



by

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SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE:

**MASTERS IN MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: SPECIALISING IN PUBLIC
RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT**

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

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BA (HONS); MA; D. PHIL (MEDIA, CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION)

APRIL 2024

ABSTRACT

Organisations are becoming more multicultural due to internationalisation and migration in a globalised world. Intercultural communication, crucial for diverse workplaces, involves sending and receiving messages among employees from different cultural backgrounds. Intercultural communication can lead to varied interpretations of verbal and non-verbal cues, particularly in countries with high immigrant rates, resulting in communication challenges. The aim of this study is to examine the cultural barriers among employees at Radio Al Ansaar. The objectives of the study are to identify barrier types and specific problems and suggest solutions. The study employed a quantitative research approach. A census method was considered appropriate for this study and adopted. Data were collected via structured questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed and administered to 55 employees; of whom 45 employees participated. The findings of this study revealed that verbal and nonverbal cultural differences, cultural stereotyping, ethnocentrism and personal characteristics such as age, gender, home language and nationality were the main cultural barriers. To address cultural barriers and challenges, practical recommendations include advocating for employees to cultivate patience, understand diverse perspectives, promote open communication, enhance language skills and foster empathy. Additionally, the study suggests that broadcast media can play a pivotal role in this context by supporting intercultural sensitivity training, encouraging cross-cultural activities and facilitating open communication initiatives.

DECLARATION

I, Lindiwe Sharon Vilankulu, hereby declare that this dissertation, submitted for the Degree of Masters in Management Sciences, specialising in Public Relations and Communication Management, has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree or to any other institution of higher education and that this is my investigation and research. I further declare that all sources were referenced and acknowledged as indicated in the bibliography.

Signed:

Date: April 2024

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DEDICATIONS

This study is dedicated to my late father, Mandlenkosi Aaron Skosana. I wish you could have been here to see my accomplishment.

My mother, Lisbeth Vilankulu, has supported and motivated me through my career and academic journey.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this research to all my nieces and nephews.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank God, the Almighty, for endowing his immense blessing that helped me progress toward completing my research work.

I am deeply grateful to my supervisor, Prof. VP Rawjee, for your patience and guidance.

I want to thank all the employees at Radio Al Ansaar for the time and effort they put into assisting me with the knowledge I needed for this dissertation.

I am sincere and grateful to acknowledge those who have motivated and supported me throughout this learning process.

I thank my mother, sisters, brothers and friends for their prayers.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DUT	Durban University of Technology
DIMS	Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

AUM	Anxiety and uncertainty model
LC	Low context
HC	High-context
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
PSB	Public Service Broadcasting

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction and Background

In today's highly competitive world, cultural awareness has become indispensable for individuals navigating multicultural settings. In these environments, exchanging ideas and behaviours among employees is essential to achieving common goals. Nevertheless, cultural barriers pose challenges, making them a widely explored research field (Celeste *et al.* 2019: 10). Understanding cultural communication models is crucial when working with diverse employees. Understanding cultural barriers, therefore, is an integral part of any workplace field (Kim 2021: 11). Employees in a multicultural workplace ought to understand cultural differences to overcome cultural barriers. When organisations fail to manage cultural differences, conflict can arise, significantly affecting employee performance (Seeger and Gustafsson 2021: 21).

South Africa has over 60 million people and is home to diverse cultures (Statssa 2022). The country's media landscape includes print, broadcast, online and digital media. Fourie (2020: 20) noted that South Africa's cultural diversity is a product of its history of colonisation, apartheid and efforts at reconciliation and nation-building. The population includes diverse ethnic, linguistic and cultural groups, such as Bantu-speaking people, Afrikaners, English-speaking communities and Urdu-speaking communities among others (Wasserman and Bornman 2018: 09). While the South African media landscape reflects this diversity, challenges persist in overcoming intercultural communication barriers. The country's commitment to inclusivity is observable in contemporary media practices that aim to acknowledge and represent its cultural diversity, characterised by 11 official languages (Ofusori 2023).

Media ownership significantly influences content and perspective (Steinfeld and Laor 2019: 05). Diversifying media ownership is crucial for fostering a more inclusive media environment in South Africa. Efforts to address this issue include initiatives by media channels to produce content in various languages, acknowledging the country's linguistic diversity. For example, broadcasters have made conscious attempts to feature programming in languages other than English, such as indigenous languages, to cater to different linguistic communities. Additionally, media organisations have implemented training programmes to ensure diverse representation within their staff, fostering an environment that values and integrates different cultural perspectives. However, economic inequalities still pose a barrier, limiting access to media resources for specific communities and perpetuating historical imbalances in media representation (Kupe 2020). Despite these challenges, ongoing initiatives and commitments aim to bridge these gaps and create a more comprehensive and equitable

portrayal of South Africa's cultural diversity in the media landscape (Kamwangamalu 2018: 01). The rise of digital media and social platforms has opened spaces for diverse voices, allowing communities to share their stories beyond traditional channels. Government regulation also plays a role in shaping media industry representation and content diversity (UNNews 2020).

Within media organisations, the diverse cultural composition of the workforce influences communication dynamics. While this diversity enhances creativity and innovation, it necessitates a nuanced approach to communication. MyTunerRadio (2023) exemplifies this, stating that Radio Al Ansaar's staff reflects a variety of cultural backgrounds, creating a vibrant environment. However, within the radio industry, cultural challenges arise, impacting internal dynamics and external image.

The study, focusing on the cultural challenges within the radio industry, specifically at Radio Al Ansaar, aims to explore cultural barriers among its employees. Communication between employees from diverse cultures has become more accessible, but understanding cultural influences is crucial for navigating potential conflicts (Žegunienė 2021: 03). Cultural differences, according to Fielding and Cilliers (2014: 54), can lead to conflicts in the workplace, necessitating organisations to employ various methods and strategies to foster effective communication and create a positive, respectful and appreciative workplace climate.

1.2 Problem Statement

Ibragimjanovna (2022: 02) highlights that in media organisations, cultural barriers pose formidable challenges to achieving effective communication. The intricacies of miscommunication stemming from misinterpreting words, accents and various non-verbal cues, such as body language, eye behaviours, facial expressions, haptics and proxemics, create a significant hurdle (Abed, Abed and Shackelford 2023: 03). This issue is particularly pertinent in radio and is primarily auditory and understanding diverse accents, and linguistic nuances becomes crucial. The implications of such miscommunication extend beyond mere inconvenience, leading to tension, anxiety, dissatisfaction, friction and discomfort among employees within the radio station (Dias 2022: 30). Fernández-Hoya and Cáceres-Zapatero (2022: 03) emphasise that miscommunication problems are linked to these negative emotions and correlate with low productivity and low retention rates in the workplace. within the radio industry, ultimately contributing to the organisational effectiveness.

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the cultural barriers among employees at Radio Al Ansaar.

The following objectives have been set based on the above aim of the study:

- Determination of the various types of intercultural communication barriers within an organisation.
- Identification of specific intercultural communication problems experienced by employees of Radio Al Ansaar
- Suggest strategies to enhance effective intercultural communication among employees of Radio Al Ansaar.

1.4 Delimitations

The researcher committed her full dedication to conducting this study on intercultural communication barriers at Radio Al Ansaar. However, some gaps still need to be filled due to limitations. The first limitation is that the study's scope is confined to a specific conclusion drawn from examining intercultural communication barriers within one community service broadcast. The focus on a single entity, Radio Al Ansaar, within a limited timeframe may impact the generalisability of the findings. The results are contingent upon the responses received during this specific period, whereas a broader study involving multiple community radio stations could provide a more comprehensive understanding of intercultural communication barriers within the media sector. Secondly, the geographical restriction of the research to Durban in KwaZulu Natal (KZN) introduces another limitation. The data gathered is specific to this region and the findings may only universally apply to some South African community radio stations. Recognising this constraint is essential for interpreting the results accurately. It underscores the need for caution when generalising the findings to the broader context of community radio stations in South Africa. Considering these limitations, there are opportunities for future researchers to delve deeper into intercultural communication barriers, specifically within the context of Radio Al Ansaar. Future studies can explore a more extensive timeframe, involve a larger sample size, and broaden the geographical scope to enhance the applicability of the findings to the broader landscape of community radio stations in South Africa.

1.5 Research Methodology

The research employed a quantitative approach, utilising questionnaires to collect data from the entire employee population of Radio Al Ansaar without sampling. The intercultural sensitivity model by Bennett was integrated into the questionnaire, which included closed and open-ended questions following sound principles and was pre-tested through a pilot study. Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and the results were presented in figures and

tables. The study focused on a community radio station in Durban KwaZulu Natal, assessing reliability and validity through Cronbach's alpha and the relevant literature. Ethical standards were upheld, guaranteeing anonymity and confidentiality and data storage, and disposal followed secure protocols.

1.6 Overview of the study

Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter One introduced the study. It addressed the problem statement, key objectives, the significance of the study, a brief examination of the related literature, and the study's methodological approach. . **Chapter Two** focuses on the literature review. It encompasses an overview of employee retention and organisational change in the healthcare sector. **Chapter Three** discusses the research methodology and design employed in the study. It includes a discussion of sample selection and data collection. **Chapter Four** presents a summary of the results of the study. It shows an analysis of the data using SPSS version 26.0 for Windows. **Chapter Five** provides the conclusions and recommendations arising from the study's results.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter briefly overviewed the research background and discussed the research problem. In addition, the aim, objectives and rationale for conducting the study were provided. Chapter two will highlight a literature review on communication and culture, intercultural communication barriers, intercultural communication theories that will be used as a theoretical framework and cultural aspects affecting intercultural communication.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the purpose of the study and its components. This chapter aims to establish the barriers to intercultural communication among employees at Radio Al Ansaar. Based on this, the study will determine the types of intercultural communication barriers within an organisation, identify specific intercultural communication problems, and then suggest strategies to enhance intercultural communication among employees. First, it addresses an overview of cultural diversity in South African radio broadcasts and introduces intercultural communication and its models (communication and cultural dimension models). This chapter also consists of intercultural communication barriers and the most relevant theories by Hofstede (2010), Hall (1976), Meyer (2014), Gudykunst (1998) and Bennett (1986), which are used to create the theoretical framework that will guide and help to analyse the empirical data that is gathered in the following chapter. The literature review will cover the cultural barriers to effective communication in a multicultural setting and the different methods used to overcome these barriers. Finally, the literature review will introduce Radio Al Ansaar as a case study in a multicultural setting, highlighting its organisational structure and the fact that it comprises individuals from different cultures. Based on this, this study will examine the cultural barriers at Radio Al Ansaar.

2.2 An Overview of Radio in South Africa

Mtimde (2000) states that South Africa has 11 official languages tied to different cultural and ethnic groups. Radio stations transmit content in diverse languages, encompassing Zulu, Xhosa, Afrikaans, English, Sotho and Tswana. This linguistic diversity allows radio stations to reach and engage with different language communities, promoting cultural expression and linguistic preservation. This diversity of radio stations caters to specific cultural communities, offering content that resonates with their experiences and interests. This diversity of radio stations entails a wide range of content, such as music, news, discussions and storytelling, which collectively mirror diverse cultural groups' traditions, values and concerns (Scales 2019: 03). Radio is a platform for showcasing diverse music genres, from traditional and indigenous music to contemporary and global styles. This exposure contributes to preserving cultural musical heritage while fostering cross-cultural appreciation. Different cultural perspectives can be heard through radio programming, promoting understanding and empathy among various communities. A more inclusive national dialogue can benefit from discussions on cultural and social issues and historical narratives. In post-apartheid South Africa, the radio was pivotal in fostering unity and reconciliation. Through its diverse programming, radio can promote a sense of shared identity while acknowledging the importance of individual culture (Malik and Shankley 2020: 15).

Bosch (2014: 03) states that the political and social dynamics of the country influence radio in South Africa. Radio broadcasts started in 1923 in South Africa. The first radio station, African Broadcasting Company, was established and based in Johannesburg. Over the years, radio broadcasting has become one of the essential mediums of communication in the country. According to Mtimde (2000: 03), radio broadcasting is audio content transmitted to receivers by radio waves. This method widely distributes information, entertainment and news to a mass audience. The growth of independent and community radio stations over the years has significantly impacted the media landscape, providing diverse voices and perspectives to listeners. This expansion has led to a rich tapestry of radio stations, encompassing various formats and catering to diverse audiences (Wiryawan, Wiryawan and Wiryawan 2022: 03).

The current South African radio landscape can be categorised into three tiers: public service broadcasting, commercial/private service broadcasting and community service broadcasting (Wasserman 2020: 03). This categorisation reflects the significant transformations in the broadcasting landscape, influenced by the country's complex socio-political history. Historically, apartheid posed challenges to media diversity and representation, limiting access to information and marginalising specific communities (Bathgate 2020). The period from 1948 to 1994 was marked by apartheid's oppressive control over media outlets, with the state-managed South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) serving as a conduit for propagating ruling ideologies while suppressing dissenting voices (Kenny 2021: 10). This era was characterised by systematic discrimination, which not only limited access to a broad spectrum of perspectives but also reinforced the dominance of the prevailing regime, perpetuating a narrative that homogenised cultural diversity (Oliveira and Turin 2023: 02).

Celeste *et al.* (2019: 10) point out that a pivotal shift occurred in 1994 with the dismantling of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic government. This transformative phase aimed to rectify historical imbalances and create a media landscape embracing cultural diversity. A commitment to media freedom, diversity and representation led to the restructuring of institutions, particularly the SABC, transforming it from a propagandist tool into a public broadcaster dedicated to serving the diverse cultural tapestry of the nation. This commitment sought to undo historical injustices, fostering a more inclusive, democratic and culturally diverse media landscape in South Africa. The preceding section provided an overview of radio broadcasting, the landscape and history. The following section will delve into the various types of radio broadcasting in South Africa and its cultural diversity.

2.2.1 Public Service Broadcasting

Public service broadcasting (PSB) in South Africa is a broadcasting model dedicated to serving the public interest by providing informative, educational and culturally enriching content. This

broadcasting model plays a crucial role in reflecting the nation's diverse interests, cultures and languages, contributing to a more inclusive media landscape for public welfare (Sehl 2020: 02). The transition from apartheid to democracy in South Africa intricately links the country's history of public service broadcasting. Initially utilised as a tool for state propaganda during the apartheid era, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) underwent a significant transformation after 1994. With the advent of democracy, the SABC evolved into a public broadcaster committed to rectifying historical imbalances and representing the diverse cultural tapestry of the nation (Wasserman 2020: 03).

According to Steinfeld and Laor (2019: 05), public service broadcasting in South Africa significantly promotes cultural diversity, provides a platform for various voices, and fosters national unity. Public radio stations reflect this through their programming, music selection and employment practices. According to Bizcommunity (2023) and MyTunerRadio (2023) examples of public radio stations operated by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) include:

- Radio 2000 offers a mix of music, news and talk shows in English, targeting a broad audience.
- Umhlobo Wenene FM broadcasts in isiXhosa, catering to the Xhosa-speaking community with a blend of music, current affairs and cultural content.
- Metro FM primarily broadcasts in English and targets an urban audience with a mix of music genres, talk shows and entertainment content.

Additional public radio stations, as listed by Bizcommunity (2023) and MyTunerRadio (2023), further exemplify the commitment to cultural diversity:

- Lotus FM focuses on the Indian community in South Africa, offering a mix of Indian music, cultural programming, and news in various Indian languages.
- SAfm is known for its information, talk shows and analysis. SAfm provides content in English, catering to a more mature and diverse audience.
- Thobela FM broadcasts in Sepedi and serves the Sepedi-speaking community with a mix of music, news and cultural programmes.
- Ikwekwezi FM broadcasts in isiNdebele and offers a range of content, including music, news and cultural discussions for the Ndebele-speaking audience.

Public radio stations in South Africa strive to reflect the nation's cultural diversity among employees, ensuring representation from various cultural backgrounds, languages and ethnic groups (Mhlanga 2020: 05). These stations emphasise cultural diversity in their programming by featuring multiple

music genres, talk shows and content catering to linguistic and cultural groups nationwide. Collaborations between public radio stations, communities and organisations are common methods to enhance cultural diversity, including joint programming, cultural exchange events and collaborations with local artists and performers. Despite these efforts, challenges such as resource constraints, linguistic diversity and historical imbalances can impact how all communities are represented (Harrison, Breithoff and Penrose 2020: 10) and (Malik and Shankley 2020: 18).

2.2.2 Commercial Service Broadcasting

The commercial service broadcasting (CSB) model is driven by advertising revenue and profit motives. The country's transition from apartheid to democracy has shaped South Africa's history of commercial service broadcasting. During the apartheid era, media outlets were subject to strict government control, limiting the scope of commercial broadcasting. However, post-1994, the media landscape witnessed a commercial broadcast surge with liberalisation and advertising-driven content. This expansion contributed to a more pluralistic media environment in South Africa, offering a variety of programming choices to the public and fostering a competitive broadcasting sector (Wesserman 2020: 03).

Falcone, Real and Liu (2020: 03) state that commercial radio broadcasting in South Africa also reflects cultural diversity, although it might have different priorities and approaches than public broadcasting. Steinfeld and Laor (2019: 05) state that commercial radio stations aim to attract specific target audiences for advertising purposes, but many also recognise the importance of catering to the diverse cultural landscape of the country. However, in countries with diverse cultural landscapes, such as South Africa, many commercial radio stations also recognise the significance of catering to the broader cultural spectrum. Understanding that a one-size-fits-all approach might be less practical in diverse societies, these stations incorporate programming that reflects their local communities' various languages, traditions and interests. Doing so enhances their appeal to a broader audience and contributes to social cohesion and inclusivity.

Bizcommunity (2023) and MyTunerRadio (2023) state that South Africa has a rich landscape of community radio stations that cater to diverse linguistic and cultural communities. They listed some examples of CSB, including:

- Metro FM broadcasts in English. Metro FM is the largest national commercial station in South Africa, targeting 25–34-year-old black urban adults, whom its owner, the SABC, describes as “trendy, innovative, progressive and aspirational”. While the station does have some

informational and educational aspects, the focus is firmly on contemporary international music—hip-hop, rhythm and blues, kwaito and more. Broadcast area: metropolitan areas of Gauteng, Limpopo, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape.

- Channel Africa is an international radio service of the SABC, which offers a multilingual source of information on Africa, including news, music and sports. Broadcasts are in Chinyanja, Silozi, Kiswahili, English, French and Portuguese, with shortwave broadcasts covering south, east, central and west Africa; satellite broadcasts covering the sub-Saharan region; and internet broadcasts covering the entire world.
- Jacaranda FM is based in Gauteng and broadcasts in the English language. The broadcast area includes the metropolitan areas of Gauteng, Limpopo, the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape.
- YFM is based in Gauteng and broadcasts in English. Broadcast area includes the metropolitan areas of Gauteng, Limpopo, the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape.
- OFM is the commercial regional station of the Free State (a province named Orange Free State before 1994, hence the O). OFM broadcasts adult contemporary music in English and Afrikaans.

Commercial radio stations, while primarily aiming to attract specific target audiences for advertising purposes, face challenges related to cultural diversity. These challenges include potential language barriers in multicultural societies like South Africa, where careful consideration is needed to communicate effectively across various linguistic groups. Understanding and respecting diverse cultural nuances is another hurdle, as each community may have unique practices and preferences. Balancing the economic imperative of advertising revenue with the goal of cultural inclusivity poses an ongoing challenge, potentially leading stations to prioritise specific demographics over others (Oliveira and Turin 2023: 02).

2.2.3 Community Service Broadcasting

Community broadcasting is broadcasting for, by and about the community, whose ownership and management represent the community, which pursues a social development agenda and is a non-profit (Unesco 2023). In South Africa, the evolution of community service broadcasting is closely linked to the country's transition from apartheid to democracy. The post-apartheid period witnessed a significant shift towards media diversity and inclusivity, with the licencing of community radio stations playing

a pivotal role in establishing non-profit, community-driven entities (Olorunnisola, Mohammed and Moore 2022: 02).

Community service broadcasting in South Africa is characterised by its focus on addressing local issues, preserving cultural heritage, and giving voice to marginalised communities, making it a critical component of the media landscape that provides a platform for local voices, cultural diversity, and community engagement. These stations, often run by volunteers, have fostered community development and contributed to a more inclusive media landscape. These stations, initiated and run by local communities, promote social cohesion and grassroots development and address issues often overlooked by mainstream media (Choudhary, Meena and Kambale 2021: 06).

In South Africa, community service broadcasting often prioritises cultural diversity among employees and volunteers to ensure that content is relevant and resonates with the local audience (Kanayama 2021: 95-111). The characteristics and approaches of community service broadcasting include a focus on regional communities, reliance on volunteers, non-profit status and a commitment to reflecting diversity in culture and language (Unesco 2023).

2.2.3.1 Characteristics and approaches of community service broadcasting:

Fombad and Jiyane (2019) state that community service broadcasting differs from commercial or public radio stations. They state that community radio stations are unique and have different broadcasting approaches. Unesco (2023) listed the characteristics and practices of community broadcasting: Firstly, community radio stations focus on local communities. These entities must cater to a particular community or geographic area by offering programmes that mirror the interests and needs of the local community members. Community radio stations often cover issues and stories reported by mainstream media outlets like Business Day and City Press. Secondly, volunteers often run community radio stations. Based on this, the stations might need more resources and must rely on the support of the community members to keep them operating. Thirdly, community radio stations are non-profit organisations and do not make a profit. Volunteers primarily run community radio stations and get funding from sponsors and donations. Lastly, community radio stations reflect diversity; they aim to consider the cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity of their communities. They often broadcast in multiple languages and offer programming that showcases different cultural perspectives.

Choudhary, Meena and Kambale (2021: 09) state that a diverse workforce is vital to media organisations because it creates a variety of perspectives and experiences that can significantly improve their storytelling and reporting capabilities. When media organisations employ people of

different ages, backgrounds, races and genders, they bring many perspectives. These unique perspectives influence news coverage, helping to demonstrate a more comprehensive understanding of complex issues. For example, a journalist from an underrepresented community can uncover stories others may dismiss as insignificant, leading to a more inclusive news agenda. Cultural sensitivity is another critical benefit of diversity in the workplace. A diverse workforce gives newsrooms the cultural sensitivity needed to cover a wide range of national and international news. Journalists with experience with different cultures are better equipped to cover world events, avoid stereotypes and engage in culturally competent storytelling. A diverse workforce is better able to communicate with diverse audiences. Since news consumers come from diverse backgrounds, having a workforce that reflects this diversity can help build trust and resonance with different communities, thereby delivering more comprehensive readers and audiences. A diverse workforce encourages creative thinking and problem-solving, which can lead to innovative forms, approaches and techniques of storytelling. Finally, diverse journalists often bring personal experiences and cultural insights that can add depth and authenticity to reporting. For example, a journalist with an immigrant background may offer unique insight into immigration policies, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the issue.

Although diversity brings many benefits, it also brings challenges related to cultural differences. Some of these challenges include misunderstandings and communication problems among employees from different backgrounds, leading to conflict and feeling unsupported. Differences in communication styles, work practices and cultural norms can create barriers to teamwork and collaboration. For example, how to give and receive feedback can vary across cultures, which can lead to conflict. Prejudice and stereotypes can persist in diverse workplaces, despite efforts to promote diversity. Media organisations must address potential biases to ensure fair treatment of all employees. Additionally, some employees may feel isolated in a diverse workplace if they belong to a minority group. Creating a sense of belonging and inclusion is essential to ensuring every employee can thrive and contribute to the organisation's success (Stuart and Chotia 2022: 04).

According to MyTunerRadio (2023), some examples of community service broadcasting include:

- Radio Khwezi broadcasting in isiZulu and isiXhosa languages and serves the Zulu-speaking community in the KwaZulu-Natal province. The station covers various topics, including local news, cultural content and social issues.
- Zibonele FM operates in Khayelitsha, a township near Cape Town. It broadcasts in isiXhosa and focuses on community development, education and entertainment.
- Moutse Community Radio Station broadcasting in Sepedi and serves the Moutse community in Limpopo province. It provides a mix of local news, cultural programming and music.

- Radio Gamkaland is based in the Western Cape and serves the farming community with content in Afrikaans and English. The station emphasises agriculture, local events and cultural programming.
- Bush Radio operates in Cape Town. Bush Radio is celebrated for its diverse programming catering to its multilingual and multicultural population. The station broadcasts in English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa and other languages, featuring a mix of music, talk shows and community news.

Radio Al Ansaar is a community radio station based in Durban, KZN, South Africa. It is known for providing Islamic content and serving the Muslim community in the region.

These examples showcase the diverse range of community service broadcasting initiatives contributing to the local and cultural fabric of South Africa. The landscape of radio broadcasting in South Africa is undeniably rich and diverse, reflecting the multifaceted tapestry of its cultural heritage. These examples showcase the diverse range of community service broadcasting initiatives contributing to the local and cultural fabric of South Africa. The various types of radio services, from public service broadcasting to community and commercial radio, play a crucial role in disseminating information, preserving cultural identity, and fostering a sense of unity among the nation's diverse population. However, it is essential to acknowledge the industry's challenges, such as cultural barriers to communication. Despite these challenges, South African radio continues to evolve, adapt and thrive, showcasing resilience in adversity. As the nation navigates the complexities of cultural diversity, the radio remains a powerful medium that entertains and serves as a vital platform for dialogue, understanding and celebrating South Africa's rich cultural tapestry.

The above section highlighted cultural diversity at various radio stations in South Africa. Therefore, the section below will delve into the significance of intercultural communication within diverse organisations. The following section will also explore the relevance of multicultural settings like South African radio stations, focusing on employees' challenges and dynamics in the radio broadcasting sector.

2.3 Introduction to Intercultural Communication

Intercultural communication is vital on radio, especially on South African radio stations' dynamic and multicultural landscape. South Africa is known for its rich diversity, with different ethnic and linguistic groups, making radio stations an essential platform for promoting understanding and solidarity among these various communities. Effective intercultural communication within these stations helps bridge cultural gaps, ensures their content meets diverse audience needs and promotes inclusion. It allows

broadcasters to create programming and content tailored to different cultural groups, improving engagement and connectivity. Additionally, intercultural communication on South African radio stations is essential to avoid unintentional cultural misunderstandings, promote social cohesion and contribute to a harmonious and integrated society. It celebrates the nation's cultural landscape and helps create a shared sense of identity and cohesion, making it an essential aspect of a successful and meaningful radio broadcasts in South Africa (Mall 2006).

2.3.1 Defining Intercultural Communication

Stay with a discomfoting environment, experience it and learn from it, compare these discomfoting and unexpected behaviours when you work or communicate across cultures as well as compare them with your behaviours and knowledge is *Intercultural Communication* (Trenholm 2020: 345).

Alexa (2022: 03) states that the differences experienced by individuals engaging in multicultural communication in workplaces might cause difficult situations for the individual due to intercultural communication barriers.

According to Alexa (2022: 03), the following elements are crucial in understanding how intercultural communication barriers are impactful:

- One culture may interpret staring as a signal of intimidation, while in another, it is taken as direct eye contact to show attention and esteem.
- Direct answers can be insulting and disrespectful in one culture, but contrarily, in another, they signal respect and suggestions for improvements.
- Asking questions is an effective tool for learning and increasing knowledge. Still, on the other hand, in another culture, it shows insufficient ability and an inability to understand things.
- In one culture, it is customary to sit when the boss comes in, but on the contrary, in another, this is considered disrespectful.

Therefore, intercultural communication plays an important role. It aims to share, understand and adjust communication among different cultures. Intercultural communication is described as a wide range of communication processes in a social context with individuals from various cultural backgrounds. Intercultural communication can depend on the behaviours and culture of an individual. It is a guide with practical theory and strategies to communicate across cultures by accepting intercultural

communication barriers. It is a phenomenon, a study that helps to know and understand how people from different backgrounds and cultures communicate with each other (Havrilova *et al.* 2021: 405).

The above section highlights the essence of intercultural communication. The section below will explore various conceptual frameworks that shed light on the intricacies of communication in multicultural contexts, with a specific focus on their applicability within radio stations. These models offer valuable insights into the dynamics of intercultural communication, highlighting the processes and challenges among employees from diverse cultural backgrounds. The section below will also provide a comprehensive overview of the theoretical foundations underpinning successful intercultural communication within radio stations. Havrilova *et al.* (2021: 451) and Durant and Shepherd (2009: 06) state that intercultural communication is a complex phenomenon, and various models have been developed to understand and navigate its dynamics within diverse contexts, including radio stations in multicultural settings. The below subheadings will explore communication and culture models:

2.3.2 Communication Model in an Intercultural Communication Setting

Communication plays a significant role in the workplace (Dimpleby and Burton 2020: 09). However, some work environments, such as universities, media houses, the military and hospitality, often attract diverse employees from multicultural backgrounds (Havrilova *et al.* 2021: 405). Organisations or entities often face intercultural communication concerns such as different values and beliefs, misunderstandings and usual roles. The role of intercultural communication cannot be analysed unless the communication concept is defined and described. This study aims to establish the main cultural barriers during the communication process. Communication requires identifying communication descriptions since it is the foundation of human interaction (Havrilova *et al.* 2021: 420).

Culture is classified as one of the main barriers to effective communication. The success of effective intercultural communication can be measured by the feedback received. This study intends to establish cultural barriers faced by employees in radio broadcasting (Radio Al Ansaar) and identify specific intercultural problems experienced by employees in radio broadcasting (Radio Al Ansaar). Culture is a barrier to effective communication, which is the core emphasis of this study. Effective intercultural communication requires the sender and the receiver to be actively involved. In multicultural media, intercultural communication research scholars Durant and Shepherd (2009: 08) affirm that clear communication is essential to avoid misunderstandings, which could lead to infective contact. Therefore, both the sender and receiver involved in the process must become aware of the roles they play during the interaction initiated by communication. This study uses Radio Al Ansaar to establish the main barriers to intercultural communication during communication (Foran and Lee 2022: 02).

Figure 2.2 (below) describes communication as a transactional process whereby both sender and receiver affect each other. Several significant components, such as sender-receiver, message channel, noise, feedback and context, determine messages' interpretation and effectiveness in the workplace and organisations.

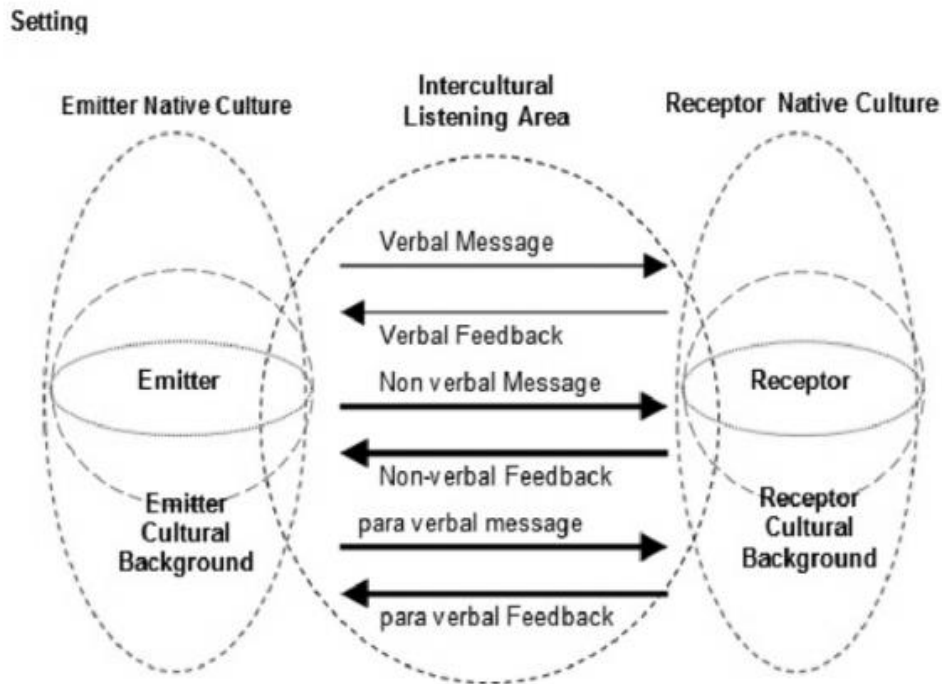


Figure 2.2: The communication process model (Source: Kubota 2019: 55).

Figure 2.2 (above) applies to a conversation context in a multicultural setting. Taking a conversation between employees in a multicultural environment, assume they send messages back and forth that they are constantly changing roles. As they continue to interact, they arrive at an understanding (Capisino 2021: 03). However, the sender (the emitter) does not share all their experiences and meanings because of their cultural background. Therefore, communication is a dynamic process because the variables influence each other (Kubota 2019: 55). Kubota (2019: 55) outlines the fundamental components of communication: source, message, channel, noise, receiver, receiver response, feedback and context. These components collectively form the framework through which individuals exchange information and ideas. However, the interpretation and representation of these components give rise to differences across cultural groups, religions and people. This underscores the significance of comprehending these components, mainly when operating within a multicultural media environment and engaging across diverse cultures.

The "**source**" serves as the initiator of communication and is responsible for ensuring the accurate transmission of the message to be understood by the receiver (Tkachenko *et al.* 2020: 02). Cultural

diversity and differing needs underpin the "source" of communication. For instance, within a multicultural media house, effective communication plays a pivotal role in fostering relationships and facilitating collaborative work among employees from various backgrounds. Communication, in this context, fulfils social and personal needs and aids decision-making processes (Dimpleby and Burton 2020: 09). "Encoding" is the process of crafting a message. In contrast, the "message" encompasses ideas, opinions, feelings, or information. This message is conveyed through various means, such as written or spoken words, body language and sign language. However, cultural language barriers can significantly affect the interpretation of messages, leading to potential misinterpretations (Xu *et al.* 2022: 01).

The "**channel**" refers to the medium used to transmit the message to the receiver. The channel choice can influence communication effectiveness and varies based on cultural preferences. Face-to-face communication might be favoured in some cultures. In contrast, others might lean towards written communication or digital platforms (Wambui 2015: 10). Following message reception and decoding, the "receiver's response" comes into play. This refers to the actions, or lack thereof, the receiver takes in response to the message. Cultural disparities in interpretation can lead to divergent responses, complicating adequate understanding (Wambui 2015: 09).

"**Feedback**" is the verbal or nonverbal reaction to a communicated message. Cultural norms shape feedback expression, impacting how agreement or disagreement is conveyed. Direct feedback is typical in face-to-face interactions, where cultural sensitivities must be considered to facilitate constructive feedback (Goffman 2022: 20). Lastly, the "context" provides the backdrop against communication, encompassing elements like environment, time and culture (Horváth and Richtárik 2020: 02). This context heavily influences the interpretation of messages. It must be acknowledged to ensure effective communication.

Noise is any form of distraction from the message. It can be in different forms: external noise can be sound or other stimuli that take your attention away from the message; internal noise can be attitude and feelings that can detract from the message; and semantic refers to the use of jargon that others can understand. Figure 2.2 on the communication model above elaborates on cultural background as an internal noise (Dimpleby and Burton 2020: 09). According to Kubota (2019: 55), cultural background is internal noise to effective communication. Due to differences in social status or cultural barriers, we often face differences in communication. We all come from diverse backgrounds, influencing how we view the world, interpret situations and communicate. Participants' backgrounds form a frame of reference that affects different forms. This means people come from backgrounds where specific languages are used.

Culture is a way of life based on values, or principles. Cultural differences between people can create barriers. People around the world follow different religious practices. Many times, differences in culture can create misunderstandings in communication. Due to globalisation and liberalised business policies, people worldwide travel and work for corporations or companies. This led to mixing or intermingling between people. However, due to differences in language, religious practices, dress styles and food habits, people often need clarification and help to understand each other correctly. This led to a communication failure (Kaluarachchi 2022: 04).

Thus, any obstacle to effective communication is called a communication barrier. Barriers are part of the of communication process. The differences in these barriers can negatively affect effective communication. Whenever we are communicating, we encode and decode. We use various channels for passing messages. At any level or moment, at any stage, there can be problems in the communication process. Sometimes, the sender must use proper language that the receiver will understand. The receiver may not be able to decode the message correctly. There can be a lot of noise in the surroundings, distracting the participants. It rarely happens that barriers do not arise in the communication process. Many barriers occur in the minds of the sender and receiver or the sender may fail to deliver the intended message to the receiver. (Kulova and Petrosyan 2019: 32).

2.3.2.1 Description of Communications

According to Kubota (2019: 55), communication is “a functional, dynamic and transactional process where participants strive to create and share meaning through the exchange of symbols”. According to Kubota (2019: 02), communication is a process used to generate meaning via messages. Communication requires interaction, where messages are created, shared, decoded/encoded and feedback is received. This means that the participant in the conversation needs to be active in interpreting the message. Furthermore, communication is a process; it is ongoing. For communication to be compelling, it must go through certain stages and be treated as a two-way process, not a one-way process. Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan (2019: 03) affirm that both participants—the sender and the receiver must—be active for the message to be interpreted and for feedback to be provided. Communication is the channelling of information that needs to be received and understood. This shows the importance of both sender and receiver being active to ensure that the message created is translated in an intended way, which then prompts feedback.

Martin and Nakayama (2013: 28) state that communications involve negotiation and sharing meaning. The participants must agree on the importance of the message. However, each message often has multiple meanings, making it more complicated. It is usually assumed that the other participant takes

the essence as intended. However, these assumptions may lead to misunderstandings for individuals from various cultural backgrounds and experiences.

2.3.2.2 Understanding of communication

The general process of human communication transactions must be explained to understand intercultural communication events. This section will analyse the communicators (sender, receiver and message). The model above (Figure 2.2) investigated the interaction between communicators in this study to provide bias for investigating effective intercultural communication barriers among employees at Radio Al Ansaar. The sender and receiver need to know each other's culture, language and environment to have a shared understanding and interest. For example, in one culture, an employee cannot call their manager by name as it is disrespectful to the manager, so he/she has to say Sir/Madam. On the other hand, in another culture, calling the manager's name is common and does not mean disrespect; instead, it is considered to build a strong working relationship (Mukarromah and Astutik 2022: 03).

According to Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan (2019: 01), communication includes verbal and nonverbal communication. Verbal communication creates written and spoken messages. Language is essential in different cultures with different mother languages, narratives and stories behind the words. The sender needs to use spoken and written languages that are appropriate and understandable to the receiver. For example, email is a written communication medium; in some cultures, writing 'Dear Sir/Madam' represents formal communication and shows the sender's formality. However, in other cultures, the receiver might consider it an offence by considering it an informal communication method. Thus, it is essential to know different cultures when communicating in a multicultural work setting.

On the other hand, non-verbal communication is a way to send a message using body language like eye contact and gestures. Verbal and nonverbal communication are linked to each other. Communication is classified into three categories: oral, written and non-verbal, because verbal communication is an interaction among people in the human voice. A formal way to communicate is by sending messages alphabetically and in sentences. Nonverbal communication can send messages through drawings and fields (Abed, Abed and Shackelford 2023: 03). For example, why does she smile and nod when I talk about improving her performance? In one culture, accepting feedback with a smile represents that the receiver is ready to change and enhance their work performance, and a smile reflects attention. Contrary to that, in another culture, a smile while taking feedback might mean that the receiver is playful, does not take the sender seriously, and would not fix their mistakes to improve (Kulova and Petrosyan 2019: 18).

2.3.2.3 Barriers to effective communication

Correa *et al.* (2020) state that **cultural differences** are barriers to effective communication. People come from different cultural locations. Social status or cultural barriers often cause communication differences. Our diverse backgrounds shape our perspectives on the world, our interpretation of situations and our communication styles. Participants' experiences create a frame of reference that influences various forms, as people hail from specific backgrounds with distinct languages.

Singh and Dey (2021: 04) state that culture is a way of life, values, or principles. Cultural differences between people can create barriers. Around the world, people follow various religious practices. Cultural differences frequently contribute to misunderstandings in communication. Globalisation and liberalised business policies have led people to travel and work for multinational companies, fostering interaction and intermingling. However, disparities in language, religious practices, dress styles and food habits often necessitate clarification and assistance for mutual understanding. These challenges can result in communication failures.

Cultural differences go beyond verbal language, encompassing non-verbal cues and communication styles. Body language, gestures and facial expressions vary across cultures, leading to potential misinterpretations. Additionally, communication styles differ, with some cultures favouring direct communication while others rely on indirect or implicit approaches. Understanding these nuances is essential for successful cross-cultural communication. Misinterpretation of communication styles can result in confusion or unintended offence, emphasising the need for individuals to be culturally sensitive in their interactions (Jayachandran 2021: 02).

Guttman *et al.* (2021) state that **linguistic** barriers stemming from differences in language, pronunciation and word meaning are intricate aspects that impede effective communication. In essence, linguistic challenges extend beyond mere language differences and encapsulate the nuanced realm of semantics—the study of word meanings. The intricate nature of linguistic barriers becomes apparent in various scenarios, where the absence of a common language or the presence of multiple languages within a communication context creates hurdles for effective understanding. The dynamic nature of language, influenced by cultural nuances and regional variations, adds layers of complexity to cross-cultural communication (Voevoda 2020: 04).

One of the primary manifestations of linguistic barriers is the lack of a common language. Effective communication becomes a formidable challenge when individuals need to share a common language.

This obstacle is particularly prevalent in diverse settings where people from various linguistic backgrounds converge. In such instances, the likelihood of misunderstanding and misinterpretation increases, impeding the seamless exchange of information. Furthermore, the diversity of words, each carrying its own nuanced meaning, introduces an additional layer of complexity. While words serve as potent tools for expression, they can become sources of confusion when different meanings or interpretations are explained (Ortega, Martínez and Diamond 2020: 02-04).

The intricacies of linguistic barriers also manifest in pronunciation and semantic ambiguity. Words that sound similar but have different meanings, such as "expect" and "accept," or "fair" and "fare," pose challenges to effective communication. This potential for confusion arises from homophones and homographs, where similar-sounding or spelled words carry distinct meanings. Communicators may need to be more careful with these words, leading to a breakdown in conveying the intended message. Acknowledging these linguistic nuances is vital for communicators to ensure that their messages are accurately understood and to navigate the complexity of linguistic diversity in diverse communication environments (Hopkyns and van den Hoven 2022: 08-09).

According to Parajuli, Paudel and Devkota (2020: 02), **perception** is a barrier to effective communication. Foran and Lee (2022: 02) define perceptions as how people see and interpret the world and give meaning to things that happen to them. However, culture can influence participants' perceptions. People from different cultural backgrounds can consequently have different perceptions about the same thing. This can create a significant barrier to communication as the sender and receiver see the world, workplace and task differently.

In the realm of cross-cultural communication, the impact of cultural diversity on perceptions becomes particularly pronounced. Individuals from different cultural backgrounds may harbour distinct viewpoints and interpretations of the same situation, leading to potential misunderstandings. This divergence in perceptions is a substantial barrier to effective communication, as it introduces a layer of subjectivity that can impede the accurate transmission and reception of messages. Influenced by their cultural lenses, the sender and receiver may see the world, the workplace and assigned tasks through different filters, hindering a shared understanding (Luo and Zhao 2021: 03). Moreover, the influence of culture on perception extends beyond explicit cultural elements to include implicit cultural norms and values. These underlying cultural factors shape how individuals process information, make judgements and attribute significance to various aspects of communication. Consequently, the cultural lens through which individuals perceive the world becomes a critical factor that organisations and

communicators must navigate to foster effective communication in diverse settings (Kamaruddin, Jafri and Ali 2023: 02).

Emotional barriers to effective communication represent a significant facet of communication challenges, encompassing the array of feelings and emotions that can disrupt the smooth exchange of information between individuals. Barriers such as anxiety, frustration, fear and guilt have the potential to impede effective communication by influencing the emotional states of those involved. This complex interplay of emotions can create hurdles beyond the surface of verbal expression, affecting both the sending and receiving ends of the communication process (Kapur 2020: 01-07).

Shevchenko *et al.* (2022: 03) state that stress is a poignant example of an emotional barrier in the workplace. People experiencing stress may struggle to communicate effectively due to heightened personal concerns. For instance, an employee grappling with nervousness or worry may struggle to articulate thoughts or ideas coherently, hindering effective workplace communication. Wei (2022: 04) mentioned frustration as another emotional barrier to effective communication. It can manifest as irritability or impatience, posing challenges to both speaking and active listening. In situations where employees are frustrated, maintaining a calm and focused communication environment becomes essential to overcome these barriers.

Fear, as an emotional barrier, can lead individuals to withdraw from communication. This withdrawal inhibits meaningful conversations and collaborative efforts. For example, an employee afraid of judgement or criticism may hesitate to share ideas or concerns openly. Guilt, too, presents a challenge by introducing self-blame or shame into the communication dynamic. When individuals harbour guilt, they may struggle to express themselves authentically, fearing repercussions or judgement. This emotional barrier can lead to miscommunication, which results in ineffective communication (Sharp, Bourke and Rickard 2020: 05).

Organisational barriers to effective communication refer to impediments within a workplace that hinder the smooth exchange of information and ideas among employees, particularly at the management level. This can arise from various factors, including exchanging information and ideas amongst employees at the management level. This can include barriers like hierarchical structures, poor communication channels and unclear policies. An organisation's disorganised organogram/structure can restrict communication channels and limit communication from lower-level employees to management and vice versa. Poor communication channels can cause misunderstandings, delays and ineffective communication among all departmental employees and management. Unclear policies can create uncertainty and confusion among employees and make it

difficult for them to know what is expected of them and how to communicate with others (Trenholm 2020: 234).

Sharp, Bourke and Rickard (2020: 02) state that the abovementioned barriers distort the message and that the goal is never accomplished. External borders arise from the external environment and external factors, whereas internal walls are present within the individual, such as tensions, work pressure, high expectations and peer rivalry. It is essential to eliminate the above barriers for effective communication and the proper flow of information between the sender and the receiver. Consequently, communication can be defined as using words, symbols and signs to exchange ideas, feelings, facts and information among people (Jack, Ridley and Turner 2023: 02). Communication is a process by which information is exchanged between individuals and organisations. Communication is the exchange and transmission of meaning and sharing of feelings. Therefore, understanding intercultural communication is vital to effectively communicating with individuals or groups of people from different cultures and enhancing understanding among the various cultural parties involved in the organisation (Doherty *et al.* 2020: 04).

Ullah *et al.* (2021: 03) state that diverse workplace organisational barriers to effective communication can take on added complexity due to employees from different backgrounds. For instance, hierarchical structures may pose challenges if individuals from diverse cultures have varying attitudes towards authority and hierarchy. In some cultures, employees are more inclined to express their opinions directly, while others prefer indirect communication. Language barriers, another common challenge in diverse workplaces, can exacerbate misunderstandings, mainly if clear communication channels are not established. Additionally, unclear policies may disproportionately affect employees from different cultural backgrounds, as varied interpretations may arise, contributing to uncertainty and confusion.

The barriers mentioned above to effective communication, including cultural differences, emotional factors, different perceptions and organisational barriers, underscore the intricate challenges of fostering clear and meaningful interactions within diverse workplaces. Acknowledging these barriers is crucial for implementing strategies that promote inclusivity, understanding and collaboration. The section below will delve into the cultural iceberg model, exploring how culture can further compound the communication challenges discussed above.

2.3.3 Cultural Model

According to Khamidovna (2020: 05), culture is often considered the central concept in intercultural communication. He further states that cultural differences led to miscommunication. Explains culture

as an iceberg (Figure 2.3). The perceptions, values, beliefs and traditions form the invisible part of the iceberg hidden from the reader. Much of the culture and behaviour remains hidden, which may need clarification and understanding. He further explains that the hidden/invisible part of the iceberg determines the behaviour of the visible region. Understanding the beliefs and values that form peoples' behaviour and thinking is essential for a deeper understanding of culture.

2.3.3.1 Layers of Culture Model

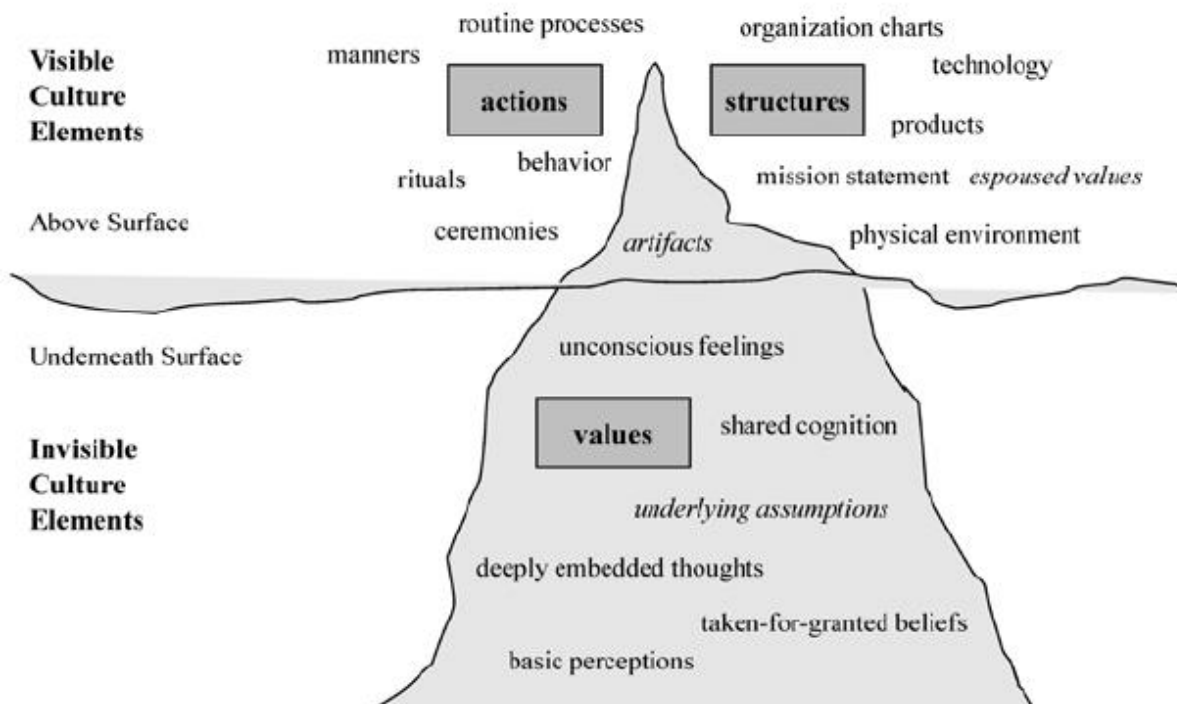


Figure 2.3: The cultural iceberg: the visible and hidden layers of culture (ResearchGate 2015).

Figure 2.3 (above) shows the visible and hidden layers of culture and behaviour components. The visible part of culture is how we live and interact with others—the dress code, language, food and ethnicity. **The invisible part** is our perceptions, values, beliefs and norms. Much of the culture and behaviour remain hidden, but they must be addressed as this may cause communication to be ineffective. The remote/invisible part of the iceberg determines the behaviour of the visible region (Badham, Bridgman and Cummings 2020: 02). **Visible cultural behaviour** include actions and practices that are deeply ingrained within a society but might not always be immediately visible or consciously acknowledged. These can include language, non-verbal communication, religion and behaviour norms that shape how individuals interact within their culture. These behaviours are explicitly learned and easily changed; these are objective knowledge. For example, an individual who starts to work at a multicultural organisation might be shocked upon noticing the difference in dress styles or how people greet each other. This can be due to a need to understand other people's behaviour more. Behaviours often follow a pattern. It becomes difficult for an individual to understand others' behaviours while also understanding their actions. Consider an example where employees are consistently late at work, and the team leader needs help understanding the reason/s. Only when the leader investigates deeply, a recurring pattern is discovered; they stay late at work for meetings that

frequently run over the scheduled time. So, they arrive late the following day (Badham, Bridgman and Cummings 2020: 02).

2.3.3.2 Understanding the term Culture

Wesch (2020: 03) defined culture as the set of shared beliefs, perceptions, values and norms that shape how they view the world. Culture is a dynamic and constantly evolving concept. It is an integral part of one's identity and plays a significant role in shaping individual and collective behaviour, communication and social interactions.

i. Beliefs

Beliefs can be defined as people having a basic understanding of the world and what is true or false to them. Beliefs affect our minds and communication (Van Assche, Bahamondes and Sibley 2021: 13). Culture plays a vital role in belief formulation and belief depends on cultural backgrounds and experiences. There are no right or wrong beliefs in matters of intercultural communication. Belief systems are crucial for employees in intercultural communication because they are learned and subject to cultural interpretation and diversity (Verkuyten and Killen 2021: 01). In other words, as employees grow up in different cultures, their culture contributes to each person's unique configuration of ideas and experiences within the sizeable cultural matrix (Verkuyten and Killen 2021: 02). Therefore, it can be said that beliefs are the first cultural influence that may cause intercultural misunderstandings.

ii. Values

Values can be another barrier to intercultural communication. Values have to do with what is judged to be good or bad, or what is regarded as necessary in a culture. People's values are translated into actions. People often offer values as an explanation for how they communicate. To appreciate other people's behaviour, one needs to understand their cultural values. People tend to defend their values as they use them to justify their behaviour. Values are a valuative aspect of people's attitude systems, including pleasure, usefulness and goodness. Everyone has their own set of values; however, cultural values tend to permeate a culture (Benson *et al.* 2020: 01).

Cultural values are organised rules for making choices and reducing societal conflicts and uncertainty. These values inform a cultural member about a good or bad way of behaving. Cultural values describe what is worth protecting, what frightens people, and what events lead individuals to group unity. Cultural values also explain which behaviours are essential and which should be avoided. Additionally, normative values prescribe the behaviour the culture is expected to perform. These values extend to

daily communication behaviour (how people behave in a specific communication context). Understanding different cultural values helps people appreciate other people's behaviour (Frese 2015: 02).

iii. Cultural Norms

Norms are standards and rules that cultural groups live by. Norms are the agreed-upon rules and expectations that culture employs to guide its members' behaviour in any given situation (Frese 2015: 03). According to Mollen, Cheung and Stok (2022: 05), norms are learned through socialisation, which is understanding how to behave acceptably in society. Cultural norms differ from culture to culture. Firstly, masculinity versus femininity: some cultural behavioural norms are based on the dominance of masculinity over feminine behaviour. Some argue that these cultures are often more assertive, career-orientated and materialistic, with less emphasis on interpersonal relationships than the feminine culture, which is more supportive and encourages a work environment promoting sexual equality. Secondly, high context (HC) versus low context (LC) culture: HC culture communicates a lot of information with few details but based on non-verbal codes based on their traditional ways of doing things. Meanwhile, LC communication is explicit and context is highly valued. They need many details to share the meaning of the information (Hall 1976). Thirdly, individualism versus collectivism: Some cultures prioritise placing a group above others, while others prioritise uniqueness. If an individual is born into a collective culture, they would put family or organisational needs above their own. Individuals born into an individualistic culture would likely consider their career and needs before organising (Vossen 2021:03).

Norms are rules that merge and form a culture's beliefs and values. Norms can be readily observed because they are formed by people's behaviours. Norms exist for a large diversity of behaviours and they include social routines. For example, norms guide how people greet each other within a culture. Social habits drive public interactions, including how to engage in a conversation, what to talk about, and the manner in which transitions occur within an exchange. Norms dictate how an individual is expected to behave when communicating. Due to different collateral backgrounds, Radio Al Ansaar employees' have their own rules to judge behaviours and social routines. Different norms may create misunderstandings in an intercultural environment (Mollen, Cheung and Stok 2022: 03).

iv. Symbols

A symbol, as a component of culture, represents something different. Symbols can substitute spoken messages when they are used to recognise and direct attention to what they appoint. Characters are primarily based on comparison and resemblance. Signs do not depend on language; they can communicate across linguistic barriers. These days, symbols represent and simplify things; practically anyone can function independently because symbols allow people to find the places they need (Kubot 2019:55).

v. Culture and Perception

Fielding and Cillas (2014:24) say people share how they view the world. Before learning any other culture, people already have their own frame of reference. Some of the structures of authority are related to the values of the cultural group they belong to. They emphasise the need for shared experiences and meanings for successful communication, which are particularly important in intercultural communication because the idea of a culture implies a group of people. These cultural patterns of perception are developed through interactions with different groups. Perceptions are like those of other individuals who belong to the same cultural groups. Culture can form only if those symbolic ideas are shared with a relatively large group (Fernández-Hoya and Cáceres-Zapatero 2022: 03). Perception is how we make sense of the social and physical worlds. They state that perception is the process of selecting, organising and interpreting data in a way that allows people to make sense of their world. The perception method mediates people's information and knowledge about their social and physical world. The shared symbols that form the basis of culture are ideas about beliefs (Fielding and Cilliers 2014: 24).

vi. Culture is Dynamic

Fernández-Hoya and Cáceres-Zapatero (2022: 07) state that another crucial feature of culture is its dynamic and constantly evolving nature, which can often cause conflict among people from diverse backgrounds. According to (Wesch 2020: 01). People from a particular culture are not identical and different cultures have intercultural struggles. For example, when reference is made to black culture or Indian culture, the diversity within that culture is ignored. The black people's culture may refer to Zulu people, or Xhosa people, who speak isiZulu or isiXhosa. The label of "black people" thus obscures incredible diversity. Similarly, "Indian people" could refer to the Indians from South Africa, the Arabic from Sudan, or the Indians from Pakistan.

As a multicultural workplace, Radio Al Ansaar employees deal with the challenges and problems of establishing a fruitful dialogue in the workplace environment and communicating effectively with others who do not necessarily share the same cultural backgrounds. Cultural differences are also related to gender, age, religion and social status (Wesch 2020:01). How people think and do things as members of society becomes their culture as a society. The environment plays a vital role in shaping people's behaviours and thoughts. Society shapes thoughts, influencing and affecting how an individual communicates with others externally and in the community. From this definition, it is evident that culture relates to how people make meaning of the environment. It can be argued that what people do cannot be explained without culture because there is no meaning attached to an individual's behaviours or specific practices (Trenholm 2020: 342).

2.3.3.3 Characteristics of Culture

While there are many definitions of what culture is and does, there is a community of agreement on what constitutes significant characteristics. Examining these characteristics will provide insight into how culture is a barrier to effective communication. According to Burke (2019: 10), cultures around the world share four common characteristics: culture is shared, it is learned, it is based on symbols and it is integrated. The members of a culture share a set of ideals, values and standards of behaviour. These elements give meaning to their lives and bind them together as a culture.

- **Culture can be learned:** According to Kaluarachchi (2022: 04), culture is not genetic; people are not born with culture. People learn culture (religion, language and values) from their upbringing. People also learn about culture as they grow up through enculturation or socialisation. Culture can be known formally and informally through different institutions such as churches, mosques and synagogues. For example, an individual can learn about the history of their culture at school. But they can also learn about their culture informally from family, friends, or the media. We imitate others, absorb communications with others and learn culture in the process. For example, individuals instinctively understand the appropriate distance to maintain when engaged in conversation, even though it was not taught to them directly. This part of culture is absorbed unconsciously. All humans have the exact basic physical needs, such as food, but how people meet those needs differs based on culture. Diverse cultures eat at various times of the day and prepare food differently. The individuals did not discover this behaviour but learned it from other people. Culture tells us how to fulfil our needs and this is done through enculturation. Each person knows how their culture does things and how their culture satisfies their human needs (Kaluarachchi 2022: 04).

- **Culture is shared:** Culture is something a group of people shares—shared practices and understanding. Culture is not based on individual thinking or behaviours but on a group of people in a society. Culture is shared between people, meaning they all behave and think analogously because they grew up in the same culture. People from the same culture can interact and communicate with each other without constant misunderstanding, mainly because everyone in that culture understands each other's thoughts and actions. Various aspects of culture, like religious beliefs, are shared from person to person. Individual people in a culture have different visions of culture. For example, culture is different based on things like gender and age. Different genders have distinct roles in society, so their experience of culture is different (Kaluarachchi 2022: 04).
- **Culture is symbolic:** A symbol is something that represents something else. Symbols are different in every culture and they are inconsistent. Signs have meaning only when people in a culture agree on their use. Language is one of the essential symbolic components of culture (Kubota 2019:55).
- **Culture is integrated:** These parts of a culture are interconnected and known as holistic. The different features of culture are related to one another and to understand a culture, one must learn about all its parts, not just a few (Ahmed 2022: 03).

Organisations are becoming more globalised, and many companies are following global models. Therefore, cultural diversities are growing in organisations and communication challenges are also increasing for the diverse cultural groups in multicultural firms. So, while working in an environment where people from different cultures work together, problems in intercultural communication usually arise. Acquiring an understanding of diverse cultures has become imperative in multicultural settings in this era of modernisation, and adapting and grasping organisational culture may seem straightforward. Due to this, having a fair understanding of organisational culture and subsequent knowledge of interculturalism is a necessity because patterns of thoughts, beliefs, values, perceptions and expectations vary from culture to culture. To get a deeper understanding of cultural and intercultural barriers, the theories of Hofstede (2010), Hall (1976), Meyer (2014), Bennett (1986) and Gudykunst (1998), along with their reviews, are explained in the following sections.

2.4 Intercultural Communication Barriers Within Organisations

Understanding the origins and types of cultural barriers is paramount in intercultural communication. The multi-view approach is a comprehensive approach to the intricate dynamics contributing to

cultural barriers. As the study delves into the intricacies of intercultural communication barriers, it will explore the nuanced aspects of ethnocentrism, cultural stereotypes, prejudice, racism and the subtle yet impactful differences in verbal and non-verbal communication. Recognising and comprehending these barriers is pivotal for fostering effective intercultural interactions among employees. Moreover, within the organisational context, the significance of intercultural communication becomes increasingly evident. Organisations like radio stations operate in diverse and globalised environments where effective communication across cultural boundaries is essential for collaboration, innovation and overall success. Hence, a profound exploration of the models explaining cultural barriers and the importance of intercultural communication in organisations is imperative for this study to navigate the complexities of today's interconnected world.

2.4.1 Models explaining the origins of cultural barriers: The Multi-View Approach.

The models of communication and culture in the context of multicultural settings are covered in the preceding paragraphs to make it evident that intercultural communication relates to communication among people from various cultural backgrounds. Cultural differences raise the possibility of misunderstandings and conflict. Thus, the study of intercultural communications aims to comprehend how customs from different cultures affect people's attitudes, behaviours and beliefs. Therefore, this study seeks to establish the main barriers to intercultural communication among employees at Radio Al Ansaar.

The theories of Hofstede (2010), Hall (1976), Meyer (2014), Bennett (1986) and Gudykunst (1998), along with their reviews, are explained below. The study of intercultural communication has expanded over the past few decades to cover a diverse range of concepts of communication and culture and the combination of both to get a deeper understanding of cultural and intercultural barriers. The five intercultural communication theories/models listed below will provide more knowledge of the difficulties in intercultural communication and point in the right direction for how organisations like radio stations with multicultural employees can enhance communication and foster more fruitful cross-cultural relationships among their staff.

2.4.1.1 Cultural Dimensions Theory Framework (2010)

Hofstede and Minkov (2010: 01) listed five cultural dimensions of organisational culture. These five dimensions are *individualism versus collectivism*, *power distance*, *uncertainty avoidance*, *masculinity versus femininity* and *orientation*. Lahti and Valo (2017: 08-09) asserts that Hofstede's cultural

framework is a well-known model that helps us understand cultural differences and their impact on various aspects of work and life. The framework consists of six cultural dimensions that can be used to analyse and compare different cultures. When applied to managing cultural diversity at South African radio stations, it can provide valuable insights into effectively managing a culturally diverse workforce. Hofstede and Minkov (2010: 03) explain the five cultural dimensions below:

- **Individualism versus collectivism:** Hofstede and Minkov (2010: 03) state that people in an individualistic community like to live independently and maintain privacy. Individuals prioritise themselves above a group, as seen in South African White communities, which places more pressure on the individual goals and consider group goals as secondary. The purposes of the community or society are given precedence over those of the individual in collectivist cultures. According to Hofstede and Minkov (2010: 03), collectivist people, like those in some black communities in South Africa, assist one another and care for their families, whereas individualist people are individually responsible for themselves. This may result in misconceptions when various personnel operate together as a team.
- **Power distance:** According to Hofstede and Minkov (2010: 04), power distance refers to the power held in diverse cultures; in some cultures, inequality is distributed, while in others, it is equally divided within the whole group without considering gender. The power of inequality distribution must be accepted by less powerful members of the organisation and institutions. In most organisations and institutions, individuals with less power must respect seniors and people with high power/authority. Power distance also points out the social classes and organisational structure, which are vital for building relations with leaders and followers of society and organisations. There is a sizable power difference between people in positions of authority and those outside a high-power distance society. Subordinates are frequently rigidly adhered to. In contrast, there is less focus on hierarchy and greater individual decision-making authority in a low-power distance culture. This can hinder efficient communication between top and bottom management in a multicultural workplace (Hofstede and Minkov 2010:04).
- **Uncertainty avoidance:** Hofstede and Minkov (2010: 05) define how various cultures or communities respond to uncertainties. It speaks to how societies and organisations handle ambiguity. Group or organisation members try to reduce tension by adhering to its fundamental and widely accepted standards and practices. The potential for unforeseen events that might harm an organisation or society's ability to function is mostly inferred by civilisations with significant levels of uncertainty. According to Hofstede and Minkov (2010:05), people from different cultures and civilisations have various ways of coping with the stress brought on by unclear conditions for people from different cultures. Technology can assist individuals in

defending their cultures from the uncertainty brought on by other people's actions and embracing the certainty they cannot protect themselves against. For example, in a diverse workplace, some employees might strongly emphasise following rules and procedures, while others might believe in taking risks and innovating. This can lead to better communication and distribution of the organisation's operations.

- **Masculinity and femininity:** The issue with gender roles highlighted by masculinity and femininity. This dimension deals with the problem of gender roles, which is crucial for any community and can be resolved in various ways. Strong ideals like assertiveness, rivalry and success predominate in a masculine culture. Masculinity results from problems in societies where men hold all the power and authority and women's rights are ignored. Feminist culture, on the other hand, shows soft values like concern for others, close connections and the welfare of others/employees. For instance, employees with highly masculine cultures place a lot of weight on rivalry at work. In contrast, employees in intensely feminine cultures place more value on gender equality and work-life balance (Hofstede and Minkov 2010: 03).
- **Long-term orientation versus short-term orientation:** The qualities of the past and present are fostered by a short-term emphasis. It emphasises adhering to tradition, defending others and upholding social duties. Long-term orientation, on the other hand, focuses on future-oriented values. Based on diverse cultural perspectives, long-term orientation and short-term orientation are distinct from one another. Employees may, for instance, believe in future planning while others may believe in the present and satisfaction (Hofstede and Minkov 2010: 03).

Review of Hofstede's cultural framework: The theory examines how men and women see masculinity and femininity, how societies and people relate to one another, and how they respond to communication challenges brought on by cultural differences. Huang and Crotts (2019: 02) state that the model impacts the management environment in companies with diverse workforces. In the context of radio stations, understanding these cultural dimensions helps adapt communication strategies, decision-making processes and content creation to align with the values and preferences of the multicultural teams, employees and audience.

2.4.1.2 High-context versus low-context cultural theory (1976)

Edward Hall (1976) developed a communication theory emphasising high-context and low-context cultures like Meyer (2014). Hall (1976) divides civilisations into several groups and describes how different cultural groups communicate with one another. Different cultures share in various ways;

some do so overtly (low-context culture), while others do so covertly (high-context culture). Communication styles that differ between cultures may cause misunderstandings or misinterpretations.

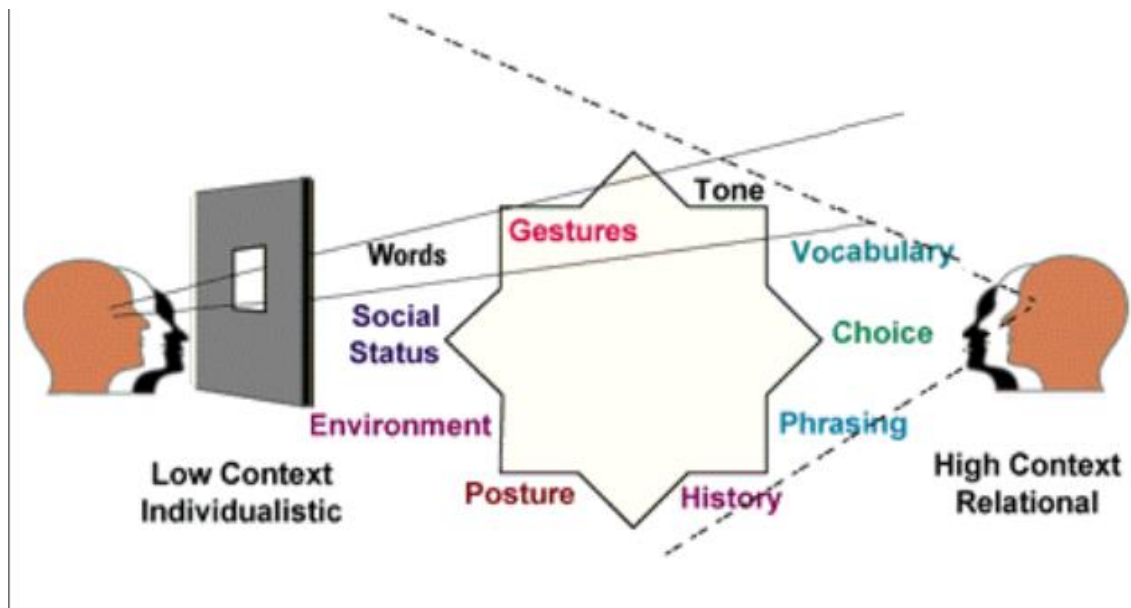


Figure 2.4. High context culture versus Low context culture (source: Hall, 1976).

Figure 2.4 (above) shows that the problem arises when people from two cultures, LC and HC, work together to achieve specific goals. Information conveyed through **high-context** communication may signify multiple things. The recipient must have extra information, such as examples, to decode and comprehend the message. There is less written information and less communication that is orally clear. Those welcomed as members and viewed as outsiders have clearly defined borders. People are relational and base their decisions and actions on close, in-person interactions, frequently revolving around a single, authoritative figure. Indian and White cultures are more prevalent in South Africa (Hall 1976).

LC, conversely, due to their more introverted interpersonal interactions, South African black societies like the Zulu, Xhosa and others are considered low-context civilisations. For communicators to comprehend the message, this information is optional. Information and communication with little context have only one single meaning. The message's intent may be decoded without any extra information. It is rule-oriented and participants follow established norms. More knowledge has been formalised and made available to the public. There is a distinct separation of time, place, activities and connections, emphasising a sequential approach. Relationships are longer-lasting and with more

people. Knowledge may be transferred more often. The focus is task-centred, with primary considerations in decisions and actions centred around the distribution of duties and what has to be done (Hall 1976).

When individuals from two cultures, LC and HC, collaborate to accomplish a specific objective or goal, issues start to occur. People from LC cultures are more professional and prioritise formal agreements, whereas people from HC cultures value interpersonal relationships and informal contracts. LC cultures value directness and specificity in communication, whereas HC cultures place more emphasis on establishing relationships before addressing agreements. According to Hall's (1990) theory, in a LC culture, followers are more dependent, such as black employees in South Africa who listen to and obey the boss's views. For example, the Swedish/white manager/leader wants the workers/followers to take full responsibility for their jobs and make them feel more independent, unlike the South African black workforce, which rigorously obeys the boss's orders.

Review on high-context versus low-context cultural theory: Hall's (1976) theory is a fixture in almost all the academic literature that has anything to do with intercultural comparison, especially in communication (Driskill 1997) and (Hunsinger 2006). This indicated its importance in the cultural area. The theory is primarily practical for organisations with multicultural employees to communicate effectively. This helps radio stations adapt their messaging styles accordingly.

2.4.1.3 Erin Meyer; The Cultural Map (2014)

Erin Meyer: The cultural map (2014) represents an essential contribution to the multicultural organisational landscape of today. This cultural map has significant value for ICC members in the intercultural workplace. There are eight levels of tools in the cultural map that may differ between cultures and societies or from culture to organisation: *communicating, leading, assessing, persuasion, trust, decision-making, disagreeing and scheduling*. Based on these points, the theory establishes two significant classes of culture: high-context culture and low-context culture (Alexa 2022: 03). The following paragraphs show how the scale instruments differ between LC and HC.

- **Communicating:** Communication takes the form of LC and HC cultures. Communication with facial expressions is easy and simple within a low-context culture. The speaker is speaking directly. On the contrary, in a high-context culture, communication is nuanced. The message needs to be more precise and explained better. Given the differences, there are problems if authority and the subordinates or the two communicators are from different LC and HC contexts. For example, South Africa tends to be low in context. Mainly, the white community

is characterised by such an everyday context, but the black community is distinguished by a high-context culture (Alexa 2022: 04).

- **Leading:** There are two types of leadership in organisations: egalitarian and hierarchic. There is little distance between authority and its subordinates under egalitarianism. The organisation's structure is horizontal and does not follow a hierarchical structure. The length of communication between staff is high, even within a hierarchical culture. Before subordinates carry out their duties, the chief of staff must approve them. An organisation is structured with a hierarchy, which takes time for responses to be received and inhibits the growth and functioning of the organisation. For example, most workplaces are hierarchical in South Africa and those in higher positions make the final decisions after consensus with subordinates (Alexa 2020: 05).
- **Evaluating:** Is the process by which feedback is given and received. Direct feedback entails providing negative feedback is provided in a blunt, plain and honest way without being diluted by positive feedback. Indirect feedback on the other hand, involves delivering negative feedback in soft, subtle and diplomatic language, while positive feedback is given (Alexa 2020: 04).
- **Persuading:** Persuading focuses on principle first. HC believes in the method of application first wherein individuals are trained to begin with facts, statements, or views before adding concepts that can underpin their conclusions and explain to them if necessary. Conversely LC agrees with Principle 1, advocating for individuals to develop theories or complex concepts before presenting facts, statements, or opinions (Alexa 2020: 05).
- **Trusting:** Trusting stresses the task-based and relation-based approaches of a culture. In a relation-based culture (HC), relations are built on personal binding, not on the hard work on the task. In a task-based organisational culture, employees' performance is the cornerstone of trust. For example, in task-based (LC), "you do good work consistently" means "you are reliable." "I enjoy working with you" means "I trust you." While in relationship-based approaches of a culture (HC): "I've seen who you are at a deep level; I've shared personal time with you over meals and drinks, and I know others well who trust you" means "I trust you" (Alexa 2020: 06).
- **Deciding: Decision-making** is based on two variables: LC as consensual and HC as top-down. Consensual is when decisions are taken in groups by consensus of the work team, as described above. Top-down is when individuals make decisions, usually led by a boss (Alexa 2020: 06).
- **Disagreeing:** Disagreements are categorised into confrontation (LC) and avoidance (HC). Confrontational: For a team or organisation, disagreement and debate are positive. An open

confrontation is appropriate and will have no detrimental effect on the relationship. Avoiding confrontation: Disagreement and debate harm the team or organisation. Unnecessary conflict is not advisable and will compromise the group's unity or hurt relations (Alexa 2020: 07).

- **Scheduling:** The timing of scheduling is governed by two variables: length and flexibility. Linear time focuses on the date and sticks to the plan. Attention is paid to promptness and good organisation. Flexible working time allows for task changes when opportunities arise. We can deal with a lot of things at the same time and there is nothing wrong with interruptions (Alexa 2020: 07).

Review of Meyer's (2014) theory: An eight-point scale is a fantastic tool for individuals working internationally or wanting to manage cross-culturalism. It is so helpful to managers and employees to work and communicate effectively. In a diverse workplace, employees need to understand human nature and a range of cultural norms to communicate effectively, and Meyer's (2014) eight-point scale covers the skills to achieve that. This model visualises various cultures on a map, highlighting vital cultural traits like communication style, hierarchy and decision-making. It assists in understanding and bridging cultural gaps within radio stations.

2.4.1.4 Anxiety/uncertainty management theory (AUM) (1998)

According to Gudykunst's (1998) idea, people may feel anxious or uncertain while talking between cultures, which may change how they communicate. In a cross-cultural communication framework, the theory describes how individuals react to and control feelings of anxiety and uncertainty (Lund and Walson 2020:06). AUM theory is more applicable in international communication since individuals from other cultures frequently have distinct norms, values and communication styles. These differences can hamper communication between individuals from different cultures, which may lead to uncertainty and fear. While the structure has been modified to enhance readability and clarity, the construction of this model adheres to the framework proposed by Gudykunst (1998) and aligns with the application of AUM to intercultural adjustment training (Yusof, Kaur and Cheah Lynn-Sze 2017: 01).

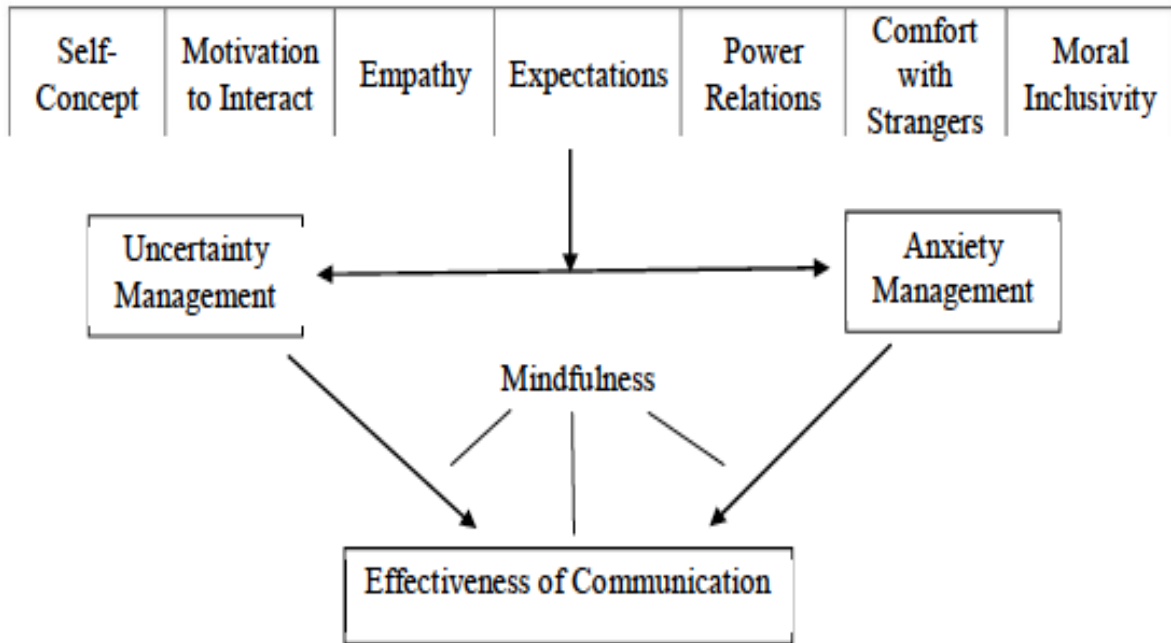


Figure 2.5 A Model of Anxiety-Uncertainty in Intercultural Communication (Lund and Walston 2020: 09).

Figure 2.5 (above) shows the seven factors contributing to uncertainty and anxiety in this model; self-concept: how one views oneself, motivation to interact/engage in the communication, perspective or situation; expectations for how the exchange is likely to proceed; the participants' power dynamics; comfort in engaging with strangers; and receptivity to others' ethical perspectives (Lund and Walston 2020: 08). Anxiety or doubt will surface when faced with interpersonal contact, depending on how much each aspect affects the individual. The experiences of people with communication disorders, such as autism, can be better understood using this paradigm. They typically struggle to comprehend or sympathise with other people's actions, and they may also have a distorted view of who they are. As a result, it is not unexpected that persons with autism frequently shy away from social settings and prefer to interact with a limited group of people they are familiar with on a personal level (Lund and Walston 2020: 09).

This model gives a mediating component through which the problem of uncertainty/anxiety may be reduced while effective communication is accomplished, in addition to describing the problem of uncertainty/anxiety. Gudykunst held that decreasing fear or uncertainty is necessary for effective cross-cultural communication. According to this idea, four strategies—mindfulness, relaxation, cognitive restructuring and skill acquisition—can be used by individuals to cope with worry or uncertainty. He

also proposed two methods for dealing with tension and anxiety when communicating across cultural boundaries: 1. Attempting to understand and respect the customs and values of a different culture. 2. Looking for an interpreter or mediator to aid with communication. The hypothesis contends that practical communication skills are essential for reducing stress and uncertainty during cross-cultural interactions. This entails successfully communicating in many cultural situations and comprehending and adjusting to various communication styles. Employees may strengthen connections and enhance cooperation by utilising cognitive and behavioural methods to increase effective intercultural communication (Lund and Walson 2020:11). Bias/prejudice is the main topic of this theory. Both argue that anxiety may have harmful consequences on intergroup interactions and point to the arousal it causes as one of the primary causes of these effects (Lund and Walston 2020: 12).

Review on anxiety/uncertainty management theory (AUM): According to Lund and Walston (2020:09–11), successful intercultural communication depends significantly on eliminating fear and uncertainty. It examined whether different people had different approaches to lowering tension during the initial contact. According to William Gudykunst's theory, people use other techniques depending on whether their society is individualistic or collectivistic. According to this notion, intercultural communication frequently benefits from a healthy amount of worry and uncertainty since it helps to develop good intercultural intonation.

2.4.1.5 The development model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) (1986)

The developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) was created by Bennett (1986, 1993b) to explain how people construe cultural differences. Using a grounded theory approach, Bennett applied concepts from cybernetic constructivism to his observations of intercultural adaptation and identified six orientations that people seem to move through in their acquisition of intercultural competence. The model is based on the assumption that a person's potential competence in intercultural relations will increase as his experience of cultural differences becomes more complex and sophisticated (Ormsby 2021:03).

As we go into the next millennium, it is well known that effective intercultural communications are essential nationally and globally. Individuals should develop intercultural competence since we deal with intercultural situations on a daily basis, both locally and globally. In addition, to be effective in intercultural communication, people need to be interested in other cultures, sensitive enough to notice cultural differences, willing to change their behaviour and respectful of different cultures. Intercultural sensitivity is the ability to distinguish and understand sufficient intercultural differences, while

intercultural competence means that one can think and act coherently in an intercultural setting (Ormsby 2021: 03).

(Ormsby 2021: 03) believes that perception is crucial in shaping the experience of reality and guiding our understanding of intercultural events; people are building boundaries between themselves and each other. Denial is the most ethnocentrism construction, in which perceptions of people from different cultural contexts can only be obtained by looking at an ambiguous category of 'other'. DMIS explains how individuals are learning to appreciate and comprehend cross-cultural diversity on a deeper level. The model comprises several phases that address the problem and descriptions of the experiences at each step refer to the stage's perceptual structure (Badola and Agrawal 2019: 04).

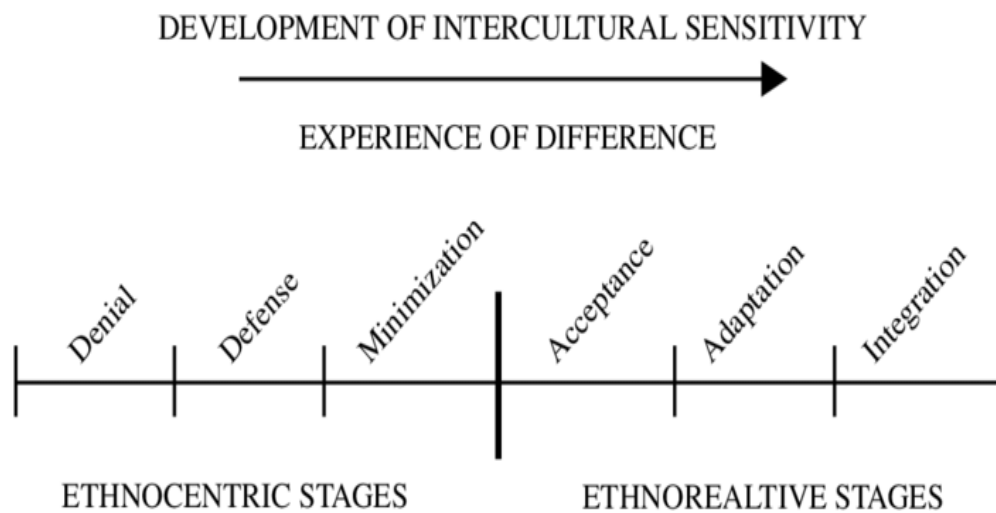


Figure 2.6: The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Source: Badola and Agrawal 2019: 19).

Movement through the above stages (Figure 2.6) depends on the need to become more competent in communicating outside one's primary social context (Hammer, Bennett and Wiseman 2020: 03). The first three stages of *denial*, *defence* and *minimisation* are ethnocentric, meaning they refer to issues associated with experiencing one's own culture.

- **Denial:** The perception of one's own culture as the only true one is referred to as the cultural difference. Other cultures are either not subject to any discrimination at all or are loosely defined. Because of this, cultural differences are either not felt at all or are thought about as undifferentiated by others, such as a "foreigner" or "immigrant." When cultural differences are brought up, people with denial worldviews often show no interest in them. Yet they could take

decisive action to eliminate a difference if it bothers them. In a more extreme denial, one may believe that only members of one's culture qualify as actual "humans" while seeing others as inferior life forms in the environment (Bennet 2017: 04).

- **Defence:** against cultural difference is the state in which one's cultural experience is used as the only viable one. People who serve in the military have developed an ability to discriminate between other cultures, so they perceive such differences as more realistic than those of denial. But to achieve a human experience similar to that of the other, the structure of the defence worldview is not sufficiently complex. The cultural differences experienced by people with a defence perspective are still stereotypical. However, they seem natural in comparison to the denial condition. Therefore, cultural differences are more openly threatening to people in defence than those in denial. In a world where one culture is superior and other cultures are inferior, the world is organised into two types: "us" and "them". People of dominant cultures are likely to feel that defence is an attack on their values, often perceived as a privilege by others. Compared to dominant groups, people of no dominant cultures may be more inclined to see defence as discovering and validating their distinctive cultural identity (Bennet 2017: 05).
- **Minimisation:** Cultural difference is the condition in which aspects of a culture's worldview are considered universal. Subsuming differences into common categories mitigates the risk associated with cultural differences encountered in defence. Cultural differences, for example, may be offset by the tremendous similarity of people to each other in terms of their biology and physical universalism. It is then possible to group experience with the similarity of natural biological processes, for example, needs and incentives, into other naturally occurring phenomena. The expertise of similarity might also be experienced in the assumed sociocultural applicability of religious, economic, or philosophical concepts (transcendent universalism). Other cultures may be trivialised or romanticised because these universal "absolutes" obscure the profound cultural differences. Minimisation people presume that things are similar and they may want to change the behaviour of others in such a way as to match their expectations. Particularly for people of dominant cultures, minimisation tends to mask recognition of their own culture (ethnicity) and the institutional privilege it affords its members (Bennet 2017: 06).

Bennett (2017:02) further explained the other three stages: *acceptance, adaptation and integration*. These stages are ethno-relative, meaning they refer to issues associated with experiencing all cultures as alternative ways of organising reality

- **Acceptance:** Cultural difference is the state in which a person has an experience of his culture as only one of several equally complicated worldviews. People with this worldview can perceive other beings as unlike themselves but equally human by discriminating between cultures and creating a met-level consciousness. People in Acceptance may develop general cultural categories that allow them to generate a broad range of appropriate cultural contrasts between many cultures. They are more than just experts in one or more cultures, although they might be able to tell how cultural differences operate throughout a broad range of social interactions. Acceptance does not imply agreement; some cultural differences may be seen as discriminatory, but the judgement has no ethnocentrism when excluding equal humanity. The main problem of "value relativity" must be addressed from this perspective. Considering this relativism, human beings need to learn how to sustain their ethics if we accept values according to cultural context and thus become able to see the world as organised by various matters (Bennet 2017: 07).
- **Cultural adaptation:** Intercultural communication is based on how people react to another culture in several ways. Nevertheless, there often needs to be more understanding of the intercultural concept of adaptation. To clarify this concept, it is appropriate to differentiate adaptation from assimilation. Assimilation is the process of socialisation that seeks to replace one's original worldview with that of the host culture. Assimilation is substitutive. On the contrary, it is an adaptation process that enables one to expand his worldview and include behaviour and values that align with a host culture. Furthermore, the assumed result of assimilation is becoming a bicultural or multicultural person. Such a person has new characteristics, but not at the price of their original socialisation. The issue of identity relating to adaptation has been quite complicated, with one of the new frontiers in intercultural communications being knowledge of it (Bennett 2017:24). According to Bennett (2017:25), cultural adaptation is not an ongoing phenomenon. Cultural adaptation is, as all human abilities are, developing at different stages and in a comparable manner to ethical or cognitive development (Piaget 1954: 25). Intercultural practitioners in charge of facilitating the exchange of cultures may identify their staff's level of development and accordingly design interventions that are more effective through the description of stages of development (Bennett 2017:25).
- **Integration:** A sustainable integration of cultural differences in communication can be achieved by resolving genuine identity. Transmission can shift from in-context to between-context states in this integrated condition, allowing for the meta-coordination of meaning and action that defines intercultural communication. At a personal level, integration is considered a form of developmental liminality where the experience of oneself has been expanded by movement in and out of different cultural worldviews. Cultural liminality can be used as a tool

for building cultural bridges and performing complicated intercultural mediations. The integration organisations are promoting the establishment of third cultures as a result of mutual adaptation to multicultural working groups, expecting these solutions to add value (Bennet 2017: 08-09).

Review of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity: Milton Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity describes the developmental stages along which people can progress toward a deeper understanding and appreciation of cross-cultural differences. DMIS builds upon a thick description of human behaviours afforded by its quantitative measures model and also offers insights into the stages of intercultural sensitivity, from ethnocentrism to ethnorelative. It helps individuals and teams progress towards more culturally competent communication.

Implementing the above models within organisations, such as radio stations functioning in a multicultural environment, can significantly improve intercultural communication. By embracing these models, radio stations can foster a deeper understanding of cultural difficulties, paving the way for enhanced cultural sensitivity. This creates awareness, facilitating more effective content production and audience engagement. Utilising the above models becomes a guiding framework, enabling organisations to navigate the diverse cultural landscape with greater finesse, create content and contribute to an interconnected media environment.

The above section delved into the intricate web of intercultural communication theories; it is evident that these frameworks serve as invaluable tools for understanding the complexities that arise in intercultural communication. The above theories also shed light on the cultural challenges and barriers that employees may encounter. Therefore, the below section will thoroughly examine the cultural barriers that play a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of intercultural communication.

2.4.2 Cultural Barriers to Intercultural Communication

Cultural barriers in intercultural communication within organisations refer to the challenges and obstacles that arise when individuals from different cultural backgrounds interact and collaborate. These barriers can impede effective communication, understanding and collaboration among employees. Cultural barriers encompass differences in language, values, norms, communication styles, behaviours and expectations. They can hinder the exchange of information, ideas and opinions, leading to misunderstandings, conflicts and reduced productivity. Cultural differences cause cultural barriers. The message could be more effective with these cultural differences. Miscommunication occurs when the communication process goes differently from the participants' expectations. When the behaviours

of the sender do not confirm these expectations, the receiver would likely develop a negative attitude towards the sender, which could lead to prejudice and stereotypes (Kaluarachchi 2022: 04). Below are some of the main cultural barriers to effective intercultural communication and their integration and implications related to the cultural barriers' theories mentioned above:

2.4.2.1 Ethnocentrism

Yousaf *et al.* (2022: 01) define ethnocentrism as a belief that one's race or ethnic group is the most important and that its culture is superior in some or all ways to that of other groups. Nameni (2020: 02) states that all cultures have a significant ethnocentric tendency to assess others' acts using the categories of one's own culture. Ethnocentrism may manifest itself in various aspects of cultural patterns. Cultures teach people how to behave and view the world, consequently people believe that the values of their culture are natural and correct. Individuals with ethnocentrism need help interpreting messages effectively. When a message is not correctly interpreted, intercultural barriers arise during the execution of communication processes. As a result, ethnocentrism might be considered one of the barriers to intercultural competence.

The intense sense of group identity or attachment produced by culture and the propensity to consider one's own culture superior to others can lead to ethnocentrism. Gradual acquisition of the characteristics and norms of a culture or group by a person or another culture can also be a precursor to ethnocentrism. Underexposure to other cultures is another factor that can contribute to ethnocentrism. The ability to accept and understand different customs can provoke feelings of ethnocentrism. Feeling at ease when communicating and being around people of the same culture is a natural consequence, as they share the same social norms.

On the contrary, an individual may feel uneasy when communicating with people from diverse cultures with different social norms and values. However, viewing and evaluating these differences are manifestations of ethnocentrism. It should be self-evident that ethnocentric character acts as a barrier to effective intercultural communication (Bhargava 2021: 03).

Gudykunst's AUM theory (anxiety-uncertainty management) focuses on how individuals manage anxiety and uncertainty during intercultural communication. Ethnocentrism can be seen as a source of anxiety and uncertainty in intercultural interactions. Individuals with ethnocentric views may need help navigating communication with those from different cultures due to a need for more understanding and familiarity. Gudykunst's theory suggests that effective communication involves

managing these anxieties and uncertainties, implying that overcoming ethnocentrism is crucial for successful intercultural communication (Nameni 2020: 06).

Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) outlines stages in which individuals develop intercultural competence. Ethnocentrism may manifest in the earlier stages of the model, where individuals are more likely to see their own culture as superior. The DMIS model provides a framework for understanding and overcoming ethnocentrism by guiding individuals towards higher levels of sensitivity and adaptability. Acknowledging ethnocentrism as a potential barrier aligns with Bennett's theory, emphasising the importance of progressing through the developmental stages for effective intercultural communication (Umarkulova 2023: 02). Hofstede's cultural dimension theory identifies cultural variations in societies, including individualism-collectivism, power distance and uncertainty avoidance. Ethnocentrism, with its belief in the superiority of one's culture, can be linked to Hofstede's dimension of individualism-collectivism. Recognising ethnocentrism as a manifestation of cultural differences underscores the relevance of Hofstede's theory in understanding and addressing communication challenges. Strategies for effective intercultural communication can be derived from Hofstede's insights into cultural dimensions (Abbasi, Umrani and Aftab 2022: 02).

Understanding ethnocentrism through the lenses of these communication theories, it becomes evident that overcoming ethnocentrism is not only a personal development process (DMIS) but also involves managing anxieties and uncertainties (AUM) while recognising and adapting to cultural dimensions theory. Combining these theories provides a comprehensive approach to tackling ethnocentrism as a barrier to effective intercultural communication.

2.4.2.2 Cultural Stereotypes and Prejudice

A negative attitude towards a cultural group based on little or no experience is another cause of ineffective communication. When employees believe they are being discriminated against and do not have the same chances as others, it is more probable that cross-cultural barriers may arise throughout the communication process. As a result, stereotypes are one of the most significant sources of cross-cultural communication difficulties (Seeger and Gustafsson 2021: 07). Having specific preconceived ideas or opinions not based on reason, experience, or evidence is prejudice; for example, having an adverse opinion about people from a particular cultural group, even though you may not have proof to support your argument. Discrimination comes in many forms, like racism and cultural relativity (Aitken 2021: 05).

Stereotyping is the process of creating a generalised image of a culture. Individuals from the same culture share comparable qualities and are classified as such. Culture is an example of criteria that may be used to stereotype someone (Esses 2021: 09). Every member of the cultural group is ranked the same. There are no individual differences in the culture when stereotyping. The consequence of stereotyping is that the differences among the members of any group may be overlooked and, therefore, interfere with the interpretation of the message (Adenike and Suliati 2021: 20).

Oude (2020: 02) states that cultural stereotyping based on age often manifests in preconceived notions that individuals from specific age groups conform to certain behavioural norms or preferences. These stereotypes can give rise to misunderstandings and miscommunications that hinder the appreciation of diverse cultural perspectives. For example, assuming that older individuals within a particular culture are inherently conservative or resistant to change oversimplifies their beliefs and values. Manzi *et al.* (2018: 09) state that assuming that younger members of a cultural group are always progressive can overlook the richness of traditional knowledge and practices they may uphold.

In multicultural workplaces, age-related cultural stereotypes can impact collaboration and communication. Assigning rigid cultural expectations to different age groups within a team may exclude valuable insights and hinder effective problem-solving. It is essential to recognise the diversity of experiences within each age demographic and appreciate the unique contributions individuals can make based on their cultural backgrounds (Cortland and Kinias 2019: 02). Embracing a more nuanced understanding of age and culture creates a more inclusive and harmonious working environment. Addressing age-related cultural stereotypes is crucial in the workplace and has broader societal implications. Policies and practices perpetuating age-based cultural stereotypes may inadvertently reinforce discriminatory practices (Clarke 2020: 01).

Eagly *et al.* (2020: 02) states that gender-related assumptions and stereotypes often influence how individuals are perceived in the workplace, shaping expectations about their communication styles and leadership abilities. For instance, traditional stereotypes may portray men as assertive and authoritative, while women are perceived as nurturing and cooperative. These ingrained expectations can lead to biased interpretations of individuals' behaviours, creating a challenging communication environment. For women, being assertive may be misinterpreted as aggressive, while men expressing empathy may be seen as weak. Such stereotypes create barriers that hinder effective communication by reinforcing gender norms instead of allowing individuals to express themselves authentically. In a diverse workplace, these gender-related stereotypes can exacerbate challenges in communication dynamics. When individuals feel compelled to conform to traditional gender roles, it stifles creativity and limits the potential for collaboration. A workplace that recognises and challenges these stereotypes

can cultivate an environment where individuals can express themselves authentically (Aitken 2021: 02).

Bennett's DMIS offers valuable insights into the development of intercultural competence. Individuals progressing through the stages of the model become increasingly sensitive to cultural differences. Individuals in the earlier stages may exhibit ethnocentric tendencies, reinforcing stereotypes and preconceived notions. Progression through the DMIS stages encourages individuals to move beyond these biases and develop a more nuanced understanding of cultural diversity. Recognising stereotypes as a barrier aligns with Bennett's model, emphasising the importance of advancing intercultural sensitivity for effective communication (Choi 2023: 10).

Erin Meyer's cultural map provides a framework for understanding cultural differences based on: communication style, performance evaluation and hierarchy. The cultural map helps identify the potential for misinterpretation in the context of stereotypes and prejudice. Stereotypes often arise from expecting behaviours in a target culture to align with one's cultural norms. Meyer's cultural map encourages individuals to navigate these differences consciously, fostering a more nuanced and accurate perception of cultural nuances. Incorporating the cultural map into intercultural communication strategies can aid in dismantling stereotypes and promoting a more inclusive approach to communication (Nehrbass 2021: 02).

Zhu (2020: 03-04) noted that in intercultural miscommunication, stereotypes often occur when people anticipate similar behaviours in the target culture without realising the potential for diverse interpretations. Acknowledging this, integrating Bennett's DMIS and Meyer's cultural map becomes crucial. The developmental progression outlined by Bennett helps individuals move beyond stereotypes, while Meyer's map provides a practical tool for navigating and appreciating cultural differences.

Ethnocentrism, stereotyping and prejudice are similar, and overcoming these barriers requires a commitment to learn about other cultures and to understand one's own. Lakshmipathiaiah (2020: 02) states that a willingness to explore different cultural experiences without thinking of judgement is necessary. The barriers to effective intercultural communication cannot be overcome completely. However, the requisite knowledge, skills and motivation can assist in limiting the adverse effects of ethnocentrism, stereotyping and other barriers. Moreover, if we talk about multicultural or intercultural settings, understanding organisational culture is the first step. Mollen, Cheung and Stok (2022)

defined *corporate culture* as the pattern of the basic assumption that gives a group the floor to exchange beliefs, norms and values and invent, discover, or develop in learning to cope with its problems of adoption. Organisations are becoming more globalised and many companies follow global models. Therefore, cultural diversities are growing in organisations and communication challenges are also increasing for the diverse cultural groups in multicultural firms. So, while working in an environment where people from different cultures work together, problems in intercultural communication usually arise.

2.4.2.3 Racism

Racism refers to the belief in the biological superiority of one group over another. A cultural group with a racist view may even regard other cultures associated with different races as inferior. Racism can be explicit or implicit. Racism is explicit when people make use of racist language or clearly express their feelings of superiority to members of other racial groups. Cultures have been employed to oppress an entire group of people and make it virtually impossible for their members to access political and social power. This prejudice is considered racism (Elias *et al.* 2021: 05).

Adenike and Suilat (2021: 20) recognised that racism can occur at three distinct levels: individual, institutional and cultural. At the personal level, racism is conceptually very similar to prejudice. Individual racism involves a person's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours towards people of a different racial group. At the institutional level, racism excludes people of colour from equal participation in society's institutions. Institutional racism is built into social structures like government, schools and industry practices. It leads to certain patterns of behaviours and responses to specific racial or cultural groups that allow those groups to be systematically exploited and oppressed. At the cultural level, racism denies the existence of the culture of a particular group. Cultural racism also involves the rejection by one group of the beliefs and values of another, such as the negative evaluations by whites of black cultural values (Naqvi *et al.* 2022: 04).

Banting and Thompson (2021: 02) states that in South Africa, racism has historically been a deeply rooted issue. Despite the progress made since the end of apartheid, it continues to affect the professional landscape. The country has implemented various laws and policies to address racial discrimination, such as the Employment Equity Act, which aims to promote equal opportunities and fair treatment for all employees, regardless of race. However, foreign workers may still face challenges in accessing career growth and professional development due to lingering biases. According to Agénor *et al.* (2021) the impact of racism on the career trajectories of foreign workers is particularly evident in the limited opportunities for upward mobility. Despite legal frameworks advocating for workplace

equality, subtle biases and discriminatory practices may persist, affecting performance evaluations, promotions and access to training programmes. This lack of career advancement opportunities can lead to frustration and disillusionment among foreign workers, impacting their motivation to engage fully in professional communication and collaborative efforts.

Kim *et al.* (2021: 04) state that while racism is a complex social issue, the cultural dimensions theory can indirectly contribute to it. For example, power distance might play a role in hierarchical structures perpetuating racial inequalities. Additionally, individualism-collectivism may influence attitudes towards diversity and inclusivity.

i. Individualism versus collectivism:

Individualistic Cultures: In cultures that lean towards individualism, where personal achievements and rights are highly valued, individuals may tend to perceive their own racial or ethnic group as superior. This individualistic mindset can contribute to explicit or implicit racist beliefs, as people may prioritise their cultural norms and view others through a lens of superiority or inferiority. **Collectivist Cultures:** On the other hand, cultures that emphasise collectivism often prioritise group harmony and cooperation. In such cultures, racism may manifest differently, with discriminatory behaviours viewed as a threat to group cohesion. However, in extreme cases, collective identity might lead to biases against those perceived as outsiders (Shao *et al.* 2020: 02).

ii. Power Distance:

High Power Distance Cultures: In cultures with high power distance, where hierarchical structures are accepted and respected, racism may be reinforced by those in positions of power. Institutional racism can be more prevalent, with discriminatory practices ingrained in social structures. Those in power may perpetuate unequal opportunities and limit access to resources based on racial or ethnic background. **Low Power Distance Cultures:** Conversely, in cultures with low power distance, emphasising equality and egalitarianism, racism might be more visible at the individual level. People may express explicit racist attitudes or behaviours due to a perceived lack of authority figures reinforcing egalitarian values (Talalova and Werthschulte 2020: 12).

iii. Uncertainty Avoidance:

High Uncertainty Avoidance Cultures: Cultures with high uncertainty avoidance may exhibit racism as a response to the discomfort caused by cultural differences. Stereotyping and prejudice may arise to simplify and categorise diverse cultural behaviours, providing a sense of certainty in an uncertain intercultural environment. **Low Uncertainty Avoidance Cultures:**

In contrast, cultures with low uncertainty avoidance may be more open to diverse perspectives, potentially reducing the likelihood of explicit racism. However, the openness to uncertainty could lead to cultural misunderstandings and misinterpretations, contributing to implicit biases if not appropriately managed. Regular communication allows for the exchange of ideas, experiences and perspectives. This is especially crucial in a diverse workplace where individuals bring different backgrounds, skills and knowledge. Regular interactions provide opportunities to learn from one another and appreciate diverse viewpoints (Xu and Cheng 2021: 03).

Hofstede's cultural dimension theory provides a valuable framework for comprehending racism by exploring how cultural values shape individuals' perceptions and behaviours. The theory identifies dimensions like individualism-collectivism, power distance and masculinity-femininity that influence societal norms and attitudes. Applying this lens to racism unveils how ingrained cultural values contribute to biased perspectives and discriminatory practices.

2.4.2.4 Verbal communication differences and barriers

Culture shapes how people express themselves, verbally or nonverbally (Kulova and Petrosyan 2019: 18). They also highlight that culture strongly influences the verbal and nonverbal symbols we use to communicate with our friends and families. The most apparent difference in verbal communication between two cultures is language. Language largely determines thought patterns. There is no question that languages are as culturally based as they are, and that language is a part of the culture. It expresses cultural values but also, to some extent, determines culture. Language is a collection of symbols, letters, or words with arbitrary meanings governed by rules and used to communicate. Language gives people a means of interacting with other members of their culture and a means of thinking. Cultural diversity in language behaviour is one of the most challenging and persistent problems encountered in intercultural communication (Abuarqoub 2019: 02).

People who speak different languages may find it challenging to communicate effectively, even with the help of interpreters or translation software. One of the most common causes of intercultural communication barriers is a need to understand the other's Language more. When people who are not fluent in a language try to communicate independently, others may need clarification on their signals, resulting in misunderstandings. For example, the common Language globally is English, yet it has different influences from country to country and for everyone. This opens the possibility of

misinterpretation of messages and ineffective communication (Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan 2019: 03). Language varies in all societies and communities. This includes different accents, pronunciations, linguistic styles and grammatical rules. This can be why some foreign employees at the diverse workplace in Durban may need help with English because they learn the other vision of English before they encounter different images of English in South Africa. The multiple meanings of words and slang may be confusing as they may not sound like dictionary words (Fomenko *et al.* 2020: 02).

Alteken *et al.* (2021:04) state that the diversity of languages can create communication problems when individuals must interact, and these problems are closely tied to cultures. Speech shapes thoughts, and language, in turn, influences thoughts, with both strongly affected by culture. People from different cultures may express themselves in the shared language with varying levels of fluency, impacting the perception of messages received from others through language varieties. Fruholz and Schweinberger (2021: 04) assert that their mother tongue and culture influence the English varieties of different groups. One's native language provides categories that influence one's perception of things.

Each person speaks differently from all others. This is related to the style and behaviour of their different languages and their diverse cultural backgrounds and beliefs. Communicators should also be aware that there are cultures that have expectations for an individual's involvement in communication. This expectation can be greater or lesser. For example, a foreign employee may prefer low involvement and not ask questions unless asked to do so at the end of a meeting at work (this is what they believe in their country of origin). In South Africa, employees are expected to be highly involved in the discussions and encouraged to ask questions and participate (Bin and Saidn 2020: 02).

English is a communication medium throughout South Africa, especially in professional workspaces. Employees from different countries use English as a foreign language in the workplace in South Africa. Most employees speak English as a second, third or foreign language. People with different cultural backgrounds have various communication and linguistic competencies in English (Voevoda 2020: 03). Due to the need for a natural learning environment, diverse employees have more difficulties learning English, especially pronunciation and oral skills. Speaking English has long been recognised as the most challenging skill to acquire or master in some countries. Diverse employees have different accents when they speak English. This must be clarified among employees. For example, Zulu employees have accents and certain sounds that are not available in English, for example, clicks like „c“, „q“, „gq“ and „xh“ (Abuarqoub 2019: 06). This creates a problem among employees as they cannot pronounce Zulu or Xhosa employees' names fluently. It is considered rude behaviour if other

cultures cannot pronounce some words correctly. Because so many variations in accents, dialects and regional peculiarities exist in English, messages are often misunderstood even when both parties speak the same language (Abuarqoub 2019: 04).

Communication is a symbolic interaction. It will never be strictly objective and carries the potential for misunderstanding. Meanings can be misunderstood. What the speaker means and what the listener hears and understands may differ. This misunderstanding is called 'bypassing'. This results from the false belief that each word has only one meaning and that words must mean themselves. When people from different cultures exchange words, the interpretation can become complex. When one uses common phrases familiar to a non-native speaker of English, the problem is magnified (Adanlawo, Reddy and Rugbeer 2021: 05).

Language can cause polarisation: the tendency to view it in the extreme, for example, beautiful or ugly, rich or poor. Polarisation can cause conflict to the point where people cannot communicate. Language is a means of communication and a tool for shaping how we think and perceive the world. Language use can reinforce existing biases and prejudices, challenge them and promote greater understanding and empathy. For example, inflammatory or divisive language can create an 'us versus them' mentality that pits people against each other and reinforces existing divides. This can lead to polarisation and conflict as people become more entrenched in their beliefs and less willing to engage in constructive dialogue (DeVito 2019: 87). According to Kulova and Petrosyan (2019: 18), culture heavily influences verbal communication, influencing expressions and understanding. They emphasise that verbal and nonverbal symbols used in communication are deeply rooted in culture, leading to significant challenges, with language being a primary contributor.

Hofstede's cultural dimension theory sheds light on the impact of cultural values on language behaviour. Varied accents, pronunciations and linguistic styles are manifestations of cultural diversity in language use. This becomes especially prominent in diverse workplaces, such as those in Durban, where employees with different language backgrounds may require assistance with English due to the diverse perception of the language present in South Africa. The theory underscores the need for cultural sensitivity in communication to bridge language gaps (Shao *et al.* 2020: 02). Bennett's DMIS provides a framework for understanding how individuals progress in intercultural competence. It is crucial to address the issues arising from verbal communication differences. For example, an individual in the earlier stages of the model may need help comprehending the communication style of someone from a different linguistic background, leading to potential misunderstandings. Advancing through the stages fosters adaptability and effective communication (Mellizo 2023: 01). Erin Meyer's cultural map, highlighting communication styles across cultures, directly relates to verbal communication barriers.

Understanding these differences becomes essential when individuals from cultures with distinct communication preferences interact, such as high-context versus low-context cultures. The map aids in navigating the nuances of verbal communication, minimising potential misinterpretations (Bannikova and Mykhaylyova 2023: 01).

Verbal communication barriers are intricately connected to the above theories. Language is a cultural product of high-context and low-context dynamics. The cultural dimension theory emphasises the impact of cultural values on language diversity, especially relevant in South Africa's diverse workplace. Bennett's DMIS helps address challenges from different linguistic backgrounds, fostering intercultural competence. Erin Meyer's cultural map assists in navigating varied communication styles, offering practical insights to minimise misunderstandings. The theories and models of high- and low-context, cultural dimensions, DMIS and cultural map provide a comprehensive framework for understanding and addressing verbal communication differences in diverse intercultural settings.

2.4.2.5 Non-verbal communication Differences

Nonverbal communication is related to culture. Culture influences nonverbal communication. Non-verbal gestures and perception of time and space differ from culture to culture. Communication is the dynamic process of encoding and decoding verbal and nonverbal messages within a defined cultural and perceptual environment. Many messages are sent intentionally. However, nonverbal messages can sometimes unintentionally influence others (Wesch 2020: 01).

Nonverbal communication includes, for example, facial expressions, eye contact, touch and space. Body language has different meanings in different cultures. The way people interpret body language depends on their gender, culture and relationship they have with the person. For example, eye contact in a workplace can communicate different and essential messages across cultures. In some cultures, eye contact is avoided between men and women, while in other cultures, eye contact is necessary to show that a receiver is listening. Miscommunication tends to arise due to the misinterpretation of non-verbal communication. Thus, miscommunication that may occur through non-verbal communication often results in tension, anxiety, dissatisfaction, friction and discomfort among employees (Dash 2022: 02).

According to Aitken (2021: 10), non-verbal communication behaviours differ from culture to culture. Cultures differ in the specific repertoire of behaviours that are enacted. Each cultural group has specific ritualised actions like movements, body positions, postures, vocal intonations, gestures, dress codes,

spatial movements and other actioned actions. For each culture, certain rules guide when and under what situations, various nonverbal expressions are required or prohibited. Rules can indicate the appropriate space between people, specifying far they should stand apart and whom to touch. Rules also show when to look directly at others in a conversation and when to look away, how talking or quietness should be used, how smiles and frowns should be used, and how fast the communication should be. The behaviours have shared meanings and signatures, like when a group jointly attributes the same purpose to a particular nonverbal act.

According to Yusof and Rahmat (2020: 02), nonverbal behaviours can be multi-channelled; they use several mediums to send a message to the receiver, for example, body movement, touch, facial expression, space and facial expressions. Messages can be sent using either one of those channels or a combination of different body movements. For example, an employee may shake the hand of a colleague and smile within one message context. The receiver will record the message based on the total context of the message. Trenholm (2020: 113) states that nonverbal cues are sometimes ambiguous; depending on the context of the communication and culture, two interpretations and meanings can be offered for one nonverbal cue. The meaning depends on the interpretation the receiver wants to attach to the nonverbal cues the sender or receiver displays. Kakharov (2022) states nonverbal cues and relates them to nonverbal behaviour's unintentional and spontaneous nature. Participants' gestures and body language can be interpreted as indicating the type of relationship that they have with each other. People's behaviours may unintentionally convey a different message to others about their emotional and mental state than intended. This can lead to a misinterpretation of the sender's intentions and cause miscommunication. Ciancarini *et al.* (2021: 02) highlighted that nonverbal communication, intricately tied to culture, plays a pivotal role in intercultural interactions. The encoding and decoding of verbal and nonverbal messages occur within a defined cultural and perceptual environment, making it essential to consider the cultural nuances that shape these interactions.

Edward T. Hall's high-context and low-context theory is instrumental in understanding the cultural variations in nonverbal communication. Shen, Elibol and Chong (2020: 02) points out that nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, eye contact, touch and spatial awareness hold different meanings across cultures. In high-context cultures, where communication relies on implicit cues and shared understanding, misinterpretations may arise when interacting with those from low-context cultures. For instance, in a workplace, the significance of eye contact can vary; across some cultures, it may be a sign of attentiveness, while in others, it might be avoided based on gender dynamics.

Hofstede's cultural dimension theory further emphasises the cultural variations in nonverbal communication, as noted by Burgoon, Manusov and Guerrero (2021: 13). Different cultural groups

exhibit specific ritualised actions in body language, gestures, vocal intonations and spatial movements. The theory highlights how rules guide the use of nonverbal expressions, indicating when certain behaviours are required or prohibited. For example, personal space and appropriate touch vary across cultures, leading to misunderstandings if these cultural differences are not acknowledged.

Bakar, Shah and Xu (2020: 02) draw attention to the multi-channel nature of nonverbal behaviours, using various mediums such as body movement, touch, facial expressions and spatial awareness to convey messages. This aligns with the high-context and low-context theory, where the reliance on multiple channels may vary across cultures. Shen, Elibol and Chong (2020: 03) notes the ambiguity of nonverbal cues, emphasising the role of context and culture in interpreting these cues. In high-context cultures, where implicit communication is prevalent, the potential for multiple interpretations of nonverbal cues increases, adding a layer of complexity to intercultural communication.

Khakimov and Melikuavi (2023: 02) underscore nonverbal behaviour's unintentional nature and stress how gestures and body language can be misinterpreted. This aligns with cultural dimensions, as individuals may inadvertently display behaviours with different meanings in their cultural context. The unintentional transmission of nonverbal cues can lead to miscommunication, emphasising the importance of cultural awareness and sensitivity. Nonverbal communication is a source of rich cultural expression where messages are encoded and decoded. The high-context and low-context theory and cultural dimension theory provide valuable frameworks for understanding the intricacies of nonverbal communication across diverse cultural landscapes. Acknowledging and navigating these cultural nuances is essential for effective intercultural communication, as misinterpretations of nonverbal cues can lead to tension, anxiety and dissatisfaction among individuals from different cultural backgrounds.

Knollman-Porter and Burshnic (2020: 01) shed light on the diverse norms that different cultures uphold, influencing various aspects of communication. These cultural norms are crucial in shaping facial expressions, eye contact, space and touch, adding layers to the discussed barriers. Additionally, the concept of cultural relativity, where individuals judge other cultures based on their cultural framework, further contributes to the complexity of intercultural interactions.

Facial Expressions and Emotions: Facial expressions are a significant aspect of nonverbal communication, reflecting emotions during interactions. However, the interpretation of these expressions varies across cultures. For example, what may be considered a positive reaction in one culture might be perceived differently in another. Understanding and navigating these cultural nuances are essential to avoid misinterpretations and potential communication barriers (Paranduk and Karisi 2020: 03).

Eye Contact and Oculistics: Eye contact, or oculistics, is another dimension where cultural norms diverge. De Leeuw, Happé and Hoekstra (2020: 02) highlight that the direction and intensity of eye contact convey different meanings in diverse cultures. Direct eye contact in black South African culture may be deemed disrespectful to elders, contrasting with its interpretation as a sign of attention and interest in a workplace setting. Recognising these variations is crucial to fostering respectful and effective communication.

Space and Social Distance: The concept of space is culturally nuanced, influencing the social distance individuals maintain during interactions. Different cultures have varying perspectives on the appropriate proximity for communication. In a workplace or business context, cultural differences may manifest in preferences for personal space, impacting communication dynamics. Recognising and respecting these differences is pivotal to preventing misunderstandings (Sharma 2022: 01).

Touch and Haptics: Touch, or haptics, holds diverse meanings based on cultural categories such as functional-professional, socially polite, love-intimacy and friendship. Some cultures are more prone to tactile contact, while others may view it differently. Understanding cultural preferences regarding touch in a diverse workplace like Radio Al Ansaar becomes essential. For instance, a handshake may be an appropriate greeting, but gestures like a kiss on the cheek may be perceived as inappropriate and uncomfortable (Finnegan 2020: 02).

Cultural Relativity and Intercultural Understanding: Cook (2023: 289) emphasises the tendency of individuals to classify other cultures based on their cultural perspectives. This can lead to misunderstandings and misjudgements hindering genuine intercultural understanding. Recognising and challenging such fixed viewpoints is crucial to fostering a more open and inclusive communication environment. These cultural norms and the concept of cultural relativity can be contextualised within the identified barriers—stereotyping, ethnocentrism, racism and verbal and nonverbal communication differences. Understanding how cultural norms contribute to these barriers provides a holistic perspective on the challenges faced in intercultural communication. Each barrier contributes to the complexity of interactions, emphasising the need for cultural sensitivity, awareness and adaptability to navigate these challenges successfully (Österman 2021: 02).

The above section explored various theories and cultural barriers that impact intercultural communication; it becomes evident that navigating the complexities of cultural differences is essential for effective organisational functioning. Nishonova, Sheraliyeva and Satimova (2021: 02) state that communicating effectively across cultures is paramount in a globalised world where businesses operate across borders and diverse teams collaborate. Effective intercultural communication in

organisations enhances teamwork and collaboration, fosters a positive work environment, minimises misunderstandings and promotes innovation. Therefore, the below section will discuss the importance of effective intercultural communication in organisations, particularly radio service broadcasting.

2.4.3 Importance of Effective Intercultural Communication in Organisations.

Effective intercultural communication is imperative for organisational success, particularly in multicultural settings. Hysa (2020: 03) and Dhanimil (2019: 04) underscore the significance of intercultural communication within diverse organisations, shedding light on its relevance in the context of radio stations, such as Radio Al Ansaar in South Africa.

Diversity in the Workplace: In radio stations, especially those operating in culturally diverse countries like South Africa, fostering a diverse workforce is not just a matter of choice but a strategic necessity. Intercultural communication within the workplace becomes vital as it facilitates harmonious interactions among employees with varied cultural backgrounds. A diverse workforce brings a range of perspectives, ideas and talents, enriching the organisational environment. **Audience Engagement and Community Relations:** The importance of intercultural communication extends beyond internal dynamics to external engagements. South African radio stations serve diverse audiences with unique cultural backgrounds, languages and preferences. Effective intercultural communication ensures that the content, messaging and programming resonate with the entire spectrum of listeners, promoting inclusivity and audience engagement. Moreover, many radio stations, including Radio Al Ansaar, often have community-oriented missions. Intercultural communication enables effective engagement with various community groups, addressing their unique needs and concerns (Lakshmipathiaiah 2020: 02).

Operational Challenges and Solutions: While diversity brings numerous benefits, it also introduces operational challenges. Communication breakdowns, collaboration issues and decision-making disparities can hinder the smooth functioning of a media organisation. Cultural differences may impede collaboration at a radio station where teamwork is crucial for content creation and production. Addressing these challenges requires a proactive approach to intercultural communication, emphasising mutual understanding, clear communication channels and respect for diverse perspectives. **Content Relevance and Sensitivity:** The content produced by radio stations holds immense cultural relevance, shaping public perceptions and opinions. Cultural barriers can hinder a precise understanding of the audience's preferences and expectations, resulting in content that needs to be revised. Sensitivity and representation are crucial considerations. Media houses, including Radio

Al Ansaar, must navigate these cultural nuances to avoid unintentionally perpetuating stereotypes or cultural appropriation, which can lead to negative public perception (AlTaher 2020: 02).

Cultural Diversity as a Source of Innovation: Recognising and managing cultural diversity in radio stations can foster creativity and innovation. Diverse talents bring varied perspectives and ideas that can contribute to a rich and dynamic creative environment. However, ensuring that cultural barriers are appropriately managed is critical to harnessing the full potential of diversity, preventing the underutilisation of talents and limiting the organisation's capacity for innovation. **Workplace Harmony and Leadership:** Unresolved cultural conflicts within a media organisation can lead to tensions among team members, affecting morale and productivity. Leadership styles, influenced by cultural differences, can impact motivation and engagement. Addressing these conflicts proactively and adapting leadership approaches to accommodate diverse expectations is essential to ensuring workplace harmony. **Career Growth and Audience Reception:** Barriers to advancing specific cultural groups within a media organisation can hinder diversity in leadership positions. A lack of inclusivity may lead to feelings of exclusion. Additionally, content that does not consider cultural nuances can alienate or offend specific audiences, impacting viewership or readership. Therefore, addressing these barriers is crucial for fostering a diverse and inclusive organisational culture (Nishonova, Sheraliyeva and Satimova 2021).

Introducing Radio Al Ansaar into today's media industry is of utmost importance, as it aligns perfectly with the recognition that the industry has become increasingly culture-savvy (Malik 2020). Constantin, Constantin, Cohen-Vidaa and Popescua (2015) stress the significance of understanding different cultures in this context. Radio Al Ansaar serves as an exemplary case study of how this understanding can be implemented. Radio Al Ansaar, as an integral part of the media landscape, offers a unique perspective by catering to diverse cultural backgrounds and fostering cross-cultural understanding. This radio station provides an overview of various cultures, promoting inclusivity and diversity in its programming. By showcasing different traditions, languages and perspectives, Radio Ansaar aligns with the industry's culture-savvy nature and contributes to the broader goal of promoting cultural awareness and appreciation.

2.5 Radio Al Ansaar: A Case Study

Radio Al Ansaar was developed in 1997 as a non-government organisation (NGO) community broadcaster to educate and socially uplift the Muslim community in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). The station broadcasts 24 hours a day on 103FM, reaching out to the Muslim community in KwaZulu-

Natal, Port Shepstone on the South Coast, Stanger on the North Coast and Estcourt in the north of KZN (Onlineradiobox 2023). The main aim of Al Ansaar Radio is to educate and develop the community and prevent the escalation of social problems. In terms of programme language diversity, the station broadcasts in English, which is the primary home language of listeners, with programmes in Urdu (an Indian/Pakistani language), a bit of Arabic, Chichewe (a Malawian language) and Zulu making up the rest of the broadcast (Alansaarfoundation 2019).

Radio Al Ansaar's programming, while serving the community in KwaZulu-Natal, lacks adequate language diversity, resulting in a limited range of languages in its broadcast programming (Mall, 2006:66). According to the Al Ansaar Foundation (2019), the station primarily broadcasts in English, which may only partially cater to the diverse linguistic backgrounds of its listeners. While it includes programmes in Urdu, Arabic, Chichewe and Zulu, there may be other languages spoken within the Muslim community in KwaZulu-Natal that are not adequately represented. This lack of language diversity could lead to exclusion and reduced engagement among segments of society, hindering the station's ability to educate and uplift the community and effectively prevent social problems (Malik 2020:02).

The lack of cultural diversity in the workforce may need help achieving cultural diversity. This lack of diversity might be characterised by employees primarily consisting of individuals from a specific cultural or ethnic background, potentially mirroring the dominant culture rather than reflecting the diversity of the community it serves (UNNews 2020). This issue can result in several challenges, including limited perspectives and experiences within the organisation, potential biases in decision-making and difficulties in effectively understanding and addressing the needs of a culturally diverse audience (Van Rooyen 2019). It can also impact the station's ability to connect with and serve the broader community, including those from different cultural backgrounds, which could affect its mission of community education and upliftment (Ofcom 2019).

In the context of Radio Al Ansaar's mission to educate and uplift the Muslim community in KwaZulu-Natal, it is essential to delve into the intricacies of communication structure and flow within a multicultural setting. As discussed earlier, the station's programming currently faces language and cultural diversity challenges, potentially limiting its ability to engage and serve its diverse audience effectively. The below section will explore how the communication structure within Radio Al Ansaar flows. It also shows how employees adapt to a multicultural setting.

2.5.1 Radio Al Ansaar's Organogram

Obeta *et al.* (2019: 01) Define an organogram as an organisational chart portrayed as a formal structure that shows the responsibilities and relationships within the organisation. The organogram shows how the employees in the organisation are connected. The lines are communication channels in the organisation organogram; they are authority and tell us who is reporting to whom (Robinson and Flintan 2020: 02). The radio station comprises individuals who range in age groups and are students, businesspeople, homemakers, professionals and pensioners of various races, ethnicities, nationalities, socio-economic classes, genders and religions. Most of the employees are of Indian descent, with a tiny percentage of staff deriving from the Malay, Zanzibari, Malawian and Zulu Muslim communities. The station also has Muslim presenters who are immigrants from Turkey, Egypt, Sudan, Pakistan and other countries. Communication is a binding force; therefore, effective communication is essential (Mall 2006: 67). Figure 2.1 below shows Radio Al Ansaar's organogram, representing the communication channel in a multicultural setting.



Figure 2.1 Organogram of Radio Al Ansaar (Source: Mall 2006: 66).

The organogram in Figure 2.1 above shows that the **Trustees of the Al Ansaar Foundation** are the top-level decision-makers with ultimate authority and control over the entire radio station and its

divisions. **Managing Board:** Receives daily reports from the Station Manager (referred to as "personnel") and is responsible for overseeing the overall operation of the station. **Station Manager (Personnel):** Responsible for the day-to-day management of the station and reports to the Managing Board. Coordinates and oversees the functioning of various departments. **Departments:** **Programming Department:** Headed by a trustee, responsible for creating and scheduling radio programmes, ensuring content quality and meeting audience preferences. **Advertising Department:** Headed by a trustee responsible for managing advertising and sponsorships, generating revenue through partnerships and promoting the station's brand. **Technical Department:** Headed by a trustee responsible for managing and operating the technical aspects of the station, including equipment, broadcasts and IT infrastructure. **Finance Department:** Headed by a trustee, responsible for managing the station's financial activities, budgeting, financial reporting and ensuring economic sustainability. **Operations Manager:** Assists the directors of each division, oversees the programming department and takes charge of the station in the absence of the station manager (Al Ansaar 2022).

2.5.2 Communication Structure and Flow in a Multicultural Setting

Khamidovna (2020: 05) states that communication usually flows through a channel. The most common channels in organisations are upward, downward and horizontal and are linked to the organisation's structure or organogram. Howcutt *et al.* (2022: 03) explain that communication in the organisational organogram flows in a hierarchical structure. Generally, communication flow in an organisation starts at the top of the hierarchy and flows downward to the lower levels of the organisation. However, there are cases where communication flows upward within the organisational structure. The different types of communication channels are discussed below

Referencing Kalogiannidis (2020: 02-03) and Hee *et al.* (2019: 02) the organogram of organisations outlines various communication flow types. Firstly, **downward communication** involves communication that flows from the top management of the hierarchy to the lower direction. For example, the management board might communicate the company's goal to the finance manager, who would then inform his or her team members (Hee *et al.* 2019: 02). Secondly, **upward communication** involves communication that flows from the lower levels of the organisation to the top level. This type of communication is essential in the organisation as it enables the employees to communicate their ideas, concerns and feedback to their leaders. Thirdly, **horizontal transmission** involves departments and individuals at the same hierarchy level. It is also essential for communication amongst departments as it helps in problem-solving (Kalogiannidis 2020: 03). Lastly, **diagonal communication** involves different levels and departments in the organisation's communication flow. For example, a manager

might communicate with a client, or a leader might speak with an organisation employee (Tkachenko *et al.* 2020: 07).

The communication flow at Radio Al Ansaar is as follows:

- Daily reporting to the Managing Board: The station manager (personnel) provides daily reports to the Managing Board. These reports likely include updates on station activities, challenges encountered and significant decisions taken.
- Trustees' Responsibilities: Each trustee, heading their respective department, is responsible for overseeing the activities within that department. They make strategic decisions and ensure that their departments are functioning effectively.
- Operations Manager's Role: The operations manager supports the directors of each department. They specifically oversee the programming department and manage station operations when the station manager is unavailable.
- Interdepartmental Communication: To ensure the station's success, all departments must communicate with each other regularly.

This communication is vital for coordinating activities, sharing information and aligning efforts towards common goals. For example, the Programming Department might need to collaborate with the Advertising Department to integrate sponsorship messages seamlessly into programmes (Al Ansaar 2022). Understanding cultural aspects influencing communication is essential within an organisational structure, as it can significantly impact teamwork, decision-making and overall productivity. When individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds collaborate, recognising nuances such as communication styles, hierarchy and social norms becomes essential.

2.5.3 Cultural Aspects Affecting Communication in a Multicultural Setting:

South African radio stations comprise diverse individuals from various cultural settings. This shows that cultural diversity is growing in media houses and communication barriers are increasing. Communicating effectively with individuals from different cultures is crucial for the understanding and optimal functioning of the radio station. Communication must be considered for the context and perspective of functioning within a media environment. This shows that cultural diversity is growing in media houses and communication barriers are increasing. This study aims to identify specific intercultural communication problems experienced by employees at Radio Al Ansaar and to suggest

strategies to enhance communication among employees of Radio Al Ansaar based on the findings from this research. Culture plays a crucial role in communication, affecting how people understand, interpret, interact and convey messages.

Working with people of diverse ethnic, national and religious origins is common, states Trenholm (2020: 320). South Africa is not just one of the most culturally diverse nations in the world; it also embraces variety in all its forms, including race, religion, language, culture and sexual orientation. Conflicts and misunderstandings in the workplace might result from cultural differences in behaviour. To communicate successfully, it is crucial to develop the ability to bridge cultural divides and settle conflicts. According to Badola *et al.* (2019:03), communication problems at work might reflect cultural variations in work-related responsibilities and conventions, as well as misinterpretations, prejudices and stereotypes. Below are cultural aspects that affect communication in the multicultural workplace, using the case of Radio Al Ansaar:

2.5.3.1 Different Social Norms and Roles

Various social roles and standards are accepted as proper ways to behave and are culturally determined. Different cultures have varied expectations for how people should conduct themselves publicly (Bicchieri 2018: 02). People who work in multicultural workplaces frequently conduct themselves inappropriately because they cannot comprehend the standards of other cultures. After that, roles trigger the norms for specific groups. For instance, in South African societies, men and women are given different duties. How these responsibilities are violated differs from culture to culture and is frequently seen in multicultural workplaces. Anxiety may result from this, and communication may be disrupted (Ahmed 2022: 03).

2.5.3.2 Different Communication Codes

People will likely encounter people who speak a different language when they go elsewhere. Distressing communication difficulties arise from this kind of intercultural gap. Even when people speak the same language, their various cultural backgrounds often cause the words and actions to have distinct meanings. It is crucial to comprehend different cultural perspectives to communicate successfully and correctly across cultures (Adenike and Suilat 2021: 19).

2.5.3.3 Different Attitudes, Values and Beliefs

Effective communication can undoubtedly be affected by contrasting opinions and ideals. This is because our values and beliefs profoundly impact how we see the world, process information and

interact with others. It can be challenging to comprehend others' viewpoints and successfully communicate with them when we come into contact with someone who shares different ideas and values. For instance, if two individuals hold distinct religious convictions, they could also have various moral, spiritual and life-related philosophies. Consequentially, it may be difficult for them to communicate properly since they may need help grasping one another's viewpoints or establishing a typical ground (Tuohy 2019: 04).

Similar to the above, individuals from other cultures may hold various values regarding social conventions, body language and communication techniques. For instance, while indirect communication is appreciated in certain cultures, direct contact is praised in others. These distinctions may need clarification and to prevent misinterpretations that obstruct clear communication. It is critical to approach communication with an open mind and an eagerness to understand the values and ideas of others. Before presenting your opinion, it is crucial to be patient, listen intently and try to grasp the other person's viewpoint. You may do this to generate better communication channels and bridges of understanding (Tuohy 2019: 04).

2.5.3.4 Diverse Cultural Awareness and Knowledge

Ormsby (2021: 05) states that cultural awareness entails comprehending and valuing cultural differences. Assuming the difference before it is acknowledged, can lead someone to make an initial, purported interpretation of something that is later misinterpreted. Assuming the difference before it is acknowledged can cause misunderstanding when a person makes an asserted interpretation of something that is subsequently misunderstood (Tuohy 2019: 04).

Failure to interpret what the other person may be saying or doing is a lack of understanding. A person may lack knowledge, consciously or unconsciously. When a problem is unknown, an attempt to fix it may result from the person saying or implying that they do not understand. The lack of understanding might allow passage even if a person knows it. This may be the result of a lack of time or low status. For example, some managers are reluctant to seek help or admit they do not understand. This may be due to their cultural beliefs and values about individualism versus collectivism. Communication skills such as being open-minded and avoiding stereotypes can help prevent misunderstandings and foster a positive cross-cultural environment (Ormsby 2021: 08).

2.5.3.5 Communication Styles in Different Cultures

According to Badola, Rakesh and Agrawal (2019: 03), a workplace with diverse employees and communication styles can significantly affect cross-cultural communication claims. Various

communication expectations and standards bring this on. Some of the critical elements that might affect communication styles in a multicultural setting are given below:

- Direct versus indirect communication: Direct communication is highly regarded in certain cultures, while indirect communication is appreciated in others. For instance, direct communication is valued in various Indian cultures, but indirect communication is more common in Black South African societies. These distinctions may need clarification for better cross-cultural interactions (Zhao 2021: 07).
- High-context versus low-context communication: High-context communication primarily relies on context, shared history and nonverbal clues. Low-context communication, in contrast, places less attention on context and nonverbal clues and relies more on explicit verbal communication. For instance, high-context culture predominates in South African black groups, but low-context communication prevails in South African Indian communities. Particularly in ethnic settings, these disparities in communication styles might result in misunderstandings (Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan 2019: 01).
- Formal versus informal communication: While some cultures respect casual communication more, others prioritise formal communication. Utilising titles, honorifics and formal language is all part of formal communication. Informal communication, on the other hand, is more casual and private. This can impact how individuals approach one another, the tone and manner of communication and the degree of anticipated courtesy and respect. For instance, using a person's first name in some South African groups could be seen as impolite, while using titles and last names might need to be more casual in other areas (Wambui 2015: 09).
- Monochronic versus polychronic time: While individuals in polychronic cultures may be okay with missing meetings and being late, people in monochronic cultures consider time a finite resource that must be used efficiently. This may impact how meetings are scheduled at work and how quickly communications are responded to. If individuals from different cultures have divergent experiences, this may cause dissatisfaction and misunderstanding (Zhao 2021: 07).

2.5.3.6 Communication Skills

Communication skills are crucial in cultural communication as they influence how messages are perceived and understood. Communication skills enable individuals to effectively and respectfully interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Rathod 2022: 1-7). Here are some ways communication skills can affect cultural communication:

- **Language:** A common language is necessary for effective communication; linguistic barriers can cause misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Effective intercultural communication may be improved in a multicultural workplace by having the capacity to talk, using suitable language and syntax, and changing the tone and tempo of speech to fit the audience (Capisinio 2021: 05).
- **Non-verbal communication:** Non-verbal cues like eye contact and personal space have distinct connotations depending on the culture. Employees from different cultural backgrounds can more effectively communicate by correctly reading and utilising non-verbal cues (Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan 2019: 01).
- **Active listening:** Active listening focuses on the speaker and attempts to comprehend their point of view. For instance, a listener with a stereotyped opinion about the speaker would find it challenging to pay attention and understand what is being said. In cross-cultural contacts, communication skills like impartial listening and open-mindedness can assist in developing trust (Kaluarachchi 2022: 04).
- **Empathy:** Empathy is comprehending and sharing another person's emotions. In particular, in a multicultural setting within the media sector, communication skills like showing compassion and appreciating cultural differences enhance cross-cultural communication and establish partnerships.
- **Verbal communication is crucial for cross-cultural communication** since it involves speaking and listening. People from various cultures may better understand one another, express their views and ideas effectively, and prevent misunderstandings through effective verbal communication skills (Wambui 2015:02).
- **Clarity and simplicity:** Using clear and simple language when communicating is crucial in cross-cultural interactions since it prevents confusion and misunderstandings. It can be challenging for individuals from other cultures to comprehend one another using idioms, jargon, or sophisticated language (Touchy 2019:04).
- **Respectful communication:** Respectful communication is essential in cross-cultural interactions because it demonstrates a person's regard for and appreciation for other cultures. Using rude words or gestures might cause misunderstandings and harm the relationship (Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan 2019: 01).

2.5.3.7 Different Religions

In South Africa, we have different religions. The individuals belong to various religious groups in media industries in communities, and at all levels. Individuals' skills of communication, behaviour, conduct and overall living conditions are influenced by religious backgrounds. However, within diverse types of organisations and media industries, individuals are taught that they need to accept other religions and cultures (Bizumic 2015: 06). Accepting other religions and cultures will contribute to the efficient functioning of organisations and media industries. In the research studies, individuals belonging to different religious groups have also formed negative perceptions, which have proven to be barriers to communication. These barriers are termed cultural communication barriers. When individuals follow the norms and values of their religion, they experience problems communicating with individuals from different religious groups. Religious viewpoints and perceptions influence how individuals think in terms of others. In other words, it creates differences of opinion. When there are differences of opinion, communication between individuals cannot occur in a well-organised manner. Therefore, it can be stated that religion is one of the primary causes of cross-cultural barriers to effective communication (Beyers 2017: 01).

Constantin, Cohen-Vidaa and Popescua (2015) state that multiculturalism and diversity have merged as essential components of many organisations, presenting opportunities and challenges for effective communication in the globalised workplace. This study aims to investigate the intricate intercultural communication barriers within the context of Radio Al Ansaar, utilising it as a case study to illuminate the communication challenges employees face in multicultural organisations. The choice of Radio Al Ansaar as the focal point of this study is substantiated by its relevance to the broader industry and it serves as a microcosm of the unique communication dynamics and hurdles experienced in the radio broadcasting sector.

This study's investigation into intercultural communication at radio Al Ansaar is not an isolated phenomenon. Instead, it mirrors the increasing multiculturalism seen in workplaces, including media organisations. Neamtu (2020: 10) highlighted that cultural diversity among employees has been steadily growing in the media industry, with radio stations being no exception. Their research emphasises that media organisations with multicultural workforces often encounter distinct communication challenges due to varying cultural backgrounds and perspectives. Furthermore, the International Communication Research Institute (ICRI 2018) surveyed media professionals worldwide and found they increasingly engage in multicultural teams. This phenomenon has led to increased diverse media perspectives and motivation, fundamental to the successful operation of media organisations in our modern connected world.

Radio Al Ansaar serves as a case study to investigate intercultural communication barriers. The selection of this radio station is particularly relevant due to its multicultural work environment, like that of many media organisations. According to Hall (2006: 67), employees at Radio Al Ansaar come from different cultural backgrounds, representing a microcosm of the diverse workforce often encountered within the radio broadcasting industry. By delving into the experiences of Radio Al Ansaar's employees, this study gained invaluable insights into the specific intercultural communication challenges common in radio stations and similar media.

2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has laid the groundwork for understanding the intricacies of effective intercultural communication barriers within an organisational context, specifically radio service broadcasting. The chapter identified and examined various types of intercultural communication barriers in the diverse workplace by delving into the literature. The aim was to explore and understand these barriers among the diverse employees. The chapter further shed light on the specific intercultural communication problems experienced by these challenges, which, if unaddressed, could lead to misunderstanding and misinterpretation due to cultural differences. Notably, the review has highlighted that a profound understanding of individuals' cultural backgrounds is crucial for fostering effective intercultural communication, ultimately contributing to achieving organisational goals. Therefore, the study aims to leverage this foundational knowledge to examine the intercultural communication barrier among employees at Radio Al Ansaar and to identify the specific challenges faced by the diverse workforce in the organisation. Subsequently, the study will propose strategies to enhance effective intercultural communication within Radio Al Ansaar, aligning to contribute insights to improve organisational dynamics. The next chapter will delve into the methodology employed in this study, outlining the research design, data collection instruments and sampling method techniques. The study aspires to bridge the gap between identifying intercultural communication barriers and implementing strategies that foster a more inclusive and effective communication environment within Radio Al Ansaar through a systematic approach.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter (Chapter 2) provided the theoretical framework for the study by discussing cultural barriers in a multicultural setting. Central themes have been identified based on the literature review and intercultural barriers in multicultural settings were analysed and interpreted based on these themes. This chapter presents the research methodology for this study. This chapter commences by discussing the research design, incorporating a quantitative approach and the case study method. Subsequent sections outline the population and sampling method, followed by an exploration of the research measuring instruments. The data collection method is then outlined. First and foremost, the data analysis and the utilisation of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29.0 for Windows was expounded upon to analyse the data. Lastly, reliability, validity and ethical considerations will be addressed.

3.2 Research Design

Creswell and Creswell (2018: 03) named quantitative research as one of the primary research approaches. Quantitative research focuses on scientific explanations by collecting data in numbers. The data gathered from the participants is therefore analysed using statistical software. Consequently, it aims to measure and test the hypotheses. Another school of thought suggests that quantitative research is more structured, rigid, fixed and predetermined to ensure the reliability and validity of information or data (Ghauri, Gronhaug and Strange 2020: 97). In addition, quantitative research uses statistical methods and commences with data collection based on a known theory, followed by applying descriptive and inferential statistics (O'Leary 2017: 132).

This study uses a quantitative methodology to identify the intercultural communication barriers in a multicultural setting. Based on this, a case study approach will be used with Radio Al Ansaar as the case. The advantage of a quantitative research approach is that it has relative accuracy and lacks ambiguity. The information was gathered through questionnaires. Quantitative research is more structured and ensures the reliability and validity of information or data (Voorhees and Howell Smith 2019: 228). A quantitative research method emphasises objective measures and statistical or numerical analysis of both collections through closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires. Quantitative research was chosen for this study because of its form of interpretive inquiry.

According to Pandey and Pandey (2015: 08), research design is a process that guides and assists the researcher in gaining a clear direction for the study. Research design explains what the researcher will

do with the participants and the data to understand the research problem and make conclusions and recommendations. Trochim, Donnelly and Arora (2017: 206) affirm that a research design outlines data collection, measurement and analysis. Research design is “the plan to obtain research participants and collect information from them.” Therefore, to have a research design that conveys informative and contractive knowledge, the questions of the study must be aligned with the objectives of the study design, which is a plan stipulating the approach for gathering and analysing critical information (Ghauri, Gronhaug and Strange 2020: 61). To contextualise the pattern followed for this study, the practices of research design are discussed below:

De Langhe and Schliesser (2017: 227) identify descriptive analysis as one of the research design processes. Descriptive analysis is used to describe the characteristics of a phenomenon being studied. However, it cannot be used to establish causality when interacting with the relationships because it addresses the “what” question (Jackson 2016: 417). He further suggests that data is gathered to describe characteristics of people and situations when using descriptive data. O’Leary (2017: 132) states that the advantages of descriptive research lie in its ability to simplify and structure data, support decision-making and serve as a crucial initial step in the research process. Its clarity, practical applications and capacity to generate hypotheses make it an essential component of quantitative research that informs subsequent investigations and contributes to our understanding of various phenomena.

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018:52), cross-sectional research is a type of research design that collects data from a sample or population at a single point in time. It provides a snapshot of a particular phenomenon or the characteristics of a group of individuals at a specific moment. Voorhees and Howell-Smith (2019:228) state that cross-sectional studies work effectively using less labour-intensive data collection methods. This includes using questionnaires. Employing the above collection method online via email enables reaching a broader population. A cross-sectional design can investigate multiple variables simultaneously; for example, collecting data on the range of attributes in one instance, for example, age, gender, interaction engagement and respect for cultural differences.

This research is a quantitative, descriptive and cross-sectional study because it explains the quality of a feature regarded as a characteristic, such as intercultural behaviours that cause communication to not be effective. It aimed to understand the quality of intercultural behaviours that affect communication and data were collected from Radio Al Ansaar employees in a single instance through questionnaires. This approach helped investigate multiple variables simultaneously and allowed for collecting data from a broader population, making it suitable for research on intercultural communication barriers.

3.3 Population

Sekaran and Bougie (2013: 240) refer to the population as a group of elements from which a researcher wishes to make inferences. It encompasses all individuals or objects with a standard set of characteristics relevant to a research problem. Information about a population can be obtained through a census, which involves collecting data from every element within the population, or through a sample, where data is collected from a subset of the population (Kumar 2019: 481).

The target group of this study consists of all full-time and part-time employees at Radio Al Ansaar. The total employee population at Radio Al Ansaar is 55 and questionnaires will be administered to all 55 (100%) employees. The employees include all presenters, writers, producers, administration staff, cleaners and security guides primarily involved in the functioning of the radio station. The criteria for sampling were the accessibility and availability of these respondents. The rationale for choosing this population as the target for the research is as follows:

Firstly, the employees are inherently tied to the radio station's operations, which is the central subject of the research. Their direct involvement positions them as the most relevant group for addressing the research problem, ensuring their insights and experiences are pivotal to achieving the study's objectives. Additionally, the decision to encompass all 55 employees is influenced by the accessibility and availability of these individuals. As they are all part of the same organisation, it is practical to access and survey each of them, reducing the potential for sampling biases and ensuring a comprehensive workforce representation. Conducting a census or surveying the entire employee population offers the advantage of providing comprehensive insights. By incorporating the perspectives and experiences of all employees, the researcher endeavours to minimise the risk of overlooking crucial details. It allows for more confident generalisations about the entire population of Radio Al Ansaar employees. Lastly, the study's specific focus on Radio Al Ansaar's employees is well-suited to the concept of a census, where data is collected from every relevant individual within the defined population. This approach aligns with the research's objectives and the necessity to understand the workforce's insights and experiences, making it a robust choice for this study.

3.4 Sampling

The census sampling technique, which falls under the category of non-probability sampling was used in this study. Therefore, sampling will not be required. The census included all 55 (100%) of the employees at Radio Al Ansaar who will form part of the study. The questionnaires were emailed to all

employees. Each employee had their own experience and perception regarding intercultural communication, thereby justifying the use of a census.

According to Sapsford (2007:7), the census method is a statistical investigation in which the data are collected for every element/unit of the population. It is also known as ‘complete enumeration’, ‘100% enumeration’, or ‘complete survey’. It provides intensive and in-depth information covering many facets of the problems. The census study was chosen for this study because it allows for in-depth information that answers the research problem. The census study was selected for its suitability in providing comprehensive information to address the research problem. This includes details such as the number of presenters at the radio station and information gathered from various employees across all departments, each representing diverse cultural backgrounds. The results of a census method are more reliable and accurate as every population item is considered.

3.5 Measuring Instrument

According to Ebert *et al.* (2018: 02), measuring instruments in research are tools used to assess or appraise a variety of variables. Creswell and Creswell (2018: 202) state that there are six measuring instruments in the quantitative study for acquiring data as it provides a scope to ask detailed questions and probe further to collect informative data. These include questionnaires.

Respondents use a questionnaire to provide information to answer the research questions. It contains a list of questions or items used to gather data from respondents about their experiences, attitudes, or opinions. A questionnaire is one of the best ways to collect data from many people within a period of time. Hence, ensuring the questionnaire's design has good wording and format is essential for accurate results (Nandal 2019: 1594). Sekaran and Bougie (2013: 149) explain that the following factors should be considered for the questionnaire to be effective:

- Avoid double-barreled questions, as asking two things in one question may interrupt responses during data analysis.
- The questions must be clear. They must be easy to understand and straight to the point.
- The respondents must be able to read in terms of the font and colour of the layout.
- The questionnaire must be straightforward and understandable.
- The questionnaire should be developed interactively to make the respondents feel like the researcher is talking to them.

Questionnaires are a list of carefully designed questionnaires to collect reliable information for answers. The aim is to know what a particular group of individuals think and feel about factors affecting them (Ebert *et al.* 2018: 02).

In this study, the questionnaire begins with biographical data, which assists in grouping the respondents accordingly. Several open-ended questions were used to explore the intercultural communication challenges, experiences and potential solutions within the context of Radio Al Ansaar, an organisation with a multicultural workforce. Lastly, the questionnaire concludes with closed-ended questions because it allows the respondents to select and choose among other sections. The closed-ended questions will also assist in coding the received information easily when analysing the data (Ebert *et al.* 2018: 04).

Previous studies on effective intercultural communications have used different methods to conduct research (Zheng 2006 and Asghar and Tabassum 2020). In this study, the intercultural sensitivity mode was used so that respondents could assess the survey based on their lived interactive experience rather than on simulated scenarios that may never happen in real life. The intercultural sensitivity mode describes how people develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of cross-cultural differences. Milton Bennett developed the intercultural sensitivity mode for people to progress towards a deeper understanding and appreciation of cross-cultural differences.

This questionnaire is structured and uses the Likert scale adopted from Chen and Starosta's (2000) intercultural sensitivity scale. This method of collecting participant data is vital when the study uses a census method. Creswell *et al.* (2016:186) believe that questionnaires primarily utilise the Likert scale. Trochim, Donnelly and Arora (2017: 153) assert that a Likert scale is primarily successful in measuring the participants' attitudes. An option was given to the respondents to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the question using a five-point Likert scale. The scale starts with strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and ends with strongly agree. Table 3.1 (below) is an example of a Likert scale (Abraowicz and Corchuelo 2019: 27).

Table 3.1 Likert Scale

VALUES	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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SCALES	1	2	3	4	5
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The critical information about the study is summarised in the cover letter (Appendix A) to the respondents. The respondents were motivated and encouraged to support and cooperate with the study by sending the results immediately. The guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity for the respondents strengthened the response rate. Emphasising the importance of intercultural communication in the workplace also relieved the participants' anxiety. The researcher prepared Appendix C. It was also approved by the leader of this study to confirm its validity and encourage cooperation from the respondents, and it was attached to each questionnaire.

The supervisor and the Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC) analysed the questionnaire to ensure the instrument's validity. The questionnaire was the only tool for collecting data. The five-page questionnaire was tested for accuracy, appropriateness and relevance to the problem situation. The closed-ended questions required participants to select and tick a single appropriate response from the provided options. The questions focused on obtaining the following information:

Section A: Demographic information (gender, age, race and position) for statistical reasons.

Section B: Consisted of five open-ended questions. This section aimed to gather information on the intercultural communication barriers experienced by employees and potential solutions within the context of Radio Al Ansaar, an organisation with a multicultural workforce.

Section C: Included an open-ended question. It aimed to gather information on the specific intercultural communication problems faced by employees at Radio Al Ansaar (a culturally diverse organisation).

Section D: Included Chen and Starosta's (2000) intercultural sensitivity scale of 22 items/questions from the model, which will be acknowledged in the study. This section included closed-ended Likert scale questions as explained in Table 3.1 above. The questions in this section aim to provide insights into an individual's attitudes and behaviours. This information can be research, diversity training, or understanding and improving intercultural interactions. The questions were categorised into the sections below:

- Interaction engagement,

- Respect for cultural differences,
- Interaction confidence,
- Interaction enjoyment, and
- Interaction attentiveness of the participants

Section E: This question is open-ended, seeking information from employees' experiences to gather suggestions for effectively manage intercultural communication barriers and problems.

The questionnaire format was influenced by how it would be administered. The researcher must consider how complete the questionnaires, whether by emailed or telephone. A cover letter, explaining the questionnaire to the respondent, accompanied all the questionnaires. The questionnaire format must be clear and understandable for the respondents to record their responses. The background and purpose of the study and the researcher's contact information were included in the distribution of the questionnaires in case the respondent wished to interact personally. The researcher communicated the time allocated for the data collection to the respondents (Riebe 2020:01).

The administration of data collection used emails. The advantage of this choice is that all employees can access email and internet connectivity in their workplace within Radio Al Ansaar. Hyman *et al.* (2019: 552) state that a self-administered questionnaire should logically follow clear instructions and questions to avoid complex filtering. The questionnaires were self-administered because they were self-paced, and the respondents were more likely to answer truthfully without prompting. This method was chosen to avoid pressuring the respondents to give appropriate rather than truthful answers.

Sekaran and Bougie (2013: 148) mention that using questionnaires as a data collection method has advantages and disadvantages. The advantages of questionnaires as described by the authors include: unimitated anonymity, they are less expensive to administrate, the respondents can respond during their available times, they can reach a mass audience and they can provide an extensive in-depth research data. On the other hand, Singh and Prasad (2021: 209) state that the disadvantage may be a risk of low response from the participants. Utilising a questionnaire as a measuring instrument for this study was beneficial.

3.5.1 Piloting

According to Ruel, Wagner III and Gillespie (2016: 16), piloting is a pre-test of a study; this is when a researcher selects two or more but not more than five participants to try out the practicability of the study by running the questionnaire by them to check its relevance. He further states that “a brief pilot

study is an excellent way to determine the feasibility of the study”. Pre-testing is essential because it assists the researcher in quickly determining if the study is relevant and its pre-test is the instrument's measurement (Census). During the stage, the researcher has the opportunity to change or add the necessary information to enhance the effectiveness of the study.

A pilot study was implemented to determine whether there is intercultural communication among Radio Al Ansaar's employees. This study adopted the following pilot study approach:

- The questionnaire was submitted to the supervisor to check whether the questions would provide information that would answer the research questions.
- The wording of the questions was checked to determine if there were leading questions and to detect if there was order bias in the sequence of the questions.
- For the final stage in the questionnaire construction, the questionnaire was tested on two employees (the station manager and the HR manager). The participants were selected based on their interaction with other diverse employees of Radio Al Ansaar.

Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed as per the consent letter to each respondent. Pilot-testing the questionnaire is essential for good results and affects the response rate (Spurlock 2018: 457). A researcher should pilot a small group resembling a larger population to bring to the fore challenges that may arise over time. This tests the data collection instrument used and its viability for the study.

3.5.2 Data Collection

The procedure used for collecting the data will be discussed in this section. The researcher selected Radio Al Ansaar because of its unique position as a radio station serving a multicultural and religiously diverse audience in South African radio broadcasting, making it an excellent case study to understand cultural barriers and their effects in a multicultural setting. This is consistent with the objectives of this study, as the intention is to identify the cultural barriers to effective communication and the cultural aspects affecting communication.

The following points need to be kept in mind when collecting data: (1) ensure all the respondents have been approached appropriately and are fully aware of and informed about the aim and context of the study; (2) guarantee the anonymity and confidentiality of the information provided by the respondents (Creswell and Creswell 2018: 202). Keeping these facts in mind, the respondents felt at ease, encouraged to participate and comfortable proceeding with the data collection. The researcher ensured

that all the listed questions were devoid of sensitivity. The respondents were assured that all information shared would be kept confidential by the researcher.

Dovey (2021: 193) states that secondary and primary data collection are two research methods for acquiring information about a situation, individual, issue, or phenomenon. Primary data is collected from the direct reflection of the phenomenon or is composed generally. Preliminary data is frequently collected after the researcher reviews the secondary data and adds some perception to the issue or problem (Lewis 2019: 14). According to Ghauri, Gronhaug and Strange (2020: 160), a researcher can collect data for a specific objective directly or indirectly. However, Bhagat (2019: 79) cautioned that primary data can be costly when ordering and usually takes time to process. They mentioned different data collection approaches: telephone calls, interviews, or self-administered questionnaires. The researcher used the questionnaire (Appendix C) as a statistic-gathering instrument to collect primary data to investigate the main intercultural communication barriers in the context of Radio Al Ansaar. The researcher anticipated elevating the response rate by utilising the personal method to administer the questionnaire to the target respondents.

Secondary data is information from another person other than the study's researcher. Its advantage is that it has existing data for use (Ghauri, Gronhaug and Strange 2020: 153). They further explained that secondary data might save money and time. However, the researcher must be careful when collecting this type of data. Hence, this study used academic sources such as journal articles, Google Scholar, publications, books and pertinent theses and dissertations.

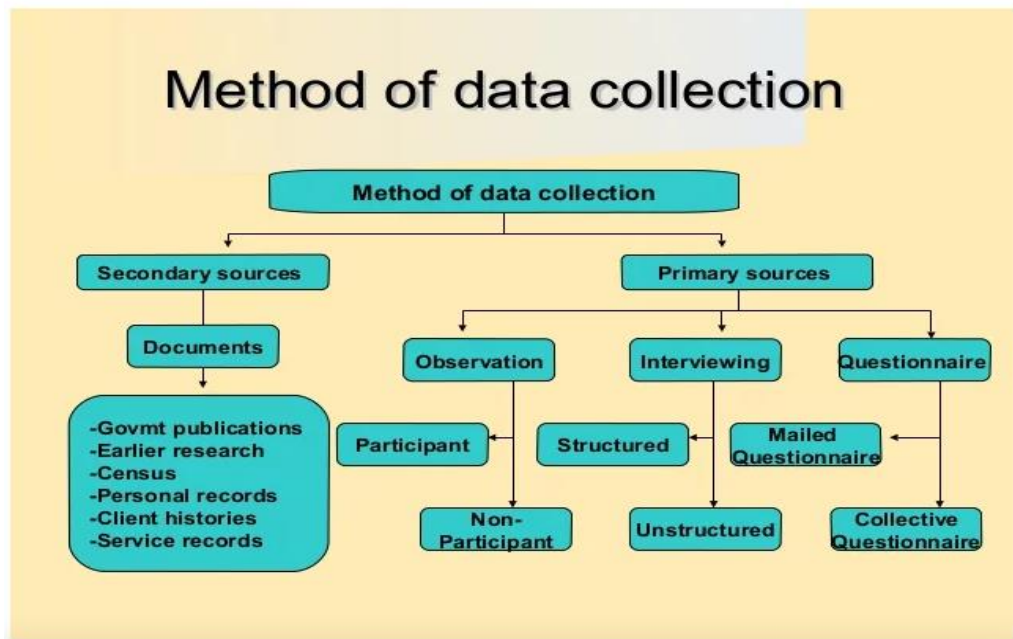


Figure 3.1 Methods of Data Collection (Source: Kumar 2005:118).

Kumar (2019: 118) states that the data obtained through the initial method is categorised as derived from secondary sources, while the sources employed in the second method are referred to as primary sources. Secondary data was collected in the study by conducting a literature review on effective intercultural communication. An in-depth intercultural sensitivity mode questionnaire was also used to collect data. The questionnaires concerned the participants' ability to respond to the presented questions about the barriers to effective communication in their workplace (Radio Al Ansaar). The literature review provided the primary data, which was made possible through questionnaires conducted by the researcher. The study did not include sampling as this was a sensor study.

3.6 Data Analysis

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013:24), arranging, categorising, summarising and describing data in more understandable terms is part of data analysis. Data analysis is the technique a researcher uses to collect and interpret data to reveal critical information, support decision-making and come up with conclusions. The first steps in data analysis involve arranging and categorising the collected data. This process is essential for creating an organised and structured dataset that can be effectively analysed. Subsequently, summarising and describing the data is essential. This often entails calculating basic statistics such as means, medians and standard deviations to provide a clear dataset overview.

The SPSS (Version 26) statistical package was used to analyse the data. This software is highly regarded for its ability to assist with data transformation, making it easier to perform statistical

analyses. Data transformation can include standardisation or normalisation, ensuring that data can be compared and analysed more easily. Moreover, SPSS facilitates the creation of tabular forms for a more superficial understanding and integration of the data. These tables assisted the researcher in visualising and presenting the results effectively.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

Consistency is associated with the term reliability, while accuracy is associated with validity. It is apparent that if any meaningful interpretations of the findings are to be made, the study's credibility must be established by determining its reliability and validity. They further state that a measure should produce the same results repeatedly for it to be considered reliable (Chan and Lay 2018: 239). Reliable estimates are required when dealing with quantitative research; if not, this may lead to the study being considered invalid (Musk 2019: 195).

According to Mey (2020: 4462), validity is the appropriateness of a data collection instrument to evaluate the concept of the study. Mazachowsky and Mahy (2020: 756) assert that an agent must be practical for the specific determinations for which it is intended and that perceptions of validity indicate that the research findings are sound. Andraka (2020: 01) defines validity as linking to the honesty of the research conclusions. Construct validity was achieved by performing factor analysis. Factor analysis helps summarise data, facilitating easy understanding and interpretation of patterns and relationships (Andraka 2020: 01). In this study, the supervisor and Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC) reviewers analysed the questionnaire to establish its face or content validity. According to Gournelos, Hammonds and Wilson (2019: 128), many researchers can use it under stable conditions. Huei, Rus and Kamis (2019: 984) report that reliability means that the results must be reliably identified when the study is repeated. To ensure the instrument's accuracy, it needs to be stable and consistent for effectiveness.

In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was applied to all correlations between items to measure internal consistency and reliability. This seeks to assess the uniformity of skill and quality among all respondents. According to Taber (2018: 1291), Cronbach's alpha coefficient is a reliability coefficient that indicates how each item in a set is positively correlated. Cronbach's alpha is computed regarding the average intercorrelations among the things measuring the concept. The closer Cronbach's alpha is to 1, the higher the internal consistency and reliability. The reliability of the study was measured using Cronbach's alpha. A pilot questionnaire was administered, and the questionnaire was corrected before final administration. This was to ensure repeated use of the questionnaires in the same situation would produce the same results. Furthermore, the researcher used related literature reviews to measure the

accuracy of the information in this study and ensured that questionnaires were explained and interpreted for participants who did not understand English. The researcher made certain that respondents were viewed fairly.

3.8 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Anonymity is essential to protecting the privacy and identity of research participants. It helps create a safe environment for individuals to respond honestly without fear of repercussions (Cecchini 2019: 79). Anonymity was ensured by not disclosing the names of the research participants to whom questionnaires were given. This means the participants' identities were kept confidential and their names were not associated with their responses. The data were collected under strict conditions of anonymity.

Confidentiality is essential to safeguarding the collected data and protecting the participants' trust and privacy. It ensures that the information shared by participants remains secure and is not accessible to unauthorised individuals (Saltz and Dewar 2019: 197). To ensure confidentiality the data will be retained for a specified period (five years) and then securely disposed. Paperwork will be shredded and all electronic data will be deleted to prevent unauthorised access or data breaches. The respondents' responses were also kept confidential to maintain the integrity of the study.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

The research process involved obtaining informed consent and permission from Radio Al Ansaar to undertake the research. Additionally, the research proposal underwent a review process by the Faculty Research Committee and DUT's Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC) to ensure that all ethical protocols were followed. Each questionnaire's cover letter (Appendix A) informed the participants about the study's nature, aim and objectives. It emphasised that participation in the study was voluntary and participants could withdraw at any time if they wished to do so. This ensured that participants were not coerced into participating and could make their own choices.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter described the methodology and highlighted the different techniques used to conduct this study. The reliability and validity of the questionnaires and analyses of the data are essential for the acceptance of the results and the study's credibility. This chapter has also shown that the methodology

was designed to augment reliability and validity; the study findings can thus be accepted with a reasonable degree of confidence. Chapter Four is dedicated to the presentation of the findings, data analysis and the discussion of research results.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The methodology was outlined in Chapter 3. This chapter presents the data obtained from structured questionnaires completed by employees. The chapter further presents the results and discusses the findings of this study. The data are presented in tabular form to show the frequency and the cumulative percentage. The data are presented in graphs for visual ease of interpretation of the results. The researcher employed (SPSS), a suitable statistical tool, for data collection and analysis. The following variables were derived from the research questionnaire:

- *Section A – Biography of the respondents*
- *Section B– Main intercultural communication barriers*
- *Section C – Specific intercultural communication problems*
- *Section D- Intercultural sensitivity scale*
- *Section E- Suggestions for managing intercultural communication barriers*

This chapter focuses on the analysis of the questionnaire data by addressing the following objectives of the study:

- To determine the types of intercultural communication barriers within an organisation.
- To identify specific intercultural communication problems experienced by employees of Radio Al Ansaar.
- To suggest strategies to enhance communication among Radio Al Ansaar employees based on this study's findings.

The questionnaire was divided into five parts. The first part (Section A) asked for personal information such as gender, age, ethnicity or race, home language, work experience and communication frequency. The second part (Section B) presented a list of intercultural communication barriers that participants face in a multicultural workplace. Questions were designed to elicit either a yes or no response, and open-ended responses to allow participants to elaborate on their experiences. Part 3 (Section C) presents one question on intercultural communication problems that participants face in the workplace. The question was yes or no, an open-ended question to allow participants to elaborate on their experiences. In Part 4 (Section D), participants were asked to rate 22 statements on the Chen and Starosta Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Scale (2000) using a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1)

strongly disagree to (5) completely agree. Higher scores on each dimension of this scale indicate greater sensitivity to cross-cultural differences (Chen and Starosta 2000). Lastly, Part 5 (Section E) presents one open-ended question on suggestions for managing intercultural barriers faced at the workplace based on their experience.

In addition, Section D uses five dimensions of cross-cultural sensitivity: Interaction Engagement, Respect for Cultural Differences, Interaction Confidence, Interaction Enjoyment and Interaction Attentiveness. Each item on the five components of the cross-cultural sensitivity scale was calculated to test the scale's reliability. The five scale components were ranked from most reliable to least reliable, as shown in Table 4.1. According to Ursachi, Horodnic and Zait (2015), this scale was considered acceptable as the reliability of the questionnaire was higher than 0.6 to 0.7, which is an adequate level of reliability and 0.8 and above is a perfect measure as indicated.

The credibility and accuracy of the results are ensured by the reliability and validity of the data collection instruments in a study. Validity in research refers to the measurement accuracy and the intent of the study's accuracy by answering the study's questions. Reliability and validity should be reported and investigated for each assessment instrument to measure study outcomes (Kumar 2019: 273). The data collected from the responses were analysed with SPSS version 29.0 for Windows.

4.2 Reliability Statistics

Kumar (2019: 270) states that validity centres on the degree to which an instrument measures its proposed measure. Reliability is an element of accuracy that can measure consistency while producing the same results if done repeatedly. Based on this, two aspects, validity and reliability, are closely associated based on each other's credibility and accuracy. Taber (2018: 1292) supports Kumar (2019: 270-273) by stating that Cronbach's alpha is between 0 and 1. To see the extent to which all the items in a test measure the same concept, the internal consistency of the test or scale must be measured.

In this study, Cronbach's alpha as a reliability test is mainly used to check the reliability of questions in multiple Likert scale questionnaires. Descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation were used in this study to analyse the results. The rating scale means were interpreted as follows: 1.00-1.80 = Very Low, 1.81-2.60 = Low, 2.61-3.40 = Moderate, 3.41-4.20 = High and 4.21-5.00 = Very High. In addition, as proposed by Chen and Starosta (2000), to calculate the total score, the nine items, such as the item numbers IE5, R1, R2, R5, R6, IC2, IAE1, IAE2 and IAE3, were 'reverse-coded'. The ISS scale includes negative expressions, such as "I don't like to be with people from diverse cultures" (see Tables 4.13–4.16 below). Therefore, negatively expressed items were decoded to ensure that

participants' agreements for all items on the scale were consistent. Table 4.1 below shows the Cronbach alpha scores for its constituent elements.

4.2.1. Cronbach's Alpha Score

Table 4.1: Cronbach's Alpha Consistency Reliability Score

	Number of respondents	Percentage
Case Validity	42	100.0
Excluded	0	0
Total	42	100.0
Cronbach's Alpha	.718	
Standardised Items	6.110	
Number of Items	22	

The Cronbach alpha value is higher than recommended in the reliability scores for all sections. For those areas of the study, this indicates a level of acceptability and consistency concerning scores. The instrument's reliability was found to be more than 71%, which shows the perfect accuracy of the research instrument and the integrity of the results obtained. If the research instrument achieves a score of more than 70, its reliability is deemed acceptable. It is concluded that the research tool used to collect data in this study has internal consistency.

Table 4.2 presents an overall scale statistic of the data collection below:

Table 4.2 Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
63.88	37.327	6.110	22

The mean of 63.88 values and variance of 37.327 were established by the overall scores for items in Section D of the questionnaire and the data obtained from this survey. The table also shows an average deviation of 6.110 for the 22 questions included in this study.

4.3 Analysis of Data

The scoring patterns of the respondents for each variable and each section are examined in Section 4.4. The levels of disagreement and agreement were tabulated to display how respondents responded to various variables. The five sections of the questionnaire (Appendix C), which had 35 items and could be measured on a nominal or ordinal scale, are presented sequentially alongside the analyses of the findings. The questionnaire was broken down into three sections, each measuring a different theme, as shown below:

The following sections are included: Section A: Demographic and Biographical Information; Section B: Intercultural Communication Barriers; Section C: Cultural Communication Problems; Section D: Intercultural Sensitivity Scale; and Section E: Suggestions for managing Intercultural Communication Barriers. The analysis for Questionnaire Section A (Appendix C) emphasises using frequency tables and descriptive statistics to show comparative studies for the data's demographics. The researcher chose descriptive statistics to present the analysis of the findings for Sections B, C, D and E of the Questionnaire (Appendix C). Below is a brief explanation of descriptive statistics, emphasising the research's empirical analysis.

4.3.1 Use of Descriptive Statistics

The calculation of descriptive statistics is a crucial step in the analysis as it provides information on the description of the variable used in the research, (Mishra *et al.* 2019: 01). Descriptive statistics can take the form of frequencies depending on the type of variable being studied, such as a nominal or ordinal variable (Kaliyadan and Kulkarni 2019: 02). If the variable of interest is an interval or ratio, it may also be a central tendency measure (Riffenburgh and Gillen 2020: 42). The descriptive analyses of the demographic information from the sampled respondents are presented first in this section. The following section presents and discusses the results.

4.4 Section Analysis

The scoring pattern of the respondents per variable per section is analysed below. The agreement and disagreement levels are tabulated below to show how respondents react to different variables. The questionnaire, comprising three sections and data generation, will be presented as follows:

- Section A includes biography data such as gender, age, home language, race and work experience.
- Section B comprises data describing the intercultural communication barriers.

- Section C comprises data from the analysis of the cultural aspects and problems affecting communication.
- Section D includes intercultural sensitivity scale
- Section E provides suggestions for managing intercultural communication barriers.

4.4.1. Section A: Biographical Data

This section focused primarily on demographic factors like gender, age, native language, race and work experience. The following are the variables' descriptive statistics:

- **Gender, race and home language for sample respondents.**

Table 4.3 Descriptive statistics of gender, race and home language of the participants:

Biographical variables for respondents (N42)	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Gender		
Female	18	42.9
Male	24	57.1
Total	42	100.0
Race		
Black/African	5	11.9
Indian	31	73.8
White	1	2.4
Coloured	1	2.4
Foreigner	4	9.5
Total	42	100.0
Home Language		
English	15	35.7
Zulu	3	7.1
Xhosa	1	2.4

Sotho	1	2.4
Urdu	14	33.3
Tamil	1	2.4
Hindi	5	11.9
Telegu	1	2.4
Gujarati	1	2.4
Total	42	100.0

Table 4.3 (above) shows a full breakdown of the participant's demographics, shedding light on the diverse composition within the workplace and highlighting some significant intercultural barriers that may exist in the workplace.

Gender

Of the total participants, 42.9% (N = 18) were identified as female, while the majority, constituting 57.1% (N = 24), were male. This gender difference may be traced back to the dominant gender makeup of the radio station's workforce, where a notable preponderance of male employees appears to be pervasive. This is related to research by Eagly *et al.* (2020) who emphasised the impact of gender-related assumptions on communication styles and leadership expectations in the workplace. Traditional stereotypes often portray men as assertive and authoritative, while women are perceived as nurturing and cooperative. Such stereotypes can lead to biased interpretations of behaviour, creating challenges in communication dynamics.

Hofstede and Minkov (2010) emphasise the influence of gender-related assumptions on communication styles, leadership expectations and stereotypes, portraying men as assertive and authoritative and women as nurturing and cooperative. The above finding in Table 4.3 indicates a higher percentage of male participants, suggesting a potential perpetuation of these stereotypes. This may contribute to challenges for female employees expressing assertiveness and reinforcing traditional gender roles, particularly in power dynamics (Dash 2022). The literature's focus on misinterpretations of behaviour due to gender stereotypes finds resonance in the workplace, where gender distribution could influence perceptions of assertiveness, empathy and collaboration. The analysis underscores the need to address these dynamics by fostering an inclusive environment that challenges gender stereotypes and promotes equal opportunities for communication and professional development (Hofstede and Minkov 2010).

Race

Delving deeper into the cultural dimensions, Table 4.3 (above) reveals that most of the employees at Radio Al Ansaar are of Indian descent, 73.8% (N = 31). The findings indicate a limited representation of other racial groups, such as Black/African, White and Coloured. This may reflect challenges in achieving true diversity, as discussed by Banting and Thompson (2021) regarding racial discrimination and the historical roots of racism in South Africa. The presence of foreign employees aligns with Badola *et al.*'s (2019) emphasis on embracing variety in all its forms, including nationalities. Addressing potential communication challenges and misunderstandings due to cultural differences is crucial. Alnsaarfoundation (2021) mentions the station's Muslim presenters from various countries, including Turkey, Egypt, Sudan and Pakistan. The findings support this by indicating a diverse representation of foreign employees within the station.

Banting and Thompson (2021) highlights the historical issue of racism in South Africa and the measures taken to address it through laws like the Employment Equity Act. The findings reflect progress, but the underrepresentation of certain racial groups may indicate ongoing challenges in achieving true workplace equality. Trenholm (2020) emphasises the importance of bridging cultural divides. The findings suggest a predominantly Indian workforce, stressing the need for proactive efforts to promote diversity, inclusivity and effective communication among employees of different racial backgrounds (Badola *et al.* 2019).

Home Language

Table 4.3 (above) reveals a diverse linguistic landscape among Radio Al Ansaar employees, reflecting a variety of home languages. English emerged as the predominant home language, with 35.7% (N = 15) of respondents identifying it as such. Urdu was closely followed, representing 33.3% (N = 14) of the participants. Additionally, a range of other languages, including Hindi, Zulu, Xhosa, Sotho, Tamil, Telegu and Gujarati, accounted for 2.4% of the sample (N = 1). This linguistic diversity emphasises the importance of effective intercultural communication within the workplace, as language barriers can pose significant challenges to teamwork, understanding and overall cohesion (Adenike and Suilat 2021; Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan 2019).

The findings support the concern about the lack of language diversity in Radio Al Ansaar's programming (Alansaarfoundation 2019). While Alansaarfoundation (2019) and Malik (2020) highlighted the station's use of English as the primary language with programmes in Urdu, Arabic, Chichewe and Zulu, the survey data delves further into the home languages of the employees. Various languages, such as Hindi, Xhosa, Sotho, Tamil, Telegu and Gujarati, among the staff indicate a broader linguistic landscape than initially acknowledged. This emphasises the need for a more comprehensive

representation of languages in the station's programming to cater to employees' and listeners' diverse linguistic backgrounds.

UNNews (2020) also discussed the potential challenges of a lack of cultural diversity in the workforce. The findings echo this concern, highlighting the significance of linguistic diversity within the organisation. As the survey reflects, a culturally diverse workforce is vital for overcoming communication barriers, fostering a deeper understanding of different perspectives and promoting overall harmony within the workplace (Van Rooyen 2019). The diversity in home languages among employees at Radio Al Ansaar underscores the importance of addressing cultural and linguistic disparities to enhance effective communication and collaboration (Ofcom 2019). Furthermore, Malik (2020) discussed the potential consequences of a limited range of languages in programming, including exclusion and reduced engagement within the community. The findings reinforce this concern by showcasing the diverse home languages of employees, suggesting that a more inclusive programming approach would better serve the broader community. By incorporating a more comprehensive range of languages, Radio Al Ansaar can enhance its ability to connect with and educate a more extensive audience, aligning with its mission of community education and upliftment (Onlineradiobox 2023).

- **Age and work experience analysis for sample respondents**

Table 4.4 Age and work experience of the respondents:

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Age (N 42)			
Valid	25-34	12	28.6
	35-44	22	52.4
	45-54	4	9.5
	55-64	2	4.8
	65-74	1	2.4
	75 or older	1	2.4
	Total	42	100.0
Work Experience (42)			
Valid	Less than 6 months	4	9.5
	At least 6 months but less than a year	2	4.8
	At least 1 year but less than 3 years	7	16.7
	At least 3 years but less than 5 years	11	26.2
	5 years or more	18	42.9
	Total	42	100.0

N (42)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	3.0714	1.09082
Work Experience	3.8810	1.29167

The findings in Table 4.4 (above) show the age group of the participants. The majority falls within the 35–44 age range (52.4%), followed by the 25–34 age group (28.6%). There is a smaller representation in the 45–54 age range (9.5%) and even fewer participants in the 55–64, 65–74 and 75 or older categories (4.8%, 2.4% and 2.4%, respectively). These age categories provide a snapshot of the

workforce's age diversity, which is essential for understanding the potential impact of age-related cultural stereotypes in the workplace. Oude (2020) highlights the pervasive issue of cultural stereotyping based on age, emphasising the impact of such stereotypes on communication and collaboration in multicultural workplaces. Manzi *et al.* (2018) argue that assuming certain behavioural norms or preferences based on age groups can lead to misunderstandings and hinder the appreciation of diverse cultural perspectives.

Cortland and Kinias (2019) suggest that assigning rigid cultural expectations to different age groups within a team can exclude valuable insights and hinder effective problem-solving. The above findings support this idea by illustrating the diverse age composition of the respondents. The prevalence of age-related cultural stereotypes in the workplace makes it crucial to recognise and appreciate the unique contributions individuals can make based on their cultural backgrounds within each age demographic. They emphasise the need for a nuanced understanding of age and culture to create a more inclusive and harmonious working environment. The findings provide an opportunity to reflect on the diversity within age groups and challenge assumptions about individuals based on age. For example, having a significant number of individuals in the 35–44 age group does not mean they all conform to the same cultural norms or preferences. Embracing this diversity can enhance collaboration and communication in the workplace. Clarke (2020) points out that age-related cultural stereotypes in policies and practices may inadvertently reinforce discriminatory practices. The distribution of age groups in the findings highlights the importance of addressing these stereotypes to ensure fairness and equality. Organisations should be mindful of potential biases in their policies that may disproportionately affect certain age groups, thereby contributing to a more inclusive workplace culture.

In terms of **work experience**, a significant percentage (42.9%) of respondents have 5 years or more of work experience. According to Seeger and Gustafsson's (2021) perspective, individuals with more experience may bring established work norms and behaviours. This can create cultural barriers when interacting with colleagues who have less experience. They further suggest that negative attitudes towards a cultural group based on little or no experience can lead to ineffective communication. Experienced employees might unintentionally perpetuate stereotypes or preconceived ideas about their less-experienced colleagues. Moreover, the findings show that 26.2% of respondents have at least three years but less than five years of work experience. This intermediate experience level introduces expectations and cultural dynamics, potentially adding complexity to communication within the diverse workforce. Seeger and Gustafsson's (2021) assertion that discrimination and negative opinions can arise when employees perceive unequal opportunities aligns with the idea that individuals at different experience levels may perceive disparities in how they are treated. Acknowledging these

dynamics is crucial for organisations to address and mitigate potential challenges in fostering effective cross-cultural communication and collaboration among their diverse workforces.

- **Communication frequency of the respondents:**

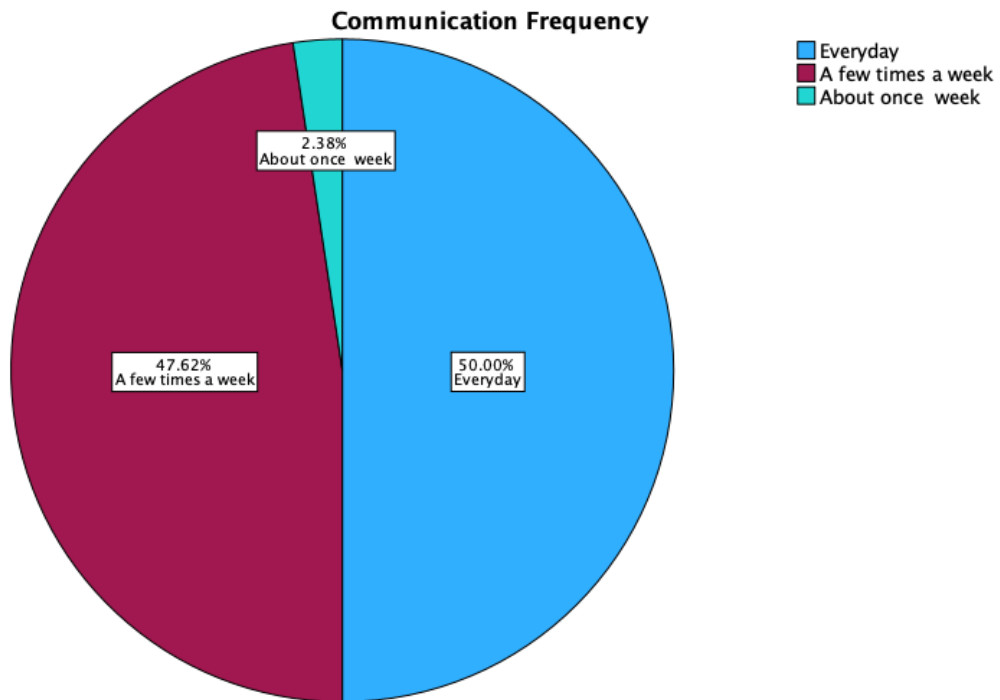


Figure 4.1 Descriptive statistics of communication frequency of the participants.

Figure 4.1 (above) reveals the frequency of communication among employees of Radio al Ansaar, highlighting the significance of regular communication in a workplace setting. Xu and Cheng (2021) emphasise the importance of regular communication in a diverse workplace, suggesting that it allows for exchanging ideas, experiences and perspectives. The findings from Radio al Ansaar align with this literature, as 50% (N = 21) of respondents communicate with their colleagues daily, indicating a high degree of daily interaction. This supports the idea that regular communication occurs within the organisation. Furthermore, the findings reveal that 47.62% (N = 19) of respondents communicate a few times a week, indicating a relatively frequent mode of interaction. This aligns with the literature's assertion that even individuals who do not communicate daily maintain relatively regular contact with their colleagues. The consistent communication pattern observed in the study may contribute to

fostering a sense of harmony and teamwork among employees, supporting the literature's argument that regular interactions facilitate learning from one another and appreciating diverse viewpoints. The small percentage of 2.38% (N = 2) of respondents who communicate about once a week is consistent with the literature's recognition that some employees may have specific roles or responsibilities that require less frequent interaction. The study acknowledges this and highlights the importance of recognising the impact of different communication patterns.

The findings from Radio al Ansaar align with the literature, particularly Xu and Cheng (2021), emphasising the critical role of regular communication in a diverse workplace. The data illustrates a high degree of daily employee interaction, fostering a strong sense of connectivity and teamwork. This supports the literature's assertion that consistent communication enables the exchange of ideas and perspectives, which is crucial in a diverse setting. The acknowledgement of varying communication patterns, even with lower frequencies, aligns with the literature's understanding of diverse roles within an organisation. In essence, the study's findings reinforce the practical significance of regular communication for mitigating cultural barriers, promoting understanding and building a shared work environment, in line with the literature on the subject (Xu and Cheng 2021).

4.4.2. Section B: Intercultural Communication Barriers

This section analysed participants' ability to communicate, and the four main intercultural communication barriers experienced by the respondents in a multicultural workplace.

- Respondents' ability to communicate with colleagues:

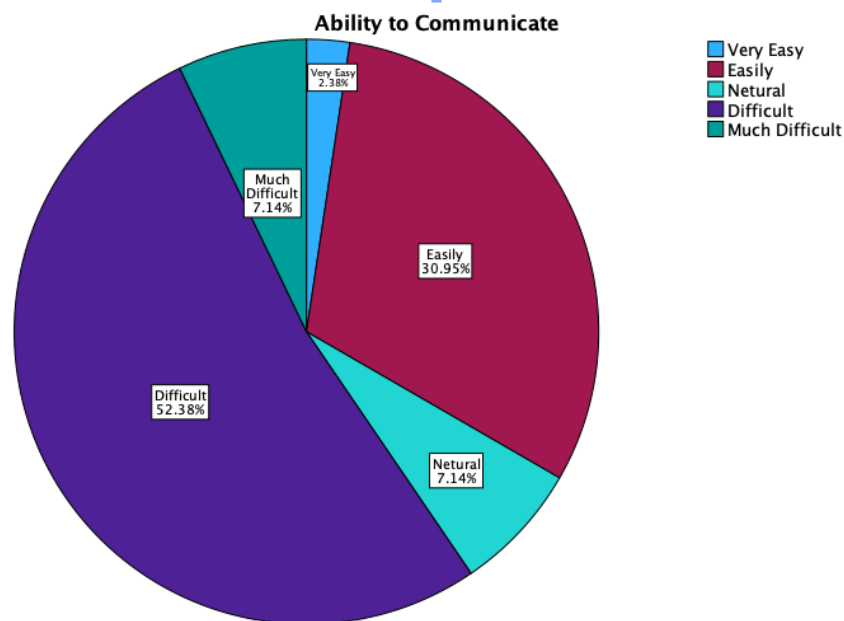


Figure 4.2 Descriptive statistics of the Ability to communicate with the participants.

Figure 4.2 (above) indicates that a significant portion of the respondents, 52% (N = 22), reported having difficulty communicating in a multicultural workplace. This aligns with Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan (2019), who highlight language as a common barrier to effective intercultural communication. According to Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan (2019), variations in language, including accents, pronunciations, linguistic styles and grammatical rules, can lead to misunderstandings and ineffective communication. They emphasise that even when a common language like English is used globally, it can pose challenges due to diverse influences from different countries. This resonates with the finding that a small minority, 2.4% (N = 31) of respondents, indicated they communicate very easily, while 31% (N = 3) found it easy. It suggests that, despite using a common language, nuances in English influenced by various cultural backgrounds may contribute to differences in communication experiences. The idea that speech shapes thoughts and language influences thoughts, both strongly affected by culture (Alteken *et al.* 2021), supports the notion that cultural barriers hinder effective communication within the organisation. The findings indicating 7.1% (N = 3) of respondents having a lot of trouble communicating further underscore the impact of cultural differences on intercultural interaction, in line with Fruhholz and Schweinberger's (2021) assertion that native language influences one's perception of things. The findings agree with the literature, emphasising the significance of language and cultural nuances in understanding and addressing communication challenges in a multicultural workplace.

Table 4.5: Statistics on Respondents' Ability to Communicate.

Statistics		
Ability to Communicate		
N	Valid	42
	Missing	0
Mean		3.31
Median		4.00
Std. Deviation		1.070

Table 4.5 above reveals the central tendency statistics results for respondents' communication ability. A mean of 3.31 reveals that the respondents articulate an average perception of neutral to difficulty. These results align with the findings of Bernhold and Rice (2019: 04), who observed that individuals in diverse workplaces may express unhappiness, reluctance to engage with people from other cultures, shyness, or intolerance towards discussions. The mean score in this study reflects a moderate difficulty level, indicating room for improvement in fostering more effective communication within the organisation. Addressing the concerns raised by Bernhold and Rice may be crucial in promoting a more inclusive and communicative environment, ultimately enhancing collaboration and job satisfaction among employees.

- **Language/Verbal Barriers**

Table 4.6 Language/verbal barriers statistics of the respondents

	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Language Barriers (N42)		
Yes	35	83.3
No	16.7	16.7
Total	100.0	100.0

The findings (above) reinforce the literature's assertions regarding language as a significant barrier to effective communication in diverse workplaces. The above findings reveal that 83.3% of respondents

have encountered language or verbal barriers in their professional interactions. This resonates with the cultural and linguistic diversity discussed by Kulova and Petrosyan (2019) and Alteken *et al.* (2021), emphasising the challenges of different accents, linguistic styles and cultural influences on language behaviour.

One prominent aspect identified by the respondents is the difficulty in correctly pronouncing names and surnames, aligning with Abuarqoub's (2019) exploration of varied accents and sounds in English, mainly those do not present in specific cultural languages, such as clicks in Zulu. The mispronunciation of names is recognised as a potential source of misunderstanding, reflecting the broader issue of linguistic diversity and the need for clarity in communication (Fomenko *et al.* 2020). The respondents also highlight challenges related to the meaning of specific words, echoing the emphasis of DeVito (2019) and Adanlawo, Reddy and Rugbeer (2021) on language as a cultural product with nuanced meanings. The potential for misinterpretation due to differing cultural backgrounds and linguistic styles is underscored in both the literature and the respondents' experiences. Furthermore, the necessity for fluency in English for work-related documents, such as emails, is a prominent concern for the respondents. This aligns with Voevoda's (2020) and Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan's (2019) recognition of English as a shared medium of communication in South Africa's professional spaces, with employees from diverse linguistic backgrounds varying in their competencies in the language.

The findings correspond to models discussed in the literature, such as Hofstede's cultural dimension theory, Bennett's DMIS and Erin Meyer's cultural map. These models offer frameworks for understanding and addressing language barriers in intercultural settings. The practical challenges identified by the respondents, such as issues with word pronunciation and varying meanings of words, align with the theoretical insights provided by these models (Shao *et al.* 2020; Bannikova and Mykhaylyov 2023; and Mellizo 2023).

- **Racism Barriers**

Table 4.7 Racism barriers statistics of the respondents

Racism (N42)	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Yes	3	7.1%
No	39	92.9%
Total	42	100.0%

In Table 4.7 (above), only a few participants indicated that racism is a barrier to intercultural communication, while most of the participants indicated that they do not experience racism at work. The results indicate that 7.1% (N = 3) of participants experience racism at work among workers from other nations (foreigners). As presented in Table 4.7, these results diverge from the existing literature on racism as a pervasive issue affecting individual and institutional levels (Elias *et al.* 2021; Adenike and Suilat 2021; Banting and Thompson 2021).

Agénor *et al.* (2021) and Naqvi *et al.* (2022) emphasise the multifaceted nature of racism, including individual, institutional and cultural dimensions. It is noteworthy that the participants, while reporting a low incidence of racism, did mention specific challenges faced by foreign workers, such as difficulties in securing permanent jobs. This resonates with Naqvi *et al.* (2022) assertion that racism can manifest in limiting opportunities for career advancement, impacting performance evaluations, promotions and access to training programmes. Kim *et al.* (2021) and Banting and Thompson (2021) underscore the historical roots of racism and its impact despite legal frameworks such as the Employment Equity Act. The participants' responses suggest that, despite legal safeguards, foreign workers may still need help in career growth and professional development, highlighting a potential gap between policy implementation and the ground-level experiences of individuals.

As discussed by Shao *et al.* (2020) and Talalova and Werthschulte (2020), cultural dimensions theory provides a valuable framework for understanding how cultural values shape perceptions and behaviours related to racism. While the participants did not explicitly reference these cultural dimensions, the literature offers insights into how individualism-collectivism, power distance and uncertainty avoidance may indirectly contribute to racism in the workplace. The reported issues among participants, such as challenges in obtaining permanent jobs, align with the Kim *et al.*'s (2021) broader discussion on the impact of racism on career trajectories, motivation and engagement among foreign

workers Agénor *et al.* (2021). Even though the percentage of participants reporting racism is low, the implications for intercultural communication in the workplace can be significant, influencing trust, collaboration and the overall communication climate.

- **Cultural Stereotype barriers**

Table 4.8 Cultural Stereotype barriers statistics of the respondents

	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Cultural stereotype (N42)		
Yes	17	40.5%
No	25	59.5%
Total	42	100.0%

Table 4.8 (above) reveals that 40.5% (N = 17) of the participants indicate that cultural stereotyping is problematic when communicating with their colleagues; 59.5% (N = 25) of the respondents did not think so. These findings align with the literature discussed, emphasising stereotypes' impact on cross-cultural communication. Seeger and Gustafsson (2021) highlighted the negative consequences of holding preconceived ideas about a cultural group, emphasising that such stereotypes can lead to ineffective communication. The findings support this assertion, as a substantial portion of the participants acknowledge the presence of cultural stereotype barriers in their workplace interactions.

Bennett's DMIS and Erin Meyer's cultural map are introduced in the literature as tools for overcoming stereotypes and promoting effective intercultural communication. Choi (2023) and Nehrbass (2021) highlight the importance of advancing intercultural sensitivity, which aligns with Bennett's model. The findings suggest that many respondents perceive cultural stereotyping as a barrier, reinforcing the significance of incorporating these models and tools into intercultural communication strategies.

The presence of stereotypes, whether related to culture, age, or gender, can indeed hinder effective communication in diverse workplaces. To address these barriers, organisations may benefit from implementing strategies informed by Bennett's DMIS, Erin Meyer's cultural map and a commitment

to fostering intercultural sensitivity among employees, as suggested by Choi (2023); Nehrbass (2021) and Eagly *et al.* (2020).

- **Ethnocentrism Barriers**

Table 4.9 Ethnocentrism barriers statistics of the respondents

Ethnocentrism (N42)	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Yes	14	33.3%
No	28	66.7%
Total	42	100.0%

33.3% (N = 14) of the participants in Table 4.9 (above) indicate that ethnocentrism is a problem when they communicate with their colleagues; 66.7% (N = 28) of the respondents do not perceive ethnocentrism as a significant issue in the workplace. This suggests that ethnocentrism may not significantly affect communication in the workplace, but it does highlight the need to examine the underlying dynamics.

The literature, as discussed by Yousaf *et al.* (2022) and Nameni (2020), defines ethnocentrism as the belief in the dominance of one's race or ethnic group, leading to the assumption that one culture is superior to others. The study emphasises that ethnocentrism can be a barrier to effective intercultural communication, impacting the interpretation of messages and contributing to intercultural misunderstandings. This aligns with Nameni's (2020) assertion that ethnocentrism poses challenges in the communication processes. In contrast, the workplace findings suggest a mixed perception among participants. While a significant portion (33.3%) acknowledges ethnocentrism as a communication problem, a more significant proportion (66.7%) does not share the same sentiment. This discrepancy raises questions about the factors contributing to these diverse perspectives. It may indicate individual variations in experiences or levels of cultural sensitivity within the workplace.

Gudykunst's AUM theory, as mentioned in the literature, posits that ethnocentrism can be a source of anxiety and uncertainty in intercultural interactions. The findings above, however, need to delve explicitly into the emotional aspects of ethnocentrism. It would be insightful for future research to explore whether the respondents who perceive ethnocentrism as a problem experience heightened anxiety or uncertainty in their workplace communication. Bennett's DMIS proposes stages in which individuals develop intercultural competence, with ethnocentrism potentially manifesting in the earlier stages. The findings above do not explicitly address the developmental stages of intercultural sensitivity. Future research could investigate whether individuals perceiving ethnocentrism as a barrier are at lower stages of intercultural sensitivity, as suggested by Bennett's model. Hofstede's cultural dimension theory identifies individualism-collectivism as a cultural dimension linked to ethnocentrism. The findings above do not directly explore specific cultural dimensions, leaving room for future research to investigate the correlation between ethnocentrism perceptions and cultural dimensions within the workplace.

The findings suggest a nuanced perspective on ethnocentrism as a barrier to effective communication in a diverse workplace, with varying participant perceptions. While the literature highlights ethnocentrism as a potential hindrance to intercultural communication, the workplace data underscores the need for a more nuanced exploration of individual experiences and cultural sensitivities within the specific context of the workplace. Future research could delve deeper into ethnocentrism's emotional and developmental aspects and its correlation with specific cultural dimensions in a workplace setting.

- **Non-verbal Barriers**

Table 4.10 Non-verbal barriers statistics of the respondents

Nonverbal communication(N42)	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Yes	23	54.8%
No	19	45.2%
Total	42	100.0%

In Table 4.10 (above), 54.8% (N = 23) of the respondents indicated that nonverbal communication is a barrier when communicating with their colleagues; 45.2% (19%) of the respondents did not think so.

The literature on non-verbal communication barriers, as discussed by Wesch (2020), Dash (2022), Aitken (2021), Yusof and Rahmat (2020), Trenholm (2020), Ciancarini *et al.* (2021), Shen, Elibol and Chong 2020, Burgoon, Manusov and Guerrero (2021), Bakar, Shah and Xu (2020), Khakimov and Melikuavi (2023) and Knollman-Porter and Burshnic (2020), underscores the influence of culture on nonverbal communication. It emphasises the dynamic process of encoding and decoding verbal and nonverbal messages within defined cultural and perceptual environments. Ciancarini *et al.* (2021) note that nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions, eye contact, touch and spatial awareness, vary in meaning across cultures, contributing to potential misinterpretations and communication challenges.

The participants' responses align with the literature's emphasis on cultural differences in nonverbal communication. In the analysis of identified issues, it becomes evident that challenges with eye contact, different clothing styles, personal space and gestures resonate with the cultural nuances discussed in the literature. For instance, the literature highlights that eye contact can carry diverse meanings, with cultural variations influencing its interpretation, a sentiment echoed by participants who faced challenges maintaining eye contact in the workplace. The participants' mention of personal space as a challenge mirrors the literature's recognition of cultural nuances in the perception of space, impacting social distances during interactions. Moreover, the participants' identification of issues with gestures and paralanguages corresponds with the literature's emphasis on the cultural variations in these nonverbal cues, further emphasising the complexity of intercultural communication.

The literature's theoretical frameworks, such as Edward T. Hall's high-context and low-context theory and Hofstede's cultural dimension theory, provide valuable insights into the cultural variations in nonverbal communication. As Shen, Elibol and Chong (2020) and Burgoon, Manusov and Guerrero (2021), noted, these frameworks stress the importance of acknowledging and navigating cultural nuances for effective intercultural communication. The findings emphasise the need for increased awareness and understanding of diverse nonverbal communication cues, particularly in multicultural settings. Efforts to bridge the gap include employee cultural sensitivity training and fostering a more inclusive and communicative workplace environment. Additionally, establishing clear communication protocols and encouraging open dialogue among team members can help mitigate the impact of nonverbal communication barriers.

4.4.3 Section C: Cultural Aspects/Problems Affecting Communication

This section deals with cultural aspects affecting communication in the workplace. This section aims to identify specific intercultural communication problems experienced by the employees at Radio Al Ansaar.

- **Specific cultural aspects affecting communication.**

Table 4.11 Cultural aspects statistics of the respondents

Cultural aspects(N42)	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Yes	28	66.7%
No	14	33.3%
Total	42	100.0%

Source: Researcher's construct

Table 4.11 (above) shows that 66.7% (N = 28) reported experiencing specific challenges in their daily interactions and work-related activities related to intercultural communication. Some participants indicated that barriers include issues such as different social norms and values, different communication styles and lack of knowledge of diverse cultures. However, 33.3% (N = 14) of the participants did not encounter such problems, suggesting that a notable segment of the staff perceives their intercultural communication as relatively smooth. The issues mentioned by employees in Table 4.11 align with several key cultural aspects affecting communication in a multicultural setting, as discussed in the literature. Constantin, Cohen-Vidaa, and Popescua (2015) support these findings, emphasising that cultural diversity in media organisations, like Radio Al Ansaar, is on the rise, leading to increased communication obstacles.

One of the challenges employees face involves different social norms and roles, where inappropriate behaviour may arise due to a lack of understanding of other cultures' norms. Ahmed (2022) and Bizumic (2015) corroborate this, emphasising the impact of various social roles and standards on behaviour in multicultural workplaces, leading to potential anxiety and communication disruption. Employees reported language barriers and misunderstandings caused by cultural differences as communication challenges. Adenike and Sulat (2021) underscore the distressing difficulties that can

arise from language gaps and the varied meanings attached to words and actions in different cultural backgrounds, reinforcing the importance of comprehending different cultural perspectives for successful communication.

Employees identified communication styles in different cultures as a challenge. Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan's (2019) and Zhao's (2021) research extensively covers various communication expectations and standards, such as direct versus indirect communication, high-context versus low-context communication and formal versus informal communication, supporting the idea that these differences can significantly affect cross-cultural communication. Rathod (2022) highlights the significance of communication skills, including language proficiency, non-verbal communication, active listening, empathy, verbal communication, clarity, simplicity and respectful communication. These skills are crucial for overcoming cultural communication barriers and their importance is echoed in the challenges employees report. The challenges reported by the participants are reflective of broader cultural aspects affecting communication in multicultural settings, as evidenced by the literature. Addressing these challenges is crucial to fostering effective intercultural communication in the workplace.

4.4.4 Section D: Intercultural Communication Scale

- **Average Score on five aspects of intercultural sensitivity**

All components below the five scaled factors were combined to get the complete picture of the data. According to Table 4.12 (below), each participant had a high average mean score for intercultural sensitivity. Respect for Cultural Differences was the highest, followed by Interaction Enjoyment, Interaction Engagement, Interaction Confidence and Interaction Attentiveness, which were the lowest.

These findings for Section D are associated with the DMIS theory. DMIS is a theoretical framework developed by Bennett (2014) that describes the stages of intercultural sensitivity individuals may experience as they expand their understanding and competence in intercultural communication. The theory posits that individuals progress through stages, from a more ethnocentric orientation to a more ethnorelative one, demonstrating increased sensitivity to cultural differences.

Table 4.12 Average Score on five aspects of intercultural sensitivity

Five Aspects of Intercultural Sensitivity	Total Mean	Total SD
IE: Interaction Engagement	3.65	0.82
R: Respect for Cultural Differences	4.40	0.70
IC: Interaction Confidence	3.41	0.85
IEN: Interaction Enjoyment	4.30	0.84
IA: Interaction Attentiveness	3.29	1.07
Total	3.70	1.04

Table 4.12 (above) shows the mean score for **Interaction Engagement (IE)** is 3.65, indicating a moderate level of engagement. In the context of the DMIS, this might suggest that individuals are moving beyond the ethnocentric stages, notably denial, where there is a lack of interest in cultural differences. The mean score for **Respect for Cultural Differences (R)** is 4.40, reflecting a high level of respect. This aligns with the ethno-relative stages of the DMIS, especially Acceptance, where individuals recognise and appreciate cultural differences without necessarily agreeing with them. The mean score for **Interaction Confidence (IC)** is 3.41, indicating a moderate confidence level. In the DMIS context, this may suggest that individuals are transitioning from ethnocentric stages, where differences may be perceived as threatening (defence), towards more ethno-relative stages. The mean score for **Interaction Enjoyment (IE)** is 4.30, indicating a high level of enjoyment. This is consistent with the ethno-relative stages of the DMIS, particularly Acceptance and Integration, where individuals find joy in intercultural interactions. The mean score for **Interaction Attentiveness (IA)** is 3.29, suggesting a moderate level of attentiveness. This may indicate that individuals are transitioning between stages in the DMIS, possibly moving away from ethnocentric minimization towards more ethno-relative stages. The overall mean score is 3.70, with a standard deviation of 1.04. This suggests a moderate level of intercultural sensitivity, with some variability in individual scores.

The high "Respect for Cultural Differences" score aligns with the ethno-relative stages, particularly Acceptance and Integration. The moderate scores in "Interaction Confidence" and "Interaction Engagement" suggest movement beyond ethnocentric stages towards more ethno-relative perspectives. The moderate "Interaction Attentiveness" score may indicate a transitional phase between ethnocentric and ethno-relative stages. The findings generally align with the expectations based on the DMIS. Participants seem to be progressing towards more ethno-relative orientations,

recognising and respecting cultural differences while navigating the complexities of intercultural interactions.

- **Respondents’ Interaction Engagement**

From Table 4.13 (below), the average score for Interaction Engagement was moderate. Participants rated item [IE1] as moderate and item [IE5] as the lowest.

Table 4.13 Interaction Engagement

	Total Mean (N42)	Total SD
[IE1] I enjoy interacting with people from diverse cultures.	4.00	0.77
[IE2] I tend to wait before forming an impression on colleagues from diverse cultures.	3.09	0.30
[IE3] I am open-minded to people from diverse cultures	4.63	0.50
[IE4] I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	4.09	0.83
[IE5] I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally distinct persons.	3.36	0.67
Total	3.53	0.63

Note: Item IE5 was reverse-coded. Table 4.13 (above) shows that [IE1] (mean: 4.00) suggests a positive attitude towards intercultural interactions. The mean score indicates a relatively high level of enjoyment, aligning with the ethno-relative stages of the DMIS, particularly with the notion of Interaction Enjoyment (IEN) in the model. [IE2] (mean: 3.09): The lower mean score on this statement suggests a tendency to quickly form impressions. In the context of the DMIS, this might indicate a potential presence of ethnocentric tendencies, such as minimising cultural differences or seeking to categorise quickly. [IE3] (mean: 4.63): The high mean score indicates a strong open-mindedness towards individuals from diverse cultures. This aligns well with the ethno-relative stages of the DMIS, particularly with the concept of Acceptance. [IE4] (mean: 4.09): The positive responses indicate a constructive approach to intercultural interactions. This is consistent with the ethno-relative stages of the DMIS, emphasising positive engagement and potentially reflecting aspects of Integration. [IE5] (mean: 3.36): The moderate mean score suggests a degree of avoidance in dealing with culturally

distinct individuals. This could be indicative of some ethnocentric tendencies, such as defence mechanisms against cultural differences. The overall mean score for Interaction Engagement is 3.53, with a standard deviation of 0.63. This indicates a moderate level of Interaction Engagement with some degree of consistency among respondents.

Positive responses and enjoyment (IE1 and IE4) align well with the ethno-relative stages (2014), especially Acceptance and Integration. Quick formation of impressions (IE2) may suggest a potential ethnocentric tendency, possibly aligning with the defence stage. Open-mindedness (IE3) strongly aligns with the ethno-relative stage of Acceptance. Avoidance of situations (IE5) could indicate the presence of ethnocentric tendencies, possibly related to denial or minimisation stages. While there are indications of both ethnocentric and ethno-relative tendencies in the findings, the overall pattern suggests a movement towards greater intercultural sensitivity, especially in terms of open-mindedness and positive engagement.

- **Respect for Cultural Differences**

The results from Table 4.14 below show that the average score for Respect for Cultural Differences was very high. Participants rated item [R4] as the highest and item [R5] as the lowest.

Table 4.14 Respect for Cultural Differences

	Mean(N42)	SD
[R1] I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.	4.72	0.47
[R2] I do not like to be with people from diverse cultures.	4.55	0.69
[R3] I respect the values of people from diverse cultures.	4.36	0.67
[R4] I respect the ways people from diverse cultures behave.	4.55	0.53
[R5] I would not accept the opinions of people from diverse cultures.	4.09	0.94
[R6] My culture is better than other cultures.	4.18	0.75
Total	4.34	0.67

Note: Item R1, R2, R5, R6 was reverse-coded. [R1] (mean: 4.72): The high mean score suggests a perception of narrow-mindedness in people from other cultures. This may indicate a potential ethnocentric perspective, possibly aligning with the defence stage in the DMIS, where one's own cultural experience is seen as the only viable one. [R2] (mean: 4.55): The high mean score on this statement suggests a reluctance to engage with people from diverse cultures. This aligns with potential ethnocentric tendencies, possibly reflecting aspects of defence or minimisation stages in the DMIS. [R3] (mean: 4.36): While the mean score is relatively high; it is slightly lower compared to the other

statements. This may indicate a moderate level of respect for cultural values, which could align with the ethno-relative stages of the DMIS, particularly the Acceptance stage. [R4] (mean: 4.55): The high mean score suggests a strong level of respect for the behaviours of people from diverse cultures. This aligns well with the ethno-relative stages, indicating acceptance and appreciation of cultural differences. [R5] (mean: 4.09): The lower mean score suggests a lower willingness to accept opinions from diverse cultures. This may indicate a potential ethnocentric tendency, possibly related to the defence or minimisation stages in the DMIS. [R6] (mean: 4.18): The mean score suggests a moderate level of belief in the superiority of one's own culture. This could align with the ethnocentric stages, particularly minimisation, where aspects of one's own culture are considered universal. The overall mean score for Respect for Cultural Differences is 4.34, with a standard deviation of 0.67. This indicates a generally high level of respect, with some variability among respondents.

High scores on statements [R1] and [R2] suggest potential ethnocentric tendencies, aligning with defence and minimisation stages. Moderate to high scores on statements [R3], [R4] and [R6] indicate ethno-relative tendencies, aligning with the Acceptance stage and, to some extent, Integration. The lower score on statement [R5] suggests a potential reluctance to accept opinions from diverse cultures, aligning with ethnocentric tendencies. The findings on Respect for Cultural Differences exhibit a mix of ethnocentric and ethno-relative tendencies.

- **Interaction for Confidence**

Table 4.15 (below) shows the average score for Interaction Confidence was moderate. Participants rated item [IC1] as the highest and item [IC5] as the lowest.

Table 4.15 Interaction for Confidence

	Mean	SD
[IC1] I am quite sure of myself in interacting with people from diverse cultures.	3.90	0.70
[IC2] I find it hard to talk in front of people from diverse cultures.	3.54	0.52
[IC3] I always know what to say when interacting with people from diverse cultures.	3.54	0.93
[IC4] I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from diverse cultures.	3.36	0.81
[IC5] I feel confident when interacting with people from diverse cultures.	2.73	0.90
Total	3.29	0.77

Note: IC2 was reverse-coded. [IC1] (mean: 3.90): The relatively high mean score suggests a generally positive self-perception in intercultural interactions. This could align with a transitional phase between ethnocentric and ethno-relative stages in the DMIS, indicating a growing confidence in engaging with diverse cultures. [IC2] (mean: 3.54): The moderate mean score suggests a certain level of discomfort or difficulty in verbal communication in intercultural settings. This might indicate a stage where individuals are moving beyond initial ethnocentric stages (e.g., denial, defence) but still facing challenges in fully embracing diverse communication styles. [IC3] (mean: 3.54): The moderate mean score suggests variability in individuals' perceived competence in knowing what to say in intercultural interactions. This may indicate a stage of development where individuals are navigating the complexities of communication, possibly in the ethno-relative stages. [IC4] (mean: 3.36): The moderate mean score suggests a moderate level of perceived sociability in intercultural interactions. This may align with a stage where individuals are becoming more aware of the need for adaptability in communication styles, potentially in the ethno-relative stages. [IC5] (mean: 2.73): The lower mean score suggests a lower confidence level in intercultural interactions. This could indicate a potential struggle with the complexities of intercultural communication, possibly aligning with earlier stages in the DMIS, such as defence or minimisation. The overall mean score for Interaction Confidence is 3.29,

with a standard deviation of 0.77. This indicates a moderate level of confidence with some variability among respondents.

The high score on [IC1] suggests a positive movement towards ethno-relative stages, with growing self-assurance in intercultural interactions. The moderate scores on [IC2], [IC3] and [IC4] suggest a transitional phase where individuals are grappling with communication challenges but showing signs of progress. The lower score on [IC5] indicates potential challenges in achieving a high level of confidence aligned with ethnocentric tendencies in the DMIS. The findings on Interaction Confidence exhibit a mix of confidence levels, with indications of progress in intercultural interactions.

- **Interaction Enjoyment**

Table 4.16 (below) shows that the average score for Interaction Enjoyment was very high. Participants rated the item [IAE1] as the highest and the item [IAE3] as the lowest.

Table 4.16 Interaction Enjoyment

	Mean (N42)	SD
[IAE1] I get upset easily when interacting with People from diverse cultures.	4.45	0.69
[IAE2] I often get discouraged when I am with people from diverse cultures.	4.36	0.81
[IAE3] I often feel useless when interacting with people from diverse cultures.	4.09	1.04
Total	4.23	0.85

Note: Item IAE1, IAE2, IAE3 was reverse-coded. [IAE1] (mean: 4.45) The high mean score suggests a tendency to get upset easily in intercultural interactions. This may indicate a potential emotional challenge or discomfort associated with ethnocentric tendencies, where differences may be perceived negatively. [IAE2] (mean: 4.36): The high mean score indicates a tendency to feel discouraged during intercultural interactions. This emotional response may suggest a stage, where individuals are still grappling with the complexities of diverse cultural communication, potentially aligning with ethnocentric stages in the DMIS. [IAE3] (mean: 4.09): The moderate-to-high mean score suggests a

tendency to feel useless in intercultural interactions. This emotional response may reflect challenges in understanding and navigating diverse cultural contexts, potentially aligning with earlier stages in the DMIS. The overall mean score for Interaction Attentiveness and Emotional Responses is 4.23, with a standard deviation of 0.85. This indicates a relatively high level of Emotional Responses with some variability among respondents.

The high scores on [IAE1], [IAE2] and [IAE3] suggest potential emotional challenges and negative responses in intercultural interactions. These Emotional Responses may align with ethnocentric stages, where differences are not fully embraced or understood. These challenges indicate a need for further development in intercultural sensitivity, particularly in managing and understanding emotions related to cultural differences.

- **Interaction Attentiveness**

From Table 4.17 (below), the component, Interaction Attentiveness, was the factor that received the lowest scores on the scale. Participants rated item [IA1] as the highest and item [IA3] as the lowest.

Table 4.17 Interaction Attentiveness

	Mean(N42)	SD
[IA1] I am very observant when interacting with People from diverse cultures	3.81	0.07
[IA2] I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from diverse cultures.	3.45	0.93
[IA3] I am sensitive to my culturally distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction	2.63	1.21
Total	3.04	0.96

[IA1] cultures (mean: 3.81): The high mean score suggests high attentiveness and observation during intercultural interactions. This aligns with the ethno-relative stages of the DMIS, indicating a positive movement towards increased awareness and sensitivity to cultural differences. [IA2] (mean: 3.45): The moderate mean score indicates an effort to gather information during intercultural interactions. While this suggests a positive intention, the score might indicate some challenges or variability in the effectiveness of information-seeking behaviours. This could align with a transitional phase in the

DMIS, where individuals are actively trying to understand cultural differences. [IA3] (mean: 2.63): The lower mean score suggests a lower level of sensitivity to subtle meanings in intercultural interactions. This may indicate challenges in decoding and understanding nuanced cultural cues, potentially aligning with ethnocentric stages in the DMIS. The overall mean score for Interaction Attentiveness is 3.04, with a standard deviation of 0.96. This indicates a moderate level of attentiveness with some variability among respondents.

The high score on [IA1] suggests a positive movement towards ethno-relative stages, with increased attentiveness and observation during intercultural interactions. The moderate score on [IA2] indicates active efforts to obtain information, which aligns with a transitional phase in the DMIS where individuals are still developing their intercultural sensitivity. The lower score on [IA3] suggests potential challenges in being sensitive to subtle meanings, indicating a need for further development in understanding nuanced cultural cues, potentially aligning with ethnocentric stages. The findings on Interaction Attentiveness suggest a mix of positive movement towards ethno-relative stages and potential challenges in fully understanding nuanced cultural cues.

4.4.3 Section D: Participants' Suggestions for Managing Intercultural Communication Barriers.

Participants presented some suggestions or steps that can be followed to manage intercultural communication barriers in a multicultural workplace based on their experience at work. As stated by most participants, intercultural communication challenges can be managed by understanding others, observing their behaviours and accepting cultural differences. It is elaborated that intercultural communication refers to an individual's message, behaviour and culture and Trenholm (2020) stated that by accepting intercultural communication barriers, individuals can effectively communicate across cultures and conflicts can be minimised. Most participants also suggest that they not be judgemental of others' behaviours as they might have grown up in some other circumstances and have different verbal and non-verbal cues, which vary between cultures. So, understanding various cultures is a way to resolve intercultural communication challenges. This idea is supported by Alexa (2020), who demonstrated that communication consists of both verbal and non-verbal language, and it is essential to understand both so that a sender can send information to the receiver appropriately.

Moreover, participants illustrated that preparedness and understanding of others' behaviours, backgrounds, distinctions and acceptability are the tools that can reduce intercultural barriers. They mentioned that understanding others' backgrounds is essential because they might have different beliefs, values and ways of living, which is also supported by (Khamidovna 2020). Khamidovna (2020)

stated that there are unchanged habitual beliefs and cultural values that ethnic, religious and social groups transmit from generation to generation, which are different in every culture. So, acceptance and understanding of intercultural communication barriers and challenges between cultures and preparedness to deal with them are some tools to manage intercultural communication barriers.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter provided valuable insights into the intercultural communication barriers within a multicultural workplace. The findings provide a basis for the creation of tailored treatments and strategies by highlighting specific communication barriers and cultural factors that affect them. Organisations may improve cooperation, comprehension and ultimately production in a diverse workforce by addressing these issues and fostering effective intercultural communication.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

An analysis of data collection during the research process was presented, including the recommendations of the study. The research findings of the employees' responses to the questionnaire compose the conclusions. Chapter 5 offers recommendations to improve effective intercultural communication amongst employees in the work environment. The work environment in this study was Radio Al Ansaar.

5.2 Conclusions of the Study Objectives

This study aimed to investigate the main barriers to effective intercultural communication among employees at Radio Al Ansaar.

5.2.1 First Objective

The first objective was to determine the type of intercultural communication barriers existing at Radio Al Ansaar. The analysis of the findings provides valuable insights into the intercultural communication landscape at Radio Al Ansaar. The first objective, to determine the types of intercultural communication barriers, revealed multifaceted challenges that span gender, race, home language, age, work experience, language proficiency, racism, cultural stereotyping, ethnocentrism and nonverbal communication. These barriers are interwoven and contribute to a complex tapestry that influences organisational communication dynamics.

The gender-related underscore the impact of traditional stereotypes in the workplace, where a notable gender imbalance may contribute to biased perceptions of assertiveness and cooperation (Eagly *et al.* 2022). The dominance of male employees, as highlighted in the findings and gender-related assumptions, poses challenges for female employees in expressing assertiveness and reinforcing traditional gender roles, particularly in power dynamics (Dash 2022). The literature, echoed by the results, emphasises the need to challenge these dynamics and foster an inclusive environment that promotes equal opportunities for communication and professional development (Hofstede and Minkov 2010).

The racial composition of the workforce at Radio Al Ansaar revealed a substantial majority of employees of Indian descent, reflecting potential challenges in achieving true diversity (Banting and

Thompson 2021). This highlights the importance of proactive efforts to promote inclusivity and diversity, aligning with broader discussions in the literature on racial discrimination and the historical roots of racism in South Africa (Trenholm 2020). While progress is evident, the underrepresentation of certain racial groups suggests ongoing challenges in achieving workplace equality. Bridging cultural divides and fostering effective communication among employees of different racial backgrounds is crucial for creating a harmonious and inclusive workplace.

The linguistic diversity among Radio Al Ansaar employees, as indicated by home language distribution, emphasises the significance of effective intercultural communication within the organisation (Adenike and Suilat 2021; Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan 2019). The results shed light on staff's diverse home languages, challenging previous assumptions about the station's language landscape. This underscores the importance of a more comprehensive representation of languages in the station's programming to cater to employees' and listeners' diverse linguistic backgrounds (Malik 2020). The results aligned with UNNews (2020), emphasising the potential consequences of limited language representation in programming, including exclusion and reduced community engagement.

The age-related results presented a snapshot of the workforce's age diversity, emphasising the potential impact of age-related cultural stereotypes on communication and collaboration (Oude 2020). Most participants suggest a significant age demographic, highlighting the need for a nuanced understanding of age and culture. Addressing age-related stereotypes is essential to creating an inclusive working environment that appreciates the unique contributions of individuals across different age groups (Clarke 2020). The distribution of age groups also raises awareness of potential biases in policies that may disproportionately affect certain age groups, contributing to a more inclusive workplace culture.

In terms of work experience, the results identified a significant percentage of respondents with work experience, potentially bringing established work norms and behaviours (Seeger and Gustafsson 2021). This introduces cultural barriers when interacting with colleagues who have less experience, potentially perpetuating stereotypes or preconceived ideas about less-experienced colleagues. The intermediate experience level adds another layer of complexity to communication dynamics, emphasising the need for organisations to address and mitigate potential challenges in fostering effective cross-cultural communication and collaboration among their diverse workforces.

Language barriers emerged as a prominent concern, with most respondents encountering language or verbal communication difficulties in their professional interactions (Abu-Arqoub and Alserhan 2019).

The reported challenges included mispronunciation of names, problems with the meanings of specific words, and the necessity for fluency in English for work-related documents. These practical challenges align with the theoretical insights provided by cultural communication models such as Hofstede's cultural dimension theory, Bennett's DMIS and Erin Meyer's cultural map (Shao *et al.* 2020; Bannikova and Mykhaylyova 2023; Mellizo 2023). The results highlight the importance of addressing language barriers to enhance effective communication and collaboration, emphasising the need for employee training and clear communication protocols.

While the incidence of racism was relatively low, the results indicated specific challenges faced by foreign workers, such as difficulties in securing permanent jobs. This discrepancy between low-reported racism and challenges faced by foreign workers suggests a potential gap between policy implementation, as reflected in legal frameworks like the Employment Equity Act and the ground-level experiences of individuals. The results call attention to the ongoing impact of the historical roots of racism and the need for organisations to bridge the gap between policy intent and individual experiences, fostering career growth and professional development for foreign workers.

Cultural stereotyping emerged as a significant barrier, with a notable portion of participants acknowledging its presence in their workplace interactions. The results align with Seeger and Gustafsson (2021), emphasising the negative consequences of holding preconceived ideas about cultural groups. Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) and Erin Meyer's cultural map, introduced in the literature, offer frameworks for overcoming stereotypes and promoting effective intercultural communication (Choi 2023) and (Nehrbass 2021). The results reinforce the significance of incorporating these models and tools into intercultural communication strategies to address cultural stereotyping in the workplace.

While not universally perceived as a significant issue, some participants acknowledged ethnocentrism as a communication problem (Gudykunst's AUM theory; Nameni 2020). This highlights the need for further exploration into individual experiences and levels of cultural sensitivity within the workplace. Exploring whether individuals perceive ethnocentrism as a barrier at the lower stages of intercultural sensitivity could provide valuable insights into workplace dynamics, as suggested by Bennett's DMIS.

Nonverbal communication barriers, reported by over half of the respondents, emphasise the impact of cultural nuances in gestures, eye contact, personal space and clothing styles (Wesch 2020; Dash 2022; Aitken 2021; Yusof and Rahmat 2020; Trenholm 2020; Ciancarini *et al.* 2021; Shen, Elibol and Chong

2020; Burgoon, Manusov and Guerrero 2021; Bakar, Shah and Xu 2020; Khakimov and Melikuavi 2023; Knollman-Porter and Burshnic 2020). The literature on nonverbal communication barriers underscores the influence of culture on the dynamic process of encoding and decoding verbal and nonverbal messages. The results align with theoretical frameworks such as Edward T. Hall's high-context and low-context theory and Hofstede's cultural dimension theory, emphasising the importance of acknowledging and navigating cultural nuances for effective intercultural communication. The results underscore the need for increased awareness and understanding of diverse nonverbal communication cues, particularly in multicultural settings, to foster a more inclusive and communicative workplace environment.

5.2.2 Second Objective

The second objective was to identify specific intercultural communication problems experienced by the employees at Radio Al Ansaar. To achieve this objective, two sections of the questionnaire were analysed. One question on intercultural communication barriers faced by employees and 14 questions, which consist of the intercultural sensitivity scale questions with 22 items, were analysed in Chapter 4.

The results revealed that most participants reported facing specific challenges in their daily interactions and work-related activities related to intercultural communication. These challenges encompass diverse social norms and values, varied communication styles and a need for more cultural knowledge. However, a notable segment of the staff perceived their intercultural communication as relatively smooth, indicating a range of organisational experiences. Challenges highlighted by employees included issues related to different social norms and roles, language barriers and misunderstandings arising from cultural differences. These challenges align with existing literature, emphasising the importance of understanding various social roles, standards and language proficiency for effective communication in multicultural workplaces.

Communication styles in different cultures were identified as a significant challenge, reinforcing the importance of communication skills such as language proficiency, non-verbal communication, active listening, empathy, verbal communication, clarity, simplicity and respectful communication. The study underscored the crucial role of these skills in overcoming cultural communication barriers. Furthermore, the research indicated that variations in language, including accents, pronunciations, linguistic styles and grammatical rules, contribute to misunderstandings and ineffective communication. The study supports the idea that speech shapes thoughts and language influences

thoughts, both strongly influenced by culture, emphasising that cultural barriers hinder effective communication within the organisation.

The results also highlighted the significance of regular communication in the workplace, emphasising its critical role in a diverse setting. Daily interactions among employees contribute to a strong sense of connectivity and teamwork, facilitating the exchange of ideas and perspectives. In addition to communication challenges, the study provided insights into employees' attitudes and behaviours in cross-cultural interactions, demonstrating moderate intercultural sensitivity. The results indicated a positive movement towards ethno-relative orientations, with high scores in aspects such as Respect for Cultural Differences and Interaction Enjoyment. However, the results also revealed a mix of ethnocentric and ethno-relative tendencies in various aspects, indicating an ongoing journey towards greater intercultural sensitivity.

5.2.3 Third Objective

The third objective is to suggest strategies to overcome intercultural communication barriers for the organisation's benefit. Participants were asked to share their perceptions based on their personal experiences to overcome this objective. The results emphasise that understanding, observing and accepting cultural differences are crucial to effectively navigating intercultural communication challenges. Trenholm's (2020) assertion that acceptance of these barriers enables effective cross-cultural communication and minimises conflicts resonates with participants' experiences.

A recurring theme among participants emphasises the importance of avoiding judgement and recognising that individuals may exhibit different verbal and non-verbal cues influenced by their cultural background. This aligns with Alexa's (2020) emphasis on understanding verbal and non-verbal language for successful communication across cultures. Participants stressed the need for cultural awareness, emphasising that being non-judgemental and understanding various cultural backgrounds are essential to resolving intercultural communication challenges. Furthermore, the participants highlighted preparedness and a deep understanding of others' behaviours, backgrounds and cultural distinctions as essential tools to reduce intercultural barriers. Khamidovna's (2020) perspective on transmitting habitual beliefs and cultural values across generations underscores the necessity of acknowledging and embracing diverse cultural perspectives. Acceptance and understanding of intercultural communication challenges, coupled with preparedness to address them, emerged as fundamental strategies proposed by participants.

Addressing the third objective, participants offered insights into strategies for overcoming intercultural communication barriers to benefit organisations. While specific strategies were not detailed in the data provided by participants, the overarching theme suggests that fostering a culture of acceptance, understanding and preparedness within the organisation can contribute significantly to overcoming these challenges. The results align with the broader goal of creating inclusive and culturally competent workplaces that enhance collaboration and communication among diverse teams.

5.3 Recommendations from the Study

The study identified some barriers that individuals encounter when working with multicultural individuals. Comprehending and addressing these challenges in various ways can mitigate conflicts and enhance overall productivity. These difficulties are not caused by mathematical or scientific formulas that are impossible to learn or replicate. However, one of the objectives is to suggest strategies to manage and overcome these barriers and lead employees towards better performance. After examining the findings in Chapter 4 and reviewing the existing literature on intercultural communication and its associated theories, the findings and objectives of the study lead to the following recommendations for overcoming intercultural communication barriers at Radio Al Ansaar:

- **Promote Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives:** Develop and implement initiatives to increase diversity within the organisation, acknowledging the current imbalances, especially regarding gender and racial representation. Establish diversity and inclusion training programmes to raise employee awareness and sensitivity, fostering a more inclusive workplace culture.
- **Address Gender Imbalances:** Implement measures to address gender imbalances, promoting equal opportunities for communication, professional development and leadership roles. Challenge traditional gender stereotypes through targeted training and awareness campaigns, fostering an environment that values diverse contributions.
- **Enhance Linguistic Representation:** Acknowledge and embrace the linguistic diversity within the organisation by incorporating a broader range of languages in programming. Provide language training and resources to address language barriers and improve communication effectiveness.
- **Facilitate Cross-Generational Understanding:** Foster a nuanced understanding of age diversity within the workforce, addressing potential stereotypes and biases. Develop communication strategies that promote collaboration and understanding among employees of different age groups.

- **Mitigate Work Experience-Related Barriers:** Implement mentorship programmes to bridge the gap between employees with varying levels of work experience. Create a supportive environment that values the unique perspectives and contributions of individuals with different experience levels.
- **Tackle Language Barriers:** Provide language training programmes to enhance communication skills, especially in English and address challenges such as mispronunciations and difficulties with specific words. Establish clear communication protocols and encourage employees to seek clarification when faced with language-related challenges.
- **Bridge the Gap for Foreign Workers:** Actively address challenges foreign workers face, including difficulties securing permanent jobs, to ensure fair and equal opportunities. Align organisational policies with legal frameworks like the Employment Equity Act to bridge the gap between policy intent and individual experiences.
- **Combat Cultural Stereotyping:** Integrate cultural sensitivity models such as Bennett's DMIS and Erin Meyer's cultural map into training programmes to address and overcome cultural stereotypes. Foster an organisational culture that values diversity and promotes an understanding of different cultural perspectives.
- **Address Ethnocentrism:** Explore individual experiences and levels of cultural sensitivity within the workplace to identify and address instances of ethnocentrism. Provide training programmes that promote cultural awareness and sensitivity, encouraging employees to adopt ethno-relative orientations.
- **Improve Nonverbal Communication Awareness:** Increase awareness and understanding of diverse nonverbal communication cues by incorporating relevant training modules. Foster a workplace culture that values and respects cultural nuances in gestures, eye contact, personal space and clothing styles.
- **Enhance Intercultural Sensitivity:** Develop ongoing intercultural sensitivity training programmes to improve employees' understanding of diverse social norms, communication styles and values. Reinforce the importance of communication skills such as active listening, empathy and respectful communication in diverse settings.
- **Foster a Culture of Acceptance and Understanding:** Encourage a non-judgemental attitude and understanding of cultural differences among employees. Promote a culture of acceptance and preparedness to address intercultural communication challenges, emphasising the importance of acknowledging and embracing diverse perspectives.
- **Regular Communication and Connectivity:** Emphasise the importance of regular communication in the workplace to facilitate strong connectivity and teamwork. Create

opportunities for daily interactions among employees to encourage exchanging ideas and perspectives, fostering a collaborative environment.

- **Organisational Support for Intercultural Competence:** Establish ongoing support mechanisms, such as mentorship programmes, to assist employees in navigating intercultural communication challenges. Recognise and reward initiatives that contribute to improving cultural communication within the organisations.

5.4 Suggestions for further study

Due to limited time and a small geographic area, intercultural communication barriers may not be completely identified, leaving a gap. Future researchers can study intercultural communication barriers in media houses with multicultural work settings in bigger geographic areas. Since only one community radio station was focused on for this study, this can create an opportunity for future researchers to include more radio broadcasting, both public and private. The conclusions of this study were based on the data collected from only the quantitative method (questionnaires). Therefore, this is an opportunity for future researchers to conduct a quantitative study on intercultural communication barriers. More specific answers can be given to the research questions. Cultural concerns persist in South Africa and worldwide in the modern era. Understanding how people communicate using different verbal and nonverbal cues so they can work together to create relationships requires intercultural communication. Blending different languages and cultural backgrounds is essential for effective communication and successful interaction in today's challenging multilingual workplace.

5.5 Conclusion

This study examined the barriers to effective intercultural communication among employees at Radio Al Ansaar, a community radio station. The findings indicated a nuanced landscape of challenges encompassing gender, race, language, age, work experience and cultural nuances. Gender-related stereotypes and racial composition indicated potential imbalances, while linguistic diversity challenged assumptions about language within the organisation. Age- and work experience-related barriers emphasised the need for a nuanced understanding of cultural differences. Language barriers, instances of racism, cultural stereotyping and ethnocentrism emerged as prominent challenges, alongside nonverbal communication barriers. The study also identified specific intercultural communication problems, revealing a mix of ethnocentric and ethno-relative tendencies among employees. Recommendations centred on promoting diversity, addressing gender imbalances, enhancing linguistic representation, fostering understanding across generations and mitigating language-related challenges. The overarching strategy advocated for fostering a culture of acceptance,

understanding and preparedness. For future researchers, the study suggests broader investigations into intercultural communication barriers in media houses with diverse settings and explores the effectiveness of recommended strategies in enhancing communication dynamics.

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Appendix A: Cover Letter

Cell: 076 6696 083

Email: 21751109@dut4life.ac.za / lindiwesharon11@gmail.com

Dear Participant

ASSISTANCE: QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETION

I am a registered student at the Durban University of Technology and I am currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Relations and Communication Management. My topic is titled: **Effective Intercultural Communication: A Case of Radio Al Ansaar**. Complete my research involves the completion of a structured close-ended and open-ended questionnaire. You have been identified as one of the respondents that formed the sample for this study.

I would appreciate it if you could please complete the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire will take about 20 minutes to complete and only requires you to cross the relevant pre-coded response objectively. Your participation is voluntary and you are at liberty to withdraw from answering this questionnaire at any time. Please be rest assured that your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and no names will be divulged to any third party. The gathered responses will be only used for statistical analysis. A summary of the main findings will be made available to you upon completion of the project.

Your cooperation in assisting me with this significant component of my study is highly appreciated and I look forward to a return of the completed questionnaire. Please answer all the questions and do not leave any question or Likert scale statement blank. If there are any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me at the above email address or via my cell phone. I take this opportunity to once again thank you for your kind assistance in completing this questionnaire in an informed and objective manner.

Sincerely

Lindiwe Sharon Vilankulu _

Appendix B: Information Letter

Good Day

I am a student at DUT (Durban University of Technology) researching for my Master's in Public Relations and Communications. You are kindly requested to take part voluntarily as a respondent in this study. In this study, your participation will be honoured and appreciated. With you participating in this study is of greater value as that will serve in the achievement of the purpose. You are being approached to participate due to your expertise, qualities and knowledge of communication in the workplace.

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

Culture has an impact when it comes to communicating effectively. Decades ago, intercultural communication had barriers that affected employees when communicating in a workplace (Silungwe 2014). Before barriers to effective communication, employees have tried to produce ways to overcome these barriers and make communication effective. In consonance with these narratives, the study aims to identify intercultural barriers in the workplace.

Outline procedure:

This research analyses the intercultural communication barriers to effective communication. It also aims to establish the main barriers to intercultural communication among employees: A case study of Radio Al Ansaar. Pikhari (2016) affirms that culture is considered a barrier to effective communication in the workplace. Intercultural communication is the communication that takes place between cultures and implies communication between people from diverse cultures (Silungwe 2014). This study focuses on diverse employees at Radio Al Ansaar which is a community radio station situated in the Durban Area. This organisation consists of diverse employees from different countries, with cultural backgrounds and languages. These employees primarily communicate face to face daily. The organisation is facing unproductively, and employees feel anxious to communicate with their colleagues (Silungwe 2014). The research methodology will utilise a quantitative research approach where questionnaires will be distributed to gather the required information. Questionnaires will be given to all the employees at Radio Al Ansaar. After critically analysing the role culture plays in ineffective communication, recommendations will be made to enhance communication amongst employees at Radio Al Ansaar

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant: The researcher ensures you that your participation in this study is of no risk or discomfort in any form.

Explain to the participant the reasons he/she may be withdrawn from the Study: The researcher ensures that, you are free to withdraw from taking part in this study, either for non-compliance, illness or for anything that can be the reason and be reassured that no adverse consequences will be attracted to you because of your decision.

Benefits: The promised benefit by the researcher is a publication of the study. The participants will learn more about intercultural communication and know ways to improve their communication skills.

Remuneration, cost of the study: In this study, you are not expected to cover any costs and the researcher humbly states that no financial benefits you will receive from this study, whether direct or indirect.

Confidentiality: The participant's information will be treated with confidentiality; the researcher ensures that only the researcher and supervisor will have access to the information of participants.

Results: This study will contribute toward intercultural effective communication in the workplace.

Research-related Injury: The researcher also ensures you that your participation in this study is of no risk or risk-free and no physical, psychological, or emotional harming, or discomfort will be felt by the respondent.

Storage of all electronic and hard copies including tape recordings: As soon as results are produced, participant's data will no longer be needed and will be disposed.

Persons to contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries: Please contact me the researcher 0766696083, my supervisor rawjeeve@dut.ac.za or the Institutional Research Ethics Administrator on 031 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to the Director: of Research and Postgraduate Support Dr. L Linganiso at 031 373 2577 or researchdirector@dut.ac.za.

Appendix C: Questionnaires

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

For each question, tick the appropriate box or fill in the appropriate space.

A1. What is your gender?

(1) Female (2) Male

A2. What is your age?

(1) 18 to 24 (2) 25 to 34 (3) 35 to 44 (4) 45 to 54 (5) 55 to 64

(6) 65 to 74 (7) 75 or older

A3. What is your race or ethnicity?

(1) Black or African. (2) Indian (3) White (4) Coloured

A4. What is your home language? (Please choose only one)

English. Zulu. Xhosa. Sotho. Urdu Tamil. Hindi. Telegu. Gujarati.
 Other/multiple languages

A5. How long have you been working in South Africa?

Less than 6 months. At least 6 months but less than 1 year. At least 1 year but less than 3 years. At least 3 years but less than 5 years. 5 years or more

A6. How many times a week do you communicate with other employees?

- Every day. A few times a week. About once a week

SECTION B: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION BARRIERS

For each question, tick the appropriate box or fill in the appropriate space.

B7. Are you able to communicate easily with your colleagues without any cultural challenges?

Yes No ▶

1	2	3	4	5	5	7
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B8. Do you think language is a problem when you communicate with your colleagues?

- (1) Yes
 (2) No

If yes, please explain the language problems you have experienced.

.....
.....
.....

B9. Do you think racism is a problem when communicating with your colleagues?

- (1) Yes
 (2) No

If yes, please specify the explanation of your experience.

.....
.....
.....

B10. Does ethnocentrism (a person's belief that their culture is superior to others) affect communication affect your communication with your colleagues?

(1) Yes

(2) No

If yes, please explain your answer.

.....
.....
.....

B11. Does cultural stereotyping (generalisation about people from a specific culture) affect your communication with your colleagues?

(1) Yes

(2) No

If yes, please explain your experience.

.....
.....
.....

B12. Do you experience non-verbal communication problems, such as eye contact, facial expression, touch and space during interaction with other employees?

(1) Yes

(2) No

If yes, please explain your experience.

.....
.....
.....

SECTION C: SPECIFIC INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

C13. In your daily interactions and work-related activities at Radio Al Ansaar, have you faced any specific intercultural communication problems?

(1) Yes

(2) No

If yes, please describe the specific intercultural communication problems you have encountered.

.....
.....
.....

SECTION D: INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY SCALE

C14. Intercultural Sensitivity Scale

<p>INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS:</p> <p>I. Please answer ALL questions to allow for effective analysis.</p>

2. All questions in this section use a 5-point Likert Scale. Please give only one answer per statement.

3. Please answer each question by placing an X within the appropriate box alongside each statement that best describes how you feel.

4. Please DO NOT leave any question blank.

KEY: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree

	Strong Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
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IE. Interaction Engagement: Feeling of interacting with others

[IE1] I enjoy interacting with people from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
[IE2] I tend to wait before forming an impression on colleagues from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
[IE3] I am open-minded to people from diverse cultures	1	2	3	4	5
[IE4] I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.	1	2	3	4	5
[IE5] I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally distinct persons.	1	2	3	4	5

R. Respect for other cultures: Tolerance of other cultures

[R1] I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.	1	2	3	4	5
[R2] I do not like to be with people from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
[R3] I respect the values of people from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
[R4] I respect the ways people from diverse cultures behave.	1	2	3	4	5
[R5] I would not accept the opinions of people from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
[R6] My culture is better than other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5

IC. Interaction confidence: Confidence to communicate

[IC1] I am quite sure of myself in interacting with people from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
[IC2] I find it hard to talk in front of people from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5

[IC3] I always know what to say when interacting with people from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
[IC4] I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
[IC5] I feel confident when interacting with people from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
.					
IE. Interaction enjoyment: Positive or Negative reaction towards other cultures					
[IE1] I get upset easily when interacting with People from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
[IE2] I often get discouraged when I am with people from diverse cultures.	1	2		4	5
[IE3] I often feel useless when interacting with people from diverse cultures.	1	2	33	4	5
.					
IAE. Interaction attentiveness: Effort to learn other cultures					
[IAE1] I am very observant when interacting with People from diverse cultures	1	2	3	4	5
[IAE2] I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5
[IAE3] I am sensitive to my culturally distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION E: SUGGESTION FOR MANAGING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION BARRIERS.

C15. What are one or two suggestions you want to give through which intercultural communication barriers can be managed? Any of your personal viewpoints. Note that this is not wrong or right as it is your thinking according to your experience.

.....

.....

.....

*(please note that all information provided above will remain anonymous)

*Thank you for you.

Appendix D: Gatekeeper's Letter



18 May 2021

To whom it may concern

Radio Alansaar hereby approves Ms Vilankulu Lindiwe Sharon (Student Number 21751109) to come into Radio Alansaar Premises and do her Thesis and projects.

**Yours Sincerely
Head of Programming
Ally Sayed
031 208 1601**

Appendix E: Ethical clearance Approval



Institutional Research Ethics Committee
Research and Postgraduate Support Directorate
2nd Floor, Berwyn Court
Gate 1, Steve Biko Campus
Durban University of Technology
P O Box 1334, Durban, South Africa, 4001
Tel: 031 373 2375
Email: lavishad@dut.ac.za
http://www.dut.ac.za/research/institutional_research_ethics
www.dut.ac.za

7 July 2022

Ms L S Vilankulu
525 Block XX
Soshanguve
Pretoria
0152

Dear Ms Vilankulu

Effective intercultural communication: A case of Radio Al Ansaar
Ethical Clearance number IREC 040/21

The Institutional Research Ethics Committee acknowledges receipt of your final data collection tool for review.

We are pleased to inform you that the data collection tool has been approved. Kindly ensure that participants used for the pilot study are not part of the main study.

Please note that **FULL APPROVAL** is granted to your research proposal. You may proceed with data collection.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the IREC according to the IREC Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's).

Please note that any deviations from the approved proposal require the approval of the IREC as outlined in the IREC SOP's.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof J K Adam
Chairperson: IREC

Appendix F: TURNIT IN REPORT

Thesis 1-5

ORIGINALITY REPORT

20%

SIMILARITY INDEX

18%

INTERNET SOURCES

3%

PUBLICATIONS

9%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	ir.dut.ac.za Internet Source	7%
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