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Title: The effect of cultural diversity on team work in the postgraduate school of the
Chester Business School

Date: 2010

Originally published as: University of Chester MBA dissertation

Example citation: Fadeyi , O. (2010). *The effect of cultural diversity on team work in
the postgraduate school of the Chester Business School*. (Unpublished master's
thesis). University of Chester, United Kingdom.

Version of item: Submitted version

Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10034/121406>

**THE EFFECT OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY ON
TEAM PERFORMANCE: A FOCUS ON
TEAMWORK IN THE POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE CHESTER BUSINESS SCHOOL**

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
University of Chester for the degree of Masters of Business Administration.

CHESTER BUSINESS SCHOOL

2010

Acknowledgements

My profound gratitude goes to God Almighty who made it possible for me to study for an MBA degree in the United Kingdom and gave me the insight for this dissertation.

I would like to thank my supervisor Mr Paul Webb whose pastoral care and encouragement made writing a dissertation a simple and rewarding experience for me.

I would also like to thank all the staff of the Chester Business School whose support throughout the duration my study has been timely and helpful.

I would like to thank Mr & Mrs Adekunle Aminu who took responsibility for my well being and made my experience in Chester a memorable one.

I would also like to say a big thank you to my colleagues who made time out of their tight schedule to take part in my research.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, my parents and sibling for their support; and also my adorable wife: Temitope who had to bear the brunt of my absence, I love you.

God bless you all.

Abstracts

The research examines the effect of cultural diversity on team performance. The research presents the findings of a study on team work in the postgraduate class of the Chester Business School. The study examines the concept of team work and cultural diversity. Team working is increasingly being used by many organisations to improve employee performance. To be effective, a team should comprise the right number of people with the right skill, knowledge and expertise. On the other hand cultural diversity in a broad sense refers to the variety of human culture in the world. However, in the context of this study, cultural diversity means that the people have a different way of viewing the world and how it operates and this difference affects every aspect of their life. Culture provides a selective screen between man and the outside world. Culture determines what we pay attention to and what we are most likely to ignore. Merely putting people from different cultural background together in teams does not guarantee that the team will function effectively. How well these people will work together remains a major concern. From the study it was concluded that there is an indirect relationship between the cultural background of the members of a team and the team's performance. The study also found out that while the cultural background of each member of the team influences how they learn, what they learn and how knowledge is shared; education, work experience, life experience and personal aspiration provide the platform and drive to learn. All these factors work together to influence the participation and contribution of each individual team member in the team's activity. It was also noted that what makes a team perform better than another team is not determined solely by the cultural background of the team members. Other factors, internal or external also influence team performance.

Declaration

This work is original and has not been submitted previously for any academic purpose. All secondary sources are acknowledged.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Research

Team work is increasingly being used by many organisations to improve employee performance. Dyer, Dyer and Dyer (2007) suggested that the primary reason why work is undertaken more by teams today is because the products and services that we use have become increasingly complex and it requires a wide range of skills to manufacture and deliver such products and services. These skills and expertise may not be found in one person, hence the preference for team work. Teams often times outperform individuals working alone in large organisations (Katzenbach & Smith, 2006). This is often the case when the task at hand requires multi-skill, judgement and experience. As Staniforth and West (1995) noted, there is no point in having a team unless it is effective and improves organisational performance. A team is effective when it adds more value than the value each member of the team would add if they were all working individually. This is called synergy. Team work often results in synergy. This is especially the case where the task to be performed requires some degree of interdependence. Mussnug and Hughey (1997) defined a team as a group of employees or people working together to achieve a predetermined target or goal by interacting with one another to exchange information, ideas about the best approach to use and making decisions that will inspire the team members to perform at their full potential. To be effective, a team should comprise the right number of people with the right skills, knowledge and expertise (Beatty and Scott, 2004). Seymen (2006) drew attention to the fact that the world market is integrating rapidly through globalisation and advancement in technology and this has given rise to the multicultural makeup of the workforce of organisations. Seymen (2006) noted further that a workforce made up of individuals from different cultures can present a broad spectrum of views, ideas and methods of addressing issues or achieving organisational goal. According to Iles and Hayers (1997), a multicultural team can go a long way in realising new ideas and can be a source of competitive advantage to the organisation. Karoc-Kakabadse and Kouzmin (2001) argues that there may be a problem of integration in a multicultural team which may reduce cooperation among team members. This can be attributed to the fact that individuals come from different cultures and have a different understanding of the communication process and styles of dialogue. Kock (2003) further suggests that

culturally homogeneous work teams are more likely to go through the team formation stage quicker than culturally heterogeneous team. This is because heterogeneous team have to deal with various cultural related issues as a result of their cultural diversity. This will have an influence on the team's performance and there is no guarantee that the team will completely scale through this stage successfully without friction. Fisher, Macrosson and Walker (1994) suggest that sometimes, the cultural difference of a team might prevent them from achieving the level of performance envisaged. According to Stewart, Manz & Sims (1999), a school of thought believes that a homogenous team is beneficial because the similarity leads to a constructive relationship that produces cooperation. However, another school of thought views a homogenous team as harmful because it can give rise to nepotism. Both views seem to be correct. Stewart, Manz & Sims (1999) noted further that this lead to the conduct of a study aimed at comparing a culturally diverse team with a culturally homogeneous team. At different times, both teams showed varying levels of effectiveness. The study concluded by suggesting that further research should be carried out to understand how individuals react to group or team with different composition.

The cultural makeup of a team is an important factor to consider in the team formation process. How well this is managed, will go a long way to determine the success or otherwise of the team.

1.2 Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of the cultural background of members of a team on the team's performance. The research aims are:

- i. To understand the relationship between the cultural background of members of a team and the team's performance.
- ii. To understand how the cultural background of each member of the team affects their individual participation and contribution to the team activity.
- iii. To find out if a culturally diverse team will perform better than a non-culturally diverse team and vice versa.

1.3 Research Question

. This research aims to provide answers to the following questions:

- i. Does the cultural background of members of a team affect the team's performance?

- ii. Does the cultural background of members of a team affect each member's participation and contribution in the team's activity?
- iii. Does a culturally diverse team perform better than a non-culturally diverse team and vice versa?

To answer these questions, the postgraduate students of the Chester Business School will be used as a case study. The students will be observed while taking part in a team activity. Questionnaires will be administered to some of the students. In addition, the team members will also be interviewed. It is believed that the responses that will be obtained from these approaches will provide answers to the research questions.

1.4 Justification for the Research#

Organisations now invest a lot of money in team building exercises in order to improve team performance (Maddux, 1994). This includes training programmes and informal activities to improve bonding in the team. Even with these training programmes, organisations still discover that some of its teams are not performing at their maximum capacity. The findings of this research will enable management of organisations understand better, other factors like cultural background of team members which may have an influence on team performance. It is believed that this knowledge will be helpful to management in designing a more effective programme aimed at improving team performance. The research will also contribute to numerous works that have been done on how to improve team performance in an organisation.

1.5 Methodology#

The research was undertaken using the postgraduate students the Chester Business School as a case study. The postgraduate arm of the Chester Business School was selected based of the multi-cultural makeup of its students and because it uses the team approach as one of its teaching technique. The research will adopt a social constructionism philosophical approach which holds the view that reality is socially constructed and given meaning by people. Qualitative and quantitative data were gathered. Qualitative data was gathered through participant observation and semi-structured interviews while quantitative data was obtained by administering questionnaires to some students of the post graduate arm of the Chester Business School.

1.6 Outline of the Dissertation#

Chapter one introduces the research topic stating the research objectives, questions, justification, methodology and definition of terms.

Chapter two contains a review of contemporary literature on cultural diversity and on the team performance.

Chapter three is a description of the research strategy and methodology used to address the research issues.

Chapter four presents the research findings undertaken in chapter three.

Chapter five analyses and draws conclusions based on the findings presented in chapter four. It also answers the research aims and research questions. The research methodology is evaluated; limitations of the research are identified together with opportunities for further research.

1.7 Definitions#

Culture is defined as the “historically evolved values, attitudes and meanings that are learned and shared by the members of a community which influences their material and non-material way of life” (Tayeb, 2003, p.10).

Team is defined as a group of employees or people working together to achieve a predetermined target or goal by relating with one another to exchange information, ideas about the best approach to use and making decisions that will inspire the team members to perform at their full capacity (Stewart, Manz & Sims 1999; Gold, 2005).

Cultural difference, cultural diversity and the word multi-cultural may be used interchangeably to mean the different cultural background of the team members that make up a team.

1.8 Summary

This chapter introduces the research problem and research question. Then the research is justified, definitions are presented, the methodology is briefly described and justified, the report is outlined, and the limitations are given. On these foundations, the dissertation can proceed with a detailed description of the research.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Poor performing teams have become a major concern to organisations in the business world today. A survey of the work process in organisations showed that many organisations have adopted the team approach as a strategy to achieve their organisational goal and improve individual performance (Stewart, Manz & Sims, 1999). Why is this so? Dyer, Dyer and Dyer (2007) believe that no single person, posses the ability of conceptualising, producing and selling today's products and services because of its complex nature. This requires teamwork. The intense global competition, higher customer expectation, government regulations and trade liberalisation are some of the factors that have made it difficult for organisations to create or maintain a competitive advantage (Beer & Nohria, 2000). Beatty and Scott (2004) suggested that the best way for organisations to get out of this quagmire is by creating a favourable condition for people to come together, share knowledge, explore alternative approaches and identify novel ideas. This can be achieved through team work. Teamwork involves people with complementary skills, knowledge and experience working together to collectively explore a challenge and come up with a creative solution. Stewart, Manz and Sims (1999) observe that organisations are facing continuous competitive pressures compelling them to cut cost, increase efficiency and improve quality. Workers are also demanding increased satisfaction from their jobs. One of the methods that organisations have used to achieve higher productivity and improve employee satisfaction is the teamwork approach. Parker (2008) suggest that teamwork can produce the following benefits for individuals and the organisation: creativity and innovation is enhanced, cost of production decreases, employees are more satisfied, the quality of products or services increases and there are fewer lost-time accidents. However, Sinclair (as cited by Procter & Mueller, 2000) warned that teams can exercise excessive controlling power over its members such that team standard takes precedent over organisation standard. A team member can be ostracised where he/ she is perceived to be the weak link in the team. Working in teams can also enhance employee satisfaction. Beatty and Scott (2004), suggest that teams can provide a powerful learning and job enhancement circle. Real-time learning occurs as members challenge one another to expand their expertise and

knowledge. Research has shown how working in teams can lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness in many areas of human endeavour (West, 1994). This can be attributed to the fact that human beings are social creatures and have learned to work co-operatively together. According to Duke Corporate Education (2005), teams are an important way of organising people to face new challenges and achieve greater results. As technology advances, so does the process of producing goods and rendering services which now requires multiple perspective and different types of expertise to cope with. Teams are formed to perform tasks and achieve goals that are too complex for one person or a number of people working independently (Gold, 2005).

2.2 Definition of Team

Teams are vastly of different scales: couples, sport teams, street gangs, political party supporters, platoons and military alliances (Gold, 2005). Thompson (2008) defined team as a collection of people who are interdependently working together to achieve a common goal. In 1995, Mohrman, Cohen and Mohrman also defined a team as a collection of people, interacting and working together to produce products and deliver services for which they are held mutually accountable. Another definition of a team says that “a team is a collection of individuals who exist within a larger social system such as an organisation, who can be identified by themselves and others as a team, who are interdependent, and who perform tasks that affect other individuals and groups” (Stewart, Manz & Sims 199). Gold (2005) views a team as a group of people having a shared objective with respect to their work, interact with one another to achieve these shared objectives and have a well-defined interdependent roles. The Duke Corporate Education (2005) suggest that a team is a small group of people, committed to shared goals, has complementary skills, is mutually and individually responsible for the team’s work and works interactively and interpedently. First, interdependence means that no single individual member of the team can achieve the goal alone. The team members have to work together to achieve the set goal. Second, common goal means that the team members have the same objective and they are cooperating with one another to achieve this objective. Third, team members tend to possess skills and knowledge that are complementary to one another in working towards their common goal. Fourth, teams are identifiable. Fifth, teams are not a stand only unit; they exist within a larger social unit.

While some authors use “team” and “group” interchangeably (Gold, 2005), others try to distinguish between team and group. Groups are generally larger in size than teams; members of a group work independently and may not take part in making decisions that affect the group. On the other hand, members of a team recognise their interdependence, cooperate with one another and are involved in making decisions that affect the team by making suggestions and giving ideas (Duke Corporate Education, 2005; Maddux, 1994). In the early eighties, the focus of team work was on the manufacturing industry particularly the automobile sector but now the idea of team work is been applied to the services industry, education and public sector (Procter & Mueller, 2000). Team work was introduced in some organisations as a strategic approach to dealing with absenteeism and labour turnover.

2.3 Team Size

It is now widely accepted that team size is a factor to consider in team performance (Belbin, 2004). According to Robins (2005), a team will find it difficult to interact when the number of its team members is more than ten or twelve people. The cohesiveness that is necessary for a high performance in a team is difficult to attain if the team is large. In the views of Thompson (2008), team size varies but generally team should have fewer than ten members. In a large team, individuals may lose their identity and the ease of positively contributing to the team (Belbin, 2004). Large teams can be of great benefit if the task is to dig a tunnel but in a complex project where communication is important, too many lines of communication will delay the project (Pennington, 2009). So far there is no consensus on the ideal team size though there are indications that small teams are preferable. The key factors that should be considered when forming a team are individual roles and the complexity of the task (Katzenbach & Smith, 2006).

2.4 Team Management Practice Planner

Simply grouping people together and assigning them a task does not make them a team. Beatty and Scott (2004) in their Team Management Practices Planner highlighted the process to follow in building a smart team:

Purpose: In order to prevent conflicts about goals and priorities, the team’s purpose should be clearly stated and communicated to all team members. The

purpose should also show how the team's effort will support the organisation to achieve its corporate goal.

Vision: This informs the team where it is going. It is often referred to as beginning with the end in mind. It gives the team a picture of the end and helps them imagine an ideal solution to the task at hand.

Developing Clear Goals and Accountability: The team's purpose should be translated to clear goals. Goal setting clarifies what is expected of the team and the strategy to achieve the goal. Team members can now be held accountable for the performance of the task assigned to them.

Authority and Reporting Structure: The team should be aware of what they are allowed to do and the procedure to follow in reporting their grievances or progress.

Team Membership and Contribution: Having the right mix of skills and experience is important to the success of a team. Team members should include individuals who possess critical experience or knowledge about the task at hand and have a stake in the final outcome.

Norm and Protocol for Working Collectively: This sets out how things are done. It prescribes the pattern for the teams thinking process, collection and interpretation of data and conclusion.

Role and Role Clarity: This helps team members understand why they are in the team and helps them make effective contribution. For example the team leader should be selected, his/her role clearly defined and communicated to others.

Developing relationships and Communication: A team is usually not a discrete unit. It is a part of a larger organisation. Developing relationships both within the team and outside it provides the team with useful information and feedback. Communication helps to build this relationship.

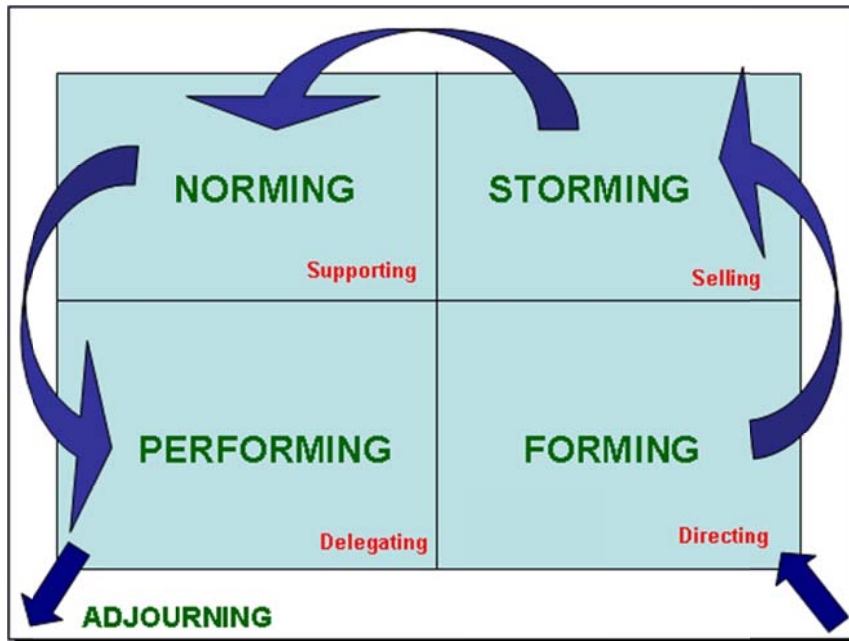
Result and Reflection: Having set out the working pattern for a team to follow in achieving its task, it is beneficial for a team to stop and reflect to see if everything is working as planned. Assessing that the team is functioning regularly helps the team to learn and improve.

2.5 Stages of Team Development

Teams usually do not perform exceptionally or as a team immediately they are formed. They go through different stages of development provided certain positive actions are taken otherwise the team can be stuck in one phase of development and suffer from what can be referred to as a case of arrested

development (Parker, 2008). In 1965, Tuckman identified four stages of team development: Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing. Later, he added a fifth stage called adjourning. In the forming stage, team members meet, express their expectations and concerns, set goals and try to assess each other's strength and weakness. This is an orientation stage. The Storming stage is characterised by disagreement as the personality of the team members clash. It is the most difficult stage of team formation and it is at this stage that most teams fail. At the norming stage, the team members expresses willingness to cooperate with one another. Team norm and work methods are developed as the team progresses to the next stage. The performing stage is a mature stage where the team has a structure in place to solve issues and make decisions. The emphasis here is on achieving results. The adjourning stage is the stage where the team is disbanded either after successfully completing their task or for being unsuccessful. According to Tuckman (Parker, 2008) every team formed will go through these stages of development. The time and effort that each team will spend on each stage depends on the quality of leadership, the characteristics of members and the task at hand. This is however a model and may not depict what happens in the real world. A team may begin at the storming stage before reverting to the forming stage. The model shows what stage of development a team is. This is helpful in deciding what type of leadership the team will require at each stage.

Figure 1



Bruce Tuckman's stages of team development

Retrieved on August 7th, 2010 from:

<http://leadershipchamps.files.wordpress.com/2008/04/form-storm-norm-perform.jpg>

2.6 Belbin's Team Roles

According to Belbin (2003, p 24) the term team roles refer to “a tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others at work in certain distinctive ways”. Belbin (2003) suggests that when individuals in a team understand their roles, they can develop their strengths and deal with their weaknesses. This will in turn improve their contribution in the team. Based on a study that examined the personality traits, mental ability and behaviour patterns in team, Belbin (2003) identified nine team roles, their positive qualities and weaknesses:

Shapers (SH): Shapers are people who challenge the team to strive for excellence. They are usually extroverts, dynamic and have a problem solving

mindset. Their potential weakness maybe that they can provoke others, are prone to provocation themselves and can be impatient.

Implementer (IMP): Implementers are the people who get the job done. They are conservative, dutiful and organised. They translate the team's ideas into practical plans for action. However, implementers may be rigid and unresponsive to change.

Completer-Finisher (CF): These are the people that ensure that projects are perfectly completed. They are perfectionist, conscientious and have a capacity to follow-through. However, they have the tendency to worry over small details and may find it difficult to delegate.

Co-ordinator (CO): These are the people that lead the team. They have a strong sense of objective, delegates effectively and have the natural ability to analyse each person's contributions and accept it based on merit. Their potential weakness is that they delegate too much of their responsibility and can be manipulative.

Team worker (TW): These are the people who ensure that the team members co-operate with one another and the team is working perfectly by providing support. They are diplomatic, co-operative and know how to avert friction. However, they have the tendency to be indecisive and can easily be influenced.

Resource Investigator (RI): These are the people who manage the team's relationship with external stakeholders. They are extroverts, enthusiastic and innovative. However, they can be overoptimistic and lose their enthusiasm quickly.

Plant (PL): These are the creative and innovative people that come up with new ideas. They are introverts and often prefer to work in isolation. Their potential weakness is that they are inclined to disregard details and are poor communicators.

Monitor-Evaluator (ME): These people who are good at judging, analysing and weighing the advantages and disadvantages of other peoples (Plant) ideas. They

are unemotional, discerning and objective. However, they lack the ability to inspire others and can be too critical.

Specialist (SP): These are people who have the specialised knowledge that the team needs to carry out their project. They are single-minded, professional and dedicated to their task. However, they have the tendency of focusing on technicalities and overlooking the big picture.

Belbin (2003) suggests that people in a team assume different team roles depending on the task, the team members and the environment. Belbin's team role model provides a framework that is useful in analysing the strength and weaknesses of a team and also in putting together a balanced team.

2.7 Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity in a broad sense refers to the variety of culture in the world. However, according to Cox (1993), cultural diversity goes beyond a variety of cultures. It is the representation of people with a distinctly different affiliation to a culture group in another social unit. The acceptance and management of cultural diversity has been promoted as a tool that can be used in solving and preventing team dynamics problem in business organisation and social units (Amaram, 2007). In other words, cultural diversity implies that the people have a different way of viewing the world and how it operates and this difference affects every aspect of their life (Chrysochoou, 2004). Researchers and policy makers have put a lot of effort in accepting and valuing cultural differences. This has led to the development of a new initiative directed towards managing people for effective performance in a culturally diverse society. This requires crafting management concepts and techniques to deal with the challenges and also to take advantage of the benefits of a culturally diverse unit. In the past, cultural diversity was managed by simply expecting the minority culture to adapt to the majority culture. However, various factors such as the desire for social justice, civil right laws, moral, social and ethical responsibilities has led to a change in the approach (Ramakrishnan & Balgopal, 1995). Hitherto, cultural difference was thought of only in terms of ethnic and national construct but now it includes race, gender, sexual orientation, age and disability (Amaram, 2007).. In other to have a proper understand of cultural diversity, it is important that we understand what culture is.

Culture is a complex word to define and attempts have been made by various authors at different times to define it. Culture as defined by Hofstede (2001, p.9) “is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group of people from another”. This collective programming is achieved through socialisation – this is the process by which the values and norms of a society or group is transmitted from one generation to another. Tayeb (2003, p.10) defines culture as “historically evolved values, attitudes and meanings that are learned and shared by the members of a community which influences their material and non-material way of life.” Culture involves inculcating a pattern of life, a standard, an acceptable manner of behaviour that is peculiar to a group into an individual. Culture defines the way people behave, their views, their perception, their taste, their preference, their ideology, how they listen, their belief system, their skill, their dress code, how their cities are planned and laid out, transport system, how economic and government systems function, their predisposition and how they attributes meaning to their world (Hall, 1976).

2.8 Culture and Communication

Other views on culture place emphasis on communication as playing a vital role in sustaining it. French (2007) noted that the norms and values of a group could be communicated to its members unconsciously through enculturation or consciously through formal education. Cultural differences can also be observed in communication styles. For example some culture expresses agreement by nodding their heads while in some other culture it is a way of saying “I do not have the authority to challenge your views”. Culture is also sustained by communication. Guirdham (2005) argues that culture will become diluted or may be discarded if members communicate more with people from outside than within the culture. Communication styles can also be used as a basis of comparing two cultures (Hall, 1976). In Thailand, verbal communication might be perceived by someone from outside the culture as ambiguous while non-verbal communication like body languages and facial expressions may be considered as important. This can be used as a basis for comparison with the Australian culture where precise verbal communication is valued. Culture provides a selective screen between man and the outside world. As Hall (1981) noted further that culture determines what we pay attention to and what we are most likely to ignore. This is widely recognised in communication as the context of a message. The terms ‘high’ and ‘low’ context is used to indicate how much information is needed for communication to be

successful. A high context communication is one in which most of the information is in the physical context while a low context communication is one in which most of the information is verbalised. Therefore, for communication to be effective in a multicultural society, the right context of communication must be disseminated to the people based on the context of information prescribed by their culture. It is also important to note that some countries have regions or states that have different cultures (French, 2007). This is usually the case in a multi-tribal, multi-lingual and multi-religious country. Though a country may have a national culture, its regions or states may have a strong sense of identity which may result in cultural differences at the community level. Respect for your elders is an axiom in the Nigerian culture. However, a closer examination of the regions of the nation reveals that there are cultural varieties and different cultures attach different weights to the practice of respect for the elderly.

2.9 Culture and Gender

Gender is also a critical aspect of culture to consider. The social roles and relations between men and women are shaped by culture (Schalkwyk, 2000). It influences the daily routine in families, the community and work place. The perspective of gender: who does what kind of work, how decisions are made varies across cultures and this forms the organising principle of such culture. The specific nature of gender relations differs from culture to culture. But the general pattern is that women are classed second to men, have less personal autonomy, fewer resources at their disposal and less involvement in the decision making process. This pattern can be observed in Nigerian the culture.

2.10 Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede's work in the 1960s on cross-cultural differences, which involved a survey conducted in different centres of the computing company IBM, resulted in what is popularly referred to as Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions (French, 2007; Hofstede, 1997). Using data collected from employees of IBM working in over forty different countries, Hofstede initially identified four cultural dimensions that distinguish one culture from another. Later, he added a fifth dimension. He scored each country using a scale of 0-100 for each dimension. The higher the score the more the dimension is prevalent in the country and vice versa. The five dimensions are:

Power Distance Index (PDI): This refers to the degree of inequality that exists and is accepted among members of a culture. A high PDI score shows that the culture accepts an unequal distribution of power and a low PDI score indicates that power is shared equally among the people.

Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI): This refers to the extent to which members welcome uncertainty and change. A country that avoids uncertain situation will score high on UAI while a country that score low on UAI will accepts risks and encourage people to discover their own truth.

Individualism/Collectivism Index (IDV): This indicates the extent to which people in a culture learn to act as individuals and emphasize their own interest; in contrast is collectivism – which indicates interdependence with a large group. A high IDV score shows little connection with people while a culture with a low individualism will display strong interpersonal and group relationship.

Masculinity/Femininity (MAS): This is the degree to which a culture stresses its masculine or feminine values. A culture that scores high on MAS will expect a man to dominate, to be strong and take the lead while a low MAS score do not exactly reverse the role but expects men to give room for the women to dominate and take the lead along with them.

Long Term Orientation (LTO): This refers to how much society values long-standing as opposed to short term traditions and values. In cultures that score high on LTO performing their social obligation and avoiding shameful event is considered very important while a low LTO seeks self-actualisation and creativity.

Hofstede's cultural dimension provides the most common way to analysis organisational behaviours across cultures. Based on his survey, the United Kingdom has the following score: PDI – 35, IDV – 89, MAS – 66, UAI – 35, LTO – 25. The interpretation of this is that in the United Kingdom, class inequality is quite low, individuality which can be observed in its predominantly nuclear family is promoted; it is open to risk and welcomes changes, promotes equality of sexes and values self-discovery.

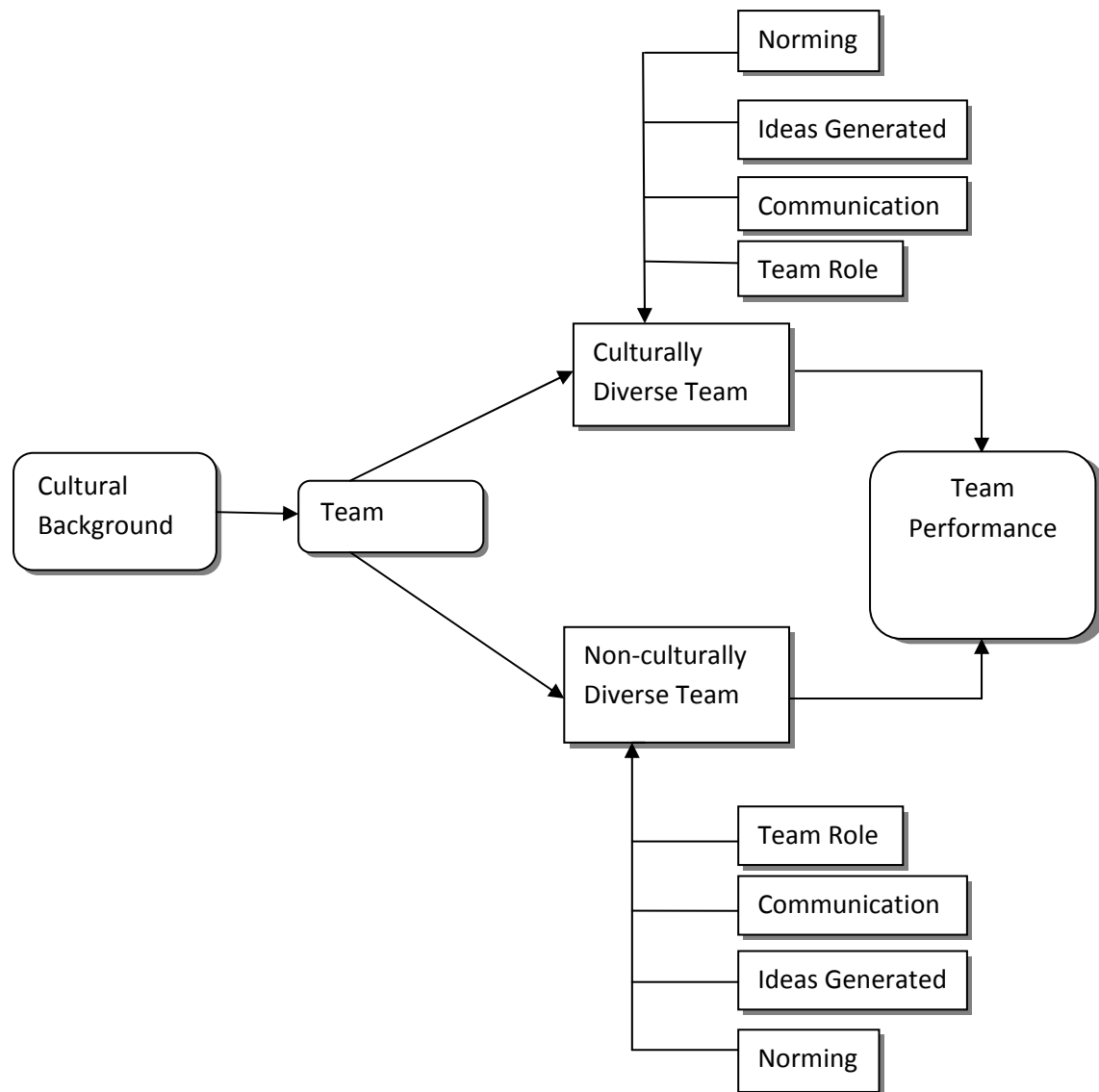
It has been difficult to estimate the number of cultures in the world. However, the vast number of different cultures seen in the world today is an indication of the number of different ideologies and views that can come to play in a culturally diverse work force; the existence of which has been greatly enhanced by globalisation. Globalisation has accelerated the interconnectedness of nations and

people giving rise to intercultural interactions. It has created a platform for companies to outsource work to other countries, enter into partnership agreement with foreign organisations and for international migration of labour (French, 2007). What influence cultural diversity will have on the interaction and performance of a team remains an interesting subject to study. Merely putting people from different cultural background together in teams does not guarantee that the team will function effectively (Lankard, 1994). How well these people will work together remains a major concern.

2.11 Conceptual Model

The conceptual model for this study was developed after a careful review of various concepts on team work and culture and the subsequent application of these reviews to the context of this study. This study is focused on examining the effect of cultural diversity on team performance, hence the model for the study is a ‘cause and effect’ model (Fisher, 2007). The conceptual model shown in Figure 2 proposes a relationship between the cultural background of members of a team and team’s performance. The data gathered will be analysed using the Hofstede’s cultural dimension, Belbin’s team role theory and Tuckman’s stages of team development as a theoretical framework. Hofstede’s cultural dimension will be helpful in examining team member’s behaviour in the light of their cultural background while Belbin’s theory will be used in analysing the role played by team members. Tuckman’s stages of team development theory will be used to shed more light on how the team interacted and moved through the development stages.

Figure 2



A conceptual framework of “cause and effect” (Fisher, 2007)

2.12 Summary

This chapter provides a thorough insight into the subject area of teams and cultural diversity. It contains various definitions of the terms, dimensions, arguments for and against it and analysis of frameworks developed by different authors. This will form the foundation for the research being conducted. Chapter three will discuss the research methodology used to gather data for this research and their justification.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The aim of the research is to understand how cultural diversity affects the performance of a team. In this regard, this chapter provides an overview of methodological approach used such as the research philosophy, methods and justification. The chapter also highlights the ethical consideration for the research.

3.2 Research Philosophy

The research will adopt a social constructionism philosophical approach. The social constructionism approach has an ontological view that reality is socially constructed and given meaning by people and an epistemological view that focus on the different constructions and meanings that people place upon their experience. The approach place emphasis on what people, individually and collectively are feeling and thinking and how they communicate it to one another verbally or non-verbally (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2008).

3.2.1 Justification of the Research Philosophy

The social constructionism approach was adopted because it is an interpretive method and it opposes the assumption that the nature of the world can be revealed by observation and that what exists is what we perceive to exist (Burr, 2003). Rather, it emphasises the social construction of reality. It also has the ability to understand people's meanings and provide a way of gathering data that is natural rather than artificial. This approach is considered suitable for this study which aims to find out how cultural diversity affects team performance and culture can be described as socially constructed.

Apart from the social constructionism approach, two other philosophical approaches were considered but rejected because they were considered not suitable for this research. They are the positivism and realism philosophical approach.

The positivism philosophical approach believes that the "social world exists externally and that its properties should be measured through objective methods, rather than being inferred subjectively through sensation, reflection or intuition" (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). The aim of positivism is to develop a generally acceptable law that can be used to predict behavior. It showed interest only in the tangible and rejects the metaphysical and subjective ideas (Fisher, 2007). It also holds out the possibility of objectively studying human beings and their actions as

you would the natural world. However, this approach is inflexible, artificial and fails to provide a suitable way to study the intangible aspect of human activity such as the internal interpretation or motivation of human behaviors. On this basis, this approach was rejected for this study.

The realism philosophical approach holds a view that what the sense shows us as reality is truth; that objects have an existence independent of the mind (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The approach allows for greater efficiency in conducting a research because it accepts value of multiple data sources and enables generalization beyond present sample (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). This approach was however rejected for this research because it requires large samples and cannot accommodate institutional and cultural differences.

3.3 Research Strategy

The Ethnography research strategy will be adopted for this research. According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2008) this strategy is often used to gather data about human behaviour or culture and the key data collection procedure is by participant observation. Saunders et al. (2009) believes that the purpose of ethnography is to describe and explain the social world the research subjects inhabit in the way in which they would describe and explain it.

Other researches strategies considered but will not be adopted are: the action research – which is concerned about improving practice rather than about producing knowledge (Elliott, 1991). The strategy will not be adopted because it is concerned with resolving practical organisational issues (Saunders et al., 2009). Archival strategy – makes use of administrative records and documents as the main source of data. This strategy will not be adopted because it only makes use of secondary data which is considered unsuitable for this research.

The research will be based on a cross-sectional study which is “a study of a particular phenomenon at a particular time” (Saunders et al., 2009, p. 155).

Although the longitudinal study has the capacity to study change and development, it will not be adopted due to time constraint.

3.3.1 Research Approach

A mixed research approach of both qualitative and quantitative approaches will be adopted for this research. This approach is referred to as triangulation. According to Saunders et al. (2009) triangulation refers to the use of different data collection

technique within one research. This is done as a way of double checking the validity of the data gathered.

3.3.1.1 Qualitative Research Approach

Qualitative research is “a data collection technique or data analysis procedure that generates or uses non-numerical data” (Saunders et al., 2009 p. 151). It aims to explore and understand people’s attitude and behavior. It will be used to understand “how” individuals perceive and respond to their environment with the aim of finding out how these affect their participation in a team. Qualitative research technique includes interviews, focus group and observation (Silverman, 2004). The limitation of this approach is that it is subjective, time consuming and less able to be generalized.

3.3.1.2 Quantitative Research Approach

Quantitative research approach is “a data collection technique or data analysis procedure that generates or uses numerical data” (Saunders et al., 2009 p. 151). It makes use of research instrument like questionnaire and emphasizes an objective measurement and analysis of target concepts (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 40). It is also a good approach to use when research is being carried out on a large sample size. Qualitative research approach makes use of computer software packages like SPSS to analyse and interpret the data gathered. The major limitation of this approach is the difficulty experienced in explaining observed patterns and the limited opportunity to probe respondents (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008 ; Bryman, 2004).

3.3.2 Justification of the Mixed Research Approach

According to Saunders et al (2009), mixed research approach “is when both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques and analysis procedures are used in a research design”. The mixed approach enables the researcher to capitalize on the strength of each approach and reduce the impact of their weaknesses. It can also provide comprehensive answers to the research questions going beyond the limitations of a single approach (Spratt, Walker & Robinson, 2004). The qualitative approach will give the researcher the opportunity to understand and probe further the ideas, attitude and feelings of the respondents. The quantitative research approach will enable the researcher to quantify the responses of the participants and make deductions. Using both approaches will improve the confidence being placed in the research conclusion.

3.4 Research Design and Methods

The research design states and justifies what type of data is to be gathered, how and from where it would be gathered (Easterby-Smith et al.). It also explains how the data will be analysed and how this will provide answers to the research questions.

3.4.1 Participant Observation

Observation involves watching and listening, recording, describing, analysing and interpreting what is being watched which is often how people behave, perform a task or interact (Saunders et al., 2009). In participant observation, the researcher attempts to participate in the activities of the research subject with the aim of experiencing and feeling what the research subject experiences. This research design is suitable where the research question or objective is concerned with how people perform a task or interact with their environment.

For this research, two teams: Team A and Team B made up of students from the postgraduate arm of the Chester Business School, United Kingdom will be observed by the researcher using participant observation, as they perform the task that has been assigned to them by the researcher. The participants were selected non-randomly and on the basis of their interest in the research. Team A is made up of five participants from five different countries namely Turkey, Indian, Vietnam, Thailand and Nigeria. Team B is made up of five participants all of whom are from Indian. The participants were promised and given light refreshment for taking part in the activity. The task assigned to the teams is contained in appendix one.

3.4.2 Literature Review

The review of relevant literature will provide a theoretical foundation upon which the research is based as well as providing information for a conceptual model that will be used to answer the research questions (Fisher, 2007). It will enable the researcher to examine extant knowledge of the field and identify knowledge gaps that will be filled by the outcome of this research.

3.4.3 Semi-Structured Interview

This is a non-standardized form of interview (Saunders et al., 2009). It is conducted with a fairly open framework which allows the researcher to have a focused, two-way communication with the research subject. This will allow the researcher to corroborate what was observed and the account given when the

teams perform their task. It will also give the researcher an opportunity to probe further in order to understand the reason for the decisions, opinions and attitudes of the research participant. The interview will focus on persistent behaviours, role or contribution made by the team members and how they correspond to the theories reviewed under the literature review. It will also be used to obtain background information about the participants.

3.4.4 Questionnaire

This is a research technique used to gather data by requiring that each respondent should answer the same set of questions in a predetermined order (Devaus, as cited by Saunders et al., 2009). It is the cheapest and least intrusive method of gathering data offering the respondent complete anonymity.

3.5 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting a representative few or unit from a larger group or population which is used as a basis of estimating certain characteristics or element about the larger group or population (Kumar, 2005).

3.5.1 Sampling Option

In qualitative research, the aim of the researcher is to explore or describe the diversity in a situation or issue. Therefore the issue of sampling has little significance when carrying out a qualitative research (Kumar, 2005). A study using an individual as a sample or carried out to describe an event is perfectly valid.

3.6 Limitation of the Research and Research Methods

Due to the present economic situation in the world and most especially in the UK and the research method: participant observation, it was difficult for the researcher to get a multinational company that will give its consent to be used as a case study for research purposes. As a result, teamwork in an educational environment was used.

Participant observation is time consuming. It takes a considerable time for the researcher to immerse himself/herself in the activities of the research subject and gain their trust. Due to the nature of this research there was a limit on the amount of time the researcher could spend with the research subject. However gaining the trust of the research was not an issue because they understand and appreciate the purpose of the study.

Another limitation of participant observation is the observer's bias. There is a propensity that the observer's interpretation will be affected by what he/she believes to be true. (Saunders et al., 2009) It is difficult to generalize its findings due to its subjective nature. It is time consuming and can pose difficult ethical issues.

The size of the research subjects, the scope and research strategy may limit the extent to which the findings of the research can be generalized.

The drawback of semi-structured interview is the interviewer's and interviewee's bias (Saunders et al., 2009). The researcher may impose his/her belief in the way the question is asked or responses interpreted. The interviewee can withhold information or paint the object of questioning in a positive light if not comfortable with the interview process thereby distorting the result of the interview. The skill of the interviewer also determines the quality of response from the interviewee.

3.7 Justification of the Research Design and Methods

Team work in the educational environment was used because the dynamics of a team is similar regardless of the sector it is being used though other factors may also affect the working of a team (Gold, 2005). It is believed that the result of this research will give us an insight into the effect of cultural diversity on team performance in all sectors of the business world and economy.

Participant observation will allow the researcher immerse himself/herself in the activities of the teams (Saunders et al., 2009). This will give him/her ample opportunity to gather primary data for the research. It will also permit the researcher to be flexible and responsive to change; two of the qualities necessary when researching human predisposition or when conducting a naturalistic research. The probability that the research subjects may act unnaturally because they are being observed is reduced because they have a good understanding of the research objectives which will not in any way expose them to any kind of risk or pry on their privacy. They also received an incentive in the form refreshment.

The use of literature review as a research method is to synthesise relevant materials from various authors to provide an insight into current understanding on the research subject. The literature review on team and cultural diversity provided the foundation for this research. It sheds more light on the origin of the research questions.

Semi-structured Interview will allow the researcher to obtain other relevant information from the participant (Saunders et al., 2009). It will give the

researcher the opportunity to probe the participant's background and relate it to their participation in the team. The participants can also express their opinions and feelings about their involvement in the research and this can contribute to the researcher's conclusion (Fisher, 2007). The semi-structure nature of the interview allows the conversation to flow naturally. This is in contrast to the structured interview which cuts off the participant if they stray from the subject of discussion.

Questionnaire will be administered to the some students of the Chester Business School who did not participate in the team activity that was observed by the researcher, but who have taken part in team activity during of their study at the Chester Business School. The questionnaire will be used to gather quantitative data to triangulate the qualitative data gathered by participant observation (Saunders et al., 2009). This will enable the researcher improve the validity and reliability of its findings due to the subjective nature of participant observation and the likely bias of the researcher during the observation process.

3.8 Ethical Considerations.

According to Cooper and Schindler (2008, p.34) ethics are “the norms or standards of behaviour that guide moral choices about our behaviour and our relationships with others”. Research ethics therefore relates to the way in which we carry out our research activities, from formulating the research topic to the analysis of data in a moral and responsible way (Saunders et al., 2009). The participants of the team activity were duly informed about the purpose of the research and they consented to being observed and interviewed only for the research purpose. This is the reason why their identities were not disclosed in the research. Also, no personal detail of respondents to the questionnaire was **included** in the research.

4 Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the research participant. It also contains a detailed presentation and discussion of the research findings based on the research method adopted by the researcher as identified in chapter three.

4.2 Application of methodology

A mixed research approach (qualitative and quantitative) was used in this study. This was done for the purpose of triangulation. A mixed research method of participant observation, semi-structured interview and questionnaire was used to gather data for the study. The participant observation and semi-structured interview was used to gather qualitative data while the questionnaire was used to gather quantitative data. The findings of both research methods adopted in this study will be presented throughout this chapter.

4.3 Analysis of research participant

A total number of nine students took part in the team activity (Appendix 1) that was observed by the researcher. Two teams: Team A and Team B were formed from the students of the postgraduate arm of the Chester Business School. The participants were selected non-randomly on the basis of their interest and understanding of the research exercise. Team A comprises four students, two male and two female (excluding the researcher) from different cultural backgrounds namely India, Vietnam, Thailand and Nigeria while Team B comprises five male students, (excluding the researcher) all from similar cultural background which is India. To protect their identities for ethical reasons, the participants in Team A will be referred to by the first four letters of their country of origin i.e. the participant from Nigeria will be referred to as Nige while the participants of Team B will be referred to by names of cities in India.

Below is the analysis of the research participant:

Table 1

Members of Team A

Team A		
Origin	Referred to as	Gender
Nigeria	Nige	Male
Thailand	Thai	Male
Vietnam	Viet	Female
India	Indi	Female

Table 2

Members of Team B

Team B		
Origin	Referred to as	Gender
India	Agra	Male
India	Delhi	Male
India	Latur	Male
India	Nangal	Male
India	Thane	Male

4.4 Participant Observation

The two teams were given the same exercise to perform and the researcher, participating in the team observed how this exercise was done by the teams. The time and the venue of the first meetings were arranged by the researcher afterwards this was left to the teams to decide. All the participants have been duly briefed about the study so they came to the meeting with a good understanding of what they are suppose to do.

4.4.1 Summary of Team Exercise: Team A (Heterogeneous team)

The record of the researcher's observation of the team exercise is presented below:

The team's first meeting was held at the residence of Viet. Nige and the researcher arrived some few minutes late for the meeting. Thai had informed us late that he would be absent because he was going to work so the meeting could not be re-

scheduled. Viet prepared her sitting room for the meeting and everyone was comfortably seated. The discussion started by Indi asking the question “what business do we start?” Viet cut in quickly by asking “who takes the minute?” and looks at everyone. When nobody volunteered, she decided to do it herself.

4.4.1.1 Norming

All the members of the team were familiar with one another except for Nige. He was quiet in the early part of the discussion but soon joined in because Indi made effort to carry him along by asking for his opinion to whatever was been discussed. After about 16minutes into the discussion, the team had normed well.

4.4.1.2 Summary of Discussion/Ideas Generated

Two business ideas were proposed, a restaurant by Indi and an entertainment centre by Viet. Viet went further by giving convincing reasons why she thinks the business idea will be profitable in United Kingdom. She believes “night life” in the United Kingdom is boring that is why the youths in the country get into trouble a lot. The entertainment centre will have a game centre, a fast food section and a cinema all under one roof. Nige and Indi agrees with this but they believe that the “night life” in the United Kingdom is not boring because there is a culture of going to the pub in the evenings; especially over the weekend and getting drunk. However, setting up an entertainment centre will attract the people that visit the pubs (especially the youth) and this will reduce the incidences of violence, scuffles and accidents that occur as a result of being drunk.

A lot of discussion was generated on the services to be offered by the entertainment centre, the target customer, location of the business, opening hours of the business, take-off cost, the unique selling point and how to price the goods and services offered by the centre. Nige suggested that alcoholic drinks should not be sold at the centre. He believed this will encourage people who do not take alcohol patronise the entertainment centre. Indi and Viet agreed with him. The team had a little difficulty on how to price the services that will be offered by the entertainment centre. This was because the way the services were priced was different in the countries of each member of the team. The team finally agreed to go home and do more research on the business idea. Nige suggested that they cannot conclude in the absence of Thai who he believes will have something to contribute. The team agreed and requested that the researcher should make

arrangement for them to have a second discussion. Nige asked for a volunteer to design the PowerPoint slides. When there was no response from the team, he suggested Viet and she agreed. Nige also proposed that any additional ideas or suggestions should be emailed to Viet. The team agrees and the discussion ended.

4.4.1.3 Communication

Being a heterogeneous team made up of people from different culture, each member of the team has their own local dialect. The common language among them is English Language which was learnt by each member at different stages in their life time. Therefore the accent and fluency of each member was different. As a result communication was hampered. Often, team members had to repeat themselves for the other person to hear and understand what was being said. Some vital points may have been missed out or misunderstood because of this.

4.4.1.4 Team Role

Below is a brief description of the role played by each member of the team:

Nige talked a lot and asked a lot of questions on the ideas of his team member and was very detailed in explaining his opinion. He made a lot of suggestions too about how to design the business model. He is an extrovert and a good communicator. Viet listened with rapt attention to anyone speaking before contributing. She was also taking notes and was quite organised. Indi was always excited about the progress the team was making but did not want to do a lot of the work involved. She initiated the discussions by reading from the assignment brief.

Below is a classification of the role played by each member of the team using Belbin's team role concept:

Nige – Plant and Resources investigator

Viet – Completer and Specialist

Indi – Co-ordinator

4.5 Team A's Second Meeting

Team A had a second meeting at the University of Chester's library with every member of the team in attendance including the researcher.

4.5.1 Norming

The team members by now are quite familiar with one another except for Nige and Thai. Nige introduced himself to Thai when he arrived because he believed he was the member who was absent from the first discussion.

4.5.2 Summary of Discussion/Ideas Generated

Nige, Viet and the researcher turned up late for the meeting. The discussion started by Indi who tried to update Thai on how the first discussion went. Nige took over from Indi and gave Thai a more detailed update of the previous discussion. Thai did not have a business idea so he agreed with the entertainment centre. However, he suggested strongly that alcohol drinks should be sold at the entertainment centre if they want to make good profit from the business because an average British drinks alcohol. This generated some discussion among them and the team finally agree to sell alcohol drinks at the centre. Viet was taking down notes of the discussion. There was also a debate on how to charge for games played by customers at the entertainment centre. Each of the team members had different ideas based on what obtained at their country of origin. It was finally concluded that the team will adopt the system used by an existing game centre in United Kingdom. Indi wanted to leave for work so she did a recap of everything discussed in both meetings using the exercise brief confirming that Viet, who was taking notes did not miss out any detail. After this, she asked for the team's permission to leave and requested that someone should let her know how the discussion ended. Viet showed the team what she has written down and Thai volunteered to join her to prepare the PowerPoint slides. The meeting ended and Viet and Thai went off to design the PowerPoint slides which were emailed to the researcher.

4.5.3 Communication

The team communicated better than the first meeting. However, there were still instances where a team member had to repeat himself/herself to communicate his/her ideas to another member of the team.

4.5.4 Team Role

The team member played roles similar to what they played in their first meeting. Thai seemed to be critically assessing what had been previously done. He was quick to accept the task of designing the PowerPoint presentation. Thai played the role of a shaper (Belbin, 2003) during the second meeting while others played the same role they did in the first meeting.

4.6 Summary of Team Exercise – Team B (Homogenous team)

Team B's meeting was held at the residence of Agra. Everyone arrived early except for Agra. We had to wait for him for about 14 minutes. When he arrived, he joined us in his sitting room where we were all seated. After the exchange of pleasantries, Agra started the meeting by asking the team members for a business idea.

4.6.1 Norming

All the members of the team are quite familiar with one another because they are classmates.

4.6.2 Summary of Discussion/Ideas Generated

The first business idea came from Thane who suggested a retail store and a sports bar. Agra agreed with the retail store. Nangal turned to Delhi and asked him if he has anything in mind. Delhi replied by suggested a foreign exchange company. Agra and Nangal disagreed with this idea citing the complex formalities of setting up a financial organisation in UK as an obstacle. Delhi tried to sell the idea to the team speaking to them in their local dialect. Agra cut in quickly, telling him to speak in English so that the researcher can understand what is being discussed. He later made an attempt to translate what Delhi said in Hindi (their local dialect) to English. There was a fifteen seconds moment of silence with everyone deep in thought. The silence was broken by Delhi who insisted that his foreign exchange company was a good idea. The team responded with a loud laughter, making comments in their local dialect. Agra translated their comments to English for the researcher to understand. He said they all suggested to Delhi to come up with another idea and to stop insisting on the foreign currency company. Nangal suggested a food factory which would manufacture food items for visitors to UK during the Olympic in 2012. He stated the company will be wound up after the event. The team members disagree with this idea speaking in their local dialect. The researcher learnt from Agra that the team disagreed with the idea based on the life span of the business. Delhi again makes another attempt to convince the team to accept his idea of a foreign exchange company saying that they would make a lot of money from the business idea. Agra and Thane disagree with the profit potential of the business. Agra pointed out that the fact that the rate of exchange fluctuates is a major disadvantage. He suggested an event management organisation. Delhi, Nangal and Thane liked the idea. Latur who has been quiet

most of the time was indifferent. Angra continued reading from the exercise brief while the team tried to answer the questions in it. Angra asked the team why they thought the business will be profitable. Nangal responded by stating that the start-up capital is low because it would be provided by the customer who wants the event organised. He also added that he has some experience in that business sector. Angra also agreed that the team can make money easily from this type of business. Nangal asked Delhi if he was happy with this business idea. Delhi replied that he prefers his own idea. Thane turned to Delhi and tried to persuade him to buy into the event organisation business idea but Delhi kept mute. The meeting continued with the team discussing what factors were considered before choosing the business idea, who would their customers and competitors be, their pricing policy and unique selling point. Latur who has been quiet most of the time responded by saying that one of the factors considered is transport cost. Angra added that the factors considered are start-up cost and profitability of the business. Thane nodded in agreement. Nangal highlighted other existing event company as their competitors. Nangal suggested that the business be located in India because there is a high demand for event organisers. Angra and Thane agreed with him. Thane suggested that the business can go international after it has been well established in India. Nangal and Angra agreed with him. Nangal noticed that Delhi has been quiet and tries to involve him in their discussion. Delhi responded saying his idea was not accepted. The rest of the team laughed and made comments in Hindi. Thane suggested that their unique selling point should be the fact that they have different product and price range for different classes of people. Nangal agreed to this and shared a joke in Hindi that got everyone laughing. To prepare the slides, Angra suggested that the exercise questions should be divided among themselves; everyone should do more research based on their discussion, prepare their part of the PowerPoint slide and email it to him. He also instructed the team members how he wants the slides prepared because he would be the one putting the final slide together. The team members agree with his suggestion and the discussion ended. After the discussion had ended, the team stayed back for a while chatting and laughing in their local dialect while having tea which was offered to them by Angra. Latur however left immediately the discussion ended saying he wants to answer a phone call from his parents in India.

4.6.3 Communication

Being a homogenous team made up of people from similar cultural background, communication was effective. Ideas, suggestions and criticisms were easily communicated and understood.

4.6.4 Team Role

Agra stirred the discussion initiating the direction of the meeting. He made some suggestions and took up the task of preparing the PowerPoint slides. Nangal generated a lot of discussions from his suggestions. He also made side comments in Hindi and tried to carry along other members of the teams that he thinks is being left out. Latur only made two suggestions and was quiet most of the time. Thane listened and critically assesses suggestions made by others. He tried to carry Delhi along to avert any friction. He also made some suggestions. Below is a classification of the role played by each member of the team using Belbin's team role concept:

Agra – Co-ordinator and Teamworker

Nangal – Resource investigator

Thane – Teamworker and Plant

Delhi – Implementer

Latur – The role he played does not come under any of Belbin's team role concept classification.

4.7 Semi-structured Interview

A semi-structured interview was conducted with the nine students that took part in the team activity. This was done to get some information about their background and to get a feedback on the team activity they were involved in.

In Team B, only two of the participants are from the same part of India. The three others are from different parts of India. The nine participants have their educational background and work experience in various fields of discipline. Their educational background includes petroleum engineering, computer engineering, hotel management, banking and finance and business administration. Their work experience includes customer service, marketing, accountant and web developer. Only one of the participants believes that the way he participated in the team was influenced by his culture. Others believe that the way they participated in the team

was influenced by their educational background, work experience, life experiences in their home country and in the United Kingdom (Appendix 3).

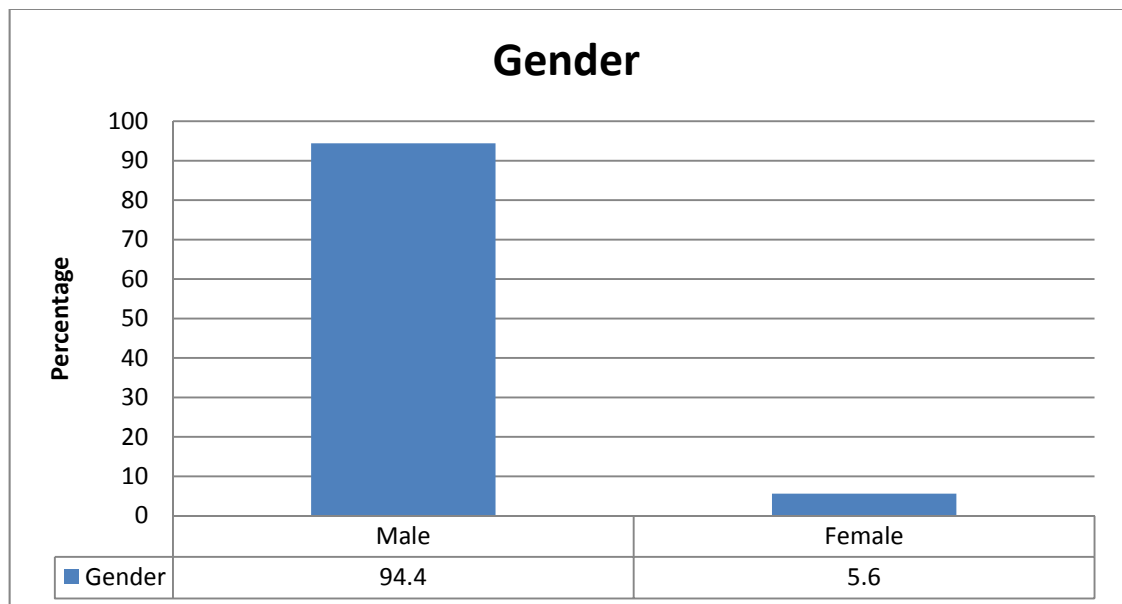
4.8 Questionnaire

From the questionnaire administered to a sample of 33 postgraduate students of the Chester Business School, 18 responses were received and analysed using a web based survey solution called Surveymonkey.

4.8.1 Gender

A total number of 18 responses were received comprising of 17 male and 1 female accounting for 94.4% and 5.6% of the total responses received (Fig. 1).

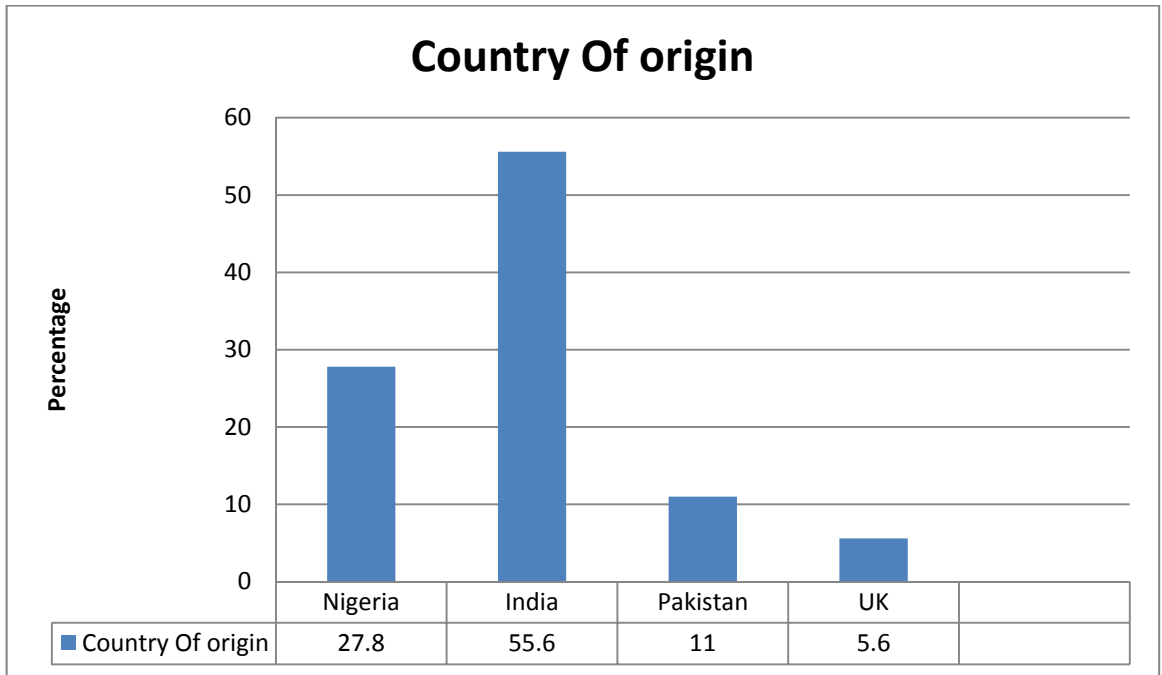
Figure 3



4.8.2 Country of origin

The majority of the respondents (55.6%) are from India. 27.8% are from Nigeria. 11% are from Pakistan while 5.6% are from the United Kingdom. This represents a good mix of responses received.

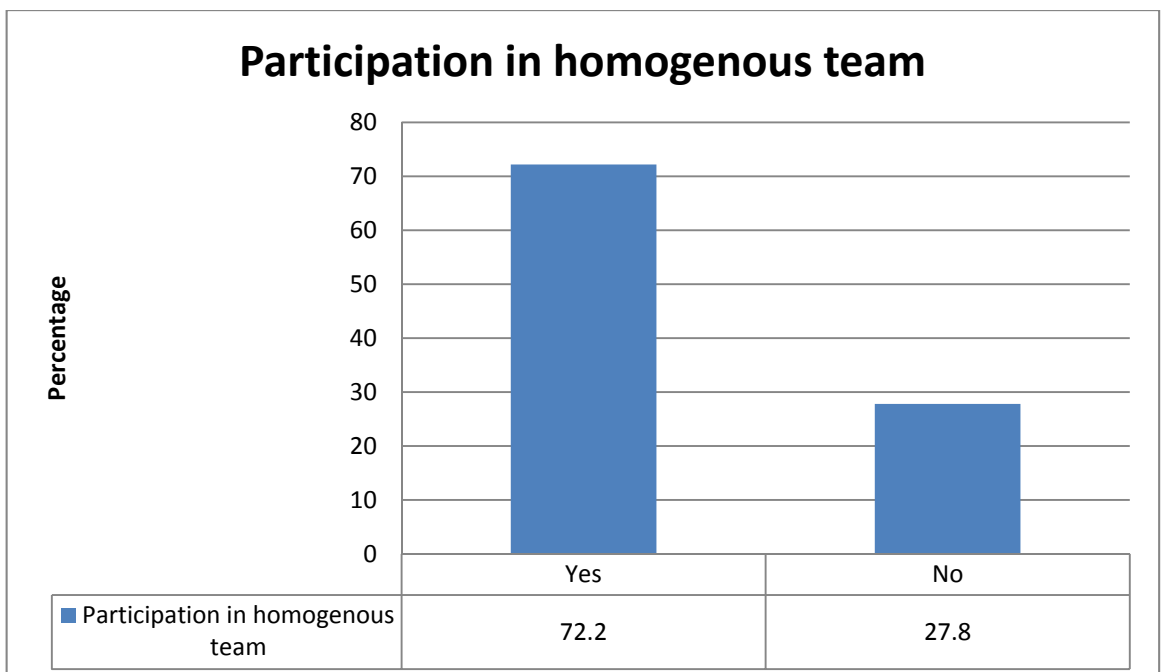
Figure 4



4.8.3 Participation in homogenous team

72.2% of the total respondents have taken part in a homogeneous team activity during their studies at the Chester Business School. They are considered suitable to respond to statements about a homogeneous team.

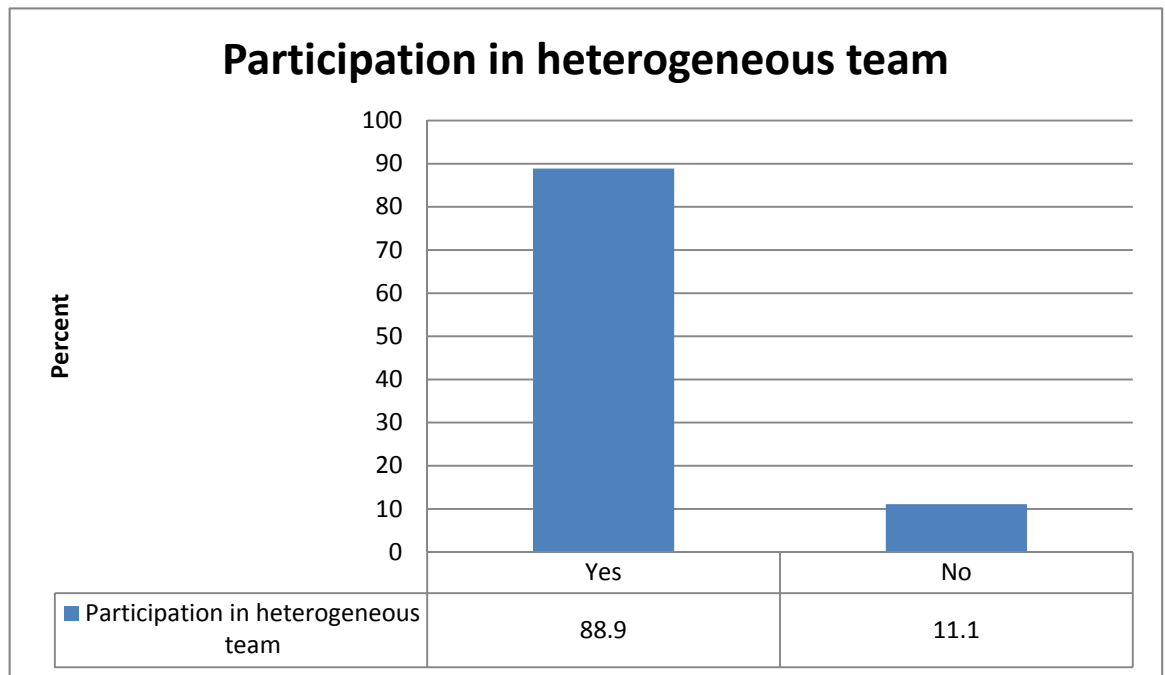
Figure 5



4.8.4 Participation in heterogeneous team

88.9% of the total respondents have taken part in a heterogeneous team activity during their studies at the Chester Business School. They are considered suitable to respond to statements about a heterogeneous team.

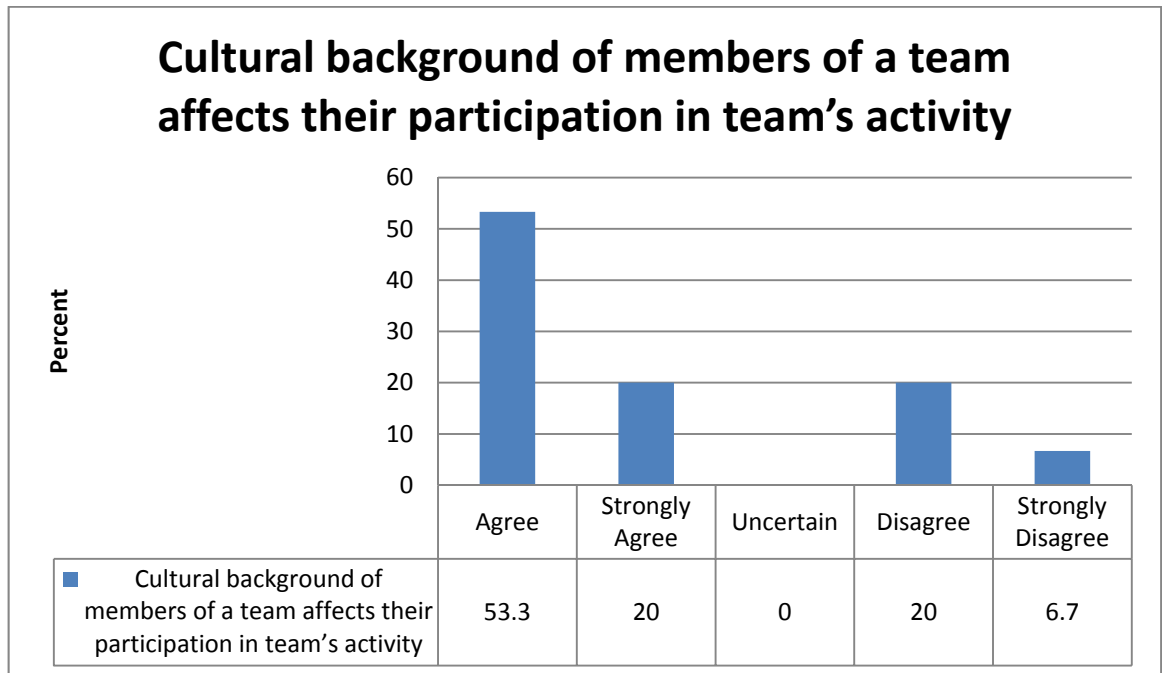
Figure 6



4.8.5 The cultural background of members of a team affects their participation in team's activity.

53.3% and 20% of the responses received agree and strongly agree that the cultural background of the individual members of a team affects their contribution and participation in the team's activity.

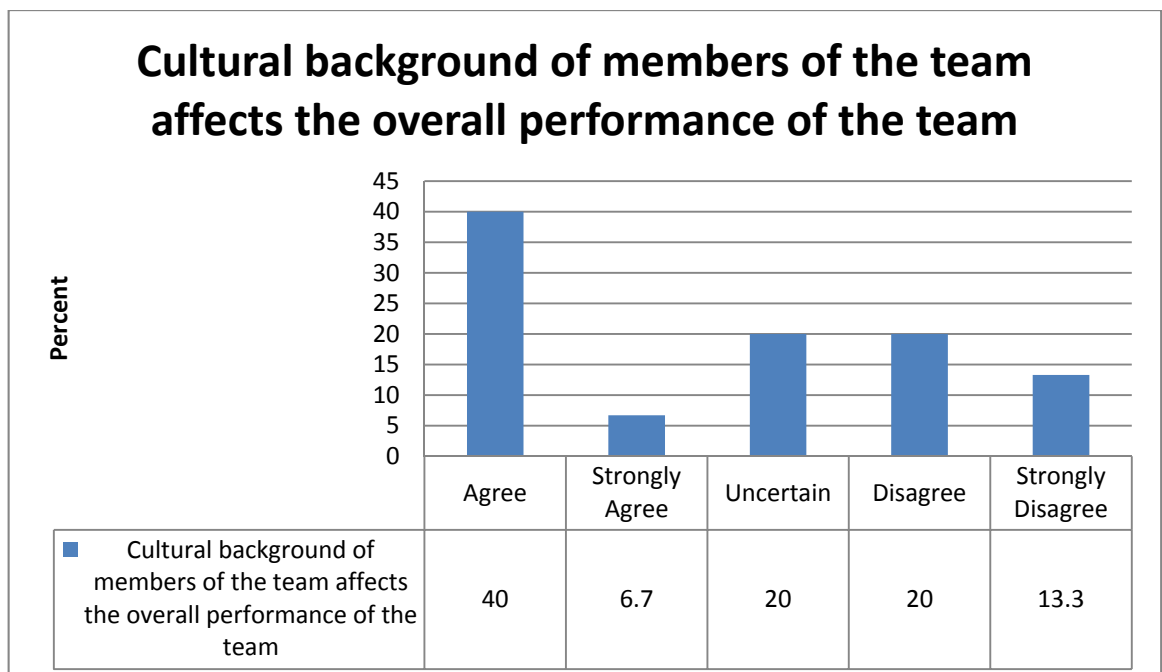
Figure 7



4.8.6 The cultural background of members of the team affects the overall performance of the team

40% and 6.7% of the responses received agrees and strongly agrees respectively that the cultural background of members of a team affects their contribution and participation in the team's activities.

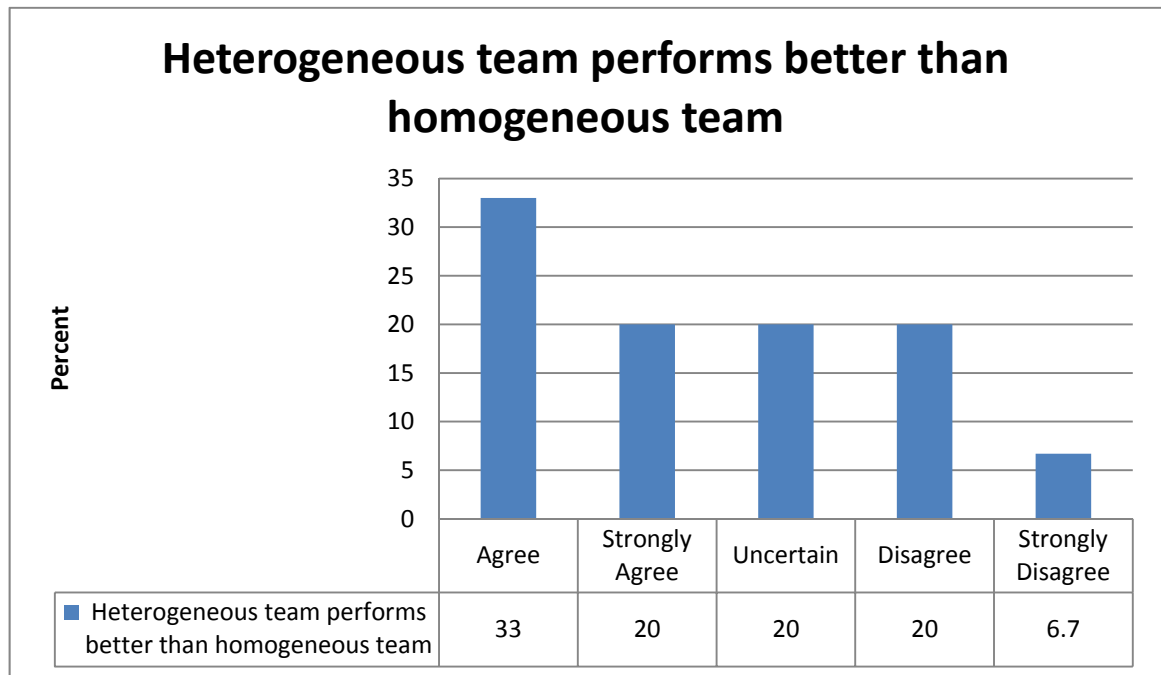
Figure 8



4.8.7 Heterogeneous team performs better than homogeneous team

The responses received on whether the team made up of people from different cultural background perform better than the team made up of people from the same country indicates that 33% and 20% agree and disagree respectively, 20% were uncertain while 20% and 6.7% disagree and strongly disagree respectively.

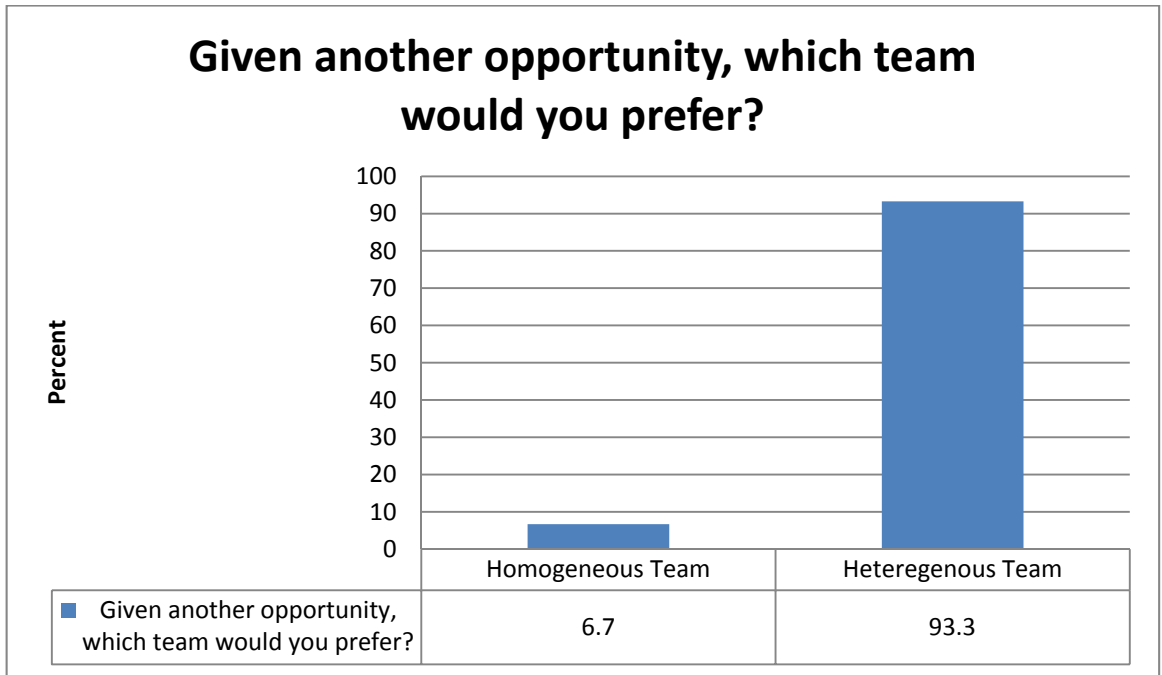
Figure 9



4.8.8 Given another opportunity, which team would you prefer?

93.3% of the respondents will prefer to take part in a culturally diverse team while 6.7% prefers to be part of a non-culturally diverse team. A further probe into the reason why 93.3% of the respondents preferred a culturally diverse team revealed that the respondents see the diversity as a strength and an opportunity to learn something new (Appendix 2).

Figure 10



5 Conclusion and Implications

5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the research findings presented in chapter four with respect to the research objectives highlighted in chapter 1 within the context of the theories reviewed in chapter two. The chapter also summarises the overall objective of the research, critically analysis of the research methodology and provides an overall conclusion for the study. The limitations of the study as well as opportunities for further study are stated in this chapter.

5.2 Critical evaluation of adopted method

Chapter three of this study describes in the detail the research methodology adopted for this study as well as their justifications and limitations. This section takes a critically look at how successful each of the method was or otherwise.

5.2.1 Participant Observation

The participant observation method was used to observe how members of a team interacted while working towards a common goal with the aim of understanding what role their cultural background played in shaping their ideas, behaviour and participation in the team activity. The participants were provided with adequate information about the objective of the study prior to commencement of the team activity to enable them put their best effort into it. The participant observation enabled the researcher to see how the team members participated in the team activity. However, the time spent by the researcher with the team was insufficient to have been able to observe the participants well enough and under different circumstances. Also the participants were quite unnatural.

5.2.2 Semi-structure interview

The semi-structure interviews were used to corroborate the participant observation. The participants were asked questions about their origin, educational background, work experience and views about the research objectives. They were also requested to give feedbacks on the team's performance and their participation in the team. This proved useful as it provided the researcher with information about the cultural background of each participant which was used to examine their characteristics. However the researcher still had to make use his judgement and this was susceptible to bias.

5.2.3 Self-completed questionnaire

The self-completed questionnaire was designed based on the research objective of the study. The idea of using the questionnaire was to get the views of other students of the postgraduate arm of the Chester Business School that did not take part in the team exercise. The questionnaire was prepared online and administered using a web based survey solution. The questionnaire link was emailed to the respondents using their university email accounts. The response rate was just good enough (54.5%). This indicates that the students do not check their university email accounts regularly. This made the online questionnaire method not a very effective approach for this study.

5.3 Analysis of findings for each research objective

The findings of the study presented in chapter four are analysed under the three research objectives below:

5.3.1 Research objective 1: To understand the relationship between the cultural background of members of a team and the team's performance.

From the study conducted, it can be concluded that there is an indirect relationship between the cultural background of the members of a team and the team's performance. It is referred to as indirect because it affects other factors such as communication which in turn affects the team's performance. In team B, the homogenous team, it was observed that communication was effective (Section 4.6.2). Team members communicated in English language as well as in their local dialect Hindi. It was easy for them to communicate their ideas, views and criticism quickly and effectively in their local dialect as suggested by Hall (1976). When using English language will not pass across their ideas in the way that they wanted to, they switched to their local dialect. Less time was spent in trying to clarify or explain what a team member meant to another team member. The level of co-operation within the team can also be evaluated from a cultural perspective. India is a collectivistic society (Hofstede, 1997) and collectivist cultural societies have been found to exhibit more cooperative attitudes than those from an individualistic cultural society (Cox, 1993). The effect of this on the team was that the team completed its task quicker than the other team; in one day. This was how communication which is based on culture affected the team's performance. In the same vein, in Team A, the heterogeneous team, communication among team members was not as effective as it was in Team B. This is because English language which was the medium of communication amongst them was not the

first language of all the team members. The team members experienced some difficulties in communicating their ideas, views and criticisms to one another (Section 4.4.1.3). It was observed that team members often had to ask for clarification from one another (Hall, 1981). It was also common for the person speaking to ask the others for a confirmation that his point was understood. The effect on the team was that it took them two meetings held on two different days to complete the task. This also includes the fact that one of the team member was absent in the first meeting.

Hofstede's cultural dimension (Appendix 4) describes India's culture as one in which the people are not averse to change. This was observed in Team B (Section 4.6.2) even though only one of the members thinks his participation and contribution in the team was influenced by his culture (Appendix 3). The team members listened to and evaluated different suggestions and were willing to try out something new. The ideas generated by the team members include foreign currency agency, restaurant, retail store and sport bar. The team did not perceive a new idea as a threat. The team was ready to welcome any idea that is different from what they are used to. According to the responses received from the questionnaire, 40% agree and 6.7% strongly agree that the cultural background of individual members of the team affects the overall performance of the team (Fig.8).

5.3.2 Research objective 2: To understand how the cultural background of each member of the team affects their individual participation and contribution to the team activity

In assessing the way the cultural background of each member of a team affected their individual participation in the team's activity, responses received from the semi-structured interview with the nine participants who took part in the team exercise were used (Section 4.7). This showed that only one of the respondent believed that his culture is one of the factors that have influenced his contribution to the team activity. He stated that other factors like his educational background and work experience influenced his participation in the team's activity. The other eight participants believed that the factors that influenced the way they participated in the team's activity are their educational background, life experiences, work experience, individual nature and belief. While observing the teams, the researcher noted that the behaviours, values, communication and orientation of the members of the teams may have been influenced by their

cultural background (Tayeb, 2003; Hall, 1981) but the ideas, suggestions and criticisms seemed to be influenced more by their educational background and work experience. For instance, according to Agra (Team B) who came up with the business idea his team decided to adopt, the factor that influenced that idea was his previous graduate degree in Hotel Management and his involvement in organising various events (Appendix 3). Also Nangal (Team B) stated that the factor that influenced his suggestions and the way he critical looked at the ideas of his team members from the perspective of the profit potential of the business idea was his educational background and most especially his involvement in business. He stated that his family owns and runs three resorts in India and he had been involved in the business since he was young (Appendix 3). Nige (Team A) asserted that his aspiration to run a business enterprise and his postgraduate degree in management influenced his suggestions and the way he critically looked at his team members ideas from a profit perspective (Appendix 3). Beatty and Scott (2004) suggested that teamwork involves people with complementary skills, knowledge and experience working together to collectively explore a challenge and come up with a creative solution. These skills, knowledge and experience are acquired through education, work and life experiences. The responses received from the questionnaires (Appendix 2) showed that 53.3% and 20% agree and strongly agree respectively that the cultural background of the individual members of a team affects their contribution and participation in the team's activity while 20% and 6.7% disagree and strongly disagree respectively. Therefore, based on the researchers observation of Team A and Team B, the responses from the questionnaire supported by views of the participants in the team activity, it can be concluded that while the cultural background of each member of the team influences how they learn, what they learn and how knowledge is shared; education, work experience, life experience and personal aspiration provides the platform and drive to learn. All these factors work together to influence the participation and contribution of each individual team member in the team's activity.

5.3.3 Research objective 3: To find out if a culturally diverse team will perform better than a non-culturally diverse team.

From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that a culturally diverse team will not perform better than a non-culturally diverse team and vice versa. What makes a team perform better than another team is not determined solely by the

cultural background of its members (Stewart, Manz & Sims, 1999). In observing the two teams, the researcher noted that both teams did perform the task excellently but using different strategies. In Team B, the team had a brainstorm session, agreed on a business idea, assigned each question of the exercise as a do-it-at-home task for themselves, each member sends the completed task to Agra who put the slides together and finish the team's task. In Team A, the team members had a brainstorm session and decided on a business idea, they agreed to have a second meeting because one of the members was absent, at the end of their second meeting two members of the team were assigned to use the minutes of the meetings to prepare the PowerPoint presentation and the team task was completed. Though both teams used different strategies, the task was completed excellently. This is evidenced by the PowerPoint slides submitted by both teams. The responses received from the questionnaire indicated that 33.3% and 20% agree and strongly agree respectively that a culturally diverse team performs better than a non-culturally diverse team. 20% were uncertain while 20% and 6.7% disagree and strongly disagree respectively. A further probe into the reason for their responses shows that respondent who agrees and strongly agrees with this views based their responses on their opinions that individuals from different cultures will bring different ideas to the team because of their culturally differences. This is very subjective when compared to the researcher's opinion which is based on the result of participant observation of two teams.

5.4 Overall conclusion about the research questions

“Teams are a fundamental unit of organizing people to meet new challenges and achieve results” (Duke Corporate Education, 2005, p. 1).

The findings from this study indicate that team work can be useful when the task requires creativity and novelty. This supports the view that one of the ways a company can gain competitive advantage is by creating an environment people can work together as a team to identify novel ideas (Beer & Nohria, 2000). The study supports Karoc-Kakabadse and Kouzmin (2001) view that a multicultural team may experience a problem of integration which may be attributed to the fact that the individual team members come from different cultures and have a different understanding of the communication process and styles of dialogue. The study also found out that environmental factors like location and the meeting venue can also have an influence on the team members

Furthermore, the study confirms the view that a team member who is considered a weak link by the team can be ostracised and ignored by the rest of the team (Sinclair, as cited by Procter & Mueller, 2000). It also came to light during the course of the study that other factors like education background and work experience have an impact on the contribution and participation of team members in the team activity. In contrast to Tuckman's stages of team development (Parker, 2008), the study revealed that a project team that is formed with members who are already familiar with one another and that is for a short period of time may not go through the four stages of team development.

In conclusion it is evident in the study that a culturally diverse team may not perform better than a non-culturally diverse team. This is in contrast with the views of Seymen (2006) and Iles and Hayers (1997).

5.5 Overall conclusion about the research project

The study has been resourceful by providing information about cultural diversity and team performance. The study was undertaken with the objective of contributing to the existing knowledge on the subject topic. This has been achieved through the contents of the chapters of the study which has carefully evaluated the topic and reported its findings in a way that could easily understood by its readers.

5.6 Limitation of the study

Notwithstanding the outcome of this study, some limitations were noted during the course of the study. Although the researcher took different steps to ensure that the participants in the team activity that was observed acted as natural as they could by offering them rewards, it came to light that some of the participants acted unnatural at some point during the team activity. This is considered a limitation of the study because the researcher had no control over it.

Another limitation is that an educational institution was used as a case study. Further study using a business organisation as a case study should be conducted. This will shed more light on the effect of cultural diversity on team performance in a business organisation.

Due to time constraint and the busy schedule of the participants in the team activity, the team spent a short time on the team task. This did not allow the researcher considerable time to observe other characteristics of the team that may

take a longer time to be revealed and observed. This is also considered as a limitation.

5.7 Opportunities for further research

The study has established a foundation on which other researcher can base their study on. The study indicates that the cultural background of team members has an effect on the team's performance. Further research can be carried out to examine the effect of other factors which may not be culturally based on team performance.

In the study, it was brought to light that due to globalisation many organisations now have a culturally diverse workforce. Future research can be conducted to understand how to effectively manage a culturally diverse team in a way that the team's performance will be improved.

Finally, a mixed approach was adopted for this study. Future research on this topic can be conducted using a different approach (i.e. quantitative approach only). This will explore other areas that the qualitative approach did not explore and provide a better understanding of the subject.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Activity One: Business Idea

Use whatever means at your disposal to select an idea for a possible business – I suggest that you generate several ideas to begin with and refine your choice down to one single opportunity. Keep notes of all your discussion as “minutes of meetings”.

Having selected a single business idea, you need to research into how this business idea might be developed up to the point of the launch of the business. In particular, you need to show evidence of:

- Why do you think this business will be successful?
- What are the factors you have considered?
- What is your initial costing?
- Who are your customers?
- Who are your competitors?
- What are your products and pricing policy?
- What is your unique selling point?

Activity Two: Presentation

Give a 15 minute PowerPoint presentation which outlines the work you have completed for activity one. Use whatever other artefacts you think are appropriate to make your presentation interesting, informative and convincing.

The research task requires that minutes of the meetings be taken. The researcher will assume the role of a scribe in both teams taking down the minutes of the meeting without disturbing the flow of activities. However, in Team B, the researcher’s participation will be limited only to taking notes as any further involvement in their activities might change the homogeneous team to a heterogeneous one because the researcher is not from India. But in Team A, the researcher can fully take part in their activities.

Appendix 2

Questionnaire Sample and Result

1. PART A

[+ Add Question](#)

Q1 [Edit Question](#) [Add Question](#) [Logic](#) [Move](#) [Copy](#) [Delete](#)

1. Gender

Male

Female

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Q2 [Edit Question](#) [Move](#) [Copy](#) [Delete](#)

*

2. Country of Origin

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Q3 [Edit Question](#) [Move](#) [Copy](#) [Delete](#)

*

3. What part of your country of origin are you from?

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Q4 [Edit Question](#) [Move](#) [Copy](#) [Delete](#)

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4. Work Experience(Sector/Industry e.g Banking, IT etc.)

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Q5 [Edit Question](#) [Add Question](#) [Logic](#) [Move](#) [Copy](#) [Delete](#)

*

5. During your studies at the University of Chester, did you take part in a team/group work where all the members of the team/group were made up of individuals from the same country/cultural background as you?

Yes

No

[+ Add QuestionSplit Page Here](#)

Q6 [Edit QuestionAdd Question LogicMoveCopyDelete](#)

*

6. During your studies at the University of Chester, did you take part in a team/group work where all the members of the team/group were made up of individuals from different countries/cultural background?

Yes

No

[+ Add Question](#)

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2. PART B

How would you respond to the following statements:

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Q7 [Edit Question](#) [Add Question](#) [Logic](#) [Move](#) [Copy](#) [Delete](#)

*

1. The cultural background of the individual members of a team/group affects their contribution and participation in the team's activity.

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Q8 [Edit Question](#) [Add Question](#) [Logic](#) [Move](#) [Copy](#) [Delete](#)

*

2. The cultural background of individual members of the team/group affects the overall performance of the team/group.

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Q9 [Edit Question](#) [Add Question](#) [Logic](#) [Move](#) [Copy](#) [Delete](#)

*

3. The team/group made up of people from different countries/cultural background perform better than the team/group made up of people from the same country?

- Agree
- Strongly Agree
- Uncertain
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

Pls state reason(s) for your answer

Q10 [Edit Question](#)[Add Question](#) [Logic](#)[Move](#)[Copy](#)[Delete](#)

*

4. If you had another opportunity to participate in a team/group work, which team/group would you prefer?

- Team/Group made up of individuals from the same country/cultural background as me
- Team/Group made up of individuals from different countries/cultural background

Pls state reason(s) for your answer



Questionnaire Result

Part A

Table 3.1

Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	17	94.4	94.4	94.4
Female	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
Total	18	100	100	100

Table 3.2

Country of origin

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Nigeria	5	27.8	27.8	27.8
India	10	55.6	55.6	83.4
Pakistan	2	11.0	11.0	94.4
UK	1	5.6	5.6	100
Total	18	100	100	

Table 3.3

Work Experience

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Retail	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
Healthcare	2	11.1	11.1	22.2
Banking	4	22.1	22.1	44.3
IT	3	16.7	16.7	61.0
Service	1	5.6	5.6	66.6
Education	2	11.1	11.1	77.7
Engineering	1	5.6	5.6	83.3
Construction	1	5.6	5.6	88.9
Textile	2	11.1	11.1	100
Total	18	100	100	

Table 3.4

Participation in homogeneous team

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	13	72.2	72.2	72.2
No	5	27.8	27.8	100
Total	18	100	100	

Table 3.5

Participation in heterogeneous Team

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	16	88.9	88.9	88.9
No	2	11.1	11.1	100
Total	18	100	100	

Part B

Table 4.1

The cultural background of the individual members of a team/group affects their contribution and participation in the team's activity.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	8	53.3	53.3	53.3
Strongly Agree	3	20.0	20.0	73.3
Uncertain	0	0.0	0.0	73.3
Disagree	3	20.0	20.0	93.3
Strongly Disagree	1	6.7	6.7	100
Total	15	100	100	
Skipped	3			

Table 4.2

The cultural background of individual members of the team/group affects the overall performance of the team/group.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	6	40.0	40.0	40.0
Strongly Agree	1	6.7	6.7	46.7
Uncertain	3	20.0	20.0	66.7
Disagree	3	20.0	20.0	86.7
Strongly Disagree	2	13.3	13.3	100
Total	15	100	100	
Skipped	3			

Table 4.3

The team/group made up of people from different countries/cultural background performs better than the team/group made up of people from the same country?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Agree	5	33.3	33.3	33.3
Strongly Agree	3	20.0	20.0	53.3
Uncertain	3	20.0	20.0	73.3
Disagree	3	20.0	20.0	93.3
Strongly Disagree	1	6.7	6.7	100
Total	15	100	100	
Skipped	3			

Reason for their response: Sees diversity as strength

Table 4.4

If you had another opportunity to participate in a team/group work, which team/group would you prefer?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Homogeneous Team	1	6.7	6.7	6.7
Heterogeneous Team	14	93.3	93.3	100
Total	15	100	100	
Skipped	3			

Reasons for their response: Diversity creates the opportunity to learn new things

Appendix 3

Semi-structure Interview

Table 5.1

Part A (Team A)

	Nige	Indi	Viet	Thai
Origin	Nigeria/Akwa Ibom	India/Delhi	Vietnam/Hanoi	Thailand/Bangkok
Years spent in country of origin	All my years	All my years	All my years	All my years
Education	Petroleum Engineering	Hotel Management	Finance & Banking	Accounting
Work Experience	Petroleum Engineer with Mobil	Hotel and customer service	Accountant	Consultancy
Family	Lived and grew up with parents	Lived and grew up with parents	Lived and grew up with parents	Lived and grew up with parents
Hobby/Skill	Reading and teaching	Dancing	Travelling and IT	Online games

Part B

Table 5.2

	Nige	Indi	Viet	Thai
What factor influenced the way you participated?	Education, business aspiration and personal orientation	Work experience and education	Life experiences and education	Work experience and education
What would you change in the team?	Meeting venue to prevent distraction	The team did not take it seriously as	Give the team more time	Team was ok to me

		they would take their course work		
--	--	---	--	--

Part A (Team B)

Table 5.3

	Agra	Delhi	Latur	Nangal	Thane
Origin	India/Delhi	India/Delhi	India/Jalgaon	India/North	Indian/North
Years spent in country of origin	All his years	All his years	All his years	All his years	All his years
Education	Hospitality	Computer Science	Hotel Management	Business Administration	Automobile Engineering
Work Experience	Hotel and Customer service	Website Developer	Hotel Customer Service	Marketing Adviser	Automobile Engineer
Family	Lived and grew up with parents	Lived with and grew up compound family	Lived and grew up with parents	Lived and grew up with parents	Lived and grew up with parents
Hobby/Skill	Cricket, Swimming, Dancing and Gadgets	Dancing, Singing, Cricket and Marketing	Chess and making friends	Football, Snooker and playing the drums	Cricket, reading and leading people.

Part B

Table 5.4

	Agra	Delhi	Latur	Nangal	Thane
What factor influenced the way you participated?	Previous team work in Indian, work experience and education	Brother's currency business	I am a quiet person by nature especially when I am in a new place i.e. UK	Personal experience working in family resorts business	Work experience, culture and education
What would you change in the team?	Change some team members	Replace a team member with another creative person	Add some female members to the team to make it livelier. Generally the team is ok.	Remove a team member because he did not contribute much to the team	Give the team more time to work, replace some members and would prefer the PowerPoint slides to be done together as a team

Appendix 4

Hofstede's Cultural Dimension

Table 6.0

	PDI	IDV	MAS	UAI	LTO
Nigeria	77	20	46	54	16
India	77	48	56	40	61
Vietnam (Asia)	70	20	40	30	80
Thailand	64	20	34	64	56

PDI: Power Distance Index - that is the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This represents inequality (more versus less), but defined from below, not from above. It suggests that a society's level of inequality is endorsed by the followers as much as by the leaders.

IDV: Individualism - on the one side versus its opposite, collectivism, that is the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups. On the individualist side we find societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family. On the collectivist side, we find societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, often extended families (with uncles, aunts and grandparents) which continue protecting them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. The word 'collectivism' in this sense has no political meaning: it refers to the group, not to the state.

MAS: Masculinity - versus its opposite, femininity, refers to the distribution of roles between the genders which is another fundamental issue for any society to which a range of solutions are found. The IBM studies revealed that (a) women's values differ less among societies than men's values; (b) men's values from one country to another contain a dimension from very assertive and competitive and maximally different from women's values on the one side, to modest and caring and similar to women's values on the other. The assertive pole has been called 'masculine' and the modest, caring pole 'feminine'. The women in feminine countries have the same modest, caring values as the men; in the masculine countries they are somewhat assertive and competitive, but not as

much as the men, so that these countries show a gap between men's values and women's values.

UAI: Uncertainty Avoidance Index - deals with a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity; it ultimately refers to man's search for Truth. It indicates to what extent a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. Unstructured situations are novel, unknown, surprising, different from usual. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimize the possibility of such situations by strict laws and rules, safety and security measures, and on the philosophical and religious level by a belief in absolute Truth; 'there can only be one Truth and we have it'. People in uncertainty avoiding countries are also more emotional, and motivated by inner nervous energy. The opposite type, uncertainty accepting cultures, are more tolerant of opinions different from what they are used to; they try to have as few rules as possible, and on the philosophical and religious level they are relativist and allow many currents to flow side by side. People within these cultures are more phlegmatic and contemplative, and not expected by their environment to express emotions.

LTO: Long-term Orientation - values associated with Long Term Orientation are thrift and perseverance; values associated with Short Term Orientation are respect for tradition, fulfilling social obligations, and protecting one's 'face'. Both the positively and the negatively rated values of this dimension are found in the teachings of Confucius, the most influential Chinese philosopher who lived around 500 B.C.; however, the dimension also applies to countries without a Confucian heritage.

Retrieved on the 25th of August, 2010 from: http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_dimensions.php