



UNIVERSITY OF THE AEGEAN
DEPARTMENT OF SHIPPING TRADE AND TRANSPORT

DISSERTATION

Diversity in the workplace

A study about diversity that exists onboard merchant ships

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Abstract

Nowadays, in many organizations, the workforce has become more and more diverse. Diversity is a subject that emerges from these changes and more and more studies are dedicated to this. Diversity concerns all organizations in the way that affects employees, managers and the organizations themselves. With such diversity in the workplace, it is become important for organizations to put in place policies and practices to build an inclusive and harmonious workplace. An inclusive and harmonious workplace is one that appreciates differences amongst workers and works towards maximizing their potentials.

Research has shown that there is a link between diversity and organizational performance and if it is properly managed, it can be one of the biggest advantages for an organization. Diversity management plays an important role for obtaining an inclusive workforce, and making these advantages visible and it helps the company to use them as a competitive advantage.

Specifically, the shipping industry is known for its diverse workforce, but this brought a number of problems such as communication and cultural misunderstandings among the crew onboard and sometimes leading also to accidents. There is a lack of cultural awareness and the shipping industry is trying to build an existing work on diversity matters. It tries to find out how workplace diversity affects internal operations, managerial decisions and performance of an organization.

The following dissertation explores the concept of diversity in the work environment with a particular emphasis on diversity onboard merchant ships. The objectives of this study are to have a better view on diversity and inclusion in the workplace and specifically in the shipping industry. The purpose is to understand the implications and extract conclusions. It is important to see if managing a diversified workforce ashore, also applies onboard merchant ships.

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Diversity: the art of thinking independently together.

-Malcolm Forbes

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1.Introduction

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Diversity is a broad term with different aspects, and these different aspects have different effects encountered in the workplace. The differences of the workforce, the environment and way of working, as well as the evolvement of legislation in regards to the discrimination of any kind have led to the imperative need of examining the numerous aspects of diversity in the workplace. The human element is the biggest asset for businesses and the optimal use of available staff can only arise from the coexistence of people with differences in terms of culture, age, gender, religion and way of thinking. Tackling the labor challenges can eventually lead to innovative ideas and major achievements for both employees and organizations.

The study begins with a better understanding of diversity and its different conceptualizations. Furthermore, we will analyze the meaning of diversity management, with a brief historical reference, because it plays an important role for businesses to maintain a diverse and inclusive workforce. Also, the priorities that must be made by the human resource management, such as recruitment, communication, diverse training, due to the fact that it is very important for diversity and inclusion at work. In addition, a detailed record is being made about the benefits of being a heterogeneous business but also the challenges and the difficulties that may arise because a long process is required and also the advantages are not directly visible.

From the 80s, there have been multi-national people that work together on board, and for that reason, a lot of misunderstandings may occur. For instance, it is said that miscommunication is one of the causes major maritime accidents may happen. In addition, there will be an overview of the work environment onboard. The third and last part of this dissertation will include an overview of how the shipping industry is doing in terms of diversity that exists onboard passenger ships. Lastly, there will be a recording of conclusions, about cultural awareness, the training of the shipping crew and if diversity and inclusion is the same between the shipping industry and other workplaces.

2. The meaning of diversity

The meaning of diversity is interpreted in a narrow but also in a broader context. The narrow concept of diversity refers to personal characteristics such as gender, race or age. On the contrary, the term is broader when other aspects of people's personality are included, like their way of thinking, their experience, their socio-economic status, their work experience, their skills, their possible physical or mental particularities, their different cultural background, their sexual orientation, their religious and political beliefs or other ideologies. These characteristics affect the way we view the professional and the general environment by the individuals themselves, while companies provide requirements for the harmonious coexistence and cooperation for all of them particular characteristics, through its customized data programs, they will have as an effect, excelled individuals contributing positively to creativity, innovation, success, and of course efficiency (Parsi, 2017; Kramar, 2012).

In a CIPD (2018) report, there is a different division for the characteristics of diversity. There is the surface characteristics, some of which are immediately distinct, for instance gender, age and nationality which are related to the so-called demographic diversity or biodiversity. On the other hand, the characteristics associated with experience, values and beliefs such as education, work experience etc. are not straightforward obvious, and for that reason they are called deep-level characteristics. Because these characteristics have a direct and indirect impact on people's professional performance they are linked to job-related diversity.

Everyone's personality is a blend of different aspects, which should be taken into account in the global workplace. In a research, actualized by de Anca and Aragón (2018), it is reported that there are three types of diversity that shapes and influences our personality:

- Demographic diversity, which is associated with features that apply to us throughout our lives and include, among other things, gender, religious beliefs and sexual orientation.
- Experiential diversity, which relates to experiences, abilities or emotional bonds that occur to us throughout our lives and shape our emotional world.

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- Cognitive diversity, which refers to the way people think and how each person has a unique way to interpret and address problems and challenges. Complementarity in others is usually looked for in personal thinking without necessarily agreeing and having the same opinions. Everyone's contribution is unique, but when it is done in a professional level, the desire to gain experience, beyond those that a person has already, leads to better results on creativity, innovation, success and also has greater links between the different departments of a business.

Lastly, in an interview by Kalev & Roscigno (2016), they said that diversity in Organizations can be described as cultural diversity, because it includes not only different groups, but also different point of views, perceptions and cultures. Diversity for particular researches can be expressed as an numerous variety of employees or a structure within the organization (numerical/ structural diversity). While at the same time there is diversity that occurs inside organizations (relational diversity), which concerns the way we view others, how we interact with them, but also if and to what extent do we discriminate across a set of different entities.

Diversity is characterized with forcefulness, so the meaning and the policies should be adapted to the particular environmental conditions, and should be seen as a mechanism for achieving social and economic goals.

2.1. Diversity, Equality and Inclusion

Often the meaning of diversity is confused with the term of equality because they are directly related. Equality can be interpreted as gatherings of people that are not treated diversely or less positively, based on their particular characteristics, including also regions of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation and age.



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Also, sometimes there is also no distinction from the concept of inclusion which expresses how to apply diversity in the workplace. It has to do with the sense of justice and respect, the desire to belong in a group of people and also them recognizing a person’s personal value, to be able to express themselves freely and of course the prospect for personal growth and improvement.

To build a successful diverse work environment, inclusion and equity are a necessary mix to make diversity work.

2.2. Four layers of diversity

The picture below shows the four layers of diversity that was created by Gardenswartz & Rowe (2003), two well known diversity management pioneers. This following figure broadens our perception of diversity to more aspects than just gender, race and ethnicity.

¹ The triptych inclusion, diversity, equity

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Diversity is unraveled like an onion with layers that once peeled can unveil the inner level. The inner level is described as the personality of an individual. Personality is the only stable feature that determines how the person behaves in any given time and situation.

The other three layers affects someone's personality in the way that they contribute in forming a person's perception, mindset and actions while the individual interrelates with the environment.

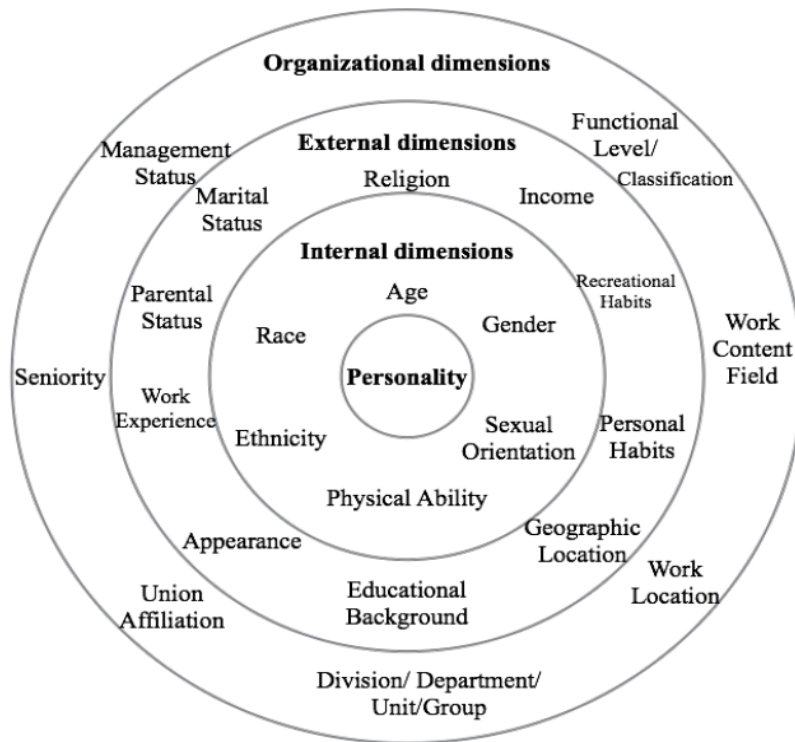
The next layer consists of the internal dimensions of diversity, such as gender, race, age, ethnicity which an individual cannot control.

The third layer represents the external dimensions that are linked to someone's choices of life, such as religion, place of residence, whether they choose to have children and personal habits. A person has a significant level of control over these attributes.

The outer layer contains the organizational dimensions and elements such as the department the individual works in, the location and content field of their work and their management status.

The organization where the individual works control the characteristics of this layer and people can only exercise limited influence over these. Organizations use this model to identify and comprehend the aspects through which all individuals perceive the world and that create boundaries on accepting each other (Gardenswartz & Rowe 2003).

² Four layers of diversity Source: adapted from Gardenswartz & Rowe (2003)



2.3. Diversity in the workplace

Diversity in the workplace means that the workforce of a company includes various people that are different from each other and do not have the same background. A cooperation with a diverse workplace has a variety of people with different characteristics and experiences. Some of these aspects of diversity that characterize them especially in the workplace are:

2.3.1. Gender diversity

Gender equality has been a subject of debate for many years. Especially in the workplace there is often an inequality in the participation of women to

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have a top position, financial benefits, conditions for promotion and more parameters. It was believed in the past, that women's top priority was taking care of their families. In addition, getting a job was very difficult for a woman and even if she was able to get a job, she was assigned low responsibility jobs in the workplace.

The representation of women in the workplace has changed significantly compared to the previous years. In 1950, women made up the 34% of the workforce, while in the 2000 it had doubled (Rice,2005). In a Randstad Research (2016) it has been found that, although it is widely believed that the different genders are equally treated in the workplace and that there are better collaboration results in groups represented by both genders, men are favored over women in the case of self-qualification and are preferred for senior positions. Although, according to recent research, McKinsey reports that companies that have a gender balance in management have a 15% increased chance of exceeding the average profit.

Also, in a research done by World Economic Forum (2017), they found out that although there is a gap between the presence of women and men in the work environment, it has dropped dramatically and now stands at 68%. Unfortunately, given the current data this gap will disappear in 100 years, while the equality of financial and other earnings will take 217 years, highlighting the need to hasten the progress in this field. It has also been found that in some areas there are not many women involved, such as in the field of construction or technology, while in others, such as education and health, men are underrepresented.

The inadequate presence of either women or men in businesses deprives them from significant benefits, not only in terms of efficiency, but also the company's image and the work environment. The equal presence of sexes in the work environment, is an indication of social justice, as they are provided accessibility and, in that way, they avoid discrimination. At the same time, gender-diverse groups within businesses constitute a big advantage. For instance, different customer requirements can be made easier to perceive. Also, there is an expanding pool of people to interview, so the companies can find the right talent for the job. Furthermore, the emotional intelligence

that characterizes the majority of women, leads to better results because of the different administration now taken into account, and other aspects of stakeholders such as environmental and social topics (Báez et al., 2018). Gender will always hold a special significance in the global workplace. Although women have entered the workforce in increasing numbers, that does not mean that they enjoy equal access and fair treatment.

2.3.2. Age Diversity

The increase in life expectancy and birth rate has an effect on the percentages of the active population. This effect is thought to be negative for the workplace because there is a perception that older people cannot follow the requirements of these modern days. Their capabilities are limited and it is thought that there is a gap in communication with younger people. Unfortunately, the same view, have the employees themselves, about their self-perception of work.

It is true that, as we age, our physical abilities and our health weakens, but at the same time, some other abilities are improving, especially those related to our spiritual development. Critical thinking, perception, acumen, decision making by assessing the conditions and the environment, finding the appropriate and rational solution, addressing life, and its challenges in general, improve as we age. At the same time, in the workplace, the commitment and dedication to an employer, collaboration, professional experience and unmatched knowledge enhances the employer's social capital but they might not be as good in some cognitive functions, such as memory (Ilmarinen, 2012).

As a conclusion, since some functions improve with age, instead of being considered old, there should be a redefinition, not only job wise, but also people of whatever age must be able to determine whether they have the job requirements, and if these requirements are connected with their human resource management business. As a result, it will create a corporate culture that is friendly to everyone. This way, the natural aging of the workforce may be a new opportunity to re-evaluate the way and forms of work and extending the survival of organizations (Ilmarinen,2016).

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2.3.3. Ethnicity/Race Diversity

Ethnicity refers to ethnic groups, such as African American, Asian etc. which are communal in nature and form their own communities within cultures in a country. On the other hand, race is seen more in terms of physical features and varies between and within cultures. People's characteristics, even from the same culture, can be different, for instance, their eyes, hair and skin color.

Because of Ethnicity/Race Diversity, cultural and racial discrimination may occur. Especially in the work environment, there are still people that are prejudice against people that have different backgrounds than their own. As a result, these individuals have minimal chances of getting the job.

A study by Gumperz, Jupp and Roberts (1979) entitled "Crosstalk", it was found out that there are three main reasons why misunderstandings and miscommunications occur in day to day situations, such as a job interview, with people that have different ethnicity and culture. These three main reasons are:

- Interpret different information in a conversation
- Conclude in different cultural assumptions about a situation and about appropriate behavior and intentions with it
- Different communication

Discrimination in the workplace affects everyone in the work environment. Although, in a McKinsey study (2015), companies with high ethnic and racial diversity have higher possibilities to have better economic results, many people from ethnic groups are unemployed in numerous countries, and those who are lucky enough to get hired are not equally treated and given the salary, training, promotion and performance evaluations that they deserve.

2.3.4. Diversity of thought

Every human being is a unit that has different aspects and at the same time these aspects characterize him. His culture, personality and experiences define the way he thinks, the way he treats others, but also the way he gets through his obligations at work. So, all of these have to do with the diversity of thought, because it results from the experiences acquired during his life.

Although society was formerly structured as a “melting pot” (Woods,2008), as different elements were mixed, but with the goal to succeed in uniformity with the absence of derogations, it is now realized that because the conditions are changing in the external and internal environment, there is not only one way to accomplish a task or to achieve a goal. In the work environment, there are a lot of people with different personalities. Consequently, they learn to think outside the box and coexist and as a result they gain solving abilities and decision making.

In a Woods (2008) report, the above relate to three key factors that concern the person but also the company.

These three key factors are:

- **Willingness**, to share different points of view. People should respect each other’s viewpoint, recognize diversity and trust in each other’s significant impact.
- **Readiness**, on the business’s side, to enable listening and learning different prospects but also form an opportunity to differentiate its mode of operation by abandoning the doctrine of a correct solution. It is important to evaluate all opinions, support them, to facilitate interpersonal relationships and above all create a corresponding culture, where everyone is able to learn from the diversity of the other.
- **Opportunity**, where everyone has access, by communicating to and from all hierarchical levels without restriction to a traditional top-down approach, with the ability to interact with everyone, while supporting a learning structure.

2.4. Diversity and Inclusion at work

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It is said by many organizations, that diversity and inclusion is important, but still in many work environments, inequality still remains. In consequence, organizations must encourage diversity and create an inclusive work environment. An inclusive workplace, makes it possible for the workforce, despite their ethnicity, age, gender and background to mushroom at work and have the same access to jobs that will confidently benefit them. As a result, organizations will have positive performance outcomes.

In a CIPD research (2018), it said that although diversity outcomes, at the organization level, are more clear, inclusive organization outcomes are not straightforward. There is a lack of research on inclusion outcomes, compared to research on diversity outcomes. Therefore, Nishii (2013), creates a measure of inclusion climate which includes three aspects:

- Ensure policies and procedures are fairly implemented and reduce bias to create a level playing field
- Recognize and embrace differences, so individuals can bring their whole self to work without fear of recourse
- Include all individuals in decision-making, even if alternative ideas are different from the current state of play.

An inclusive work environment is the one that supports all the workforce and takes a holistic approach to diversity. Organizations must understand how inclusive they are by getting feedback from their workforce, so they can understand if their employees feel supported. Companies understand that they cannot be successful on a global platform if they do not have a diverse and inclusive workforce. A diverse and inclusive workforce is necessary to foster new ideas, reduce inequality and discrimination and guide business strategies. Companies view diversity and inclusion as an innovation strategy.

2.4.1. Diversity Management

Managing Diversity in the workplace is an active and conscious development of one strategic, communication and administrative process with a future orientation and guided by values, that accepts and uses some differences and similarities as a perspective that can have an added value in

a company (IDM, 2007). In a company that respects and uses diversity as a component to success, each individual should have their own role to play in the company and their skills should be successfully exploited.

The term diversity management appeared in the United States of America in the late 1980s as a consequence of the need for companies to adapt to the new law, which was legally binding them to not discriminate employees, and also emphasizing on human rights, equality and justice, with the ultimate goal being of course able to survive in a highly competitive business environment (Knights & Omanović, 2016; Kramar, 2012; Pitts, 2009).

Though, transitioning from a various workforce to an inclusive workplace requires significant effort from the people who lead the organizations, by establishing human resource management, policies and practices, manage teams, recruit employees and contribute an organizational culture. This implies the need for a different kind of management – a diversity management.

Diversity management helps the human resource's training to ensure, a working environment that includes all those groups of workers that had not been equally treated before, such as women or people of different racial backgrounds. Therefore, everyone has equal opportunities in recruitment, training, in-service training and also implement flexible staffing policies. At the same time, the company tries to maintain its corporate reputation, attracting and retaining the right-skilled employees, improving their efficiency and of course, achieving their strategy goals.

R. Roosevelt Thomas, known also as “father of diversity”, was one of the first to stress the need for diversity management in businesses. It was he who first pointed out that, rather than trying to change the culture of their diverse employees, businesses should change their own culture. This way, employees attribute the maximum of their capabilities and enables the businesses to benefit from their employees not only job wise but also learn from them. Management diversity now, escapes the notion of morality and justice, gains economic impact as a heterogeneous workplace and also has the same efficiency, commitment and quality as a homogeneous workplace.

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As reported by Reinchenberg (2001), diversity management has to do with mentality, but also with the culture of the organization and the different personal aspects that employees bring to the organization through work, race, physical disadvantages or other peculiarities. Whereas Mor Barak (2011) defines diversity management as voluntary actions of the organization designed to include employees with different backgrounds in official and unofficial structures through policies and programs.

2.4.2. Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management is an administrative function of a company that designs and executes those activities that are about managing a company's workforce, stating the importance of the human factor, as a competitor advantage for operating and achieving business goals. It must support the interests of its employees and at the same time achieve its company's business goals.

Humans, procedures, systems have changed, not only because of technology, but also because corporations have become more competitive. As a consequence, companies are hiring employees that are multilingual, multicultural and multinational. Therefore, human resources have changed their way of function, such as recruiting.

Human Resources have a significant part to play in cultivating and promoting diversity. Its key goal in diversity management is to make and enable an organizational culture that fosters a respectful, inclusive environment where each employee has the opportunity to learn, grow and contribute to the organization's success.

Nevertheless, it is extremely difficult for human resources to monitor diversity in the work environment. Unlike, demographic diversity, cognitive diversity is hard to be seen from a large majority of people. Although, it's a time-consuming process and requires a large amount of money to be spent,

Human Resources should be able to carry out annual monitoring and training, not only for the current employees, but also those they will hire, so they can have a multinational profile in their organization.

2.5. Managing diversity in the workplace

Diversity management has different approaches over the years to take into account. Initially the need to manage diversity was addressed as a reactive approach to the new data. This approach was proactive, and people started to identify and evaluate the advantages of it. The diversity management approaches, reflects on its evolution and it is mainly related to the process through which diversity is achieved.

The different approaches throughout the years take into account its respective interpretations, either as a competitive advantage or as part of corporate policy on corporate social responsibility (Kramar, 2012). A newer approach is based on an open system model and considers diversity management necessary for corporate social responsibility. Moreover, diversity management affects both the financial and the social results of a company and also influences the institutional and legal framework, the interpersonal relationships and personal beliefs.

The processes through which diversity is achieved, were considered as a part of the strategic management and were related to the changes inside and outside the company. The importance of creating a relevant culture was highlighted in order for the company to achieve its goals. The creation of culture is achieved through decisions of the top management that understands and supports changes in processes, policies and practices to further support the diversity management. The human resources management system should also be adapted to embrace diversity.

A diverse workforce can convey a better basic leadership, better items and administrations, more joyful clients and expand their efficiency. An effective diversity management is about unleashing the rich and differing potential of an entire workforce. The aim is to build and manage a diverse work

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environment, in other words, an inclusive workplace. But how can a company manage diversity in its own environment? Human resources professionals, face a lot of challenges to incorporate diversity into their workplace. These challenges can be moderated if the businesses can support a more diverse workplace through advancing a culture of resistance, open correspondence and planned strategies to address issues that may emerge. They who authorize, and want to successfully manage diversity in the working environment, should comprehend their employees' backgrounds and know that their ideologies can affect their decisions. That could be achieved if the human resource management prioritize the following:

2.5.1. Diversity as equal opportunity, fairness and anti-discrimination:

Although, work environment policies prohibit discrimination, every individual's attitudes, prejudices and bias still exists which leads to discrimination. In a Talaska (2008) report, it is said, that there is a relationship between attitudes and discrimination, with emotional prejudices being more closely linked to racial discrimination than stereotypes and beliefs. In addition, emotional prejudice relates to discrimination rated by self and others, but stereotypes and beliefs only tend to be related to self-reported discrimination, ending up to the fact that emotional prejudice is a powerful factor in discrimination. Furthermore, it is examined that the outcomes of perceived racial discrimination, is negatively linked to job attitudes, recruitment, as well as physical and psychological health. So, it is clear that, prejudice and discrimination exist in organizations and has a big impact on the individual's well-being. There is a lot of evidence that, many minority groups are at a disadvantage when it comes to job applications. For instance, in a study (Quillian,2017) that used call-back rates from field experiments, track hiring discrimination against African-Americans since 1989, but there is also some evidence that recruitment discrimination against Latinos is declining.

In conclusion, it is clear that discrimination still exists in the modern work environment. This has a negative impact on the workforce and on every individual's health and satisfaction. Therefore, businesses move away from

their goal to be diverse and inclusive. Biases and discrimination are the key issue that blocks a company's progress towards diversity and inclusion.

There are a lot of challenges that managers face in managing diversity and equality in the workplace, but Human Resources should not make discriminations. On the contrary, they should judge their triumphs and failures on the individual's merit rather than attributing actions from their past.

2.5.2. Diversity Recruitment

Diversity recruitment is the practice of recruiting candidates through a system that is free from biases towards or against any individual or group of candidates. It is still merit-based hiring and still strives to find the best possible candidate, but it is designed to give equal opportunities to all participants regardless of their background.

Diversity recruitment is a top priority these days. Achieving greater diversity in the workplace is not just a noble and compliance-related goal. The rise in diversity is related to the increasingly collaborative and team-based structure of modern organizations. The evidence is clear that companies that can effectively recruit and manage a diverse workforce have a clear competitive advantage.

If a company wants to succeed in diversity recruitment, it must surpass, as mentioned, its prejudice. Nowadays, 74% of the corporations claim that they practice diversity hiring, 18,75% of software engineers are women and 7% of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) workers are African-American and Hispanic despite of making up to 28% of our population. To assemble a different working environment, it is vital to recruit and employ from a variety of different backgrounds. For this to happen, the Human Recourses must not be bias during interviewing but rather, value their talent. In the event that those who interview the candidates can get through prejudgment and hire the most qualified individuals, will be able to become a diverse company and a different work environment ought to be the characteristic outcome.

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By attracting and retaining a diverse range of staff, businesses can identify opportunities and explore new solutions. Developing, implementing and promoting a diversity strategy is the challenge employers now face. Nowadays, organizations try to make their recruitment strategies more efficient, so they can attract more diverse individuals and increase diversity within the organizations. These strategies have to do with how to support cultural diversity, establish and promote equality and lastly, individual mentoring-guidance development. The key in these strategies is for the candidates to gain information about the organization and the goal is for the candidate to view the organization as a positive place to work. Establishing a hiring strategy will definitely support this goal and help in making it a success.

2.5.3. Diversity Training

Diversity training is a program -usually provided by the companies- that helps people reduce their bias and discrimination and on the real note, teaches people with different backgrounds how to work together sufficiently.

Companies such as Texaco, Coca-Cola, and CBS spend a huge amount of money a year to train managers, for instance, face-to-face workshops, with lectures, videos, and role-playing. With these trainings they are supposed to help people not to be prejudice and move them to control their biases. Furthermore, it is very interesting the fact that only 40% of all medium and large firms offer training.

Diversity training is needed because of the majority of the different people working in the same environment. Although, theoretically speaking this could have positive effects to the company, many firms have failed with this method to achieve the business's goals, as Frank Dobbin and Alexandra Kalev (2016) mentioned in their research. This happens because many companies try to control the managers managerial bias and too few firms try

to engage them. But if companies engaged their Human Resource managers it can also be very effective, rather than starting a managerial uprising.

There is a variety of ways that a company can engage an HR manager, such as sending them on special recruitment visits and professional events for women and minorities. Special recruitment programs encourage managers to get out there and find recruits. Many firms use management training programs to help women and minorities move up. These programs use existing managers to train a diverse pool of future managers.

Moreover, Diversity training, may seek to influence a number of outcomes, from awareness of other cultures and beliefs to addressing bias. Outcomes are often defined as cognitive (such as verbal knowledge), skill-based (changes in behavior), attitude (such as self-efficacy and motivation), and emotional outcomes (such as reaction to training) (Berzukova, 2016). Kalinoski (2013) investigated the cognitive and skill-based outcomes of diversity training. Overall, diversity training has a positive effect on cognitive, skill based, and attitude outcomes, but it had larger effects on cognitive-based outcomes than attitude outcomes. Also, it has positive outcomes to social interaction, active instructions and distributed training. In other words, effective training can enhance knowledge and skills to candidates when it comes to diversity, but its harder to change every individual's attitude.

Furthermore, Alhejji (2016) explores the positive impact diversity training has from three perspectives: the business case, learning outcomes and social justice. A direct business case for diversity training is not yet proven but it has a positive impact on participants capabilities providing evidence that diversity training can be effective in some respects.

Diversity training can be effective to give the participants the appropriate knowledge and skills for the job but training takes place over multiple sessions. Also, in a CIPD (2018) research it is said that diversity training is often well-received by the participants and can have short term results, but the sustained impact of such training on behavior and emotional prejudice over time is not yet clear.

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2.5.4. Communication

Culture, race, gender, and ethnicity impact the workplace communication. Due to interlinked world economy, we are more and more seeing ourselves getting in contact with a variety of culturally diverse people. Therefore, communication is one of the most important essentials in the global working environment, because, not only do international employers learn to interact between them, but also are able to gain knowledge and skills so they can be capable in intercultural communication.

Intercultural communication or cross-cultural communication skills, need to be effective in the global workplace. Verbal communication, is one of the most successful ways people can exchange information and ideas and it's even more successful if it's between different cultures and social groups. However, communication is not only determined by language, but also by nonverbal factors, for example body language. So, in order for intercultural communication to be successful in a multicultural workplace, people must acknowledge these factors.

To deal with a diverse work environment, associations need to guarantee that they adequately communicate with the representatives. Organizations must intend to beat language and social boundaries. They should build and maintain relationships so they can establish company growth by achieving corporate goals.

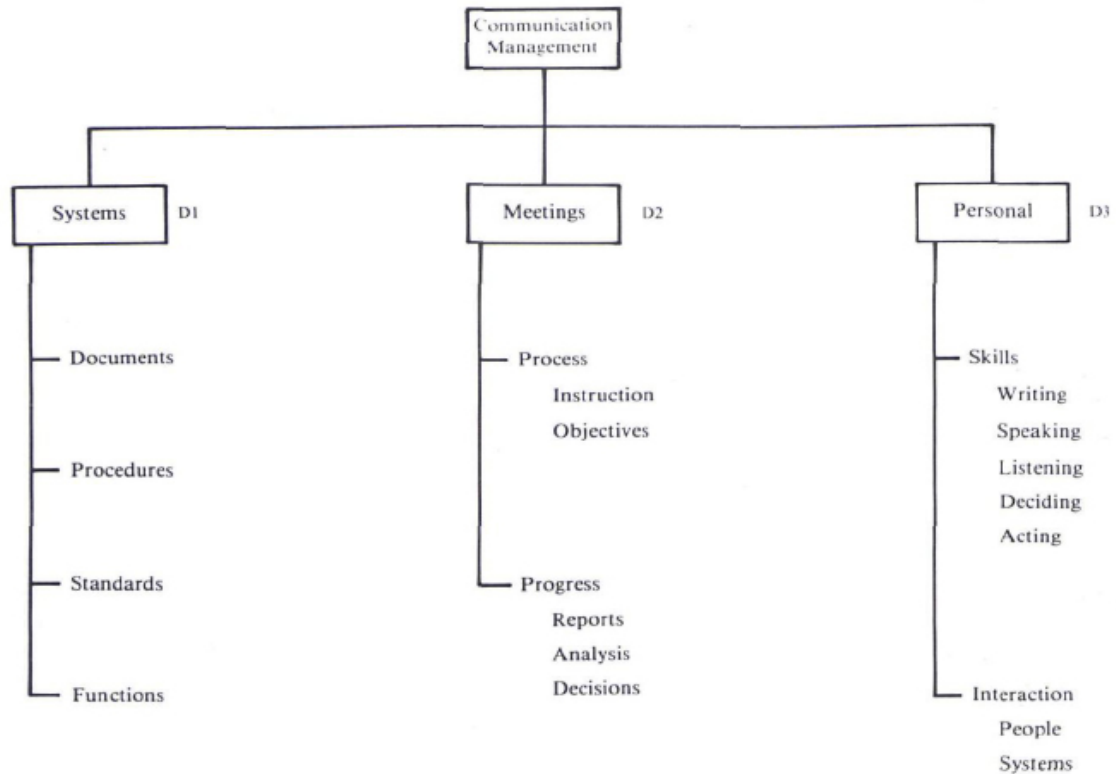
This can be accomplished with the help of management communication. Management communication is new to the field and it was emerged in the USA and was called to existence to improve communication abilities of would-be managers. Today, it helps organizations with systematic planning, implementing, monitoring, and revision of all the channels of communication within an organization, and between organizations, in order to achieve the set of goals and objectives.

The following picture from an article by Oliver, C. E. (1983) shows how communication management helps the organization. With systems given for better communication, gatherings of people to ensure effective decision-making progress and of course, personal communication development.

In detail, communication management tools help to produce effective communications and are in the form of documents and equipment such as calculators. These tools help with project documentation, planning, policies and codes etc. Following by meetings, which helps each individual by giving them instructions and guidance, discussing and analyzing relevant matters, and resulting in conclusions.

Lastly, management communication helps the individual with personal communication development, such as expressing themselves in written form and orally, by helping the worker to gain the ability to reach conclusions or make judgements, and also to be able to interact with individuals between different members and to be able to interact with others from the media of the company.

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Communication management is important for any company regardless of its size. It contributes to the overall goals of the organization and builds a positive and friendly atmosphere. An effective communication system within the organization will result in increased profits, high employee satisfaction and brand recognition.

2.6. Diversity as a strategy

³ Communications Management Chart D, <https://www.pmi.org/learning/library/communications-management-project-function-knowledge-5722>

Diversity Management is more than just a notion of diversity. What is important is how an organization can handle diversity strategically.

Roosevelt (1999) says that the company's first step is to explore whether and why it needs diversity in its workplace, that is to construct a strategy. Then, the organization should consider how it can adapt the strategy. To do this, the company should perform a SWOT analysis. Moreover, SWOT analysis helps the organization to find their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. SWOT Analysis makes the most of what the organization has already got, for the business's best advantage. It reduces the chances of failure, by understanding what the company is lacking, and eliminating hazards that the company may be unaware of.

The third step is to deal with issues that may be caused by inclusion, that is if the company has successfully changed its management. The final step is to determine whether or not a change in culture is necessary in the company. It may be needed to change the whole culture environment of the company in some way, so the diverse employees can remain in the company. If the company succeeds it will approach a more diverse workforce.

The company needs to decide which aspects of diversity can bring strategic superiority, assist in achieving its goals and add value and focus on those. This is a strategic decision and when it is taken, the strategy should be implemented by all the departments of the business and especially in the human resource department, being the leader of this (Keil et al., 2007). According to Hunt et al. (2018) study, it was revealed that the companies that participated in the study, developed an Inclusion and Diversity strategy relevant to their business values and development targets.

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There are four aspects for building a successful diversity and inclusion (I&D) strategy, these are (Figure 3):

- Commitment by the CEO to motivate the business. Leading organizations recognize that this begins from the top management and many are trying to convey that commitment to their middle management. Companies should try to encourage role learning and ensure the successful execution of the I&D plan by middle management.

- Companies should set as their first priority I&D strategy because that will help the growth of the company. Organizations with a successful I&D strategy clearly associate this with the business goals of the company. To successfully do that the company tries to attract and recruit the right talent from a variety of different people and strengthening decision-making capabilities. Leading companies can extract certain information from the above metrics that can help them identify and adopt the diversity elements more suitable for them.

⁴ Figure 3. Four imperatives for building a successful Inclusion & Diversity Strategy. Source: McKinsey & Company (2018)

- Creating a certain portfolio of I&D actions to achieve transformation. Leading companies appear to follow this technique by prioritizing the I&D-relevant programs to comply with the growth strategy of the company. Their aim is to develop an inclusive organizational culture and this can be accomplished by creating a program in which these strategies are constructed together.
- The I&D strategy must be adjusted to suit local conditions. The leading companies realize that while their I&D strategy must adhere to consistency, there is room for customization based on the different parts of their business and the various contexts in which they operate (geographic and socio-cultural), aiming to exploit opportunities and achieve better outcomes.

While the above can help build an I&D plan that will be integrated into the overall strategy of the business, there are some crucial aspects that need attention, as they are often difficult to implement and maintain. These are the top and middle management accountability, a captivating case for I&D that will be based on facts, and decisions that need to be aligned and prioritized. Also, the actual implementation of the I&D strategy can be a long-lasting process. Organizations that succeed in this, manage to establish a solid corporate ethos that is captured in all company's stakeholders (Hunt et al, 2018).

An impressive example of a successful business case is the one of IBM company as described by Thomas (2004). Already in 1993 IBM was a company that offered equal opportunities and respected the rights of its employees. In 1995 the CEO Lou Gerstner decided that there were much more that the company could take advantage of so he formed a working group project in order to find out the differences among the employees and ways to attract more employees and customers.

Thus, he formulated task forces of eight demographic groups, Asians, blacks, LGBT community, Hispanics, white men, people with disabilities

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and women. Gerstner requested by each task force to answer to four questions:

1. what does the group need to feel welcome and appreciated in the company,
 2. what can the organization do in cooperation with your group to achieve maximum group's productivity,
 3. What can the company do so that your group is influenced to prefer buying from IBM and
 4. With which organizations should the company cooperate to better comprehend the needs of your group.
- The answers were the starting point for IBM to develop its diversity strategy and helped the company to get closer to customers and concentrate to talent (Thomas, 2004).

According to IBM employees' descriptions, this was a significant change in the philosophy of the organization. In addition, long-lasting efforts were done to minimize the differences, and actions were taken to strengthen them and exploit the benefits.

Thomas's (2004) four elements are crucial for an organization that wants to apply big changes. These elements are:

- Show commitment on behalf of the leadership team.
- Engagement on behalf of the employees.
- Management practices consolidated with the initiative
- Well-built business case.

All these assisted IBM to develop a diversity strategy that was a key to corporate growth.

2.7. Benefits of a diverse workplace

In a Forbes (2011) research, it is said that diversity is part of an organizations' strategy, either as a need to synchronize with changes in the general environment, or because they have benchmarked other organizations where it functioned positively. Regardless of the original cause, the results are generally considered positive and there is a return in investment that has

been done. As it is previously said, companies invest a large amount of money for recruitment, training and developing their employers.

Companies acknowledge that having a diverse workforce can differentiate them from their competitors. There is a need to invest in the workforce, because business resource is now a necessary condition for the companies. The business environment, that includes all employees, regardless of their background, perceptions, beliefs, motivates them to give the maximum of their abilities, as they feel that their differences are taken into account. As a result, there is a high level of productivity.

Diversity is a source of competitiveness advantage and correlates with the efficiency of a company. Thanks to this correlation, it is possible to attract the necessary talent because better customized services and products are provided to different audiences, making decisions is improved, and the viability of businesses is ensured. That is why companies want a diverse workforce with top talent, because they make better decisions. As Deutsche Bank's global head of diversity, Eileen Taylor, said in a Forbes (2011) report, "If you want to attract the best talent, you need to be reflective of their talent in that market". The advantage of having diversity is the attraction and retention of the talents, which are necessary for businesses, as they lend them to a comparative advantage through the provision of a healthy working environment, which supports diversity, recognizes personal contribution and allows their development. As a result, the employees are satisfied and committed to the business.

The existence of employers with different backgrounds, works positively for businesses in order to make the most of the existing workforce. The companies want to find those employers who can meet the requirements of the job position and also to be able to tackle with the possible lack of skilled personnel, especially in times of demographic rearrangements. All of the above, enhance the positive image of the business, improve the business profitability and manage to attract and retain the workforce, as they are directly related to organizational justice.

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Also, the existence of a harmonious working environment where everyone can contribute according to their abilities, is an important factor for employees to give the maximum of their abilities, as said in a research conducted by the Ministry of Manpower (MoM) in 2010, where 87% of companies consider harmonious coexistence important in the workplace. Diversity, positively increases empowerment and commitment. Employers are satisfied and willing to participate, their abilities are more effective and this boosts their moral. Consequently, there is a dramatic drop in early retirement and in problems that may happen in partnerships with different people.

The exchange of varieties of ideas and teamwork assures better outcomes for the businesses. Diversity of thought, contributes positively to making better decisions and consequently having better performance at work, because the process of collecting data is more productive than the way of a homogeneous group. It is more productive because there is trust in a group, teamwork and recognition of personal contribution. It is difficult for a single person to perform many tasks at once than a team can. Coworkers that come from a diverse background have unique perceptions and experiences during teamwork and group tasks. Every member of a group can bring up ideas to enlist answers for problems that may occur and effectively solve the problem at the shortest possible time.

Lastly, another benefit of having diversity at the workplace is the employee's personal growth. Employees learn new cultures, ideas and perspectives and in that way, helps them to have a clearer insight. The more time spent with diverse colleagues slowly breaks down discrimination, xenophobia and encourages members to pass aside their differences and work as one.

All the above are related to organizational justice, improve efficiency and empower the positive image of the organization (Bleijenbergh I., Peters P.& Poutsma E., 2010). According to Deloitte (2017), there is a positive 30% difference in the performance of companies that apply practices of integration and detainment of talents related to their competitors.

2.8. Challenges-Difficulties of a diverse workplace

Implementing diversity in the workplace is a voluntary effort of the business administration. It is a long process and its results are not immediately visible, especially when valuation is usually done with financial terms. To have positive results in a diverse company, you have to have the right management, and if that does not happen, it may ultimately harm the business and adversely affect the employees, downplaying the benefits of diversity.

In many cases it is thought that diversity management is causing problems because it leads to even higher inequality between different groups. As it is reported by Verweij (2017), in the workplace it is often observed a categorization of two groups. Employees belonging to a group with similar characteristics (ingroup) and to those that do not have these common characteristics and therefore they do not belong to the same group (outgroup). The ingroup is usually favored while the outgroup is treated negatively. Greater emphasis may be given to groups that are not in advantage over other groups that are. For instance, onboard a Norwegian tanker, manned with Norwegian officers and Filipino crew, on a day off, they went for sightseeing. During the sightseeing trip, in the bus, the crew members and the officers happen to mix as they sat down in the bus, since it was not clear who would go in the front or in the back. All were casually dressed in civil clothes and in a good mood. In an embarrassed way the Filipinos finally regrouped in the back. The groups split up ethnically during the rest of the day, including a dinner meal to which all were invited. There was little talk, if any, between the two groups. (Østreng, D. 2007)

When this separation happens it usually results to an in-group favoritism and/or and out group discrimination. On the other hand, there is also the risk of “reverse discrimination”, where the out-group excludes and rejects anyone different than them by creating their own inner group. Also, in another point of view, it can be said that diversity refers exclusively to groups with specific characteristics that act independently without caring about the business achievements and goals through collaboration and diversity.

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The innate tendency to associate with people that we share same aspects, leads to favorable treatment, which in the workplace can be expressed by the support provided by the above to some groups or to specific people. In case of a promotion, employees may be judged by their skills based on their hidden templates of success, that every human has, and because of which it can be a biased rating in favor of some, even though the majority are equally qualified and without taking into account the added value that each and every employee brings to the business. As a result, diversity is excluded and uniformity is achieved, but this is a limited factor for attribution and innovation.

Stereotypes, concerning the positive or negative characteristics that are attributed to members of a group, prejudices that include negative views for non-members, and finally discrimination, which are selective behaviors towards others because of categorization into specific groups, have a detrimental effect in choosing a profession, in the way of working and of course in the interaction with others. The group or people that are targeted by these stereotypes are experiencing intense emotional stress, that affects their cognitive behavior and their effectiveness.

A SHRM survey (2009) has shown that the implementation of practices that support diversity often encounters obstacles that are mainly based on the refusal to accept the necessary changes for a diverse and inclusive workplace. There is a lot of resistance to these diversity practices from those who consider the existing system to be fair and meritorious, and any change come to this, is perceived as a threat (Deloitte, 2018). The SHRM survey (2009) found that the most important obstacles to applying and increasing diversity and inclusion in the work environment of an organization, are mainly the general indifference, the impression that diversity already exists and the not sufficient training of the workforce. The same survey showed that the general indifference, the impression that diversity already exists and the lack of commitment from the human resources are the greatest obstacles to applying and increasing diversity in the company's top management.

Coexistence with different people can be perceived as a threat to a group, because their safety, beliefs and values are being disturbed, therefore incorporation issues may occur. Social incorporation between workers with different backgrounds sometimes can be influenced to the maximum degree.

3. Diversity in the maritime industry

Shipping is supposed to be the core of internationalization but apart from diversity and its global character it is one of the riskiest sectors (IMO, 2011). A number of strategic actions, along with a number of new laws, rules and technological innovations, intend to enhance and develop safety on board ships. However, Cockcroft (2000) states “a vessel is as good as the people who navigate her” highlighting the importance of the crew and the shore workforce for the shipping industry.

The shipping companies want their crew to be skilled and talented and also possess technical knowledge and expertise. But because, the shipping industry is international and because the cost-efficient strategies of shipping companies make multinational recruitment appealing, they attract multinational crews for reasons related to the turnover of the sector as well as the continuous demand of labor force.

In a globalized environment where shipping is activated, the human factor is a very important element, especially when it comes to the shipping business. The human element, is not only the one that coordinates the whole procedure but it is also part of the procedure, either this means the innovation in the business or the cutting cost.

The growth of the maritime industry contributes to the employment of seafarers from different countries to work not only at sea but also ashore. The employment of mixed nationality crew has become widespread since the 1980s as a way to reduce manning cost, one of the most flexible elements of ship operation costs (Lane, 1986; Sampson & Zhao, 2003; Theotokas & Progoulaki, 2007). Approximately 80% of the passenger ships all over the world have composed a more multilingual and multi ethnic crew the past 25 years. This is because the maritime industry has rapidly increased

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worldwide under many national flags of the traditional maritime countries, to flags that are convenient in recruiting low cost crews. It is not uncommon to have a ship managed in one country, registered in a second country, classed in a third country, and crewed by people from multiple countries (Grech, Horberry, & Koester, 2008, p.135).

It is estimated that 80 percent of the world's merchant ships are crewed by multicultural crews. Also, it is not unusual to have seven or eight nationalities onboard, and large cruise ships may have more than thirty (Tran, 2007).

So, having a diverse workforce is not something new to the maritime industry, but because of the manning scale on ships steadily decreasing due to the industry's inability to attract young new talent, proper monitoring and checking crewmembers does not happen anymore. Multiple researches have shown that most accidents happen on ships that are manned by mixed-crews (IMO, 1994). As a result, this led to risks about the safety of the ship.

3.1. The risks of having a mixed crew

A lot of researches on accidents, show that the workforce on board is the highest risk factor when it comes to maritime safety, since approximately 80-90 % of the maritime accidents are caused by human error. The problems which the maritime crew face today is multiculturalism and communication, their lack of motivation and commitment to their job and lastly, the training and recruitment of new seafarers.

Most accidents on board a merchant ship is caused by cultural diversity. There have been a lot of accidents in the maritime industry due to cultural complexity on ships. For instance, in communication that may lead to misunderstandings, causing danger to the ship, the people onboard and the environment. These accidents are attributed to ineffective communication and misinterpretation of different behaviors on multilingual and multicultural vessels. In a research done by Progoulaki & Theotokas, (2016), it is said that because a vessel is a spatially closed environment where people not only work together, but also live together, cultural diversity, when it is managed badly, can conclude to conflicts and misunderstandings. These issues can lead to poor cohesion among crew members, damage to morale,

and poor leadership support which can increase the risk of maritime accidents.

In a case study written by Joakim Manson, he states the differences in communication between Russian and Nordic cultures. Joakim Manson, which was a member of the bridge team on board the ship, states that the team consisted of individuals from Moldavia, Ukraine, Russia, Finland and Sweden (himself included). The seafarers from Moldavia, Ukraine and Russia shared a lot of similarities in their culture and also in terms of their language. The same applies to the Scandinavian countries, Sweden and Finland. He, being Swedish, noticed that, in many occasions, when the Finnish officer and he cooperated on the bridge, they used a way of communication not familiar to the rest of the bridge team. They all used English as the working language but the tone of their voice, length of sentences as well as their body language was completely different from the others. He says that the non-Scandinavian members were nervous and could be distinguished often when in stressful situations, such as when navigating through dense traffic. The Nordic members tended to use a low tone voice, tried to speak in calm tones and tried not to express stress. In contrast, during a similar situation with the Russian officers on watch, the Finnish officer and Joakim Manson, often felt uncomfortable with the loud and fast passed communications. He says that: "It appeared that the behavior of one culture was causing distress to the other culture and vice versa."

It is said that, 40 percent of the maritime accidents are due to cultural constraints such as communication or language problems (Rehman, 2007, p.83). In a report done by Pyne & Koester (2005), several cases are reported about communication failures on board ships. These failures have to do with different cultures and language barriers between the crew and the pilot, the crew and the passengers and communication with other vessels. They also state that, crew members that speak the same language can cause risks, and these risks can be increased and be even more severe when people use English as a second language. Furthermore, without common language, a lot of crew members due to the lack of communication with others, isolate themselves which leads to lack of important information and uncertainty.

Inter-human communication words are estimated to represent approximately 10% of the information, the tone of voice 35% and the visual 55% (Hemming, 2008). So, communication can be non- verbal, as it is mentioned

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above, which means that a lot of facial expressions and gestures may not be understood or understood differently between crew members from different cultures. To have a better understanding of non-verbal communication, culture plays an important role. For instance, nodding your head in Western countries is understood as yes, whereas in for example India it is a no. As a warning example of the lack of cultural understanding in terms of communication, Horck (2006) shows that dealing with cultural issues is also a fact of honor: people often have difficulties in admitting that they do not understand what a colleague is saying.

To understand better the importance of communication, in an international seminar on Maritime English held by Istanbul Maritime University in Turkey, they presented several ship accidents that happened due to communication barriers (STCW an Human Element Section, 2002). These are:

- **A tanker mooring accident:** A 56,000 gt Bahamian flag tanker was berthing at an oil terminal in the UK when a mooring line parted and struck the crew of a mooring boat causing serious injuries. The pilot had intended to run the breast line ashore but not to make it fast until the ship was alongside and had believed that the master had understood his intention. However, the master thought that the line should be heaved tight and instructed the pilot accordingly. All verbal communications between the master and the crew were in Korean, a language he did not understand, the pilot did not know that his intentions had been mistaken until the accident occurred. Later on, it was identified that the accident occurred because of the poor communication between the pilot and the ship's master.
- **Bulk carrier grounding:** A 36,000 GT Panama flag bulk carrier left port under pilotage and grounding. The pilot was conning the vessel and gave instructions to the helmsman but his attention was distracted and he failed to correctly check the actions of the helmsman. The pilot failed to hear the helmsman's replies and the ship swung out of the channel and went aground. The accident was identified to be poor communications between the helmsman and the pilot.

- **Passenger ship fire:** 158 people lost their lives because of a small fire that started in the bedding and spread throughout the ship. Escape routes were filled with smoke and people unfamiliar with the ship needed the help of the crew to find the way out. The signs were not in a language familiar to the passengers, so it was an ineffective way to give safety instructions. Meanwhile, the officers and most of the crew did not share a common language neither with the passengers. Although the fire was not related to poor communications between officers and the crew, the weak safety management coupled with the inability of the officers to communicate with the crew and the passengers', unfortunately resulted in the loss of many lives.

All three cases demonstrate, in their various ways, the need for effective communications to ensure safe and efficient ship operation. Pyne & Koester (2005) list that the number of accidents can be minimized, since the number of accidents is occurred by poor communication. The Crew Resource Management can help reduce these misunderstandings with training based on non-technical skills, such as, teamwork, situation awareness, decision making and communication. Furthermore, other factors can also be improved, such as better equipment and technology which can help improve communication on board.

3.2. Gender diversity on board merchant ships

The percentage of seafarers are mostly men. In an IMO report (1992) it is said that only 1-2 % of the 1.2 million seafarers in the world were women. Unfortunately, this prevails until today, after 28 years, and the only way to close these deepening gaps is to attract a more gender-diverse workforce. Of course, this is not an easy task because only till recently, the male-dominated industry started to shed some of its ancient gender prejudices. Women were not welcome in the shipping industry because it was thought that, working in a non-traditional job may encounter problems due to the fact that, they are “women” doing a man’s job. Men traditionally have gone to sea to get away from women, or expect women to stay at home and depend on men. Others may be of the view that women are more fragile than men and should not do

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this sort of work or live in this environment. Some people also, think that women cannot do jobs that involve strength and heavy mechanical work. But thanks to technology, the demand for physical power has been turned into a growing demand for brainpower. (Hansen, 1998).

Gender discrimination can be grouped into two main divisions. The first division is 'hidden discrimination' and the second one 'open discrimination'. The 'hidden' is where women are not given normal tasks as their male counterparts, with the idea to keep them out from dirty or dangerous work. As a result, this form of discrimination against women, prevent them from gaining experience on the job. In contrast, "open discrimination" is where women have to prove themselves physically and technically competent to be able to win the respect of their male colleagues by working harder. Women are seen putting in about 50% more effort than men are. As a result, there is a high rate of mortality in women in jobs, which are mostly men dominated. "The death rate of women in such jobs is about three times that of the general female population" according to Denmark's Institute of Maritime Medicine. Dr Hansen of this institute reported of two cases where the dangerous work done by the women resulted in their death because they had to carry out orders (Hansen, 1998).The percentage of women that work on board a merchant ship today, face a lot of difficulties due to the discrimination that there is against women everywhere in the maritime industry. Consider the case of Myrna Galang Daite, the first female officer to be admitted to the Philippines Merchant Marine Academy. The male students held a protest rally over the college's decision to accept women ("First Philippine woman", Jan/Feb 2000)

Another victim of gender discrimination was Ms. Harriet Berg, Norwegian vice-minister of Trade and Commerce, which also includes shipping matters, had this to share in an article in the Shipping Professional (April 1998). At a reception organized by the ambassador of a Latin American country, where all kinds of diplomats were present, the president of the national Power Company came around and shook hands with everybody present except of Ms. Berg. When the ambassador told him who she was, he was very embarrassed and eventually shook her hand.

Furthermore, a lot of women on board ships, face in a daily basis sexual harassment. In a research done by Hannah Aba Aggrey (2000), more than

80% of the women made a mention of some form of sexual harassment. The Collins Cobuild English dictionary defines sexual harassment as, “repeated unwelcome sexual comments, looks, or physical contact, usually by men against women” (Sinclair, Fox & Bullon, 1999). Although, it is a problem that must be taken into account, it is not talked off publicly because of its after effect. Most female cadets who are victims of sexual harassment do not complain, and only talk about it to close friends or they keep it to themselves and try to solve it in their own way. Since seeking for help could worsen the case or lead to another problem.

Even though in recent years, sexual harassment is been spoken out, not any solutions have solved the problem. For example, the women of the Danish Navigators’ Union (DNU) at a meeting with the union officials, the first of its kind, and the only one where sexual harassment was mentioned, the response was to transfer the female navigator. As it is clearly noticed, this will not solve the problem, because the man stayed on the ship and could probably do the same to another victim. The union women of DNU are aware that women are not treated equally with their male counterparts. They understand that there is a need of change in several areas but they want the changes to take place quietly. In their opinion, if they seek attention to their problems, it may backfire. For instance, in some cases, it may lead to formation of further obstacles when applying for jobs. The women of DNU are quoted also as saying, “feminism in the name of equality does not belong in the maritime world” (Hansen,1998).

Also, family roles and traditional views influence women’s status in some societies. A lot of families and society in general, do not approve of women working on board ships. Therefore, women have to go through a lot so they can have their family’s consent. For example, a woman, that was born and raised in a small village in Germany, says that when her parents learnt that she wanted to work on board a ship, they thought she was crazy. The community of the village also said that they should stop her from doing that kind of work. (Zhao, 1998). Also, in an article written by Monica Kohli (2019), she states that because her father was captain and because she was raised on board, it was her dream to follow her father’s footsteps. However, she says that: “I had no role models to guide me - no women captains, no female crew, pilots, dockside workers or even women in shipping offices.

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Growing up in India it was not even an idea that was allowed to exist. So, I joined the shipping industry, but through the law”.

The workforce has huge gender pay gaps and only 1% of the women occupy leadership goals. Although, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) over the last decade is trying to make some progress, it is still difficult for some women to be accepted by some shipping companies. Even if they get accepted, the working conditions of some of the shipping companies do not favor women. Thankfully, the safety management system (ISM Code) and the International Labor Organization (ILO), the working conditions of men and women workers have been improved.

Furthermore, many women have to face the conflict of how to deal with the problem of profession and family. Women working ashore have conditions like maternity leave and childcare, which are strictly adhered to. However, some women working on board ships, this privilege is barely known. Besides, childbearing plays an essential key factor in the sustainability of women in this industry, because it is thought that children stop them from going ahead in their career. Most women though, stated that with the help of grandparents and a loving husband, they were able to balance this problem. (Karikari, 1999)

3.3. Diversity on-shore maritime companies

On the other hand, although the workforce on board is diverse, it is said that, the shore-based workplace in the maritime organization, is often less diverse (Simon Phillips, 2019). Nowadays, the majority of shipping organizations have either not started looking at this or have only just started their diversity journey.

Diversity and inclusion are proven to be weak in the shipping industry. However, in an article by Safety4Sea (2019), it said that a newly-launched Diversity Study Group (DSG) is going to take place, to help the shipping industry boost diversity and inclusion.

Heidi Heseltine, co-founder of DSG, mentioned that in a Shipping event during London International Shipping Week, she asked the audience how many of their employers operated proactive in diversity and inclusion

programs. She noted that only one person out of about 45 raised their hand. Also, she mentioned that in a recent Maritime CEO event in Hong Kong, she repeated the same question and roughly half the audience (of about 60 people) raised their hand.

Also, most of the shipowners' associations do not intend to employ women. According to Zhao (1998), some companies go to the extent of telling women applicants that "so far as there are men, that is fine with them". Maritime institutions providing maritime education are ready to train women for both ashore and afloat, but are unable because the funds which came from the shipping companies initially are not forthcoming. Others are no longer helping with the training of cadets, which affects women more. All that is heard from these companies are advertisements seeking for officers, forgetting that an officer needs to go through cadetship training before becoming one.

To understand the problem of diversity in shipping companies, Flexport which is a freight forwarding and customs brokerage company based in San Francisco, California, although they are trying to be more diverse and inclusive, they are not all the way there yet. Founder and CEO of Flexport, Ryan Petersen, in previous workplaces, he said that he found it draining to maintain his alter ego at work. He had to show at all times professionalism and certainty, while oppressing his light-hearted aspects of his personality. Consequently, he became less engaged and even less productive with his job, until he could not anymore and decided to leave.

After going through all that, he decided making his own company, Flexport. A company that will spread awareness of diversity and inclusion in the work environment. He worked hard to create a welcoming culture, not just for the workforce, but also for others outside the work environment, to be their authentic selves. He states that he wanted people to know that their differences are appreciated, their diverse backgrounds are accepted, and their ideas are taken seriously.

To support the company's mission, Flexport tries to obtain equality in the work environment. To do so, they try to give to everyone equal opportunities despite the candidates age, race, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, national origin, marital, veteran or citizenship status, religion, disability, or any other protected basis.

Also, when recruiting they try to select cadets with top talent without prejudice. After hiring the right people for the job, they train them so they

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can be able to adapt and work as a team in a multicultural environment. In that way, the workers will gain diversity experience and will help them to give creative ideas and be more productive at work. “We’ve repeatedly seen the tremendous value created when combining two disciplines, or taking the best ideas from one discipline and applying them to another” said CEO Ryan Petersen. Furthermore, Flexport works hard to ensure that every individual in the company gets the pay they deserve. Ryan Petersen states that pay is determined on the basis of the value a person creates as measured through objective evaluation and feedback processes, and never on politics, favoritism, or discrimination.

In 2018, the company launched a range of programs to invest more in diversity and inclusion, including hiring consultants to help them understand and implement best practices. This program will consist an inclusive leadership training.

Overall, it is understood that Flexport recognizes that there should not be boundaries in the work environment concerning gender and ethnicity. That being said though, Flexport does not have a high percentage rate neither on diversity or gender. During a latest measurement, 43,5 percent of the people working in the company are women and almost half of them work in the tech department. On the other hand, a last month’s update showed that Flexport is rated with an A- by the 24 employees that have left culture ratings. Males at Flexport’s rated the company’s culture slightly higher than females, with males rating the overall culture 84/100.

So, it is noticed that although companies try to maintain a diverse and inclusive work environment, it is not that easy. Even if a vast amount of money has been spent on diversity training, inclusion is not that easy to be achieved. Diversity is a difficult topic to talk about, and most people think that it is not appropriate to talk about personal issues in the workplace.

As it is seen, multicultural workforces when they are not appropriately managed, can lead to reaping the benefits of diversity. Therefore, diversity management is needed in the shipping industry, not only ashore but also onboard ships. With the help of diversity management, maritime accidents may be reduced by spreading out cultural awareness.

3.4. Cultural awareness among crew on board

As noticed, there is a lack of cultural awareness among the people that work onboard. In multiple pieces of research, there have been discussions about the maritime industry and possible measures that can help reduce the negative impacts of the culturally mixed crew on ship safety. Unfortunately, they have failed to discover a solution either in academic exploration or practical measures so far.

There have been though a lot of efforts that try to solve the problems of cross-cultural communications on board. Usually, the handling of multicultural difficulties becomes a burden carried by the seafarers themselves, so the only way the crew can deal with cultural differences, is by gaining experience. Seafarers, need to socialize with other cross-cultural crew members. These will help their communication skills, interrelationships, behavior, strategies to adjust the culture shock and good leadership. A socio-cultural education improves awareness and the respect of crew members from other countries. (Thuong, 2007).

On the other hand, in Kahveci and Sampson's (2001) research, it shows that knowledge gained at work is not sufficient for solving the problems caused by different languages and different national cultures, or for overcoming the stereotypical behaviors between seafarers.

Rehman (2007) in his research called for close cooperation between the International Maritime Organization (IMO), shipping industry and maritime education and training (MET) institutions to provide quality training in English language and culture differences to help eliminate the communication barriers among crewmembers. Maritime English language is standardized to be used in shipping in order to improve maritime safety (Cole and Trenkner, 2003), not only onboard but also between ship and shore.

So English, therefore, is an international requirement for certification of seafarers, but most importantly a key element in ensuring safe, efficient and profitable ship operations. However, even English speakers sometimes manage to misunderstand each other. Moreover, when different national or regional variations of the English language are added, the possibilities for miscommunication are increased, for example the American and British language.

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Maritime English is not only used during ship operations but also it can be useful as a tool for social interaction within multinational crews (Froholdt & Knudsen, 2007). If multicultural crews start to interact with each other outside the work environment or on their days off, it will help them understand and recognize cultural awareness. If seafarers put an effort into practicing their English language, it will help them improve their communication skills.

Also, Maritime English communication is not the only solution to reduce maritime accidents. Non-verbal communication, namely sign language can be taught to seafarers. It is thought by many people that sign language, (especially professional signals) is an important communication method onboard ship (Thoung, 2007). This type of language can also be used to complement spoken English, especially for non-native speakers, that have English as their second language, when in an emergency, sign language can be useful in panic situations. For instance, In Japan, sign language is used in noisy machinery spaces from the 1950s (Nakazawa, 2004)

Cultural awareness development is recognized in multinational business management. However, the research and training of cultural awareness of crew in the maritime sector has not extensively developed. In a study done by Horck's (2006), he mentioned the importance of cultural awareness on the part of seafarers. He argued that cultural awareness gives a better understanding of the support to be expected and the challenges to be faced when working with crew members of specific nationalities. In an IMO (2014) report, it said that education and training in cross-cultural differences have thus become of increased importance in today's maritime industry. It was not until 2010 that the IMO Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) amended to include cultural awareness issues resulting in the development of specially designed courses (Brenker et al., 2016).

A cultural awareness course aims to build cultural bridges, and it helps to confront common fears of human diversity. According to Thuong (2007), seafarers normally encounter four acknowledged and familiar obstacles, these are:

- Stereotyping
- Prejudice

- Bigotry
- Discrimination

It is essential to focus on these obstacles so it can be understood that our differences make every one of us unique and also to be able to manage them so we can integrate. For most people these courses are a call for participation in a focused cultural awareness education. But if an individual that takes part in these courses, cannot dispatch of these obstacles, it would be smart to send the cadent to another course or remove him/her from a job that requires the workforce to be culturally sensitive and culturally aware.

Furthermore, Dr Jan HORCK (2005) , in his thesis, says that when conducting a course in cultural awareness there are two fundamental concepts that need attention, these are:

- equal opportunities for all cadets and
- to not compare cultures and behaviors.

The course has reached its full success when the participants have fully realized their identity and their feelings.

Also, he states that it is important that each shipping company works out its own priorities in diversity management, and if these are followed correctly the below benefits will follow:

- Attracting, recruiting and retaining people from a wide “talent” base.
- Contributing to employee flexibility and responsiveness.
- Building employee commitment, morale and “discretionary effort”.
- Managing better the impact of globalization and technological change.
- Enhancing creativity and innovation.

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- Improving knowledge of how to operate in different cultures.
- Improving the understanding of the needs of current customers or clients.
- Improving knowledge about the needs of new customers and clients.
- Assisting in the development of new products, services and marketing strategies.
- Enhancing the organization's reputation and image with external stakeholders.
- Creating opportunities for disadvantaged groups and building social cohesion.

Differences among people are not easy to deal with. Therefore, the courses are a way to help diversity management reduce misunderstandings and accidents. For this to be achieved efficiently, everyone in the workplace should attend a course in cultural awareness. It must be realized that diversity is important, and that the company's manager plays an important role by inspiring the workforce to welcome diversity.

In conclusion, the results after a course in multicultural awareness maybe not be immediately seen. The results might come directly, after a few days, maybe after several years or never. This means that a company sending its workforce to cultural awareness education must have in mind that the investment that has been given for this training, might not bring results or might, but not in a short amount of time.

4. Conclusion

Diversity in the work environment ashore is utterly different from the work environment onboard merchant ships. A lot of businesses in recent years try to adopt diversity and inclusion into the workforce while the shipping industry has just already started to invest in diversity. Companies view diversity and inclusion as an innovation strategy, while inclusion on board

merchant ships is needed to reduce misunderstandings and accidents that happen due to cultural diversity.

Businesses have already started their practices in equality, diversity recruitment, training candidates and try to minimize the boundaries of communication. In addition, they try to block biases and discrimination, so they can recruit top talent employees despite their background, because this encourages equality and allows the company to develop. Furthermore, companies offer diversity training so their workforce can work together sufficiently. Also, they try to train their HR managers so they can recruit new talent and help women and minorities to move up. Consequently, the amount of money spent on the investment of diversity management has positive effects and gives them a competitive advantage.

This though is not an easy task, for the companies to have positive results on diversity and inclusion, they must have the right management. If proper management does not exist, it will harm not only the company but also the workforce, which will bring difficulties rather than benefits.

On the other hand, although diverse people are working in the shipping industry for many years, inclusion is hard to maintain. This is because the maritime industry has failed to attract new talent, and there is a lack of proper monitoring and checking new crew members. As a result, discrimination exists onboard, so it is hard for the shipping industry to be inclusive. Furthermore, managers of mixed crews may lack awareness and do not take advantage of the benefits that come from having a diverse workforce. The team onboard has a lot of communication problems and lack of cultural awareness, both important management parameters that should be recognized by the shipping industry.

Nowadays, the maritime industry is trying to solve this problem by spreading cultural awareness. For this to happen though, each shipping company must invest in diversity management and start training their fleet, even if the results are not directly perceptible. Companies should send their crew to bridge resource management courses, so they can learn to set aside their differences and work as a team. Maritime education and training institutions (MET) should also take a better look at the communication competence of becoming a seafarer.

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If the maritime industry, acknowledges the advantages that a mixed crew can bring to the field, more culture awareness researches will be provided and more training will be given to the crew. According to Jan Hork (2005) some possible advantages are:

- “foreigners” having a different way of thinking and analyzing.
- The “foreigner’s” talent could be used to deal with customers of same culture.
- People from peripheral countries, used by crewing agencies, might be less inclined to disobey orders and think that they know more than their superiors.
- In a big crew-selection-sample there are better possibilities of finding top talent crew members. Take the best people from whatever nationality/culture.
- Because shipping is a global market, “foreigners” will bring transferable knowledge for later shore-jobs in a similar region from where they come.
- Having an Asian crew has less percentages of having alcohol problems than with a European crew. In addition, Asians will be more willing not to drink than Europeans. A national outsider tends to behave because the “foreigners” will not accept inappropriate behavior.
- Indirectly hiring seafarers from developing countries acts as a support for development in less developed countries.

If diversity management is efficient, multiculturalism onboard ships should have additional benefits. As Jan Hork (2005) said “These benefits will appear when respect is shown”. Crew members should not be afraid to pass on their knowledge to others, especially when it is about the safety of the ship. A good example of handling mixed crews is the Danish shipping industry. The reason could be that they are soft but their strictly consequent management is carried out with a Danish smile.

As it is clearly noticed, the work environment on board a ship is completely different compared to other work places. So, it is different to attract diversity and inclusion respectively. Seafarers are separated from their families for a

long period of time, so their second home is the vessel. They have to learn to set aside their differences and cope together as one, despite culture, gender and nationality so misunderstandings may not occur. While, in the work environment in other workplaces, they only have to work together for a small amount of time every day.

In a small unofficial interview, which I had with a young officer he said that onboard merchant ships there is lack of cultural awareness. He notes that on a day to day bases he meets different people onboard the ship, and although he understands the value of diverse people, his colleagues think otherwise. A lot of his crew members make inappropriate comments about the diversity of an individual, and that there have been a lot of incidents where the diversity of a person was not respected. On the other hand, he states that new young seafarers give value to the different backgrounds that a person may have. So, it is understood that the majority of new talent due to the fact that they seem to be more open minded, and are properly mentored and educated have more respect to diversity.

The millennial generation which want to engage in the shipping industry must acknowledge the diversity of this industry and be properly trained and educated in cultural awareness. It seems that because young seafarers have grown into a world with more and more differentiated people are more respectful towards diversity so it may be easier for them to understand that every person is unique and get rid of obstacles that arise onboard the vessel, such as discrimination.

As Estlund (2003) says, it is more challenging to adapt existing employees to new projects each time. On the other hand, this has to do with the management of each industry and how much of a possibility it is for the employer to develop. The crew resource management must acknowledge the crew's talent and differences without biases getting in the way. In return, each individual can get a chance to participate in training courses and expand their area of expertise. This way, cultural awareness will be educated and communication gaps can be dispatched, so it may be possible to have inclusion onboard.

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