



Cyprus
University of
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Faculty of Management
and Economics

Doctoral Dissertation

**INTERCULTURAL WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS IN
THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: AN INVESTIGATION
OF THEIR IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Chrystalla Vassou

Limassol, April 2018

CYPRUS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS
DEPARTMENT OF HOTEL AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

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Approval Form

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ABSTRACT

Workforce management issues appear to be the hardest to tackle in the hospitality industry. Staff shortage, the reliance on foreign labour, and the inability of the industry to attract and retain local talent are interrelated challenges. This thesis argues that one of the greatest gaps in human resource literature stems from the assumption that the integration of foreign employees in a society or an organisation can be studied by looking only at the latter's experience. Viewing integration through the lens of inclusive organisations, it becomes clear that diversity management refers to the mindset of the whole workforce – not just minority groups.

Employing a mixed-methods design, this thesis investigates the impact of intercultural workplace relationships on affective commitment and on wider attitudes towards the “other”. The study takes place in Cyprus, a small island economy which is dependent on tourism. The findings touch upon the root cause of prejudice and confirm the reciprocal nature of integration, suggesting that workforce management challenges mainly stem from insecurity at the material and the symbolic levels. Human resource implications are derived, which are presented analytically and diagrammatically as a framework for inclusive organisations which can inform hospitality stakeholders.

Keywords: human resource management, diversity management, hospitality industry, inclusive organisations, intercultural relationships