

Cross-Cultural Communication in Multinational Corporations: The Situation at Innoson Motors

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Article History	Abstract
Original Research Article	<i>This survey investigated cross-cultural communication at Innoson Vehicles Manufacturing Company (IVM), a multinational corporation, Nnewi, Anambra State, Nigeria. It was anchored on Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Hall's High-Context vs. Low-Context Communication, and Cultural Intelligence Theories. Eight objectives and oral interviews guided the survey. Multistage sampling was used to select the sample size for the study. At the first stage, through purposive sampling, IVM was selected for the cross-cultural communication studies. The population of study comprised all the 1,800 staff at the Nnewi plant. At the second stage, the population was divided into four subgroups according to job function and nationality. 10% of the population of each subgroup was taken, yielding a sample of 194 as follows: Management & Administration (15), Technical & Engineering (25), Production and Technical Staff (139), and Foreign Technical Partners (15). The four variables tested were language barriers, cultural differences, communication strategies, and employee performances. Results indicated that language and cultural differences had a significant effect on technical instructions and effective communication between Nigerian staff and foreign technical partners; cultural differences negatively affected teamwork and collaboration; effective cross-cultural communication significantly improved employee performance, output and productivity; the most effective communication strategy at IVM was constant training of staff on cross-cultural communication and interpretation and translation support. The study recommended that cultural intelligence and constant staff training will foster interaction and improve communication, collaboration, teamwork, and productivity.</i> Keywords: cross-cultural communication, Hofstede's cultural dimensions, cultural intelligence, multinational corporations, high and low contexts communication.
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Introduction

For many growing companies, working with global teams is now part of everyday operational activity. As businesses grow across different regions, employees with diverse cultural backgrounds come together to work harmoniously to achieve mass production of goods and render efficient services.

In addition, in our daily social interactions in multicultural environments, we also come across people whose languages, cultures, and values may differ from ours. Kumari (2026, February 25) believes that, for this inter-cultural challenge to be leveraged there should be mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence of individuals with opposing cultural identities to develop or collaborate

harmoniously. In addition, understanding one another's cultural differences reduces misunderstandings, promotes mutual understanding, improves accommodation and encourages compromise.

In contemporary society, the problems posed by cross-cultural interaction grow in consonance with technological advancements and innovations. Many scholars (Savage & Gallagher, 2023; Buttrick, 2024) argue that technological revolution and the birth of online communities have facilitated and strengthened cross-cultural communication. In business, politics, and social interaction, cross-cultural communication plays an indispensable role by harmonizing

the interest of the parties involved in the communication process.

Egan (2025, October 31) avers that, in addition to “building successful relationships, fostering collaboration, and driving innovation”, cross-cultural communication also helps individuals in business transactions to defeat the differences posed by their cultures so that, with their customers worldwide, they can operate without hitches across borders.

Understanding and effectively navigating cultural differences enable businesses to operate seamlessly across borders, enhance team dynamics, and connect authentically with customers worldwide. Customers are usually in love with brands that speak their language. That is, speaking local language from the inscription on packaging to logo, advert language, and to the cultural representation of the people. For instance, the Hero Beer has a label with the logo of the rising sun (from the East), the Biafra symbol. This beer sells the highest in the eastern region of Nigeria than in other regions because the eastern consumers have developed loyalty for the brand, and are also attached to the beer through the cultural packaging.

Cross-cultural communication fosters international public relations (IPR) in the global community by ensuring that individuals communicate effectively with diverse cultures with the belief that they are representing the image of their countries. We know that due to the differing cultures across the globe, what works for PR in country X may not work in country Y. International PR ensures that messages get out and resonate globally (Global Results Communication, 2025, August 5). If a PR professional is transferred from country X to country Y, he does not only need a fresh orientation but also learns the local culture of the new country.

Apart from the knowledge of other countries’ business environments, cross-cultural communication helps individuals to understand the political cultures and media structures of other countries they interact with.

The study aimed to investigate challenges, impact of cultural norms and language differences, and communication strategies at Innoson Motors, Nnewi - a multinational corporation in Nigeria’s eastern region.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the survey was to investigate the impact of cultural and language differences on employee communication, productivity, collaboration, and teamwork. The specific objectives were to:

- 1) Investigate the impact of language differences on effective communication.

- 2) Determine whether cultural norms have a significant effect on the exchange of feedback in IVM.
- 3) Evaluate staff ability to work with colleagues from foreign cultures without cultural intelligence.
- 4) Assess the ability of cultural differences to actually delay decision process and production.
- 5) Find out whether Innoson Motors trains its staff on cross-cultural communication.
- 6) Find out whether interpretation and translation support is available for staff when needed.
- 7) Investigate the correlation between effective cross-cultural interaction and employee productivity.
- 8) Find out whether miscommunication and misunderstanding usually lead to errors and rework at IVM.

Hypotheses

H₁: Language differences make it hard to communicate freely

H₂: Cultural norms have a significant effect on the exchange of feedback.

H₀₃: Staff can effectively work with colleagues from foreign cultures without cultural intelligence.

H₀₄: Cultural differences do not have a significant effect on the decision making process and production.

H₅: IVM provides training on cross-cultural communication.

H₆: Interpretation and translation support is available at IVM when needed.

H₇: Effective cross-cultural interaction improves staff productivity.

H₀₈: Miscommunication and misunderstanding do not lead to errors and rework.

Questions for Oral Interviews

Opening:

- (1) How long have you been working at Innoson Motors, Nnewi?
- (2) What is your department?

Communication Experience

- (3) What has been your experience working with foreign staff, especially those outside your culture?

- (4) What challenge do you usually encounter working with them?
- (5) Has there been any misunderstanding between you and them due to language and cultural differences?

Strategies and Adaptation

- (6) What do you usually do to ensure mutual understanding between you and the foreign staff? (e.g. use of interpreters; cultural Intelligence; learning local culture)
- (7) What efforts does the management make to bridge the communication gap between local and foreign staff?
- (8) Do you think there is adequate cultural orientation and training for both foreign and local workers?

Impact and Suggestion

- 9) How does communication with colleagues from outside your culture affect your daily output and teamwork?
- 10) What do you suggest to make cross-cultural communication better in Innoson Motors, Nnewi?

Literature Review

Cross-cultural Communication

The concept of cross-cultural communication is an interaction in a community, corporation, or society, comprising individuals from differing cultural backgrounds. Effective inter-cultural communication is very important because, according to Ria (2026, February 3), we live in a multicultural world where our partners, our neighbours, and our colleagues may all come from different countries or cross border cultures.

Understanding one another's traditions and cultural values is very important as this awareness helps one to communicate well, avoid conflict, and increase understanding. An Indian working in the midst of Nigerians in a Nigerian-based corporation is not a problem. Problems arise when the Indian refuses to learn the cultural values and traditions of his colleagues. For instance, among the Hindus in India, "feet touching" (Pad Namaskar) is a form of greeting to parents, spiritual leaders, or the elderly. On the other hand, in Nigeria, "feet touching" may suggest an insult, leg staining, bewitching the elder via the leg, or checking the material the footwear is made of.

Furthermore, The United Kingdom, Australia, and India are some Commonwealth nations that drive through the left-hand side. Nigeria is also a Commonwealth country but uses the right-hand drive. A Nigerian new in the UK, Australia, and India and who wants to avoid road accidents and arrests, should know this driving culture or he falls out

with road safety officials, the police, security agents, or law enforcement officials. Nawanga and Ntayi (2010) state that "traffic rules are said to be violated when drivers deliberately disobey formally prohibited or socially accepted codes of driving behaviour".

Finally, cross-cultural communication is found in the business, political, social, and corporate environments across the globe.

Empirical Review

There are many studies on cross-cultural communication in international business, commerce, and trade.

Onuoha et al. (2018) assessed the cross-cultural communication strategy with employees' performance in selected multinationals in South East Nigeria. The specific objectives were to ascertain the effect of adopting cross-cultural communication strategy on employee performance, and to examine the effects of cross-cultural religious tolerance on employee performance. The questionnaires were administered on 313 respondents pulled from the different corporate entities in the region.

The questions, structured on a five-Likert scale, and the hypotheses were analysed using the simple linear regression statistical tools. The results indicated that the adoption of cross-cultural communication strategy and religious tolerance positively affected employee performance of the select multinational companies in the South East.

Hwang (2024) explored "Cross-Cultural Communication in Global Business" using mixed methods comprising qualitative (exploratory and analytical) and quantitative (structured interviews) designs. The study examined the impact of cultural dimensions, styles of communication, and non-verbal cues on interactions across different cultures. Critical elements such as globalization, workforce diversity, decision-making processes, risk management strategies, and conflict resolution techniques were explored to drive home the strategic importance of cross-cultural competence in attaining organizational success.

Furthermore, the research also explored the impact of cultural norms, such as individualism versus collectivism, hierarchical structures, and the concept of politeness, on communication practices using theoretical frameworks like Hofstede's cultural dimensions and Hall's high-context and low-context models of communication. Additionally, it evaluated the role of technology and digital platforms in either facilitating or hindering cross-cultural interactions. The research proposed pragmatic strategies, such as cross-cultural training, conflict resolution techniques, and inclusive communication, toward better intercultural communication.

Hwang (2024) found that, among other results, advancement in modern technology, transportation, and communication had improved global transactions and expanded the scope of international trade. This advancement has broken the barriers to communication and exchange of information and flow of commodities across the globe.

The study recorded some major barriers to international business as linguistic differences and cultural misunderstandings.

Theoretical Review

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions: The theory explains how cultural values shape behaviour in societies and organisations. That is, it demonstrates the effects of a society's culture on the values of its adherents, and how these values relate to behaviour.

The six dimensions of Hofstede's theory are: (i). power distance (ii) individualism/collectivism (iii) masculinity/femininity (iv) uncertainty avoidance (v) long-term orientation (vi) indulgence/restraint

To apply the above dimensions, the researchers compared the cultural situations in the business environments of Nigeria and other international communities. For instance, under power distance, the Asia (China and Japan) and Europe (Germany) are low and egalitarian while Nigeria is high and hierarchical. Again, under individualism/collectivism, Europe and Asia are highly independent and self-reliant (i.e. individualism) while Nigeria is tied to family and community life (Nwaezeihenatuoha, 2026, pp. 6-9). Under uncertainty avoidance, Nigeria is moderate, flexible, and adaptable to situations. In Asia and Europe, uncertainty avoidance is low.

Furthermore, Nigeria has long-term orientations, and mixes traditional values with modern pragmatism, while Europe and Asia are typically short-term and focus on immediate results. Finally, social norms restrain Nigerians while placing emphasis on community desires over individual desires. On the other hand, Europe and Asia, under the dimension of indulgence/restraint, value freedom and enjoy personal life.

However, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory has come under criticism by scholars (e.g. Nickerson, 2025, August 13).

First, the population sample was not representative of the entire national sample because all of them were drawn from IBM (a single multinational corporation). The fact was that those workers were all employees of a Western, technology-focused organisation, which might have influenced their values and attitudes. The results of the study might not be the same if data were drawn from other national corporations with different manufacturing focus (e.g. in Nigeria), or the same IBM company in another country.

Second, the model imposes cultural uniformity on the entire country thereby stereotyping the entire nation and ignoring the

possibility of significant variation based on race, gender, region, class, generation, and subculture. For instance, youths in urban cities in Nigeria may share similar values with their American contemporaries than with older generations in rural areas of Nigeria. Therefore, due to differences in cultures, it was not possible that all the IBM workers behaved the same way in all the 70 countries where the company was located.

Third, the model is not amenable to the dynamics of a cultural revolution in modern society. Cultural values change over time, but the model may not fully capture this transformation. For instance, between 1960s-1970s, there were social and technological transformations different from what obtained not only in the Netherlands where the study was conducted but all over the globe.

However, despite its limitations, the framework remains widely used in business, research, and international relations for its practical insights into cultural diversity.

Furthermore, Nickerson (2025, August 13) argues that Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions offers “a model for comparing cultures through measurable traits, helping [to] explain why behaviours and values differ between societies”. This is why it is of great importance to organisations, educators, and policymakers who use it to improve cross-cultural communication, adapt strategies, and anticipate potential misunderstandings.

Cultural Intelligence: (or Cultural Quotient, CQ), introduced by Christopher Earley and Soon Ang in 2003, is construed as the ability of an individual to effectively understand, adapt, and work in different cultural contexts amidst cultural differences in an increasingly globalized world (Earley & Ang, 2003). It goes beyond basic cultural awareness by focusing on how individuals navigate and succeed in culturally diverse environments (Kannan, 2023).

Cultural Intelligence also entails “skills in perceiving cultural differences, adjusting behaviours, and making decisions that consider cultural nuances, which are essential for successful collaboration in globalised settings” (Kannan, 2023), such as Innoson Motors.

Cultural Intelligence comprises four key capabilities

- i. Cognition (CQ Knowledge): CQ Knowledge focuses on understanding structural business systems, legal environments, and core social norms.
- ii. Meta-cognition (CQ Strategy & Higher Level Reflection): CQ Strategy requires analysing your own cultural assumptions, planning for corporate meetings, and adjusting your perspective in real time.
- iii. Motivation (CQ Drive): CQ Drive is the internal energy, confidence, and resilience needed to push through the stress of cultural differences.

- iv. Behaviour (CD Action): CQ Action is the visible adaptation of your verbal speech, tone, non-verbal gestures, and habits.

There have been arguments against Cultural Intelligence theory. First, it lacks practicable evidence or examples. Blasco et al. (2012) argue that conflict-free communication is good communication. Cultural Intelligence theory claims that effective communication is all about ensuring that messages reach their target audience freely and without interruption. But can conflicts and interruptions be completely obliterated in the communication process?

However, we establish that there are interruptions and conflicts even in intra-cultural interactions and transactions. The solution to effective and conflict-free communication is the careful management of and alignment between Berlo's source-receiver contexts in which their skills, attitudes, knowledge, and culture are crucial factors (See Journalism University, 2025, May 13; Businesstopia, 2026; Budhraj, 2026, January 19).

The second criticism is on the assumption that an interrupted message is evidence that there is a lack of understanding (i.e. cultural unintelligence) of the cultures of the parties involved in the communication process. Earley and Ang (2003) fail to understand that cultural awareness may not completely obliterate message interruption but it can only control its rate. There are many other factors that can hinder the free flow of messages in organisations, families, groups, or society. Research has proven that message fidelity can be opposed not only by culture but knowledge, attitude, social and demographic factors (Budhraj, 2026, January 19).

Cultural Intelligence lacks empirical constructs. This is because it has no scientifically rigorous process. This is why some scholars (Lorenz et al., 2020; Brand et al., 2023) argue that Cultural Intelligence is more of an "idealized" concept that simply functions as an abstract opposite of cultural unintelligence rather than a grounded theoretical proposition.

Information asymmetry is possible among individuals high in cognitive cultural intelligence, though it is true that they possess cross-cultural knowledge that enables them to interact easily with individuals from different cultures. This allows them to have the information others do not possess and, owing to this advantage, they may tend to exploit others in the community.

Hall's High-Context vs. Low-Context Communication

This theory was first propounded by an American anthropologist, Edward Hall, in the 1970s. It explains the variations in and the understanding of communication styles, values, and societal norms. Simply put, the framework defines "how cultures convey meaning" (Barnum, 2021). It categorises cultures and places countries on the polarisation of high context and low context in the global community. The countries that belong to the high-context communication group usually engage in interpersonal interactions through

nonverbal cues such as unspoken signs and signals, facial expressions, and gestures.

Many scholars (Hulatt & Freitas, 2024; Oban International, 2025, August 14; Sheposh, 2025) have argued that only the countries in Asia, Africa, Middle East, and Latin America adopt high-context communication platforms, prioritizing collectivism, community life, interpersonal relationships, trust, and implicit understanding, relying heavily on nonverbal cues and shared experiences. On the other hand, countries in Europe and North America practice low-context communication, focusing more on individualism resulting in members being less able to read relational cues when interpreting communication, seeking meaning from the words themselves, and communicating directly and explicitly.

Hall's high and low context communication is very useful in international trade, international communication, advertising, media studies, cultural and behavioural studies.

High and low context communication has faced strong criticism. For instance, Hall doesn't provide a breakdown of all continents and countries to show where each sits on the continuum (Tong & Yuqing, 2020). Again, there is also possible misinterpretation by those from outside the culture. In addition, because meaning is attached to context, outsiders often miss critical information. This leads to confusion or wrong conclusions. Furthermore, information in high context cultures may not be explicit enough. This may lead to frustration for those needing direct and immediate answers. Message transfer and exchange in high context cultures is slow because the mass media is not always involved in the dissemination.

Communication in high-context cultures is transient because unwritten messages are easily forgotten. On the other hand, countries with low context communication mostly have written messages making it difficult to retrieve or correct textual errors.

Finally, the interplay and common denominator among Cultural Dimensions, Cultural Intelligence, High and Low Contexts communication, is that they all anchor on the influence of culture on behaviours, attitudes, and interactions, and how individuals should interact in a world characterised by cultural diversity (Ang et al., 2011). Owing to the foregoing central idea of the theories, they are therefore relevant to the present study.

Knowledge Gap

The literature reviewed above reveals both theoretical and methodological gaps in cross-cultural studies in multinational corporations. Cultural Intelligence and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions are important theoretical frameworks that earlier studies on Innoson Vehicles Manufacturing Company have not explored in cross-cultural studies.

Secondly, also missing are the impact of cultural diversity and language differences on employee collaboration and productivity at Innoson Motors, Nnewi.

Thirdly, there is an adverse lack of literature in cross-cultural communication in Nigeria especially in corporations and businesses in the southeast. However, the present study will address the gaps registered above.

Methodology

The study used mixed methods. The oral interviews were qualitatively analysed while the structured questionnaires were analysed using the weighted average on a 5-point Likert scale. In addition, Hall's High-Context vs. Low-Context Communication explains the variations in and the understanding of communication styles, values, and societal norms.

The researchers purposively selected Innoson Motors, Nnewi, Anambra State, Nigeria, because it is a multinational corporation that satisfied the characteristics required for the study. In the study, Innoson Motors and Innoson Vehicle Manufacturing Company (IVM) are used interchangeably.

A semi-structured interview guide was used to collect qualitative data from key respondents. Both Nigerian and foreign technical partners were orally interviewed to allow comparison of perspectives and impacts on cross-cultural communication challenges and strategies at Innoson Motors, Nnewi. 10 to 20 minutes interviews were conducted face-to-face with top ranking staff. With the permission of the respondents, the interview was recorded and was later transcribed for thematic analysis.

For ethical considerations, the researchers obtained permission from the Human Resource Department of Innoson Motors, Nnewi, before data were collected. With the help of two trained assistants, the data-collecting instruments were administered over a period of three weeks. Completed questionnaires were retrieved at the expiration of three weeks. This was to allow the respondents full opportunity to react to the questions. This resulted in a high response rate. Data analysis was done using the weighted average (weighted mean).

The combination of structured questionnaire and oral interview ensured methodological triangulation, improving the validity and reliability of the findings.

Using the figure from the human resource department, there were 1,800 employees at the Nnewi plant of Innoson Motors. All the 1,800 employees represented the population of the study. The stratified random sampling was used to divide the population into four subgroups according to job function and nationality. 10% of each subgroup was taken for all the staff except foreign expatriates whose population was only 15. So, all of them were purposively selected. This gave a total of 194 samples.

Within each group, simple random sampling was used to select a representative number of respondents. The stratified, random sampling and demographic groupings of the employees enhanced an equal chance and equitable capturing of both the Nigerian and foreign staff perspectives.

Population and Sample Breakdown (10% of each population taken except foreign staff)

STRATUM	ESTIMATED POPULATION	SAMPLE (10%)
Management & Administration	150	15
Technical & Engineering	250	25
Production/Manufacturing	1,385	139
Foreign Technical Partners	15	15 (All staff retained purposively)
TOTAL	1,800	194

The primary data for the study were collected through structured 5-point Likert scale questionnaires. These were administered manually to the respondents. For deeper insights and methodological triangulation, oral interviews with the key informants (managers and foreign partners) were also conducted.

The data gathered for the study were analysed through descriptive statistics involving frequencies and simple percentages to describe the responses.

For the questionnaires, respondents were grouped into four strata:

(1). Management and Administration

The roles under here are as follows:

- i. Deputy General Manager
- ii. Administration Officers
- iii. Account Officers
- iv. Public Relations Officers

(2). Technical Engineering

This stratum is made up of the following roles:

- i. Mechanical Engineers
- ii. Automation Engineers
- iii. System Engineers
- iv. Welding Engineers

(3). Production and Technological Staff

The roles here are:

- i. Welders
- ii. Painters
- iii. Electricians

- iv. Assembly Line Workers

(4). Foreign Technical Partners came from: (i). China (ii). Japan (iii). Germany

Based on the above strata, the variables tested were: (i). Language barriers (ii). Cultural differences (iii). Teamwork and collaboration (iv) Communication strategies (v). Employee performances

Data Presentation and Discussion

Respondent Demographics

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENT (%)
Male	121	62.4
Female	73	37.6
Others	-	-
Total	194	100.0
NATIONALITY		
Nigerian	179	92.3
Chinese	9	4.6
Japanese	3	1.6
Germany	3	1.6
Total	194	100.0
EDUCATION LEVEL		
Primary	-	-
Secondary	20	10.3
Graduate	123	63.4
Postgraduate	51	26.3
Total	194	100.0
POSITION HELD		
Management & Administration	15	7.7
Technical & Engineering	25	12.9
Production & Technology	139	71.7
Foreign Technical Partnership	15	7.7
Total	194	100.0
Months/Years at IVM		
Less than 12 months	20	10.3
1-5 years	21	10.8
6-10 years	52	26.8
11 & above	101	52.1
Total	194	100.0

There was more male staff (121) than female (73). The population of Nigerian employees (179) in IVM was greater than that of foreigners (15). This was probably

because IVM was a Nigerian-based multi-national company. On the other hand, there were more Chinese (9) than Japanese (3) and Germany (3). 123 staff members at

Innoson Motors, Nnewi, were graduates; 51 employees held postgraduate qualifications ranging from Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) to Master's Degree and PhD. This is an indication that the staff members of IVM were mostly research fellows.

Survey Analysis Table

Data Presentation of Respondent Opinion

H	Item	SD 1	D 2	N 3	A 4	SA 5	Total	M	Interpretation
1	Language differences make it hard to communicate freely	15 7.7	20 10.3	5 2.6	45 23.2	109 56.2	194	4.1	Agree (Accepted)
2	Cultural norms have a significant effect on the exchange of feedback	5 2.6	14 7.2	4 2.1	5 26.3	120 61.9	194	4.4	Strongly Agree (Accepted)
3	Staff can effectively work with colleagues from foreign cultures without cultural intelligence	120 61.8	51 26.3	4 2.1	14 7.2	5 2.6	194	1.6	Strongly Disagree (Rejected)
4	Cultural differences do not have a significant effect on the decision making process and production	109 56.2	45 23.2	5 2.6	20 10.3	15 7.7	194	1.9	Disagree (Rejected)
5	IVM provides training on cross-cultural communication	5 2.6	10 5.2	9 4.6	30 15.5	140 72.2	194	4.5	Strongly Agree (Accepted)
6	Interpretation and translation support is available at IVM when needed	10 5.2	6 3.1	4 2.1	30 15.5	144 74.2	194	4.5	Strongly Agree (Accepted)
7	Effective cross-cultural interaction improves staff productivity.	3 1.5	10 5.2	8 4.1	40 20.6	133 68.6	194	4.5	Strongly Agree (Accepted)
8	Miscommunication and misunderstanding do not lead to errors and rework	140 72.2	40 20.6	4 2.1	4 2.1	6 3.1	194	1.4	Strongly Disagree (Rejected)
	Composite Mean							3.4	Neutral

Scale: SD =Strongly Disagree = 1; D = Disagree = 2; N = Neutral = 3; A = Agree = 4; SA = Strongly Agree = 5; Composite Mean = 3.4 (**Neutral**)

H1: Language differences make it hard to communicate freely

Language and Cultural differences make it hard to communicate freely. 109 (56.2%) respondents strongly agree that language differences at Innoson Motors Nnewi make it difficult for them to communicate freely with their colleagues from outside their cultures. The entire response also falls under the weighted average of 4.1 which is within an interval range of 3.41 - 4.20. Therefore, by oral interpretation, this alternative hypothesis is “accepted” because language differences have a high impact on the employees and production.

This hypothesis is accepted by Tenzer et al. (2021); Emuze and Nelson (2023). Tenzer et al. (2021) demonstrated that “evident” language barriers cut down participation among multicultural staff, while “hidden” pragmatic barriers impair sensemaking and sophisticated knowledge processing (Tenzer, Terjesen, & Harzing, 2021). In the Nigerian workplaces, Pepper et al. (2024) identified language bottlenecks and identity-driven in-groups as key challenges to collaboration.

Similarly, Emuze and Nelson (2023) surveyed construction workers and site managers in South Africa. They found that language and cultural differences were the primary cause of communication problems on site. They, therefore, published that barriers between site management and workers impede performance improvement.

In an independent interview with a Chinese supervisor regarding language and cultural differences resulting in misunderstanding, he admitted that, “absolutely, common misunderstandings occur regarding hierarchy and direct feedback. In Chinese manufacturing culture, if a manager gives an instruction, employees typically nod and execute it without questioning the superior in public. On the factory floor here, a Nigerian worker might enthusiastically say “I understand” out of respect, even if they are still confused about the technical process. This led to a misunderstanding where I assumed a task was completed correctly, only to find the assembly wasn't aligned properly. We solved this by implementing hands-on visual demonstrations rather than relying only on verbal instructions”.

H2: Cultural norms have a significant effect on the exchange of feedback

120 (61.9%) participants strongly agree that cultural norms have a significant effect on how feedback is given and received in the multi-cultural corporation. The entire response acquires a weighted average of 4.4. This is found within the interval range of 4.21- 5.0. So, by interpretation, this is “accepted”. Cultural norms really have a very high impact on employees and production.

From the above analysis, it is evident that language differences and cultural norms are real blockers in Innoson Motors, Nnewi. They make communication hard, slow decisions, disrupt how feedback is given and received, cause errors, omissions, and peccadilloes.

Sangwa et al. (2025) conducted a thematic synthesis of Africa-Europe business communication and found persistent misunderstandings due to power hierarchy, power distance, and indirect communication. These are core elements of African cultural norms. In their study of Chinese oil corporations in Africa, Xing et al. (2019) noted that cultural proximity between African “Ubuntu” values and Chinese Confucianism influences HRM practices and feedback approaches. The Nigerian workplace review further confirms that cultural diversities (ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences) create communication complexities (See Pepper et al., 2024).

H3: Staff can effectively work with colleagues from foreign cultures without cultural intelligence

With a 1.6 average, IVM employees strongly disagree and reject the proposition that staff can work effectively with colleagues from foreign cultures even without cultural quotient (CQ).

Mijares (2023) reviewed multinational corporations and concluded that employees lacking intercultural skills face stereotypical labeling, misunderstandings, conflicts, and reduced output. A 2024 global survey by Ipsos reported that 60% of employers consider intercultural skills “very important” for organizational success, with 40% stating these skills help teams run effectively (Ipsos, 2024). Xing et al. (2019) also emphasized that cross-cultural training and mutual learning are critical for Chinese managers in Africa to enhance mutual collaboration and understanding.

H4: Cultural differences do not have a significant effect on the decision making process and production.

This hypothesis is rejected (1.9 average). It is established that, with the average of **1.9**, differences in the cultures of the employees delay successful decisions and production. This is a demonstration that there is a serious correlation between cultural differences and official decision making process and production.

Sangwa et al. (2025) investigated the impact of cross-cultural communication in Africa-Europe organisations. They reaffirmed that cultural barriers directly influence communication outcomes and organizational performance. Emuze and Nelson (2023) found that cultural diversity on South African construction sites contributed to delays and poor product quality. Similarly, Pepper et al. (2024) argued that Nigeria’s cultural complexity hampers communication,

negotiations, and by extension, operational decision-making.

H5: IVM provides training on cross-cultural communication.

The staff of Innoson Motors Nnewi strongly agree/accept that IVM actually provides training on cross-cultural communication. The evidence is the **4.5** weighted-average.

There are mixed findings on cross-cultural communication training support for the employees of the Multi-national corporations in Africa. For instance, Gebreegziabher et al., (2024) did a multi-center study of nurses in Ethiopia. He found that only 1% of 600 participants had received cultural training, and 92.5% reported that there was absence of organizational support for cultural competence.

Similarly, a scoping review across low-income and middle-income countries reinforced the findings of Gebreegziabher et al., (2024) concerning the absence of cultural training in multi-cultural and multi-national companies. Seager et al. (2024) established that only 5 of 38 studies reported any cultural intelligence training.

However, Xing et al. (2019) noted that Chinese firms in Africa actively recommend and implement cross-cultural training to manage cultural challenges.

H6: This hypothesis is accepted with a weighted average of **4.5**. That is, the employees strongly agree that the company makes available interpretation and translation support whenever the need arises. Ye (2023) stressed the “indispensable role of translation strategies” in multinational work environments to mitigate language barriers.

However, De Jesus-Rivas et al. (2016) disagree with this finding. They found that translation and interpretation support is not only ignored but remains inconsistent in multi-national corporations.

H7: Effective cross-cultural interaction improves staff productivity.

89% of the staff (20.6% Agree & 68.6% Strongly Agree) consent that effective cross-cultural interaction improves their output. This falls within the interval range of 4.21 - 5.0 yielding a **4.5** average of acceptance.

Luqman and Agathysya (2023) did a comparative study in multinational work environments. They found that cross-cultural training and technology tools significantly improved communication patterns and team performance. Ipsos (2024) made two important findings in his study: employers believe intercultural skills help build trust and understanding and maintain an effective team.

H8: Miscommunication and misunderstanding do not lead to errors and rework.

The employees strongly disagree with this null hypothesis (with 1.4 average). It is therefore rejected. They establish that miscommunication and misunderstanding equal errors and rework.

Emuze and Nelson (2023) directly linked language and cultural diversity barriers to an increase in rework and poor product quality in construction. Studies on Nigerian exporters found that socio-cultural barriers contribute to conflict, miscommunication, failed negotiations, increased operational costs, and reduced productivity (Ecohumanism Journal, 2024; Mijares, 2023).

Discussion of Findings

The survey yielded an overall composite mean of 3.4, falling within the neutral range [2.61-3.4]. This indicates a general collective indifference or passive stance from the respondents regarding the variables measured. While this suggests there are no critical systemic failures causing widespread dissatisfaction, it also simultaneously highlights a lack of distinct organizational strengths.

Again, the neutrality of the composite average also indicates indifference and passive sentiment among the staff. Respondents do not feel strongly positive or negative. They are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the experience.

In addition, a neutral composite average score means that there is no obvious failure to fix immediately, or clear success to celebrate or replicate.

Alternatively, while the composite mean for the items falls within the Neutral Range [2.61-3.4], a deeper examination of the descriptive frequencies shows that IVM is full of employees who are highly polarized in their opinions concerning the company's handling of cultural issues. Some earlier works have a composite average of 3.4 (e.g. Vijver, 2009; He et al., 2017; Meyerding & Trinh, 2025).

Since 22.3% of the participants express true neutrality, this demonstrates a bimodal distribution, with heavy clustering at the extremes of the scale (i.e. Strongly Agree and Strongly Disagree). Therefore, the neutral average does not truly reflect respondent indifference or laconic behaviour, but rather a sharp division in employee experience and perception.

Presser and Schuman (1980) in their earlier research found that typically between 10-20% of respondents chose the neutral option when it was provided compared to the same survey when it was not. This is close to the findings of this present study which found aggregate neutrality to be approximately 22%.

Language is a chief barrier to inter-cultural communication at Innoson Motors, Nnewi. 79.4% of the employees

admitted that language differences made it difficult for them to communicate freely at the company. On the other hand, cultural norms frustrated feedback exchange in the corporation to 88%. The implication of the foregoing was that these constraints negatively affect task execution, collaboration, teamwork, output, production, and sales.

The above finding is directly related to that made in a study in Ghana by Boateng et al. (2024) on “The Impact of Language Differences on Effective Communication in Multinational Corporation in Ghana”. The team investigated the operational and communication constraints of multinational corporations (MNCs) operating in the multi-cultural and multilingual Ghana society (See also Al-Mutairi, 2025). The study found out that “language barriers impede communication, reduce collaboration, and exacerbate cultural differences”.

Human beings communicate with language (spoken, written or paralinguistic). Al-Mutairi (2025) reveals that misunderstanding due to language barriers is common among communicators with uncommon codes. At Innoson Motors, Nnewi, there are currently 1800 employees. This population is unequally distributed with 15 foreign technical partners from China, Japan and Germany. The rest are Nigerians. This arrangement has given rise to having four international languages at Innoson Motors, Nnewi. So, language barrier is not only quadrilateral but negatively affects effective communication.

Translation and interpretation are the alternative instruments to simplify communication across cultures at Innoson Motors, Nnewi. Experts (e.g. Magaz, 2023, March 20; Eversa, 2025, February 14; Markert, 2026, January 9) have explained that the difference between language interpretation and translation is that whereas the former employs immediate oral services, translation involves delayed textual transfer of a document from one language to another.

However, despite the provision of interpretation and translation support at IVM, Mahmoud (2022) and Ahmadova (2025) believe that this support can pose difficulties in an organisation. For instance, at Innoson Motors, Nnewi, interpreters and translators of Chinese, Japanese, and German languages may not possess the nitty-gritty of cultural and linguistic awareness of these foreign languages. It is obvious that these languages have entirely different syntactic and structural compositions from Igbo and the English languages.

It is therefore usually difficult for interpreters and translators at Innoson Motors, Nnewi, to handle interpretation and translation due to linguistic and cultural problems. For example, English syntax follows the Subject-Verb-Object arrangement (i.e. SVO-structure) in its active

voice. On the other hand, Japanese follows a completely restructured active sentence layout - Subject-Object-Verb (SOV-Structure).

Another problem associated with interpretation and translation is personnel scarcity and availability. It may be hard in this part of the world to get professionals who can interpret or translate Chinese, Japanese, and German languages to English or Igbo. Again, the personnel employed for the role may not be available when the need arises.

Negotiation, bargaining, and haggling are the processes of reaching mutual agreement in business by revealing deep-seated cultural expectations about trust and value. In the Nigerian approach, sourcing and closing deals rely heavily on relationship-building or social capital and patient bargaining. Haggling is an expected, engaging, and ritualistic part of buying and selling used to establish mutual respect. Decision-making often moves from top to bottom, respecting strict organizational hierarchy.

The Chinese, Japanese, and German approaches favour an expedited, transactional, and data-driven negotiation style. They prefer to lay out bottom-line figures early, utilizing legal frameworks and contracts as the primary basis of trust rather than personal friendships (as in Nigeria). Therefore, they can burn out from the prolonged social grooming required in Nigerian businesses, while Nigerians may pull out of deals if they feel rushed or handled with a cold, purely transactional approach.

The patronisers of Innoson Motors are mostly Nigerians whose business culture builds relationships before business transactions. A cold, transactional, or rushed approach often signals a lack of respect, raising suspicions about the credibility of the deal or the partner. [Projectcor.com](https://www.projectcor.com) (2022, May 24) reveals that “there might be some tough talking ahead, but you’re more likely to reach a satisfactory agreement if you establish a good relationship early on”.

Greetings and titles are basic to cross-cultural communication because they establish immediate respect, indicate social hierarchy, status, and promote trust. Nigeria is a high power-distance society. So, respecting age, rank, and social standing is not only strictly necessary but may involve exchange of pleasantries, where those involved ask after the business, health, family, and general welfare of their families.

It is a tradition in Germany and Japan to attach academic or professional titles to surnames. For instance, Germany uses “Herr Doctor” while Japan may say “Tanaka-san”. Omitting these attachments in Germany and Japan can be described as disrespectful, arrogant or excessively casual.

Nigeria has deep respect for parents, elders and community leaders. So, greetings may involve specific body language, bows, and specific spoken honorifics with distinct verbal responses. For instance, in Yoruba and Hausa cultures, it is offensive and disrespectful not to greet elders properly. Yorubas will prostrate or bow. Hausas kneel.

According to japan-guide.com (2025, February 10), while greeting an elder in Japan, “bowing with your palms together at chest level ... is not customary in Japan” but allowed in Yoruba, Nigeria. With this, an older Japanese employee at Innoson Motors, Nnewi, may feel uncomfortable when a younger Yoruba staff member greets him with a bow and “palms together at chest level” (japan-guide.com, 2025, February 10). Conversely, an older Yoruba Nigerian at Innoson Motors will feel insulted, dishonoured, and disrespected by a younger Japanese staff that greets him without a bow but with palms at the chest.

Furthermore, a Chinese, Japanese, or German employee using the first names of Nigerian elders in the company or outside without permission may be dismissed as disrespectful, insulting, and ill-mannered. In Igbo society, a younger native, no matter how highly placed, wealthy, or educated his may be, is not expected to address his elders without the initials

Cultural intelligence demands that all the employees at Innoson Motors, Nnewi, should understand the cultural provisions and norms of other colleagues in the organization. This awareness reduces the inherent offense and meaning that can be deduced from greeting styles.

Dukeh (2026, February 4) narrates his experience on his first visit to Lagos, Nigeria. He reports that “before I could even sit down, my friend’s younger brother demonstrated something that completely changed my understanding of social etiquette. When his elderly uncle entered the room, this 24-year-old university graduate immediately dropped to his knees, clasped his hands together, and greeted the uncle with elaborate formality that included inquiries about the uncle’s health, his journey, his family, and his business. The entire exchange lasted perhaps two minutes, but the respect conveyed in those moments was absolutely palpable”.

In Nigeria, especially in Igbo society, handshakes are common among the male folks and more rampantly among agemates. Younger people (children inclusive) do not have handshakes with the elderly except when elders are the first to bring out their hands. Women do not have handshakes among them nor with men. They simply hug themselves. Women bend before elderly men and, in return, they simply pat the women's back.

Among the titled men in Igbo land, they do a back-palm-handshake by raising their right hands and hitting them

back to back three times, while calling the other person's titular name. At the end of the third painless hit with the back of their palms, the fourth is the proper handshake using the front of the palm. At times, they use their walking-sticks or staffs instead of their hands.

Life Style and Culture (2026, June 2) observes that “in many places in Nigeria, people use a handshake to greet each other. This is common and feels friendly. It is a lot like how it is done in Western cultures. But, how you do it and what it means can change. If you greet someone who has higher social status or someone who is older, you may give a slight bow or use your left hand to hold your right wrist as you shake hands. This is a sign of respect”.

The fifteen foreigners at Innoson Motors, Nnewi, are not fully aware of all the basic greeting cultures across Nigeria and, therefore, unknowingly may cause offense and damage relationships in the corporation. A Japanese technical partner narrates, in his funny accent, that “this is my eighth year in this part of Nigeria. I often fell out with the natives and my colleagues during my first 12 months or so due to my ignorance of their culture of greeting. Now, I've learned most of the common greetings in this part of the world. This awareness and knowledge have helped me to adapt. Friendship, trust and collaboration are a lot easier now”.

In the Igbo culture, eating with the left hand is taboo. In Northern Nigeria, for example, it is not only an eyesore eating with the left hand but also an abomination rejected by their religion. However, in the south, even though Christianity does not necessarily frown at southpaws, southern tradition, especially in the east, opposes the use of the left hand to eat.

Another aspect of the food culture is the food type. There are differences in the cuisine of various nations of the world. Again, some eat what others avoid, and some avoid what others eat. Each of the localities in Igbo land has a particular animal it avoids its meat. This is a problem at Innoson Motors, Nnewi, because the Igbo population is drawn from different parts of the Eastern region. In Nnewi, where Innoson Motors is headquartered, the sacred python is the totem of Idemili, goddess of the river. Therefore, its meat is taboo to all the natives. In some families in Nnewi, the monkey, dog, and tortoise are also not edible.

A Chinese technician at Innoson Motors (Nnewi) marveled at the rate at which the python which is good meat in China is labeled a totem and eschewed in Nnewi. In his account, the Chinese reported that “I once caught a mǎng (python) at the foot of the fence outside there [pointing to the main factory building]. I killed it. My intention was to give it to one of the company's chefs (an Igbo lady) to prepare it for my dinner. But that was my major mistake. I was forced to

perform the *ji shen* (a ritual) to appease the gods whose totem I had killed.

Since then, my Igbo colleagues, especially those from the Nnewi community, have been avoiding me. To them, I'm an abomination personified. This created a psychological distance. Teamwork, collaboration, and output were negatively affected. However, I've been trying to revive the relationship”.

At Innoson Motors Nnewi, nonverbal cues often carry more weight than spoken words, and misinterpreting them can instantly derail a professional relationship. Nigeria is a high-context culture and, therefore, communication at Innoson Motors relies heavily on social background, status, and underlying visual cues. China, Japan, and Germany are low-context cultures where explicit, direct verbal clarity is expected. This disparity poses a huge constraint to free

communication and interaction among the staff from dissimilar cultures.

In Asia and Europe, direct eye contact signifies honesty, transparency, and confidence. In many Nigerian cultures, such as Igbo, prolonged direct eye contact with an elder or superior can be misinterpreted as defiance or a lack of respect.

Hand gestures are highly expressive among the Igbo but using the left hand to give or receive items is viewed as deeply offensive. Chinese, Japanese, and German people often use either hand interchangeably without offense. Therefore, lack of awareness leads the expatriates at Innoson Motors to view Nigerians as evasive, while Nigerians may view Americans as aggressively blunt or disrespectful.

SUMMARY OF CROSS-CULTURAL COLLABORATION DYNAMICS AT INNOSON MOTORS

NONVERBAL CUES	IGBO DYNAMIC	FOREIGN DYNAMIC	IMPLICATION FOR INNOSON MOTORS
Kinesics (Body Movement)	High expressiveness, lively hand gestures	Restricted gestures, heavy reliance on neutral poker-faces.	High risk of local workers misinterpreting calm foreigners’ neutrality as anger or disapproval.
Chronemics (Time)	Polychronic approach to time, prioritising relationship building.	Monochronic approach, strict compliance with deadlines	Silent tension usually erupts when differing nonverbal priorities conflict over production assembly lines.
Paralanguage (Tone & Pitch)	High-volume, enthusiastic tones used for ordinary conversation	Subdued, quiet tones indicative of professional control.	Expatriates might mistake vocal enthusiasm for workplace hostility

Cross-cultural communication directly dictates a brand's ability to localize its marketing and product design. In the Nigerian preferences, the market is deeply influenced by collectivism, community endorsement, and status expression. Consumers respond strongly to brands that celebrate local pride, vibrant aesthetics, family values, and religious respect. Physical market activation and word-of-mouth recommendations often carry more weight than abstract digital campaigns.

In the foreign preferences, the market is driven by individualism, convenience, and direct utility. Consumers prioritise hyper-customization, time-saving features, transparent pricing, and corporate social alignment. An Asian or European company attempting to enter Nigeria with a generic global marketing strategy will fail to

resonate. Effective cross-cultural communication ensures that brands speak to the specific aspirational and communal motivations of the local consumer base.

To navigate the problems of local market and consumer preferences (e.g. Innoson Motors, Nnewi), cross-cultural experts (Liu, 2023; Ikechukwu et al., 2025) suggest that to localise its production and marketing, Innoson Motors, Nnewi, should adapt to relational buying habits.

Finally, Innoson Motors staff members believe that language and culture matter, and that they cannot ignore cultural intelligence and still perform effectively. Owing to this awareness, the company provides training and translation support. Employees agree that this helps them by improving relationships and making productivity go up.

If this is not the case, misinformation and misunderstanding will surely lead to errors and rework.

Responding to the question on the challenges usually encountered working in a multinational corporation, a Japanese line operator quipped that “My primary challenge revolves around decision-making and problem-solving structures. In Japan, we prefer consensus-building and planning every detail thoroughly before starting a project. Here, I’ve noticed a tendency to dive directly into the task and troubleshoot issues as they arise. While this shows great problem-solving agility, it sometimes leads to minor safety or quality oversights”.

Summary of Findings

- 1) Language differences hinder free and effective communication at IVM.
- 2) Cultural norms negatively affect how feedback is given and received at IVM
- 3) IVM employees cannot work freely without cultural intelligence.
- 4) Culture causes delay in decision making and production in IVM.
- 5) Training exists in IVM.
- 6) Interpretation and translation support exist in Innoson Motors Nnewi.
- 7) Effective cross-cultural communication equals productivity
- 8) Miscommunication leads to errors and rework.

Implication of Findings

(1). For Company Operations

(i). Gender Gap in Workforce

The gap between the male staff and their female counterparts is a clear indication of visible gender gap and male dominance in the workforce distribution at IVM. This distribution aligns with global automotive manufacturing norms. Assembly and physical shop floor production roles traditionally hire more male than female due to the strenuous nature of heavy machinery operations.

Despite the domination of the male population, 37.6% female indicates that Innoson Motors, Nnewi, integrates women into modern automobile production. This distribution, however, is usually across administrative, quality control, or lighter precision engineering lines.

(ii). Job Creation

As Africa's first indigenous auto-manufacturer, IVM is built on providing jobs for Nigerians. This is evident in the employment of over 90% of Nigerians in its workforce. The

company is a massive avenue for local job creation. The targeted inclusion of Chinese, German, and Japanese foreign technical partners underscores a strategic dependence on “global automotive strongholds for technical knowledge transfer, specialized tool design, and automation management” (Chukwuma, 2015).

(iii). Technical Awareness in Digital Age

The education history of the members of the staff reveals that IVM believes that modern digital vehicle assembly requires robust technical literacy, spatial math, and computing skills. Innoson Motors is not operating on a low-skilled manual assembly blueprint. Instead, it hugely depends on highly qualified talents that are capable of operating complex automated systems.

(iv). Extraordinary Staff Stability

The demographic information of the staff shows that 80% of staff have spent more than six years working at the auto company. According to some scholars (e.g. Nwobu et al., 2024; Okeke et al., 2026), this workforce retention at Innoson Motors reveals extraordinary staff stability and low turnover rates. This is because in a specialized engineering landscape like Nnewi, long-retained industrial knowledge is highly critical. The implication is that the “deep well of experienced personnel ensures strict quality control and prevents costly operational learning curve gaps” (Okeke et al., 2026).

However, on the other hand, 52.1% of the staff have spent more than eleven years. This simply means that more than half percent is approaching retirement. The company needs urgent workforce reinforcement and training of junior staff. Experience should also be transferred from the most senior colleagues to their subordinates.

(v). Delay and Rework Lead to Cost

Items 4 and 8 reveal that cultural norms and language issues directly slow decisions, hamper productivity, and create errors. In the process ample time and huge sums of money are lost to production lapses and inefficiencies.

(vi). Availability of Training and Interpretation and Translation Support

Training, interpretation, and translation scored 4.5. This means that the company’s investment is working. This must be sustained.

(2). Implication for Employees

(i). Stress, Anxiety, and Frustration

The inability of the staff to communicate freely in the company can lead to reduced cordial interaction, frustration, feeling misunderstood, lower morale, and

disappointment. This situation also creates psychological social distancing.

(ii). Cultural unintelligence

This creates a wide gap in skill and feedback exchange. Employees admit they need to work with foreign colleagues who understand them. Therefore, they should be given more cultural tools and support. This will improve teamwork and make them more productive.

(3). Implication for Overall Communication

The communication problem at Innoson Motors is not people-oriented but channel-oriented. Communication tools exist such as the technological equipment (e.g. internet, cellphones), letters, linguistic and paralinguistic tools. However, language and culture still block free transmission.

In addition, cultural “unintelligence”, cultural differences and norms affect feedback and understanding. In Nigeria, when an employee or trader nods his head, it means “I understand”, “alright”, “agreement”, “consent”, “acceptance”, or “yes”. Also, the shaking of the head stands for “rejection”, “disagreement”, “rejection”, or “no”. Conversely, in some foreign cultures (e.g Japan) it is different. Nodding the head in Japan does not mean “yes”, “agreement”, or “consent”. It simply means that your listener is just hearing you well. Therefore, to coexist, transact, and work together in a multi-cultural society (e.g. Innoson Motors, Nnewi) without conflict or misunderstanding, the individuals from different cultures should study the culture of the other colleagues for effective, harmonious rapport.

For example, a German technical staff complained that “Ich bin manchmal verwirrt. Viele der nigerianischen (Igbo) Mitarbeiter sind bei fast jedem Treffen hinter dem Zeitplan. Sie kommen meistens zu spät zu Besprechungen. Und sie fühlen sich wohl dabei. Ich verabscheue diese Eigenart.”

Translation: “I get confused at times. Many of the Nigeria (Igbo) staff are almost always behind schedule in every meeting. They usually come late to meetings. And they feel comfortable. I detest this idiosyncrasy”.

The composite average of 3.4 (neutral) indicates that communication is adequately balanced but fragile. This works because of the support for training, interpretation, and translation. It does not mean that the inherent cultural differences have disappeared.

Recommendations

- 1) Heavy male dominance is conventionally expected in a global corporation as IVM, especially on core automotive assembly floors. However, it should adopt gender inclusivity and

training and design dedicated mechanical engineering internships for female technical and engineering graduates across the five states in the Southeast of Nigeria. This will help diversify the pipeline into advanced design, computerized diagnostic tracks, and plant management roles.

- 2) IVM should consider speedy knowledge transfer from the fifteen foreign technical partners to the local workforce. Since the 15 expatriate technology partners perfectly overlay technical partnership positions, IVM should deploy a formal pairing programme and match each foreign expert with a high-performing local postgraduate engineer to permanently internalize high technical know-how within the local workforce over time.
- 3) There is a need to employ inclusive communication strategies for the creation of a healthy cross-cultural environment. Some of these strategies include use of sensitive language, introducing diversity in the communication
- 4) Cultural sensitivity is the capacity to be aware of one’s own cultural bias. knowledge is understanding a target culture in terms of its cultural peculiarities, skills are concerned with adaptive mechanisms emerging as response to variability between cultures and motivation means willingness for interaction.
- 5) Intercultural negotiation strategies
When involved in negotiating across cultures, intercultural negotiation strategies must be used. This includes understanding of the method, style and context in which negotiation is carried out in that culture.
- 6) Although interpretation and translation support is available, constant training and provision of translation help a lot. So, the effort should be doubled.

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