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International Human Resource Management Strategies for Multicultural Organizations

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ABSTRACT

The increasingly global nature of construction has highlighted the importance of multiculturalism and the new challenges it brings to execution especially in the light of the dependency on international human resources for expertise and delivery of construction projects in a cost-effective and timely manner. Adopting an analytical approach, this chapter attempts to review international HRM strategies and outlook for multicultural organizations of the construction sector in the Zimbabwean context and also provides some deeper insights on the gaps and inadequacies and recommends possible ways of bridging the identified gaps in practice. In the process, the chapter also examines the cultural factors that influence communication and how communication can be made effective in multicultural environments. But the core of the chapter is to explore international human resource management strategies for multicultural organizations.

INTRODUCTION

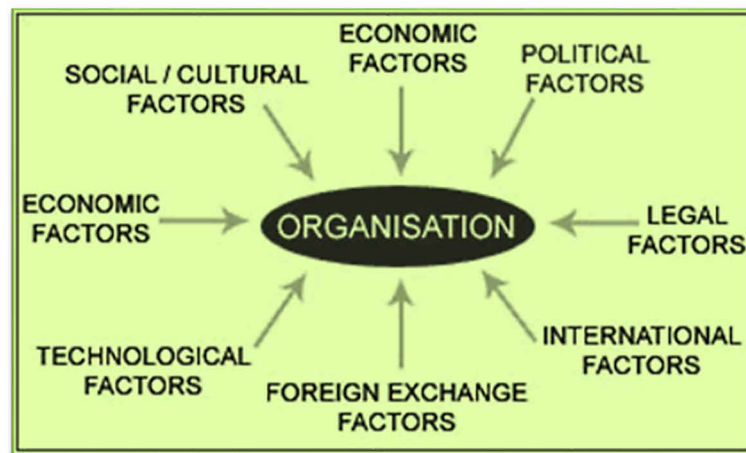
Organizations world over are becoming increasingly diverse in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality. Among many other advantages and disadvantages associated with this diversification phenomenon, the diversity brings substantial potential benefits such as better decision making, greater creativity and innovation, and more successful marketing to different types of customers. According to Cox (1991), the increased cultural differences within a workforce for a multi-cultural organization also bring potential costs in higher turnover, interpersonal conflict, cross-culture communication breakdowns and challenges related to international human resources management (IHRM). Cox (1991) went on to suggest to multicultural organizations' leadership that to capitalize on the benefits of diversity while

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minimizing the potential costs, leaders are being advised to oversee change processes toward creating “multicultural” organizations. What are the characteristics of such an organization, and how do they communicate effectively whilst remaining within the confines of both the home country as well as the host country’s human resources management practices. Figure 1 reflects what factors influence the organization, especially when it operates as multicultural organization.

Figure 1. Factors influencing multicultural organization

Source: Self-Developed



The increasing global nature of construction projects has highlighted the importance of multiculturalism and the new challenges it brings to project execution (Ochieng & Price, 2010).

Further, set of implemented management strategies like incentive programs, labor management, training, communication, supervision, planning, resource scheduling, use of advanced construction methods, and management of construction are to improving productivity (Ghodrati, Yiu, Wilkinson & Shahbazpour, 2018). But cultural aspects though vital get ignored and with the the dependency on international human resources for expertise and delivery of construction projects in the cost effective and timely manner it becomes more relevant and crucial. Adopting an analytical approach this paper attempts to review international HRM perspective for construction sector multicultural organizations in the Zimbabwean context and also provide some insights on the gaps and shortcomings. It also recommends possible ways of bridging the identified gaps in practice. In the process, the chapter also examines the cultural factors that influence communication and explores how communication can be made effective in multicultural environments from international HRM perspective.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research has established the relevance of cultural intelligence (CQ) for adapting to different cultural contexts and for directly affecting both performance and satisfaction (Henderson, Stackman & Lindekilde, 2018). Earley and Mosakowski (2000) stated that multicultural organizations are increasingly being

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