

Analyzing The Influence of Non-Verbal Cues on Cross-Cultural Business

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Abstract

This study mainly evaluates the key role of the non-verbal cues in the cross-cultural business negotiations and highlight their significance to overcome all the language barriers. The study undertakes a secondary qualitative method and a thematic analysis that explores the way that non-verbal communication impacts the negotiation outcomes and providing effective information to improve interaction in different professional settings.

Keywords: non-verbal cues, cross-cultural business negotiations, language barriers, secondary qualitative method, thematic analysis, non-verbal communication.

1. Introduction

Cross-cultural business settings involve a wide range of people belonging to different ethnic backgrounds for which non-verbal communication among them plays a crucial role in professional interactions. According to Forbes, body language is a universal form of communication, but non-verbal cues are a consistent medium of interaction across cultures [1]. In that case, the frequency of nonverbal cues impacting cross-cultural business negotiation seems to be an area of concern as negotiation is a process where constructive communication is needed.

A Harvard Business Review paper shows communication is an obvious medium of handling tasks at the workplace [2]. However, it is also true that a culturally diverse group of people have complex language differences that make their communication challenging. Communication among a culturally diverse group is difficult, as one specific language might not be acceptable to the whole group [3]. It further leads to conflicts or miscommunication in the business negotiation process, where accuracy, clearance and attention are needed. In that case, also, communication has also been a crucial part of negotiating the solution to the expected conflicts [4]. Thus, the following research considers this important to further analyses based on secondary data sets and critically presents the way non-verbal cues affect the business negotiation process in cross-cultural workplaces.

2. Literature Review

Concept of non-verbal cues

The term non-verbal cues refer to changing communication modes from verbal to physical expressions. Non-verbal cues have been a crucial part of communication habits and it is associated with professional etiquette as well [5]. In the professional space, communication has standard values in terms of managing

tasks, interacting or attaining a cohesive relationship with colleagues. Non-verbal communication is not only associated with the physical expression, but sometimes it can be indicative as well. However, physical and non-verbal communication both have been associated with situational areas as well. Workplaces in the virtual model have no scope to comply with non-verbal communication due to a lack of physical presence [6]. Thus, communication and non-verbal cues both have been associated with situational workplace, scenario and possible communication scopes.

Business negotiation

Negotiation in business is mainly associated with individual communication and conversation, but in cross-cultural settings, language barriers reduce the scope of communication. Verbal cues enable the scope to interact with people from culturally diversified backgrounds and hold strong language differences [7]. In that case, the scope of negotiation is mainly associated with non-verbal communication while simple conversation in different languages is possible. However, a trend of using translators in business negotiation within culturally diverse groups is a common method where there is no need for non-verbal expressions [8]. Thus, it can be stated that business negotiation is one of the important parts of companies depending on the communication modes, while non-verbal cues have certain points of operation in the process.

Cross-cultural business negotiation through non-verbal cues

Cultural differences in business settings impact the communication scopes among the colleagues working in a group. In that case, a cross-cultural business involves multiple countries in its operations, where communicating with a person from a different country involves language barriers [9]. This eventually becomes a critical point in the negotiation process as without communication, it is not possible to conduct a deal or make operations. However, the overall process of communication depends on the mediums used and the actual language pattern [10]. In simple terms, non-verbal communication attains a scope to indicative statements that help them understand the common meaning the person is trying to show. Thus, it can be stated that the influence of non-verbal cues on business communication and negotiation is positive as it becomes an additional way of interaction in case of language differences.

3. Methodology

The study explores the context of non-verbal communication's impact on business negotiation in cross-cultural settings based on theoretical and conceptual assessment. The study has chosen a secondary qualitative data collection method to collect theoretical insights from articles from credible sources. Following this method, the research incorporated a qualitative data analysis process using Braun and Clark's six-step framework of thematic analysis. This thematic analysis is being conducted as per the data gathered from secondary sources. Both journal and news articles have been selected as secondary origins for the study where a total of 6 articles have been analysed. Apart from the data assessment, ethical considerations have been maintained in this research. There was no data alteration to maintain the originality of the information and neither articles without accessibility were chosen. A proper referencing system has been followed to ensure the sources used are properly recognised and cited. Thus, the overall methodological background of the study is hereby adopted as per the suitability of the methods and their accurate usage.

4. Findings and Discussion

Findings

Thematic analysis

Non-Verbal Cues as bridge builders: Non-verbal cues including facial expressions, gestures and posture act as the universal tools for communication and it facilitating understanding in the culturally diverse settings where the verbal language barriers visible [11]. These cues help to establish rapport and also mutual trust that are important for successful negotiation.

Cultural sensitivity and misinterpretation: The adaptation of some non-verbal cues varies massively across the cultures and it mostly leads to misunderstanding. This mainly highlights the needs for cultural awareness and sensitivity in the cross-cultural negotiation.

Integration of Technology: With the increase of virtual workplaces, the absence of the physical presence limits the non-verbal communication. Thus, tools including video conferencing effectively resolve this gap and emphasized the key importance of visual interaction in negotiation.

Discussion

The findings mainly underscore the important role of the non-verbal communication in negotiating cross-cultural business. While the non-verbal cues improve the collaboration and understanding but their varying interpretations occur some major challenges [12]. However, negotiators should cultivate the cultural awareness and also take their communication styles effectively. The adaptation of technology also emphasized the changing dynamics of non-verbal communication in the modern professional settings.

5. Conclusion

Following the above discussion, it can be stated that research investigated the background of the cross-cultural business landscape where communication in non-verbal cues was found challenging but important. This is because the study found a considerable number of barriers in business negotiation can be created due to understanding the gap of language. Language differences, cultural similarities and misconception are some key areas where non-verbal cues can pose a positive influence by reducing the communication gap. Overall, the study explored more depth areas through the secondary evaluation that further need to be explored.

6. References

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