsen, H. (2006). *Workplace representation in Denmark -structure and role*. [online] Available at: https://vbn.aau.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/57364607/HK_HIVA-EZA_2006_1_.pdf [Accessed 9 Mar. 2025].
- Kooyers, J. (2015). The United States and Spain: A Comparison of Cultural Values and Behaviors and Their Implications for the Multi-Cultural Workplace. *Honors Projects*. [online] Available at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/honorsprojects/399>.
- Langaas, M. and Mujtaba, B.G. (2023). Communication across Cultures in the Workplace: Swimming in Scandinavian Waters. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, [online] 11(4), pp.174–192. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2023.114014](https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2023.114014).
- Latif, Z.A. (2020). The effect of collectivism diversity towards multicultural teamwork performance among restaurant employees. *Journal of Vocational Education Studies*, 2(2), p.91. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.12928/joves.v2i2.1180](https://doi.org/10.12928/joves.v2i2.1180).
- Laursen, R., Sedat Gümüş and Allan David Walker (2024). Navigating egalitarian culture and accountability pressures: shared instructional leadership practices of Danish school leaders. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1108/jpcc-01-2024-0014](https://doi.org/10.1108/jpcc-01-2024-0014).
- Lewis, R.D. (2018). *When cultures collide: leading across cultures*. London; Boston Nicholas Brealey Publishing.
- Lin, C. (2019). Understanding Cultural Diversity and Diverse Identities. *Encyclopedia of the UN Sustainable Development Goals*, 1(1), pp.1–10. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69902-8_37-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-69902-8_37-1).
- Livermore, D.A. (2015). *Leading with cultural intelligence: the new secret to success*. New York: Amacom.
- Locke, E.A. and Latham, G.P. (1990). A theory of goal setting and task performance. *The Academy of Management Review*, [online] 16(2), p.480. Doi: [HTTP://dx.doi.org/10.2307/258875](https://dx.doi.org/10.2307/258875).

Lockett, S., Butler, D. and Wui, P. (2023). The Lack of Diversity and Inclusion in Management in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry: Focused on the Interview with Executives. *International Journal of Business & Management Studies*, 04(07), pp.1–7. Doi:

[HTTPs://doi.org/10.56734/ijbms.v4n7a1](https://doi.org/10.56734/ijbms.v4n7a1).

Lønsmann, D. (2014). Linguistic diversity in the international workplace: Language ideologies and processes of exclusion. *Multilingua*, 33(1-2). Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2014-0005](https://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2014-0005).

Maher, R. (2018). *The Impact of Danish National Culture on Strategy Formulation Process of an NGO*. [online] Available at: https://research-api.cbs.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/59754802/584836_Full_exam.pdf.

Manusov, V. and Patterson, M.L. (2006). *The SAGE Handbook of Nonverbal Communication*. SAGE Publications.

Martin, G. (2014). The Effects of Cultural Diversity in the Workplace. *Journal of Diversity Management (JDM)*, 9(2), pp.89–92. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.19030/jdm.v9i2.8974](https://doi.org/10.19030/jdm.v9i2.8974).

Martins, L.L., Schilpzand, M.C., Kirkman, B.L., Ivanaj, S. and Ivanaj, V. (2012). A Contingency View of the Effects of Cognitive Diversity on Team Performance. *Small Group Research*, 44(2), pp.96–126. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1177/1046496412466921](https://doi.org/10.1177/1046496412466921).

Mattila, A.S. (1999). The Role of Culture in the Service Evaluation Process. *Journal of Service Research*, 1(3), pp.250–261. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1177/109467059913006](https://doi.org/10.1177/109467059913006).

Maznevski, M.L. (1994). Understanding Our Differences: Performance in Decision-Making Groups with Diverse Members. *Human Relations*, 47(5), pp.531–552. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1177/001872679404700504](https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679404700504).

McSweeney, B. (2002). Hofstede's Model of National Cultural Differences and their Consequences: A Triumph of Faith - a Failure of Analysis. *Human Relations*, 55(1), pp.89–118. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726702551004>.

Meyer, E. (2014). *The Culture Map: Breaking Through the Invisible Boundaries of Global Business*. 1st ed. New York: Publicaffairs.

Milliken, F.J. and Martins, L.L. (1996). Searching for Common Threads: Understanding the Multiple Effects of Diversity in Organizational Groups. *Academy of Management Review*, 21(2), pp.402–433. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1996.9605060217](https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1996.9605060217).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2023). *Work-life balance*. [online] Denmark.dk. Available at: <https://denmark.dk/society-and-business/work-life-balance>.

Morrison, E.W. (2014). Employee Voice and Silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, [online] 1(1), pp.173–197. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091328](https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091328).

Nielsen, H.O. and Larsen, S.H. (2015). *New forms of employment ICT-based mobile work, Denmark*. [online] Available at: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/system/files/2020-11/wpef15028.pdf> [Accessed 5 Mar. 2025].

Omrane, A. and Khan, M.A. (2024). A comparative analysis of six national cultures under the umbrella of Hofstede's model. *Environment and Social Psychology*, [online] 9(3). Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.54517/esp.v9i3.1618](https://doi.org/10.54517/esp.v9i3.1618).

Ozgen, C., Peters, C., Niebuhr, A., Nijkamp, P. and Poot, J. (2014). Does Cultural Diversity of Migrant Employees Affect Innovation? *International Migration Review*, [online] 48(1_suppl), pp.377–416. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1111/imre.12138](https://doi.org/10.1111/imre.12138).

Qin, J., Muenjohn, N. and Chhetri, P. (2013). A Review of Diversity Conceptualizations. *Human Resource Development Review*, 13(2), pp.133–157. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1177/1534484313492329](https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484313492329).

Reisinger, Y. (2009). *International tourism: cultures and behavior*. London; New York: Routledge.

Ruchika Tulshyan (2022). *Inclusion on purpose: an intersectional approach to creating a culture of belonging at work*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Mit Press.

Salas, E., Cooke, N.J. and Rosen, M.A. (2008). On Teams, Teamwork, and Team Performance: Discoveries and Developments. *Human Factors: The Journal of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society*, [online] 50(3), pp.540–547. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1518/001872008x288457](https://doi.org/10.1518/001872008x288457).

Samovar, L.A., Porter, R.E., McDaniel, E.R. and Roy, C.S. (2017). *Communication between cultures*. 9th ed. Boston, Mass.: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning.

Sattorovich, J.U. (2020). Intercultural difference parameters: Hofstede and Trompenaars theories. *European Journal of Research and Reflection in Educational Sciences*, [online] 8(11). Available at: <https://www.idpublications.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Full-Paper-intercultural-difference-parameters-hofstede-and-trompenaars-theories.pdf>.

Selmer, J. and Luring, J. (2013). Globalizing Denmark. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 43(1), pp.9–25. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.2753/imo0020-8825430101](https://doi.org/10.2753/imo0020-8825430101).

Shen, H., Zhang, M., Liu, R. and Hou, F. (2020). Economic Policy Uncertainty and Corporate Innovation: Evidence from China. *Asian Economics Letters*, 1(1). Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.46557/001c.17192](https://doi.org/10.46557/001c.17192).

Smith, P.B., Dugan, S. and Trompenaars, F. (1996). National culture and the values of organizational employees. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, [online] 27, pp.231–264. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233894827_National_culture_and_the_values_of_organizational_employees.

Stahl, G.K. and Maznevski, M.L. (2021). Unraveling the effects of cultural diversity in teams: A retrospective of research on multicultural work groups and an agenda for future research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, [online] 52(1), pp.4–22. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-020-00389-9](https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-020-00389-9).

Stahl, G.K., Maznevski, M.L., Voigt, A. and Jonsen, K. (2010). Unraveling the Effects of Cultural Diversity in teams: a meta-analysis of Research on Multicultural Work Groups. *Journal of International Business Studies*, [online] 41(4), pp.690–709. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/jibs.2009.85>.

Statista. (2025). *Restaurant industry in Denmark | Statista*. [online] Available at: <https://www.statista.com/study/61508/restaurant-industry-in-denmark/> [Accessed 25 Feb. 2025].

Symons, M. (2013). The rise of the restaurant and the fate of hospitality. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 25(2), pp.247–263. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1108/09596111311301621](https://doi.org/10.1108/09596111311301621).

Taras, V., Kirkman, B.L. and Steel, P. (2010). Examining the Impact of Culture's consequences: a three-decade, multilevel, meta-analytic Review of Hofstede's Cultural Value dimensions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 95(3), pp.405–439.

Thomas, D.C. and Inkson, K. (2017). *Cultural intelligence: surviving and thriving in the global village*. Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Ting-Toomey, S. (1999). *Communicating Across Cultures, First Edition*. Guilford Press.

Ting-Toomey, S. and Dorjee, T. (2018). *Communicating across cultures*. 2nd ed. Guilford Publications.

- Trompenaars, A. and Hampden-Turner, C. (1997). *Riding the waves of culture: understanding diversity in global business*. [online] London; Boston: Nicholas Brealey Publishing. Available at: https://ocan.yasar.edu.tr/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Riding-the-waves_Part-1.pdf.
- Tuckman, B.W. and Jensen, M.A.C. (1977). Stages of small-group Development Revisited. *Group & Organization Studies*, [online] 2(4), pp.419–427. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1177/105960117700200404](https://doi.org/10.1177/105960117700200404).
- Wallensteen, P. (2019). *Understanding Conflict Resolution*. Sage.
- Wang, J., Cheng, G.H. -L., Chen, T. and Leung, K. (2019). Team creativity/innovation in culturally diverse teams: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 40(6), pp.693–708.
- Watzlawick, P., Janet Beavin Bavelas, Jackson, D.D. and Norton, W.W. (1967). *Pragmatics of human communication: a study of interactional patterns, pathologies, and paradoxes*. New York; London: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Wei, X., Huang, S., Stodolska, M. and Yu, Y. (2015). National Recreation and Park Association • 556 • *Journal of Leisure Research Copyright*, [online] 47(5), pp.556–576. Available at: <https://www.nrpa.org/globalassets/journals/jlr/2015/volume-47/jlr-volume-47-number-5-pp-556-576.pdf>? [Accessed 5 Mar. 2025].
- Xie, J.L., Roy, J.-P. and Chen, Z. (2006). Cultural and individual differences in self-rating behavior: an extension and refinement of the cultural relativity hypothesis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 27(3), pp.341–364. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.1002/job.375](https://doi.org/10.1002/job.375).
- Xie, Z. (2024). The Influence of Cultural Backgrounds on Team Dynamics and Decision Making in Multicultural Environments. *Transactions on Economics Business and Management Research*, [online] 10, pp.139–145. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.62051/1nng6893](https://doi.org/10.62051/1nng6893).
- Ye, Z. (2024). Language Barriers in Intercultural Communication and Their Translation Strategies. *Language Barriers in Intercultural Communication and Their Translation Strategies*, 6(1), pp. p178–p178. Doi: [HTTPs://doi.org/10.22158/mmse.v6n1p178](https://doi.org/10.22158/mmse.v6n1p178).

Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Title: Exploring Multicultural Staff Dynamics in the Restaurant Industry of Denmark

Section 1: Background information

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your nationality?
4. In which country were you raised?
5. What languages do you speak fluently?
6. Have you worked in restaurants outside Denmark?
7. If yes, where?
8. What role do/did you have?
9. How many years have you worked in the restaurant industry in Denmark?
10. What was your team size?
11. In which city or cities in Denmark have you worked in the restaurant industry?
12. Did you notice any differences in team dynamics or cultural experiences between the cities you worked in?

Section 2: Team Dynamics and Culture

(Rate on a scale of 1-5) 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

13. My team worked well together despite cultural differences
14. Cultural diversity made teamwork more interesting or dynamic
15. I adjusted how I communicate when working with colleagues from other cultures (e.g., changing my tone, using different gestures, or choosing simpler language)
16. I felt included and respected by coworkers from different backgrounds
17. Cultural misunderstandings sometimes caused tension or conflict
18. Diverse cultural perspectives helped our team solve problems more creatively
19. We talked openly about cultural differences in my team
20. Team leaders or managers encouraged collaboration between culturally diverse staff
21. I felt comfortable sharing my own cultural background at work
22. Cultural differences had a positive impact on my team's overall performance

Section 3: Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

- 23. I feel comfortable voicing my opinion to managers or supervisors if I disagree with them
- 24. I prefer working in a team rather than working alone
- 25. I feel comfortable handling unexpected situations at work
- 26. I value harmony and cooperation over personal success
- 27. I tend to prioritize immediate rewards or results over long-term goals and outcomes
- 28. Optional - Do you have any comments about how your cultural background influenced your role or teamwork?

Section 4: Trompenaars Cultural Dimensions and Hall's Cultural Factors

- 29. At work, I usually say things clearly and directly so there's no confusion
- 30. I often pick up on people's tone or body language to understand what they really mean
- 31. If I disagree with someone at work, I usually say it openly
- 32. When giving feedback, I try to be subtle so I don't make the other person uncomfortable
- 33. I believe rules should apply to everyone equally, no matter the situation
- 34. I am comfortable expressing my emotions openly at work
- 35. I prefer to keep my work life and personal life separate
- 36. People should be respected at work based on what they have achieved, not their background or title

Section 5: Benefits of multicultural teams

- 37. What are the biggest benefits you experienced in a multicultural team? (Select all that apply):
 - Learning new ways of thinking or working
 - Gaining insight into different cultures
 - Improving communication and language skills
 - More creativity and new ideas
 - Better service for international customers
 - A more interesting and dynamic work environment
 - Developing greater tolerance and openness
 - Building friendships with people from other cultures
 - None of the above
 - Other (Please specify)

Section 6: Challenges of multicultural teams

- 38. What challenges have you experienced in culturally diverse teams? (Select all that apply):
 - Misunderstandings due to cultural differences

- Language barriers
- Different work styles or expectations
- Difficulty giving or receiving feedback
- Unequal treatment or favoritism
- Feeling excluded or misunderstood
- Conflicts related to values or norms
- Slower teamwork or decision-making
- I have not experienced any challenges
- Other (please specify)

Section 7: Conflict in multicultural teams

39. Which of the following apply to your experience with conflict in multicultural teams? (Select all that apply):

- I've seen or experienced conflict related to cultural misunderstandings
- Cultural conflicts were handled fairly and respectfully
- I felt uncomfortable addressing cultural differences directly
- We avoided talking about cultural conflict
- Cultural conflict led to better understanding afterward
- I haven't experienced conflict related to culture
- Other (Please specify)

Section 8: Management in multicultural teams

40. Which of the following best describes how your manager fostered a culturally inclusive team environment? (Select all that apply):

- Encouraging team members to share their cultural backgrounds and experiences
- Making an effort to ensure all team members feel heard and valued
- Resolving conflicts arising from cultural misunderstandings in a fair manner
- Promoting teamwork and collaboration through cultural understanding
- I did not feel included by my manager
- None of the above
- Other (please specify)

41. Which of the following actions did your manager take to accommodate cultural differences in the team? (Select all that apply):

- Adjusting their leadership style to suit different cultural backgrounds
- Encouraging open communication about cultural differences
- Providing training or workshops on cultural awareness
- Recognizing and celebrating cultural holidays or traditions

Providing support for language barriers

None of the above

Other (please specify)

42. How did you feel about your manager's approach to handling cultural diversity in your team? (Select all that apply):

My manager was approachable when discussing cultural differences

My manager has helped me understand my colleagues' cultural backgrounds better

I felt that my manager addressed cultural misunderstandings effectively

I have had to address cultural misunderstandings on my own, without managerial support

I have not noticed any efforts from my manager to manage cultural diversity

Other (please specify)

43. Optional - Do you have any additional comments or experiences you'd like to share about working in a multicultural team in the Danish restaurant industry?