

THE IMPACT OF DIVERSITY ON RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT IN PAKISTAN (ETHNIC & LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES IN MULTINATIONAL FIRMS)

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Abstract

Purpose: Language & ethnic diversity is the basis of discrimination in Pakistan. In this regard it is important to understand diversity & relationship conflict in current economic scenario in context of multinational firms. The main aim of this study was to understand factors of diversity (ethnicity & language) that lead to relationship conflict.

Design /Methodology/ approach: The conceptual framework implies the impact of diversity on relationship conflict. Therefore, this study utilized the descriptive methodology and data was personally collected from 19 groups of multinational firm. Survey questionnaire was used to collect data from 250 employees of work groups. SPSS version 22 was used for data analysis.

Findings: The results of analysis revealed that variables of diversity and relationship conflict shown good internal consistency, Pearson correlation & linear regression revealed significant contribution of diversity on relationship conflict. Diversity showed good strength of relationship with relationship conflict

Originality /Value: This study will provide useful insight to government, policy makers and managers to implement diversity strategy while managing relationship among team members of multinational firms for peaceful work place which is need of current economic scenario.

Keywords: *Diversity (Ethnic & Language), Relationship Conflict*

Introduction

Diversity is being promoted in Pakistan in response to current economic pressures. By definition, diversity always presents some diverse characteristics. When team member's work together with some qualities and wisdom offered to members for assigned tasks mainly depends on situation (Ayub, N., & Jehn, K.A., 2010). Therefore, Number of trainings & programs offered for diversity in multinational firms for improvements. The Multinational firms have introduced so many of programs not only to efficiently contribute to economy in the current economic scenario and also for the wellbeing of working employees & public (Ayub, N., & Jehn, K.A., 2010).

Pakistan is the fifth largest country in the world with sparse population that got independence in 1947 having peoples with different racial, ethnic, cultural background. On the basis of such background every group have formed their distinct character, Punjabis, Sindhis, Muhajirs, Baluchis, Hindokwans, Pashtuns & ethnic groups given in the table 1. Moreover, given ethnic groups are in majority while remaining other ethnic and racial groups are non – Muslims in

Given in paper of shehla amjad paper but I have followed current data from ukessays online, 2018

Ethnic Groups	Percentage of Total Population
Punjabi	42.15 %
Pashtun	17.42%
Sindhi	14.1%
Saraeki	10.53%
Muhajir	7.57%
Balochi	3.57%
Others	4.66%

Table 1

(Ukessays Online, 2018)

Minority. (Ukessays Online, 2018). At the same time, numbers of afghan refugees are registered with some ethnic groups and also some from Iran, Burma and Tajikistan. Approximately, there

are 75 to 80 languages existed in Pakistan with Punjabi in dominancy while other significant language are Sindhi, Pashto, Saraiki, Balochi & Urdu as national language. These Ethnic groups & multilinguism have contributed to diverse cultural scenario in work place of multinational firms.

Furthermore, In Pakistan, Diversity generally defined perceived difference in terms of language and ethnicity. In general, Diversity has been defined as process of hiring workers from diverse background (Nailah Ayub & Karen Jehn, 2010). Most importantly; diversity can be important source of talent pool for competitive advantage, Economies of scale, productivity or for innovation in current economic scenario (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; McLeod, Lobel, & Cox, 1996; Watson, Kumar, & Michaelson, 1993). At the same time, when diverse members work together, they perform different than similar group's homogeneous teams (Jackson, May, 1995; Milliken & Martins, 1996; Williams & Oreily, 1998). conflict is very common among members of dissimilar groups, Ethnic & language diversity is surface level diversity, which is very common with relationship conflict (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, Pelled, Eisenhardt, & Xin, 1999). Therefore, relationship conflict focus the personal differences create anxiety, aversion, unwillingness, blame game, stereotype biases, lead to psychological separation (Amason, 1996; Pelled et al., 1999). Moreover, Different languages cause poor group functioning and lower communication capability in diverse setting (Feely & Harzing, 2003). In fact, ethnicity is the basis for Integration in the team groups (Taniya Kateri Hernandis, 2010).

Similarly, when multinational firms hire the skilled workers, it forms the group of diverse workers (Earley and Mosakowski, 2000; Milliken and Martins, 1996) from different ethnic and linguistic background. Therefore, it is important to know how these differences in provincial culture, language & ethnic differences perceived by dissimilar in the groups. The study of diversity is getting increased importance, despite of that, rare studies focus the Relationship conflict and diversity in context of Pakistan. Therefore, cultural variations in human behavior cause variations in the attitude, belief, norms, and values.

Problem Statement

Pakistan has failed to achieve economic targets due to mismanagement of resources up to extent that it has become virtually bank corrupt due to eccentric policies of past rulers (MEHRULLAH JAMEEL, 2017). Traditional methods of firms have failed to meet the requirements of modern

economy. Multinational firms are working tremendously by hiring workers from every corner of four province .Therefore; diversity is essential challenge in Pakistan due to multi-cultural four provinces. Employees when deal with problems regarding the task assigned they encounter differences during work or during interaction they easily encounter personal conflicts and employees focus each other rather than focusing on actual work. Hence this difference of language and ethnicity is the first step to relationship conflict that lead to poor performance.

Objectives of Research

The main objective of this research is to develop the holistic understanding of the diversity (Ethnic and Language) (Surface level diversity) –Relationship conflict by analyzing the impact of diversity On Relationship Conflict in order to fill gap of previous research. On the other hand, this research will use language and ethnicity as the basis for discriminatory attitude but not consider it as variable.

- To analyse the how diversity cause relationship conflict among teams of multinational firms in order to properly manage teams which is need of current economic situation
- How language & ethnicity lead to personal or emotional conflicts to best manage employees in teams in context of Pakistan.

Literature Review

Since independence of Pakistan, the economy had faced various challenges from time to time due to poor political systems, poor management of resources. In the recent years, Economy of Pakistan is facing severe challenges. Moreover, such poor economic conditions is due to the failure in main areas of economy such as lower GDP growth rate, current account deficit, Agriculture, over all low manufacturing, inflation rate increased from 6.17 to 7.4, Imbalance of payment (MEHRULLAH JAMEEL, 2017) . However, Pakistan has failed to achieve economic targets due to mismanagement of resources up to extent that it has become virtually bank corrupt due to eccentric policies of past rulers (MEHRULLAH JAMEEL, 2017). Traditional methods of firms have failed to meet the requirements of modern economy.

The need for diversity has been realized by the nation of Pakistan in response to economic situation that should be facilitating through education & various laws in various multinational

firms. Consistent with current research, Pakistan is multicultural country, when multinational firms hires the workers, it form the group of workers from diverse ethnic background having multiple languages. Therefore, Ethnic & language diversity acts a basis of discrimination among group . Ethnic diversity refers to differences when members perceive each other on the basis of different ethnic groups (William o Reilly, 1998) . Categorization Elaboration Model (CEM) states that ethnic differences lead the person to perceive others as dissimilar that negatively evaluate dissimilar ethnic group ,while positively evaluating similar ethnic members due to social categorization (Haslam, 2004; Hogg & Terry, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) . Ethnicity acts as fundamental for social integration in workplace groups of multinational firms (Tanya Kateri Hernandez, 2010).

Some strong ethnocentric employees try to maintain gap in group with peoples from different ethnic background (Ibarra, 1995). However, not to talk consistently is not possible in interdependent group (Stephan and Stephan, 1985). Further, official talk lead to stress and anxiety (Peterson, 2002). Although, when working on assigned task and it failed to get solution, it easily emerged in to relationship conflict, misunderstanding, blame game (Earley and Mosakowski ,2000). Further, ethnic diversity acts as ethnocentrism that mainly cause acceptance or rejection towards others due to one's emotional bondage with same ethnicity (Nailah ayub & Karen Jehn ,2006). Diverse employees always are characterized by aversion. In sum, Interethnic conflict or relationship conflict usually occurs among Punjabi, Sindhi, Urdu, Pathan, Mahajir & other ethnic groups. Significantly, Similarity attraction theory states that less positive attitude among different ethnic groups may easily translate to relationship conflict (Bryne ,1971) .

The second diversity which is very common in Pakistan is “language diversity” that has received little attention from the beginning. Language diversity refers to communication difference in diverse group setting (Henderson, 2005). When members accept the linguistic diversity; they openly accept varying languages, vocab & accent. (Jonsen et al., 2011). The situation is different in Pakistan, when member speak different language in group, it provide other member to socially categorize (Jackson et al., 1993; Timmerman, 2000), as represent him/her as heterogeneous member. Moreover, when members are not open to diversity showed discriminatory attitude towards heterogeneous member. When Punjabis placed in multinational firms, Punjabis wants

more Punjabis. Similarly, pathans want more Pathan (Laurent, 1983). Therefore, members want peoples of same language because they feel more comfortable with peoples of same language. However, communication is key to all group process (Reed, 2010; Taylor and Van every, 2000) in order to avoid misunderstanding. Furthermore, in multinational firms, behavior pattern and way to communicate could easily emerged members in to relationship conflict (Taylor & corren, 1997).

Therefore, conflicts likely to occur in groups of multinational firms, yet its effects are not clear (Bayazit and Mannix, 2003; Jehn et al., 1999; Pelled, 1996). Moreover, Conflict has been defined as situation where both parties face opposing views in a manner that lead both parties to clash (Deutsch, 1973) . Similarly, jhen (1997) identified three main types of conflict , first; Task Conflict, which has been defined the as “disagreement due varying opinions, ideas, viewpoints on same task” , Second; when task conflict will be so heated, this concentrate the differences ,it will emerged relationship conflict ,because ethnic and language diverse work group quickly aggravates the circumstances; it ignites emotions of anger, irritation and aversion (Peterson, 2002; Schiff, 1994).

Another feature of diversity is its relevance to political events, as diverse team work together provincial histories become more intense and current events become also involved (Paletz, 2004). (Li & brewer 2004) sampled the Sindh province and highlighted the death of three prime ministers of Sindh shaheed zulfqar Ali Bhutto, liaquat Ali khan, Benazir Bhutto in same city and in same province, these events cognitively influence cohesion and reduce ones patience of Sindhi peoples and it produces negative beliefs and attitude towards Panjabi peoples. Furthermore, when multinational firm brings group together, it enhances the perception for ethnic conflict due to negative perception about peoples of other province (Brief et al., 2005) .

The diverse members carry histories, traditions that four provinces carry with it, that quickly enable them to socially categorize themselves (Lalonde, 2002; Weiss, 2003). In perspective of Pakistan, Social categorization theory states that Imagine when group composed of Sindhi, Urdu, Punjabi, Pathan and Balochi peoples, provincial dominancy influence the attitude and behavior of peoples when working in groups (Turner, 1985). Because Peoples of small provinces (Sindhi , Baluchi) have stereotype attitude with peoples of dominant provinces (Punjab &

pathan) due to perception of injustice with small provinces in terms of resources distribution, differing media interpretation (Fiske and Taylor, 1991; Thatcher and Jehn, 1998; Tsui et al., 1992) only due to language & ethnicity .

Conceptual Framework

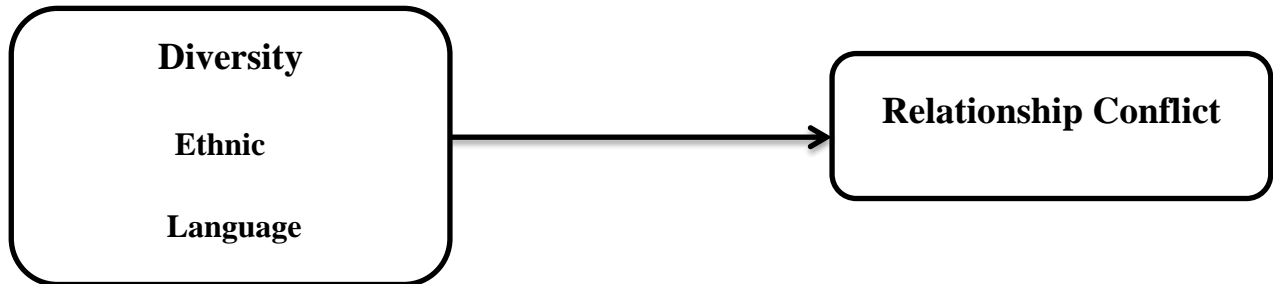


Figure :1

As discussed earlier, Ethnic & language diversity acts as a basis for discrimination. Surface level diversity (Ethnic & language) is the reality of Pakistani multinational firms. Workforce diversity commonly observed in cities of Pakistan in response to economic pressure that compelled them to collectively work together in groups (Nailah Ayub & Karen Jhen, 2010). As ethnic diversity increases in the group, team disorientation lead to unwillingness in team setting that enables team members to maintain gap by developing in sub groups of same ethnic groups (Ibarra, 1995) .Diversity leads to relationship conflict mainly due to three reasons, first; poor relationship, Second; poor cohesion, third; categorization (Riordan and Shore, 1997). In addition, demographic and ethnic distinctiveness cause negative effect on each other in diverse setting (Harrison et al.,1998). In addition, this ethnic diversity acts as ethnocentrism that mainly causes acceptance or rejection towards others due to one’s emotional bondage with same ethnicity (Dekker et al., 2003; Mummendey et al., 2001).

If diverse groups work together the ethnic differences produce different feelings and behavior, guided by cultural histories (Elsass and Graves, 1997) .Moreover, leader tend to favor the members of same ethnic group and appreciate the only contribution of same ethnic group and consistently ignore his recognition and achievement of dissimilar members (Elsass and Graves, 1997).As a matter of fact, the dissimilar members cognitively perceive differences. Identically, the advantage of task conflict turned to relationship conflict due to ethnicity. Similarly, Peoples of

small provinces have stereotype attitude with peoples of dominant provinces due to perception of injustice with small provinces in terms of resources distribution, Karachi operation, Injustice with peoples of Baluchistan, recent political events, differing media interpretation (Blank and Schmidt, 2003; Rivenburgh, 1997; Weiss, 2003), further intense ethnic differences. Most importantly, peoples having same ethnic background cant experience or less experience conflict.

Another type of surface level diversity is Language diversity. Nearly 75 to 80 languages existing in Pakistan. Language diversity had greater influence due to socio- cultural misinterpretations caused by lack of socio – Linguistic knowledge cause communication breakdown in groups (Henderson, 2005). Communication is the basic to group process and due to multiple languages workers failed to develop social relations (welch & welch, 2008) & social distance remained (Jhonson & lederer ,2005) . Consequently social distances facilitate stereotype language diversity that negatively influence positive attitude (Tsui et al.,1992) . Therefore, members wants peoples of same language ,because they feel more comfortable with peoples of same language in order to avoid misunderstanding. Unintentional socio – cultural misinterpretation due to lack of socio – Linguistic knowledge paves the way to relationship conflict among team members (Henderson, 2005).

Hypothesis 1: Diversity of ethnicity and Language is significantly related to Relationship conflict

Research Methodology

Research Design

This chapter has outlined the entire research methodology of this study. The methodology included Research strategy, Approach, methods, way of sample selection, data analysis and ethical considerations as well.

Research Strategy

This research had applied previously applied strategy. Furthermore, Number of studies has been carried out on diversity and relationship conflict but rare studies have been carried out in context of Pakistan. The role diversity is extremely important in Pakistan in current economic scenario,

to meet modern economic requirements and for the economic development of the country. This study is also helpful in managing conflicts smoothly.

Research Method –Quantitative

In order to meet above objectives of the research, this study has used quantitative method. However, quantitative strategy emphasizes the cause and effect relationship between independent variable (Diversity) and dependent variable (Relationship conflict) .Further, this study had used structured questionnaire to collect data from respondents.

Data collection Method and Sampling technique

As discussed earlier, Questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents physically, by using Non – Probability sampling technique. Total 250 employees were selected from 19 groups in different Multinational firms in Karachi. Some group has 13 employees and some have 12 employees and some groups have 10 employees. 6 groups were selected from Khaadi, 9 group of employees were selected from Mc Donald's, 4 groups from general Tyres. Sample was selected by using umah Sekran table.

Research Instruments

In demographical factors, Ethnic groups were included including Sindhi, Urdu, Punjabi, Pathan Baluch and then gender, qualification & their status was asked. Researcher had measured all scale ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree. Scale for measuring diversity containing 10 items adopted from M-Guzman universality diversity - scale (1999), 5 items of ethnicity also adopted from same scale of M-Guzman universality diversity - scale (1999). But 4 items of language Sub scale was adopted from (Harzing and Feely, 2008h; Hobman et al., 2004) .while scale for measuring relationship conflict adopted from the (jhen, 1995) containing 4 items.

Data collection Sources Both sources of data collection were used including primary data through questionnaire and secondary data from Published sources, internet, and through search engine.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data was processed in Software known as Statistical Package for Social Sciences, Descriptive Statistics, Reliability analysis, Bivariate correlation and Linear Regression analysis were performed for data analysis and interpretation.

Ethnic groups & Demographic profile of Respondents		
<i>Ethnic group</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Punjabi	107	42.8
pathan	89	35.6
Mahajir	47	18.8
Sindhi	7	2.8
<i>Gender</i>		
Males	167	66.8
Females	83	33.2
<i>Qualification</i>		
Graduation	169	67.6
Masters	71	28.4
M-phil	10	4.0
<i>Status</i>		
Married	208	83.2
Single	42	16.8

Table :2

Demographic profile of respondents showed that majority of ethnic group belonged to Punjabi with 42.8 %, second majority of ethnic group were belonged to pathan 35.6%, third majority of ethnic group were belonged to Mahajir 18.8 % and fourth majority were belonged to Sindhi with 2.8%. While gender also indicate majority of male respondents in group with 66.8 % and females were with 32.2%. In qualification majority of employees in the group were graduate with 67.6% and remaining were masters 28.4% and 4.0 were M-phil. In terms of status majority of employed were married with 83.2% and remaining were single with 16.8% Shown in table 2.

Descriptive Statistics & Reliability Analysis				
Descriptive Statistics	No of items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach Alpha
Diversity				
Diversity	10	25.142	8.674	.810
Ethnic Diversity	5	11.672	5.117	.783
Language diversity	4	14.628	4.032	.816
Relationship Conflict	4	10.354	4.324	.733
Diversity & R .Conflict	23	61.835	15.120	.831

Table: 3

The diversity (M = 25.142, SD= 8.674), The Ethnic diversity(M= 11.672, SD= 5.117), Language diversity (M=14.628 ,SD= 4.032), Relationship conflict(M=10.354,SD= 4.324) , Diversity & relationship conflict (M=61.835,SD=15.120) as given in table 3.

Reliability Analysis

Composite sub scales were used, coefficients were calculated, cronbach Alpha for sub –Scales are given above Diversity = .810, Ethnic diversity .783 (Sub scales of diversity) , Language diversity = .816 (Sub Scale of diversity) , Relationship Conflict .733, diversity & relationship conflict = .831. However, all variables showed good internal consistency among variables given in table 3.

Hypothesis Testing

Correlation & Regression

Variable	1
Diversity(IV)	-
Relationship conflict(DV)	.750
R2	.562
Adjusted R2	.560
t value	4.942
Beta	.750

Table: 4

Pearson correlation & linear regression, Impact of Diversity on Relationship Conflict. Significant at the 0.05 & 0.01 levels (two tailed) respectively.

The two expedient were followed in order to testify hypothesis. In first step, Pearson correlation was performed to analyse the strength of relationship between diversity and relationship conflict variables .however, Independent variable was diversity (Language & Ethnicity) is subscales of diversity and dependent variables was relationship conflict. The second step performed was linear regression analysis (LRA) to know the effect of Independent variable on dependent variable. See Table 4 Diversity shown significant contribution on Relationship conflict (Beta = .750, $t= 4.94$). Over all, Diversity shown good strength of relationship with relationship conflict ($R = .750$, Beta =.750) and hypothesis 1 is accepted. There was also positive correlation between diversity & Relationship conflict($R = .750$) given in table 4.

Discussion & Conclusion

Diversity (Ethnic & language) in groups is an important factor that usually shapes various processes, characteristics and different experiences within teams of multinational firm (Barrick et al., 1998; Jackson Ruderman, 1995; Milliken & Martins, 1996). The main objective of this study was to explore the effects of diversity (Ethnic & language) (Surface level diversity) on relationship conflict in teams of multinational firms of Pakistan. This study goes beyond and identified that team disorientation in multinational firms due to ethnicity and language lead to relationship conflict and it affect emotions of trust, helping behavior & satisfaction. In this way team process weakens to work in the long term (pelled et al.,1999) due to less respect , less trust , less cooperation than similar groups (Nailah Ayub & Karen jhen ,2010). While team members dissatisfied & failed to achieve expected targets. Therefore, members who involved in conflict prevent further involvement due to relationship conflict, consequently less satisfaction, low performance, and low efficiency in diverse teams (Mor-Barak and Cherin ,1998) .

The diversity found in Pakistan is its relevance to political events, as diverse team work together provincial histories become more intense and current events become also involved (Paletz, 2004). (Li & brewer 2004) sampled the Sindh province and highlighted the death of three prime ministers of Sindh shaheed zulfqar Ali Bhutto, liaquat Ali khan, Benazir Bhutto in same city and in same province, these events cognitively influence cohesion and reduce ones patience of Sindhi peoples and it produces negative beliefs and attitude towards Panjabi peoples.

Furthermore, diverse members carry histories, traditions that four provinces carry with it, that quickly enable them to socially categorize themselves (Lalonde, 2002; Weiss, 2003). In perspective of Pakistan, Social categorization theory states that Imagine when group composed of Sindhi, Urdu, Punjabi, Pathan and Balochi peoples, provincial dominance influence the attitude and behavior of peoples when working in groups (Turner, 1985). Because Peoples of small provinces (Sindhi, Baluchi) have stereotype attitude with peoples of dominant provinces (Punjab & Pathan) due to perception of injustice with small provinces in terms of resources distribution, recent political events, differing media interpretation (Blank and Schmidt, 2003; Weiss, 2003) only due to language & ethnicity.

Diversity attitude can be strengthening through reducing ethnic ethnocentrism and language differences. It's a fact that Attitude of human developed in childhood learning (Sears, 1981) and it's hard to change that attitudes (Green, Seher, 2003; Sears & Funk, 1999). At the same time, attitude can be changed through education or through various trainings to reduce differences. When members placed in groups it psychologically creates competition among workers, this competition can be turned to positive through maintaining strong provincial image as best performer. Over all, organization can increase knowledge of positive diversity through developing diversity supportive climate such as various financial rewards for working in groups, promotions and by offering various job opportunities.

However, this study will provide useful insight to managers and policy makers and organization, this will help managers and researchers to discover, implement, and improve relationship conflict for peaceful work place in today's competitive environment. Unfortunately, in the developing country like Pakistan there are still rare programs for diversity.

Recommendations

- Government should take initiatives to conduct various diversity programs at the national level in institutions, colleges & universities.
- Politicians should play their role as a representative of the public
- Institutions should develop diversity supportive climate
- organization should arrange workshops, trainings and various other programs for promotion of diversity in Pakistan
- Every organization should have separate budget for diversity trainings.

Limitations

This study has discussed diversity and its impact on one interpersonal conflict which is relationship conflict while two types of interpersonal conflicts is absent from this study. However, entire data only collected from different multinational firms in Karachi and not from different cities of Pakistan. Limited resources dictate the limited responses. This study failed to collect the responses from four provinces due to main focus on how difference in ethnicity, language ,that cause difference in attitude by keeping in view multinational firms .

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