



Measuring Employee Perception on The Effects of Cultural Diversity at Sievo

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ABSTRACT

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This paper explores people's perceptions towards cultural diversity at Sievo, by using the Benefits and Threats of Diversity Scale (BTDS). This is an instrument developed in the Netherlands in 2013 and aims to measure how employees perceive the effects of cultural diversity in the workplace. Diversity is evident and compulsory with reducing geographical boundaries for a workforce. Thus, organizations can better reach solutions through effectively understanding diversity profiles and areas of concern. The study provides a mix of qualitative and quantitative responses. The responses are gathered on five benefit dimensions and four threat dimensions. Sievo is truly a diverse organization and focuses on empowerment through lateral hierarchy and diversity through equal employment opportunities. People's perception of diversity was clear, and most responses were positive. However, some areas that were highlighted were understanding context and feelings in case of different cultures, and at times communication issues. On one hand people are willing to working in a diverse culture but at the same time they want to be comfortable with people with the same socio-economic backgrounds. The study suggests that there are no exact responses to diversity being positive or negative. According to the responses, employees cannot be totally in favour of or against diversity. As the literature suggests previously that people either see the pros or cons of diversity. Diversity is a human phenomenon. This means that perception, responses, pros and cons of everything vary depending on surrounding environment.

Key words: workplace diversity · diversity attitudes · diversity resistance · diversity outcomes · diversity Scale

Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	5
1.1	Research Objectives:.....	6
1.2	Research Question:.....	6
1.3	Theoretical Framework:.....	6
1.4	Problem Statement:.....	7
1.5	Dimensions of benefits of cultural diversity in the workplace	7
1.6	Dimensions of threats of cultural diversity in the workplace	8
2	Literature Review.....	9
2.1	Diversity.....	9
2.2	Importance of measuring perceptions towards diversity	10
2.3	Diversity strategy	11
2.4	Diversity Management.....	14
2.5	Benefits associated with cultural diversity.....	15
2.6	Threats associated with cultural diversity.....	17
2.7	Reasons for Using the BTDS.....	18
3	Methodology.....	20
3.1	Research Approach:.....	20
3.2	Questionnaires:	21
3.3	Interviews:	21
3.4	Primary Data:.....	21
3.5	Population:.....	22
3.6	Sample Size:	22
3.7	Ethical Considerations:.....	23
3.8	Research Limitations:	23
4	Data Analysis.....	24
4.1	Questionnaire:	24
4.1.1	Benefits.....	24
4.1.2	Threats:	30
4.2	Interviews:	39
4.2.1	Interview 1:	39
4.2.2	Interview 2:	40
4.2.3	Interview 3:	41
5	Discussion	43
6	Conclusion and Recommendations	46
6.1	Recommendations:.....	47
	REFERENCES	48
	APPENDICES.....	57

ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

TAMK	Tampere University of Applied Sciences
BTDS	Benefit and Threat Diversity Scale
RBT	Resource Based Theories
CC	Core Competence
IN1, IN2, IN3	Interviewee 1, Interviewee 1, Interviewee 3

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1 Introduction

Everyday work force diversity is gaining more popularity amongst the practitioners and consequently researchers as well. According to studies many organizations tend to increase cultural orientations believing to positively effect productivity (e.g. Cox et al. 1991, 45-56; Jehn et al. 1999, 287–306; McLeod and Lobel 1992; Van Knippenberg et al. 2004, 515–541). However, it is very difficult to manage diversity and at many occasions it results in negatively effecting teams (Jehn et al. 1999, 287–306; Van Knippenberg and Schippers 2007, 515–541) and also creating resistance within coworkers (Thomas and Plaut 2008, 1-22; Harrison et al. 2006, 96–107; Antwi-Boasiako 2008, 225–231).

Diversity policies can trigger many unwanted reactions thus to implement such policies it is important to understand employee's perspective towards diversification. According to studies personal attitudes towards diversity can be a strong predictor towards diversity policy outcomes, such as social identification patterns, team cohesion, employee well-being and performance (Hofhuis et al. 2012; McKay et al. 2007, 35–62; Van Knippenberg et al. 2013, 515–541). The effectiveness of diversity policies is very much affected by the overall perception carried in majority workforce in organization.

This research is tending to approach the workforce of Sievo in Finland to understand how they perceive diversity, based on the Benefits and Threats of Diversity Scale (BTDS). This is an instrument developed in 2013 in Netherlands which measures workforce perceptions towards diversity and its effects.

The BTDS offers greater utility with respect to comparable instruments as it (1) independently measures perceived positive and negative effects of diversity, and (2) has increased practicality by providing specific dimensions for both positive and negative effects.

With the increase in globalization people have become more open to diversity and for businesses it has become a buzz word. At the same time professionals are realizing the difficulties arising from diversity. There are both positives and negatives of every scenario thus this research attempts to study the perceptions of Finnish work force at Sievo.

1.1 Research Objectives:

The research has following objectives:

- To check if cultural diversity has an impact on work culture
- To determine whether cultural diversity effects (positive and negative) workforce.
- To study the response of work force towards cultural diversity

1.2 Research Question:

This study is being done to understand “how cultural diversity is perceived in a Finnish work environment and what effects it has on the work efficiency?”

1. What is cultural diversity/ how it is perceived within the company?
2. Does cultural diversity effect work efficiency?
3. How people adapt to cultural diversity?

1.3 Theoretical Framework:

Diversity Theories started developing in the early 1980s. Management and Organizational are the major concerns of these theories. As the workforce boundaries are shrinking and workplaces are becoming more multicultural, it is becoming more important to understand diversity theories and diversity effects on future. (Janssens, Maddy and Steyaert, Chris, 2003)

There are two major theories of diversity that will be considered for this study. Resourced based theory and core competence provides the bases of studying workforce diversity in relation to human resource practices to manage organizational performance. These two theories RBT and CC explains workforce heterogeneity and how heterogenous workforce can provide bases for competitive advantage. According to this phenomenon diversity and employee heterogeneity can to better organizational performance. The resource-based theory talks about the link of internal company resources, company strategy and performance (Barney, 1991, 214-188). In the opinion of some scholars like Wright, MacMahan, and McWilliams (1994) human resources is one of the most important sources of competitive advantage for the organization. Thus, resource can be developed and to gain strategic advantage. Schroeder, Bates, and Junttila

(2002, 105–117) defines many factors on which human resource can be developed and one of them is workforce heterogeneity. Through workforce heterogeneity business can effectively respond to their customers in sales and services. According to RBT heterogenous firms are more capable in knowledge. As differentiated knowledge can bring more ideas to the table.

1.4 Problem Statement:

Based on the theoretical framework we can define the Problem statement for the study. As in theory cultural diversity implicates innovation and productivity with increased competence and experience. This study will assess the perception of cultural diversity in actual work environment. Finland is a closed society and people take longer to open about their opinions. This provides a unique opportunity for this research to combine theory and practice to develop a ground for future research.

1.5 Dimensions of benefits of cultural diversity in the workplace

There are five dimensions of cultural diversity benefits measured using BTS.

Understanding of Diverse Groups in Society: working in a diverse workforce helps employees to understand other cultures and be more flexible towards other norms and values. It gives better sense of judgement while dealing with other cultures. This may include customers or co-workers.

Creative Potential: According to the respondents working with other cultures is more intriguing. This results in idea creation and learning opportunities are increased. When people put in a different situation with different people, they think in a different manner and hence brings more ideas.

Image of Social Responsibility: A culturally diverse workplace portrays a good image of the organization in society. This puts the organization forward towards social responsibility and providing equal employment opportunities.

Job Market: Another dimension that was widely discussed was larger talent pool. Not restricting to some cultures and keeping an open workforce platform provides the company pool. It enables the organization to have the best possible candidate with a larger talent pool and enabling organizations to fill the vacancies with qualified personnel.

Social Environment: It as mentioned that working with different cultures is always fun and more active. As people have different experience to share from around the world thus diversity makes the workplace more interesting.

1.6 Dimensions of threats of cultural diversity in the workplace

Realistic threat: There is a high chance that people do not respond well to diversity and there is grouping of different cultures. People resist change and new cultures might threaten the majority working in the organization.

Symbolic threat: It was mentioned that employees might develop beliefs about a certain culture and how they work and interact. These preconceived notions might result in adverse results of diversity.

Intergroup anxiety: Another aspect of diversity threat is that people have anxiety dealing with other people. The insecurity of working in with a culturally different person might result in employees reacting in irrational manner. They might not be as open or helpful leading to miscommunication.

Productivity Loss: This is a major threat. While working with diverse workforce due to preconceived notions, miscommunication, not understanding the other person and many other reasons the team may not work most productively. This has said before may not be true for every team and every situation, but this is the most triggered threat of diversity.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Diversity

Diversity is one of the most qualitative terms. Anything that is not heterogeneous is diverse. All humans are heterogeneous yet diverse. Similarly, everyone might have their own definition of diversity. Major dimensions of diversity are measured on are gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, education, or work status. According to Kreitz (2008, 101–120) explains diversity as “any significant difference that distinguishes one individual from another,” this covers all the aspects on the surface and the ones which might not be that obvious to short interactions. Ely and Thomas (2001, 79–90) explains diversity as a “characteristic of groups of two or more people and typically refers to demographic differences of one sort or another among group members.”

The variations of definitions of diversity explains that diversity is dependent on the intergroup and interpersonal relations of employees at a workplace. Diversity theories which explain the dimensions of diversity put more focus on the social identity and social categorization within group dealings (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, 7–24), while putting stress on the relevance of obvious traits (Harrison, Price, & Bell, 1998, 96–107), as in race and nationality (geographical location). According to previous literature intergroup relations at workplace are influenced by social identity and perceived similarity. Both these aspects have their positive and negative consequences, such as leading to discrimination, in equal in employment opportunities, typecasting, and conflicts, on the other hand, enforcing creativity, innovation, and better problem solving (Krell & Wächter, 2006, 127–149). In studies conducted at group level of analysis, it has been shown that diverse teams have outperformed homogeneous groups at occasions especially in the context of creativity and satisfaction (Fujimoto, Härtel, & Härtel, 2004, 4–16; Podsiadlowski, 2002, 279–300; Stahl, Maznevski, Voigt, & Jonsen, 2010, 690–709).

Diverse groups have individuals from different backgrounds and experiences; thus, they bring new ideas and different perspectives to the group. This provides better problem solving and initiative skills to the group, enhancing the creative and learning skills which ultimately translates to better performance of the group (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998, 77–140). This makes the group more interesting and

satisfying workplace to be at (Podsiadlowski, 2002, 112–145). Employee diversity is especially an advantage to the businesses who are dealing with global client base. This helps them have diversity inside the company and that practice of dealing with different cultures helps them to deal with outside diversity. It gives the workforce an understanding of different cultures and their norms and values. Here it should be acknowledged that pre-existing social inequalities for minority groups and perceived difference might result in conflicts while dealing with diverse workforce.

Difference in opinion always leads to different approaches and it is a good thing. This may enable organization to deal with issues arising from diversity situations and help manage it in a better way.

2.2 Importance of measuring perceptions towards diversity

Mostly, cultural diversity studies are conducted from the perspective of minority groups and how they feel about a certain situation. As an example, take the study of Berry's (1992, 187- 212) acculturation strategies, which provides a great deal of knowledge on what kind of psychological processes immigrant groups go through with in a society. Here we should remind ourselves any human interaction is between two people. Dealing with different cultures there are always two or more cultures involved. Thus, attitudes and behavior of the majority group have equal or perhaps more influence on those of minority members.

According to Bourhis et al. (1997) that expats apply certain acculturation strategies in a new society, and they have impacts, at the same time the host society's exhibits preferences for those of immigrant's acculturation strategies. These preferences are highly influential to the outcomes of the acculturation process.

Hereby the same applies in the context of an organization. According to research studies, the attitude of majority members towards diversity is a strong forecaster of sense of acceptance for minority members. That said leading to benefiting intergroup contact through positive behavior (Hofhuis et al. 2012).

It is important to understand that any kind of change brings resistance. Implementing diversity policies in an organization can have strong repercussions in terms of resistance to change, communication and adjustment to new environment (Thomas and Plaut 2008, 1–22). According to Harrison et al. (2006,

96–107) research, a meta-analysis shows how some of the most widely used diversity management techniques like affirmative action programs, may negatively impact acceptance of diversity for society's majority members. However, this impact can be reduced through communication and justification of these diversity policies. It can be stated that in order to ensure that positive effects of diversity are gained, it is important to understand how diversity is perceived and understand general perception majority workforce towards diversity and shape your policies to implement diversity management strategies. According to earlier research, workforce diversity articulates both negative and positive impacts over work environment. Employee might welcome or may feel threatened by diversity. Thus, employee perception and experiences may influence (positively and negatively) the actual outcome of diversity (e.g. Cox and Blake 1991, 45-56).

2.3 Diversity strategy

Every organization approaches diversity in different manner according to their workforce situations. Literature has identified different approaches to address diversity in organizations. At many different occasions the terms diversity strategy, diversity orientation, and diversity perspective are used synonymously. Organizations might respond to diversity with systematic strategy which can be periodic or continuous (Dass & Parker, 1999, 68–80). These strategies can be ongoing anywhere between “not doing anything” to “having a full-blown diversity strategy” this may involve many steps and interventions providing framework for the whole organization (Bhawuk, Podsiadlowski, Graf, & Triandis, 2002, 135).

According to Thomas and Ely (1996) there are three paradigms of perspectives on which organizations approach diversity:

- 1: The discrimination and fairness paradigm
- 2: The access and legitimacy paradigm
- 3: The learning and effectiveness paradigm.

These paradigms explain the beliefs and norms, expectations from diversity and value of diversity perceived by organizational members and connects it to work environment. According to Dass and Parker (1999, 68–80) there is also fourth perspective i.e. resistance perspective. This perspective explains that societies

positive view of diversity is considered unimportant or taken as a threat for the organization.

As explained by Roosevelt (1995, 245–263) there are all kinds of reactions to diversity, organizations ignore the subject, try to deny its impact, built relationship in teams, isolate, suppress or try to adapt to the environment. Thus, it depends on the organization how to address the issue or not to address the issue all together, whether to make it a strength and play along or make it a threat for productivity. Thus, it would be rightly said that attitude towards diversity makes it either a benefit or a threat for the organization.

The literature misses a comprehensive study that quantifies diversity strategies in the organization. Thus, Podsiadlowski, Otten, and van der Zee (2009) investigates the examples provided by Ely and Thomas (2001, 79-90). They integrated the observations of Dass and Parker (1999, 68–80) and suggested a conceptual framework of five diversity perspectives: which are: 1. Reinforcing Homogeneity, 2. Color-Blind, 3. Fairness, 4. Access, 5. Integration and Learning. Looking into detail of these perspectives we see that Reinforcing Homogeneity means that the organization ignores cultural diversity. They even reject diverse workforce enforcing homogeneity in the workforce. They favour majority and homogeneity in the organization over heterogeneity.

In theory and practicality the bases lie in the thinking that working in homogenous workforce provides better integrating, communication and ease in workplace context (Riordan, Shaffer, & Stewart, 2005; Schneider, 1987, 1445–1467; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992, 549–579). According to Schneider's (1987, 1445–1467) attraction–selection–attrition hypothesis explains organizations are inclined towards, attracting, hiring, and retaining similar type of people in the name of organization culture. They intend to promote majority in the country through criteria's like previous experience, language, local business knowledge, local contacts, and network. This increases the filtration criteria for immigrants. Here notice that this intention of excluding minority or rather including the dominant majority might be implicit or explicit (Flam, 2008, 173–197; Podsiadlowski & Ward, 2010, 279–300). Also, many organizations might not totally ignore cultural diversity in their environment or job market but would resist it (Dass & Parker, 1999, 68–80).

According to (Ely & Thomas, 2001, 229–273) the concept of discrimination and fairness can be divided into a Colour-Blind and cultural Fairness perspective.

Most of the examples provided in their research refers to the Colour-Blind approach (Podsiadlowski et al., 2009). This approach explains that humans should be treated as equals without their cultural orientations. While dealing with people management personals should not consider ethnical background as a measure of decision making. Thus, everyone is treated fairly. Colour-blindness and fairness both define fair treatment of workforce and avoiding discrimination at workplace. However, it should be noted that both these concepts have different reasoning for ensuring equal employment opportunities: Color-Blindness talks about equal employment opportunities, but it does not consider difference arising from diverse cultural backgrounds. Whereas Fairness combines fair treatment by addressing need to acknowledge diversity and treating minority groups with support to reduce social inequalities.

The Access perspective provides a wider prospective of organizations internal and external environment. This concept talks about how organization shows its internal diverse culture to its outside diverse customers. Diverse workforce portrays similar diverse internal and external culture of the company.

The Integration and Learning perspective explain things on a much macro level. It suggests that the organization, workforce, and internal and external environments all can benefit from diversity. According to this concept, diversity creates a learning opportunity for everyone in internal and external environment. This is a major concept as it explains that change happens with mutual learning between minority and majority work groups. This provokes mutual adaption and creating an understanding environment between workgroups and combines them into one.

Both concepts of Access and Integration and Learning are reflective of the advantages gained from diverse workforce. These concepts entail the positive aspects of diversity and gaining advantage while using a diverse workforce to achieve a stringer workforce, bigger talent pool and effectively dealing with globally diverse customers to meet company goals (Fish, 1999, 196–205).

However only taking about the concept of Access, it considers how internal diversity can help gain advantage in external environment and translates into effective dealing with diverse external customers. The Integration and Learning perspective give a wider view from just business-related demographic reasons and positive aspects. Equal and fair treatment for all the workforce talks more about minority work groups and their rights. This means that organization has not

only realized diverse work groups in their environment but also, they investigate every individual's specific expertise and acknowledge their potential. This will help them gain advantage through using the right resource and expertise at the right area.

Overall all of these five aspects can be characterized ranging from the defensive (ignoring and/or resisting diversity) to reactive (being legally and social responsible and/or addressing intercultural conflict) to proactive (acknowledging the socio economic benefits arising from diversity and encourage diversity as a learning opportunity for the whole organization).

However practically there is no evidence found that explains these dimensions in an organization. Neither to our knowledge there are any studies which quantify organizational approach towards diversity. In organizations diversity is tackled in a very subtle manner. None of the organizations openly oppose diversity but the positive and negative attitudes can be seen through theory approach towards recruitment, succession planning and team diversity. There is a big gap on how diversity is approached in organizations and theoretical foundations of organizational diversity.

2.4 Diversity Management

There is literature available that highlights the benefits and importance of organizational diversity (the so-called value-in-diversity hypothesis; Ely & Thomas, 2001, 79–90; Richard, 2000, 164–177; Shore, Chung-Herrera, & Dean, 2009, 117–133). It would be right to say that perception towards diversity determines its impact in organizations. To ensure a positive impact of diversity, a diverse management should be introduced in the organization to inculcate trickledown effect.

To define diversity and manage it, literature provides many definitions of diversity management. Mostly diversity management comprises of practices that intend to reap maximum benefits through diversity (Cox, 1993). These include policies for recruitment, succession planning and retaining employees regardless of their backgrounds (Cox & Blake, 1991, 45-56). According to Seymen (2006, 301) cultural diversity be an opportunity to increase competitiveness by increasing the variety of workforce at workplace. This would provoke a sense of competition and push employees to be better.

Every organization tend to deal with diversity in their own way, as discussed earlier some ignore it and some take advantage from it (Bhawuk et al., 2002, 112–145; Ensher, Grant-Vallone, & Donaldson, 2001, 53–72; Seymen, 2006, 296–315). Some of the policies that are common while dealing with workforce diversity or multiculturalism at work include diversity committees, multicultural team, representative groups, language tuitions, intercultural training, and diversity workshops. Most effective tools to manage diversity come from embedded policies within existing processes like training and development, employee orientations, team dynamics, recruitment and retention polices and diverse management group.

Organizational performance and workforce mix are affected by its diversity measures. The policies any organization follows to manage its workforce will determine the intensity of diversity in its environment. Here having a diverse workforce does not necessarily means that the culture would be diverse. If the organization does not allow free flow of ideas, diverse workforce might not impact its functions. It is important to standardize diversity measurement approaches to have a better knowledge and management of diverse workforce. There is a gap at the conceptual level about diversity management literature and its practical application (Richard & Johnson, 2001, 177–196).

2.5 Benefits associated with cultural diversity

Why organizations try to have a diverse workforce? It has been researched and presented in literature that diversity provides many explicit and implicit benefits towards productivity and team dynamics.

At the beginning it needs to be recognized that for companies the stakeholders and customers are very diverse culturally. Thus, it would help to have a diverse workforce to Firstly, it is recognized that an organization's markets and stakeholders are inherently culturally diverse. A diverse workforce can be a tool for gaining competitive advantage and have a better understanding of minority workforce (e.g. Ely and Thomas 2001, 229–273). Take an example of supermarket located in a diverse locality, having a diverse workforce would provide the business an opportunity to interact in a better way providing better customer service.

This principal can be applied to all other organizations. Government organizations need diverse workforce to understand and meet the needs of diverse social groups. Understanding the diverse work groups is the first step towards understanding the many different profiles in the society.

Another reason for having more knowledge about diverse workforce is described in research as diverse workforce tends to be more creative and innovative. As diverse workforce approaches the issue with many different angles and perspectives thus providing a better overall situation analysis resulting in better idea work productivity (Van Knippenberg et al. 2004, 515–541).

According to research studies diversity reduces monotony and encourages more original idea generation (Fay et al. 2006, 137–159). De Dreu and West (2001, 1191–1201) states that provided opportunity to speak different ideas (cf. Edmondson 1999), may result in more diversified ideas entailing creating thinking and making respondents more alert to think critically and reach a better solution (Brodbeck and Greitemeyer 2000, 621–648; Collins and Geutzkow 1964, 52-86). According to Ely and Thomas, the ‘insights, education and skills that an employee gains from working with different cultures is valuable. This increases his potential to understand and rethink current strategies, processes, and intergroup communications to reach a better and more productive solution. (Ely and Thomas 2001, 240).

In some situations, cultural diversity may increase flexibility and creativity. Which is result in better performance and higher productivity (Shipton et al. 2005). This gives bases of “increasing the creative potential” to be a dimension for benefits of diversity.

Finally, there are more direct and quantifiable effects of diversity but at the same time there are many impacts that are not immediately seen. One of which is the overall image of the organization in the society. Being an equal opportunity employer bring more positivity to the company image and how society and the world looks at the company. Though employing diverse workforce organization send a positive message of social responsibility and they aim to reduce discrimination (cf. Cunningham and Melton 2011, 647- 663). The idea of having a diverse workforce under corporate social responsibility is a modern concept of organizational ethics. Thus, positive image and corporate social responsibility is another important dimension of diversity benefit.

2.6 Threats associated with cultural diversity

According to Stephan and Stephan's Integrated Threat Theory (ITT; 2000) which deals with different types of threats faced by employees in multicultural environment, states that there are three kinds of threats present for employees in such an environment. The theory classifies these threats as "realistic threats(external circumstances that involve potential physical, economic or status loss for the in-group),symbolic threats(the perception of the out-group's beliefs, values and symbols as a threat to the in-group's beliefs, values and symbols), and intergroup anxiety (negative feelings of in-group members when anticipating or experiencing contact with out-group members)".

Realistic threats can be equally applicable to both minority and majority group members of the society. People tend to promote similar ideas and values. Thus, in case of increased diversity this may affect majority group in a adverse manner, at the same time this can affect the minority group member significantly with their career progression, job prospects etc. In case the companies who try to have a diverse workforce through affirmative action tends to reduce opportunities for majority work group of society. This mostly applies during the time of restructuring and downsizing of the companies (Antwi-Boasiako 2008, 225–231). These kinds of actions reduce employee sense of security and motivation without the effect of diversity. According to studies realistic threat often occur due to less acceptability of diversity in local workforce (Lowery et al. 2006, 961–974).

A second threat dimension explained by Stephen is termed as Symbolic threats. The threats which does not exist in the environment but somehow people perception makes them real. According to Stephan and Stephan (2000, 23–45), people may deem diversity as a challenge to prove themselves to the world and compete against the world in their own home. This kind of perceived threats is resulted from different norms, backgrounds, beliefs, and attitudes between cultural groups. The sense of world that one has, his beliefs and his view about the world makes it easier of him to comprehend things easily, which when met with other views tend to spark a sense of fear (Greenberg et al. 1990, 202–213). Thirdly, dealing with people from different backgrounds makes some people nervous. It is a natural phenomenon of fearing the unknown. This can be grouped as intergroup anxiety (Curseu et al. 2007, 125–140). There are several studies explaining the effects of intergroup anxiety as exaggerated cognitive, effective,

and behavioral reactions towards diversity (see Staw et al. 1981, 77–140). It is hard for people to know the feeling of the other person when they are not from the same backgrounds. Verbal conversations are clear but at times the hidden body language or idea behind the certain reference is not clear to the other person. This makes it difficult to understand people and take them to their word. Finally, due to increased pressure (perceived pressure) of workforce diversity the team may suffer productivity loss. Although there has not been significant evidence of this but in certain conditions, working with similar mind set may increase productivity and vice versa (Jehn and Bezrukova 2004, 409–425; Thomas 1999).

Some of the common and more visible threats are, difficulty in managing diverse workforce, meeting expectations, work culture, informal talks at workplace etc. All this may become a cause of raising conflict. Furthermore, personal opinions and biases towards any particular minority group (particularly immigrants) regarding their education, language proficiency or lack of understanding of modern world can lead to difference of opinion and hard to work in a group (Choenni 2007; Curseu et al. 2007, 125-140) resulting in productivity loss.

2.7 Reasons for Using the BTDS

To measure common attitudes towards diversity, researchers have developed many instruments in context of workplace.

For example, The Reaction to-Diversity (R-T-D) Inventory was developed by Hostager and De Meuse (2008, 127–139). This tool categories respondents into four groups, which are diversity optimists, realists, or pessimists. Another research presents the Attitudes towards Diversity at Work Scale (ADWS; Nakui et al. 2011). This tool was presented to measure workforce attitude towards diversity based on two variables: productive (beliefs of effective productivity of diverse workgroups) and affective (social or affective aspects of diversity).

The instruments discussed in examples provide a reliable and valid assessment of major variables effecting diversity. However, there are other factors effecting human attitudes and to make an educated decision, organizations need more information.

There are two major advantages of using BTDS over other research tools. Firstly, BTDS exhibits separate dimensions for both positive and negative attitudes towards diversity on separate dimensions. As stated in review of diversity literature by Van Knippenberg and Schippers (2007, 515–541), “we believe the inherent ambivalence of diversity outcomes may not be fully represented in one scale ranging from pro to con” (see also Stockdale and Cao 2004, 299–316). As diversity entails both positive and negative repercussions simultaneously, workforce can also see, understand, and be affected by both at the same time. Secondly, the BTDS provides a concrete set of benefits and threats perceived by employees. This instrument provides more information to the user and give more in-depth knowledge of variables that might not be evident on the surface but certainly effects human behaviors.

The major strength of this tool is that both scales i-e Benefits and Threats as well as the individual items constructing these scales have been well researched and are embedded in previous research literatures, also these dimensions are than further studied and refined through interviews and large scale survey study of actual workforce. The development of tool through both qualitative and quantitate research increase its reliability and practicality.

3 Methodology

The research methodology was designed to get a good sample size for the research.

3.1 Research Approach:

Qualitative research is described as a research that considers the major characteristics describing the contexts, the observed social scenario in which the interaction of the actor and the researcher has taken place. (Irene, 2011). Qualitative Research dwells on the interaction of the people; who are the actors in a particular situation and the research is focused on their daily actions, workings, understanding, expression of ideas, giving meaning to a certain phenomenon, and, on the other end the person involved in the research. The research is responsible for data gathering and interpretation of how social reality is constructed by these actor's attitudes and behaviours.

Creswell (1994) explains **Quantitative Research** in the simplest manner. He explains it as the type of research that explains the studied variables through collecting numerical data and analyzing that data in a mathematical manner. Furthermore Cohen (1980) states quantitative research involves empirical data and empirical statements. According to him quantitative research provides a descriptive statement of what "is" the case of the "real world" rather than implying to what "ought" to be the case. These statements are explained in form of numerical values.

Triangulation technique is used for the purpose of this study. Triangulation is the technique where more than one data collection methods are used. Triangulation is used to get better understanding of human phenomenon such as perceptions concerning diversity (Downward, Mearman, 2007). Through triangulation the study gets depth as it is not possible to interview a lot of people with limited resources and it is not possible to explain one's feelings with limited questions and responses.

Mixed methods were used for the research. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were followed. In qualitative approach interviews were taken where

there were open ended questions regarding diversity. In the quantitative portion BTDS was used and the questionnaire developed in the study was used as it was a validated and reliable tool for gathering data on diversity dimensions.

It is important to understand that triangulation method is not adopted to cross validate the data from interviews and questionnaires but to get a more wholistic view of human perceptions relating to workforce diversity.

3.2 Questionnaires:

From the workforce of 165 employees 31 Questionnaires will be taken into analysis.

3.3 Interviews:

Interviews were conducted from 3 respondents. These respondents were selected cautiously from different work levels and different departments to ensure information is gathered from all actors in the context. It was ensured that the anonymity of and the confidentiality of the information is not harmed at any level. The interviews were held in a structured manner. The sequences of the interview questions was managed in a way that the respondent develops their own understanding of the phenomenon i-e Cultural Diversity and the researcher can understand how the respondent perceives diversity and build on the interview accordingly.

3.4 Primary Data:

Hox & Boeije (2005) explains primary data as facts collected through original source for a particular study with a particular motive. This kind of data usually is used in both qualitative and quantitative research and often considered as the best source for research purposed.

In quantitative research primary data is collected through, questionnaires, email surveys, web surveys, experiments, and survey diaries. In qualitative research primary data is collected through interviews, observations, focus groups, and unstructured diaries.

The data used for the research is primary and is collected from Sievo employees. This has provided an insight of a Finnish organization with diverse workforce.

3.5 Population:

The population for this study was Sievo workforce. Which consist of 165 employees working in Finland. This includes almost 25 nationalities hence have a multi-cultural workforce. Thus, it makes the workforce diversified and interesting for the study.

3.6 Sample Size:

The sample was taken of 31 employees. This was based on the responses collected through the survey. For the interviews 3 respondents were taken from different departments and work tier.

The sample was collected through simple random sampling. Olken & Rotem (1986) explains simple random sampling as a technique where the sample is collected on random basis and each event has an equal probability of occurrence. This is one of the basic sampling techniques. For this study simple random sampling without replacement is opted considering the resource limitation and due to Covid 19 pandemic situation it was harder to collect the data.

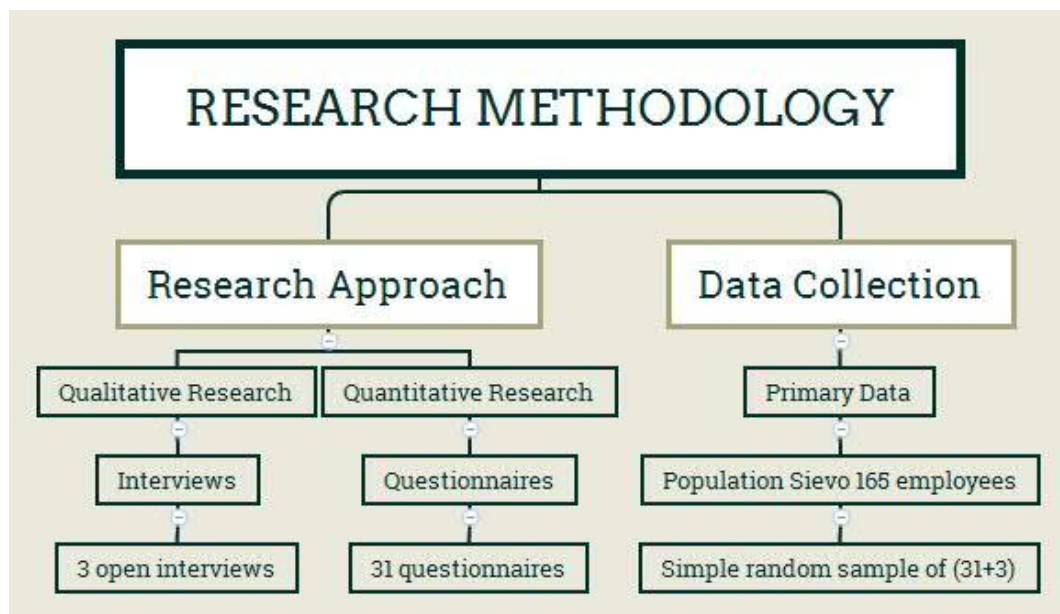


FIGURE 1: Research methodology of the study

3.7 Ethical Considerations:

Following ethical considerations were taken great care of:

1. Anonymity of respondents
2. There will not be hostile environment and respondents will be voluntary
3. Informed consent will be taken from the respondents of both questionnaire and interviews
4. The quality of data will not be tempered

3.8 Research Limitations:

1. There are limited resources with one researcher
2. People might not be willing to give their true opinion thus to avoid any kind of bias we will do the survey without ids
3. Time limitation
4. There are no harsh ethical concerns and privacy of employees is kept in consideration.

4 Data Analysis

Data is analyzed statistically and presented as per percentages and graphically.

4.1 Questionnaire:

4.1.1 Benefits

The questionnaire was divided into two sets of questions, benefits, and threats. The benefits part had 5 dimensions on which respondents replied. Each of these dimension responses are as follows:

1: Understanding Diverse Groups in Society

Does working with a diverse group affected you?

The highest response was given to option 2 i-e Gives us better insight in the needs of different groups in society. 15 respondents responded to option 2 which makes it 48.39%. The lowest responses were given to option 1 and 3 where 4 respondents to each option. These options indicated reaching larger part of community and adjusting policies as per different groups in the society as shown in Table 1. Figure 2 through graph and Table 2. provides comments.

Table 1. Affects of diverse workgroup

	ANSWER CHOICES–	RESPONSES	
1	Enables us to adjust our policies to different groups in society	4	12.90%
2	Gives us better insight in the needs of different groups in society	15	48.39%
3	Allows us to reach a larger part of the community with our policy	4	12.90%
4	Helps us better understand new developments in society	6	19.35%
5	Other	2	6.45%
	TOTAL	31	

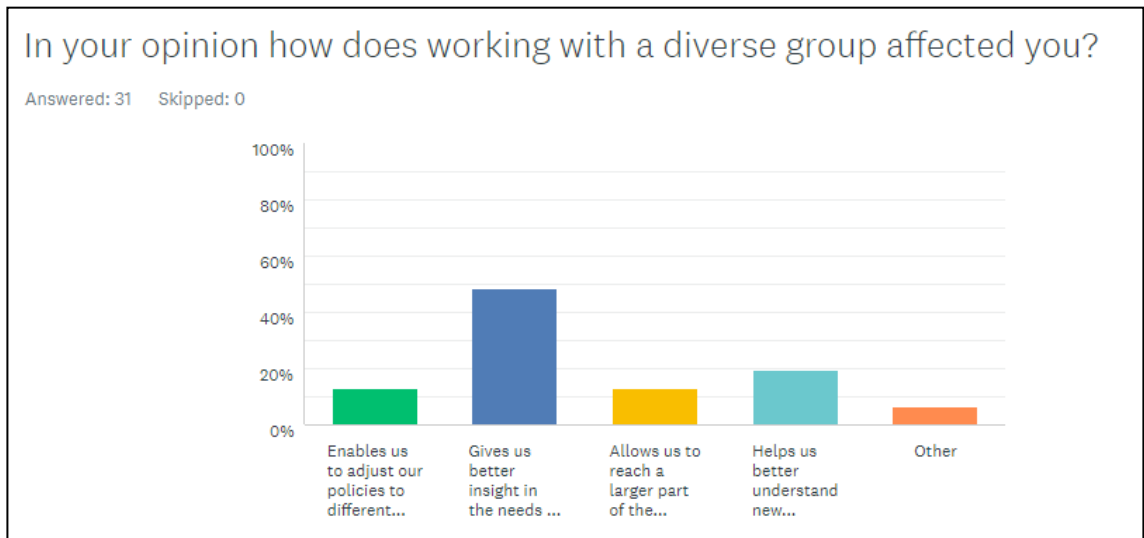


Figure 2. Affects of diverse workgroup

Table 2. Affects of diverse workgroup Comments:

1	Cannot think of anything
2	I feel no difference compared to working with any group. Everyone should be treated equally especially in a work environment.
3	What policy are you talking about?

2: Creative Potential

In your opinion cultural diversity helps us creatively, how?

The highest response was given to option 4 i-e Leads colleagues to learn more from each other’s knowledge and experience. 19 respondents responded to option 4 which makes it 61.29%. The lowest responses were given to option 3 where only 1 response was collected. This option indicated that diversity makes teams more innovative as shown in Table 3. Figure 3 through graph and Table 4. provides comments.

TABLE 3. Affects of diversity on creativity

	ANSWER CHOICES–	RESPONSES	
1	Makes us better at solving complex problems	3	9.68%
2	Enables us to come up with more original ideas	6	19.35%
3	Makes us more innovative	1	3.23%
4	Leads colleagues to learn more from each other's knowledge and experience	19	61.29%
5	Other	2	6.45%
	TOTAL	31	

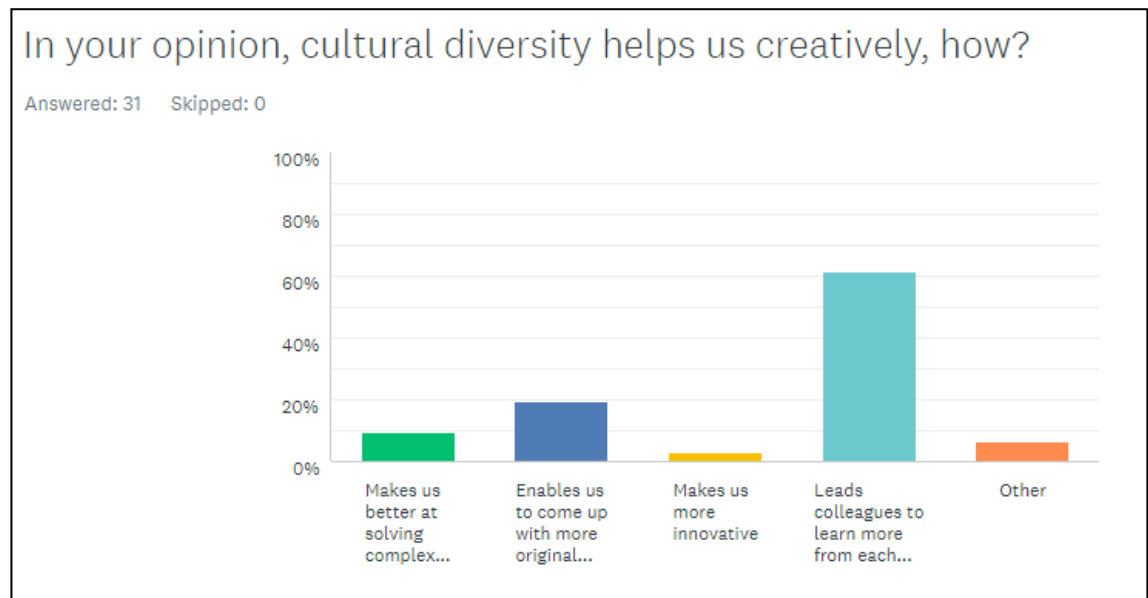


FIGURE 3. Affects of diversity on creativity

TABLE 4. Affects of diversity on creativity Comments.

1	A question should not assume that everybody's opinion is that diversity helps creatively
2	I don't think it does

3: Image of Social Responsibility

In your opinion, does workforce diversity impact an organization's social image?

The highest response was given to option 1 i-e It is good for our image towards the outside world. 14 respondents responded to option 1 which makes it 45.16%. The lowest responses were given to option 4 and 5 where 2 respondents to each option. These options indicated individual department image and other thoughts as shown in Table 5. Figure 4 through graph and Table 6. provides comments.

TABLE 5. Image of Social Responsibility

	ANSWER CHOICES-	RESPONSES	
1	It is good for our image towards the outside world	14	45.16%
2	Makes the outside world look at our department in a more positive way	6	19.35%
3	Makes all groups in society look at our organization in a more positive way	7	22.58%
4	Is good for our department's image amongst minority groups in society	2	6.45%
5	Other	2	6.45%
	TOTAL	31	

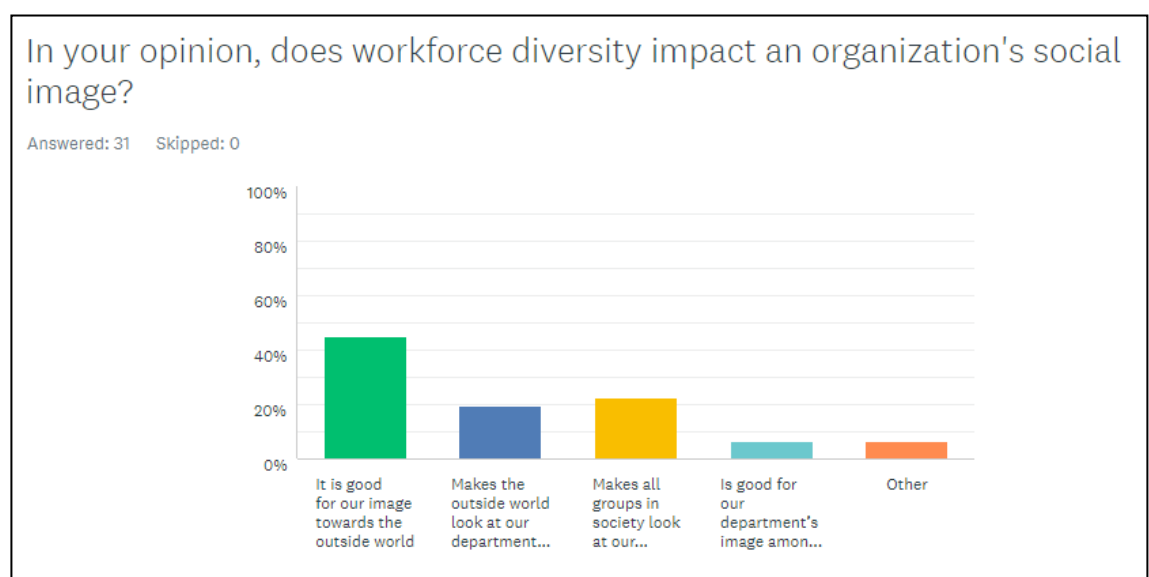


FIGURE 4. Image of Social Responsibility

TABLE 6. Image of Social Responsibility Comments:

1	It is good for PR perspective (how the company is seen), useful for recruitment purposes (esp. amongst minority groups) and business critical for sales / customer relations (additional language skills and cultural knowledge of multinational clients and prospects)
2	What department are you talking about? Probably nobody outside of the company thinks anything about departments.

4: Job Market

In your opinion, does diversity makes recruitment easier?

The highest response was given to option 3 i-e It leads us to have more choices when recruiting and selecting new personnel. 28 respondents responded to option 3 which makes it 90.32%. The lowest responses were given to option 4 and 5 where 0 respondents to each option. These options indicated anticipation of job market and other views as shown in Table 7. Figure 5 through graph.

TABLE 7. Job Market

	ANSWER CHOICES–	RESPONSES	
1	It is needed to fill all vacancies in our department	1	3.23%
2	It is necessary for recruiting enough new personnel	2	6.45%
3	It leads us to have more choices when recruiting and selecting new personnel	28	90.32%
4	It is necessary for anticipating changes in the job market	0	0.00%
5	Other	0	0.00%
	TOTAL	31	

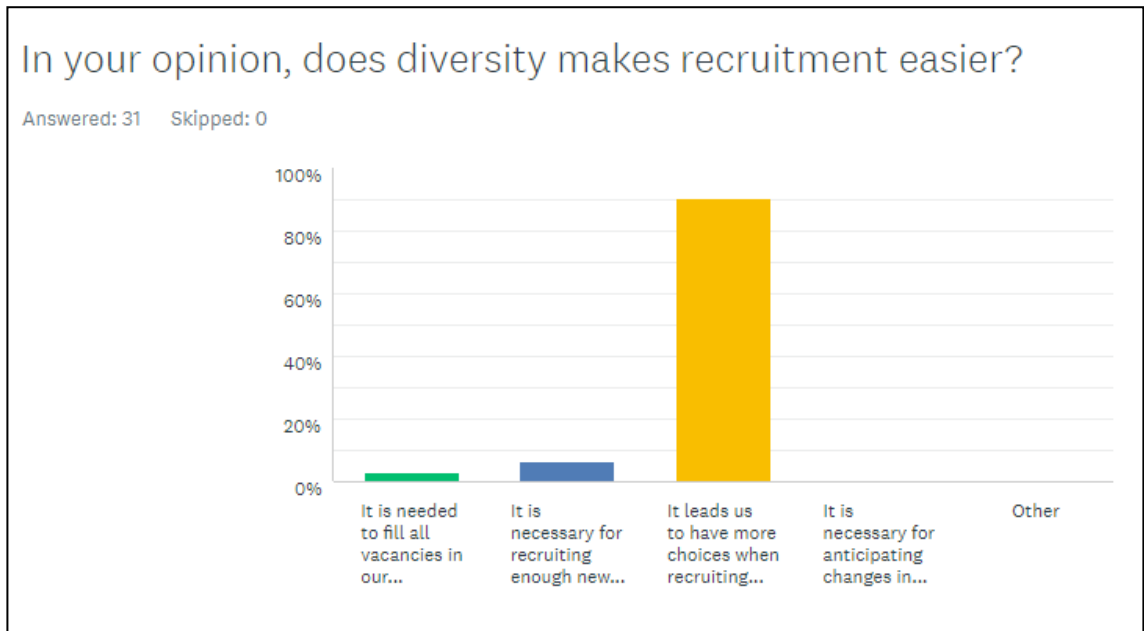


FIGURE 5. Job Market

5: Social Environment

In your opinion, what effect does diversity has on social environment at workplace?

The highest response was given to option 4 i-e It makes this an interesting place to work. Where 16 respondents responded to option 4 which makes it 51.61%. The lowest responses were given to option 2, 3 and 5 where 1 response was given to each option. These options indicated Pleasant work environment, Fun and other views as shown in Table 8. and Figure 6 through graph.

TABLE 8. Social Enviornment

	ANSWER CHOICES–	RESPONSES	
1	It has a positive effect on the work atmosphere	12	38.71%
2	It leads to a pleasant work environment	1	3.23%
3	It is fun	1	3.23%
4	It makes this an interesting place to work	16	51.61%
5	Other	1	3.23%
	TOTAL	31	

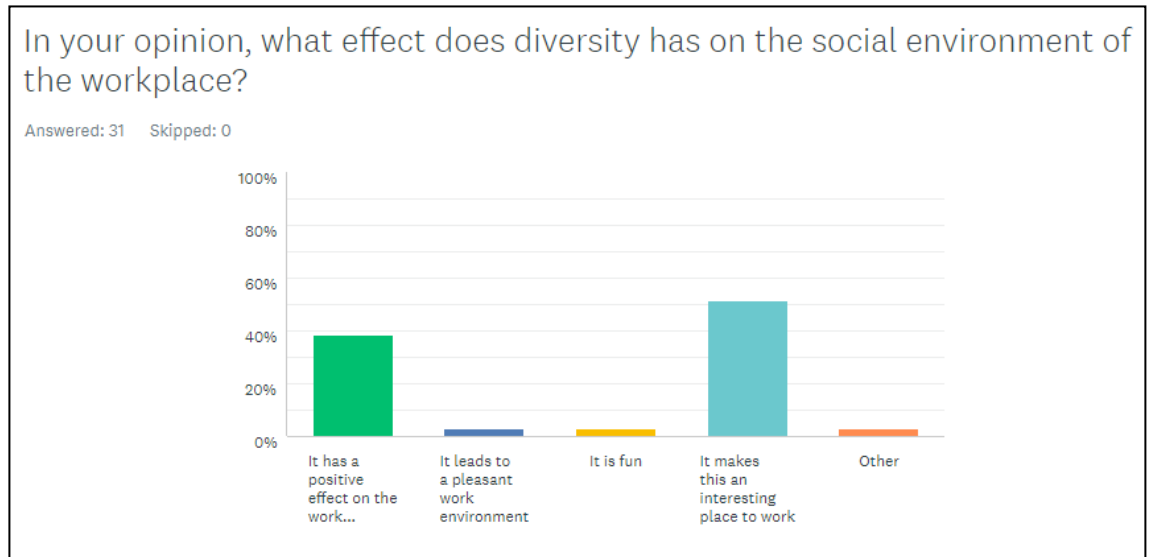


FIGURE 6. Social Environment

4.1.2 Threats:

6: Realistic Threat

In your opinion, how does diversity impact local workforce?

The highest response was given to option 5 i-e Others, there were 20 comments given to this. Where 21 respondents responded to option 5 which makes it 67.74%. The lowest responses were given to option 4 where 0 response was given to each option. These options indicated majority employees feel less recognised as shown in Table 9. and Figure 7 through graph. Table 10. provides comments.

TABLE 9. Realistic Threats

	ANSWER CHOICES–	RESPONSES	
1	It leads to fewer career opportunities for majority members	4	12.90%
2	It diminishes the status of majority employees	3	9.68%
3	It reduces the attention given to the needs of majority members	3	9.68%
4	It causes majority employees to feel less recognized	0	0.00%
5	Other	21	67.74%
	TOTAL	31	

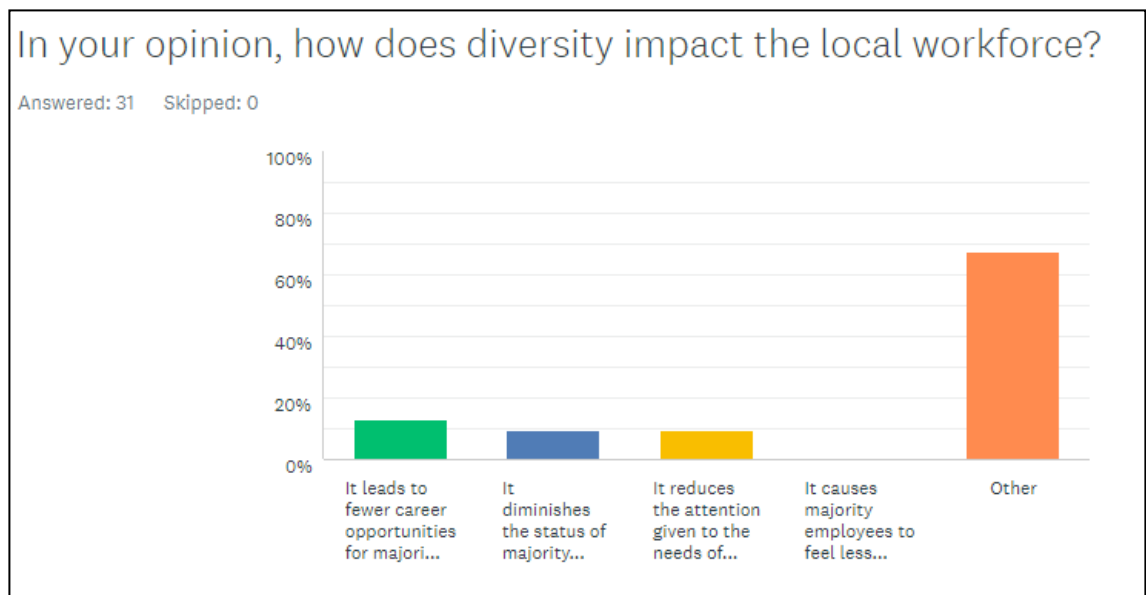


FIGURE 7. Realistic Threats

TABLE 10. Realistic Threats

1	No negative impact
2	It is natural that it happens
3	For to time being at least, the diversity and its effects has been positive (all answer options here seem negative)
4	It forces majority employees to develop themselves to better compete in the workforce market
5	It leads to more business and opportunities for the local workforce and society in general.
6	No real negative impact
7	Better chances of filling available jobs with the right people
8	It doesn't impact significantly.
9	Increased diversity in the workforce leads to an increase in opportunities for majority people in the area.
10	Other options seemed rather negative. I feel that it boosts equality on the job market, and your ethnic background would not have an effect when applying for a job.
11	Local workforce is also diverse.
12	Confusing - how can diversity be different from local workforce? Minority and diversity are different topics for me.
13	Stimulates competition
14	It makes the majority more aware of their advantages but can also create more competition
15	No issue
16	It makes the workplace and cultural more interesting, and interactions leads to learning and growth from all parties
17	None of the above
18	I don't think it leads to any of the given options. It might put some extra language requirements for locals.
19	I don't recognize the majority vs minority; we are one group of people here.
20	It has no negative effects

7: Symbolic Threat

In your opinion, how does diversity effects work communication?

The highest response was given to option 4 and 5 i-e It forces employees to adjust to a different culture and Others, there were 10 comments given to this. Where 16 respondents responded to option 4 and 11 responded to option 5 which makes it 51.61% and 35.48% respectively. The lowest responses were given to option 2 where 0 response was given. This option indicated strong change in department culture as shown in Table 11. and Figure 8 through graph. Table 12. provides comments

TABLE 11. Symbolic Threats

	ANSWER CHOICES–	RESPONSES	
1	It causes friction between colleagues with different norms and values	3	9.68%
2	It causes the department's culture to change strongly	0	0.00%
3	It leads to a situation in which majority members are forced to adjust	1	3.23%
4	It forces employees to adjust to a different culture	16	51.61%
5	Other	11	35.48%
	TOTAL	31	

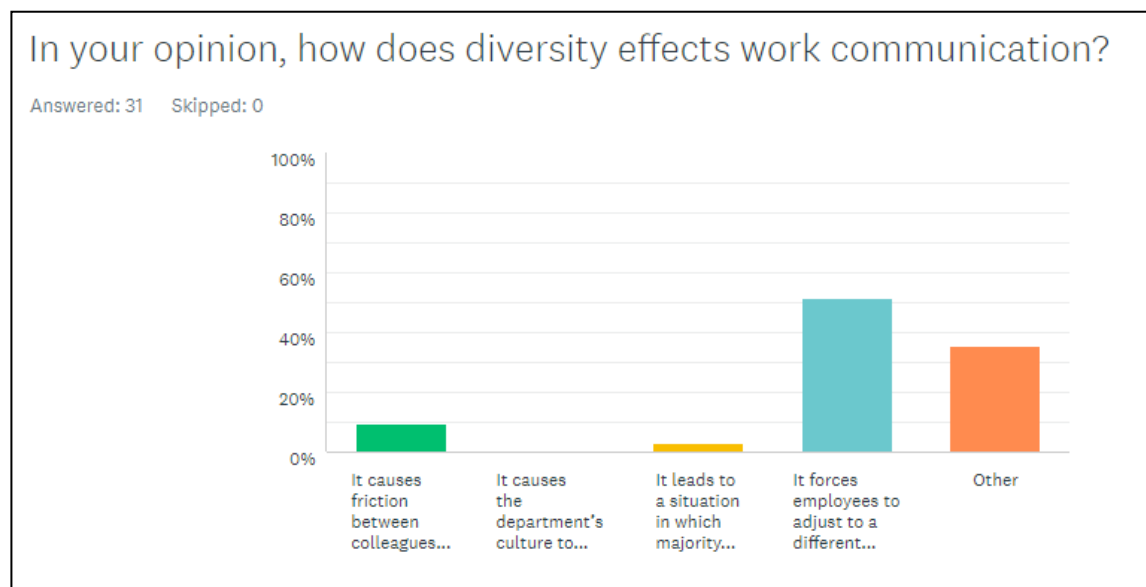


FIGURE 8. Symbolic Threats

TABLE 12. Symbolic Threats

1	it enables people to learn
2	It leads mainly to linguistic adjustments
3	The culture and work communication is unique for every company. I believe our diversity has shaped our culture and work communication to be more flexible, fun, curious and understanding. I don't believe any employee is forced to adjust or change. Instead different opinions and viewpoints are valued.
4	Only in positive ways as it brings out the diversity
5	It can pose some challenges in communication, but more positives than negatives with this
6	People are equal when most of them are using other than their native language.
7	Makes it easier and more standardized.
8	Again diversity and minority are different for me. Having multi-cultured team helps me improves my personality and have a wider experience.
9	requires everyone to be a bit more clear, inclusive and sensitive
10	No real difference

8: Intergroup Anxiety

Has intergroup communication been difficult for you due to diverse backgrounds? In what context?

The highest response was given to option 1, 3 and 5 i-e Makes it hard to judge what others are thinking and others, there were 09 comments given to this. Where 9, 11 and 9 respondents responded to option 1, 3 and 5 respectively. The lowest responses were given to option 2 where 0 response was given. This option indicated diversity leading to uncomfortable situations as shown in Table 13. and Figure 9 through graph. Table 14. provides comments

TABLE 13. Inergroup Anxiety

	ANSWER CHOICES–	RESPONSES	
1	Makes it more difficult for colleagues to understand each other	9	29.03%
2	Leads to uncomfortable situations	0	0.00%
3	Makes it hard to judge what others are thinking	11	35.48%
4	Causes insecurity in interactions with co-workers	2	6.45%
5	Other	9	29.03%
	TOTAL	31	

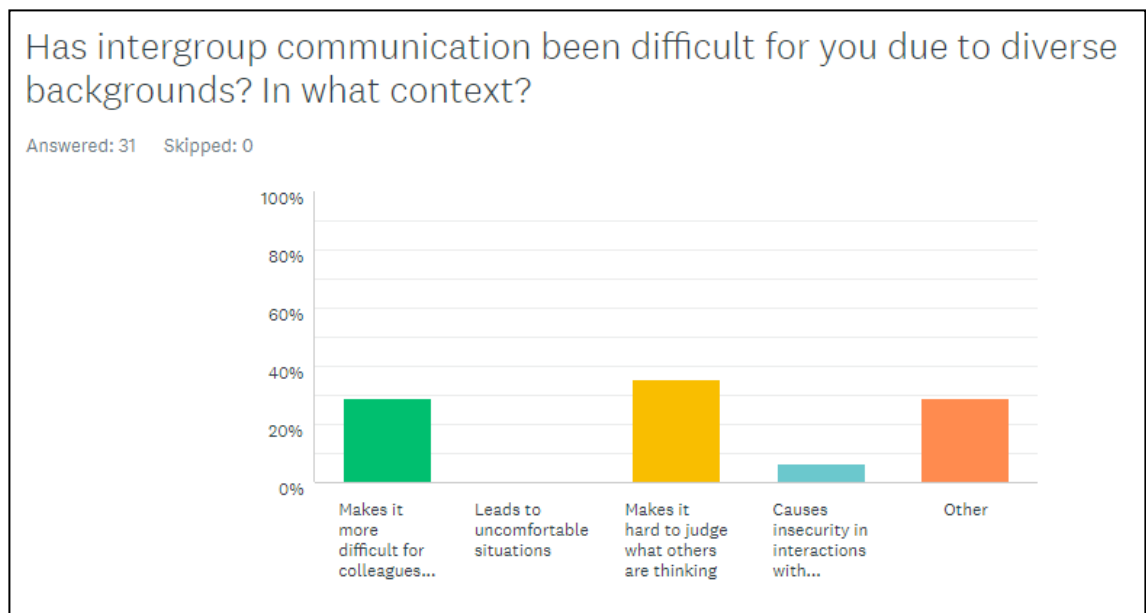


FIGURE 9. Inergroup Anxiety

TABLE 14. Inergroup Anxiety

1	No difficulties
2	No experiences regarding the points above
3	Assumption is the mother of all mistakes and communication is hard, regardless of background.
4	No difficulties is caused by diversity
5	Has not created any difficulties
6	Has not been difficult, everyone seems to be understanding towards others' "mistakes" (from the cultural point of view) in the communication.
7	No real issues
8	When the company culture is honest and direct, there may be miscommunications with employees coming from non-confrontational cultures for instance.
9	Not really. Working language is English so everyone understands each other. Dialects sometimes make it harder to understand but that can be said about the Finnish language as well.

9: Productivity Loss

In your opinion, does diversity leads to less productivity in any of the following contexts?

The highest response was given to option 5 i-e others, there were 05 comments given to this. Where 23 respondents responded to option 5. The lowest responses were given to option 2 where 0 response was given. This option indicated diversity makes management difficult as shown in Table 15. and Figure 10 through graph. Table 16. provides comments

TABLE 15. Productivity Loss

	ANSWER CHOICES–	RESPONSES	
1	Causes managers to spend more time on individual coaching	4	12.90%
2	Makes our department difficult to manage	0	0.00%
3	Makes our work processes run less smoothly	3	9.68%
4	Reduces the overall quality of employees	1	3.23%
5	Other	23	74.19%
	TOTAL	31	

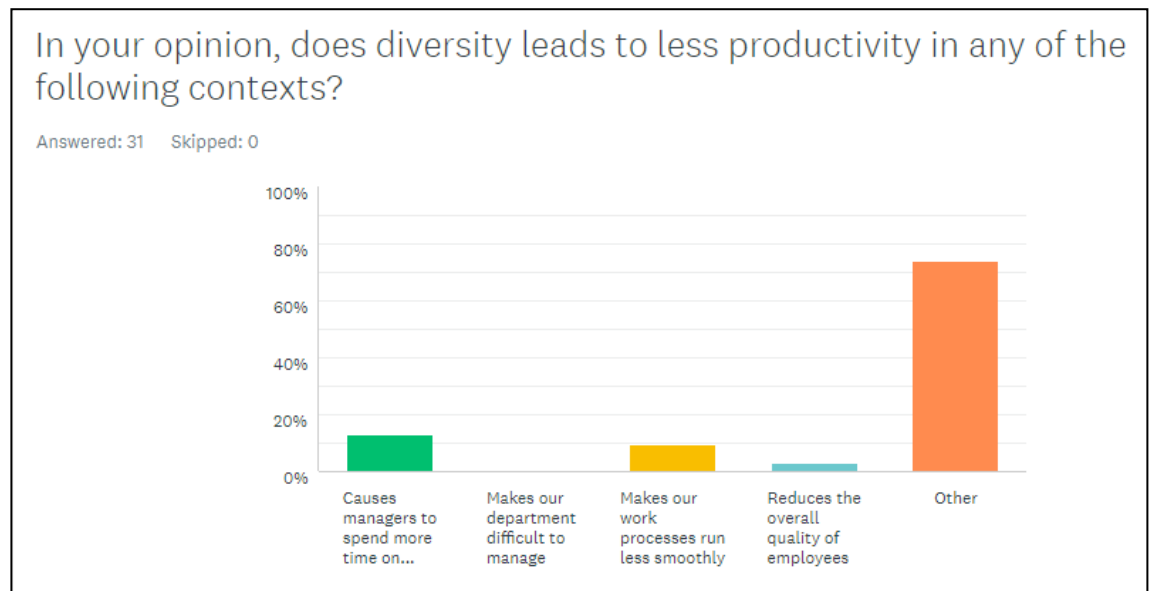


FIGURE 10. Productivity Loss

TABLE 16. Productivity Loss

1	No
2	No
3	I don't see any negative impact of the contexts
4	It does not lead to less productivity
5	It does not lead to less productivity
6	I see diversity increasing our productivity as we have more ideas, viewpoints and knowledge.
7	Have not really noticed any negative impacts
8	Nope, it does not
9	No
10	Diversity leads to more committed employees. It does not have a negative impact on productivity.
11	Does not affect any of these. If anything, it improves the overall quality of employees
12	No, in my opinion it doesn't.
13	It has opposite effect; productivity grows in diverse groups.
14	No, in my opinion initially it is harder to find common ground but later it becomes a strength.
15	No
16	No
17	Marginal issue though all in all
18	Not really.
19	It does not lead to less productivity
20	No

4.2 Interviews:

There were three interviews conducted. These were based on same questions as of the questionnaire. The respondents were briefly explained about the context of the research and how their situation and organization would help in generalizing the results. Since Sievo is a very diverse organization thus interviewees were also from very different backgrounds culturally and were also from different departments. Major findings from the interviews are as follow:

4.2.1 Interview 1:

According to IN1. Diversity is when people have different backgrounds, and they don't have similar past experiences. This effect their lifestyles behaviors, traditions, expectations, and habits. People working in Seivo have already studied or have lived in Finland for some time, so they have adopted Finnish ways to some extent. It can be said that maybe they are deep inside the same but in many ways they are similar. Thus, there is no issues with communication and being from other cultures.

Language is not an issue since employees have studied in English (as not being 1st language for many employees) and they can communicate and understand each other, even employees who are not fluent still try to learn the language. In other companies where the majority was Finnish it was harder to mingle because people were comfortable with communicating in Finnish. But due to Seivos diverse environment it's much easier to express ourselves.

It is very nice to have a diverse workforce. In international companies with clients all over the world, diverse workforce can speak client language and understand their culture. Diverse workforce provides a more creative environment and provided learning opportunities.

Conflicts are very much possible, but people get accustomed of the culture they are living in. Thus, conflicts rarely arise due to communication and cultural backgrounds. During current situation on working from home due to Covid pandemic IN1 mentioned that communication has become a bit difficult due to constant emails and chats and not seeing people but that might not have to do anything with diversity.

According to IN1 there are less opportunities due to not knowing the local language and faced gender discrimination in a very subtle manner. Also, expats

getting job opportunities does not mean less opportunity for the local workforce since most of the job opportunities ask for good Finnish language skills thus there are very less opportunities for expat. Also, even if an expat gets the job, they also help the economy by providing a tax paying individual to the local economy.

Final thoughts, working in a diverse workforce have made IN1 more openminded and understand people much better. Through travelling and meeting people and working with them make you develop more rather staying at the same place with similar people. IN1 values diverse work environment.

4.2.2 Interview 2:

According to IN2, Diversity is where everything is not homogenous and employee have different studies, backgrounds and they think differently. In a company like Sievo it matters what matters and what does not matter like gender does not matter. Thus, in Sievo skills matter and like people speaking different languages is business critical for them. As Sievo has clients worldwide so it helps to have diverse workforce. So, they can say in context to Sievo a German person dealing with German client would be better as he/she understands language and culture more than anyone who speaks German but is from a different country. It helps to grow sales. This is one aspect the other aspect is that they are growing, and business is growing, and they need skilled people quickly and it is very hard to restrict to just Finnish workforce. It is hard to understand how a similar company can just rely on Finnish workforce. Diversity increases talent pool for Sievo.

In IN2 opinion, for Finnish workforce it might be hard because Sievo does not require Finnish language skills rather they need English so they cannot consider anyone who does not speak English. Specially in client facing positions might not be critical in development areas. Also, foreigners ask for lesser salaries than a local person so they can imagine companies hiring foreigners at development positions just due to lower salary demands and it somehow it negatively effects the salary structure in job market.

It is always easier to communicate if you are from the same socio-economic backgrounds. Differences always brings some layers of miscomprehensions when you don't have the same assumptions. When you discuss so many things and imply that the other person understands what you mean. This is in general that there are company unsaid thing.

IN2 explains, at Sievo the culture is open and honest. they have an open culture, and we like to listen to employees and know how they feel. They encourage people to speak. Since it is very hard to understand all the different cultures. Sometime people are not very confrontational or it's not easy for them to say No. If they do not say anything, they cannot assume so it's good to have a trusting environment and giving people opportunity to speak. If you want to listen to people but they do not verbalize it, it is challenging for us to understand and address the issue. But people realize at Sievo that they can speak up and honestly give their opinions.

4.2.3 Interview 3:

According to IN3 diversity is when people come from different backgrounds, It would include their cultural orientation, from different part of the world, language, also their values like if someone is religious or not although it does not matter at work but it contributes to diversity.

It is a good experience to work in a diverse, language barrier is the most common challenge faced. Although people speak English but sometimes due to different dialects it is difficult to understand them. IN3 explained that they can understand the literal meaning of the conversation but it's hard to comprehend everything. Sometimes the cultural aspects also play part. If people are not from the same culture, they can understand the meaning of the conversation but not the feeling behind it. Also, during studies being not very clear in communication was one of the issues. Working in diverse teams creates some frustrations when communication is not that smoot but not really conflicts.

According to IN3 issues with diverse teams are very implicit. Like if some group is not comfortable with a new team member due to their cultural orientation they might be frustrated but they won't say it out loud and with the passage of time things like these resolve themselves if the other person is good in their work. For example, there is team where all team members are Finnish speaking and someone joins who does not speak Finnish language so someone might think that it's a struggle that they have to change their team language due to this new hire but they would not say that out loud.

Explaining benefits of diversity, IN3 mentioned that diverse workforce provides a larger talent pool and choice to hire the best fit for the company and the customers as well. Our customers are global so hiring people from different backgrounds helps us serve them in a better way. At Sievo we go for the best match and background and culture is not considered. Sievo is an equal opportunity employer and everyone gets a fair chance.

As a society it's good that companies hire diverse workforce, it brings in more taxpayers. Accommodating students will keep the brains in Finland increasing talent and helping job market. On the social aspect IN3 mentioned that people from different parts of the world make Finnish society more diverse and accommodating which in their perspective is a good thing.

Final thoughts Diverse groups bring value to the business and to the economy. It increases Sievo's ability to hire the right fit for the job. Sievo is one of the few companies providing opportunity to everyone in the society with the matching skill set without any biasness and contributing responsibly towards the society as well.

5 Discussion

The questionnaire divided into two parts benefits and threats. There were five questions in benefits and 4 questions in threats part of the questionnaire. While discussing about effects of diversity and what positives are contributed to your work life due to diversity. Through the interviews we can see that in general Seivo has a very diverse workforce. This is their business need and employees cannot be segregated on the bases of culture, language etc. There is no clear local and expat situation at Seivo. Thus, the company culture is more open, adaptable, and forgiving to diversity.

According to results 48% and 61% respondents mentioned the cultural effects of diversity and it helps them to understand and work in different cultures. In both questions regarding diversity effects of creative potential there were almost 6.5% responses mentioning that diversity does not affect in any manner in context to work place or one of the respondents explicitly mentioned that it should not be assumed that diversity has only positive effect at workplace.

Here we see most respondents mentioning the benefits of diversity and its easier for them to answer to the positive aspects provided but there are those outliers and their perception that normally research misses. From the literature we can also see as mentioned by Daft (1994) there are primary and secondary aspects of diversity. Characteristics which can be seen from the outside like race, gender etc are primary characteristics thus from first comment we see that at Sievo employees consider these characteristics to be non-relevant in a work situation. However, the other comment that refers to the point that it should not be assumed that “diversity only having positive aspects” can be talking about more secondary characteristics of diversity like norms, believes working style etc.

While discussing social responsibility 45% of the respondents responded that having a diverse workforce makes the company look good in the society. This might seem to be a very vain aspect of diversity but, this is one of the major contributors towards social acceptance and globalization. According to Ely (1995, 164) organizations use diversity as a tool for achieving emancipatory goal: “emancipatory both in the traditional sense of freeing people from oppression and in the sense of freeing people to explore themselves”. We can say that when workplace provide a non-hostile, productive and equal opportunity environment it

somewhere effects personal behaviors and in return contributes positively towards a moderate and accommodating society.

Talking about the talent pool more than 90% of the respondents agreed that diversity provides a larger pool of candidates for recruitment. Also mentioned during interviews that for an organization like Sievo its business critical to have diverse workforce, with the increasing business and customer all around the world it is hard to imagine to limit human resource to just local workforce. The benefits of diversity are mostly business related. As mentioned by all the interviewees that diversity is business critical for Seivo. They are growing so limiting to local resources would restrict them in terms of talent pool. Sievos customers are global and its beneficial for them to have a diverse workforce to serve their customers in the best possible manner. Since Sievo is dealing worth global clients it's good to have a people from all over the globe and learn about cultures.

The last benefit dimension was work environment almost 85 % of the respondents responded towards diversity making work environment more positive and interesting to work.

Moving on to threats, it was evident that people had positive views about diversity, and it was hard for them to respond to negative situations presented. Most of the respondents chose other options in all the questions.

Responding to the threats to local workforce, 12% respondents showed the concern for lesser opportunities for local workforce and 67% of the respondents explained how they disagree or there are no significant threats to the local workforce. Some of the interesting mentions were additional language requirements for the local workforce.

As discussed in work communications it was evident from the interviews and the questionnaire responses that the only aspect that effects work could be language and understanding different dialects. Otherwise there was minor outliers for other options. However again language was highlighted. At the same time, it was mentioned at some occasions that language can be a barrier while communicating. As mentioned by IN3 that all employees speak English language but still it is some time difficult to understand their feelings behind the conversation due to different backgrounds. Also mentioned by IN1 that it is more interesting to work.

Intergroup anxiety is another important threat. There were mixed responses towards intergroup anxiety. Major responses were towards understanding the feelings behind said words. Sometimes it becomes difficult to understand the context of conversations. During interviews it was also mentioned that knowing the feelings behind words becomes difficult to understand while we work with diverse workforce.

Productivity loss is another topic where 74% of the respondents responded in negative as to there is no negative impact on productivity due to diversity. Major responses included that there is no negative impact of diversity on productivity however due to diverse workforce productivity increases.

6 Conclusion and Recommendations

Diversity is a widely known phenomenon. As the geographical boundaries are diminishing people are becoming more and more aware of its benefits for the business and society. It is a general knowledge that diversity is the name of heterogony in many aspects, gender, culture orientation, religion, norms values. Diversity exists at both micro and macro level in every society. Cultural diversity can be local or international. People from one area of the same country differ from the other in terms of language, norms, values, and daily routines.

There were not many studies on diversity in Finland. Sievo is one of the best places to work in Finland and has a very diverse workforce profile. Thus, for this study Sievo was a perfect example. It was important to understand how employees understand and react to difficult questions towards benefits and threats. The effects of diversity are not always unambiguous. There are not always conflicts arising from diversity. However, the effects of diversity are not always seen on the surface as well.

For most of the respondents it was easy to make a choice while choosing between threats and benefits. Employees were clear in their choices. But the same time there were outliers mentioning in questions regarding benefits that we cannot assume that there are only benefits of diversity, highlighting their intent to respond to a con of diversity. Similarly, there were responses which all together denied towards any threats. However almost 50% of the response were able to choose one or the other threat of diversity.

During the interviews it was further discussed in detail and we mentioned by all the respondents that it is easier of everyone to work with similar background employees. Like mentioned in IN3 discussion that if a team has all Finnish employees and someone is hired who does not speak in Finnish language, someone from the team might think that it's a struggle to change their inter team language due to the new hire. But this would not come to the surface and they will not say it out loud.

We need to understand that this attitude is not negative in any sense, it is natural to resist change. However, understanding this aspect, it important and company can ensure that every team has some level of cultural diversity.

It was clear from the study that respondents knew the concept of diversity and how it provides opportunities and are aware of both benefits and threats of diversity.

6.1 Recommendations:

Diversity is a well-known and well discussed phenomenon in the society. It is time that as researchers we dig deeper into the topic. In the light of this research following recommendations can be made.

The research provides bases for future research. It provides an overview of how diversity being a positive phenomenon has also become a taboo of being positive all the time. This can be discussed further. Aspects which are highlighted in the research such as communication issues, cultural issues and other work-related issues can be addressed.

Organizations can benefit from such studies in addressing these minor hidden issue in human resources. This would help making the workplace more adaptable and open to saying difficult things in a positive manner. Through such studies, human resource department of organizations can maintain a balanced role of a change agent, an administrative expert, a strategic partner, and an employee champion. This will increase the prosperity of organizations by making the heterogeneity as the new homogeneity.

With digitization and influx of information from all areas, people have generally become more adaptable. Here it needs to be addressed that change is always difficult. As discussed by R. T. (2005, 369-388) that change management is always crucial for an organizations success. Thus, the changing workforce should be taken critically and understood that it is not always easy for everyone to adjust with people from different cultures. This needs to addressed in a positive and quick manner. Addressing the issues and discussions will in this directions can help researchers and companies alike.

This kind of researches where difficult issues are openly addressed in a positive tone, will help explore more areas in social sciences.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Benefits

Understanding Diverse Groups in Society

1. ug01 ...enables us to adjust our policies to different groups in society
2. ug02 ...gives us better insight in the needs of different groups in society
3. ug03 ...allows us to reach a larger part of the community with our policy
4. ug04 ...helps us better understand new developments in society

Creative Potential

5. cp01 ...makes us better at solving complex problems
6. cp02 ...enables us to come up with more original ideas
7. cp03 ...makes us more innovative
8. cp04 ...leads colleagues to learn more from each other's knowledge and experience

Image of Social Responsibility

9. im01 ...is good for our image towards the outside world
10. im02 ...makes the outside world look at our department in a more positive way
11. im03 ...makes all groups in society look at our organization in a more positive way
12. im04 ...is good for our department's image amongst minority groups in society

Job Market

13. jm01 ...is needed to fill all vacancies in our department
14. jm02 ...is necessary for recruiting enough new personnel
15. jm03 ...leads us to have more choices when recruiting and selecting new personnel
16. jm04 ...is necessary for anticipating changes in the job market

Social Environment

- 17. se01 ...has a positive effect on the work atmosphere
- 18. se02 ...leads to a pleasant work environment
- 19. se03 ...is fun
- 20. se04 ...makes this an interesting place to work

Threats**Realistic Threat**

- 21. rt01 ...leads to fewer career opportunities for majority members
- 22. rt02 ...diminishes the status of majority employees
- 23. rt03 ...reduces the attention given to the needs of majority members
- 24. rt04 ...causes majority employees to feel less recognized

Symbolic Threat

- 25. st01 ...causes friction between colleagues with different norms and values
- 26. st02 ...causes the department's culture to change strongly
- 27. st03 ...leads to a situation in which majority members are forced to adjust
- 28. st04 ...forces employees to adjust to a different culture

Intergroup Anxiety

- 29. ia01 ...makes it more difficult for colleagues to understand each other
- 30. ia02 ...leads to uncomfortable situations
- 31. ia03 ...makes it hard to judge what others are thinking
- 32. ia04 ...causes insecurity in interactions with co-workers

Productivity Loss

- 33. pl01 ...causes managers to spend more time on individual coaching
- 34. pl02 ...makes our department difficult to manage
- 35. pl03 ...makes our work processes run less smoothly
- 36. pl04 ...reduces the overall quality of employees