What is cross cultural management?

Management's definition has been perceived as an art and a science; it qualifies to be an art simply because it requires artistic skills in order to mold the subject or the people that a manager manages to be more effective than prior to meeting them. On the other hand it qualifies to be a science because the process of making people to be more effective will require application of some scientific principles (Reh, 2010). Management can only become successful if the four basic pillars of management are employed, they include: Planning, Organization, Directing and Monitoring. The value of any manger can be evaluated through the output increase since his/her employment. If prior to the management employment the staff used to produce three units and after the employment the production remained constant then the manager was of no value (Reh, 2010).

Any management should start with planning; in this, the manager identifies the goals that the organization wants to accomplish. Planning is all about getting to identify the destiny and the path to the destiny. The manager identifies the resources required, material or human, and then strategizes he/she will employ them to accomplishing the desired end product. All the stake holders should be consulted. In organization the manager outlines how the identified plan will be made to happen. The people who will be involved in doing the work should be prepared to ensure that they are able to perform their responsibilities (Reh, 2010). It's at this juncture that a manger may find challenges, reason being unlike in the management of machine, managing people require great expertise for people are social beings and with diverse orientation to life as well as dissimilar cultural backgrounds.

Cross Cultural Issues

It's incumbent for the management to ensure that the three aspects of organization's structure are enhanced for their importance in cultural management. They include: the general relationship among the employees and their relationship with the organization, the horizontal and vertical authority system that defines the supervisors and the subordinates, and the general views of the staff about their organization's destiny, goals and purposes as well as their places in the workplace (Morgan, 1998).

In management the manager will have to deal with the cross cultural issues owing to the fact that people in a workplace come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Cross culture refers to the various forms of interactivity present between members of different cultural groups; it's a discourse that concerns cultural interactivity. The increase in immigrants of workers necessitates having a cross cultural approach to management. There is a need to have social cohesion in work place whereby national and international cultural diversities will be respected. The management should provide a multicultural environment where all the employees are presented with equal opportunities to work effectively amidst the cultural diversity without being subject to some dominant cultures.

Manifestation of Cross Cultural Issues

In work places there are many diversified cross-cultural issues that present themselves, such may include:

Race: The world has become a global village. Migration from one region to another is not uncommon. In many organizations you will realize that the employees are from diverse races (Stainback, Robinson, & Tomaskovic-

Devey, 2005). This may present itself as a challenge in work place especially among the people who have a challenge in dealing with people of different races (racists). The issues of racism have presented themselves in a very strong way in many companies. Racists are inclined to the believe that there are some people of a certain race who cannot take the key management positions and if they are forced by the circumstance to promote such people to such positions, they have to people from the " superior races" to keep watch for they do not believe in the competences of the " inferior race". Racism present itself in issues like: use of abusive language or calling people names by their race " nigger", overlooked during promotion despite of a person's performance, denial of training, offered challenging jobs so as to prove inefficiency of people from a certain race, bully, shouted at, offer of unpopular shifts, and denial of holidays and other benefits that people from the ' superior races enjoy' (TUC, n. d.). The management has to employ some mechanisms that will emphasize on respect for all people.

Gender: The issue of superiority complex based on sex, consequently leading to dominance of a given sex especially the men presents itself in the society at large. The workplace does not become an exemption. In many companies employees administrative position are based on merit, therefore its not uncommon to find women bossing over men. It's also common to find men who believe they are better than women and hence they find it hard to bow to such authorities. The management has to strategize on a way to overcome such challenges for a cohesive and conducive working environment. Otherwise the production will be hampered for the men in

question may do a shoddy job so that they can drive their point home;
woman can not manage such a position (Benello, Boyte, Krimerman, 1992).

Communication: LeBaron (2003) has pointed out that all communication is
cultural. We draw our use of verbal and non verbal communication skills
from our cultural backgrounds. The essence of communication is to interact
and if there is a barrier to the effective communication between the
interacting parties then the purpose of the communication is not fulfilled.
The issue of communication is one of the most explicit manifestations of the
cultural diversity in workplace that the management should endeavor to
work on. The languages of communication as well as the way to
communicate are some of the most basic things that a person learns right
from childhood. The socialization process is so powerful such that for one to
change an individual's orientation to communication, it may require a very
intensive training. The challenges of cross cultural and intercultural
communications are seen when people expects other people to
communicate the way they deem communication should be done, basing
from their cultural backgrounds. Breakage of communication can lead to a
total failure in a company's production.

The feed back should show whether the communication process has taken
place. Due to diverse cultural orientations one will realize that the
communication process may never take place. It's the role of the
management to train all the staff so as to ensure that they understand each
other. The management should establish a common communication method
that should provide a platform for them to communicate effectively
(LeBaron, 2003).

Miscommunication is very common especially where there are cultural diversities. Miscommunication does not only lead to failure of the purpose of communication but also to conflicts or even aggravate a conflict that already existed.

Religion: Religion happens to be one of the most cross cultural issue that has an immense effect on relationship between and among employees in a work place. People have diverse religious believes and even those who are from the same religious backgrounds also differ in their interpretation of believes. For example in a workplace there may be different types of Christians; some Protestants and some Catholics. This people believe in same God but they differ immensely in their conducts depending on how they are socialized. In such a setting there may also be Muslims, atheists Buddhists among many other religious affiliations. Issue of religion manifest themselves right from the presentation of the curriculum vitae for a job application. There are many companies that one can never secure a job without stating one's religious affiliation. During a job interview it's not uncommon to be asked to expound on your beliefs. The religious issues may bring about conflicts in situations where the superiors do not like an individual's religion. The religious harassments may also be manifest when some employees try to convert their work mates to join their religions or even the bosses expressing their disapproval of an individual's religion (AMER, 1993).

Management strategies for maximizing multicultural team potential

A multi cultural environment is a kind of environment that will enable all the employees to perform equally without being subject to the biases of diverse

or dominant cultural backgrounds. It's important for any organization to ensure that the environment that prevails in a work place allows all people to be maximally productive while developing their love and allegiance to the organization. There is a need to establish common ground.

There are several approaches that can be used in enhancing a multicultural workplace consequently increasing production:

Cultural awareness: in a situation where there are diverse cultural orientations it's important for the management to initiate a mechanism that will facilitate to cultural awareness. The organization's management should employ cultural awareness training for every employee who joins the organization hence establishing a real cross cultural synergy. The organization should encourage employees to take personal initiative besides the training in building cultural knowledge; to learn more about other cultures. The organization should emphasize on constructive interaction with people of diverse cultures so that one can amass as much information as necessary for a productive interaction (Sinha, 2009).

Treatment of people as individuals: The management should emphasize on the virtues of equality (Sinha, 2009). All the people in the workplace should be treated as individuals not as people from a given race, religion, tribe, gender and other divisions that are manifest in work places. Generalization should be avoided both in the vertical and horizontal dealings in a work place.

Utilization of cultural knowledge: The learning process that is created by the organization management should ensure implementation of the knowledge

attained to maximize on cohesive relation and optimal production (Sinha, 2009). The benefits of the learnt information can only be realized when the knowledge is put into action.

Withholding Assumptions: The management of an organization should avoid jumping to conclusion about people's behavior and train employees to dig deep into reasons behind colleagues conduct before judging them. One fundamental rule of cultural awareness is avoiding making assumptions that one way is right and another wrong (Masondo, n. d).

Avoid Blame: The vice of blame is simply not constructive. In a situation where the management or workers realize a break down or a failure, they should not stand at bay to blame those who are involved in the failure, rather they should pick the situation without the use of the ' cultural awareness glasses'. This approach helps solve issues as well as act as a precedent for the future (Masondo, n. d.)

Attentive listening: One of the greatest cross-cultural and intercultural challenges is communication. The leaning process of cultural diversity can itself be hampered by the means of communication. In order for an organization to have a multicultural team that will optimize production, its incumbent for the management as well as the employees to make efforts to be good learners. One of the key components to learning process is being keen listeners. Listening includes paying attention to words that are said and how they are said. There is also a need to read in between the lines based on the context of communication. The team members should also relay their

knowledge to each other. All the team members should facilitate in building up of skills for the entire team (Masondo, n. d.).

It should be noted that in the attempt to create a multicultural team it's not possible to master all the norms of workmate's cultures leave alone learning the entire cultures of the other people but all the team members should be trained to have a positive attitude towards the other people's cultures. The importance of learning a people's cultural behaviors is to get to understand why those people behaves the way they do; what is the rationality behind a given behavior. After one has understood the logic, then he/she should respect the behavior whether it suits individuals believes or not (Sinha, 2009). The management should also not be quick to judge the employees before understanding the conditions that favored a particular action. If colleagues realize the respect that you accord to their cultures, they are most likely to respect you in return creating a conducive environment for more intimate interaction that will definitely make the working conditions better, consequently increased production.

The organization should also emphasize on enhancing a virtue of trust among employees. If the management is to act as a role model of engaging in trustworthy behaviors, the rest of the team will be motivated to employ the same technique in approaching various issues that they face in day to day running of the organization's affairs. All the people in the management and any leadership should practice virtues like honesty, respect and dependability Lane, DiStefano, and Maznevski (2005). There is a need to ensure that both vertical and horizontal interaction are accompanied by good communication skills, experience, superior job skills, long term

perspective of industry, and extra ordinary performance of the responsibilities entrusted to each person. It's incumbent for multicultural teams to be observant of the initial formation stage, since it sets the pace that the team will flow in for the rest of its establishment.

Lane, DiStefano, and Maznevski (2005), have argued that motivating of the multicultural teams can also pray a significant role in optimizing the potential of the team. Beside the use of money to motivate the team, there are other approaches that can be employed, such approaches may include:

Recognizing the achievements of the team among their peers: For every achievement that such a team attains its incumbent for them to be appreciated in meetings, while with colleagues hence motivating even the other teams to follow suit.

Recognition out of the work environment: the multicultural team should be recognized even off the context of the workplace. For example if an organization does advertisements for the organization over radios, magazines news papers or any other media, the teams' achievements should be mentioned.

Opportunities for continuous learning: the multicultural team should be rewarded for very little achievement through providing the members with opportunities to learn more. If their skills are enhanced they are likely to be more productive after employing the newly learned skills.

Involvement in crucial decision making: A person will always be motivated if they are showed they are important. Such an opportunity to show respect

and appreciation is manifest if the decisions regarding the organization are

made in consultation of the team.