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Impact of National Cultures on Global Leadership in Kenya

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Abstract
This paper examines the effects of national cultures on a Sglobal organizational leadership and how to understand and handle the cultures effectively. The paper examines the trends in the 21st Century organizations and their relevance to global leadership practices especially the rapid development of technology and globalization which have led to the need for prioritizing the marketing function and its demand for diversity in the human capital and so has led to cultural diversity in the organizations themselves. The paper discusses the impacts of these cultures on the basis of the Hofstede cultural dimensions which are then discussed, each with its possible impact on the organization and how it can be handled in the Kenyan context.
Keywords: Globalization, culture, diversity, cultural dimensions
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1. The 21st Century Organizational Trends.

1.1. Globalization

Information and communication technologies (ICT) in the 21st Century have made the world look like just a small globe (Mahmood, 2017). Information which used to take weeks to reach a recipient now takes a few seconds. In the 1970s, it could take a whole day to get a call through to Australia from Kenya at a heavy cost and the conversation was almost intelligible due to the poor connection. Today, one calls Australia in the seconds it takes to dial a mobile phone and the conversation is clear and can even be recorded and the parties can see one another if they are using the video calls. Air travel is safer and faster across continents. A few years ago, a trip to Mombasa from Nairobi took 12 hours by rail but it now takes 40 minutes by air or 4 hours with the Standard Gauge Railway line (Banister & Stead, 2007). Trading globally is not different from trading nationally as far as time and distances are concerned. A global company trades and procures its products and production materials across the world with subsidiaries, joint ventures or partnerships in other countries with no regard for national boundaries (Wadwa & Parimoo, 2013).

1.2. Developments in technology

The 21st Century organizations are being driven by technology which has made production faster and cheaper such that the product can be offered at a lower price without affecting profitability and has prioritized the marketing function as a driving factor (Abdel-Razek & Sayyar, 2011; Boer & Blaga, 2018; Cochrane, 2014). Since all the global products are meeting in one country and they seem to bear the same characteristics, the market is turbulent (Choi, 2012; Nafel, 2016). The elements of the marketing mix have to be applied with technology in mind which in turn demands competent workers (Dominici, 2009). There is therefore the need for synergy between the human capital and technology (Jain & Yadavv, 2017). An example is the mobile telephone. When the mass use of the mobile phone came to the Kenya market at the beginning of the 21st Century, they were clumsy but expensive gadgets in today's standards. The mobile phone has become a common possession for most people and they are fitted with radios, televisions, internet, GPS, cameras, remote car security controls, banking and many other applications and the development is still going on (Dudley, 2018; Wesolowisky, Noor, Eagle, & Snow, 2012). The same applied in industries leading to staff retrenchments due to the massive early retirements for workers as they were replaced by the technology (Holland & Bardoel, 2016).

The other effect of the technology is to make the products or services similar since the companies are using the same machines. The result was the end of identifying a product's quality by its country of manufacture. The most likelihood is that the BMW car which one sees in Kenya is probably made in South Africa whereas Kenyans knew it as a German model (Soejachmoen, 2016). The Mercedes truck could be from India, the Philips Television from Korea, while the Peugeot car was probably made at Thika in Kenya and not France (Bailey, Ruyter, Michiec & Tyler, 2010). The parent company reproduces the same technology in many countries and they will manufacture the same products with the same qualities. What is of interest to the companies is the cost of production and they will establish their industries where the production costs are lowest which is why multinational organizations are relocating from Kenya, citing the cost of electricity and transport (Biggiero, 2007; Puig, Marques, & Ghauri, 2009).

1.3. Diversified WorkForce

All nations do not have the same levels of technical knowledge (Bohn, 1994). The required competences are wide and such is their demand, that an organization has to depend on the global human capital (Fatima, 2017). Labor laws and regulations have been relaxed to enable the importation of labor to handle the technologies and a global organization's workers are from many nations and located in many countries (Ethier, 1985; Miles, Snow, Fjeldstad, & Letti, 2010). The 21st Century organizations are now operating in teams with a demand for agility and they are not easy to coordinate when the team members are located in different countries and have to use technology for communication (Zander, Moickaitis, & Butler, 2012). Due to the different cultures, diversity management skills are essential in Human Resources Management (Syed & Tariq, 2017) and the better the technology is, the better will be the communication process (Agboola, 2013).

2. Cultural Dimensions.

2.1. Impact of Cultures.

One of the important factors for success or failure for a global organization is the ability to understand the global cultural contexts in the organization (Beauregard, Basile, & Thompson, 2018). The leader faces performance challenges from the human capital with different concepts of religions, work, social behaviors and with ethnic cultural influences including racism and tribalism (Cagiltay, Bichelmeyer, & Kaplan, 2015; Levitt, 2015). All these will affect the effectiveness of the teamwork if there is no cohesion and synergy in the team. A global leader communicates with managers in different countries, different time zones and who might not even be able to communicate verbally with one another. Due to rapid changes in the cultural contexts of societies, it has become essential for business leaders and managers to understand cultural diversity and how it can affect their organizations (Koki, 2003).

2.2. Cultural Diversities.

It was the research findings of Hofstede (1991) which came up with the concept of "cultural dimensions" which indicated that there were similarities in national cultures (Hofstede, 1991). Culture shapes human characteristics and behaviors and these are important in leadership because a leader deals with people, an issue made complex by the nature of the cultures involved and how each demands different approaches since each culture has definite values and prefers these over those of other cultures (Peretz & Rosenblatt, 2011; Hofstede, 1991). Although society can be made up of groups like in Kenya where there are 47 tribes, each with its own values as a tribe, there are also common cultural characteristics among all those tribes which can be described as the national culture (Omulo & Williams, 2017). The global leader has to understand what that culture is and what effect it has on the organization. When Davies (1999) attributed the conduct of Hitler to the fact that "he was a German", it is the same as asserting that all Germans exhibit common cultural characteristics (Davies, 1999). Because culture is cognitive, there cannot be the same sense of culture between different groups and each will have its own sub-cultures. The common national culture would be influenced by the common denominator between them. Despite the 47 tribes in Kenya having their own sub-cultures, Kenyans have common cultural characteristics and this is what a global leader should look for to determine the national character which can apply to all. Like Emotional Intelligence (EI) which is developed all the way from childhood (Goleman, 2017), culture is also learnt from the family, the young playmates and in school such that by the time a child is as young as ten years, most of the social cultural values will have been instilled (Hofstede 1991). National cultural diversities affect the collaborations necessary for global operations and will ultimately have a direct effect on the organizational performance (Scarlat, Zarzu, & Prodan, 2014).

2.3. Impacts of Cultural Diversities.

A diversified workforce is like a double edged sword with both advantages and disadadvances (Mazur, 2010). When effectively led, the organization brings together a diversified international workforce with an understanding of their nationalities in terms of such issues as politics, economy, the law and their national cultures which is good for innovation and organizational change (Hajro, Gibson, & Pudelko, 2015). By combining all this knowledge, it will be possible for the organization to gain and retain a marketing advantage (Nguyen & Aoyama, 2015). If not effectively managed, cultural diversity can cause problems when an employee is affected by issues like team identity because of not identifying with any of the other cultures and could feel out of place when in the presence of other team members or where other members display prejudice in relation to race, color, sex or religion which can demotivate a qualified worker (Onghena, 2013; Hitesh, Khushboo, Deepak, & Kaustav, 2015). This happened in Kenya during the construction of the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) which caused tension between the Chinese and the African workers and could have led to racial conflicts (Petersen, & Ali, 2018; Levitt, 2015).

3. The Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions.

3.1. Power Distance.

The power distance dimension is experienced in nations where power and the factors of economic production and resources are not distributed equally and is the dominant culture in Kenya (Daniels & Greguras, 2014; Ketter &

Arfsten, 2015). The closer an individual is to the leadership, the more the economic benefits. An organization which is close to leaders in such a society will get its requirements attended to faster than when operating outside the power zone. Most global organizations will try to include an influential leader in their boards of directors just for the purpose of ensuring that their interests receive priority. Tiny Rowland of Lonrho set the pace by always appointing relatives of the Heads of States and other members of the ruling class into the directorships of his various companies (Chege, 1994). When the national leaders lost their positions, new strategies had to be formulated on how to approach the new leaders who might take vengeance on all those who had not been cooperative before (Khatri, 2009). The advice for the global leader is to stay neutral on internal political issues in any country (Katerina, 2017).

The same power distance happens even in business organizations. Those at the top of the leadership have numerous privileges well in excess of their salaries such as expensive cars, drivers, security, entertainment allowances, family educational facilities and they are housed in the high-end prestigious estates. Those at the lower levels have low salaries with no other benefits and live in the slums. A global leader needs to understand this contrast for it will determine the employee expectations for motivation. If the organization intends to employ high level employees, it must be prepared to offer differentiating perks otherwise the employee will not feel esteemed in society and this is one of the motivational needs as stipulated by the Maslow hierarchy of needs (Taomina & Gao, 2013).

In Kenya, closeness to the national leadership can lead to tremendous wealth as such a person is given free government properties such as houses and land which are immediately sold for astronomical amounts in a country where housing is a major concern with Kenya having the biggest slum in Africa (Makeku, 2018). Land is a thorny issue in Kenya and was one of the factors that led to the inter-tribal clashes in the 1990s and has continued with the post-election violence witnessed after every election from 2007 (Aidi, 2013). The leaders are provided with free, armed Police escorts and are fully covered by the government for any medical treatment anywhere in the world (Seleim & Bontis, 2009). In such a society, people fight for leadership not because of the desire to serve the members of the society but to enrich themselves and so those in leadership positions like members of Parliament and Cabinet Secretaries have salaries and benefits far beyond comparison with the masses (Peyton, Zigarmi, & Fowler, 2019). Their cronies are given priority in the awarding of government tenders. They operate with impunity and are involved in criminal activities which would land a common person in jail (Wambui, 2018). If a global leader needs land for operations, using the normal procedure to acquire government land could take years and many obstacles may be put in the process that it might appear an impossible task. However, if the leader reduces the power distance, the land can be acquired with instructions on the telephone because 'orders from above' will be obeyed (Helbling, Kälin, & Nobirabo, 2015). One is deemed to be a fool for attaining a high position and leaving it no better financially which has created the ever - widening gap between the rich and the poor (Mohajan, 2019; Hoffmann & Hendricks, 2019). A global leader is expected to demonstrate the same display of power in everything. He is not expected to travel in public transport, cheap cars or be seen in the lower- end eating places. That would negatively affect the social standing and influence (Daniels & Greguras, 2014).

3.2. Uncertainty Avoidance.

Uncertainty avoidance is when members of a culture do not accept situations where they have no control (Hofstede, 1991). Such societies are closely knitted together by strict social discipline and policies where the society is centered on its culture and members avoid interferences from external elements (Merkin, 2006). This is exhibited in agriculture- based economies where the farmers face factors beyond their control such as rain and draught. No farmer will plant before it rains, even when the Meteorological department announces the coming of the rainy season in a few days for if the rains do not fall as predicted, the loss is heavy and will impact negatively on the families. But business communities or fishermen are used to such uncertainties (Broekhuizen, Giarratana, & Torres, 2017). A businessman will establish his business in a town and he cannot be certain that it will pick up well or be able to fight the competition, but despite that, he will still go ahead, take the risk and open the business. The same will apply to fishing communities where they will go to sea in their boats only to encounter terrible storms away from land, but that will not stop those who survive from going out again (Ginkel, 2001). In Kenya, the uncertainty avoidance contrast can be seen between the Kikuyu and the Kalenjin communities. The Kalenjin are large scale farmers who depend on rain for their enterprises but the Kikuyus are business people who take a lot of risks. Rarely will the Kalenjin be found outside their community land but the Kikuyus are found all over Kenya and have even risked taking their businesses outside the country (Bedasso, 2015). When the inter-tribal clashes of the 1990s erupted, the Kikuyus' homes and properties were destroyed especially in the Rift Valley, the home of the Kalenjin who are not tolerant of external influences from other cultures (Elfversson, 2019). But when peace was restored, the Kikuyus went back there and continued as if nothing had happened.

Uncertainty avoidance cultural dimension inhibits innovation for its decisions are slow (Ahmed & Shafiq, 2014). A culture without uncertainty encourages innovation as can be seen in Dubai, a desert country which is now a world -leading economy due to innovations in the use of their land, whereas Kenya, with its good land and water, is constantly struggling with famines instead of utilizing the water for irrigation (Abbas, 2018; Fuchs, 2007). A global leader should not expect the managers in those countries to take initiatives without his direction. Since they do not tolerate outside cultures, posting a manager there from a different culture could end in failure. The leader has to conduct thorough training, coaching and mentoring to bring up the team into global practices (Cumberland, Herd, & Alagaraja, 2016; Rarick, Winter, Nickerson, Falk, Barczyk , & Asea, 2013).

In the Bible, this cultural contrast is discussed in the narrative of the controversy between Paul and Peter on Hellenism as related to the strict Jewish religious culture (Acts 15: 1-30). Paul, as a Hellenized Jew, had learnt from the Greeks on how to adjust to global cultures but Peter was an orthodox Jew, clinging to the Law of Moses and like other Jews of his time, finding it difficult to adjust to the concepts of the early Christians who had been commissioned by Jesus to preach the Gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:19-20). In the end, it was Paul who won with his liberal attitude while Christianity did not succeed with the Jews (Gellman, 2016). Despite the cultural differences of nations, Christianity has reached to all nations of the world and even Africa is playing its part which shows that a global leader must be adaptable in the understanding of the diversified cultures (Nnaman, 2015; Robinson & Harvey, 2008).

The same can happen in a global business so that 'when in Rome, do as the Romans do' (Memon, Mirza, Lim, Umrani, Hassan, Cham, & Shahzad, 2019). If one of the branches is in the Middle East where the dominant religion is Islam with zero tolerance for religiously unclean foods, then a manager should adopt to that and should not touch any prohibited foods (Kashim, Majid, Adnan, & Yahaya, 2015). If a company is starting operations where the uncertainty avoidance is a national culture, then right from its establishment, there must be clear policies and practices otherwise it will find it difficult to attract employees who will be uncertain about their work and their future (Harparz, Honig, & Coetsier, 2002).

3.3. Individualism versus collectivism.

Individualistic societies are concerned only with themselves and their personal benefits with the members being responsible as individuals for their needs, with no commitment to the society and can change to another in the event of disagreements. Because in a global context such disagreements are bound to occur, an individualist will break team work (Sosik & Jung, 2002). Whereas resources such as time or attention to other people's needs have no tangible benefits and are even non-reciprocal, they influence behaviors especially in team work so individualists are poor team members (Workman, 2001; Kotlaja, 2019).

Collectivism exists in a society where the members have concerns for one another as a group and will go to great lengths to ensure their belongingness to the team, to the extent of sacrificing their personal desires and needs (Hofstede, 1991; Hui & Triandis, 1986). Poor self-presentation and loss of face are important elements in collectivistic societies for they lead to the loss of social esteem, acceptance, and trust by the society. Individualists are egoistic and have no concern for loss of face and do not see the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (Banergee, Hanna, Kreindler, & Olken, 2017). The global leader in an individualist society needs to instill the sense of collectivism from a global aspect but there could be conflicts between the envisaged organizational culture which the leader is trying to diffuse to the members and the national culture (Hamza, 2018).

3.4. Masculinity Versus Femininity.

This dimension relates to assertiveness, competitiveness and the characteristics of modesty and caring for others in the society (Hofstede, 1991). The cultural dimension has different roles for men and women, with masculinity encouraging the sense of being always the winner in all social contexts with exhibitions of a lot of money such as through big cars or expensive clothes and houses (Smith, Dugan, & Savage, 1998). In femininity cultures, the concern is for the quality of life and its effect on the family and society in general, making them diligent, steady and reliable workers with quality performance (Tuleja, 2019).

Technology in the 21st Century has caused a paradigm shift in the understanding and application of this dimension. With the rise in education for both male and female members of societies, the masculine and feminine differentiation is not so evident except in very underdeveloped nations but even there, global charity organizations are putting efforts in transforming the societies to gender equality. A computer used by a bank clerk will not discern the user as male or female and so women have now penetrated the formerly male dominated functions (Wang, 2018). In Kenya, some have become county governors, Cabinet Secretaries and University Vice-Chancellors where it has been noted that they tend to exhibit even higher masculinity than the males themselves (Erdener, 2013; Kenny & Donnelly, 2019). Consequently, the 21st Century is encouraging the transformation to the feminist dimension which denotes caring and modesty in society through equality in education where males and females are receiving the same levels of education and equal opportunities at work (Mukherjee & Mukhopadhyay, 2013). This has therefore reduced the significance of this dimension and even Hofstede himself recognized this shift from his earlier research (Hofstede, 2011). The gender equality in the workforce is improving the performance standards of organizations where female workers are given the same opportunities as the males in their learning and development (Wu & Cheng, 2016).

3.5. Long-Term Versus Short-Term Orientation.
The long- term versus short-term orientation dimension examines whether a society shows a future or a historic perspective. Cultures with long-term orientation make strategies for the future on a long-term vision (Shi, Yang, & Prescott, 2013; Ryu & Moon, 2009). They practice controlled financial transactions and establish steady, long term relations with stakeholders. A culture with the short-term orientation however deals with the present as related to the past and Africans in Kenya are placed in this dimension because according to Mbiti (1970) they see their time only in terms of now (*sasa*) and the past (*zamani*) (Mbiti, 1970) unlike the East Asian countries like Korea, Japan and China who have long-term orientation (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010).

3.6. Indulgence Versus Restraint.
Members of an indulgent culture believe that each individual has the freedom to satisfy the personal desires for fun in life and are responsible for their future but restraint cultures have strict cultural norms on such practices, perceiving their lives as not within their control and will take no initiative to give it direction, preferring to stick to the same beliefs and practices as the rest of the society (Hofstede 2011). A restraint culture could give problems to a global organization because of the organizational demands for agility, innovation and diversification. Because they do not accept changes quickly, the organization will encounter marketing problems when one considers the turbulent business environments of the 21st Century (Cochrane, 2014). The First Century Christian church experienced this problem with the Jews, especially on religious culture on issues like washing hands, working on Sabbath days and food (Matthew 9:14).

4. Conclusion.
The 21st Century is an era of converging cultures because of the effects of globalization. Global leaders have to understand the prevalent cultural practices which could affect their investments in the different countries (Wang, 2007). The organization team members should be made to realize that they will be coming into contact with different cultures and because of the current levels of technology in communication, a mistake made in one country would be known within a short time in all the other global units and could affect morale and organizational performance.

Organizations as entities can be compared to the nation of Kenya which is made up of 47 tribes, each with its own subculture but when combined together, they result in one national culture (Guta, 2014). If Kenya leadership had recognized the diversity of the tribal cultures in the country, the tribal clashes, especially those of the 1990s would not have occurred for they were caused by the collectivistic and individualistic cultural dimension in relationship to land, an issue which had been ignored since independence in 1964 (Boone, 2013). The same can be applied to a global organization, made up of different establishments in different countries where the national cultures of those countries have to be understood and observed. The global organization should develop its own culture to be observed globally so the organization climates in all units will be similar. The team leader in a country like Kenya where indiscipline and corruption have become predominant should not follow suit and will enforce ethics strictly for this is now the concern in the 21st Century global organizations (Buller, Kohls, & Anderon, 1991). If unethical practices are allowed in one country, it will spread to the others because of staff communication between the units. A global leader must first study the national culture and then be selective of the practices to be observed if they are within the organizational ethics policies. It is also important for these leaders to develop a global mindset since they can be posted to any unit globally (Vakilbashi, Ismail, & Mokhber, 2014).

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