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ADAPTATION AND MANAGEMENT OF ASIAN EMPLOYEES IN THE FINNISH WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Case-company ABB Oy

Business Economics and Turism
2013

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ABSTRACT

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Title	Adaptation and Management of Asian Employees in the Finnish Working Environment
Year	2013
Language	English
Pages	95 + 2 Appendices
Name of Supervisor	Leena Pommelin-Andrejeff

After the escalation of internationalization in the 1990s, the issue of multiculturality became more relevant in Finland. The companies needed tools to manage employees from other countries besides Finland. Business cooperation especially with the Asian region has raised interest in the target countries of this research, India and China. Therefore, the research problem for this thesis was to discover what needs to be taken into consideration in the adaptation and management of Asian employees in the Finnish working environment and specifically in the case-company ABB Oy. The aim was to find out the differences between Indian and Chinese employees compared to the Finnish employees and give tools to the managers at ABB Oy to acknowledge and handle those differences.

This research examined issues such as human resource management (HRM) in a multinational context, Finnish society and adaptation and culture differences. HRM in a multinational context gives methods to the managers to act in international situations and companies. Finnish society explains the labour market and multiculturality in Finland, which give background information to the topic of what influences in the adaptation to the Finnish working environment. Culture differences address the effect of different cultures and the differences between the target cultures of Finland, India and China. Furthermore, the importance of cross-cultural communication was discussed.

Empirical study was conducted using a qualitative research method by interviewing Indian and Chinese subordinates and their managers at ABB Oy. The main results were the importance of language skills and intercultural knowledge in order for different nationalities and cultures to cooperate effectively together. Recommendations for the company on how to develop and support the Asian employees' adaptation into the Finnish working environment and manager´s role in the process were given in the last chapter.

Keywords	Finnish working environment, International Human Resource Management, induction, cultural differences

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Liiketalous ja matkailu

TIIVISTELMÄ

Tekijä	Marita Hellsten
Opinnäytetyön nimi	Aasialaisten työntekijöiden johtaminen ja sopeutuminen suomalaiseen työympäristöön
Vuosi	2013
Kieli	englanti
Sivumäärä	95 + 2 liitettä
Ohjaaja	Leena Pommelin-Andrejeff

Kansainvälistymisen kiihtymisen jälkeen 1990-luvulla, monikulttuurisuuden käsite nousi oleellisemmaksi Suomessa. Yritykset tarvitsivat keinoja johtaa työntekijöitään muista maista kuin Suomesta. Yritysyhteistyö erityisesti Aasian alueella nosti kiinnostusta tutkimuksen kohdemaita, Intiaa ja Kiinaa, kohti. Näin ollen, tämän opinnäytetyön tutkimusongelma on, mitä tulee ottaa huomioon aasialaisten työntekijöiden sopeutumisessa ja johtamisessa suomalaisessa työympäristössä ja erityisesti case- yrityksessä ABB Oy:ssä. Tavoitteena on löytää erot intialaisten ja kiinalaisten työntekijöiden välillä verrattuna suomalaisiin työntekijöihin sekä antaa työkaluja esimiehille tiedostaa ja käsitellä niitä eroja.

Tutkimus käsittelee asioita kuten henkilöstöhallinto multikansallisessa yhteydessä, suomalainen yhteisö ja sopeutuminen sekä kulttuurierot. Henkilöstöhallinto multikansallisessa yhteydessä antaa esimiehille keinoja toimia kansainvälisissä tilanteissa ja yrityksissä. Suomalainen yhteisö kuvaa työmarkkinoita ja monikulttuurisuutta Suomessa tarkoituksena antaa taustatietoa siihen, mikä vaikuttaa sopeutumisessa suomalaiseen työympäristöön. Kulttuurierot käsittelevät eri kulttuurien vaikutusta ja kohdemaiden, Suomi, Intia ja Kiina, kulttuureja. Lisäksi työssä käsitellään monikulttuurisen kommunikoinnin merkitystä.

Empiirinen tutkimus toteutettiin kvalitatiivisella tutkimusmetodilla haastattelemalla intialaisia ja kiinalaisia alaisia sekä heidän esimiehiään ABB Oy:ssä. Keskeisimmät tulokset olivat kielitaidon tärkeys sekä kulttuurienvälisen tiedon omaaminen, jotta eri kansallisuudet ja kulttuurit voivat tehdä yhteistyötä keskenään. Viimeisessä kappaleessa annetaan suosituksia yritykselle siitä, kuinka kehittää ja tukea aasialaisten työntekijöiden sopeutumista suomalaiseen työympäristöön sekä esimiehen rooliin sopeutumisprosessissa.

Avainsanat	Suomalainen työyhteisö, kansainvälinen henkilöstöhallinto, perehdyttäminen, kulttuurierot

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APPENDIX 2. INTERVIEW STRUCTURE FOR THE MANAGERS

1 INTRODUCTION

The topic of this research is adaptation and management of Asian employees in the Finnish working environment and the case-company is ABB Oy. ABB Oy is the customer for this research. Oy (osakeyhtiö) is a Finnish word for the company form Ltd (Limited liability company) and I am referring to the case-company as ABB Oy to state that the company is a Finnish subsidiary of the ABB Group located in Switzerland. The case-company is presented in chapter 2.

This chapter explains the background, purpose, research questions and the need and structure of this research. The goal is that after reading this chapter the reader gains a general overview and understanding of the thesis in order to enjoy the rest of the work.

1.1 Background of the research

Due to globalization countries, companies and people worldwide are in constant interaction with each other. For example, a company's employees can consist of many different nationalities and cultures. Hence, new tools and methods are needed in order to succeed, especially in business.

Human Resource Management (HRM) can be defined as activities processed by a company to effectively utilize its human resources. When a company employs someone who has a different nationality or a company's operations involves direct relations with a foreign company, the issue of international human resource management (IHRM) becomes relevant. IHRM is a tool used to understand the effects of internationalization added to the domestic human resource management (HRM). IHRM focuses on how and which of the activities change when a company is international. (Dowling, Welch & Schuler 1999, 2-3.) HRM and IHRM and their dimensions are further discussed in chapter 3.

In Finland the issue of internationalization is quite young. Internationalization and its effects gained attention only two decades ago. Before the escalation of internationalization in the 1990s, Finland was rather an isolated country and the number of foreign nationals was comparatively very low. The reasons could be

due to Finland's geographical location and non-colonialist history. Another reason could be that after World War II, the Soviet Union had a great impact on Finland, especially when it comes to immigration policies. After the political and economic changes in the early 1990s, the Soviet Union collapsed and Finland joined the European Union and that is when the migration and Finland's communication with the rest of the world became freer. From that time onwards, the number of foreign nationals in Finland began to grow steadily until today. (Raento & Husso 2001, 158.)

According to the annual report on migration from Ministry of the Interior in 2012, the number of foreign nationals in Finland was 195 511 out of the whole population of 5 426 674. If compared to the number of foreign nationals in 2001, which was 98 577, the number has more than doubled. (Ministry of Interior 2012, 4.)

The effects of more open communication with the rest of the world are also evident in the Finnish business life. Companies have started to employ foreign employees within and outside Finland. There is also more interaction between Finnish companies and their counterparts abroad. One of such companies is ABB Oy. One of ABB Oy´s main interaction is with companies on the Asian continent, especially China and India. The partnership with the Asian counterparts often requires that employees from other ABB companies in China and in India come to work for ABB Oy in Finland and vice versa.

According to information fetched from ABB Oy´s Reporting Team, there are currently 560 foreign employees from over 50 countries in various employment relationships at ABB Oy. The number includes permanent foreign employees, consultants, international assignments and other external employment relationship. Out of the total number, 30 are Chinese and 90 are Indians. From the top five of most foreign nationalities at ABB Oy, India is number two together with Russia and China is number four. (ABB Oy´s Reporting team 2013.) These numbers are based on reports where person´s nationality is registered as something other than Finnish in the data system, so in reality, the number of individuals with foreign background working at ABB Oy might be higher if the nationality is not registered

correctly.

The significance of Asians is also seen in the national statistics; according to the Ministry of Interior report mentioned above, in 2012 the largest groups of foreign-born people by continent of birth were Europe 64 % (182 696), Asia 20,5 % (58 499) and Africa 9,1 % (25 895). Altogether, the number was 285 471 people out of the total number of 5 426 674 people born in Finland. (Ministry of Interior 2012, 6). Furthermore, according to the Population Register Center, there were 6 465 Chinese and 4 029 Indians living permanently in Finland in 2012, and those nations were also among the highest number of foreign nationals living in Finland. (Population Information System, Population Register Center 2012).

One of the reasons why there are many Asians living in Finland is the Finnish school system, which studies have shown to be one of the best in the world. Finnish education attracts people from Asia to come study here. In 2009, the number of Asian students in the Finnish Universities was 2 400 when total number of foreign students was 6 984. (Ministry of Education and Culture 2009). In 2011, total number of foreign students studying at University of Applied Sciences in Finland was 8 727 and in Universities 8 752. These figures have grown yearly. (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö a & Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö b). ABB Oy has grabbed the opportunity to recruit Asians who have degrees from Finnish schools.

Asia has become crucial to the success of ABB Oy. The economic boom in East Asia has aroused interest in Finnish companies to move to Asian countries such as South-Korea, China, India and Japan. The Asian employees help ABB Oy to do good business in their home countries because of their know-how and language skills.

However, these developments have a lot of implications on the managers at ABB Oy. It is not known how these Asian employees have adapted or are adapting to the Finnish working environment. This research has been written for managers at ABB Oy to give them tools on how to effectively manage their Asian employees among their Finnish counterparts in their respective departments.

1.2 Research problem and purpose of the research

The research problem for this thesis is: what needs to be taken into consideration in the management of Asian employees in order for them to adapt to the Finnish working environment?

The research questions discussed in this thesis are:

i. What influences in the adaptation of Asian employees to the Finnish working environment?

ii. What should a manager take into consideration with an Asian employee with a different cultural background?

iii. What are the differences in managing Finnish employees compared to Asian employees?

The goal for this research is to find out what influences in the adaptation of Asian employees (specifically Chinese and Indians) to the Finnish working environment and to give tools for the managers at ABB Oy to manage their Asian employees.

This research is from both managers' and subordinates' view to get a comprehensive picture on what affects to the adaptation of Asian employees into the Finnish working environment and what is the manager´s role in the process.

1.3 Limitations of the study

This research is conducted for ABB Oy. Therefore, the findings of this research may not be applicable to other Finnish companies that have operations in Asia.

Although this research makes reference to the Asian continent, the research is written about the employees from China and India. Due to this, findings from this research may not be applicable to ABB Oy´s employees from Asian countries other than China and India. Moreover, the target group of Indian and Chinese employees is those who are in an employment relationship with ABB Oy or in an external employment relationship meaning they work through an external company for ABB Oy or are in a short-term assignment from ABB China or India. From the total number of 120, the

number of ABB employment relationships is 21 and external employment relationships are 99. Expatriates are not included in this research, because they require their own kind of perspective and views, which are not in the scope of this research.

Another limitation is that, even though ABB Oy operates in over 30 places, this research focuses on the offices in Helsinki and Vaasa. These two offices are the biggest in Finland and they have the highest number of foreign employees from China and India.

1.4 Need for the research

The need for this research came after a discussion with the Global Mobility- team of ABB Oy. We discussed on the issues from which the Global Mobility- team would need more information and what would benefit them in their work and ABB Oy in general. After some meetings, the idea of researching the adaptation of Asian employees at ABB Oy came out. It is not really known how the Asian employees (specifically Indians and Chinese) have adapted or are adapting to ABB Oy and what the adaptation into the Finnish working environment at ABB Oy demands. Furthermore, the idea was to give methods and tools for the managers at ABB Oy to lead their Asian employees and to discover the differences with subordinates from India and China compared to the Finnish employees.

1.5 Structure of the research in brief

The structure of this research consists of three parts: introduction to the research and case-company, research theory and empirical study. The introduction is purposed to introduce the background and goals of the research and the case-company. The main topics for the theory are HRM in multinational context, Finnish society and adaptation and culture differences. Empirical study connects the theory to the practical aspect by studying the research problem in the case- company. Results from the empirical study are presented and analyzed to conclude the research. The main topics of the research are described shortly below.

The case-company ABB Oy is introduced in chapter 2. The idea is to give general information about ABB Oy for the reader to get an understanding about the case-company.

The purpose of the chapter 3 is to introduce HRM in multinational context and the methods of IHRM and cross-cultural management. These methods are for the companies and their managers to lead the employees successfully in a way that the different nationals and cultures are taken into consideration. The chapter also explores the meaning of recruitment and employee selection procedures which follows the induction process.

Chapter 4 is about the Finnish society and its characteristics. The chapter describes the Finnish labour market situation and multiculturality in Finland. The general adaptation of foreign people into the Finnish society, the challenges and factors effecting in it and two theories of adaptation from Hofstede and Kim are explained in the same chapter.

Chapter 5 focuses on culture differences. Different definitions of culture are introduced to help the reader to view culture from the many different perspectives. The case-cultures are introduced to allow the reader to gain insight of the Finnish, Chinese and Indian cultures. Different theories about the effects of culture are also introduced and the importance of communication in cross-cultural context.

Chapter 6 summarizes the theoretical framework and introduces the model for adaptation and intercultural management I have developed based on the main points and theories introduced in this research.

The remaining chapters focus on the empirical study, its results and conclusions. Chapter 7 explains the research design for the empirical study. Chapter 8 continues with analyzing the results of the empirical study and finally is the conclusions of the study in chapter 9.

2 CASE-COMPANY ABB Oy

This chapter is about the case-company ABB Oy for the reader to get a clear picture on the company. The content is ABB´s history and present, key figures and business with product and service description. The meaning of internationality at ABB Oy and ABB Oy´s organizational culture are discussed as well.

2.1 History and present

The history of ABB goes over 120 years when Gottfrid Strömberg stepped into the Register office and made a registration from his power business. His idea was to make innovations with what to compete with the competitors during that time. The current form of ABB was created in 1988 when the Swedish Asea and Swiss Brown Boveri merged together with an ownership principal of 50:50. The growth of ABB is based on the technological power and strong local roots, which Strömberg represents in Finland. (ABB Oy intranet, 2012 a.)

Today ABB is a global leader in power and automation technologies. ABB is based in Zurich, Switzerland and it employs over 145 000 people in approximately 100 countries. In ABB Oy, the personnel consists of around 6 600 people in over 30 places. The largest factory clusters are in Helsinki, Vaasa and Porvoo. ABB Oy is one of the biggest employers in the industry field in Finland and the biggest in capital region. In 2012, ABB Group´s revenue was 2,4 billion. The CEO of ABB Oy is Tauno Heinola (ABB, 2013 a; ABB, 2013 b.)

ABB´s culture consists of leaders who are characterized by competence, ambition and integrity. Those three characteristics ensure that ABB fulfills its commitments to the customers, its employees and to the communities and societies where they operate. ABB´s business principals are responsibility, respect and determination (ABB, 2013 d.)

2.2 Core business

ABB Group structure is divided into five divisions, which are divided into local business units specialized in particular industries and product groups. The five divisions and brief descriptions are given below. (ABB, 2013 c.)

Power Products: The product offering in voltage levels consists of circuit breakers, switchgear, capacitors, instrument transformers, power distribution and traction transformers, as well as a complete range of medium voltage products. (ABB, 2013 c.)

Power Systems: Turnkey solutions for traditional and renewable power generation plants based on energy, transmission grids and distribution networks. These solutions play a vital role in the optimization of electricity generation and the development of more reliable, flexible and smarter grids. (ABB, 2013 c.)

Discrete Automation and Motion: Motors, generators, drives, mechanical power transmission, robotics, PLCs, wind converters, solar inverters, UPS systems, voltage regulators, rectifiers, traction converters, excitation systems, fast DC chargers. (ABB, 2013 c.)

Low Voltage Products: Products and solutions applicable for multiple electrical applications from residential home automation to industrial buildings, including low-voltage circuit breakers, switches, control products, wiring accessories, enclosures and cable systems designed to assure safety and reliability. (ABB, 2013 c.)

Process Automation: Products, systems and services designed to find the best solutions for the productivity of industrial processes. Solutions consist turnkey engineering, measurement products, control systems, life cycle services, outsourced maintenance and industry specific products (eg, electric propulsion for ships, mine hoists, turbochargers and pulp testing equipment). (ABB, 2013 c.)

The company invests strongly in research and development (R&D) from which it is known for. ABB has been investing in R&D through all market conditions and it has seven corporate research centers around the world. ABB is worldwide the largest supplier of power grids, industrial motors and drives as well as the largest provider of generators to the wind industry. (ABB, 2013 c.)

2.3 Internationality at ABB Oy

In 2012, 204 people were recruited to ABB Oy for permanent employment relationships. From that number, 15 (7,4%) were foreign nationals. In addition, in

2012 there were 199 people with foreign background from almost 50 countries employed at ABB Oy. In 2012, from ABB Oy´s personnel 123 were on an international assignment and ABB Oy had 17 international assignees (ABB personnel key 2012.)

ABB identifies diverse and talented workforce as essential competitive advantage (ABB Group Intranet 2013). As a global company, diversity means differences in people which make us unique. ABB aims to include all these differences by respecting and utilizing them in achieving the common ABB goals. (ABB Oy Intranet 2013 b.)

3 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN MULTINATIONAL CONTEXT

As mentioned in chapter 1, globalization and the growth of international cooperation between companies have attracted much attention, hence an increased interest towards interculturality. This has been made possible through effective human resource management (HRM). HRM is the key to success in all international or multinational organizations, because a company´s human resources possess the knowledge and abilities to perform the work. Hence, to achieve results the personnel needs to be managed so that the abilities and knowledge of individuals are in the best use of the company. (Harris, Brewster & Sparrow 2003, 3.)

This chapter introduces three different approaches to HRM in multinational context: international human resource management (IHRM), cross-cultural management and multicultural management. All these approaches have the same key factor, which makes HRM international, namely the effect of cultural differences in a company´s management style. However, cultural differences will be further explained in chapter 5. This chapter also explains the importance of international recruitment and selection process and the meaning of successful induction.

3.1 International human resource management

International human resource management (IHRM) focuses on how people from different countries who also have different thinking and action manners can be managed in a team to reach a shared target. This has created both opportunities as well as challenges in business. IHRM is a method used to understand other cultures and to succeed in the international cooperation. (Dowling et al. 1999, 2.) Therefore, IHRM means managing personnel in a way that the different ideas and manners from people with different nationalities are taken into consideration. (Harris et al. 2003, 3.)

A publication for the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) in 2002 claimed that people working in an international environment should possess these abilities:

- Relationships skills (especially cultural empathy)

- Influence and negotation skills
- Analytical and conceptual ability
- Strategic thinking

Furthermore, they need broader know-how from the following areas:

- International business
- International finance
- International labour legislation
- Local labour market
- Cultural differences
- International compensation and benefits (Harris et al. 2003, 4-5.)

3.2 Cross-cultural management

Culture is around us; through different languages, religions, communication styles, norms, values and symbols reflected in people. Culture has an influence in who we are and how we interact within and across nationalities and countries as individuals, families, communities, organizations and nations. As companies become more and more global the impact of people with different cultural backgrounds becomes more important as well. In an international business environment the impact of different cultures is visible and has to be considered in managing a company´s employees and also in doing business with clients and customers from different cultures. (Society for human resource management 2008, 1.)

Cross-cultural management describes these differences between cultures in people´s behavior in organizations around the world and explains how to work in an environment with employees and clients from different cultures. In other words, cross-cultural management explains and compares organizational behavior across countries and cultures and aims to both understand as well as develop interaction

between all the interest groups of a company, for example employees, managers, clients and business partners around the world. (Adler 1997, 10.)

3.3 International recruitment and selection

Recruitment is an activity where potential job candidates are searched for. The company selects the most suitable people who match with the job requirements. Selection is the activity of gathering information to evaluate and decide who would qualify for the job. (Dowling et al. 1999, 69-70). The aim is to hire the best talent with the best competencies to perform successfully in the offered job in the company´s favor. When recruiting it is important for the company to know what kind of person and what abilities they are looking for. In order to attract the most qualified applicants, the company also needs to know how to market the job. The recruitment message should be thought of carefully to highlight the realistic but attractive sides of the job and what the company can offer for the potential employee. Recruitment and selection process is also crucial for the IHRM in the company because selecting suitable employees in the beginning makes IHRM easier. (Caligiuri, Lepak & Bonache 2010, 129-131.)

When recruiting employees into an international working environment, for example if the company itself is international, the job or job applicants are from different countries and cultures or the location for the job is abroad, new factors, such as possible global recruiting strategy and cultural aspects step in. In that case, it is important to take into consideration what is valued workwise in the country and culture of recruitment. For example, some cultures can value free time over status and power. (Caligiuri et al. 2010, 130-131.)

There are three possible recruiting strategies that can be applied in employee selection practices around the world. The first of these three is to have a one common selection practice and this is typically called the home country´s model. This model is applied to all the subsidiaries around the world. Another option is to develop different employee selection models locally or regionally. Third option is to create a combination of local and global model, for example an employee selection system with common structure but local adaptation. (Caligiuri et al. 131-132.)

The Table 1 below illustrates selection criteria in international context. The measurement consists of personality factors, communication skills, motivation and the actual technical skills and experience for the job, family circumstances and country or cultural requirements. Normally, this criteria is used in the selection of an expatriate or international assignment, but I find them to be good measurements when selecting any employee to work in an international company or an employee from different culture or country, because they also influence in person´s ability to adapt to a new environment. (Ferraro 2006, 170-171; Dowling et al. 1999, 85.)

Table 1. Selection criterions (Ferraro 2006, 170-171; Dowling et al. 1999, 85-89)

Personality factors	**Communication skills**	**Motivation**
-positive attitude -not being afraid of setbacks -being nonjudgemental -flexibility -nonethnocentric -perceptive -possess cultural empathy -eagerness to experience new things	-knowledge from the other country´s language or willingness to learn and use it	-personal interest to work and see other cultures
Technical skills and experience -ability to perform in the required job	**Family circumstances** -adaptation of family members and spouse -family´s attitude towards the new culture	**Country/Cultural requirements** -suitability between employee and culture, for example in some countries the political situation might be more risky and there might be reluctance towards female employees in some countries in Middle East or South East Asia regions

3.4 Induction process

Induction is the follow-up after the recruitment. It covers an employee´s actual training into the new job and also other basic background information about the company. These are the technical and standard information thought to a new person in the beginning of new work. They are also part of the actual socialization process

where the employee accepts and absorbs the working culture. Socialization process means adapting the values, attitudes and behavior patterns that are expected in the company and by its employees. (Dessler 2009, 160.)

The time spent on induction varies among companies from informal and brief into more structured ones or many days lasting programs. In any case, in the beginning, a new employee is usually given some kind of a handbook about the company to read. The handbook includes basic information about the company, such as the working hours, performance reviews, payroll and vacations. In addition, the new employee is given information about the personnel benefits, personnel policies, daily routines of the employees, company operations and organizational structure, safety policy and other regulations. Most of this information is normally written on the company´s internal website for the personnel. (Dessler 2009, 160.)

In relation to the above, induction process usually starts from that the new employee receives basic information about the company, its history and policies. Within the first days the employee also meets his or her supervisor. After these the actual guidance to the job and to the work assignments are explained. Then the new employee will also be introduced to the colleagues and familiarized with the workplace and facilities. (Dressler 2009, 161.)

According to Dessler, there are four stages in a successful induction, which should be accomplished:

1. The new person should feel welcome in the company

2. The person should have a clear understanding about the company in a broad scale, for example the history, present, culture and idea of the future

3. The person needs to know what is expected of him in terms of work and behavior

4. Lastly, the part of true adaptation comes into the picture. The person will hopefully adapt to the preferred social behavior of the company meaning the ways that things are done there. (Dessler 2009, 160.)

In addition, a succeeded multinational induction should include the following:

5. Sharing your own culture
6. Learning new ways to look at your own culture from the persons with other culture background
7. Learning to communicate in new ways; recognizing different interpretations and views
8. Building new kind of multiculturalism where people do not only accept the differences between cultures but also create a new cultural identity together (Monikulttuurinen työyhteisö 2007.)

ABB Oy´s induction process

At ABB Oy, induction is defined as actions to help a new person or an employee who has already worked a longer time in the company to adapt to the changing job, organization, working environment as well as to the other employees. Induction is part of personnel development purposed to provide sufficient prerequisites for the new employees and those who have new tasks to perform in their jobs and to be part of the working community. (ABB Oy intranet 2013 a.)

ABB Oy has clear plans and goals related to the induction. They also use tools and methods to help the process, such as induction checklist, which is used to document and check that the necessary things are taught and told to the new employee. ABB Oy also arranges programs and training for the new employees, for example something like “Welcome to ABB”- event where some general knowledge about ABB Group and ABB Oy, its history, procedures, regulations and safety issues are explained. Training about different IT-systems, which are used at ABB Oy is arranged for new managers and employees regularly. (ABB Oy intranet 2013 a.)

ABB Oy´s induction process is illustrated in Figure 1. The process actually starts before the job itself, that is, already during the job interview. The new employee is introduced to ABB Oy as an employer and to the future job tasks in order for the person to get an idea what the job and the company are like. Normally, the future

supervisor or HR representative carries out the job interview. After the job interview, when the new employee has been selected, the supervisor informs the work community and they prepare for the new member, for example a mentor or a person who will be responsible for the main induction is named from the work community. Within the first days, the new employee is given a short general orientation about the employment conditions and the procedures at ABB Oy. During the same time, a personal induction plan is made for the new employee and the expectations of induction are discussed. After some weeks, the new employee and the mentor or supervisor will have a feedback discussion about the induction and possible additional information is given to the employee. Alongside the actual induction process, key areas are self-study and continuous job guidance, which are also illustrated in figure 1. They are more or less an ongoing process throughout the whole career. (ABB Oy intranet 2013 a.)

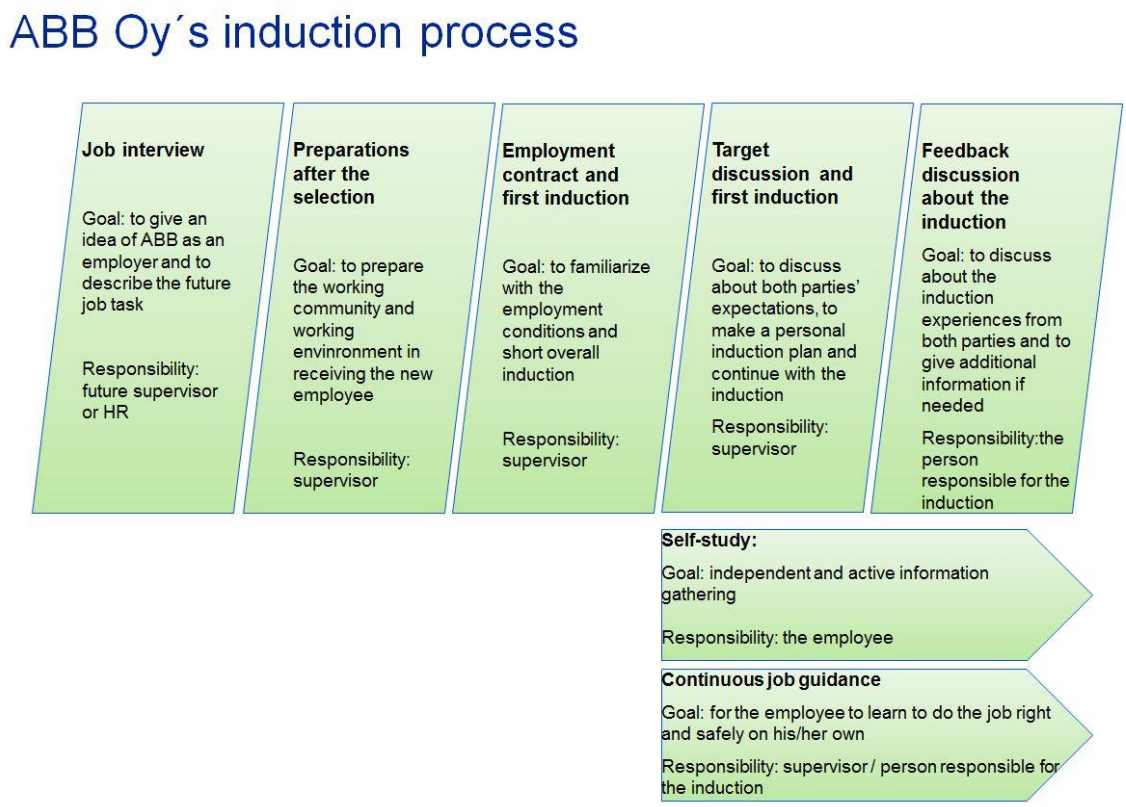

Figure 1. ABB Oy's induction process. (ABB Ohjeisto 2013 b.)

4 FINNISH SOCIETY AND ADAPTATION

In this chapter the reader will be given an understanding of the Finnish society and its labour market. In addition, this chapter deals with multiculturality in Finland and introduces two different theories about adaptation and factors influencing in it. The meaning of language in adaptation is also discussed last. These topics help in understanding Finnish society, which is necessary in order for a person to adapt into the Finnish working environment.

4.1 Finnish labour market

Finland´s population is a little over 5,4 million at the moment. The number of working age population is decreasing because of an increasing rate of retirement. However, the number of immigrants is growing and careers are becoming longer at the same time. The labour force consisted of just under 2,5 million workers in 2012. The average number of people unemployed in 2012 was 207 000, and the unemployment rate was around 7,7%. There are also regional differences in the labour market of Finland and in the employment. Today the most job opportunities are in the Southern Finland and in the biggest urban areas. The rural areas in Finland do not offer as much job possibilities as they used to. (Eures 2013, Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2013.)

Finland´s economic structure has undergone a transition from being dominated by agriculture and manufacturing industries to become a service society. The main sectors employing the largest number of people are service industry, commerce, transport, education, hotel and restaurant services, health and social services and other services. Health and social services sector increased the number of available jobs by about 13 000 in 2012 which was the biggest growth compared to other sectors. The employment situation was quite good in other sectors as well, considering the uncertain economic situation in Finland. Employment in these sectors is expected to grow also in the future. (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2010; Eures 2013.)

Finnish companies who employ the largest number of employers are: Nokia, a manufacturer for electronics; Itella, a courier and postal service provider; UPM, wood

and paper products manufacturer; and Kesko, a wholesale and retail trading company. Those are all well-known, big companies in Finland. Recently, however, the trend of employing people has also gone to the small and medium-sized companies' direction and the number or companies who employ less than 10 people is increasing. Another big employer is the public sector. The city of Helsinki for example is the biggest single employer in Finland. It employs in the education, social and healthcare services as well as transport and maintenance sector. (Eures 2013.)

As mentioned earlier, the unstable and uncertain economic situation in Finland has affected to the companies. There is uncertainty in the demand of products and services the companies provide and therefore, companies try rather to cut down on costs than to recruit new employees. There is also gap between the available workers and the suitable workers needed in companies. Normally, there is shortage in the relevant work experience, training or specialist skills a job requires but the jobseeker do not possess. The qualifications a job requires depend on the job concerned and can vary a lot. (Eures 2013.)

It is common for people in Finland to have many jobs in different companies or even careers during their lifetime. The majority of employment relationships are based on permanent contracts, but the number of short-term and part-time contracts is becoming more common. Part-time work is still, however, not as common in Finland as it is compared to other countries in Europe. Possibilities to family leaves and child day care enable especially women to participate actively in the working life. (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2013.)

Most of the employed Finns are members of a trade union. Trade unions purpose is to look after employee´s interests and to negotiate with the employers' organizations on the terms and conditions of employment, for example about the salary. (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2013.)

4.2 Multiculturality in Finland

The immigration to Finland in the 1990´s has made the issue of multiculturality more current. New and different cultural groups with their own life styles have become part of Finnish everyday life. This means new methods in solving how all these groups

together with the Finns can life together. It affects every individual as well as all institutions such as schools, the police and other authorities. (Huttunen, Löytty & Rastas 2005, 16-17.)

Multiculturality means several different cultural groups living in one society. Multiculturality can be observed through changes in attitudes and in individual's identity. Multiculturality affects in everyone through social, cultural and political ways. Finnish society forms its own multiculturality when people with those different cultural groups live together and face the daily life challenges and practices. For example, a person needs to deal with some multicultural issues when having a work colleague or neighbor with different culture background. Furthermore, multiculturality manifests in the daily life through values, norms, dressing, food and music. Hence, culture is something that defines our everyday life and our way of perceiving things. It is the small things but also the more ideological value questions. (Huttunen et al. 2005, 20–26.)

The issue of multiculturality is often divided into two themes: accepting and appreciating the culture differences or seeing multiculturality as a problem. The ones who see multiculturality as a positive thing are happy for example about that there are exotic food options in the Finnish supermarket or that they will get friends from different countries. The problems can be caused due to lack of understanding and handling the cultural differences and due to the inequality between the Finnish citizens and minorities. (Huttunen et al. 2005, 22.)

A blog writing from Finland´s economist union also stated that the Finnish companies will become more and more multicultural within the next decade and that language skills are not enough anymore; people need to understand different cultures and their characteristics. The writer also said that travelling and school exchanges abroad are common among students but he suggested more active participation in practical trainings abroad by saying that they are good ways to learn not only language and get working experience but to learn the culture as well. (Koistinen 2013.)

4.3 Adaptation of foreign people into the Finnish society

Moving to another country and culture can be mentally stressful and to settle to the new environment and conditions can take some time. Some factors influencing in the adaptation to Finland are mentioned in this section.

From an article in Finnish magazine, Suomen Kuvalehti and from a story about a project (Spurtti-projekti) purposed to recruit foreign employees conducted by the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment in the Southwest area of Finland, I identified the following factors affecting in adaptation to Finland:

- finnish bureaucracy
- difficulties in finding friends, loneliness
- family and spouse issues, children's possibilities for education
- character of receiving society and tolerance towards foreign people and cultures
- language barriers
- climate (Vuorinen 2010; Spurtti-projekti 2013.)

It is easy to understand why these factors have an effect in adaptation. It was mentioned in the story of Spurtti- project that the Finnish bureaucracy can be rather slow. Running errands with the Finnish authorities can be problematic and finding information about the Finnish working life is difficult. In addition, making friends is difficult which causes loneliness. (Spurtti-projekti 2013.) The article in Suomen Kuvalehti on how to survive in Finland as a foreign person stated that in general Finns' English language skills are good but still knowing Finnish is seen compulsory in order to really adapt to the Finnish culture and to find a job. It was also mentioned that the family members' conditions need improvement and support in the adaptation process. One suggestion to help the adaptation of family members and especially children was international schools. The story stated that for some people already the Finnish climate with its four seasons can be a big shock. Lastly, one important factor discussed in the article was the attitude and

tolerance of Finnish society towards foreign people. Finns were described introvert making foreign people feel like outsiders. It was discussed that Finland should be more open, active in international politics and welcoming towards foreign people. (Vuorinen 2010.)

4.4 Act on the Integration of Immigrants and reception of asylum seekers

Finnish law has a point about integration of immigrants called Act on the Integration of Immigrants and reception of Asylum seekers, which purpose is:

> ”to promote the integration, equality and freedom of choice of immigrants through measures which help them to acquire the essential knowledge and skills they need to function in society”.

The law determines integration immigrant’s participation in society and working life while also maintaining their own culture characteristics, such as language. Integration also involves measures and resources offered by the authorities to promote and support integration. (FINLEX 1999.)

4.5 Hofstede´s model of culture shock and acculturation

According to Hofstede there is often a standard model of acculturation process, which a foreign person undergoes when faced with a new cultural environment. For example, a person can experience such kind of process during an international assignment. (Hofstede 1996, 209.)

In that new cultural environment, foreign person typically experiences some form of culture shock. It is illustrated in the figure 2 below that people´s mental software contains basic values, which are perceived natural and unconscious for they are obtained at very early age. On the top of values are the more superficial layers of culture: rituals, heroes and symbols. The foreign person can learn some of the symbols and rituals in the new cultural environment but values are so deep in the core layers of culture that it is not likely for the person to fully understand them. As a result, the foreign person in a new country or environment will probably feel distress or frustration since (s)he is not able to fully connect with the new culture. In some

cases the foreign person may even suffer from physical symptoms and may need medical help. (Hofstede 1996, 209.)

The acculturation curve in figure 2 describes the emotions and stages people encounter in the beginning of foreign cultural environment experience. The figure is a diagram where feelings (positive and negative) are on the vertical curve and time on the horizontal one. Phase 1 is normally short period of *euphoria*: the person feels excited to travel and to experience new things. Phase 2 is *culture shock* period when the attraction of new is already gone and the real life begins. Phase 3, the stage of *acculturation* starts when the foreign person has little by little managed to get accustomed to the new environment and conditions as well as adopted part of the local values and gained social contacts. Phase 4 is the last stage of the acculturation process called *stable state*. There are three possibilities on how the foreign person can feel in the stable state: negative compared to home (4a), if the person is not able to become part of the community and culture or it can be as good as before (4b) which means the person has more or less adopted both home and the new culture. Last possibility is that the person feels totally comfortable in the new culture environment (4c) and is on the same or even higher level than the natives. (Hofstede 1996, 209-210.)

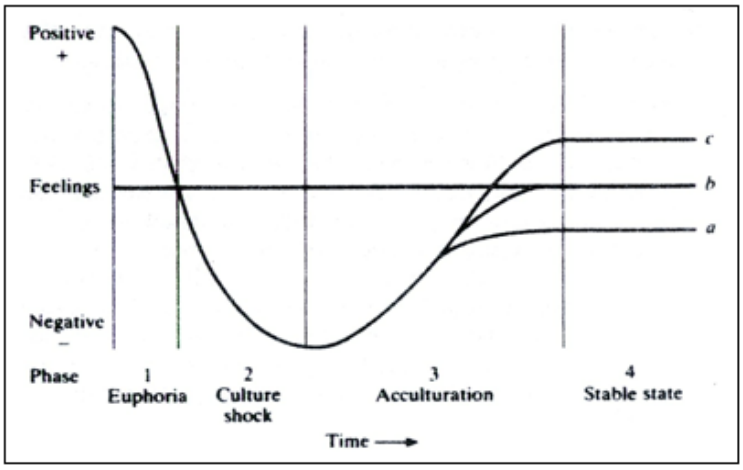

Figure 2. The acculturation curve. (Hofstede 1996, 210)

There is no specific length of time in the scale of acculturation curve in Figure 2. People who have stayed in a new environment for up to three months have reported to experience euphoria, culture shock and acculturation phases within that period.

People, who have stayed in a different cultural environment for several years, have reported culture shock phase to last a year or more before acculturation. (Hofstede 1996, 210).

4.6 The process of cross-cultural adaptation according to Kim

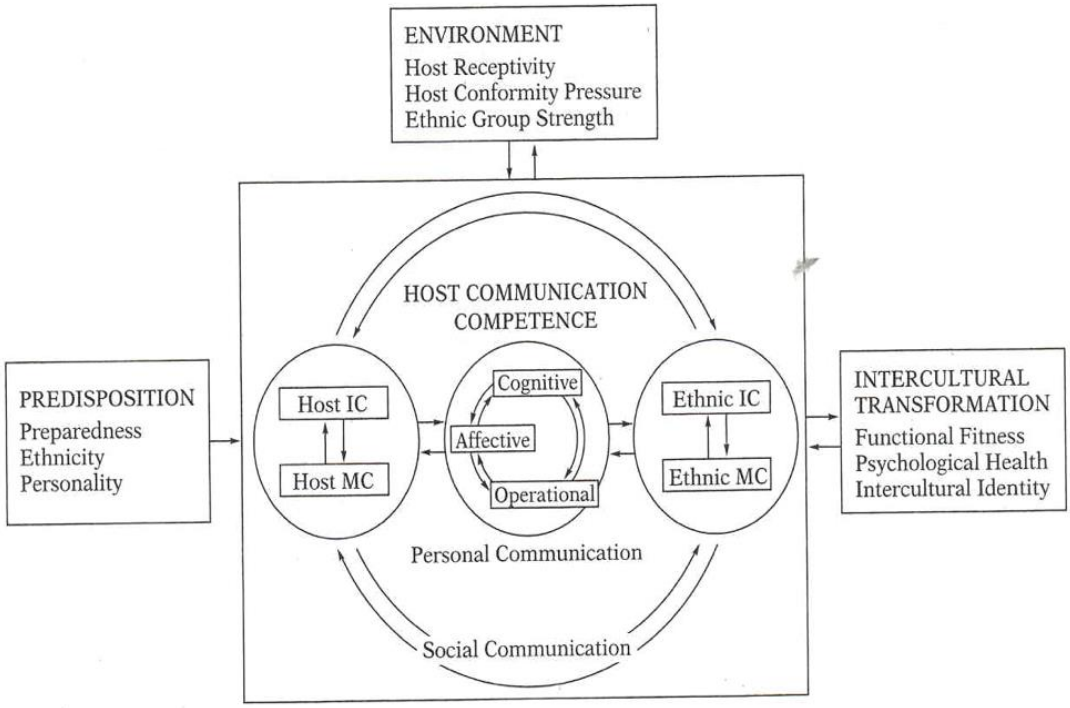

FIGURE 2 *A Communication Model of the Structure of Cross-Cultural Adaptation*
(NOTE: IC = interpersonal communication; MC = mass communication.)

Figure 3. Factors influencing cross-cultural adaptation: a structural model. (Kim 2001, 87)

The model of Kim´s cross-cultural adaptation in figure 3 divides adaptation into six interacting dimensions. These are Personal communication: host communication competence, Social communication: host and ethnocentric, Environment, Predisposition and Intercultural transformation. Each of them can be divided further into smaller components, which are explained shortly below. Kim uses term “stranger” to describe the person in the adaptation process. (Kim 2001.)

4.6.1 Personal communication: host communication competence

Personal communication is the innermost dimension of Kim's cross-cultural adaptation model. Having the competence to communicate effectively in the host environment is crucial in order to adapt. Kim defines it as *the host communication competence*. Host communication competence consists of understanding the language, culture values and norms and correct communication behavior in handling information in the host environment. Host communication competence is divided into three components: cognitive, affective and operational. *Cognitive competence* is the knowledge and understanding of host communication, which consists of language and cultural verbal and nonverbal codes. *Affective competence* is the stranger's emotional capability to handle the challenges in the host environment and the willingness to adapt and learn to live in the culture by also making changes in stranger´s own cultural habits. Furthermore, affective competence includes the attitude towards the host community and the local people. *Operational competence* is where cognitive and affective competences combine. This enables stranger to successful social transactions through technical skills of carrying out the daily tasks. It is synchrony of being able to choose the right way of communication and resourcefulness in creating solutions to handle unfamiliar situations and to maintain social relationships. (Kim 2001, 72-73, 106-108, 114-116; Nieminen 2009, 29.)

4.6.2 Social communication: host and ethnocentric communication.

Social communication is divided into two elements: *host and ethnic social communications.* They surround personal communication in the figure 3 meaning they are connected to each other. The relation reflects through personal communication´s host communication competence, which gives skills to the stranger to interact in the host social communication environment. Host social communication can be divided into interpersonal and mass communication. Host interpersonal communication helps strangers to build relationships with the local people and to learn the correct communication practices from them. Host mass communication is the large-scale communication of the host culture, the media´s influence in the social and value systems. (Kim 2001, 122-123, 130; Nieminen 2009, 30.)

The ethnic social communication means stranger´s networks in the host environment from his own country or ethnic group. These networks give support in the beginning of the adaptation, but can limit social relations to only those from the same ethnic group, which can thus slow down adaptation to the host culture. The ethnic social communication is also divided into interpersonal communication where the stranger relies to his fellow ethnic friends during uncertain times and mass communication where the large-scale communication is within the stranger´s own ethnic group. For example, the media focuses on the news one ethnic group´s home country. This again, as mentioned earlier, can prevent adaptation. (Kim 2001, 134-141; Nieminen 2009, 30.)

4.6.3 Environment

According to Kim, there are three main environmental factors influencing in the stranger's adaptation, namely host receptivity, host conformity pressure, and ethnic group strength. *Host receptivity* refers to the level how open and welcoming the host environment is towards the stranger. The level of acceptance is often affected by how ethnically or geographically familiar or different the stranger is compared to the host people. For example, Finns are more likely to be welcoming towards Western Europeans than Asians since the Western Europeans are ethnically closer to them and thus seem more familiar. Furthermore, people in the capital city Helsinki are probably more used to seeing foreign people than those living in small towns or in the countryside. (Kim 2001, 78-79; Nieminen 2009, 30.)

Host conformity pressure means the expectations and pressure put on the stranger from the host society to act according to their habits, for example to know the language. The pressure is especially high towards strangers who plan to stay in the society and culture permanently, such as immigrants. Even to those who are staying temporarily, for example international assignees and international students, they experience some level of pressure for they associate with the local people and contribute in the daily activities in the host society. Moreover, in the heterogeneous host societies the amount of pressure is usually less compared to homogenous societies. (Kim 2001, 79-80, 152-154; Nieminen 2009, 31.)

Ethnic group strength means how strong position the stranger's ethnic group has in the host society. A strong ethnic group has more influence and power in the society. However, a strong group can work against the adaptation for it can pressure the stranger to maintain the original cultural habits if for example the strangers interacts only with the ethnic group members. (Kim 2001, 80-81; Nieminen 2009, 31.)

4.6.4 Predisposition

Predisposition means the factors within the strangers themselves that influence in the adaptation. Kim has named these factors *preparedness for change, ethnic proximity* and *adaptive personality. Preparedness for change* refers to a stranger's readiness for learning and adapting to the new environment as well as the ability to handle challenges. Other important factors are cultural learning before entering to the new host society, education level, media exposure and experience in interacting with people from different cultural background, for example through travelling. The level of preparedness is usually influenced by the reasons behind coming to a new environment. It has a great impact on the readiness whether the move is voluntary or involuntary. (Kim 2001, 82-83.)

Ethnic proximity refers to the stranger´s overall ethnic similarity and compatibility with the mainstream ethnicity of the host people. In Kim´s view, ethnic similarity means the physical characteristics of the stranger compared to the natives. Ethnic compatibility is then the level of compatibility between the stranger´s cultural values and norms with the natives. Naturally, the higher these similarities and compatibilities are, the less stressful it is to adapt to the host society. (Kim 2001, 83-84.)

Adaptive personality means the personality factors that help the adaptation process. According to Kim, these personality factors are openness, strength and positivity. Being open enables the stranger to be willing to learn and to gather information from the new culture. Strength helps in facing challenges and it attributes to having persistence. Positivity reflects in the attitude of believing and having faith that things will arrange. (Kim 2001, 84-85.)

4.6.5 Intercultural transformation

Intercultural transformation is the result of cross-cultural adaptation process. There are three levels of transformation: functional fitness, psychological health and intercultural identity. *Functional fitness* means that the stranger is capable of operating in the host environment; (s)he can carry out the daily activities and feel comfortable in the environment. (Kim 2001, 183-187.)

Psychological health can usually not be seen very well because it is a "normal, taken for granted state of being", as Kim describes it. Throughout the adaptation process the stranger has experienced a lot of things, which might have caused stress and shaken mental health. At a healthy psychological state, host communication competency of cognitive, affective and operational capabilities work in harmony and create balance. (Kim, 187-190.)

Intercultural identity is the final stage of cross-cultural adaptation. The stranger´s identity has expanded to consist of both original cultural identity and the new adopted culture. Through individualization, the stranger becomes aware of his or her own identity and the identity of others but at the same time sees the universal oneness of human nature through universalization. (Kim 2001, 190-193, Nieminen 2009, 33.)

4.6.6 The role of language in adaptation

The role of language is one of the most important factors in the adaptation to a new culture and environment. Thus, it can also be the biggest challenge and obstacle of not fully adapting. It will help in creating contacts and social network at the work place to have at least basic knowledge of the local language. Furthermore, getting employed and educated, receiving information and communication become easier. Knowing the language will help the person to feel part of the society and therefore, it is one key factor in foreign person´s well-being. There are several factors affecting in learning a new language. For example, person´s education background, experience in learning languages and motivation. To learn the Finnish language, active use of the new language, independent studying, contacts with Finnish people and being in a Finnish environment support in learning the Finnish language. (Vartia, Begbom, Giorgiani, Rintala-Rasmus, Riala & Salminen 2007, 66-67; Laiho 2008, 11-12.)

Another reason why language has such an important role in person´s adaptation is the cultural side. Language and culture are unquestionably connected to each other. Understanding a culture is impossible without taking into account the language. Language is used in the communication so the vocabulary and way of speaking are influenced by the culture, its values and norms. All in all, knowing the language helps in understanding the people, their lifestyle and cultural background. (Ferraro 2006, 54-59.)

5 CULTURE DIFFERENCES

Culture is one key factor when comparing different countries and nationals. Culture has an effect on everything. Each country has its own culture and therefore, each culture is also different. This chapter gives few from many existing definitions to culture and presents the cultures from the target countries Finland, China and India. In addition, four theories about culture differences from Richard Gesteland, Frons Trompenaars, Edward and Mildred Hall, Florencence Kluckhohn and Geert Hofstede are introduced shortly. I chose Hofstede´s dimensions of culture- theory for a closer framework to this research, because it is probably the most famous one and I believe it reflects the cultural aspects from the target countries. The meaning of cross-cultural communication is explained last.

5.1 Definitions of culture

The list of definitions about culture is endless. There are few generally accepted examples below which I also think describe culture accurately.

According to Geert Hofstede culture is ”the collective programming of the mind, which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.” (Hofstede 1996, 5)

Anthropologist Edward Hall defines culture in relation to a country where every culture and country have their own identity, language, nonverbal communication methods, material culture, history and ways to do things. (Hall 1981, 1-2.)

According to anthropologists Kroeber and Kluckhohn “culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditioning elements of future action.” (Adler 1997, 14-15.)

5.2 Hofstede´s manifestations of culture at different levels of depth

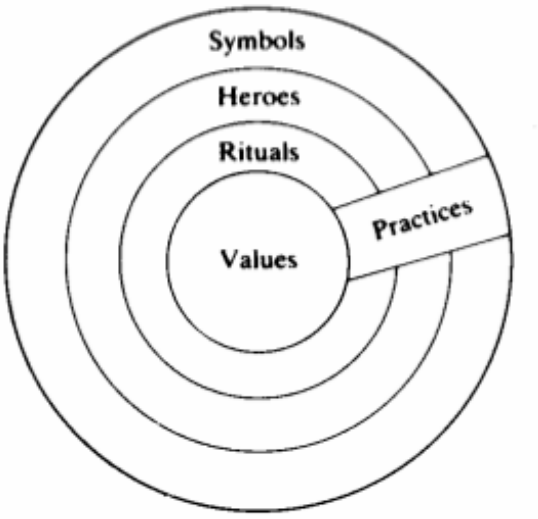

Figure 4. The ”onion diagram”: manifestations of culture at different levels of depth. (Hofstede 1996, 9)

Hofstede suggests culture to appear in four ways illustrated in the figure 4. The figure represents layers of an onion where symbols represent the most superficial appearance of culture, values the deepest level, with heroes and rituals between them. (Hofstede 1996, 7.)

Symbols are words, pictures, gestures or objects that have a certain meaning, which only those who share the same culture can understand. Symbols can easily be copied from one cultural group to another and that is why it is the most superficial level of culture. *Heroes* are persons, real or imaginary, alive or dead who possess characteristics that are appreciated in a culture. Thus, they are models for behavior. Also phantasy figures like Batman in the USA or Asterix in France can be seen as heroes. *Rituals* are collective activities, which are considered socially important in a culture. They are not technically necessary but have become such within a culture. For example ways to greet or show respect to others and religious ceremonies are often rituals. (Hofstede 1996, 7-8.)

As illustrated in the Figure 4, there is a term *practices* above symbols, heroes and rituals. It means the three levels are visible to an outside observer. However, the

cultural meaning is not visible. The cultural meaning is interpreted only by the practices of the insiders. (Hofstede 1996, 8.)

Finally, in figure 4, the core consists of values. *Values* mean tendencies to prefer certain affairs at given time above others. Values also have opposite ends from each other like evil and good or ugly and beautiful. They are learned and acquired preferences already as children, but not consciously. A person grows into prefer the values within a culture, because they are seen as norms. Norms represent the standard values for a particular group, which are accepted as normal object or behavior. (Hofstede 1996, 8-9.)

5.3 Gesteland´s cross-cultural business behavior model

Richard Gesteland has created a cross-cultural business behavior model based on his over thirty-year career experience as expatriate manager and international negotiator in many countries. He has noticed that variances in four general models for cross-cultural business behavior help to understand international marketing, negotiating and managing. The four models are below. Country profiles from Finland, China and India are in Table 2.

1. Deal focus versus relationship focus. Cultures differ in whether they are more doing the deal- focused or building relationships-focused.

2. Informal versus formal cultures. The differences occur when doing business with more formal and hierarchical culture and other way round.

3. Rigid-time (monochronic) versus fluid-time (polychronic) cultures. Other cultures see time more tangible and are rather strict in spending it when the others are more relaxed in making schedules.

4. Expressive versus reserved cultures. In expressive cultures, people communicate in many ways, verbally, nonverbally and writing when reserved cultures are not so expressive and it can cause confusion, especially in a business situation. (Briscoe & Schuler 2004, 123-124.)

Table 2. International cross-cultural country profiles. (Briscoe & Schuler 2004, 125)

Finland	India	China
Deal-focused	Relationships-focused	Relationship-focused
Moderately formal	Formal	Formal
Monochronic	Polychronic	Monochronic
Reserved	Reserved	Reserved

5.4 Frons Trompenaars' research on cultural differences

Frons Trompenaars has done research on different aspects of culture related to these issues: the way people give status to the members of their culture, attitudes towards time and nature, individuals and groups and relationships between the people in the society and culture. He found five cultural factors into which countries can be categorized: Universal versus particular (emphasis on rules versus relationships), collectivism versus individualism, range of expressed emotions, range of association with other people and status according among people. The overall results of Trompenaars´research are similar to Hofstede´s study, which is presented in section 5.7. (Briscoe & Schuler 2004, 121.)

5.5 Hall´s culture difference theory in the dimension of high and low context communication

Edward and Mildred Hall´s theory about culture differences is based on differences in communication. Their research deals with these dimensions: High and low context communication, monochronic and polychronic time, personal space, fast and slow messages, fast and slow information flow and action chains. (Nunez, Mahdi & Popma 2009, 11.)

This research explains briefly only the high and low context communication dimension because I believe it to be the most useful dimension in explaining the culture differences in this research.

In low context cultures the communication is clear and the words in delivering the message are important. People want detailed and precise information. Finland is an

example of low context culture. On the contrast, in high context cultures the communication occurs often nonverbally and the whole context of the message is important. For example, only a gesture can tell a whole message and reveal the big picture. Both India and China belong to high context cultures. (Nunez et al. 2009, 12-13.)

5.6 Kluckhohn´s values orientation theory

Florence Kluckhohn has created a theory about values orientation based on basic assumptions. The idea is that every person, anywhere in the world and throughout all ages, has had to face many problems in order to survive. Every culture has multiple options to deal with the problems but people prefer particular options over others. According to Kluckhohn cultures have different ways to handle in the following categories. (Nunez et al. 2009, 33.)

1. Dominating, in Harmony or Subjugated to Nature. In nature-dominating cultures, people solve problems systematically by changing the environment to adjust to their needs. In harmony with nature- cultures, people survive by adjusting and accepting some of their problems. Some problems can be solved but some not. In subjugated to nature-cultures, people accept their situation totally and survive in that way. (Nunez et al. 2009, 33-34.)

2. Past, Present and Future Orientation. Culture or society can be a mix of all those three or just one is the dominating orientation. The orientation of time has an effect on the way time is planned, whether the culture is focused on past and the history, present where plans are short term and living in the moment is important or future with emphasis on goals and plans near or far. (Nunez et al. 2009, 36.)

3. Doing or being cultures: task or relation orientation. In doing cultures, people have the attitude ”live to work” and they are task oriented. In being cultures on the other hand, people have the attitude ”work to live” and they are more interested in relationships. (Nunez et al. 2009, 37.)

4. Individualism and collectivism. In individual cultures, people define themselves by their own accomplishments and independency is respected. In collective cultures,

people define themselves as a part of group and community, people belonging and responsibility to the group. (Nunez et al. 2009, 39.)

4. Private or public space. Cultures are different in using the physical space. Some cultures think more space is private, for example a person´s own room or handbag when another culture considers the same space public and they do not mind sharing their property or space. (Nunez et al. 2009, 41.)

5. Human nature. Cultures have tendency to think humans are either basically good or basically evil or sometimes combination of both. This reflects also in the McGregor´s X management theory where managers either think employees dislike their job and need to be controlled in order to perform or the managers trust the employees and do not feel the need to control them, on the opposite, they include them in the decision making and give them responsibility. The first option applies in the cultures where humans are seen basically evil and the second one in the cultures with basically good assumptions of humans. (Nunez et al. 2009, 43.)

5.7 Hofstede´s dimensions of culture

In the second half of the 20th century, Geert Hofstede carried out a survey about values in more than 50 countries for people who all worked for the same multinational company, IBM, in its local subsidiaries. At first you might expect the employee´s answers to the questions be similar to each other but in fact, the differences were big. The nationality differences in the answers stand out clearly and therefore, the aspect of culture varies a lot from country to country. Based on the study, Hofstede identified four areas, and added a fifth one later, in which the countries and cultures differ. Hofstede called these areas five dimensions of culture:

1. Power Distance, 2. Masculinity versus femininity, 3. Individualism versus collectivism, 4. Uncertainty avoidance and 5. Long-term orientation versus short-term orientation. (Hofstede 1996, Nunez et al 2009, 47.)

In Hofstede´s study countries could score points from 1 to 100 on each of the dimensions above. Some countries scored even more than 100 due to statistical procedures. Later Hofstede added more countries to the list which were not in the

original IMB- study by having their five dimensions scores calculated. The scores of the target countries' cultures are in Table 3. (Nunez et al. 2009.)

5.7.1 Power distance

According to Hofstede (1996) power distance "is the degree in which the less powerful members of an organization accept that power is distributed unequally. "In the normal life, power distance means the way people are equal or unequal for example at work, school or in the family based on factors such as status or age. (Nunez et al. 2009, 48.)

In low power distance countries, people are rather informal and equal. For example, at school the students can often just speak and ask questions without raising their hand or asking for permission and in the work place, the employees do not always need to wait for their supervisor´s orders, they can take initiative. Examples from low power distance countries are the Netherlands, Israel, Scandinavian countries (Finland), Germany and the German speaking countries, Great Britain and English-speaking countries such as USA, New Zealand and Australia. (Nunez et all. 2009.)

In high power distance countries, people have accepted that other people have more power because they have some certain status, they are older or otherwise your superiors. For example, your parents, manager and teachers. You should not argue against them and opinions are given in a respectful and sometimes indirect way. Examples from high power distance are countries in Asia, Latin America, West Africa and Eastern Europe. (Nunez et al. 2009.)

5.7.2 Masculinity versus femininity

In relation to culture´s behavior and values masculinity and femininity represent the biological differences typically seen between men and women. The differences according to Hofstede are related to gender-roles, to the way people are either modest or assertive and the values in a society, which can be called either more hard or soft values. The values of a society reflect in everyday life, at work, at school and in private life. (Nunez et al. 2009, 55 & Hofstede 1996, 79-82.)

A masculine culture is a society with values such as achievement, success and assertiveness. The people thrive to be the best and that also gives popularity. The gender-roles are also divided between men and women; men are expected to be tough, assertive and competitive when women are expected to be tender, modest and interested in the quality of life. (Nunez et al. 2009, 55.)

A feminine culture is the opposite of masculine culture. Modesty and caring for others are valued in feminine cultures. The gender-roles usually overlap, both men and women are expected to be modest, tender and interested in the quality of life. In feminine culture, the people also want to be the best, but they are modest about it, showing off is not appreciated. Finland belongs to a feminine culture and China and India are medium-feminine cultures. (Nunez et al. 2009, 55.)

5.7.3 Individualism versus collectivism

In an individualistic culture, people are ”I-oriented”. They have learned it by growing up with the core family, parents and siblings, which means you are mostly responsible for yourself. Individualistic cultures value independency and children are taught to do things own their own already at young age. Being honest and open by speaking your mind is another value in an individualistic culture. Therefore, a direct communication where the message is clear is also preferred. Finland is an example of an individualistic culture. (Nunez et al. 2009, 50.)

In a collective culture on the other hand, people are ”We-oriented”. They have learned it by growing up in big families where family is seen as the nuclear family members and also other relatives, such as grandparents and cousins. People are almost never alone and therefore, caring for others is important. People learn to become responsible members of group where the group means all the social networks a person has (family, friends, neighbors, school friends and work colleagues). Communication is rather indirect and even saying ”no” is usually made in a soft, indirect way so that the person does not hurt the other person´s feelings. Most of the countries in Asia are an example of collective culture. (Nunez et al. 2009, 51.)

5.7.4 Uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance is the way a culture reacts or is prepared to react towards uncertain, unstructured situations. The need for predictability is shown in having strict formal and informal rules. (Nunez et al. 2009, 57.)

In countries with high uncertainty avoidance, people are used to rules, knowing exactly what is and is not allowed and what is expected of them. People enjoy clear structures and both formal and informal rules. (Nunez et al. 2009, 58.)

In countries with low uncertainty avoidance, people are used to flexibility and flexible rules. They have learned that everything in life cannot be predicted and uncertainty is normal. People enjoy assignments with room for creativity and less structure. Finland, China and India are all cultures with low uncertainty avoidance. (Nunez et al. 2009, 58-59.)

5.7.5 Long- term orientation versus short-term orientation

The scores on this fifth dimension are actually based on the Chinese Values Survey (CVS) done by Michael Harris bond and not on Hofstede´s original IBM study. There were 100 respondents from 23 countries in the CVS research and the respondents were students. (Nunez et al. 2009, 61.)

Countries with long-term orientation believe that perseverance leads to results. Students study hard at school, because they think it will help them in becoming successful in the future. Failure is seen as a result of not working hard enough. In working life, self-discipline and responsibility are valued and there is not much free time. People are economical moneywise and believe in investment´s returns in ten years. China and India are countries with long-term orientation. Finland does not have country scores on the long-term orientation but according to Nunez et al. Finland has medium-high long-term orientation. (Nunez et al. 2009, 61.)

Countries with short-term orientation believe in results with short efforts. Students also work hard, but either success or failure is seen to be based on luck and chance. In working life, people value more success, self-expression and freedom. When it comes to investments, people believe in returns in one year. (Nunez et al. 2009, 61.)

Table 3. Country scores on Hofstede´s Five Dimensions of Culture from the target countries. (Nunez 2009, 63-64)

	PDI Power Distance	IDV Individualism	MAS Masculinity	UAI Uncertainty avoidance	LTO Long Term Orientation
China*	80	20	66	30	118
Finland	33	63	26	59	
India	77	48	56	40	61

*estimated values

5.8 The three target cultures: Finland, India and China

In this section the target cultures of Finland, India and China are introduced. The focus is on the working culture aspect and in the differences compared to the Finnish culture. Furthermore, the differences are reflected with Hofstede´s theory of culture dimensions.

Working culture is the generally accepted values and norms at the work place, which control the actions of the employees. It is a powerful element that shapes work enjoyment, work relationships and work processes. Culture cannot actually be seen but it manifests for example in people´s behavior, decision-making, symbols and daily work practices. Especially Organization´s management influence in the organization culture because they set an example for the employees and give strategic direction. (Heathfield S, 2013.)

5.8.1 Finnish culture

The Finnish working culture is based on equality. Men and women are treated the same way and majority of the women are working. The Finnish culture is individualistic and so individuality, ability to take initiative and being hard-working are valued. Another largely appreciated value is punctuality and following agreed schedules, especially in doing business. Overall, the Finnish values are based on the feminine culture and Finns can be described as friendly, quiet, timid, prudent, calm and reliable. Finns also enjoy strict observance of agreements and regulations. (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2013; Davidsson, McKee & Sarkki 2001, 17-19.)

In most of the work fields in Finland the working way is hectic. The regular working hours are eight hours per day and forty hours per week. The working life changes quickly and in addition to good education level people are required continuous training for new skills and competencies. Qualified people are expected to update their skills and know-how all the time and to be ready for new challenges. (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2010.)

Finland has two official languages: Finnish and Swedish. At least basics of Finnish language is usually required at almost all the workplaces, even though English is normally the corporate language in the big companies. It is in practice when a person actually needs the Finnish language, because not necessarily all the information and instructions are in some other language than Finnish. However, interestingly, there are also regions in Finland, like Ostrobothnia and some parts in the Southern Finland, where it is possible to survive with only knowledge of Swedish. (Ministry of Employment and the economy 2013.)

There was a story in the local newspaper of Vaasa (Pohjalainen) in August, which dealt with the Finnish working culture. According to the story punctuality and showing up to meetings in time is seen very important in Finland. The story also stated that the hierarchy level between employees and managers is rather low and the relationship is quite informal. Other issues that came up in the story were that Finns do not have a habit of small talk; they are direct and go straight to the point. (Luukkanen 2013.)

5.8.2 Indian culture

India is a diverse country with its many religions, regional differences and population of 1,237 billion according to the World Bank in 2012 (The World Bank 2013). An important factor ruling the Indian life style is the religion. There is no state religion and no requirements to practice any religion. Nevertheless, spiritual traditions and beliefs are respected and the Indians celebrate over fifty national, religious and regional holidays. Due to the religious beliefs cow is seen as a sacred animal and Indian do not eat pork or beef. In general, Indians prefer vegetarian food. (Budhwar & Varma 2011, 56.)

The Indian culture is based on high power distance where the hierarchy level and cast systems rule the daily life. People are treated differently depending on person´s status and cast. For example, in working life the managers are on the highest level of hierarchy and they possess power. The employees expect managers to give orders and make decisions, which the employees follow. The managers are also expected to check the quality of the work. Unlike in the western countries and in Finland, the managers trust their employees to do what they are supposed to do and the results are usually trusted to be good. Furthermore, the employees do not seek for responsibility in their work; they rather want someone else to say what to do. This is also different compared to Finland, where initiative and freedom in performing the job are appreciated. The cast systems shows in a way that the ones who are on the higher level do not do certain tasks which are seen to be lower casts jobs. Typically, the higher-level people use their head and the lower level people use their body and do more physical work. (Kolanad 2001, 256-260.)

The Indian society is highly collective and the family is extremely important. Due to the collectivism, also in the work place social relationships are key factor in doing business and Indians invest in good relationship with their business partnerships because it builds trust. Indian society is also rather used to uncertainty caused by nature, corruption, low per capita income and gap between the rich and poor and so they are low in uncertainty avoidance. Also due to the uncertainty, patience is seen as the primary value because to get things done takes time for example the Indian bureaucracy can be complex and time-consuming. Efficiency is not necessarily appreciated. (Budhwar & Varma 2011, 56, 171; Kolanad 2011, 261, 266, 270.)

Another interesting issue is the relationship between men and women. Indian culture is medium-feminine where the men are expected to work long hours and women typically take care of the house and children. However, it is also common for the women, especially on the lower cast, to work but they are not necessarily treated equally at the workplace, for example a female Indian manager might be quite uncommon. (Budhwar & Varma 2011, 55.)

5.8.3 Chinese culture

There were 1,237 billion inhabitants in China in 2012 making it the largest country by population (The World Bank, 2013). Most of the people are populated in the big urban areas and big cities such as Shanghai, Beijing and Hong Kong even though the country´s size is close to Russia and Canada. However, many parts in China are almost uninhabitable, for example the grasslands in Mongolia. (Flower 2003, 14-17.)

China is a combination of communist political ideology and capitalist economy, which together form the society of ”socialist market”. In reality, the country is rather authoritarian and the free-market is largely controlled pleading to the ancient Chinese cultural traditions. China is a country with many opposites; the yin and yang, the ancient and modern China, old architecture compared to the modern skyscrapers. Religious philosophical influences are Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism. The communication is low context style. Symbols and expressions have a great role in the conversion and the Chinese are cautious in using the word “no”. They avoid saying “no” directly because they don’t want to hurt the other person´s feelings. They might soften the “no” by saying it in some other way and the person has to interpret it form the context (Foster 2000, 49-50, 52, 55.)

The management style is very hierarchical in China and so the power distance is high. In addition, employees are normally not given compliments in public. In fact, the Chinese culture is collective and it appears in the form of individuals trying to achieve a common goal, to work for the good of the community. (Foster, 76-77.)

The equality between men and women in business life is at least in theory more or less true. However, there number of men and women in every profession at every level is probably not equal, but that can also be due to other reasons. As in Finland, the Chinese highly appreciate punctuality. They expect you to be on time, as they will arrive in time themselves too. Yet, like in India, patience is seen as a virtue for often strict schedules are not possible due to traffic or queues so losing patience is considered embarrassing. It is also considered embarrassing to ”lose face”. The Chinese do not want to look bad in front of others and for example, if they do not

know an answer to a question or they do not want to answer, they try to cover their embarrassment. (Flower 2003, 56-57, 142-143.)

5.9 Cross-cultural communication

In a global business environment communication can become difficult, because every employee, manager and other business parties have their own cultures and cultural ways of perceiving and interpreting things. Therefore, in business activities such as negotiating, decision making, leading and exchanging information and ideas, the ability to communicate successfully when people are from different cultures is crucial. (Adler 1997, 67-68.)

Communication is involved in all kinds of activities. Everything a person does or says, even just a gesture or expression is communication and sends a message to the receiver. In other words, communication includes verbal messages, words, and non-verbal messages, such as behavior, tone of voice and facial expressions. In a simple form communication can be defined as the exchange of meaning: it is a person´s attempt to let another person know what he or she means. (Adler 1997, 68.)

As explained in the previous paragraph, communication is a two-way game; it has both message sender and message receiver. Figure 5 illustrates that in cross-cultural communication the sent message is not identical to the received message. Communication is more symbolic behavior, a person cannot communicate his or her ideas, feelings or information directly, but the person needs to symbolize them before they can be communicated. The producing of a symbol message is called encoding and decoding stands for receiving a meaning from a symbol message. The Figure 5 shows also the encoding and decoding process where the message senders need to encode the meaning of their message into a form that the receiver will understand. Those ways can be words or behavior. Then receivers must decode the words and behavior, the symbols, into forms that have meaning to them. (Adler 1997, 68.)

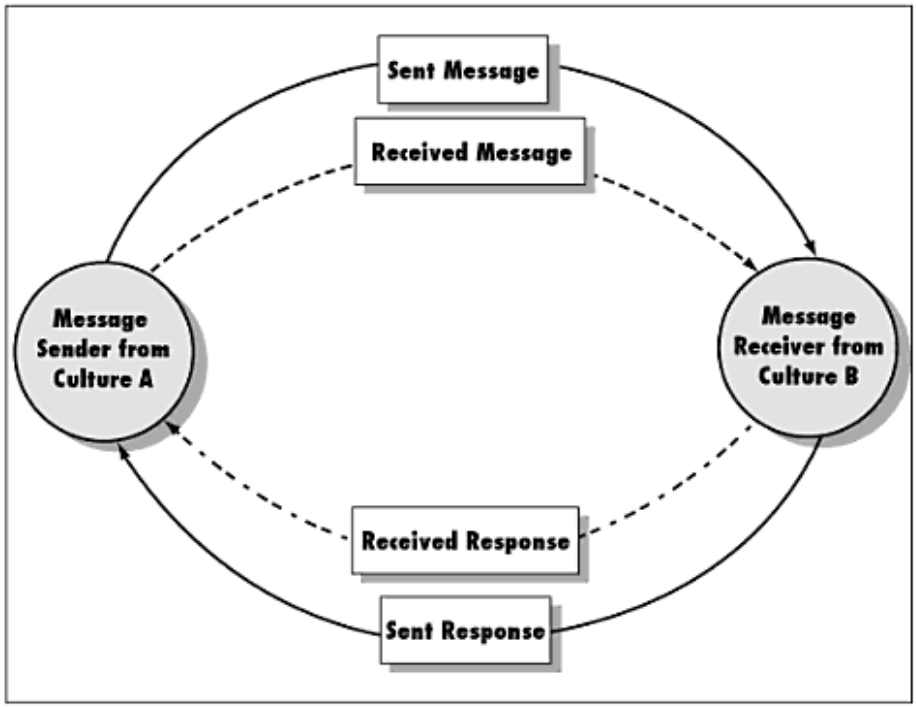

Figure 5. Communicating Across Cultures. (Adler 1997, 69)

Cross-cultural communication occurs between persons from different cultures; a person from culture A sends a message to culture B. Cross-cultural miscommunication occurs when the receiver's culture does not understand the sender´s intended message. The chance for miscommunication is bigger, when the difference between the message sender´s and receiver´s culture is big. (Adler 1997, 70.)

6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretical framework is a summary of the main points in the research theory in which the research and the empirical study are based on. Figure 6 below is a model I have developed reflecting the most important factors related to adaptation and intercultural management in a company. The model is based on the theories introduced in this research from which I have collected the main points and developed my own model for adaptation and intercultural management. There are seven main points in the model in Figure 6: company factors, local society and adaptation to the working environment, culture differences and working culture, factors related to the person, local language, cross-cultural communication and social network. Each of them is introduced below.

Company factors include issues such as organizational culture, acknowledging foreign employees in the processes and procedures, management style, successful recruitment and selection as well as induction. Through all of these factors the company can affect to the adaptation process. Organizational culture means the norms, customs and values accepted in the organization, which influence in everything in the company. Tolerance towards foreign employees and acknowledging them in the company´s processes and procedures are other important factors in the adaptation process. Management style refers to the ability to manage foreign subordinates and the issues which need to be taken into consideration when managing them. One common difference between cultures in the management style is the hierarchy level, the formality or informality, between managers and subordinates. Successful recruitment and selection emphasize the meaning of selecting employees who have the ability to work in an international environment. A relevant selection criteria is presented in the model´s dimension “factors related to the person”. Induction refers to the importance of proper induction to the work and to the working environment. If the person being inducted is foreign, it should also be taken into account in the induction process. The criterion for successful multinational induction was introduced in chapter 3, in section 3.4.

Local society is the foundation for the whole adaptation and intercultural management, because the norms, customs and values are based on it. Hence, working

environment and all the other dimensions in the model are influenced by it. Tolerance and attitude of the locals towards foreign people reflect in feeling accepted and is thus important in the adaptation process.

Culture differences and working culture reflect the knowledge of different cultures as well as the interest to understand and learn more about other cultures. All in all, the different cultures should be seen as a possibility and richness.

Factors related to the person comprehend personality characteristics, such as openness, positive attitude, cultural empathy, not being afraid of challenges and being nonjudgmental. Furthermore, important factors are person´s motivation to move abroad, communication skills, such as ability to negotiate and express yourself, and intercultural experiences, for example through traveling or dealing with people from different cultural background. These factors are relevant for every person dealing with intercultural situations, hence for both managers and employees in multinational companies.

Language is one of the key issues in both adaptation and in the interaction between the managers and employees. It is important to have a common language, which both parties understand. Typically in intercultural situations it is English. In terms of adaptation learning the *local language* and actively using it becomes more vital because language is part of the culture. Therefore, understanding of the culture grows and communication and the daily activities become easier.

Cross-cultural communication refers to the language and to the ability to interact with people from different cultures. This ability means understanding different interpretations and views and knowing how to communicate messages to people from different cultures in a way that they are understood.

Having a good *social network* in the new country and environment is necessary for a person´s mental stability because the support from family and friends as well as making friends in the local environment, either with the local people or people from the same ethnic group, make life more pleasant. Moreover, having local friends also assist adaptation because they connect the foreign person to the local culture. Friends from the same ethnic group are good in helping to maintain person´s home cultural

background but there is a risk if the person relies too much on them. In that case, it rather hinders adaptation if the person does not actively participate and adjust to the new cultural environment.

Figure 6.Model for adaptation and intercultural management.

7 EMPIRICAL STUDY

This chapter describes the empirical study which purpose is to link the research theory with the practical research. The practical research examines the theory to the case-company ABB Oy. The theoretical framework presented in chapter 6 is to what the empirical study is based on to test the those theoretical assumptions in order to find an answer to the research problem of what needs to be taken into consideration in the management of Asian employees in order for them to adapt to the Finnish working environment at ABB Oy. Analysis of the results is presented last in this chapter.

7.1 Research design

Research design is the plan on how to execute the empirical study. Research design includes the research strategy, research methods and selection of the target group. These issues are discussed in the following sections.

7.1.1 Research strategy

According to Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara (2008), there are three traditional research strategies: experimental research, survey-study and case-study. In experimental research, the impact of one variable is measured to another variable. *Experimental research* is typically conducted by choosing a sample from a specific population, which is analyzed in different experiment methods. These methods include systematic and planned variations in the experiment conditions in order to cause a change in the variable and to measure those changes. *Survey-stu*dy is a strategy to gather information from a group of people in a standardized form. The information is material gathered from a sample of individuals from specific group of people normally using a questionnaire or structured interview. The collected material is used to describe, explain and compare some phenomenon. *Case-study* is detailed and intensive information from a single case or small group of related cases. A single case or situation with individuals, group, community or process is selected and researched in its natural environment. The material is collected through interviews, observation and documents. The target is typically to describe a phenomenon. (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2008, 130-131.)

In this research, the strategy is case-study where the case-company is ABB Oy. I am studying the phenomenon of Asian employee´s adaptation into the Finnish working environment at ABB Oy and manager´s role in the process.

7.1.2 Research method

In general, there are two research types: quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research type is usually used when the focus is on quantity, as the name already expresses. The research material needs to be applicable for quantitative, mathematic measuring since the results are typically shown in numerical values and analyzed with statistics. Qualitative research is thus more focused on the quality. I chose qualitative research for my thesis and will therefore explain its characteristics in more detail next. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009, 131-133, 136.)

The characteristics of qualitative research are:

- the research´s nature is overall information gathering where the research material is collected in a natural, realistic environment
- carefully selected target group
- flexibility with the research as plans can be changed according to the conditions
- cases and research material are handled and interpreted in a unique way
- use of inductive analysis where the aim is to reveal unexpected issues. For that reason, the research material is examined in detail and multilaterally
- use of qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews, group interviews, observation and discursive analysis of different documents and texts
- the observations and discussions with the target people are seen to give the most information (Hirsjärvi et al. 2009, 160.)

According to Fisher (2007), there are five major research methods: interviews, panels, questionnaires, documentary research and observational research. These methods can then be applied in open (unstructured) or pre-coded (structured) way. It depends on the research case which method could be the most suitable in terms of getting the most useful material to answer the research problem. (Fisher 2007, 158.)

For this research I chose interview, and more specifically semi-structured interview as the research method. Interviews can be conducted in either open or structured way and in semi-structured way, which is in between those methods. In an open interview, the conversation is about a certain topic but it is informal and there is no structure. The pre-coded interviews are on the other hand controlled by the researcher. Normally, the interviewer has a clear list of questions with answer options from which the respondent will pick the best alternative. Semi-structured interview is in the middle of open and pre-coded interview. Usually, there are some main topics or themes to discuss about but also flexibility for the interviewee to answer in the way he or she wants. (Fisher 2007, 158-159.)

I chose semi-structured interview as the research method because I think it was the best way to gather information from the target group regarding the research topic and problem. The interviews were conducted face-to-face either in Finnish or in English, depending what language the interviewee knew. I wanted to talk with the respondents in person because I believed it was important in order to create trust and also to be able to ask the interviewee what he or she means in case I would not understand due to language barriers or other reasons. Furthermore, since the questions were formed according to certain themes, I wanted the situation to be flexible and give room for the interviewee to say the things the person finds important.

7.1.3 Selection of the target group

As mentioned earlier, in qualitative research the target group is usually selected carefully to match the purpose of the research and to cover all the necessary factors in order to get reliable results. In this research, the target group was Asian employees (Indian and Chinese) and their managers who have an employment relationship with ABB Oy or external workers such as consultants, short-term international assignees or

subcontractors working at or for ABB Oy. The employees who are in employment relationship for ABB Oy are white-collar employees.

The respondents for the interviews were selected from a report of Indian and Chinese employees and their managers who currently have an active ID-number in the data system used at ABB Oy. The main criteria how the interviewees were selected was based on that the employees were either Indian or Chinese and sample was from both cities Vaasa and Helsinki. Each of those employee´s manager was also interviewed in order to get both counterpart's perspective. Otherwise, I chose the people randomly.

7.2 Execution of the empirical study

According to Hirsjärvi & Hurme (2001), there are at least four practical issues, which need to be thought of before the interviews, namely time, place, approximated duration and equipment used in the interview. All these issues were thought of when I was conducting the interviews and are now further explained in this section.

After choosing from the report, which people I would like to interview for the research, I started calling to both to the managers and to the subordinates. I explained them what my research is about and asked whether I could interview them for it. Most of the people were interested in being interviewed so getting enough interviewees was not a problem. When the person had agreed to be interviewed, we booked an appointment for the interview and usually I also sent an email to confirm the time and to further explain what the research is for. Moreover, I sent the interview questions to each interviewee in advance to give them a chance to familiarize themselves with the questions before the interview. In order to get the counterparts, for each interviewed subordinate, I have interviewed the person´s manager as well.

The language used in the interviews was English for the Indian and Chinese employees whereas for the managers it was Finnish, with one exception of an Indian manager with whom I spoke English. All the interviews were conducted face-to-face and individually. I thought it is more comfortable for both me and for the interviewee to talk in person. Furthermore, I think it creates trust between the interviewer and interviewee to meet in person and I also wanted to be able to ask specified questions

and further explain the questions in case the interviewee had not fully understood them.

All in all, there were three target groups in this research: Indian employees, Chinese employees, and their managers. Altogether I interviewed thirteen (13) people; seven (7) subordinates from which four (4) were Indians and three (3) were Chinese and their managers from whom six (6) were Finns and one (1) was Indian. That Indian person was interviewed for both his subordinate and manager role. Therefore, the number of interviewed people is thirteen and not fourteen. Since the target group´s location was both Vaasa and Helsinki, I spent two days in Helsinki interviewing six (6) people; two (2) Chinese and one (1) Indian subordinate and three (3) managers. The rest, seven (7) people, were interviewed in Vaasa; one (1) Chinese and three (3) Indian subordinates and three (3) Finnish and one (1) Indian manager. The Indian manager´s subordinate is also Indian. The gender division between the interviewees was one (1) female subordinate and three (3) females from the managers and the rest of the nine (9) interviewees were males. Table 4 below illustrates the division of interviewed people. From the sample of Indian and Chinese employees at ABB Oy, the number of Indians was comparatively higher than the Chinese and therefore, the number of interviewed Indians is also higher. The number of Indian employees at ABB Oy is 90 and Chinese is 30.

Table 4. Division of interviewed people.

Total number of interviewed people= 13	**Interview in Vaasa Indian**	**Interview in Helsinki Indian**	**Interview in Vaasa Chinese**	**Interview in Helsinki Chinese**	Total number
Subordinate	3*	1	1	2	7
Manager	3*	1	1	2	7

*the one Indian person was interviewed for both subordinate and manager role. For that reason, the total number of interviewed people is 13 and not 14.

The interviews were conducted in a conference room or in another quiet and peaceful place, normally at the work place and unit of the interviewee to create a safe and comfortable environment for the person. The duration for the interviews was between 20-75 minutes, approximately 35 minutes. The interviews were rather flexible and informal but I asked same type of questions in the same order as in the interview question structures from every interviewee. There were two a little different interview question structures, one for the Indian and Chinese employees and another for the managers. All the interviewee´s were informed that the interview would be recorder and the answers would be handled confidentially and anonymously in the interview questions document, which I had sent to interviewees in advanced. I also asked in the beginning of the meeting whether the conversation could be recorded and they all agreed. Furthermore, it was again underlined during the meeting that all the interviews were confidential and their answers would be analyzed anonymously in the research. In addition of recording the interviews, I also made notes.

In order to be able to handle the material from the recorded interviews, I transcribed all the interviews into a written form. That way it was easier to read and analyze afterwards what the interviewees had said during the interview meetings. It is more common to transcribe the material than to make conclusions straight from the recordings (Hirsjärvi et al. 2008, 217).

7.3 Analyzing the results

In the analyzing of the results of the empirical study I used a method called content analysis. This method is purposed to describe the research phenomenon in a compressed and general form. Content analysis means analyzing and finding meanings from the text and material. The analysis pursues to describe the content of the material verbally. Furthermore, the aim for a qualitative analysis is to add information value by creating meaningful, clear and coherent information. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2004, 105, 107, 110.)

Content analysis is criticized for that it only organizes the material to make conclusions. The criticism is especially due to its incompleteness where the researcher has explained the analysis in details but failed to draw meaningful conclusions,

instead the organized material is presented as if results. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2004, 105.)

Content analysis in a qualitative research can be conducted in three ways; material based, theory directional or theory based. There are two logics used to express deduction in material analysis; inductive which is material based and perception is from singular to general and deductive which is theory based and perception is from general to singular. The difference between material based, theory directional and theory based ways is that in *material based analysis* the theoretical concepts are created from the material whereas in *theory directional* they are introduced as ready ”already known” from the phenomenon. *Theory based analysis* is on the other hand based on earlier framework which can be theory or some concept system. In that case, theme or mind map leads the analysis. Theory based analysis can typically be conducted by reducing, categorizing and quantifying the material. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2004, 95, 97, 110, 116-117.)

The analysis of the results in this research was made in deductive, theory based way. The theme, which guided the empirical study was the theoretical framework introduced in chapter 6. Theory has guided my work all a long since it is rather clear what should exist in theory in order for an Asian employee to be able to adapt to the Finnish working environment and also what is expected from manager in that process. The purpose was to research that knowledge in practice and specifically at the case-company ABB Oy.

I started analyzing the material by reading through the transcribed material, making notes and underlinings. I also placed the answers in different categories according to the themes in the theoretical framework. The themes in the theoretical framework functioned as a structure to pick up the relevant things and also the things that were left out. That way the material was reduced and categorized. I also quantified how many times a same thing appeared in the interviews or how many interviewees had said the same thing.

8 RESULTS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

This chapter presents the results of the empirical study. The empirical study was conducted using semi-structured interviews. In a semi-structured interview the interview questions are based in certain themes, which are relevant in the purpose of finding an answer to the research problem. Those themes are the seven themes introduced in the theoretical framework: company factors, local society and adaptation to the working environment, culture differences and working culture, factors related to the person, local language, cross-cultural communication and social network. Therefore, the results of the empirical study are explained through these themes. The research problem in this thesis is ”What needs to be taken into consideration in the management of Asian employees in order for them to adapt to the Finnish working environment?”.

In the beginning of the interviews, I asked some general questions to get background information from the interviewees. The results are from all of the target group´s point of views according to those seven themes. In some of the themes the emphasis is more either on the subordinate´s or manager´s view so the questions were also formed that way, meaning that in some topics the focus is more on either the subordinates or managers. The results are presented in the following sections. If I have used quotes from the interviewees with whom the interview was conducted in Finnish, I have translated the quotes into English so that the reader can understand the meaning.

8.1 Background information from the interviewees

The backgrounds of the three target groups, Indian and Chinese employees and their managers working at ABB Oy are introduced in this section. For this research the relevant background information from both subordinates and managers is nationality, age, duration of living in Finland and employment relationship and work duration at ABB Oy. For this research I will only tell the general working field of the interviewees to protect their identity. From the subordinates, I asked additionally their education and purpose of coming to Finland whereas from the managers I asked how long they have been in a managerial position and how many Asian (Indian and/or Chinese) subordinates they have or have had.

There were four Indian and three Chinese nationalities among the subordinates. The age range between the subordinates is from 27 to 42 years. The average age is around 30 years. The working relationship among the Indian employees was permanent for two people and two of the employees were external consultants. From the Chinese employees, two have a permanent contract and one is on a short-term assignment. The duration of living in Finland for the Indians varied from 6 months to 13 years. The duration of working for ABB Oy varied from 6 months to 16 years. However, the Indian employee who had worked 16 years for ABB Oy had been an expatriate for 8 years in another country than Finland. For the Chinese the duration of living in Finland and working at ABB Oy were the same and varied from 6 months to 7 years.

All the subordinates had an Engineering education background. Two of the Indians work in IT-field and the two others work in sales department. The Chinese work in different fields: one of them works in sales department, another one in research and development department and the third one in production. The purpose of coming to Finland for the two Indian external consultants was a project they were conducting for ABB Oy and the two employees with permanent contract had come to Finland to study and got a job at ABB Oy through practical training. For all the Chinese employees it was common that they had background in working for ABB China. The one who is on an short-term international assignment had come to Finland to train and get knowledge from ABB Oy to execute a project back in China and one had also come to Finland through project and then stayed in Finland. The third one came to Finland because of personal reasons. She has a Finnish husband and she got a transfer from ABB China to ABB oy.

The managers were all Finnish, except one´s nationality was Indian. The age range was between 31 to 58 years. All the managers have a permanent working relationship at ABB Oy. The duration of working at ABB Oy varied between 6 years to 33 years. They have been in manager positions from 6 months to 12 years. From the Indians' managers two work in sales department, one in IT-field and one in HR-department. From the Chinese employees' managers, one works in research and development department, one in sales department and one in production. The managers had only either Indian or Chinese subordinates at the moment and the number of subordinates is either one or more. However, all of them had some sort of work related experience

from both nationalities through projects or other global work cooperation. In addition, four of the managers had subordinates with other foreign nationalities so they have experience in dealing with foreign subordinates. In order to protect the managers' identity I will not tell the exact number of how many subordinates the managers have from the target countries.

8.2 Referencing to the interviewees when presenting the results

In order to maintain the interviewee`s anonymous, I have referenced to the interviewed subordinates as interviewee A or B. A refers to the four Indian subordinates and B to the three Chinese subordinates. From those categories I have again made smaller categories by numbering those main alphabetic groups to represent each subordinate. To get the counterpart´s perspective with the managers, I have named the managers according to their subordinates so that the manager´s name reflects his or her subordinate`s name and to that manager name I have added a letter M to reflect the manager position. The categories are presented in the tables 6-8 below.

Table 5. Interviewed Indian subordinates.

INDIAN EMPLOYEES	Age (years)	Gender	Employment relationship	Work field	Work location	Duration of living in Finland (years)	Duration of working for ABB Oy (years)	Purpose of coming to Finland
Interviewee A1	28	Male	external	IT	Vaasa	0,5	0,5	project
Interviewee A2	27	Male	external	IT	Helsinki	2	2	project
Interviewee A3	33	Male	permanent	sales	Vaasa	13	8	studying
Interviewee A4	42	Male	permanent	sales	Vaasa	12	16	studying

Table 6. Interviewed Chinese subordinates.

CHINESE EMPLOYEES	Age (years)	Gender	Employment relationship	Work field	Work location	Duration of living in Finland (years)	Duration of working for ABB Oy (years)	Purpose of coming to Finland
Interviewee B1	29	male	permanent	R&D	Vaasa	3	3	project
Interviewee B2	32	male	external	production	Helsinki	0,5	0,5	short-term assignment
Interviewee B3	35	female	permanent	sales	Helsinki	7	7	Finnish spouse

Table 7**.** Interviewed managers.

MANAGERS	Age (years)	Gender	Employment relationship	Work field	Work location	Duration of working for ABB Oy (years)	How long has been in a manager position	Nationality of subordinate
Interviewee A1M	31	female	permanent	HR	Vaasa	6	0,5	Indian
Interviewee A2M	48	female	permanent	IT	Helsinki	18	12	Indian
Interviewee A3M*	42	male	permanent	sales	Vaasa	16	4	Indians
Interviewee A4M	50	male	permanent	sales	Vaasa	27	12	Indians
Interviewee B1M	58	female	permanent	R&D	Vaasa	33	10	Chinese
Interviewee B2M	33	male	permanent	production	Helsinki	12	8	Chinese
Interviewee B3M	32	male	permanent	sales	Helsinki	8	3	Chinese

*Manager´s nationality is Indian

8.3 Company factors

Related to the theme of company factors, I asked questions from the interviewees about the organizational culture at ABB Oy, whether the company has acknowledged the foreign employees working there, the Finnish management style, induction, what are the most important things for the manager to do to help the adaptation, whether the managers know if there are some organized programs or orientation for foreign employees and about the pros and cons in having foreign subordinates.

8.3.1 Organizational culture at ABB Oy

Most of the Indian and Chinese employees think that the organizational culture at ABB Oy is good. Interviewee A2 said that the working style is open; people are open to ideas. The Chinese employees had the same opinion that it is easy to work at ABB Oy because the communication is clear; it is said straight whether the work is good or bad. However, interviewee A3 commented that it is difficult to get feedback and the information is often generalized to the whole team instead of giving the feedback to a one person. Interviewee B1 said that the work is more detailed and technical when in in China it is more overall. Therefore, it is easier to focus on one specific part here in Finland. In addition, interviewee B2 had noticed efficiency to play an important role in the working culture.

Many of the managers talked about the multiculturality at ABB Oy. Most of them said that ABB Oy pursues to think and act globally but a lot needs to happen before it is really on the practical level. Although ABB Oy is a global organization, the Finnish culture dominates without a doubt. Interviewee B3M said that it is more so that the foreign employees adapt to the Finnish working community and not so that the work community would adapt to the foreign employees. Interviewee A4M was on the opinion that ABB Oy has a truly multicultural working environment, though. Interviewee A1M commented that it depends from units how the internationality shows, for example the HR department is probably not so used to foreign employees compared to other units. Interviewees A1M, B3M and B2M commented that the working culture is direct and open; people can express their opinions and everyone is approachable. Interviewee A2M told she had heard comments from outside visitors that the atmosphere at ABB Oy is stiff and it is difficult to get to know people. She also said that the casual attitude is lacking. Moreover, she sees people in Helsinki to be more tense and wanting to show off their status whereas in Vaasa the people are more friendly and warm.

> *Interviewee A3M:"people forget that you are a Finnish organization yes, but you are a multinational and multicultural company. And that is where sometimes the conflict comes. The Finnish culture is here and certain cultures are here, you tend to forget that you have people under you who are multicultural, from different backgrounds, languages, cultures and you need to, one things is for a foreigner to adapt to the*

Finnish culture, that is one thing, but that is when you are outside of ABB but when you are inside ABB, you are a one culture, that is multinational culture and that is where I think the Finnish organization sometimes forgets that. ”

8.3.2 Acknowledging foreign employees at ABB Oy

There were rather mixed answers from the Indian and Chinese employees about whether ABB Oy has acknowledged the foreign employees in the processes and in the working environment. Interviewee A1 said that there are not many foreign employees at ABB Oy whereas interviewee B3 said the opposite that you can see many foreign faces there. Interviewee A3 commented that it depends from units. Some units have more foreign employees than others and in the ones where are more foreign people, they have been acknowledged. Tools and systems are more in English there, the people are more open and they are experienced in dealing with foreign people. Interviewee B3 and A3 work in sales department whereas interviewee in A1 in IT-field. However, many of the employees said that there are still quite many processes and documents in Finnish so in that sense the multinationality does not show.

Interviewees B3, A2 said that the foreign employees show when the meetings are in English and people need to speak English. Interviewee A2 said that being the only time when it shows that there are also foreign employees at ABB Oy. Interviewee B3 hopes for more training programs in English. All in all, everyone thought more or less that the foreign employees are acknowledged at ABB Oy even though the language shows as a barrier sometimes.

8.3.3 Finnish management style

Every Indian and Chinese employee´s opinion about the Finnish management style was that it is easy to go talk to any manager and there is no hierarchy compared to their home countries. The Chinese employees commented managers being more like friends to them and that the relationship between the subordinate and manager is quite equal; they only have different positions. Interviewee A3 said that the open office concept creates an open working environment where it is easy to approach anyone. Interviewees A3 and A4 said that in India the managers usually have their own rooms and their positions show in their behavior. Interviewees B1 and B2 said the same thing about the managers in China. Interviewee A4 commented that the managers

sometimes forget that the employees are humans and they are different so the expectations should also be different.

> *Interviewee A4:"Finnish management style is a bit more taken for granted I would say in the sense that you tend to forget that at the end of the day you are dealing with human beings, the people, and again from different backgrounds so your expectations should not be the same."*

> *Interviewee B1:"In my opinion here is more like friend, in Shanghai it is a little bit different. The boss has his level when talking."*

8.3.4 Induction

All the Indian employees told that they did not have any proper induction. They were just introduced to the people with whom they were going to be working with. Interviewee A1 mentioned that the important facilities and areas such as exits and coffee room were introduced. Interviewees A3 and A4 said there were no documented information about the work and no planned induction program which was a challenge because you had to find out all the information by asking from other people. Interviewee A1 thought that even though there was no proper induction it was still sufficient enough. Interviewee A2 said that the working environment was not introduced to him so he had to adapt to it slowly during the work. Interviewee A2 said to have being working for ABB Oy also from India so the work was not new to him but a colleague whom he was going to replace gave him training to the rules and responsibilities expected of an external consultant.

The Chinese employees said to have received help whenever they had some problems or something was not clear. Interviewees B1 and B3 told that there was not so big difference in the work and working environment compared to the work at ABB in China. Those interviewees also said that the manager introduced the main facilities and environment to them.

8.3.5 The most important things for the manager to do in the adaptation process according to the Indian and Chinese employees

The Chinese all agreed that the most important thing for a manager to do to support the adaptation is to offer help and instructions when needed. Interviewee B3 also said

that the manager should select people to help and give support to you on daily basis, especially in the beginning. Furthermore, the manager should tell how things are done at the work place, not only the work but also the environment, for example how to go to lunch.

All the Indians had different advice about the most important things for the manager to do to support the adaptation process. Interviewee A1 said managers need to make the person feel comfortable by telling the responsibilities and providing clear communication. Interviewee A2 emphasized that the manager should make the employee feel part of the group by using a common language during meetings and other gatherings. Interviewee A3 suggested having a discussion with the person about his or her expectations about the job and role and even about what the person expects from the manager. Lastly, interviewee A4 suggested to emphasize the importance of language and to somehow make it mandatory to learn the Finnish language because it is too easy not to learn it if you have the choice.

8.3.6 Organized programs or orientation for foreign employees at ABB Oy

For about half of the managers it was not clear if ABB Oy arranges some form of organized programs or orientation for foreign employees. From that half of interviewees B3M and B1M had an idea that there probably is some sort of events but they had never had to find out more specifically what programs. Interviewee A3M said that there are not any programs targeted especially to foreign employees but to all new employees. It also came out that the roles are not clear on whom takes care of what when a new foreign employee, specifically an external employee, comes to ABB Oy. The other half of the managers knew that there are some programs for foreign employees and they mentioned an external company AAC with whom ABB Oy does cooperation and who arranges language and culture trainings and city tours for the foreign employees. Interviewee A2M commented that some kind of free time activity is arranged in Helsinki but it is rather stiff and is not functioning so well.

8.3.7 Pros and cons in having foreign subordinates

Most of the managers saw it as an advantage to have foreign employees. They said that having foreign subordinates enlarges their own worldview and gives perspective in the sense that there are different ways of acting. In addition, the foreign employees

internationalize the work community in a practical level. Interviewees A3M, A4M and B3M said that it is important to have people from the countries where ABB Oy does business because they know the culture and language. Interviewees B3M and B2M also commented that it is nice to meet new people and speak English on daily basis.

> *Interviewee A1M:"you learn from your own culture when you telling things to the other person and you learn from the other country´s culture and you learn to proportion your own worldview that not everybody thinks like this and that things can be done in different ways."*

The challenges were mostly related to language issues. Naturally, it was identified as a challenge to be talking about some difficult subjects in another language than a person´s mother tongue. Furthermore, interviewee B2M finds it challenging that neither the Chinese nor the Finns talk much so it is difficult when nobody is so eager to talk. Interviewees A3M and B1M said different views being a challenge sometimes. Interviewees A4M and B3M talked about the adaptation challenges. Interviewee B3M said that if the person does not have other ties to Finland than work there is a risk that the person will leave and interviewee A4M thinks it is challenging to get the whole family to adapt. Interviewee A1M commented that it is challenging when the things that are self-evident to Finns need to be explained to the foreign employees. Interviewees B3M, B1M and A2M and said that it is difficult to think of something negative in having foreign employees.

8.4 Local society and adaptation to the working environment

The questions which needed to be found out about the local society and adaptation to the working environment from the subordinates were related to the biggest challenges in the Finnish society and working environment to get used to, Finns attitude towards foreign people, the issues that either enhance or hinder adaptation and what are the most important things for a person to do to help the adaptation to the Finnish working environment. From the managers, I asked about their assumptions about how the Indian and Chinese have adapted to ABB Oy, how the manager supports or could support the employee in the adaptation process.

8.4.1 The biggest challenges in the Finnish society and working environment

Both Indian and Chinese employees said that the biggest challenge is the language. It is getting better but it is still a barrier. At the work place it is not so much of a problem, because everybody speak fluent English but the local people outside prefer to speak Finnish and it is challenging at times. Interviewee A4 also said that language starts to become a must if you want to get more into the society and in the companies it is silently required that you should speak Finnish if you want to reach for higher positions.

Interviewee A3 and B1 commented that Finland is quieter and calmer compared to their home countries. It is less pressure in Finland. The Indian saw it as a challenge whereas the Chinese prefer the more peaceful life style in Finland. All the Chinese employees said again that the Finns are nice and friendly, but the Indians experience Finns more reserved and not so open which is different to the people in India.

> *Interviewee B1:"Everything was quite nice, everyone did perfect. I like the environment here because it is a little bit quiet, Shanghai is so hurry."*

8.4.2 Finns' attitude towards foreign people

From the Chinese point of view, they all agreed that Finns are nice, friendly and helpful. Interviewee B1 also commented that it is normal if people do not smile or say hello because in China it is like that so that was expected. However, interviewee B2 commented the opposite about Finland. Both of these interviewees live in Helsinki. Interviewee B2 had noticed that at the work place or outside the people might say hello to people or open the door for you even if they do not know each other. According interviewee B2, it is not like that in China. The person was speculating that maybe the Finns are friendlier towards foreign people.

> *Interviewee B2:"When people say morning or hello to each other and also sometimes people in here is nice and willing to help, maybe it is better for foreigners."*

Interviewees A3 and A4 who live in Vaasa thought that the Finns' attitudes towards foreign people have changed for the better. They used to not be so open to people but today Finns are more open to speaking English and they are more used to foreign people. However, interviewee A2 living in Helsinki commented that Finns are pretty

reserved and do not talk to foreign people unless they approach the Finns first. Then they are helpful. Interviewee A4 also said that it is difficult for a foreign person to really get into the Finnish society and culture because the Finns are not allowing that yet. They want to keep certain culture things to themselves. He made an example about that there are not much foreign people in manager positions in the companies. Nevertheless, all of the Indians said that people´s attitudes at ABB Oy towards foreign people have been good all the time.

8.4.3 Issues that enhance or hinder adaptation to the working environment

Again the majority of the Indian and Chinese employees think that the most important thing to enhance adaptation to the working environment is to learn the Finnish language. Furthermore, interviewees A3 and B3 said that the person needs to have an open-mind and not to judge things in beforehand. Interviewees A3 and B1 said that the person needs to adjust oneself and one´s thinking to the new living and culture. It is important to learn the Finnish way of doing things and understand that you are not in your home country so things are different. Interviewee B3 said that having a job helps in adapting because it gives you something to do, financial independency and security. Many of the employees also said that it helps the foreign employees to feel part of the group when the meetings and other common gatherings are held in a common language (typically in English) so that everybody can understand.

> *Interviewee B1:"My opinion language will be the most important thing in adapting, even in the living sense."*

> *Interviewee A3:"just go and see how the work environment is and just adapt to the best of your capabilities. The idea is just to adapt. You cannot fight the environment all the time. You have to understand that this is not your own culture."*

As hindering issues, interviewee B1 mentioned feeling homesick and missing friends and family. But the interviewee said that feeling homesick is something you need to deal with in order to adapt to the new culture. Interviewee B3 said that having a good start and first impression when coming to the country are important because they define and give the attitude to the entire adaptation process. Interviewee A4 said about the language that there is a risk if the language becomes too heavy in getting a

citizenship the person might decide to leave to some other country which language the person can speak.

8.4.4 Managers' assumptions about the Indian and Chinese employees' adaptation to ABB Oy

Two of the managers, interviewee A1M and B2M said that they have adapted well to the work and working environment but nothing more. Interviewee B2M continued that it depends on the person whether he or she adapts or not. Interviewee B1M commented sometimes thinking whether the Chinese are lonely since the Finnish life style is rather isolated and therefore it is not easy to get to know other Finns. However, she told that they are probably interacting with the other Chinese in Vaasa and it is more their life style to do something together in the free time. Interviewee B3M had an understanding that those who come to Finland have adapted well. At least he had not heard or experienced any problems.

About the Indians´ adaptation, most of the managers had an opinion that they have adapted very well to Finland and to ABB Oy, but interviewee A4M had noticed that they do still face some challenges. Interviewee A2M said that the Indians adopt fast other countries customs while holding on to their own culture as well.

> *Interviewee A2M:"I feel that those Indians as foreigners, does not matter in what country they are, they are very integrative. They adopt quickly other countries customs, all the time hold on to their own culture, but at the same time are very open-minded."*

8.4.5 Manager`s support in the adaptation process

Many of the managers said that the most important thing to support the employee to adapt to the working environment is to be there for the person, follow how things are going, help to get started and interfere to the possible problems already at early stage. Furthermore, the manager should have time to handle other issues besides the work things; the practical, basic things such as apartment, bank account etc. Manager should also explain how the Finnish everyday life works; the Finnish way of working and the customs and norms. In addition, managers should get to know the employees' cultural background and learn what the work customs in their country are.

Interviewee A3M also stressed that the employee need to be made comfortable to come to work and mangers should talk to the employees personally on daily basis and ask how they are doing, if everything is okay. The goals and strategies should also be clear and the employee needs to be told what is expected of him or her. Moreover, the manager needs to build trust with the subordinates.

> *Interviewee A3M:"If the people trust you, want to work with you, want to work for the company, they know the goals are right, the strategy is right, the managers are supporting you, nothing else. "*

One big factor from the manager`s point of view in how they could support their foreign employees better was to get to know the person´s cultural background. For that purpose, many of the managers suggested cultural training from the company. Interviewees A4M, B3M and B2M had already been to such courses and they felt the courses had given good knowledge for them. Interviewee A4M and B3M said that at the moment, quite many managers learn by doing so it would be useful to learn something in advance in order to be prepared. It was also suggested from interviewee B1M that the company could organize some informal common gatherings in addition to the already existing ones. Interviewees B1M and B2M talked about that the work community should also arrange some gatherings but the problem is again that the Finns might not feel so comfortable in spending too much free time with the work colleagues since it is not part of the Finnish life style. It might feel forced. Nevertheless, it was said that there should be some sort of interaction between the Finns and foreign employees for them to get to know each other.

> *Interviewee A3M:"I try to understand each and every culture and react in that particular way. And that I think other managers, even employees should look at."*

Other suggestions came from interviewees A3M and A4M. Interviewee A3M said that a mandatory, at least one month´s intensive language learning before starting the work, would support adaptation. That way the employee would have a good foundation to learn the language more by oneself and the person would be able to manage well in the country. Another suggestion from interviewee A4M was for the managers to get first-hand experience and learn about other cultures in practice by actually going to other countries. The company could send people for example on

international assignments. The same interviewee commented that the employee and his or her family should be looked at as a whole. Often the spouse is having problems in finding a job and the children´s school should be considered. He mentioned that one problem in Vaasa is that there are no official international schools. However, that same manager said the school cooperation in Vaasa is good and it should be further developed; many of the foreign employees have come to ABB Oy for example through schools' practical training.

8.5 Culture differences and working culture

The subordinates were asked what culture differences they have experienced with the Finnish managers or employees at the work place and generally in the Finnish working culture. The managers were asked to describe the culture differences between the Indian and Chinese employees compared to Finns.

8.5.1 Culture differences in the Finnish working culture

Interviewees B3 and B2 mentioned difference in the work dressing code. In China, the style is more formal and the employees might have to wear uniforms. In Finland, the employees have more freedom to dress how they want and usually the style is more casual. It was also said from interviewee B1 that in Finland the employees have more freedom in general to execute their work and spend the necessary time for the work. Interviewee B1 also said that there is less pressure in the Finnish working culture so it is easier in Finland. Interviewee B2 talked about the respect individuals get at the work place and that the employees are willing to take responsibilities. He also said that Finnish working culture is efficient and there is good teamwork. Furthermore, he had noticed that the eating culture is different in Finland. The people eat from their own plates whereas in China people share their dinner.

Interviewee A3 also talked about the freedom to do the work the way you want and that the working culture is relaxed in Finland. However, interviewee A2 had noticed that the Finnish working style is punctual and work is expected to be delivered in time. If a date of delivery is settled, Finns take it as a commitment when for Indians it is not an absolute promise, instead there should be room for some few days´ delays. Interviewee A4 commented that the Finnish working culture is number driven. The

people behind the employees are sometimes forgotten. Another comment about the working style from interviewee A2 was that Finns are more process-oriented whereas Indians are solution-oriented. They want to provide the result first and then focus on the process. Interviewee A1 had found a difference in the working hours. He said in India, people work usually more than 8 hours a day, closer to 10 hours, and also on Saturdays. Furthermore, the work is not so much separated from the personal life as in Finland. Interviewee A1 also commented that there are more female employees in Finland compared to India, although the trend is changing and females are getting more into the working life in India.

> *Interviewee A1:"There is complete balance between work and life. There is the time when you should work for 8 hours a day, for that duration they only work… I think they do their activities work time and then after that enjoy their personal life after the official hours."*

> *Interviewee A3:"Finnish working culture is very good in that way that it is more relaxed. You have more freedom to do things you want them to do so it is a positive things."*

8.5.2 Culture differences between Asian and Finnish employees from subordinates point of view

Most of the culture differences the Chinese employees had experienced were related to that the Finns make things clear and direct, black or white. Interviewee B2 said that Finns follow rules strictly. For example, they obey what their manager says and in general they do not break rules. Interviewee B1 mentioned that there is a bigger personal space in Finland. At the work place, it is not as crowded as in China. For example, people have their own big desks.

> *Interviewee B1:" It is more direct and directly to the purpose and say everything quite simple, make everything black or white so it is easier for me."*

It was also mentioned by two of the interviewees A3 and A4 that Finns are direct, honest, systematic and straightforward. The interviewees A3 and A4 also like that way of doing things. As it was also brought up from one of the Chinese employees, interviewee A3 also talked about that the Finns follow rules strictly and there is not much flexibility. According to him the rules are more for guidance in India and the

person decides how to implement them. Another difference from the interviewee A4 was that the Finns are less competitive than Indians. For Indians, it is taught already from early age that life is surviving but for Finns it is not like that. This sometimes shows in the way of doing business because Finns get too comfortable and do not push business forward, whereas Indians are more business-driven.

8.5.3 Culture differences between Finnish and Asian employees from managers point of view

All the managers had noticed that the Asian culture is more hierarchical. The power distance between the subordinate and manager is higher compared to Asian culture where status gives more power. Especially, the Chinese do not necessarily dare to say so directly to the manager if they do not agree. In addition, most of the managers had noticed that both Indians and Chinese are more communal. They take others more into consideration and want to be with others. According to interviewees B1M and B2M it can be problematic because the Finns do not do so many things together in the free time. It is not so important for them. They usually go home after work and spend time with the family. Interviewees A2M, B3M and A3M commented on the humor between the Finns and Indians and Chinese. Sometimes the Finnish humor is not understood maybe because it is sarcastic and Finns tend to laugh at things that the people from Asian countries are not used to laugh at.

> *Interviewee A4M:"There is a clear difference with the Asians that if I as a manager say something to an Asian, basically say anything at all even something silly, they just do it. They do not question anything."*

Most of the managers who have Indian subordinates also commented on the working hours as one of the Indian employees talked about that as well. The managers had noticed that Indians tend to work long hours; they are work-oriented. Interviewee A3M, who is an Indian himself too, commented that the work and personal life are not so much separated for the Indians as it is for the Finns. For example, the Finns do not like to be disturbed during the weekend but for the Indians it does not matter so much. They are used to more ongoing work style. Most of the managers said that Indians are more social and interviewee A3M mentioned that they are more people-friendly. Majority of the managers also said that the Indians hold on tight to their own

culture and the way of working. Interviewee A1M had noticed that Indians are not as punctual as Finns. For example, if a meeting starts at 3 pm, Indian will start to get ready for the meeting at 3 pm when in the Finnish way, you would have to be ready and there already on that time. Interviewee A1M had also noticed a difference in the Indians eating habits. She said it has been challenging to find something to eat for the Indian subordinate from the work cafeteria. Furthermore, the eating times are different compared to Finland; in India the breakfast is rather heavy and it is not common for them to eat lunch around noon.

> *Interviewee A2M:"They (Indians) are very hard-working, work-oriented, considerably more positive and social."*

The majority of the managers who have Chinese employees had noticed that the Chinese lean on to other Chinese people easily. They do not necessary come to the Finnish group but easily find other Chinese to spend time with. All those managers said that the Chinese are cautious in what they are saying so that they do not hurt anyone´s feelings. Most of the time they might think it is better to be quiet than to risk and say something silly. In relation to that, interviewee B2M said it is difficult to get the Chinese to speak openly. He also commented that Finns are more open and tend to spread information whereas the Chinese think more that knowledge is power. For example, it cannot be assumed that if something is told to a Chinese manager he or she would pass it on to the employees. Furthermore, he said that the Chinese take time to build trust. It needs to be earned by showing that you are trustworthy.

> *Interviewee B2M: "They (Chinese) are extremely careful not to hurt anyone´s feelings that many times they think it is better to be quiet than to say some bad joke what we Finns do maybe a little too much."*

8.6 Factors related to the person

This section determines the most important factors and qualities to possess for people dealing in an intercultural environment. Thus, this applies to both subordinates and managers. The subordinates were asked their opinion about the most important qualities that managers who have foreign employees should possess and the managers were then asked about the most important abilities for a foreign person to possess

when recruiting and selecting foreign employees. The most frequently named important qualities according to the managers and subordinates are listed in Table 5 below. Interviewees B3M and B1M said that they cannot see so much difference in the qualities what they are looking for when thinking of recruiting a foreign person compared to recruiting a Finn. Interviewees A4M and B1M said that it depends on the available vacancy what the important abilities are.

Table 8. Important qualities for subordinates and managers dealing with intercultural situations and people.

Subordinate	Manager
- language skills	- language skills (fluent English)
- openness and positive attitude	- openness, especially to new ideas
- flexibility; the person´s view needs to change when coming to a new country	-to learn and understand the background where the person is coming from
- interest towards the other country´s culture	- to make everybody comfortable in the team by creating a path between the different cultures so that everybody feels good
- social skills	- clear communication
- courage to go abroad and to approach new people with foreign language	- to support the subordinates
- education; does it match with the Finnish education system	- to describe especially new things in more detail
- family circumstances; whether the person is coming alone or family remains in the home country → can be hard for the person in the long run	- positive and multicultural attitude; be inclusive towards all the different nationalities
- technical experience and international work experience	- to give freedom to do the work and to develop and give opinions

8.7 Local language

This topic was purposed to find out the influence of local language skills or lack of local language knowledge to the adaptation into the working environment. The

subordinates were asked about their Finnish language skills and their experiences in relation to the importance of knowing Finnish.

Most of the Indian employees except interviewee A1 said that their Finnish language skills to be on a level that they can cope. They admitted of probably not putting enough effort in learning the language because they feel comfortable in using English and there is not real need or pressure to learn it. The working environment and working are in English and nowadays almost everybody inside and outside the company can speak English. However, all of them said that knowing Finnish makes life easier and is important in terms of adaptation. For example, interviewee A4 said it is hard to understand the jokes if you do not speak Finnish.

The Chinese employees were more eager to learn Finnish and tried actively use the Finnish language. Interviewee B1 even tries to speak Finnish first with the colleagues for example during coffee breaks. Interviewee B3 thinks it is risky to use Finnish at the work place if it is not fluent because it can cause serious misunderstandings but she speaks Finnish outside the work. She also said that there are still some documents and instructions in Finnish but nowadays she can manage with her Finnish language knowledge. The third Chinese employee, interviewee B2, tries to learn some words but thinks the language is very difficult. All of them also agree that knowing Finnish is good and it can influence in adaptation.

Most of the Indian and Chinese employees also said that even though the official language at ABB Oy is English, there are still many instructions, processes and databases in Finnish. They said it is time-consuming if you do not know the language and you need to translate something. Nevertheless, most of them also said that the people at ABB Oy have good knowledge in English so working is not a problem.

> *Interviewee A3:"If you know the (Finnish) language your life would be more easier because even though ABB´s official language is English but in Finland that is not really the case. Most of the instructions and database and even the Intranet pages, most of the information is only in Finnish which I think if you know the language it is easy for you but if you don´t know the language it becomes a big task for you."*

8.8 Cross-cultural communication

The subordinates and the managers were asked how the cross-cultural communication and interaction are working at the work place and what are the possible situations causing misunderstandings.

In general most of the Indian and Chinese employees had not experienced any major problems or misunderstandings in the communication between the Finns because English is the common language used. Interviewees A1 and A2 said it is difficult to explain things in other language than your mother tongue so that the person will understand what you are saying.

All the Chinese employees preferred the Finnish style of communicating which is clear, open and direct compared to China. However, at first it caused confusion since they were not used to it. They said that in China, you have to think more what you say and sometimes the meaning is not clear. For example, the Chinese do not say ”no” directly; you need to understand it from the context. In Finland, yes is yes and no is no.

> *Interviewee B2: ”In my mind I wanted to say no but I will not say no, you must guess and sometimes you cannot get a real answer about this but here I think it is easy to get a yes or no.”*

Interviewees A3, B3, A4 and A2 mentioned that Finns are quiet. Interviewees A3 and A4 said that Finns do not talk to each other and show their emotions, whereas the Indians are emotional and it can cause confusion. Furthermore, interviewees B3 and A4 said that Finns are not used to small talk. They do not talk so much during meetings and they feel more comfortable in being silent than talking about something unnecessary. This can cause stress in a foreign person because he or she might think there is something wrong. Interviewee A4 who works in Helsinki said that there are no informal conversations between the Finns and foreign employees at the work place, whereas interviewee A3 who works in Vaasa said the Finns and foreign employees have interaction on daily basis; they are one group and take coffee breaks and lunch together.

> *Interviewee B3: ”Foreigner need to get used to that Finnish people feel more comfortable when is silent rather than when some chit chat is going on… but often in other cultures people start getting stressed. There has to be something wrong, why isn´t anybody saying something.”*

Most of the managers had noticed that with both Indian and Chinese employees they tend to double-check that they have understood each other and also written material plays a more important role. Especially with the Chinese employees clearly defined instructions and orders on what needs to be done, what is expected of the person, are important. Interviewees B2M and B3M also said that they might need to ask more questions from the Chinese employees. They said Chinese employees do not necessarily express opinions or ask questions themselves.

Another identified problem with both Indians and Chinese is the language challenges. The Indians might have quite strong accent, they speak too fast or they use such fancy words that are normally not used in spoken language that it can be difficult to understand what they are saying. With the Chinese, the problems are more or less the same. Interviewees A1M and B2M said that already the work topics are difficult so talking about them in foreign language is challenging. Furthermore, interviewee A4M had experienced lack of English skills among the Chinese. It is not necessarily understood what the person is saying and it is also difficult to ask in a polite way what the person said without hurting one´s feelings. The Chinese employees’s managers said the Chinese are more cautious and reserved in expressing their own opinions compared to Finns. They rather echo the manager whereas a Finn can more easily question the manager´s opinion. Interviewee A1M said that Indians are more nervous of making mistakes. Interviewee A4M had noticed the same thing with Asian cultures in general. They are afraid of losing their faces for the person usually represents the entire family so making a mistake or losing the job is a big deal for them.

> *Interviewee B2M: “Language skills is a challenge in the sense that they (Chinese employees) speak quite little and us Finns we, partly because of the cultural background, we try not to say I did not understand but to ask in some other way the person meant. But they all speak English, but the accent is so different… You need to be careful not to heart one´s feelings, need to be cautious.”*

Interviewee A4M pointed out a challenge when holding meetings. The manager told it is challenging to have a meeting where there are both Asians and Europeans because both of the groups need to be taken into consideration. The Asians want more detailed information and the Europeans get frustrated from that. The Europeans need more freedom.

8.9 Social network

The subordinates were asked about their social network in Finland. There were three categories related to the social network: having local Finnish friends, local friends from the same ethnic group and whether they have family members from their home country in Finland. The aim was to find out the effect of friends and family onto the adaptation.

All the Indian employees besides interviewee A1 had made friends with the local Finnish people as well as with other Indians living in Finland. Interviewee A3 and A4 had Indian wives, interviewee A4 was single and interviewee A1 was waiting for his family to come to Finland. All the Chinese employees had made friends with both local Finns and other Chinese people. Interviewees B1 and B2 did not have any family members either from Finland or from China with them in Finland. Interviewee B3 has a Finnish spouse.

All of the interviewed employees agreed that it is very important to have friends if you are staying in a foreign country for a long time. Otherwise you feel lonely and adaptation would be difficult. Interviewees A4, B2 and A3 also said that Finnish friends can help in learning the Finnish culture and living style and it opens your view. Interviewee A4 said that having friends from your own ethnic group are good because they help in maintaining your roots.

> *Interviewee A3: ”It limits your view and make your life much more difficult if you don´t have mixed social network, because then there are so many things you will not learn if you don´t interact with the Finns.”*

> *Interviewee A4: ”It is always good to have Indians as friends because you stick to your root… There are certain cultural things, certain festivals you enjoy with Indians because we understand it better, we do it better.”*

> *Interviewee B3: ”Friend is very important; otherwise you feel lonely and definitely cannot stay in a foreign country very long.”*

Interviewee B3 said that it is not easy to find friends. There are not many changes to get to know others. Furthermore, colleagues at the work place seem to be busy with their own lives and making friends require also time. She mentioned that it could be easier to find friends through studying. Interviewees A3 and A4 said in fact having made good friends with the Finnish people during their studies in Finland.

9 CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes the central results and findings from the research as a conclusion. Furthermore, the reliability of the research is analyzed through the principals of reliability and validity. I will also discuss about my own opinion of the work and its success and give recommendations to the company based on the main points and results of this research.

In relation to the research problem of what needs to be taken into consideration in the management of Asian employees in order for them to adapt to the Finnish working environment, several important issues were discovered through the empirical study. First and foremost, according to both the Indian and Chinese employees and their managers, local language knowledge and skills is the most important one. In Finland, knowing the Finnish language will definitely help in fully adapting and feeling comfortable in the society and working environment. At ABB Oy, the official language is English and most of the employees speak fluent English but still many of the interviewed Indian and Chinese employees had occasional problems due to Finnish language barriers. Therefore, having at least fluent English skills becomes even more crucial and is, thus, a basic requirement for a functioning communication between the employees and managers.

It was discovered that in general the Indian and Chinese employees can manage very well with English but there are still quite much information, systems and instructions in Finnish and it can cause big tasks for the foreign employees to be able to use them. The Finnish employees' attitudes towards foreign employees were seen more open compared to people outside the company. In general, however, the Indians thought Finns are rather reserved. The Indians and the Chinese thought that Finns are direct and clear in the way of communicating and they saw it as a positive thing. The Finns give clear comments, which is different compared to China where you cannot easily know the meaning of what a person is saying.

Another vital element in terms of adaptation is the influence of culture differences. In both the managers' and the employees' answers, knowledge of people´s cultural background was emphasized. Learning and understanding the culture in question

helps the manager to know how the subordinates behave and think. It helps the manager to know the employees` needs and how to react to their behavior. For the employees it is equally important to learn the local culture and adjust to it. That way it becomes easier for them to understand the working culture and to start the adaptation process. It is important for the manager to know the different ways of working with people from different countries and cultures. Those differences need to be acknowledged in the way the work community and team works. With the Indian and Chinese employees, many of the managers had noticed that they expect written and clear instructions. They want to know their responsibilities and what is expected of them. Unlike Finns who appreciate freedom in doing their work and are eager to question managers' opinions, the Asians, and especially Chinese, are not so used to that.

Furthermore, managing foreign employees and for the employees to adapt to the Finnish working culture certain abilities or personal characteristics will help. Many of the managers and employees said that being open-minded and having a positive attitude will help the adaptation and it will also help the managers to be open to new and different people and cultures. Moreover, the subordinates highlighted that managers' support and help during a problematic or unclear situation is important.

For many of the managers it was not clear what organized programs ABB Oy arranges for the foreign employees or if there are any in the first place. Furthermore, according to most of the managers the working culture at ABB oy is mainly influenced by the Finnish culture and the working style is Finnish. In that sense, more effort could be put in acknowledging the foreign employees at ABB Oy. For example, most of the managers thought that arranging culture trainings would help their work and arranging more some sort of activity between the Finns and foreign employees would be a good way for the people to get to know each other. In that way it would also help adaptation to the working environment.

All the Indian and Chinese employees agreed that having friends is important if a person is staying in a foreign country for a long time. Having a strong social network of local Finnish friends and friends from the same ethnic group give support to the foreign employee and connects the person to the country. Two of the Indian

employees had come to Finland to study and made friends with the locals in the university so that is a one way to get to know the local people and to adapt to the society. One of the managers also commented that studies are a good way to get a job.

There were no clear differences between the cities Helsinki and Vaasa. At first, it could have been thought that internationality shows more in the interviewees' answers working in Helsinki since it is the capital city and there are for example more foreign people compared to Vaasa. However, the differences appeared more on cultural, individual and unit level. For example, most of the differences were related to culture differences such as way of acting and thinking but also to individual characteristic features, of course, also affected by culture and differences between units since the working environment and style are different in different units. For example, according to this research the sales department is more international than the HR-department.

All in all, the Indian and Chinese employees seem to have adapted to the working environment at ABB Oy well and they were satisfied with their managers input in the adaptation process. Furthermore, managers' and subordinates' answers were quite coherent. They had pretty similar answers, which I think is a good thing because the opinions are similar and complete each other. The managers saw having foreign employees as a positive thing. It gives them perspective and opens up their worldview. The foreign employees internationalize the people and ABB Oy on a practical level. Moreover, the foreign employees are important for the global business because they give knowledge about other countries besides Finland.

9.1 Reliability of the research

In research the aim is to offer as reliable and valid information and results as possible. However, it is practically impossible to totally avoid mistakes. Therefore, it is important to assess the reliability of the research. There are several measurement and research methods which can be used to assess the reliability of a research. The most common methods are probably the reliability and validity principals. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2008, 226.)

Reliability means the repeatability of a research so in other words it means the ability to give non-coincidental results. There are many ways to state the reliability of a

research. Few ways to determine the reliability are if different researchers discover the same kind of result or if the object of the research is examined many times and the results are still the same. Validity is another principal to assess reliability. It means the used measurement´s or research method´s ability to measure exactly that what it was purposed to measure. For example, when the researcher has got answers from the target group it might be that the respondents have understood the questions in a different way that the research had in mind and if the researcher handles the answers in the way (s)he had in mind, they are no longer valid because they do not measure the issue that they were supposed to measure. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2008, 226-227.)

In a qualitative research, the reliability and validity assessment methods are used with different interpretations because there are actually no clear measurement methods to assess the reliability and validity in a qualitative research since they are unique and case-based. Therefore, in a qualitative research it is important to describe how the study was conducted and how the results were discovered as accurately as possible. All the phases, conditions and execution of the research need to be explained accurately to add reliability. For example, in a research where the research method is interviews, it is important to explain the interview conditions and place, duration, possible distractions, misinterpretations and researcher´s own assessment from the situations. Furthermore, when analyzing qualitative material the information is usually gathered into certain categories so it is important to explain to the reader the reasons behind those specific categories. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2008, 227.)

In this research, the issue of reliability and validity can be observed from many views. I believe it is clear that the results of this research cannot be taken as an absolute truth because they represent answers from few of the Indian and Chinese employees and their managers, not all the Indian and Chinese employees and their managers. However, I do believe these findings represent the thinking for the majority of the people at ABB Oy and the idea of a qualitative research is the quality of the material so in my opinion the validity of this research is good. Furthermore, there were similarities between the employees' and managers' answers which adds validity and show that the sample size was big enough for drawing conclusions on the topic.

Another issue when assessing the reliability of this research is that there is a risk for misunderstandings especially with people from different nationalities and cultures when doing an interview. The questions might not have always been understood correctly or clear enough due to language barriers or differences in the way of thinking. For example, I had some problems especially with the Chinese interviewees in expressing my questions since they seemed not to have always fully understood what I meant. With a couple of the Indian and Chinese interviewees, I had to repeat the question a few times in a different way to make the question clearer to the interviewee and still I did not always get an answer for the question I aimed to find out. Moreover, I noticed that it was difficult to get negative and direct answers from the Chinese. They always tried to avoid saying something negative and if they did you had to understand it from the context that it was negative. For that reason, I had to make some of my own interpretations from the interviews. In fact, the Chinese interviewees said the same thing themselves about the way of communication in the Chinese culture that the do not say ”no” directly; it has to be understood between the lines. Furthermore, one of the managers, interviewee B2M, said that the Chinese try to be very polite and it can be difficult to talk openly with them.

Furthermore, I experienced some language challenges with the Indian and Chinese interviewees. With a few of the Indians, it was sometimes a problem to follow what they were saying because they used some fancy words or I did not understand their accent. But all in all, their English skills were very good. With two of the Chinese, on the other hand, I experienced some language challenges because their English skills were lacking. It was difficult to understand what they were saying sometimes. These same issues came out with the interviewed managers as well, interviewee A4M and B2M saying the same thing about the communication problems with the Indians and Chinese.

With all this being said, I believe it adds reliability when the interviews were conducted face-to-face to limit the risk of misinterpretations and misunderstandings. It was good that I could explain the questions in case the interviewee did not fully understand them and I could also ask if I did not understand what they were saying. Furthermore, I was able to ask additional and more detailed questions when necessary. The places where the interviews were conducted were quiet and we were

able to talk without any distractions. I also believe I was able to gain their trust in a way that they felt comfortable during the interviews and they could say what they wanted to say. Moreover, it was all of the interviewees' own will to be interviewed. The interviews were conducted individually and anonymously which I believe also adds reliability.

9.2 Own opinion of the work and its success

I believe this research has succeeded in its purpose to find an answer to the research problem of what needs to be taken into consideration in the management of Asian employees in order for them to adapt to the Finnish working environment at ABB Oy. Furthermore, I believe this thesis has answered to the research questions of what influences in the adaptation of Asian employees to the Finnish working environment, what a manager should take into consideration with an Asian employee with different cultural background and what are the differences in managing Finnish employees compared to Asian employees.

In my opinion this research gives a good general understanding about the topic of adaptation and management of Asian employees in the Finnish working environment specifically related to the case- company ABB Oy.

9.3 Recommendations for the company

Based on the results of this research, I will make a few recommendations for ABB Oy to further develop the issue of adaptation and management of Asian employees in the company. First and foremost, I suggest culture trainings for the personnel of ABB Oy but at least to those managers who are dealing with foreign individuals on daily basis. Such trainings would help the managers to understand the differences between cultures in the way of working.

I also recommend taking more into consideration the language point of view. As discovered in the study, all the Indian and Chinese employees had felt some difficulties due to language limitations and especially due to that they cannot speak fluent Finnish. Therefore, using common language during common gatherings or meetings would help everyone to understand what is happening. Furthermore, the

company could offer support in the language training, both in Finnish language studies and in English language studies with those whose English skills are lacking. In addition, attention should be given to that there is information available also in English about all the common processes and instructions.

Another issue which was discovered from the interviews was that the induction system is somewhat lacking. Many of the employees said they did not have proper induction and there was no documented information about the work and how things should be done. The company and the units could develop their induction strategy and make some sort of documented induction plans to support the adaptation to the working environment. All in all, the importance of documented information and instructions was emphasized when having Asian employees so this should be noted in the working environment and in the management style.

Lastly, there is the issue of interaction between the Indian and Chinese employees (or foreign employees in general) and the Finns. Few of the managers expressed that there could probably be more informal gatherings with the work community for the people to get to know each other. One of the Indian employees also commented that the informal interaction with the Finns seldom takes place. Therefore, more some sort of activity in the work community or during free time could be arranged to support networking with the people at ABB Oy.

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INTERVIEW STRUCTURE FOR THE INDIAN AND CHINESE EMPLOYEES

This interview is for a research to my thesis work for the Vaasa University of Applied Sciences. The research is conducted for the Global Mobility- team of ABB Oy. The topic is "Adaptation and management of Asian employees in the Finnish working environment". The focus is on Indian and Chinese employees. The purpose is to discover what influences in the adaptation of Indian and Chinese employees to the Finnish working environment and what is manager´s role in the process.

The interview will be recorded to assist the analyzing of the answers. The answers will be handled confidentially and anonymously in the research.

Interview questions:

1. General information
   a. Nationality
   b. Age?
   c. Employment relationship (permanent, external) and position at ABB Oy

2. How long have you been in Finland and why did you come here?

3. What do you think are the biggest things in the Finnish society and working culture in terms of norms, customs and values that have required getting used to?
   a. How would you describe Finns attitude towards foreign people?
   a. How would you describe the organizational culture at ABB Oy?

4. Do you think it shows in the working environment of ABB Oy that there are foreign employees?
   a. How does it show?
   b. What do you think could be helpful to do differently?

5. How would you describe the Finnish management style?
   a. What qualities do you think are important for a supervisor who has foreign subordinates?
   b. What would you hope for more or different from your supervisor?

6. How would you describe your induction to the work and to the working environment?

7. How is cross-cultural communication working at your work place when thinking of interaction between you and the Finnish employees/managers?
   a. What are the situations causing misunderstandings?

8. What cultural differences have you experienced with the Finnish employees/managers?
   a. How do they show in everyday life?

9. Do you see knowledge of Finnish language or lack of it having an influence in the adaptation to the working environment?
   a. How do the affects show?

10. Social network
    a. Have you made friends with the local people and/or with people from the same nationality who live in Finland or do you have family members here?
    b. Do you think it affects in the adaptation and how?

11. What do you think enhances your adaptation to the working environment and what hinders?

12. What do you think are the most important things in order for a person to adapt to the Finnish working environment
    a. What do you wish from your supervisor in that process?

INTERVIEW STRUCTURE FOR THE MANAGERS

This interview is for a research to my thesis work for the Vaasa University of Applied Sciences. The research is conducted for the Global Mobility- team of ABB Oy. The topic is "Adaptation and management of Asian employees in the Finnish working environment". The focus is on Indian and Chinese employees. The purpose is to discover what influences in the adaptation of Indian and Chinese employees to the Finnish working environment and what is manager´s role in the process.

The interview will be recorded to assist the analyzing of the answers. The answers will be handled confidentially and anonymously in the research.

Interview questions:

1. General information:
   a. Nationality
   b. Age
   c. Employment relationship (permanent, external) and position at ABB Oy
   d. How long have you been a manager/ in a manager related position?

2. Do you know if ABB Oy has any form of organized programs or orientation for the foreign employees?
   a. If yes, what kind of programs or orientations?

3. Have you had many Asian/ Indian and Chinese subsidiaries?

4. How would you describe the organizational culture at ABB Oy including working environment, norms, customs and values?

5. How would you describe the Indian and Chinese employees compared to Finns?
   a. What cultural differences have you experienced with the Indian and Chinese employees?
   b. How do those differences show in everyday life?

6. How is the cross-cultural communication working at your work place when thinking of interaction between Finns and Indian and Chinese employees?
   a. What are the situations causing misunderstandings?

7. In terms of recruitment, what abilities do you think are important when selecting foreign employees?

8. What assumption do you have about the adaptation of Indian and Chinese employees into the Finnish working environment at ABB Oy?

9. What do you think are the pros and cons in having foreign (Asian) subordinates?

10. What do you think are the most important things to do as a manager to help the adaptation process and how do you execute them?