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**MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS IN THE MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT**

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**Abstract.** The study is **aimed** at analyzing the issues of managing organizational communications in the multicultural business context and revealing the main difficulties in providing effective cross-cultural communications at enterprises in terms of organization and staff development. **Methodology:** the research can be defined as executing an investigation to acquire additional knowledge on the issue of managing organizational communications in the multicultural environment. In the study, a combination of critical analysis, synthesis and comparison was applied as the basic research principles. The **subject matter** of this paper is organizational communications in multi-national business environment. The **relevance** of the research is determined by the need to increase the effectiveness of cross-cultural organizational communications at domestic enterprises in order to provide their development and successful functioning in the multicultural environment. Currently, cross-cultural business communications are given much importance, since they require more thorough planning and strict control, compared to internal communications. Under such conditions, the success of interaction depends on reaching an agreement on the rules and methods of communication acceptable to representatives of various cultures. The most important issue in the study of cross-cultural professional communication is research of its effectiveness dependence on the level of intercultural competence of communicants. Intercultural competence, including the knowledge and skills, refers to most problematic aspects of managing communications of companies operating in the multicultural environment. Adaptation of management to the conditions of the environment can result not only in gaining congruence in the various cultures the organization operate in, but also in increasing the communications effectiveness to the extent ensuring performance efficiency at the cross-cultural level. In today's multicultural business environment companies frequently encounter cultural differences, which can impede effective performance and successful achievement of organizational goals. Increased globalization of business processes has set the task not only to correctly identify differences in the national cultures, but also to adequately use them to overcome the intercultural difficulties while establishing and developing relations with foreign partners. Optimizing cross-cultural professional communications and increasing the intercultural competence of personnel becomes essential to the organization's performance effectiveness. Ensuring effectiveness of the organization's performance in a multicultural environment is closely related to exploring the ways of increasing the competitiveness of Ukrainian enterprises globally. The present research contributes to this area by offering valuable insights into cross-cultural communications in organizations with a multicultural environment and the ways of optimizing communications management.

**Keywords:** organizational communications, cross-cultural communications, communications management, multicultural environment, intercultural competence

**JEL classification:** M10, M12, M14, M19

## INTRODUCTION

In understanding the organization as a social system, a key role can be attributed to the communicative approach, as communication is the main process that ensures interdependence and consistency of performance of the organization's units. Effective communication is a premise for success in achieving the goals of any organization. However, it is communication that is one of the most controversial issues in management, with respect to which there is still no clarity and full understanding of the mechanisms of providing its effectiveness. The communication processes carried out by the organization and its employees form a communication environment, which is understood as a set of conditions enabling the organization and its members to interact with partners with the view of exchanging information, establishing and maintaining business relations. Cooperation with other cultures' representatives has become a daily experience. Consequently, in an increasingly globalized world and multicultural environment, professionals face many challenges including communication effectiveness on the level of intercultural competence of communicants. Therefore, managing organizational cross-cultural communications is essential for functioning of the organization and its performance efficiency.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Recently, the problem of organizational communications has been in the focus of foreign and domestic scholars. Some studies aim to explore internal organizational communications (J.W. Gibson, R.M. Hodgetts, B.S. Morgan, W.A. Schieman, B.K Berger, A.D. Brown, R.L. Daft, O. Hudz, O. Vynohradova, L. Balabanova), others highlight the problems of marketing, PR and advertisement communications (S. Cutlip, A. Center, G. Broom, C. Fill, B. Jamieson, V.M. Berezyn, E.N. Holubkova, Y.V. Krylov, A.P. Pankrukhn). However, for some reasons economic aspects of organizational communications are beyond the framework of research. Apart from advertising, no form of communication has been considered as a factor of economic development so far.

Nevertheless, the effect of organizational communication has been an issue discussed by many scholars and researchers. Effective internal and external communications contribute to increasing employee engagement, productivity, commitment, trust, and outcomes to make a better environment (T. Cox, C. Medina, B. Schill, K. DuPont, J. Greenberg and R. A. Baron).

Modern multicultural environment requires managers to acquire new skills and a new "global mindset" (Jeannet, 2000). Cross-cultural management and communication is viewed as improving the interaction across different nations and cultures (Adler, 1991). Given a frequently low efficiency of cross-cultural communication, D.S. Lifintsev and J. Canavilhas included into the most widespread barriers or obstacles for cross-cultural communication the following ones: language barriers, differences in values and standards of behavior, lack of experience, lack of trust, and lack of knowledge about other countries or stereotypical thinking (Lifintsev and Canavilhas, 2017).

The significance of cross-cultural professional communications is determined by their impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. The role of communications in the organization and, consequently, its functions are determined, first of all, by the needs of the organization itself. Being a required element of the organization's functioning, cross-cultural communication, however, can be used at a primitive level, without providing effective management of the organization and its interaction with the external environment.

## PAPER OBJECTIVE

The article is aimed at analyzing the issues of managing organizational communications in the multicultural business context and revealing the main difficulties in providing effective cross-cultural communications at enterprises in terms of organization and staff development.

The specific paper objectives are as follows: to research the impact of globalization on the processes of organizational communications; to reveal the main difficulties the organization is faced with in the process of cross-cultural communications; to analyze the essence and components of intercultural professional competence as an established professional environment as well as the major factors affecting the formation of intercultural professional competence; to outline the ways to optimize the communications management in multicultural environment.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The problem of managing organizational communications in the multicultural business environment cannot be fully described without dwelling on the concept of globalization. Some scholars view globalization as removal of international borders and trade barriers (Ohmae, 1995), or formation of one world as a single space (Robertson, 1995). Others describe the process of globalization as that of growing global interconnectivity, integration, and unity in various aspects of human activity (Parker, 2005). In general, globalization is referred to as the action or procedure of international integration of countries arising from the convergence of world views, products, ideas and other aspects of culture (Habich and Nowotny, 2017). Globalization and human interconnectedness are caused by essential changes in economy and politics, business environment and information technologies. Today businesses can not only interact and exchange information across borders, but also serve the customers in different parts of the world. This communication “across borders” transcends geographical boundaries and changes the traditional rules of economies (Cairncross, 2001). Communication technologies are connecting businesses around the world and changing the ways of working and communicating in a new multicultural environment.

Effective functioning in the culturally diverse business environment hinges on the ability of businesses and people to successfully adapt to the complexity of other cultures, to effectively understand and accept cultural differences, respond to the challenges of the new business environment. These demands of today require new skills and attitudes, among which intercultural competence is of primary concern.

Many researchers view intercultural competence as the most important premise for increasing understanding between different cultures (Bennett, 1993; Hammer, Bennett and Wiseman, 2003). In the business context, intercultural competence is considered to be crucial in achieving overseas effectiveness (Landis and Bhagat, 1996) and successful management performance internationally (Black and Mendenhal, 1990); a lack of intercultural competence may lead to lower competitiveness of businesses, though (Tarique, Briscoe and Schuler, 2015).

Globalization further advances the importance of intercultural competence as professional communication now occurs across national borders and cultures. Therefore, the characteristic features of cross-cultural communication in the professional environment (cross-cultural professional communication), which simultaneously can be viewed as barriers to communication, are considered in three dimensions:

- 1) differences within the communication process associated with different cultures;
- 2) differences in business approaches caused by differences within markets, corporate cultures;
- 3) personal differences of people entering into communication.

The processes of cross-cultural communication occur under “double” impact of the external and internal environment on the communicants. On the one hand, due to this impact, there appears the need to study not only the characteristic features of communication of the foreign partner country,

but also those of the organization and employees representing it. On the other hand, it is necessary to adapt the existing communication skills for using in a new multicultural environment.

We understand intercultural competence in a professional area as intercultural knowledge and relations implemented in the organization through intercultural behavior at various levels. These components of intercultural competence lay the foundation for intercultural professional competence, which can be defined as an established objective environment that determines the capabilities and boundaries for implementation of intercultural competence in the professional context.

Having analyzed various approaches to intercultural competence studies (M. J. Bennett, M.R. Hammer, B. Spitzberg and G. Changnon, D.K. Deardorff, G.M. Chen and W.J. Starosta, P.M. King, D.A. Griffith and M.G. Harvey, A.V. Matveev and P.E. Nelson), and given the features and requirements for cross-cultural communications, we distinguished the following major factors affecting the formation of intercultural professional competence:

- Equivalence of cultures. This factor implies the impossibility of contrasting the cultures; all cultures are of equal historical value and should be compared without evaluation categories applied.

- Cultural distance. It is determined by the proximity or remoteness of cultures. The more similarities in cultural attributes, settings, codes exist, the shorter the cultural distance is, the easier the process of adaptation to cross-cultural communication is.

- Context. This factor includes the historical, political and economic conditions accompanying cross-cultural communication., for the formation of intercultural competence, it is not so much the differences in economic indicators of the development of society as the differences in the behavior of a culture in the economy that are important.

- Cultural standards of management (CSM) can be defined as a set of relations, ideas, values and norms of behavior characteristic of the organization's management system, which reflect the models of management culture prevailing due to socio-cultural factors affect and inherent in the organization. Management culture reflects the development level of the organization's managerial system (Žukauskas, Vveinhardt and Andriukaitienė R., 2018).

CSM are part of organizational culture as well as they affect its formation. Cultural standards are formed primarily under the influence of the country's culture. However, in the process of cross-cultural communication, some perceptions and behaviors of the organization and its employees may change.

In terms of management, cultural standards can be of benefit for the organization by increasing the management decisions effectiveness; however, they can also create barriers to cross-cultural communication. The form of CSM implementation consists of the norms of behavior conveyed either orally or by attitude to behavior. Cultural management standards develop over time under the influence of the environment and management system processes.

Attitudes, beliefs and values can change due to changes in the management strategy, technology, or environment. There are both objective factors influencing the change of CSM (external environment, for example, change of the political situation) and subjective factors (obtaining new knowledge or misconceptions about another culture during cross-cultural communication).

- Stereotyping. The concept of cultural stereotype reflects the difference of this culture from others, characterizing activity in this cultural environment. Stereotypes are widely-accepted, culturally shared beliefs describing personal traits and characteristics of groups of individuals (Ramasubramanian, 2011). Stereotypes can help or hinder effective multicultural communication.

- Cross-cultural experience. This factor is of importance for rapid adaptation to a different cultural environment. Cross-cultural experience embraces interpersonal communication experience, experience of socialization in another culture, and experience of professional communication. On the basis of cross-cultural professional experience, management shapes structures and mechanisms to enforce effective communication and expand relations with other foreign partners.

Furthermore, this process creates the premises for building a common ground for multicultural communication. In our opinion, the deeper the organization is involved in multicultural communication processes, the higher its ability to carry these processes is, as during communication the organization gains new knowledge, adopts new management technologies – partially borrowing them from partners, partially creating them on the basis of the experience acquired – in order to ensure more effective cross-cultural organizational communications.

The above considered factors, on the one hand, represent the grounds to form intercultural or cross-cultural competence. On the other hand, they are deeply affected by the components of the intercultural professional competence and can alter as intercultural professional competence develops and expands.

Managing the establishment of intercultural professional competence requires reconsidering the following components the cross-cultural communication process.

**Knowledge.** The component is formed on the basis of knowledge of the partner-country culture, knowledge in the field of international management as well as management culture of the partner organization, knowledge of a foreign language and customs. This component represents the ground for forming intercultural professional competence.

**Attitude.** This component is formed on the basis of the acquired knowledge and is implemented in the characteristics of openness, willingness to cooperate, tolerance and empathy.

**Openness** covers the following area of communication: political, information, scientific, educational and economic.

**Willingness to cooperate** implies, in addition to the knowledge gained, incentives of inter-organizational cooperation, trust to the partner, readiness to consider the peculiarities of the national and management culture of the partner, readiness for mutual influence of management cultures, emotional willingness to cooperate.

In the cross-cultural communication at the interpersonal level, attitude component is mainly realized through tolerance and empathy. Tolerance, being, in fact, a formula of cross-cultural communication, includes not only tolerance for cultural differences, but also openness to novelty, self-confidence, ability to recognize the importance of other people, participation in competition.

**Empathy** is a rather complex ability to understand and share the feelings of another person, understand the world of his/her experiences and share his/her emotional state. Empathy serves as a basis for mutual understanding in cross-cultural communication. Obviously, empathy is impossible without being respectful for the communication partner and non-judgmental about his/her behavior. Therefore, empathy can be considered as a communication skill necessary for successful implementation at the multicultural level.

**Behavior.** This component implies communicative behavior, which is established in the communicative situations and areas where the implementation of certain norms is significant for communication. Professional communicative behavior can be described according to the situational model based on the practice of cross-cultural business contacts, including areas and communicative situations where cross-cultural communication reveals the differences.

## CONCLUSION

Communication is integrated into all management activities; therefore it can be called a linking process. The communications system of the enterprise is a factor crucial for managing the process of the enterprise's organizational development and requires a complex approach to its research and formation.

Cross-cultural professional communication refers to most challenging and controversial aspects of companies operating in a multi-cultural environment. Correctly identifying differences in national cultures, adequately using them to overcome the intercultural difficulties while establishing and developing relations with foreign partners can result not only in increasing the efficiency of

personnel performance but also are likely to convert cross-cultural communication into a competitive advantage.

Managing organizational communications encounters a row of obstacles or barriers, among which the most frequent are differences in values, cultural standards of management, standards of behavior and language barriers. Overcoming these barriers and effectively carrying out cross-cultural professional communication depends on the level of intercultural competence of communicants.

Formation and implementation of intercultural competence is possible provided intercultural management resources are available, that is an aggregated set of principles, methods, tools and conditions, which within the process of cross-cultural interaction are actualizing into effective cross-cultural professional communication.

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## УПРАВЛІННЯ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙНИМИ КОМУНІКАЦІЯМИ В ПОЛІКУЛЬТУРНОМУ СЕРЕДОВИЩІ

**ВОЛКОВА ВАЛЕРІЯ ВОЛОДИМИРІВНА**, кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент, доцент кафедри ділової комунікації, Запорізький національний університет, м. Запоріжжя

Актуальність досліджуваної теми зумовлена нагальною необхідністю підвищення ефективності організаційних комунікацій на вітчизняних підприємствах з метою забезпечення їхнього розвитку і успішного функціонування в полікультурному середовищі. В даний час міжкультурним діловим комунікацій приділяється значна увага, оскільки вони вимагають більш ретельного планування і контролю в порівнянні з внутрішніми комунікаціями. В таких умовах успіх взаємодії залежить від досягнення згоди щодо правил і способів спілкування, прийнятних для представників різних культур. Найважливішим питанням при вивченні міжкультурного професійного спілкування є дослідження залежності його ефективності від рівня міжкультурної компетентності комунікантів. Міжкультурна компетентія, включаючи знання і навички, відноситься до найбільш проблемних аспектів управління комунікаціями компаній, що працюють в мультикультурному середовищі. Предметом дослідження є організаційні комунікації в контексті проблем управління в умовах багатонаціонального ділового середовища. Дослідження спрямоване на аналіз питань управління організаційними комунікаціями в полікультурному діловому середовищі і виявлення основних труднощів забезпечення міжкультурних професійних комунікацій на підприємствах у контексті підвищення ефективності їхнього функціонування та розвитку персоналу. Базовими засадами дослідження виступають критичний аналіз, синтез і порівняльний метод, використаний комунікативний підхід. Наукова значимість роботи полягає в дослідженні процесу управління організаційними комунікаціями з урахуванням

особливостей функціонування бізнес-процесів в умовах глобалізації в полікультурному професійному середовищі. Практичне значення роботи полягає у визначенні факторів підвищення ефективності управління організаційними комунікаціями відповідно до вимог, що висуваються до підприємств на міжнародному рівні.

**Ключові слова:** організаційні комунікації, міжкультурні комунікації, управління комунікаціями, полікультурне середовище, міжкультурна компетентність.

## УПРАВЛЕНИЕ ОРГАНИЗАЦИОННЫМИ КОММУНИКАЦИЯМИ В ПОЛИКУЛЬТУРНОЙ СРЕДЕ

**ВОЛКОВА ВАЛЕРИЯ ВЛАДИМИРОВНА**, кандидат педагогических наук, доцент, доцент кафедры деловой коммуникации, Запорожский национальный университет, г. Запорожье

Актуальность исследуемой темы обусловлена насущной необходимостью повышения эффективности организационных коммуникаций на отечественных предприятиях с целью обеспечения их развития и успешного функционирования в поликультурной среде. В настоящее время межкультурным деловым коммуникациям уделяется большое внимание, поскольку они требуют более тщательного планирования и строгого контроля по сравнению с внутренними коммуникациями. В таких условиях успех взаимодействия зависит от достижения соглашения о правилах и способах общения, приемлемых для представителей разных культур. Важнейшим вопросом при изучении межкультурного профессионального общения является исследование зависимости его эффективности от уровня межкультурной компетентности коммуникантов. Межкультурная компетенция, включая знания и навыки, относится к наиболее проблемным аспектам управления коммуникациями компаний, работающих в мультикультурной среде. Предметом исследования являются организационные коммуникации в контексте проблем управления в условиях многонациональной деловой среды. Исследование направлено на анализ вопросов управления организационными коммуникациями в поликультурной деловой среде и выявление основных трудностей обеспечения межкультурных профессиональных коммуникаций на предприятиях в контексте повышения эффективности их функционирования и развития персонала. Базовыми принципами исследования выступают критический анализ, синтез и сравнительный метод, использован коммуникативный подход. Научная значимость работы заключается в исследовании процесса управления организационными коммуникациями с учетом особенностей функционирования бизнес-процессов в условиях глобализации в поликультурной профессиональной среде. Практическое значение работы состоит в определении факторов повышения эффективности управления организационными коммуникациями в соответствии с требованиями, предъявляемыми к предприятиям на международном уровне.

**Ключевые слова:** организационные коммуникации, межкультурные коммуникации, управление коммуникациями, поликультурная среда, межкультурная компетентность.