

Prevention of Cultural Issues in International Business

Abstract

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<p>Globalization and the changing business environment frequently give rise to cultural conflicts within the workplace, leading to harassment and misunderstandings among the employees. As a result, personnel may quit the job, resulting in a loss of talent and the advantages of diverse teams. The purpose of the study is to analyze current international and national legal frameworks that regulate cultural disputes and identify weaknesses and differences in their implementation. The study aims to create a new cultural resolution framework to prevent conflicts among employees in the organizations.</p> <p>The thesis is based on the deductive method using primary and secondary data. The theoretical part is based on secondary data where corporation law, international teams, cultural issues, and the legal resolution models were explained. The empirical part is based on the questionnaire which was collected among Finnish and Spanish businesspeople and employees in small, medium, and large organizations.</p> <p>With the help of the descriptive analysis, the quantitative data from the survey was analyzed in Excel and presented in the study. The findings indicate that cultural conflicts can be effectively managed through cultural resolution models and relevant legislation. A novel model was developed throughout the research. The framework included appropriate team distribution and psychological assessments to proactively address potential issues. The new model was built according to the already existing ones.</p>		
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Legal Frameworks, Cultural Issues, Workplace Diversity, Workplace Discrimination		

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1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Throughout globalization and the fast-changing business environment, employees experience cultural conflicts within the workplace, meeting issues such as harassment, bullying, and minor misunderstandings. Businesses act only when such issues negatively impact personnel relationships and overall performance. To resolve these disagreements, organizations should have clear corporation laws and promote cultural awareness among foreign employees. However, with such implementations, the underlying reality of the issues in the workplace remains the same, and the maintenance of a friendly environment is difficult and nearly impossible. Programs promoting cultural integration can potentially build a great team, but not in the long run. Despite the efforts to improve the working atmosphere, employees may still choose to resign. As a result, companies are losing talented staff and benefits from multicultural teams. Consequently, for medium-sized and large organizations, cultural diversity has become unmanageable, the process of globalization has become inefficient for most companies, and in conclusion, existing models that were efficient before the globalization process cannot prevent cultural tension and legal frameworks. (Dumay & Marini 2012, 14.)

1.2 Thesis Objectives, Research Questions, and Limitations

Thesis objectives

The first objective is to analyze current international and national legal frameworks that regulate cultural disputes, identifying weaknesses and differences in their implementation. The research assesses the efficiency of the legal frameworks in promoting harmonious cross-cultural interactions within multicultural organizations by using recent case studies from two countries: Finland and Spain.

The second objective is to investigate whether cultural and legal models are used in large, medium-sized, and small organizations, how businesses deal with issues in the workplace, and how this affects performance results. Through the empirical research and the questionnaire, the thesis will evaluate whether appropriately managed cultural diversity improves organizational effectiveness or causes conflict.

The final objective of this research is to create a cultural resolution framework for conflict prevention in organizations. This framework will provide a comprehensive solution for large and medium-sized organizations with multicultural teams. The model will assist in basic

data analysis and human decision-making, transforming cultural differences into an asset for learning and improving organizational effectiveness.

Research questions

The selected research question was how to prevent cultural legal issues in the workplace in international business. The research aims to understand how to resolve cultural issues and legally prevent them in intercultural teams. The purpose is to analyze legal and cultural issues and create a model suitable for huge and medium-sized businesses with global teams to prevent misunderstandings and improve organizational performance. The newly created framework helps to analyze data and corporate documentation and supports human decision-making. To achieve the answer to the main question, the following sub-questions were used:

- What are the primary legal cultural structures regulating disputes in global business contexts?
- What are the legal and ethical consequences of implementing a cultural legal resolution model in an international business context?
- Which models are used to resolve legal cultural issues?

Limitations:

The term limitations refers to those characteristics of design or methodology that influenced the interpretation of the findings from the research. Study limitations are the constraints placed on the ability to generalize from the results, to describe further applications to practice, and/or related to the value of findings that are the result of how the researcher initially chose to design the study, or the method used to establish internal and external validity or the result of unanticipated challenges that emerged during the study. (James & Murnan 2004, 66-67.)

The study has the potential limitations as follows: Firstly, the research has empirical limitations. Since a university student cannot access all data, the validity and reliability may be missed. The study analyses only a small amount of data available to make a prediction but does not give a comprehensive view of the issue. Moreover, the scope covers only the resolution of the existing issues but not their occurrence and nature. Secondly, there are methodology limitations. The sample size is small, and the results do not reflect the entire population's views on the topic, making the research results less accurate since access to the information is limited.

Thirdly, there are analytical limitations. Limits in accuracy and the significance of the finding. The research represents a particular model according to the data; it can influence how the data is interpreted and create biased decisions. (James & Murnan 2004, 70.)

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The thesis focuses on Abraham Maslow (1943, 1970), Stephen Covey (1989), Brian Hall (1994), Lawrence Kohlberg (1958, 1981), and Kieran Egan's Intercultural Sensitivity (1997) cultural and legal resolution frameworks and their impact on the workplace environment. Based on the existing models, a newly created framework is proposed.

A theoretical framework limits the scope of relevant data by focusing on certain variables and defining the viewpoint that the researcher will use in the analysis and interpretation of the data to be gathered. It further improves the understanding of concepts and variables according to given definitions and generates new knowledge by either validating or challenging theoretical assumptions. A theoretical framework consists of concepts, including their definitions and references to relevant academic literature and existing theories that guide the research. The theoretical framework must demonstrate an understanding of theories and concepts relevant to the research paper's subject. (USC Libraries 2024.)

The main definitions of the terminology used in the study are provided below: Cultural conflict in the workplace involves a scenario in which individuals or groups from diverse cultural backgrounds face disagreements coming from varying values, beliefs, practices, or social norms. This occurrence frequently happens when cultures come together, especially in diverse environments, resulting in miscommunications, conflicts, and, at times, open hostility. (Oxford review 2024.)

The cultural and legal resolution model is an effective framework, typically based on principles of legal culture, that offers an organized method for addressing and settling disputes by considering the cultural and legal contexts that influence behaviors, values, and mindsets in a workplace. (Friedman 1975, 5.)

Established cultural models: The established cultural resolution models such as Abraham Maslow's (1943, 1970), Stephen Covey's (1989), Brian Hall's (1994), Lawrence Kohlberg's (1958, 1981), and Kieran Egan's Intercultural Sensitivity (1997) are focused on preventing workplace issues among the employees. (Moodian 2009, 40.)

Overview of the frameworks: Abraham Maslow's (1943, 1970) frameworks organize the structure and policies that foster employee satisfaction across all levels of psychological

satisfaction and the feeling of inclusiveness, creating a positive work atmosphere and reducing conflicts. Stephen Covey's (1989) framework is utilized in leadership training and conflict resolution, assisting employees in adopting a constructive approach to situations and concentrating on a common objective of the organization. Brian Hall's (1994) model enhances cultural awareness and reduces the chances of intercultural disputes by promoting an inclusive approach to communication. Lawrence Kohlberg's (1958, 1981) framework offers insights into the varying levels of moral reasoning among employees, facilitating customized training and legal policies that can prevent misconduct and foster a respectful, fair work environment. Kieran Egan's model of Intercultural Sensitivity (1997) promotes intercultural competence, enabling organizations to establish common goals and objectives. (Moodian 2009, 42.)

1.4 Research Methodology and Data Collection

Research Design and Approach

Descriptive research, with no control over variables, can be explained as a statement of current events. Additionally, analytical research aims to determine why something is the way it is or how it came to be, while descriptive studies are often defined as simply attempting to identify, describe, or classify what it is. The goal of descriptive research is to investigate the current issues or problems by collecting data that allows them to describe the situation more thoroughly than was possible without using this method. (Manjunatha 2019, 863.)

The thesis is based on the deductive method. Deductive reasoning moves from general concepts to specific ones (theory, observation, confirmation). Arguments based on laws, regulations, and established principles are usually used for deductive reasoning. (Burney & Saleem 2008, 1.) Research questions and survey subjects have been developed based on existing models and theories, which are subsequently tested using the data obtained from the survey.

Research Methodology

Combining and integrating qualitative and quantitative research methodologies into one study is known as mixed methods research. It involves collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data to address the research questions and gain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon. The fundamental idea behind mixed methods research is to maximize each data type's benefits while neutralizing its disadvantages. The integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches allows researchers to compare the results of one methodology

with those of the other, expand their evidence, and validate their conclusions. (Haq 2014, 20.)

Quantitative analysis is the process of gathering and examination of numerical information to address scientific research questions. The quantitative approach is applied to summarize, average, identify patterns, make forecasts, test causal relationships, and generalize findings to broader populations. It enables the measurement of effect sizes, assesses the strength of correlations, prioritizes rankings, and evaluates the suitability of the evidence regarding the effectiveness. (Rana et al. 2021, 2.)

The qualitative analysis investigates non-numerical information to uncover patterns, themes, and insights. It is commonly utilized in social sciences, education, and healthcare areas to understand complex human behaviors, experiences, and interactions. (Atlas.ti 2024.)

Mixed methods integrate quantitative and qualitative research approaches to provide a thorough understanding of the research issue, merging statistical analysis and numerical data with detailed perspectives on participants' experiences. This strategy is beneficial when a single method is weak to address the complexities of the research questions. The mixed method is used for a complete understanding of the two frameworks: the legal aspect of issue resolution and the cultural aspect (Creswell & Clark 2017, 4.)

Data collection methods

In the study, empirical data is utilized. Primary data indicates the original data collected directly by the researcher, while secondary data refers to information gathered by another individual previously. Primary data sources include surveys, observations, questionnaires, focus groups, case studies, and interviews, while secondary data sources consist of governmental publications, websites, books, journals, articles, and internal records. In the study, the theoretical part is established with the help of the literature, while the empirical data is gathered from a questionnaire focusing on the cultural resolution models, framework use, and familiarity. (Oluwatosin 2023, 1-2.)

1.5 Thesis Structure

After the introduction of the research background, thesis objectives, research questions and limitations, theoretical framework, research methodology, and data collection, the thesis progresses to the theory. The theory consists of two chapters: The second chapter of the thesis defines corporation law and international teams, addressing the main challenges of foreign employees and explaining the legal frameworks in international business. The study

defines the business and occupational safety laws in two countries: Spain and Finland. In the third chapter, the cultural issues and legal resolution models are introduced and summarized, starting from the definition of cultural issues, processing to the layers of diversity, and case studies from Spain and Finland. The cultural resolution models such as Abraham Maslow (1943, 1970), Stephen Covey (1989), Brian Hall (1994), Lawrence Kohlberg (1958, 1981), and Kieran Egan's Inter-Cultural Sensitivity (1997) are explained. After the theoretical chapters, the fourth chapter of the thesis presents the empirical research and data analysis using the descriptive method for the quantitative data. The data was collected with the questionnaire and then analyzed in Excel and represented in the tables to visualize results. The fifth chapter summarizes the findings by answering the research questions. Furthermore, it presents the newly created model and assesses the study's validity and reliability, proposing directions for future research on the topic.

2 The Corporation Law and International Teams

2.1 Definition of the Corporate Law

Corporate law is a body of laws, rules, and regulations that govern the formation and operation of corporations. This field covers a wide range of subjects, from setting up and structuring companies to the legal requirements for running a business. It applies to businesses of all sizes and types, including start-ups formed for tax advantages and large companies formed through mergers with other businesses. Moreover, corporate law, also known as company law, aims to help ensure that businesses follow legal standards and guarantee fairness, transparency, and accountability. In other words, it plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity and stability of businesses within the economy. (Armour et al. 2009.)

Dealing with various legal and business matters is part of the general corporate practice. Numerous corporate attorneys are employed at law offices, especially at large or medium-sized offices, where they advise clients and manage various transactions such as negotiation, drafting, and reviewing contracts and other agreements. (University Law School 2024.)

Company law practice covers various organizational issues such as forming companies, directors and shareholders' rights, articles of association, board meetings, secretarial tasks, and the listing or delisting of businesses. (University Law School 2024.)

Regulations help to coordinate participants in corporate activities and minimize instances of opportunistic behavior among various stakeholders. A significant part of corporate law can be considered as dealing with three major sources of opportunism: conflicts between management and shareholders, arguments among shareholders, and disagreements between shareholders and other stakeholders such as creditors and employees. (Armour et al. 2009.)

Corporate law can come in the form of setting down basic voting regulations and limiting how managers interact with the company and shareholders. The company decides on the type of corporate law it will follow, including whether it will focus on making a profit, operate as a non-profit, or strike a balance in between. The company also decides whether to allow public investment or remain closely held. They determine the organization of the company. (Estabrook & Fischel 1991, 8.)

The business law establishes fair working conditions for all employees and regulates general organizational standards. Considering commercial law is crucial, particularly as the

world becomes more interconnected. A combination of legislation and policy forms corporate law. Legal issues include laws, regulations, and court rulings that hold directors and officers accountable to shareholders. The rights and concerns of other groups, as well as societal and economic norms and frameworks, are all included in the policy issues, as are the rights, obligations, and solutions accessible to shareholders. The section starts by discussing the objectives of corporations. Following that, it examines the origins, frameworks, and roles of corporate legislation. After that, the corporate lawyers examine corporate governance. Later, they evaluate the theories, rights, and responsibilities of shareholders as well as other groups. Following that, they examine insider transactions and oversight. Finally, they assess corporate insolvency and liquidation. (Estabrook & Fischel 1991, 10.)

2.2 Definition of the International Teams

Multinational teams of all shapes and sizes have been called the 'heart' of globalization (Davison et al. 1996.) Global teams are now a fundamental element in structuring work that spans across different geographical locations. They provide an option to classic hierarchy-based structures and are the basis of what is now referred to as the global networked organization. Global teams bring together individuals who are physically far apart and collaborate on specialized assignments or objectives, overcoming borders related to nationality, culture, organization, language, and location. Although international teams show potential for coordinating global tasks, they face challenges due to their complex nature. (Oxford 2020.)

Multinational organizations are increasingly using global teams that have diverse nationalities, cultures, and languages and work remotely across the world. (Zander et al. 2012.) On the one hand, the global teams can work together in the same office and location, but only if the foreign worker can move to the country where the organization's headquarters are located and can attend the meetings and collaborate with other employees who are working in the same office. On the other hand, a worldwide team is formed by staff members who work from various countries and time zones without a shared office, attending meetings and collaborating with employees from the same office online. Communicating and working online with international teams means that the virtual space serves as their shared meeting place, and the usage of the technologies is necessary. (Adobe 2024.)

Global teams are essential for large and medium-sized multinational corporations that are operating globally. International teams consist of individuals from varied national or cultural backgrounds, usually collaborating in different locations and having to communicate across borders, cultures, and time zones. (Kotthof & Spencer-Oatey, 2020, 5.)

Employees of various races and ethnicities must collaborate in a local business, a global company, or an international group. While a lot of teams are created to combine resources and improve operations, the varied cultural backgrounds of team members could result in a slower learning curve for developing effective operations compared to groups with similar cultural backgrounds. Global teams have different perspectives, but the main idea is that team members from different cultures work together to have the same goals in the organization and consist of people from varied national, linguistic, and professional backgrounds, which allows for a broad exchange of ideas that promotes innovative problem-solving and flexibility. Working together across borders provides diverse expertise and enhances comprehension of global markets, enabling businesses to adapt quickly to changing economies and businesses. (Bouncken et al. 2015.)

2.3 The Main Challenges of The Global Teams

The Individuals shown in the two nations represent various backgrounds and collaborate in both conventional and informal teams to achieve organizational goals in multicultural environments. Global teams reflect the changes, opportunities, and challenges that surround cooperation across diverse sectors of the community, including non-profit and not-for-profit entities, as well as relief and development situations. Some of the most difficult aspects of managing multicultural groups include their interpersonal interactions, how they communicate, and cultural differences. The challenge of effectively leading multicultural teams is to detect the underlying cultural causes of conflict and intervene in ways that both bring the team back on track and empower its members to deal with future issues themselves. (Manzoni 2017.)

Among these issues is discovering new ways to organize work. The international business environment has experienced changes, including shifts in the global landscape with the growth of emerging markets, as well as shifts in how firms interact with one another, with an increase in partnerships, licensing, and contracting, and the growth of smaller, technology-oriented, flexible international firms alongside large multinationals. (Manzoni 2017.)

Communication and trust issues are frequently centered around cultural disparities, geographic separation, and differences in time zones. Studies show that a significant challenge in multinational teams is the disconnect in timing, strategic, and operational aspects when units are not in sync with their actions and strategies. Temporal separation is a gap in time between an action and feedback, whereas strategic splitting entails conflicting objectives between headquarters and regional offices. Operational separation

occurs when collaborative practices are not in harmony with how work is organized. (Friesl & Silberzahn 2012, 2.)

Obstacles like language barriers, time zones, and cultural misunderstandings can impact the effectiveness of global teams in organizations. International business teams also encounter challenges related to geography, language, and culture. The main concerns include difficulties in building trust among team members, communication challenges, and cultural barriers related to power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, and long-term versus short-term perspectives. (Stan et al. 2010, 473-474.) In Table one, the differences in context between traditional and global teams can be seen; this table reflects the traditional teams working in a single context, opposite to global teams working across multiple contexts.

Traditional Teams Work in a Single Context	Global Teams Work across Multiple Context
Common physical location and work environment	Multiple physical locations and work environments
Common national culture in a single geography	Multiple national cultures in multiple geographies
Common economic and political conditions	Multiple and dissimilar economic and political conditions
Native language speakers	Native and non-native language speakers
Professional expertise and communication skills	Cross-cultural competence and adaptability in addition to professional expertise, communication skills
Task is generally contained within organizational and national boundaries	Task generally involves crossing organizational and national boundaries
Opportunity for frequent, face-to-face, and informal interactions and information sharing	Opportunities for informal interaction are infrequent and interaction is generally structured and mediated by technology

Work within a single time zone	Often work across multiple time zones
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Table 1. Differences in Context Between Traditional and Global Teams (adapted Stan et al. 2010, 474.)

2.4 Business Law

Gaining knowledge of how the law can affect business operations will help today's managers recognize legal issues beforehand. In Business Laws, a worker in a commerce-oriented society assumes a variety of positions, including consumers, producers, employers, employees, principals, agents, and so on, each with their own set of rights, obligations, and responsibilities. The law has an impact on every aspect of the society's corporate culture. Therefore, it is vital to understand the meaning of Business Law. Business legislation addresses the legal elements of commercial relationships between individuals and organizations. (Choudhary 2013.)

International law may be defined as a body of law formed because of international customs, treaties, and organizations that govern relations among or between nations. International Customs are customs that evolved over the centuries. Treaties and International Agreements are agreements between or among nations. International Organizations and Conferences are composed mainly of nations and usually established by treaty — for example, the 1980 Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods. (Choudhary 2013.)

The civil law and common law systems are two of the most significant legal groups in existence today. Civil law refers to institutions that have been influenced by Roman law to varying degrees. These include the laws of most European continental countries, such as France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, and the others. Almost all South and Central America adopted civil law, with French law having a significant influence. Common law is based on English law, or more specifically, the legal system of England and Wales. Scotland has its own legal system, which is mostly based on civil law from continental Europe, particularly France. (Choudhary 2013.)

Contracts, intellectual property, corporate governance, taxation, business formation and separation, consumer protection, limitations on the environment, and many other subjects are all covered under business law. There are multiple applications for business law. It safeguards individual rights, establishes guidelines for ethical behavior, helps guarantee fairness in commercial relationships between competing companies, and fosters economic stability by establishing legal certainty. (American Public University 2023.)

2.5 Occupational and Safety Law

The countries selected for the case study are Finland and Spain, chosen due to the contrasting frameworks of occupational safety law in each nation. Occupational safety law serves as a crucial legal structure designed to protect employee welfare in the workplace through a variety of regulatory and preventive strategies. This area of law is multifaceted, encompassing both statutory obligations, which are established through formal legislation, and common law duties. The primary objective of these laws is to prevent workplace hazards and promote a secure working environment. This is achieved by placing significant emphasis on the employer's duty to assess risks and manage exposures effectively. (Harrison et al. 2019, 2.)

As noted, by Harrison et al. (2019, 4.) in their work on the principles of occupational health and safety law, the legal framework is designed to ensure that employers take proactive measures to identify potential dangers and implement strategies to minimize them. At its core, occupational safety law seeks to establish a balance between the responsibilities of employers to provide a safe workplace and the rights of employees to be protected from occupational hazards. This balance is critical, as it not only safeguards the health and safety of workers but also fosters a culture of accountability within organizations. The legal framework establishes specific occupational health standards that must be adhered to, and it outlines enforcement mechanisms that include inspections by regulatory bodies, as well as legal repercussions for non-compliance.

Harrison et al. (2019, 5.) emphasize the importance of workplace safety and legal accountability, highlighting how these mechanisms serve to uphold the standards outlined in occupational safety law. In conclusion, occupational safety law constitutes a comprehensive set of regulations aimed at safeguarding the health, safety, and welfare of employees within the workplace. It encompasses a wide range of statutory laws, case law, and administrative regulations that are intended to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses. Employers are obligated to maintain a safe working environment, while employees are entitled to protection from unsafe conditions. This legal framework not only serves to protect individual workers but also contributes to the overall well-being of the workforce, promoting a healthier and more productive society. (Harrison et al. 2019, 5.)

After the main definitions and importance of the occupational and safety law, the study overviews this regulation in Finland and Spain. The safety and health of the workplace are paramount. Employers and supervisors must ensure that safe conditions are met. This

obligation is codified in the Occupational Safety and Health Act (Työturvallisuuslaki, 738/2002), which serves as the foundation of Finnish occupational safety legislation. The act outlines the fundamental responsibilities of employers to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of their workforce, with a strong focus on risk assessment, training, and preventive strategies. Additionally, it encompasses regulations concerning working hours, workplace environments, and the use of personal protective equipment. The Occupational Health Care Act (Työterveyshuoltolaki, 1383/2001) facilitates access to occupational health services, which include medical evaluations, health monitoring, and initiatives aimed at preventing work-related injuries. In workplaces with ten or more employees, workers elect an occupational safety and health representative (työsuojeluvaltuutettu) to advocate on their behalf. These representatives are tasked with understanding relevant safety issues, participating in safety inspections, and communicating health and safety information to their colleagues. Furthermore, each employer assigns a head of occupational health and safety (työsuojelupäällikkö) to collaborate with employees and the relevant occupational safety and health authorities (työsuojeluviranomainen). In Finland, the responsibilities of these authorities are managed by the occupational health and safety divisions of the Regional State Administrative Agencies (aluehallintovirasto, AVI). These authorities ensure that employers adhere to occupational safety and health regulations and provide guidance to both employees and employers regarding safety practices and employment conditions. (FIOH 2024.)

The health and safety framework in Spain is primarily established through legislation enacted by the national Parliament, with autonomous communities tasked with the implementation of these laws. A pivotal piece of legislation in this domain is Law 31/1995, enacted on November 8, which addresses Occupational Risk Prevention. This law serves as the cornerstone of occupational health and safety regulation in Spain, delineating a comprehensive framework aimed at mitigating workplace hazards, coordinating preventive measures, and safeguarding employees from potential accidents and health issues. Key aspects of the law include the assessment and prevention of risks, the delineation of responsibilities for both employers and employees, and the formation of health and safety committees in specific work environments. Additionally, the regulatory landscape is further defined by Royal Decrees and Regulations, such as Royal Decree 39/1997, which governs the operation of specialized prevention services within companies, and Royal Decree 71/2005, which outlines essential safety and health standards concerning the use of work equipment. The Spanish occupational health and safety legislation is also influenced by European Union directives, notably Directive 89/391/EEC, which establishes a framework for health and safety at work. These directives aim to harmonize occupational health and

safety regulations across EU member states, ensuring a baseline of safety and health standards while permitting individual countries to implement more rigorous measures if desired. The Framework Directive specifically promotes initiatives to enhance the safety and health conditions of workers in their respective workplaces. The fundamental legal framework for safety and health establishes essential principles aimed at preventing and safeguarding workers from occupational accidents and illnesses. The National Institute for Safety and Health at Work in Spain is pivotal in the enforcement of occupational safety regulations. Additionally, the Labour Inspectorate (Inspección de Trabajo y Seguridad Social) is responsible for ensuring adherence to these laws through inspections and investigative activities. In conclusion, both Finland and Spain have strong legislative frameworks that oversee occupational health and safety, which are impacted by national laws and EU regulations. By reducing hazards and putting in place mechanisms for enforcement and justice, these rules seek to protect workers' health. The National Institute for Safety and Health at Work in Spain and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health are the main organizations involved. (EU-OSHA 2024.)

3 Cultural Issues and Legal Resolution Models

3.1 Definition of the Cultural Issues

Organizational cultural problems, particularly in multinational companies, are the difficulties that emerge from variances in cultural standards, beliefs, and actions. These problems frequently affect how employees communicate, make choices, collaborate, and perform. Cultural issues arise when the organization operates globally and has employees from various countries. Personnel from different nations respond to stimuli in various ways, engage in communication styles that differ, and approach decision-making in unique manners. Traditional developed company cultures start to break down. Therefore, misunderstandings increase, and confidence diminishes, particularly between the main office and the local branches. In their attempts to address the cultural issues, businesses face the danger of losing the fundamental qualities that contribute to their commercial achievements. (Meyer 2015.)

The problems in the cultural issues are explained further. Firstly, language and cultural misunderstandings. Cultural variances can confuse both spoken and non-spoken communication. Fuld (2012, 1.) notes that even when individuals are speaking the same language, the subtle cultural differences—such as the way one speaks, body language, and manners—can create tension. For instance, what is seen as respectful in one culture (such as avoiding eye contact) might be interpreted as being untrustworthy or lacking interest in another.

Secondly, clash in work approaches. Cultural norms vary in expectations regarding leadership, collaboration, and handling disagreements. Cultures with a hierarchical structure (such as certain Asian nations) might value respect for authority, whereas Western cultures tend to value direct feedback and individual initiative. This mismatch can cause tension within international teams and decrease efficiency if not addressed effectively. (Glynn et al. 2013.)

Thirdly, varied approaches to making decisions. Cultural perspectives on taking risks, reaching agreements, and managing time can also lead to conflicts in making decisions. Glynn et al. (2013) indicate that some cultures might focus on careful discussion and reaching a consensus (a common trait in Japanese business practices), while others prefer making decisions swiftly to seize market opportunities (a characteristic often observed in the U.S.)

Finally, adjusting to local customs. Businesses that venture into international markets must adjust their strategies to align with local cultures. Neglecting local traditions, consumer

behavior, or legal frameworks can damage a company's image and result in business failures. For example, Google's attempt to enter the Chinese market was hindered by regulatory and cultural barriers, which significantly impacted its operations there. (Fuld 2012, 3.)

3.2 Layers of Diversity

Salacuse (2013, 3.) divides the legal frameworks in international business into three primary legal structures. The first structure is the national legal framework, which pertains to the rules and guidelines set by the country where the investment is taking place. Included in these regulations are rules concerning foreign investments, rights to property, taxes, labor practices, and environmental protection. National frameworks play a vital role in determining how much foreign investors can operate in a country and the conditions they must adhere to. For instance, certain nations have restrictions on foreign ownership or mandate partnerships with local companies. The second structure is the contract framework, which refers to the agreements made between the investor and the host country or local companies. These agreements outline the terms of the investment, such as dispute resolution methods, responsibilities of each party, and circumstances in which the investment can be changed or ended. Contracts in global business are vital for guaranteeing that both parties have unambiguous, legally binding agreements to safeguard their interests in overseas investments. The third structure is the international treaties, conventions, and agreements that regulate investment flows between countries within this framework. An important feature of this framework is the safeguard provided via bilateral investment treaties and multilateral agreements, which grant foreign investors specific protections against expropriation, discrimination, and unfair treatment. International arbitration organizations are included in this system and offer impartial venues for settling investment disagreements. (Salacuse 2013, 6.)

The framework for managing diversity benefits is integrated successfully when an initiative is viewed as a culture change intervention in both people and systems interlocked and working for the benefit of the whole. The framework for managing diversity should focus on three arenas (individual attitudes, managerial skills, organizational values, and policies) and have four layers. (Moodian 2009, 35.)

The first layer is the personality level. This deepest layer consists of a person's distinct qualities, attributes, and personal choices, such as their attitude, beliefs, hobbies, and drives. Because personality is unique to individuals, it influences their interactions with others, decision-making, and impact on the organization. Acknowledging this variety assists

managers in comprehending and backing various working styles and preferences present within a team. (Moodian 2009, 36.)

The second layer is the internal dimensions. These elements of an individual's identity, such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, physical ability, and sexual orientation, are typically beyond their control. Inside characteristics are frequently the most obvious elements of diversity and can greatly impact how people are seen and handled in a company. Valuing and accepting these differences are crucial for creating an inclusive workplace where every employee feels appreciated. (Moodian 2009, 36.)

The third layer is the external dimensions. This level comprises traits a person gains, nurtures, or selects with time, such as education, wealth, marital and parental status, faith, looks, and geographic position. Outer measurements frequently influence how a person views things, their abilities, and past events, influencing their position and input in a company. Comprehending these aspects can help in determining roles, assignments, or duties that correspond with everyone's distinct background and skills. (Moodian 2009, 36-37.)

The fourth layer is the organizational dimensions. This external layer consists of elements related to the organization, such as job position, workplace, level of experience, managerial role, and departmental association. Organizational dimensions play a crucial role in determining an employee's availability of resources, level of influence, and opportunities for career growth within the organization. Identifying these variances assists organizations in addressing structural diversity by establishing avenues for progression and ensuring equal opportunities in different positions and departments. (Moodian 2009, 37.)

The layers of diversity can be seen in figure one.

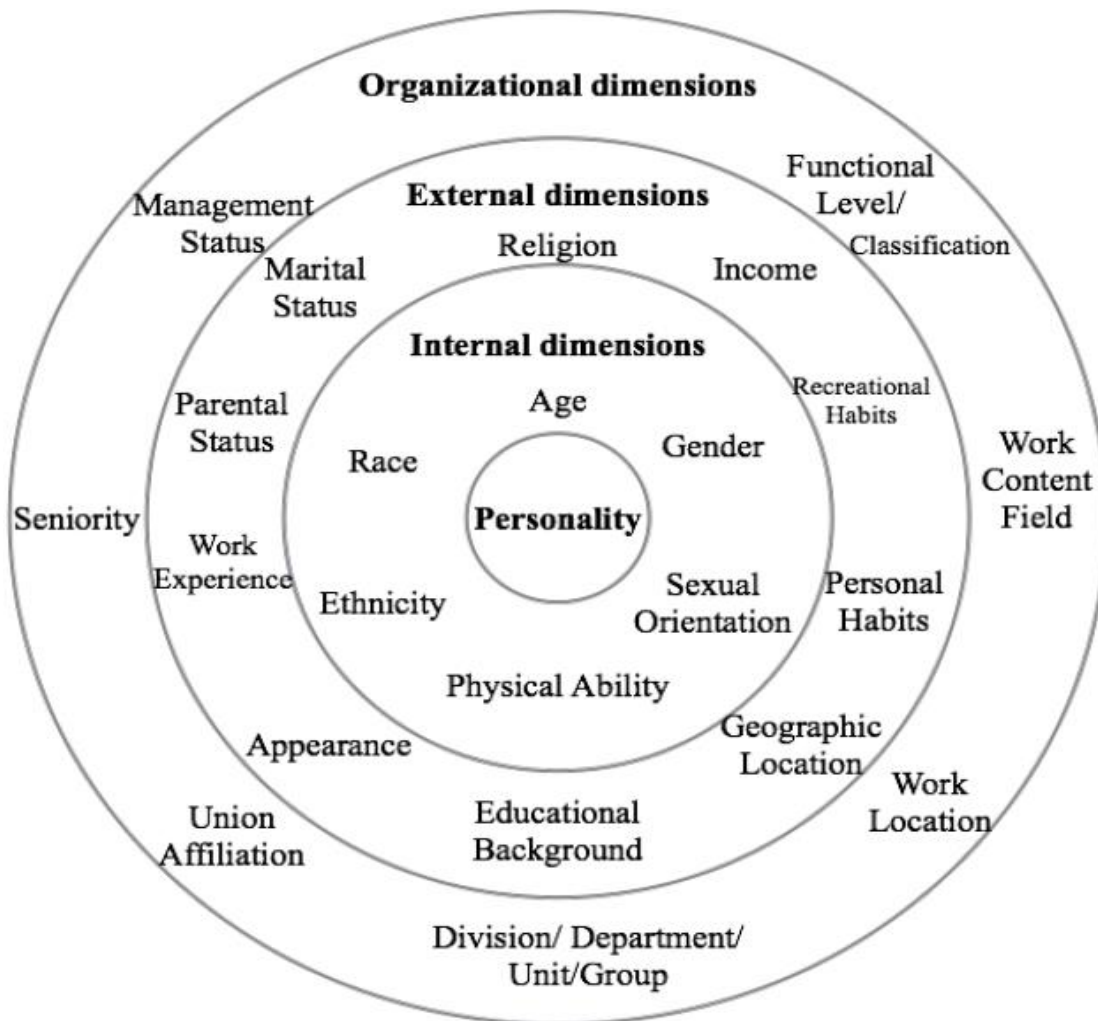


Figure 1. Four layers of diversity Source: Adapted from Gardenswartz & Rowe (2003)

The Four Layers of Diversity framework is utilized to acknowledge and appreciate the complete range of diversity present in organizations. By understanding and dealing with every level, companies can establish a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere where every employee can succeed. By understanding the legal framework, the company can develop a framework for resolving legal issues globally by navigating domestic laws, creating a cross-border compliance strategy, and applying international treaties and arbitration. (Moodian 2009, 39.)

3.3 Case Studies

To assess the evolution of cultural issues, the study will examine case studies from leading organizations in Finland and Spain, focusing on the period between 2008 and 2019. One notable example from Spain is Telefónica, a leading telecommunications firm established in Madrid in 1924. The company is committed to fostering a more humane world through the promotion of inclusive digitalization and ranks among the largest telephone operators

and mobile network providers globally. (Telefónica 2024.) Telefónica encountered a significant cultural challenge related to workplace bullying, commonly referred to as mobbing in Spain. Employees who experienced bullying initiated legal proceedings against the company, claiming violations of Spanish labor laws due to the organization's failure to prevent or address such behavior. In 2019, Telefónica was determined to have breached its responsibilities under the Occupational Risk Prevention Law by lacking adequate mechanisms to avert bullying and safeguard employees' mental well-being. The case underscores the necessity of cultivating a culture characterized by openness and respect. In response, Telefónica instituted new internal policies, including mechanisms for reporting bullying, mental health support, and regular assessments of workplace climate. The implementation of Law 31/1995, which mandates Spanish employers to mitigate physical and psychological risks, including harassment, was also pivotal. Employers are required to ensure a healthy work environment, which entails taking proactive measures against mobbing and addressing psychological risks. Although the issue was ultimately resolved, the company faced reputational damage. While legal actions can address severe instances of bullying, Telefónica may not effectively manage minor misunderstandings. (El País 2019.)

The second case involves the Finnish enterprise, Alma Media, which operates as a digital service and media organization with a notable ability for innovation, having been established in 1849. In 2008, Johanna Korhonen was appointed as the editor-in-chief of Lapin Kansa, a newspaper under the ownership of Alma Media, recognized as one of the largest media entities in Finland. Shortly after her appointment, Alma Media terminated her employment, declaring that she had provided misleading information during the hiring process. Johanna Korhonen contended that her dismissal was discriminatory, asserting that it started from her partner being a woman. She claimed that Alma Media's actions contravened Finland's equality and labor regulations, emphasizing that her termination was unrelated to her professional qualifications. Furthermore, the CEO of Lapin Kansa reportedly informed Johanna Korhonen that if he had been aware of her family situation, she would not have been hired. In response, Korhonen initiated legal proceedings against Alma Media for wrongful termination. The Helsinki Court of Appeals ruled in her favor, determining that Alma Media had indeed discriminated against her based on her sexual orientation. Consequently, the court-mandated Alma Media to compensate Johanna Korhonen with eighty thousand four hundred euros. for her unlawful dismissal. This case established a significant precedent in Finland concerning workplace equality and the rights of all individuals. The incident adversely affected Alma Media's reputation and heightened awareness regarding the necessity for enhanced inclusivity and anti-discrimination

measures within Finnish workplaces. It also sparked conversations about the responsibilities of companies in promoting diversity and ensuring equitable treatment for all employees. (YLE 2008.)

3.4 Legal resolution models

Many international business failures have been ascribed to business practitioners' lack of cross-cultural competence (Johnson 2006, 6.) The merging of cultural awareness with legal structures at work is now a crucial priority for companies operating in diverse environments. Several models have been created to promote successful conflict resolution by considering cultural variances and legal requirements. Here are some current models and methods integrating cultural factors with legal aspects in conflict resolution. To support personal multicultural envisioning, it is helpful to examine development models proposed by various theorists. Each theorist put forward a series of linear developmental stages and proposed an idea of an ideal, progressing individual state. One of the distinctions between these models is their shared fundamental principle: for personal growth to occur, an individual must experience a significant change in their mindset. (Moodian 2009, 4.)

Abraham Maslow (1943, 1970) put forward a pyramid of needs. Basic needs like comfort, security, love, belonging, status, and self-esteem motivate individuals the most. After the essential needs are met, individuals are inspired to achieve self-actualization and reach their maximum potential. This involves being truthful, acknowledging the truth, adopting a moral code based less on outside influence, and evaluating others without bias. Maslow viewed self-transcendence as the highest point in his hierarchy, driven by a purpose beyond oneself, but he also suggested that moments of self-transcendence could happen at any level. (Moodian 2009, 19.)

Stephen Covey (1989) proposed a human development with two changes in consciousness, moving from "dependent" to "independent" to "interdependent". People who rely on others for guidance follow specific instructions, but transitioning to independence means taking initiative, evaluating those instructions, making personal decisions, and taking on more accountability for one's thoughts and actions. In Covey's second shift in consciousness, realizing the interconnectedness of individuals motivates one to adopt principles that enhance both relationships and the welfare of society. (Moodian 2009, 19.)

Brian Hall (1994) created his model by focusing on changing values and priorities. During his initial two stages of awareness, individuals typically embrace the perspectives of others on truth, reality, and morality. His significant change of perspective happens when individuals transition from being focused on external influences to being focused on their

thoughts and feelings. The freedom allows for the continued growth of dedication to the global community and to support others. (Moodian 2009, 20.)

Lawrence Kohlberg (1958,1981) emphasized the growth of moral reasoning. His primary change in perspective involves transitioning from traditional to post-traditional ethics. To achieve this level, individuals aim to move beyond societal norms of morality and establish their moral principles to guide their actions. He aimed to find universal moral principles, such as valuing all individuals, through their efforts. Empathy is a means of achieving the concept of fairness. (Moodian 2009, 20.)

Kieran Egan's Intercultural Sensitivity (1997) emphasized another fundamental concept: comprehension. In the guest's fourth stage of philosophy, he encourages individuals to create mental frameworks that they perceive as reflecting the ultimate truth. Some individuals transition to a fifth stage of "irony," where they realize that all "truths" are created and no conceptual construct accurately captures the complexity of the world. In the model, there is a significant transition from an "ethnocentric" to an "ethnorelative" perspective. During the ethnocentric stage, individuals believe their cultural perspectives are synonymous with objective truth, leading them to only view and evaluate other cultures through their biased lens. Individuals in the autocorrelative phase realize that their culture's perspective is just one of the numerous ways to perceive and exist in the world. They gain knowledge of various cultural norms, values, and behaviors and enhance their ability to see the world from the perspective of other cultures more effectively. The models highlight the need for a change in consciousness for further advancement. These models are universal and can be applied in a work setting to address legal issues related to culture. (Moodian 2009, 20-21.)

4 Empirical Research and Data Analysis

4.1 Data Collection

The main data for the thesis were gathered via the online academic survey. In this instance, a survey outlines a technique for collecting data from a group of individuals. The survey centers on sociological research, incorporating a variety of questions. It is a single survey aimed at gathering the essential data for the research. The audience is an internal survey as it was carried out among the organization's owners and staff. (Scheuren 2004, 9.)

A survey was designed with questions based on the research question and current topic. The first question reflected the current job position offering three options: CEO manager, HR management, Employee, or another leading role. The second question focused on the size of the organization: small, medium, or large. The third question reflected the frequency of interaction with colleagues or clients from various cultural backgrounds. The fourth question was about familiarity with the frameworks for resolving cultural issues, if the respondents were familiar with the cultural models, they had the choice to select the Abraham Maslov model, Stephen Covey model, Brian Hall model, Lawrence Kohlberg model, Kieran Egan's Intercultural Sensitivity model, all of them or none. The sixth question focused on the effectiveness of cultural issues. The following question was about helpful technologies in the workplace and their effectiveness. The last questions were focused on the main causes of the cultural legal issues in the workplace and the effectiveness of these strategies. The Likert scale was used with the questions about effectiveness since it made the evaluation easier. The survey was designed in Google Forms since it is a great tool for collecting feedback. Google Forms can be easily transferred to Excel for data analysis.

To collect accurate information from the participants to share their knowledge and experiences, the survey questions were designed to be closed-ended. It provided the exact variants of answers where the participant can choose one, two, or more options. The questions utilized in the surveys are included in Appendix one presented in English respectively. While the survey's primary language was English, the questions can be translated into Spanish and Finnish for native Spanish and Finnish speakers to guarantee clarity and inclusiveness. Since the survey was conducted online, the language of the content could be changed with the help of translation-installed tools such as Google Translate. The final dataset included 100 responses. The participants were professionals with considerable experience in entrepreneurship, business development, and cross-cultural environments, particularly regarding cultural legal model application in issue resolution. Many of the respondents acknowledged cultural legal models for resolving

problems. Half of the participants were native Spanish speakers, and the other half were Finnish. Most of the participants were contacted through their working email addresses or phone numbers in messengers such as WhatsApp. It was easy to establish a connection with the participants since the email addresses and the phone numbers were in an open access. The access to the phone numbers and email addresses of the business owners was received from previous experience in project management in various universities and academic programs, such as the Erasmus Program in the Universitat Politècnica de València, and the contacts of the employees were received previously from the practices in the international programs in Berlin (Digital Marketing and E-commerce) and Saarbrücken (Management studies).

The surveys were conducted online for ease and efficient data analysis. The questionnaire took place from December 9, 2024, to December 15, 2024. To guarantee anonymous responses, LAB University of Applied Sciences implemented data protection measures. The survey does not request names, email addresses, or any information that could potentially identify a participant, and all respondents are made aware that their participation is voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time for any reason. Furthermore, participants are informed beforehand that their answers will be collected anonymously and will be used exclusively for academic research purposes. Information security is linked to data protection, which preserves respondents' rights regarding the handling of their data. It emphasizes protecting the privacy of personal information and making sure that those handling it are authentic and meeting the audience's responsibilities.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

Since statistical methods frequently describe variables, the data was analyzed using this method. When performing descriptive statistics, one variable at a time is examined (univariate analysis). All researchers use these descriptive statistics before starting any data analysis, including frequency tables, central tendency measures, variability measures, and central tendency and variability summary. (Patel 2009, 4.) Questionnaires are an instrument used in descriptive research that makes it possible to gather data from a large number of respondents and then quantify it. Participants in survey research provide their answers via polls, questionnaires, or surveys since it is a common instrument used in market research to get respondents' insights. A survey needs to have a clear design and should be a balanced combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions to collect high-quality data. The survey approach is the preferred choice for descriptive research with a high sample size because it may be conducted both offline and online. The main advantage of using descriptive analysis is data collection by using specific techniques, such

as the survey, case study, and observational approaches, which can be used to carry out descriptive research. These three covers all the main data collection techniques, which give valuable information. Future studies or even the development of hypotheses regarding the study's object can benefit from this. The descriptive analysis is diverse: The data obtained provides a comprehensive picture of a research issue because it is qualitative and quantitative. These results in gathering information that was not meant to be obtained and generating data that is wide-ranging, varied, and diverse. Moreover, descriptive research makes it possible to carry out the study in the respondent's natural environment, which guarantees the collection of accurate and high-quality data. The main disadvantage of this research method is confidentiality if questions are very specific or make respondents feel as though they are being "observed," the target group may not always tell the truth. It could make the data less trustworthy. The Halo effect plays a role in descriptive research since the observations may be regarded as false or invalid if the researcher has a possible bias against the research topic or certain participants. The sample is not representative, which means It is extremely difficult to confirm that the sample accurately represents the entire population because of its randomness. Descriptive research is limited in its ability to identify specific reasons because it merely examines the "what" of an objective or occurrence, ignoring the "why" or "how." (Manjunatha 2019, 862.)

In the current study, the descriptive research helps to understand the familiarity with the cultural and legal models, the main causes of the cultural issues, and the tools that businesspeople or human resources departments are using for the prevention of cultural issues. (Manjunatha 2019, 864.)

4.3 Quantitative Analysis

After the one hundred answers with the purposive sampling were collected, the study proceeded to the data analysis with the descriptive method focusing on the quantitative data. The main outcomes of the descriptive analysis are the Excel tables with the funding shown and explained below. The first table shows the causes of the cultural issues.

Causes of Cultural Issues	Frequency	Percentages
Miscommunication or Language Barriers	2	33 %
Lack of Cultural Awareness Training	2	33 %
Different Work Ethics and Values	1	17 %
Stereotypes and Biases	1	17 %
Total	6	100 %

Table 3. Frequency in percentages, causes of cultural issues.

The table of frequency and percentages of causes of cultural issues is presented below. Miscommunication or Language Barriers and Lack of Cultural Awareness Training emerged as the most reported causes, each receiving a frequency of two responses representing thirty-three percent of the total responses. The Different Work Ethics and Value and Stereotypes and Biases received one response, accounting for seventeen percent of the responses. The total response frequency is six, ensuring that all responses are accounted for one hundred percent. The participants identified communication issues and lack of cultural awareness training as the most significant causes of cultural conflicts, the data also highlights secondary concerns such as work ethic differences and stereotyping, which are less common but remain relevant. These findings are connected to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions model, which emphasizes communication styles, values, and work practices across cultures. It means the cultural legal model's resolution can regulate these issues. In the legal context, the results reflect the need for the employees to be aware of the organizational policy and the consequences of their actions toward individuals who are working in the same organization.

Table four showed the familiarity with cultural and legal frameworks presents the frequency of the responses and the percentages.

Cultural Framework	Frequency	Percentages
Brian Hall and Kieran Egan's Model	1	1 %
Stephen Covey's Model Only	2	2 %
Stephen Covey and Brian Hall Models	2	2 %
Maslov and Stephen Covey Models	3	3 %
Lawrence Kohlberg's Model Only	4	4 %
Maslov, Brian Hall, and Lawrence Kohlberg Models	7	7 %
Maslov, Stephen Covey, and Brian Hall Models	8	8 %
None of the above	10	10 %
Maslov Model Only	19	19 %
Brian Hall Model Only	21	21 %
Maslov and Brian Hall Models	23	23 %
Total	100	100 %

Table 4. Familiarity with Cultural and Legal Frameworks in percentages

This frequency represents the number of responses for each combination of cultural frameworks. Twenty three percent of respondents reported being familiar with Maslov and Brian Hall Models, which is a notable portion of the sample. The twenty-one percent reported being familiar only with the Brian Hall Model. Nineteen percent of the respondents are familiar with the Maslov model only, and only ten percent are unfamiliar with those cultural frameworks. The following eight, seven, three, two, and one percent are a combination of those models which can show how many cultural resolution models respondents are familiar with. Finally, only four percent reported being familiar with Lawrence Kohlberg's model. Ultimately, the Maslov and Brian Hall models have a combined score of hundred, indicating that they are equally recognized and applicable, indicating a moderate level of familiarity with the models. Understanding the cultural frameworks involves avoiding issues before they arise in a legal context. The organization and the working environment can both gain from the application of the well-known Maslov and Brian Hall models.

Table five explains the effectiveness rating of the cultural and legal frameworks by calculated mean and standard deviation.

Cultural issue resolution model	Mean (1-5)	Standard Deviation
Maslov model	3,03	1,36
Brian Hall model	3,03	1,26
Stephen Covey's Model	3,07	1,25
Lawrence Kohlberg's Model	3,00	1,30
None of the above	2,72	1,15
Kieran Egan's Model	2,30	0,92

Table 5. Effectiveness rating of the cultural Legal frameworks

Understanding and applying cultural frameworks is essential in legal contexts for addressing cultural issues within companies or legal systems and for managing conflicts. Models such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Brian Hall's framework, Stephen Covey's method, Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral growth, and other models are evaluated in the table based on their demonstrated effectiveness in specific conditions.

It is commonly known that the Maslow and Brian Hall Models focus on individual drive and beliefs. Their ability to identify and address the basic needs and motivations of the people involved in cultural conflicts or disputes is what makes them effective in a legal context. Understanding these models enables legal professionals to address the fundamental causes of conflicts and promote a more transparent and collaborative workplace.

The effectiveness of Covey's framework, which emphasizes the characteristics of initiative, collaboration, and trust, is scored slightly higher. Its application in legal contexts involves promoting effective interaction and resolving disputes by fostering transparency and understanding between parties. A solid foundation for making legal decisions is established by Kohlberg's theory of moral growth, which places a strong emphasis on ethical reasoning. It can help with mediation or adjudication and investigates how the parties involved in cultural conflicts reach moral conclusions. In a legal context, Kieran Egan's concept appears to be less successful. It may not be as appropriate for tackling cultural legal issues because of its emphasis on creative involvement, which contrasts with the structured and methodical elements of legal systems.

The relatively low score for "none of the above" suggests that traditional models are preferred over unstructured or non-framework approaches. It highlights the importance of applying proven theoretical frameworks to address cultural legal concerns. The study emphasizes how understanding cultural frameworks can help legal professionals anticipate issues, steer clear of conflicts, and provide culturally sensitive solutions. While models like Kohlberg's concentrate on the moral aspects of conflict resolution, theories like Maslow's and Covey's offer beneficial approaches for improving decision-making and arbitration. Through the integration of cultural sensitivity into the negotiation process, these frameworks improve fair and successful legal outcomes.

The final table six is presenting the percentage of technology use for cultural and legal issue resolution.

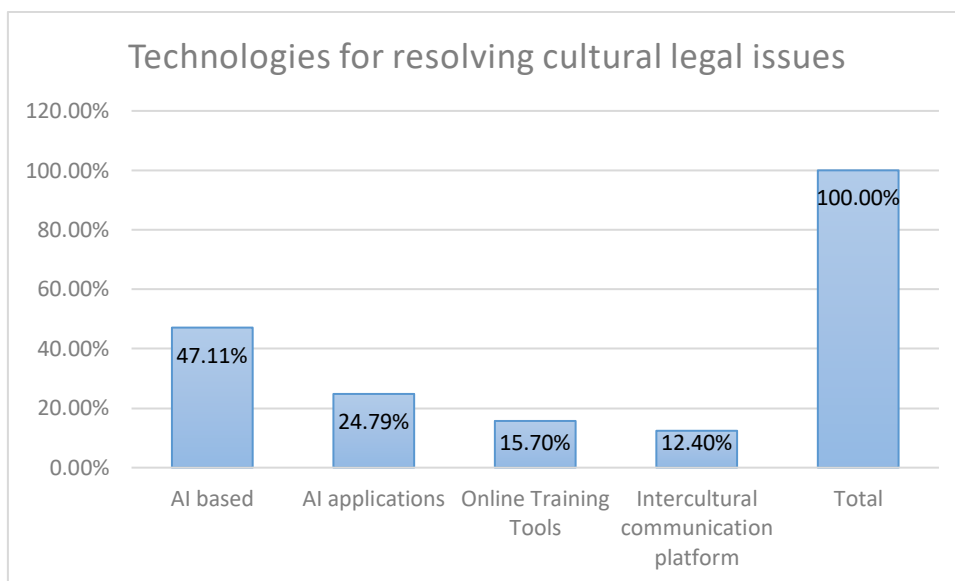


Table 6. Technology Use for Cultural and Legal Issue Resolution

The technologies used for cultural legal issue resolution also play a role in resolving cultural and legal issues in international business. Artificial intelligence-based and application tools, online training platforms, and intercultural communication platforms are important for cultural sensitivity and legal compliance. The chart shows which technologies are most frequently utilized by respondents to resolve cultural issues. Artificial intelligence-based translation tools are the most used technology for resolving legal and cultural barriers when translating for documentation. Most Artificial intelligence systems available today can quickly translate legal documents. Artificial intelligence applications are being used by twenty-four-point seventy nine percent of the respondents to address legal and cultural challenges. These software programs can help with automated legal analysis, guaranteeing dedication to international regulations and adapting corporate procedures according to cultural and legal requirements. Online training resources are being used by fifteen-point seventy percent of respondents. Employees are trained in conflict resolution, cultural sensitivity, and a variety of legal frameworks using online training resources. Intercultural communication platforms, which offer virtual environments where employees from different cultures can communicate effectively, facilitate cross-broader teamwork, and ensure that employees understand each other's cultural experiences and perspectives, are used by the remaining twelve-point forty percent of the correspondents. In a legal context, these platforms facilitate smoother contract negotiations and dispute resolution in worldwide environments. Examples of these platforms include Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Slack, Kaltura, and others.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Answer to The Research Question

The primary research question of the thesis focused on preventing cultural legal conflicts. To support the statement, sub-questions were created based on key legal and cultural frameworks that manage disputes, along with their legal and ethical implications. Answers to these questions were obtained using a mixed-research method, employing a descriptive design to analyze data gathered from surveys and actual cases involving Spanish and Finnish companies. The sub-questions aimed to assess the effectiveness of the legal resolution models. The table below shows the responses to both the main research question and the sub-questions.

Research Question and Sub-Question	Answer
<p>Main question: How to prevent cultural legal issues in the workplace in international business?</p>	<p>Cultural legal issues in the workplace can be avoided by using legal cultural frameworks. These frameworks help prevent problems such as bullying and miscommunication on the workplace and enhance employee interactions. Regularly evaluating team performance and workplace dynamics can spot potential cultural conflicts early, allowing for legal solutions. Additionally, organizing teams based on shared values can reduce conflicts. It is crucial to educate both employees and employers about legal cultural resolution models to ensure smooth implementation. Finally, monitoring employees for assessment can lead to better outcomes, promoting inclusion and productivity. One of the key advantages of utilizing legal</p>

cultural frameworks is their ability to facilitate open communication among team members. By establishing clear guidelines and expectations regarding cultural sensitivity and legal compliance, organizations can create an environment where employees feel safe to express their thoughts and concerns. This proactive approach can significantly reduce the likelihood of cultural misunderstandings raising into more serious issues. Regularly evaluating team performance and workplace dynamics is another critical strategy for identifying potential cultural conflicts before they become problematic. By conducting assessments and feedback sessions, organizations can gain valuable insights into the interactions and relationships among team members. This continuous assessment makes it possible to identify any signs of cultural conflict beforehand, allowing management to immediately put legal solutions and actions into practice.

These actions not only deal with problems when they come up, but they also show that the company is dedicated to creating an inclusive culture. Conflicts caused by cultural differences can also be

reduced by structuring teams around shared values and objectives. Employees are more likely to support and collaborate effectively when they are placed together according to how well they share the organization's basic principles. This alignment may decrease the likelihood of miscommunications and arguments arising from cultural differences by promoting a sense of unity and belonging.

Sub question 1: What are the primary legal cultural structures regulating disputes in global business contexts?

The main legal frameworks that manage disputes in global business settings discussed in the paper include specific laws and regulations that govern business activities within a country. These include labor laws, anti-discrimination policies, and workplace safety regulations, such as Finland's Occupational Safety and Health Act (Työturvallisuuslaki, 738/2002) and Spain's Occupational Risk Prevention Law (Law 31/1995), which prioritize employee well-being and safety. Additionally, cultural legal resolution models play a role in managing and

preventing disputes. For example, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs helps organizations understand employee priorities related to basic needs, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Stephen Covey's Model emphasizes principles like trust and harmony, which aiming in building trust and forming multinational teams with shared values. The Brian Hall Model helps diverse teams resolve conflicts resulting from different beliefs by addressing changing motivations and values. By emphasizing values-based thinking, Lawrence Kohlberg's Model assists organizations in preparing executives to manage complex ethical choices across cultural boundaries. Finally, Kieran Egan's Model encourages respect for cultural diversity by teaching staff members to adhere to cultural standards, which lessens impact at work.

Sub-question 2: What are the legal and ethical consequences of implementing cultural legal resolution model in an international business context?

The legal and ethical implications of using a cultural legal resolution model in international business include the risk of not complying with laws, as this model may not fit the legal systems of every country. Businesses must deal with various legal frameworks, each with its

	<p>own rules, ways to resolve issues, and enforcement methods. Enterprises must guarantee that cultural considerations are not replacing legal obligations in any way. Additionally, a cultural legal resolution model that heavily emphasizes local values might result in unfair treatment of employees from different cultural backgrounds. Overall, the cultural model can have positive effects. By applying legal cultural frameworks, businesses can reduce risks related to legal non-compliance, discrimination, and exploitation, while also respecting cultural differences.</p>
<p>Sub-question 3: Which models are used to resolve legal cultural issues?</p>	<p>The key models for addressing legal cultural issues include those by Abraham Maslow (1943, 1970), Stephen Covey (1989), Brian Hall (1994), Lawrence Kohlberg (1958, 1981), and Kieran Egan's Inter-Cultural Sensitivity (1997). The paper discusses these models and highlights how they can effectively prevent and resolve legal cultural problems. A newly developed legal cultural resolution model incorporates elements from these existing models to help settle disputes.</p>

Table 7. Answer to the Research Question

5.2 Model Proposal

The proposed new model includes five key elements: awareness of cultural policy, psychological aspects, team distribution, adaptation (inclusiveness), and evaluation (performance assessment). When new hires join the organization, they need to understand the cultural policy (each company has its policy) instead of only focusing on psychological elements for ongoing assessment; various tests predict behavioural aspects, including honesty and integrity assessments: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator comprises 100 questions categorizing individuals into 16 personality types, Rorschach Inkblot test, and the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory true or false test, along with the Solovei-Carusio emotional intelligence test. All these assessments can help assign new employees to teams, and the data needs to be gathered as accurately as possible. Each team has a supervisor for direction since one of the main issues for the organization is inclusion and supervision. The adjustment process is a vital aspect of the model because each employee requires time to adapt to the new work setting and culture. The evaluation of the performance is the concluding section and is bound to the data assessment of the performance and challenges of the new employee. The main success of this model is the right distribution and data analysis. The primary drawback of the new model is psychological testing, as every country has regulations governing who may conduct the tests. For instance, psychiatrists conduct psychological testing in Finland. It indicates that this stage will need the creation of new positions. (Selvarajah et al. 2021.)

The main concepts of the mode are presented below:

- New employees- the workers who have never been employed in the present organization prior and are not familiar with the policies and the rules of the organization yet.
- Cultural policy- the company's legal and ethical policy, a collection of guidelines that all individuals must adhere to ensure a fair and constructive atmosphere at work.
- Psychological factor—This aspect involves evaluating the individual to determine which role will best serve the organization; additionally, the assessment can reveal the degree of emotional intelligence and temperament, crucial for diverse teams.
- Distribution to the team- T1, T2, and T3 refer to the distribution of teams; to streamline the model, only the distributions of three teams are included, but this does not imply that there must be only three team distributions.

- Supervision- S refers to the oversight of each team. Proper oversight results in the team's success, which is why every team requires it.
- Teams- In the model, the teams are represented by the letter T, and the team number can vary (based on the organization's size).
- Adaptation is the procedure of comprehending the legal regulations and the organizational environment and adapting to new circumstances.
- Estimation of performance is the continuous procedure for gathering and examining data to obtain precise outcomes for decision-making.
- Data- the gathered data regarding the behavior and performance of the new employee

The beginning of the model involves hiring and onboarding new employees as they join the organization formally. The company assesses employees' existing skills, adaptability, background, and fit with the company's culture and goals, a process overseen by the Human Resources department. After the new workers are recruited, they receive a thorough orientation on the company's cultural policies, values, and objectives. Aligning employees with the company's mission and expected workplace behavior is crucial at this stage. The organization might offer training sessions for new employees on company values, work ethics, communication protocols, and cultural norms to foster a sense of belonging and enhance alignment with company expectations. The psychological aspect focuses on the mental capability and emotional state of new employees, considering factors like motivation and teamwork skills. Psychological evaluations assist in evaluating adaptability, emotional intelligence, and capacity to manage stress and adjust to changes. In the legal framework of labor law relations, the essential aspects of personnel management include conceptual management skills and human resource planning. These are critical for recruitment practices aimed at acquiring employees with the ability to oversee various processes like manufacturing, organization, and technology. (Selvarajah et al. 2021.) The primary goal of this stage is to verify that employees are mentally ready and meet the company's standards, they can work in a team and communicate efficiently. Tests are carried out in this stage before employees are allocated to the groups. The organizations are structured based on individuals' personality traits and actions. Half of the success depends on how effectively the group is formed. The creation of teams based on necessary skills and employee preferences can foster a cohesive work environment, enabling employees to collaborate with like-minded individuals and accomplish organizational objectives more efficiently.

Teams must possess the necessary skills for the tasks and be able to work together efficiently despite various limitations. (Selvarajah et al. 2021.)

The stage of adaptation is centered on making sure that employees are included and integrated into their teams and the organization. The primary goal of this stage is to establish a feeling of community membership, guaranteeing that employees feel at ease and efficient in their positions. The adjustment period is crucial even for experts who have experience in the field. The effectiveness of a new employee is determined by how well they adapt, regardless of their past work experience. The length of time they will remain in the company is influenced by the corporate culture, type, and elements of the company. (Frolenoka 2017, 130.)

Data can be collected in different ways for the team's performance estimation. The primary focus is on team performance metrics, which utilize objective criteria to evaluate team results and impacts, including project deadlines, quality of work, and productivity ratings. Performance metrics are commonly accepted as impartial standards for assessing team efficiency. (Kozlowski & Ligen 2006, 77.) The focus group technique provides in-depth qualitative data on team obstacles and viewpoints while welcoming a variety of perspectives. Focus groups are very successful in examining group dynamics extensively (Krueger & Casey 2014). Digital data analytics is the primary instrument used to analyze collaboration patterns on digital platforms by collecting real-time data on communication and task management from digital tools. Digital tools allow for immediate monitoring and unbiased data gathering (Mesmer-Magnus et al. 2011, 5.) The new proposed model is presented below.

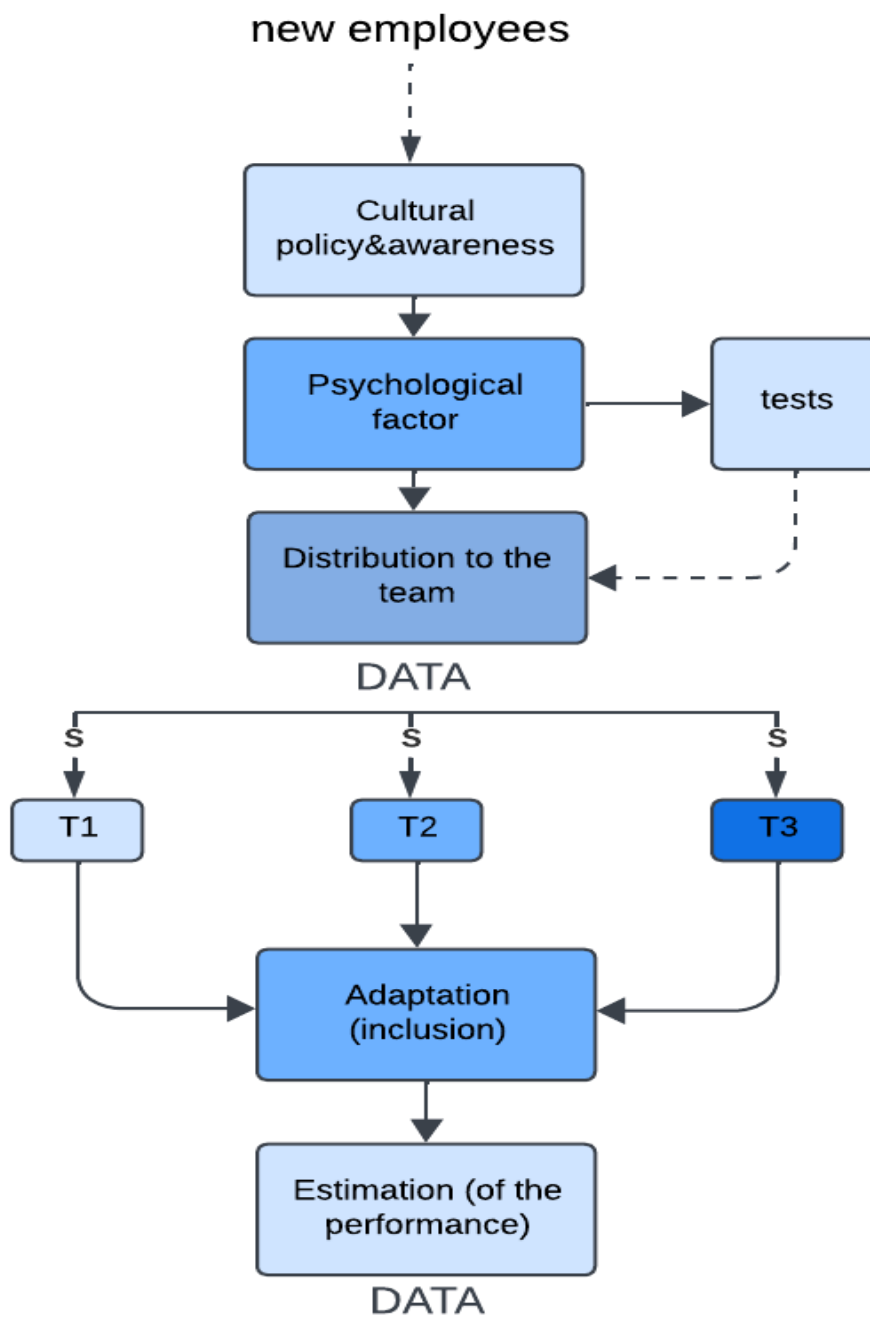


Image 1. Cultural Resolution Model

5.3 Validity and Reliability

Reliability and validity are important ideas for assessing research quality since they show how effectively a method or test measures what it is supposed to estimate. Reliability focuses on the consistency of a measurement, while validity looks at its accuracy. When designing research, planning methods, and reporting results, especially in quantitative

studies, it is crucial to think about both reliability and validity. Ignoring these can lead to various biases and negatively impact your research. Reliability means that a method can produce the same results repeatedly under the same conditions. Validity means that a method accurately reflects what it aims to measure. High validity indicates that the results align with real-world properties and variations. (Cohen & Morrison 2017, 20.)

Survey questions were created based on the research questions and were open-ended to allow respondents to share their experiences on the topic. There was no set time limit for completing the survey, enabling respondents to complete the questionnaire at their own pace, which helped enhance the reliability of the results. Additionally, secondary data from trustworthy sources such as books, journals, and course presentations were used to improve the accuracy of the findings. Firstly, descriptive analysis was used. The quantitative data was analyzed and collected with the help of the questionnaire, to get precise results on a current topic. However, it is vital to note that data from the surveys relies on participants' interpretations, experiences, and opinions, which might create biased results. Secondly, the data only reflects the perspectives of Finnish and Spanish CEO managers, businesspeople, and employees, which makes the results limited and subjective. Thirdly, the survey contained a cover letter with general information about the research topic and explained data protection and anonymity to ensure honest and reliable responses. The data protection method was explained in the survey cover letter (LAB University Data Protection). Participation in the survey was voluntary. Secondly, the established frameworks: the study utilized recognized theories and cultural models, including the famous Maslow and Brian Hall frameworks, to investigate the findings and according to these models create a new one. Finally, the case studies included real-life examples from recognized Spanish and Finnish organizations (Telefónica and Alma Media), supported the research funding, providing a practical point of view into the cultural issues in the workplace and their legal solution.

While there are challenges regarding the validity and reliability of thesis research, the available resources have been used to improve the credibility of results. Due to the small non-probability sample, findings might not be practical because they lack Spanish and Finnish businesspeople, Human Resources specialists, and CEO with relevant experience and knowledge. The research focused only on two countries and their legal and cultural issues, lacking comprehensive expertise. The information obtained from the small number of employees and entrepreneurs who took part in the survey may be beneficial as an overview for international organizations aiming to apply legal cultural models to address a range of challenges.

5.4 Suggestion for Further Research

Cultural legal resolution models have not been widely explored since the organizations are utilizing only well-known models such as Maslov's and Brian Hall's. As mentioned earlier in the research, the limited access to the necessary data is a limitation, affecting the validity and reliability of the findings. The overview of the study considers only a small amount of data for making predictions and does not provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue, focusing instead on two European case study countries and addressing current problems rather than their origins and occurrences. Future research could benefit from including more countries such as Asia and Africa, to emphasize global interaction and inclusion. Furthermore, future studies might explore the occurrence of cultural issues and the application of legal frameworks in various countries and organizations.

Another previously mentioned limitation is the methodology. The small sample size does not accurately represent the perspectives of the larger population, which compromises the accuracy of the research results. To draw stronger conclusions, future studies should include a larger sample size to make more precise predictions and explore a wider variety of data for consistent and valid results. By incorporating diverse organizations from various industries, cultures, and regions, researchers can achieve applicable findings. Additionally, utilizing a larger dataset allows for more sophisticated statistical analysis, which can enhance the accuracy and reliability of the research outcomes.

In the study, not all cultural models were represented and analyzed, as it primarily relies on specific cultural and legal resolution frameworks. Future research can employ various models and methods, comparing them with those mentioned in the study. Furthermore, researchers may explore the newly proposed model and assess its impact on the business environment of large and medium-sized organizations since the newly created model requires further observations and practical integration.

The thesis focused on legal and cultural issues within organizations. However, understanding the main causes of organizational conflicts, their roles, and effects on business operations and performance should also be investigated. Future studies could broaden the understanding of the nature of cultural issues and their prevention in advance. Moreover, the newly proposed model should be examined thoroughly in the legal and cultural context.

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Appendix 1. Survey in English

Dear Participant,

Thank you for dedicating your time to being a part of this survey. This study aims to investigate the models and technology used for avoiding cultural challenges in the professional setting of international business. Your answers will be kept confidential and will only be used for educational reasons (Bachelor thesis).

What is your job role?

CEO, manager

HR manager

Employee

Other leading role

What is the size of your organization (or organization you are working in)?

Small (1-50 employees)

Medium (51-500 employees)

Large (500+ employees)

How frequently do you interact with colleagues or clients from different cultural backgrounds?

Daily

Weekly

Occasionally

Rarely

Are you familiar with any models or frameworks for resolving cultural issues?

Yes

No

If yes, which models or frameworks have you used for the resolution of cultural issues?
(Select all that apply)

Abraham Maslov model

Stephen Covey model

Brian Hall model

Lawrence Kohlberg model

Kieran Egan's Intercultural Sensitivity model

None of below

How effective are these models in resolving cultural issues?

1 Very Effective

5 Not Effective

Have you used technology (e.g., AI tools, online communication platforms) to address cultural issues in your workplace?

-yes

-no

If yes, which technologies have been most helpful? (Select all that apply)

AI-based translation tools (e.g., Google Translate, DeepL, Reverso)

Intercultural communication platforms online

Online training tools

AI applications

How do you rate the effectiveness of technology in resolving cultural issues?

1 Very Effective

5 Not Effective

Select in your opinion the main causes of the cultural legal issues in the workplace

Miscommunication or language barriers

Stereotypes and biases

Lack of Cultural awareness training

Different work ethics and values

What strategies does your organization use to prevent cultural issues (Select all that apply)

Cross-cultural training programs

Encouraging open communication

Creating diverse teams

Using mediadors or consultors

How effective are these strategies in preventing cultural issues

1 Very Effective

5 Not Effective

Appendix 2. The Cover Letter



Dear Participant,

You have been chosen to take part in this survey due to your current role in the global company for the thesis of bachelor's research on the topic of resolving cultural legal issues in the workplace within international business. Your input will contribute to creating useful suggestions for addressing and avoiding cultural obstacles in international work environments.

How to Participate:

The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. To participate, please follow the link below:

If you prefer to complete the survey in another format (e.g., paper or email), kindly reach out to me, and I will accommodate your preference.

Confidentiality and Data Protection:

Your responses will remain strictly confidential and anonymous. Data collected will be used solely for academic purposes and handled according to LAB University of Applied Sciences data protection guidelines. No personally identifiable information will be shared.

Deadline:

Please submit your completed survey by 22.11.2024

Contact Information:

If you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to contact:

Irina Fateeva

LAB University of Applied Sciences

Phone: +31602487052

Email: irina.fateeva@student.lab.fi

Thank you for taking the time to contribute to this study. Your participation is greatly appreciated and will help advance our understanding of effective cultural issue resolution and prevention in international business.

Yours sincerely,

Irina Fateeva

Data Protection Notification:

This research adheres to the data protection policies of LAB University of Applied Sciences. Participation in this survey is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time without consequences. For detailed information on how your data will be processed and stored, please refer to the attached Data Protection Statement or visit [\(the link\)](#).