The impact of workplace diversity on organisations

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Abstract:

The subject matter of this paper is workplace diversity. The study is conducted to explore how companies manage workforce diversity and its consequences to the company's existence as well as examine how companies' deal with challenges that comes with employees from diverse cultural backgrounds. The research therefore answers the question `Has workplace diversity contributed to organizational success`. Because diversity covers a wide range of human attributes and qualities, The research is limited to the required tools for managing workplace diversity, advantages and disadvantages of managing a diverse workforce. Five companies in Finland and Ghana have been studied in order to acquire answers to the question that is being focused on.

To gather the required data for this thesis, the author has mostly used the current material that contains Human Resource Management studies. Qualitative research method has been used to gather and analyze the data on the companies. To answer the research question as well as obtain and practical and relevant information on each company, the author conducted an interview on three of the companies, and gathered information on the internet on two of the Companies.

The result shows that workplace diversity plays an effective role in some companies. However inadequate mentoring and guidance could cause a company low productivity. For this reason there must be regular improvement in ways to effectively manage a diverse workforce as the world keeps advancing.

In the conclusion, the findings of the thesis were indicated, which states that workplace diversity has contributed to more productivity but some factors such as differential treatment could hinder its successful implementation and hence company success. Big companies are more passionate about diversifying their workforce and see its implementation as a norm and continuously strive to improve diversity management, whereas small companies see it as a choice and evitable when they feel it a burden or cannot effectively manage it.

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Table of contents

1 INTRODUCTION

Diversity can generally be defined as recognising, understanding and accepting individual differences irrespective of their race, gender, age, class, ethnicity, physical ability, race. Sexual orientation, spiritual practice and so on. Grobler (2002:46) also supports this view by adding that each individual is unique but also share any number of environmental or biological characteristics.

Diversity can be classified into two dimensions. The primary dimension such as age, gender, sexual orientation and so on, exhibits the main differences between various individuals. These primary differences also has the most impact on initial encounters and can be easily noticed and serve as filters through which people view the world. The secondary dimensions such as religion, education, geographical location, income etc, are those qualities that are not noticeable in the first encounter and can even change throughout different encounters. These qualities are only noticed after some interactions occur between individuals. (Ashton 2010). Globalization in this recent time has triggered more interaction amongst people from different cultures and backgrounds than before. People are now more open-minded in the marketplace worldwide with competition coming from almost everywhere in the continent. Diversity can be a problem to an organisation but could also be a solution, It also comes with its disadvantages but also benefits and dangerous but also constructive. The challenge then is to extract the very essence of diversity and tactically manage it for the improvement of the people and the organization.

Most organizations in their own perspective, adopt diversity at their workplace or organisation to become more creative and open to change. Increasing and improving workplace diversity has become an important issue for management in the recent years due to the recognition of how the workplace is changing. Since managing diversity still remains a challenge in organisations, managers tend to learn managerial skills needed in a multicultural working environment and prepares themselves to teach others within their organizations to value cultural differences and treat all employees with dignity. For some business leaders and managers point of view, diversity is a big challenge to them although it knows no organizational boundary and has no limitations.

1.1 Background of the study

During the 1960s and 1970s, the United States for the first time saw the need to promote workplace diversity. President John F. Kennedy in 1961 recognised a President's Committee on Equal Employment Prospect with the goal of ending discrimination in employment by the government. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 went further, avoiding discrimination in any activity. The promotion of workplace diversity continued to go further, setting a policy to promote equal employment chances by creating the possibility for the program to continue for a long period of time in any department. It turned out to be a turning point, because it succeeded in avoiding the deliberation of diverse characteristics such as "nationality, human race, skin colour etc." to believing in the principle that to be fair to all, one needs to be committed to treating everyone equally.

In 1971, the Nixon Administration reviewed the policy in a way to ensure that positive action outline with a goal is set. Recent work has queried the meaning of diversity management (for example, Jenner, 1994; Nkomo and Cox, 1996); its ability to lift morale and enhance productivity (for example, Thomas and Ely, 1996) and its underlying paradigms, assumptions and intentions. Litvin (1997) argued against the use of different kinds of persons (women, men, ethnic minorities or majorities, the aged etc) as repositories of difference on the grounds that they are divisive, revitalization debate was conducted by Blommaert and verschueren (1998) to argue that it is not about managing diversity as such, but that it is about managing the negative side effects of unaccepted diversity: the fight against racism and discrimination (blommaert and Verschueren, 1998, p. 14, emphasis in original). The various issues raised by these critiques are worrying when so many organisations seem intent on "diversity management".

Figure 1. An idea of a diverse workforce

1.2 Problems and Hypothesis

It points out that, countless studies have been conducted on work place diversity. This study is provoked by the gap left unfilled by a substantial number of research works that has been conducted on workplace diversity and its significance on the corporate culture. In recent years Diversity Management and workforce diversity have been substantial and as such have forced companies to embrace these concepts in their companies with the aim of increasing productivity and profit. This forced integration has created divergence and uncertainty in the workforce, as management is not skilled enough to control the concept of diversity management and its ethics, and so managers are finding it difficult to effectively practice diversity management, which in turn has become an albatross on their neck.

Managers find it difficult in knowing the factors that contribute to effective diversity management or the exact leadership tasks that can be achieved to effectively and efficiently deal with issues related to workplace diversity.

In completing this study, relevant theoretical works are considered in order to ascertain the factors that could lead to the formation of a favorable working environment that pertains to diversity management. In reality, it is also important to establish the implications this has had on companies so as to create a very conductive working atmosphere through workplace diversity management.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The rationale behind this research is to examine the different ways of dealing with work place diversity as well as to provide management with the necessary guidelines for effective diversity management in small and big International companies in order to show the reader how to build an effective workplace diversity by applying different diversity management tools.

1.4 Research Question of the Study

The research question of the study is "Has workplace diversity contributed to organizational success". In order to answer the research question the author defined the following objectives of the study:

1. Discuss the evolution of workforce diversity

2. Explain benefits and limitations of workplace diversity.

3. Explore the required tools for managing workplace diversity.

4. Study the views of various companies regarding the choice and implementation of workplace diversity.

The study will be useful for the companies under discussion nevertheless it shall also be helpful for people who want to know more about workplace diversity, and how to manage it.

1.5 Description of Material and Sources

It is germane to state that this research work is based on the facts and information extracted from relevant academic books, proven online sources and feedbacks from interviews conducted on companies. The author is sure that workplace diversity is one necessary issue to consider during management and needs constant managerial improvement, therefore in writing the theoretical analysis of the thesis, the author tried to adopt the most up-to-date information available. However some of the chapters contain older studies due to the knowledge acquired from the degree. Generally, the thesis consists of four different parts. The theoretical framework includes three parts and the fourth part contains the empirical research of case companies. The basis of the research makes provision of current studies on workplace diversity.

The first part of the theoretical study discusses the concept of workplace diversity and explains to the reader why business or companies of today should consider it.

The second part of the study explains the advantages of workplace diversity as well as the disadvantages and challenges that may prevent the successful implementation of workplace diversity in the company.

The third part discuses the required tools and reasons for workplace diversity management, and the major role players in workplace diversity.

The fourth part of the study is an empirical research that describes workplace diversity of five different companies. The information and facts were carefully evaluated and critically screened to provide the needed data for the research as well as to enhance the flow of relevant and reliable information. Interview questions can be found as an appendix at the end of the thesis work. The later part of the report points out the finding and critiques of the research.

1.6 Research Methodology

Research can be defined as executing an investigation to acquire an additional knowledge or idea to add to an existing understanding and knowledge of a particular discipline. (Myers 2009, p 6). Furthermore he explained that research could also be seen as the act of creating an activity that contributes to producing a new idea or knowledge. The knowledge is classified as new due to the fact that the theories used in the findings and interpretation of the research might be different from the existing information or literature in other way.
The process for this study has involved a combination of research, synthesis and analysis. In answering the research questions, the research work is predicated on primary and secondary source of information. With the primary source, an email interview was conducted on three companies with the relevant interview questions regarding their experience and view on working with a multi-cultural workforce. The secondary source of information was gathered from the Internet regarding workplace diversity on two companies.

An interview can be defined as a conversation between the author (interviewer) and another person (interviewee). Kvale (1996, p. 14) regarded interviews as " an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes on the social situations of research data." It is usually conducted for an idea or information and also serves as a reference for future purposes.

The q uestions will concentrate on finding out the company's view on workplace diversity, the main challenges of managing a multicultural workforce and other relevant questions regarding the company's operations and company culture. The interview questions set for the interview were phrased clearly (some technical terms is explained) in order to make it easy for the interviewee to read and understanding, In order for the interviewee to have an ample time to read and review the interview questions, it was sent to the company before hand. Some measures was put in place to overcome interview bias, and also questions that are more personal and sensitive are put on the later part of the interview questions so that the interviewee will have much time to access the company culture and company's activities before giving his thought or opinion. This served as a good way to determine the reliability and authenticity of the information. The use of semi-structured interviews in the qualitative research enabled the author reveal and understand the ´what´ and the ´how´ but also to place more emphasis on exploring the ´Why` (Robin, 2002:59).

The concept of workplace diversity is a survey that involves much more exploration and explanation to the respondent in order to give him a clearer view of its existence. Therefore, in explanatory study, semi-structured interview is adopted in order to understand the relationships between the various points raised in the concept. Secondly, the qualitative research method is used to enable the author analyse the result in interpretative and subjective manner. The secondary research method was conducted through surfing the Internet, books and other relevant academic reports to acquire relevant information for this thesis work.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

It is very significant to note that not much conclusive research has been done in the field of diversity management. Therefore the weight of previous research conducted has been prac-

tically evaluated in order to look into the subject matter. In some situations the quoted theory may be more applicable than in other situations, however this should not be regarded as the fact before more decisive research is done. In this situation, the writer advises that managers who evaluate the research findings should use discretion in following a particular course of action. It must also be noted that the findings of this study will reflect the perceptions of the Companies or organizations involved, therefore not be assumed to be universally applicable to all companies.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the thesis, which could be divided into three parts. Firstly, Some factors to consider in the decision making process of a company to adopt a diverse workforce and the second part discusses the importance of cultural mentoring to effectively manage a diverse workforce and thirdly the concept in diversity management in companies.

2.2 Factors to Consider in adopting a diverse workforce

The concept of workplace diversity might differ from company to company according to the rules and guidelines that have been stipulated for a particular purpose and also the meaning a company gives to it and how it is often utilised. "No one wants to pay a company for services and not get value for money", a company that would employ a diverse workforce aims improve its productivity and income. When considering to adopt a diverse workforce, some important factors and attributes needs to be taken into account, which involves the following:

- Company type
- Organisational culture
- Company Location

Company type

The type of a company plays a significant role in the decision making process of the company in determining whether or not to employ a diverse workforce. Companies differ in size and activities, and come with its own rules and company act. Most public companies tends to employ more workers due to its size as compared to private companies, the same applies to other types such as limited liability companies, Unlimited companies, Government companies and so on. (The times 100, 2013) Employing diverse employees would

mean, being convinced that the company type will do well or much better with them on board.

Organisational culture

Organisational culture could be defined as a set of values that are share in the organisation, which reflects on the company's activities. There are five components to organisational culture that involves its practices, vision, value, people, place, and its history. Each organisational culture is unique and different from any other company's, therefore any decision made my a company about workplace diversity is based on the company's beliefs and norms, and must therefore reflect on that company. (Coleman 2013)

Company location

Company location contributes to the decisions of a company to or not to employ a diverse workforce. Companies that have their manufacturing plants situate in most parts of the world does not seem to have much choice but to employ workers from diverse cultures, since workers are needed in each office they operate. However some companies has the ability to decide whether or not to employ a diverse workforce especially when they are situated only in their country of origin.

2.3   Effective mentoring Program

Cultural mentoring plays an important role in managing a diverse workforce; it orients employees from different cultural background about the new activities or environment they have found themselves in. Mentors could come in so many ways, such as an individual person, group of people, an association, a seminar and so on, in order to enjoy the working environment where different culture and believes meet. One would realise that becoming an effective cultural mentor doesn't have to continually rely on any conception of elegance. It is how the workers experience the mentoring relationship that determines its success. It is expected that the data and result of this study will add to the available empirical evidence of an organisational success in managing a diverse workforce. Adding to the understanding of the interaction between employees and managers as well as the effect of a diverse workforce to the organisation and serve as an important input in the company's

policy planning. Most companies believe in the effectiveness of workplace diversity as it brings the interaction between different people with different ideas and also enables a successful achievement at the workplace. Despite this view, some companies disagree to this motive based on the disadvantages that comes with workplace diversity. They believe that it courses destruction and lack of concentration as well as low performance in the company or workplace due to discrimination, preferential treatment and reduces performance. It is pertinent to state that the workplace diversity have the ability to improve workforce in a company but comes with its disadvantages as well. It is true to assert that workplace diversity has greatly encouraged employees to share their carious ideas, as well as enabling companies to earn higher returns. But the question that has remained unanswered is the implications on employees, especially foreign ones. However, it can also be argued that the sources found during the research makes it more compelling to believe that workplace diversity is an effective way of increasing productivity in a company.

2.4 The concepts in diversity management

"Diversity Management can be defined as the process of planning, directing, organizing and applying all the comprehensive managerial attributes for developing an organizational environment, in which all diverse employees irrespective of their similarities and differences, can actively and effectively contribute to the competitive advantage of a company or an organization. According to Kreitner, (2001:37) diversity "Stands for the various differences in individuals as well as similarities that exist among them. "

Kreitner's definition emphasizes on three crucial issues about diversity management:
Diversity applies to all employees and do not only encompass certain range of differences but the entire spectrum of individual differences that makes people unique. Therefore diversity cannot be viewed as only racial or religious differentiation, but it is the combination of all differences. The concept of diversity defines differences among people and also their similarities. The act of managing diversity requires that these two aspects be dealt with and managed at the same time. Managers are therefore expected to integrate the collective mixture of similarities and differences between workers into the organization. As such, diversity can be described as having four layers (Kreitner, 2001:38):

Personality: This describes the stable set of characteristics that establishes a person's iden-

tity. There are many different types of personality traits that an individual can portray. These types of traits could be a person's action, the behavior they process and their attitude. Moreover, the personality traits could be classified into two types, namely positive personality trait and Negative trait. Some of these traits could be classified in the below table as follows:

Table 1. Some Personality traits of a diverse workforce (yourdictionary.com)

PERSONALITY TRAITS

POSITIVE TRAITS	NEGATIVE TRAITS
Patience	Laziness
Honesty	Unfriendly
Reliable	Self centered
Intelligent	Rude
Trusting	Obnoxious

Internal dimensions: These dimensions are characteristics that have a strong influence on people's perceptions, expectations and attitudes towards other people. These include factors such as gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, physical ability and race

External dimensions: These dimensions are personal traits that we have a certain amount of control or influence over. They are factors such as income, personal and recreational habits, religion, education, work experience, appearance, marital status, and geographic location.

Organizational dimensions: These dimensions are relevant or significant to the organization itself. They include factors such as management status, Unit or division, work field, seniority, union affiliation and management status.

Currently affirmative action is used as a method of attaining a diversified and integrated workforce. Kreitner is of the view that (2001:40) "affirmative action is an artificial intervention aimed at giving management a chance to correct an imbalance, an injustice, a mistake or outright discrimination" and that it does not foster a need to change leadership's thinking about diversity management. Jeffery (1996:11-13) argues that although affirmative action and black economic empowerment is necessary, the private sector should be

15

allowed to focus on wealth and economic opportunity creation rather than just giving jobs to the previously disadvantaged. A higher level of "diversity awareness" from affirmative action is known as valuing diversity. Valuing diversity emphasizes the awareness, recognition, understanding and appreciation of human differences. By valuing diversity, employees feel valued and accepted, and are recognized as a valuable resource that contributes directly an organization's overall success (Kreitner, 2001:41). Grobler (2003:49) states that for an organization to value diversity it must first understand the differences between valuing diversity and employment equity. The fundamental difference is that employment equity is enforced by legislation. The management values diversity due to its desires to gain competitive advantage by using the talents of a diverse workforce.

The highest level of "diversity awareness" is the discipline of diversity management. It is the deliberate and focused creation of organizational changes that enable all employees to perform up to their maximum potential (Kreitner, 2001:42). Israel is a typical example of how the valuing of diversity can turn this issue into an asset to be used for the benefit of the organization (Vermeulen, 1998:1). South Africa is a country with a very diverse population that contains many cultural, social religious groups, much like Israel. The South African population consists of many immigrants bringing with them the diverse ethno-cultural practices of their countries of origin. This challenged the state to convert these differences into a national asset (Hirsh, 1993:195). Achieving competitive advantage through the management of diversity has become an important managerial, and hence leadership, consideration (Thomas, 1996:17). It is therefore obvious that management discipline needs effective leadership in order for it to be successfully implemented. According to Kreitner (2001:551) leadership is defined as "a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organizational goals." Changing existing attitudes toward diversity in the workplace clearly involves more than just decisive leadership but also the cooperation of all employees as it affects their inter-personal relationships with each other. Therefore managers must exhibit leadership traits and move beyond the normal tasks of planning, organizing and control. Managing diversity is a business imperative, strategic priority and a competitive necessity (Mc Enrue, 1993:18-29). Daniel (1994:14) agrees with this viewpoint and adds that if diversity is not utilized as a tool it might become business' downfall.

2.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Diversity management

There are some advantages and Disadvantages that come with managing a diverse workforce of which management must be aware of to guide them in the decision making processes in the organisation. They also reflect on the findings on the research conducted on the case companies. Below are some of them: (David Ingram 2013)

2.5.1 Advantages

High level of Productivity: Increasing productivity at the workplace has been one of the major challenges for managers and leaders and to the company in general. Due to the fact that every organisation has its own unique company structure and objectives, different strategies may be used to challenge or address the company in order to increase productivity. One of those strategies involves adopting workplace diversity and managing it effectively. When management takes the welfare of its workers at heart by means of offering them proper compensation, health care and employee appraisal, It enables workers to feels they belong to the company irrespective of their cultural background by remaining loyal and hardworking which helps to increase the company's productivity and profit.

Exchange of varieties of ideas and Team work: In recent times teamwork is increasingly advocated by businesses and organisations as a means of assuring better outcomes on tasks and also for the delivery of goods and services. A single person taking on multiple tasks cannot perform at the same pace as a team could; therefore each team member brings to the table different ideas and offers a unique perspective during problem solving to effectively arrive at the best solution at the shortest possible time.

Learning and growth: Diversity at the workplace creates an opportunity for employee's personal growth. When workers are being exposed to new cultures, ideas and perspectives, it can help each person to intellectually reach out and have a clearer insight of their place in the global environment and hence their own surroundings. The more time spent with culturally diverse co-workers can slowly break down the subconscious barriers of xeno-

phobia and ethnocentrism, thereby encouraging workers to be more experienced members of the society.

Effective Communication: Workplace diversity can immensely strengthen a company's relationship with some specific group of customers by making communication more effective. Customer service department is one of the areas where effective communication is crucial. A customer service personnel or representatives can be paired up with customers from their specific area or location, making the customer feel at home with the representative and thus with the company. For example some companies in the south-western part of the United States often prefer to hire customer service personnel's who are bi-lingual to deal with customers who speaks Spanish in their native language.

Diverse Experience: Employee and their co-workers that come from a diverse background bring to the table some amount of unique perceptions and experience during teamwork or group tasks. Pooling the diverse skills and knowledge of culturally distinct employees together can immensely benefit the company by strengthening the responsiveness and productivity of the team to adapt to the changing conditions. Every diverse culture has its own strengths and weaknesses, therefore in addition to their individuality, every diverse employee possesses a unique strengths and weaknesses that is derived from their culture. When each workers´ unique trait is managed properly and effectively in the organization, it can leverage the strengths and complement its weaknesses to highly impact the workforce.

2.5.2 Disadvantages

High Cost of Diversity Management: To increase job satisfaction, workplace diversity management could sometimes be very costly, when an organisation strives to effectively manage the diverse workforce, it undergoes a mandatory diversity training during which supervisors, employees, and managers receive lessons on the best way to interact with employees and clients. In recent times, there are lots of Diversity management program available where companies could choose from, taking into account the size of the company and it's employees. Some training programs require a high travelling and participation cost.

Discrimination: One significant disadvantages of working with a diverse workforce is discrimination in the part of both managers and employees. It can exist but hidden aspect of a poorly managed workplace. When a worker is being discriminated, it affects his ability to perform well and it also affect the perception of equity and raises issues of litigation.

Communication issues: Workplace diversity can negatively impact communication in the company. It can place an obstacle in the way of effective communication, which can cause a decrease in productivity and dampen the cohesiveness among workers. Even though spending time with employees by getting to know them helps reduce and in some instances eradicate communication barriers during a long-term, co-workers orientation periods and an individual´s first impressions can be difficult to control when culture clash.

Myriad Accommodation: Although the premise of workplace diversity is mutual respect, making way to accommodate each diverse worker´s request can be burdensome of employers, which makes it difficult to manage diversity. Some employee work constraints such as race, religion, country of origin and gender can sometimes be overwhelming if the diversity in the organisation tends to be so much to the extent that the company has to employ a fulltime staff to keep track of accommodating the employees needs. For example, some Muslim employees may decide not to work on Fridays, as it is a special day for prayers. In such instances employers has to make provision for someone to take their shift when the need arises.

Incorporation issues: Social incorporation at the workplace cannot be influenced to the maximum degree. Forming exclusive social groups is often a natural process that cannot be controlled sometimes. Therefore, companies tend to experience some degree of informal divisions amongst their workers thereby creating conditions where diverse employees avoid having contact with each other during leisure times and when work is over. Although this scenario doesn´t seem fundamentally wrong, it can reduce the effectiveness of knowledge sharing amongst teams and hence decreasing productivity. (Ruth Mayhew 2013)

2.6   Required tools for managing a diverse workforce

Managing diversity requires that managers should recognise certain skills that are vital for creating an effective and successful diverse workforce. Leaders and managers must understand that understanding discrimination and its consequences will always prevail in the organisation. Managers must recognize their own cultural preferences. They must see diversity as the differences among individuals and support the fact that each individual is unique in a special way. Moreover, managers must be ready to change the organisational culture when the need to do so arises and learn how to effectively manage the diverse workforce in order to be successful in the future. (Kelli A. G, Mayra L, Allen W, and Karl K 2013). Unfortunately there is no single formula that a company could apply to be successful, therefore it depends on the ability for the manager to figure out what best suits the company based on teamwork and the dynamics of the workplace. Roosevelt (2001) explains that diversity management involves a complete process needed for creating a working environment that involves everyone. When creating an effective and successful diverse workforce, Managers in the first instance must focus on personal awareness. Both employers and employees need to outline their personal prejudices. A one day session of training is not enough to change people's mind and behaviours, therefore organizations need to constantly develop, implement, and maintain ongoing training and awareness creation.

Diversity management entails much more than providing same opportunity for employment. Managers should realise that change occurs in a slow pace, but yet should continue to encourage change. Dealing with diversity also requires providing a secure environment for managers and workers to communicate, such environments includes social gatherings and business meetings where every member feels comfortable to be and creates a friendly atmosphere to speak freely as well as listen to others. Mentoring programs should be implemented to guide employees on how to access information. Constructive feedbacks should be given to the employees after they have learnt about their mistakes and when they are successful in implementing the lessons learnt to achieve success.

2.7 Cultural mentoring as a tool for managing workforce diversity

In the global environment, culture can be defined as the way people live and the attributes they portray such as their behaviours, believes, values, and symbols that they accept generally from generation to generation. In a Business sense, every company has its ´Company culture` that entails different form of activities for various working positions as well as a general guide to the company.

A cultural mentor's task is to help both older staff and new recruits understand the culture in the new context. In particular, it is the duty of the cultural mentor to explain to the mentee how things are done in the company, and how behaviour should be interpreted. Some companies usually regard the Human Resource Department or Human Resource Manager as a company mentor. Whereas other companies invite or in some cases employ an individual or group of people to serve as mentors to the company from time to time. The ultimate goal of a mentor is to be able to help the participants or employees realize their own potential to enable them to effectively utilise it

To become a successful cultural mentor, a person needs to find out the areas in which he or she is much more informed and comfortable with and could excel. Those areas would incorporate as well as represent the person´s image. Based on the above views and explanations, a Cultural mentor can be defined as an individual or a group of persons who serves as a role model to formulate an objective.

2.8 Characteristics of a Good Mentor

A good mentor portrays certain qualities and uniqueness. Due to the existence of individual differences, some of the qualities that a particular mentor may process may differ from another mentors´ qualities. However most mentors have some common similarities. Mentors could as well come in different forms such as a group of people, mentoring conferences, Associations and so on. Some characteristics of a good mentor are listed below: (Lint center for national security studies, Inc. 2013).

2.8.1 Awareness of the outside world:

A good mentor is aware of the world outside his or her own environment. As good businessmen are aware of changes that occur outside their own particular line of business, which may influence their decisions making process and actions in the business, a good mentor maintains an awareness of current changes in other career programs, of long term occupational need advancements. Awareness of the outside world helps him to well understand the various workforce and adopt the best tools to use in mentoring each diverse employee to positively understand his position internally and the external perspective as well, in a suitable and efficient manner. Moreover, ability to effectively engage in a potentially long-term relationship with each workforce irrespective of his or her opinions or background is also very important. From a happier staff to an increased organisational productivity rate, the benefits of a workplace cultural mentor actively supports: (Lois, J)

2.8.2 Having A Global Vision:

An efficient mentor has a broader view of the company´s mission and objective and guides the day-to-day operation of the company. He or She usually looks beyond the ordinary and consider the company's operations as a whole to know where it is currently, where it is heading and more importantly, where it should be going. An ideal mentor is aware that there is usually a requisite that surpasses the task at hand. A person having such a global vision looks ahead to the necessities of the Department with which he/she has been appointed for or the company in general over a set period of time.

2.8.3 Processing a Positive Attitude:

Processing a positive attitude about the goals and objectives of mentoring is an important attribute of a good mentor. A successful leader may not always be a successful mentor. The mentor is very competent and believes that the mentees or workers can substantially benefit from participation, and willingly shares these beliefs with other multi cultural mentee. The mentor must also not dispute the fact that one culture is as important as the other and therefore must portray the same attitude towards all workers.

2.8.4 Having Networking Experience:

Networking entails the ability to make and maintain a wide contact with business partners and leaders and benefit from the partners´ offerings and ideas in a variety of career areas, level of management, and organizations over a long period of time. Networking can also help provide relevant information, insightful views and career-enhancing contacts. An effective mentor do not only participates in networking, but also understands how employees in the organisation can benefit from networking. A mentor ensures that the mentee learns the importance of networking irrespective of their cultural differences, in order to begin to establish his own networks in his position of work in the company.

2.8.5 Possessing some Professional characteristics:

A cultural mentor must process professional characteristics as respect, duty, loyalty, personal courage, integrity, condor, compassion, competence and commitment. These characteristics are of heightened importance and must be strictly observed and applied during the daily routine. In addition to applying these qualities on the job, the mentor guides the new multi-cultural employees by setting a positive example, through encouragement and open communication.

2.9 Reasons for diversity management in organisations

2.9.1 Talent Shortage:

One reason to diversify a workforce is talent shortage. In an era of critical talent shortages, organisations are finding that they must attract, motivate, retain, and utilise their valuable employees effectively if they are to be competitive. Diversity management can reduce unwelcomed turn over and reduce absenteeism. In order to get the best out of the workforce, companies should not exclude any particular group by gender, race, or religion, the company will be excluding the person that is going to produce the next famous and successful product or someone who is going to contribute in another useful way in marketing, computing or engineering or elsewhere.

2.9.2 Range of Consumer Need:

In recent years, organisations have recognised that they can best serve different customer groups in many different markets in more diverse workforce even if the locality or home base of the organisation is located in a culturally imaginous market, there may be substantial customers that are located in other more diverse communities either in its home country or abroad. In communities where other languages dominate, organisations benefits from hiring employees who speak the dominant languages. They could also have diverse workforces design products that attract diverse consumers or customers.

2.9.3 Globalisation:

Globalisation can be defined as a process where organisations or businesses start to operate in an international scale. Companies are more open to internationalise their operations, they choose an efficient location to operate. Prices of inputs vary all over the world, which attracts companies to shift some of their production to countries with cheaper inputs such as labour in developing countries but are usually limited to save countries. Workforce diversity is a critical measure to companies who seeks to establish themselves. (Globalisation and business 2013)

2.10 Barriers to effective diversity management

Managing a diverse workforce comes with potential challenges that mentors and leaders must overcome. Some common barriers to implementing diversity management are (Kreitner, 2001:53):

- The difficulty in balancing career and Family: Women are most likely to be presented with this challenge. In modern culture, women are still expected to take care of young children and to manage the household. Although attitudes are shifting, women still bear the greatest household responsibilities.

- An unsupportive and hostile working environment for diverse employees: Diverse

employees are excluded from social activities and are thus prevented from forming networks among other employees.

- Fears of discrimination: People fear of being discriminated upon and therefore are reluctant to apply for jobs where there are different nationalities than theirs.

- Diversity is not seen as an organizational priority: Employees may not view diversity efforts as work contributing to the success of the organization.

- Resistance to change: People resist change for reasons such as fear of failure, mistrust and peer pressure.

It is up to leadership to overcome these challenges by properly informing and managing changes and the perceptions when they feel threatened.

2.11 Change Management

Due to the implication of a change in people's perception to change, leadership may need to adhere to change management principles (Kreitner, 2003:668). Kotler advises that management should implement change management by taking into account to:

- Establish a sense of urgency: Management must provide a convincing reason to accept diversity management principles. When the workforce becomes comfortable with the ideology of diversity management, it will motivate them to follow it.

- Create a guiding coalition: People with influence and power need to lead this change. Chief Executive Officers, head of departments, business mentors and other prominent and respectable persons in the company or the society are usually the right persons to lead the change, due to the fact that they are more experienced and are often trusted to know the right and wrong.

- Develop a vision and strategy: A strategic plan with the goal of effective integration of diversity into everyday business needs to be formulated. This will help the com-

pany track its activities to ensure that it is followed and successfully implemented.

- Effectively communicate the change vision: This goal and vision must be consistently communicated in clear terms to all affected in order for them to have the clear idea of the change and come to term with it.

- Empower broad-based action and generate short-term wins: The barriers to diversity management must be addressed and eliminated. Also Small achievable goals should be set to ensure its successful implementation.

3 COMPANY CASES ON WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

3.1 An Organisation

An organisation can be defined as a public establishment that is designed to serve a particular purpose. *Business dectionary.com (2013) defines organisation as a social unit of people that is structured and managed to meet a need or to pursue collective goals.* The relationship between every different activities and the members of every organisation is determined by its laid down management structure that shows how they are related. The environment of which an organisation finds itself usually affects its existence due to the fact that they have an open system. To effectively assign different roles and responsibilities to staffs and members, thereby enabling them to successfully carry out the different tasks, Organisations are subdivided into different levels, ranging from top management staff to subordinates. (Organisation, 2013)

For the sake of this research work, five companies have been focused on to attain their views on workplace diversity and to ascertain the degree at which they agree or disagree to the research question. These companies are Ford Motors Company, Coca-Cola Company, Miljoy Group, Dabboussi International Company Limited, and Dastia Siivous Oy.

3.2 Ford motor company

Figure 2: Ford Motor Company Logo

The information gathered about Ford Motors Company is based on online sources that are already available to the public. Most of the information was gathered from the company's website. The purpose of the information gathered is to get detailed information of the

company's workplace diversity involvement, and the impact it has had on the company's activities and success.

Ford Motor Company is a reputable company, which was incorporated on 6 June 1903, and focuses on developing and manufacturing of varieties of vehicles that deliver an outstanding value to their customers worldwide without changing their product strategy irrespective of the country of operation. The company has over 100 plants in the United States, Brazil, Thailand, South Africa, and eighteen other countries. It employs over 350,000 people all over the world. Throughout the history of Ford Motors, their diverse employees have created a variety of products that has immensely contributed to its success. Ford has been one of the world leaders in workplace diversity and inclusion, which has since remained the key business strategy of the company. Diversity could be found in every level of the company's operations, from the boardroom to the design studio, from the plant floors to the engineering centre, their diversity makes them a better and successful company. (Wikipedia 2013)

3.2.1 Ford Motors History of Diversity

In the early days, Ford Motor Company took the necessary steps to ensure that its workforce has reflected the communities in which it does business. Within its first five years, Ford had established production or sales operations in the United States, Canada, France, the United Kingdom, parts of Scandinavia, Eastern Europe and in Russia.

The C.E.O of the company, Henry Ford In 1913, adopted a strategy, which greatly helped the company to meet its customer demands. He upgraded the positions of some of the workers, and offered attractive wages and salaries, which were more than double the industry average at that time. The 5 dollars a day attracted thousands of immigrants and African Americans to join the company. Ford effectively formed a new American middle class which made Ford Motor Company one of the first American companies to reflect the growing diversity of the United States. (History of Diversity, 2013)

Recognising the company's day-by-day growth in diversity in the company, Ford realised that it needed to strategically and effectively manage the diverse workforce to enable its implementation continue to work to the company's advantage. Ford therefore recognised

some measures, which they thought would retain and also attract new diverse workforce and successful diversity implementation and management. These measures involves Ford Motors´ recognition of its Global diversity vision of Diversity and inclusion, of which some strategies are underlined and explained below:

3.2.2 Global Diversity Vision at Ford

The vision of diversity and inclusion of Ford is to maintain diversity and inclusion environment. In order for Ford Motors to achieve its vision and strategy, it identified 5 strategic focuses that involve: (Strategic Areas Of Focus, 2013)

Diverse workforce: Employing people from all over the world irrespective of their race, gender, ethnicity, age, disability to contribute to the company's success story.

Respectful and Inclusive Work Environment: A working environment where no one is left out but instead all is included in the decision-making process as well as opinion sharing. And also a mutual respect for each individual's culture believe and their personality.

Leading the Way: To ensure that Ford Motors stands ”on top of the chart” above other reputable companies, by moving one step further from them in terms of workplace diversity and productivity as a whole.

Work life Integration: This integration involves workers making choices as well as exercising control of their life´s challenges in order to meet their goals. In recognising the impact of the work life integration strategy, the company designed a conducive-working environment for workers to successfully combine personal lives with their working life, thereby motivating them to work productively and efficiently. (Worklife integration and achieving, 2013)

External Partnerships: Ford Motors created partnership sales group, which aims at giving large discounts to employees, retirees and spouses of eligible partner companies to serve as goodwill and a means to promote workplace diversity. (Special pricing on Ford, 2012)

3.2.3 Global Diversity Challenges at Ford

Ford Motors had encountered numerous challenges and has since continued to improve on their strategies to manage these challenges in order to continue with their success story regarding workplace diversity. Below are some of the challenges

Forming A Structure and Guideline for Different Religious groups: one of the challenges that Ford Motors encountered the ability to effectively form a structure and the best guideline that all workers from different religious backgrounds could fit in some way, and could accept and follow irrespective of their believe. It took some time to overcome, due to the fact that workers too into consideration how to work with their own faith and support others with different faith at the same time. (Ford Interfaith Network 2005)

Developing solutions and new strategies: One of the major challenges at ford is to continuously develop new diversity solutions and strategies to manage workplace diversity, as well as explore new and effective methods of doing things. (James J. P.)

To be fair to all: Ford Motors has been making a tremendous effort to battle the challenge of being open and fair to all workers, by creating equal opportunity for all employees to portray their full potentials in the various roles they play.

Effective Diversity Education: To effectively educate workers on diversity and it practicalities have been one of the challenges at ford as the company strives to ensure successful diversity implementation.

3.2.4 Diversity Management Tools at Ford

To successfully manage a diverse workforce as well as continue to promote its diversity initiative, Ford Motors established various meeting and outreach groups that aims to educate and serves as a tool to address diversity challenges as well as guide employees through the day-to-day activities both at work and their personal lives. To mention but a few, some of the groups are explained as follows: (Employee Resource Groups 2013)

Disabled Employees (FEDA): FEDA aims to ensure that disabled employees enjoy flexible and comfortable working environment by providing them the needed resources and networking tools

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs): This group is a joint corporate-sponsored Employee resource group. It provides support network and contribute to employee's professional development.

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or Transgender Employees (GLOBE): The group strongly supports the company's Equal Employment Opportunity policy. It provides networking and supports employee's freedom of choice.

The employees African-Ancestry Network (FAAN): The group was formed since 1994 to promote leadership and development through counselling and dialogues on diversity with top management. It also organises seminars and mentoring programs for employees

Asian Indian Association (FAIA): The group focuses on developing the competencies of employees to help them become strong leaders. It also forms a community and corporate citizenship outreach, as well as promote Ford brand.

The Interfaith Network (FIN): FIN aims to promote religious tolerance and understanding, peace and dignity of all humans. The group brings together employees of all religious backgrounds to express their faith in a meaningful and appropriate way.

3.3 Coca-Cola Company

Figure 3: The business logo of Coca-Cola Company

The information gathered about Coca Cola Company is based on online sources that are already available to the public. Most of the information was gathered from the company's website and published articles. The purpose of the information gathered is to get a detailed information of the company's workplace diversity involvement, and the impact it has had on the company's activities and success as well as analyse other challenges that the company has faced with regards to workplace diversity.

3.3.1 Introduction

Coca–Cola Company is a multinational company, with its operations located in most parts of the world including Finland. The company manufacture non-alcoholic beverages and supplies them in bulk and in retail outlets. The company has its headquarter located in Atlanta, Georgia in the United States of America (1). Coca-cola was invented in 1886 by John Stith Pemberton (2). In 1889, the original inventor of Coca-cola sold the company to Asi Griggs Candler. Currently, the company is offering More than 500 brands currently and its operations are scattered in over 200 countries worldwide and employs about. (3)

3.3.2 Global Diversity Mission

The global diversity mission of the Coca-Cola Company is to be recognised for their leadership in Diversity, Inclusion and fairness in all areas of its workplace, including the workforce and business in general.

Muhtar Kent, the chairman and CEO of Diversity and Leadership explains that (The Coca-Cola Company No. 38 in the Diversity and Inclusion Top 50) Everything we do in terms of diversity is based on a simple, powerful and global premise: Our diversity should be as inclusive as our brands. Building a diverse and inclusive workforce is central to our 2020 Vision, which calls for us to 'achieve true diversity' throughout our business.

 Coca-Cola sees diversity as the heart of their business and always strives to create a working environment that provides equal opportunities and access to information. As a global business, the company embraces the multicultural world in the workplace and the marketplace, and continues to diligently work to advance its diversity journey. In view of this, the company has received several catalyst awards to recognise their good work. Coca-cola was ranked the 38th of the top 50 diversity and Inclusion companies for 2013
(Global Diversity mission 2013)

3.3.3 Diversity challenges at Coca-cola

Diversity at the workplace is loaded with all kinds of myths, misconceptions and all kinds of baggage. Managers have been seeking various strategies to manage diversity at the workplace, which has attracted some challenges. Below are some of the challenges that coca-cola has been dealing with and continues to work hard to improve on these them. (Mauricio V, 2013)

Different Culture and history in every country: Every country has its culture. Therefore in every country that Coca-cola operates in, its culture has to be taken into consideration in designing the company structure, and to accept differences in order to be competitive. Employee Resigning due to moving to a different geographical area are:

Making work-life balance possible for employees: It can be tough sometimes when guiding employees to combine private life with their work life. This has put coca-cola in a position where it is constantly seeking the best possible solution to deal with the challenge. Women and disabled employees are the major source of the challenge

High cost of diversity management: Coca-cola spends significant amount of money on diversity training and mentoring programs to educate workers on diversity.

Lawsuits: Some employees file lawsuits against coca-cola when they felt they have been discriminated on due to their race. Recently, 16 workers filled lawsuit against the company, when the felt they were discriminate on. (John 2012)

3.3.4 Successful Diversity implementation Measures

To successfully implement diversity at the workplace, some measures needs to be put in place, so that a company can follow it to ensure that it is on the right track. Coca-cola Company has put in place various diversity training and implementation platforms for its workers to help battle diversity challenges.

3.3.5 Diversity Education and Training

Coca-cola has established ongoing diversity training with the aim of advancing its ongoing workplace Diversity journey. These different diversity education programs has been successful in minimising conflicts and lawsuits and has helped workers to deal with their diversity related issues. The Education and Training has improved overtime, strengthening the ability of managers and employees to leverage, value and respect individual differences to sustainably drive better results to the business.

The diversity Education and training has been grouped into three main pillars, namely, Diversity Speaker Series, which involves inviting Speaker and guests to give a speech to workers about diversity. Diversity Library Where every information about diversity can be found so that workers can get easy access to them and learn more about the company's diversity initiatives and achievements as well as learn about individual's diversity. Finally, Diversity Education and Training which aims at educating workers on how to deal with worker and their differences as well as training them to put what they learn into action and help drive their engagement.

All the three pillars of Diversity training goes hand-in-hand to help increase productivity by creating a working environment that influence diversity. The pillars could be illustrated in the picture below: (Diversity Education and Training 2013)
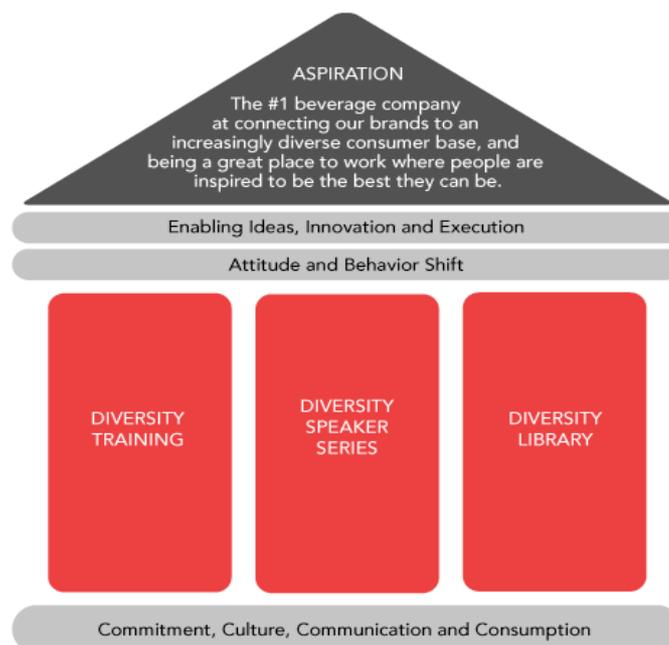

Figure 3: The three pillars in diversity and education at Coca-Cola Company

3.3.6 Coca-Cola diversity management tools

To successfully manage a diverse workforce as well as continue to promote its diversity initiative, Coca-Cola organised several mentoring and outreach groups to educate workers and serves as a tool to address diversity challenges as well as guide employees through the day-to-day activities both at work and their personal lives. To mention but a few, some of the groups are explained below: (The Coca-Cola Company 2013)

Coca-Cola Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Ally (LGBTA): The aim of the group is to promote a working environment where everyone is included. It creates a platform of sharing where employees feels comfortable with their diversity and contributes to the company's success.

The Coca-Cola African-American Business Resource Group: The group serves as an advocate for a winning and inclusive culture, where there is respect for individual's diversity and value in the pool of talents in the African American group.

The Coca-Cola Business Support Professionals Business Resource Group: the group promotes excellence in the workplace and provides business support to employees to boost their morale.

The Women's Business Resource Group, Women's Link: the aim of the group is to inspire, develop, and engage women workers to the company, to establish a reputation as a place where women are valued. The company received the 2013 Catalyst award to recognise its effort to empower women at the workplace. 2013 Catalyst Award (Catalyst Award 2013)

3.4 Miljoy Group

The information gathered from Miljoy Group is based on an email interview conducted by the researcher. The manager of the company Opoku Mike was the respondent of the interview. The interview questions were sent alongside a letter explaining what the research was about and what the responses would be used for. The responses were later sent back by the manager by email, which was used in the thesis work.

Miljoy Group is a company that operates in Finland and has been in operation since 2004. It is an independently owned Limited Liability company that provides services such as Money transfer, telecommunication, intercultural communication services, IT related services, Environmental and forestry consultancy.

Vision and Mission of Miljoy

The company's vision is to provide credible services in their line of business to their clients and customers and aims to keep a long-term relationship with them.

The company's mission is in two folds, Firstly to provide the best services to their clients at competitive prices and secondly to promote and maintain a good name with their customer base.

Miljoy Group has been successfully operating with about 25 permanent diverse workers both locally and outside Finland, and has about 20 non-permanent workers. The company continues to grow each day in customer satisfaction. Although small in size, the company believes immensely in workplace diversity and has had numerous experiences in adopting and managing it. It ensures that equal treatment is given to workers irrespective of their backgrounds. (Miljoy group 2013)

Below are the interview responses that were given with regards to the interview questions that were used in the research work. (Interview responses 2012)

- Based on the question "*Do your company has a diverse workforce and promotes its implementation?"* The manager stated that, "We strongly believe in workplace diversity due to the nature of our corporate culture, and it has gone a long way to contribute to our success".

- Based on the question "*What do you see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse workforce? "*, the manager further explained that the language barrier is one of the challenging aspects in the services department of the company's. Especially it's branch in Ghana, but their mentoring program has been tackling it successfully.

- Based of the question "*What steps have you taken to meet these challenges?"* Due to the size of its workers, the company has a routine online conference meeting. Workers handbook that states the code of conduct of the company also serves as a guide for each worker.

- Based on the question *"What do you see as the advantages of working with employees from a diverse cultural background*" the response was that the workers bring to the table different ideas.

- Based on the question "*What kind of experiences have you had working with others with different backgrounds than your own? "* he responded; all the diverse workers always seem to have their own different significant opinions on a given task, so it helps in the decision making process of a particular task, as the best idea is considered and improved upon for a successful outcome. It is more fun to work with diverse employees as well.

- Based on the question "*Has there ever been a situation where an employee was not accepting other employee's diversity, if yes how did you handle the situation? "* the manager answered yes and added two years ago, a female employee was promoted to the position of a senior sales officer, and a male employee complained that he deserved the post because he felt that "As a man he is much stronger both mentally and physically to excel than the female". The manager explained to him how important it is for the company to practice gender equality, and respect of the right of each diverse employee.

- Based on the question *"What strategies have you used to address diversity challenges? What were the positives and negatives?"* The response was that we do not have an official laid down stategies to address any challenges, but instead try to deal with it as it comes, according to the situation at hand which makes it more difficult to solve problems

It can be inferred from the interview responses that workforce diversity has contributed to the success of Miljoy Group. The following were the summery of the results obtained from the responses.

- Workplace diversity has contributed to high productivity in the company
- Workers bring to the table different ideas.
- There is no laid down strategies to deal with diversity management problems

- Language barrier and discrimination is one of the challenging aspects in the services department of the company. Gender discrimination has also been a challenge.

The overall outcome of the interview response regarding the company's diversity management and the impact it has on the company were positive. However the company lacks ideas to successfully manage diversity.

3.5 Dabbousi International Company Limited

The information gathered from Dabbousi International Company Limited is based on an email interview conducted by the researcher in October 2012. The C.E.O of the company Dabbousi Fadi was the respondent of the interview. The interview questions were sent alongside a letter explaining what the research was about and what the responses would be used for. The responses were later sent back by the manager by email, which was used in the thesis work.

Dabbousi International Company Ltd is a company based in Lebanon and has its branch in Ghana. The company was founded 1997 and has since been involved in the supply of sawn timber products and consistently delivers various products as per client specific requirements and exclusively supply to a number of well-known wood manufacturers in the USA, EU, Saudi Arabia, Far East and the United Kingdom. The company depends on latest technology to strengthen their capabilities to deliver quality products to valued clients. Dabbousi field of business is divided into processing of wood from its raw stage (Timber) to its finished or final state (lumber and timber products). The field of manufacturing is where by Dabbousi make customer ideas come to reality that is designing according to customer needs and specification. (Global market group 2013)

Below are the interview responses that were given with regards to the interview questions that were used in the research work. (Interview responses 2012)

- Based on the interview question *"Do your company has a diverse workforce and promotes its implementation?"* there was a positive response by the manager and he went on to say that as for implementation there were a number of policies that had been put in place by the company to check it routinely and some of the policies are leadership that are informed about workforce diversity and committed to the cause of the business.

- Based on the question *"What kinds of experiences have you had working with others with different backgrounds than your own?* The manager answered the question about the experiences the company have had with working with a diverse workforce by stating that their employees in their branch in Ghana has been much comfortable with working with people with different religious background as compared to their headquarters in Lebanon, most of the employees in Lebanon are Muslims and few of them are from Christian background, therefore they sometimes do not get along very well, despite the company's effort to successfully manage diversity.

- Based of the question *" What do you see as the advantages of working with employees from a different cultural background?"* The response was that Workplace diversity has contributed to high productivity in the company.

- Based on the question *" What do you see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse workforce and what steps have you taken to meet these challenges?"* The response was that discrimination has been one of the major challenges in the company.

- Based of the question *"What steps have you taken to meet these challenges?"* The response was that, they try to put both religious groups together when there is teamwork or when the need arises. Also the company organizes tourism program for its staff where all workers participate and get to interact with each other.

- Based of the question *"Has there ever been a situation where an employee was not accepting other employee's diversity (Yes / N0)? If yes, how have you handled the situation?"* The response was (Yes) and further explanation was that there have been shared duties, responsibilities and individual accountability that is laid down

for each worker, which has helped the company to integrate programs in a peaceful manner.

- Based on the question *"What strategies have you used to address diversity challenges? What were the positives and negatives?"* The response was that there are Objectives that are set to guide each activity in the company. The company also strives to improve on the diversity management techniques

It can be inferred from the interview responses that workforce diversity works to support the company and all inclusive work environment that has been working hard to figure out ways to weave diversity. The following were the summery of the results obtained from the responses.

- Workplace diversity has contributed to high productivity in the company
- The company has benefited from the different pool of ideas from the diverse employees
- The company has diversity management techniques uses to manage its workforce which is not enough but still needs to do more
- Discrimination and negative attitude amongst the employees has been one of the major challenges the company has been facing and has been striving hard to improve techniques to eliminate it

The overall outcome of the interview response regarding the impact it has on the company were positive. However the company has been finding ways to deal with the negative impact of diversity by organising monthly and annual meetings to educate employees on diversity and tolerance, with the motive of eradicating discrimination.

3.6 Dastia Siivous Oy

The information gathered from Dastia siivous Oy is based on an email interview conducted by the researcher in September 2012. The company information was retrieved form the company´s website. The manager of the company Jussi Haapaniemi was the respondent of the interview. The interview questions were sent alongside a letter explaining what

the research was about and what the responses would be used for. The responses were later sent back by the manager by email, which was used in the thesis work.

Dastia Siivous Oy is a registered company in Finland with over 100 employees. With such a diverse workforce this company has been successful in the field of cleaning, since its establishment for about ten years ago. Their employees come from Europe, Asia and Africa. the company has been one of the successful companies in the its line of business. Even though most of these workers do not work in one place there is still that kind of cohesiveness among them because some of them work together whilst some work in separate places but do sometimes come together and work in a particular place when the need arises. (Dastia siivous, 2013)

Below are the interview responses that were given with regards to the interview questions that were used in the research work. (Interview responses 2012)

- Based on the question "*Do your company has a diverse workforce and promotes its implementation?*" the response was yes they believe in workplace diversity and employ workers from diverse cultures, except that they do not employ disabled persons because their working activities are labour intensive

- Based on the question *"What kinds of experiences have you had working with others with different backgrounds than your own?"* the response was that the language barriers normally result in confusion and ineffective teamwork.

- Based on the question *"What do you see as the advantages of working with employees from a different cultural background"* The response was that it makes work easier and faster, as some of the workers are stronger than others, so they usually group them together based on the nature of the task for easy flow of work.

- Based on the question *"What do you see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse workforce and what steps have you taken to meet these challenges? The response was that* communication; nepotism and resistance to change have been the major challenges that the company have been facing. The company fears to fail if

they recruit more diverse workforce such as disabled employees, as they feel it will cause them low productivity and high cost of diversity management.

- Based on the question *"Has there ever been a situation where an employee was not accepting other employee's diversity (Yes / N0). If yes, how have you handled a situation when a colleague was not accepting of others' diversity?"* the response was No. All the workers accept and respect each other.

- Based on the question *"What strategies have you used to address diversity challenges, what were the positives and negatives?"* the response was that they do not have specific strategies set before hand to manage their diverse workforce except that every worker goes on with his or her job normally and problems are dealt with as they come. Moreover, more attention is paid to a good work done by the workers instead and not their backgrounds or differences.

The research conducted at Dastia Siivous Oy showed that from the manager's point of view workplace diversity has contributed to the company's success.

- The company believes in workplace diversity but are selective on the human attributes.
- There are factors that hinder the successful management of the workforce such as communication problems, and resistance to change.
- Managers' fears to fail if they recruit more diverse workforce such as disabled employees, as they feel it will cause then low productivity and high cost of diversity management.
- The language barriers normally result to confusion and ineffective teamwork. Nepotism is seen as a major challenge, most employees tends to favour their friends and relatives whenever there is a vacancy to be filled, thereby blocking the chances of requiting more diverse workforce.
- Moreover, little effort is put in taking care of workers personal needs.

The overall impact of workplace diversity is somehow positive, as the company needs to do more to effectively manage diversity.

4 LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, section 4.1 describes the background upon which the study was carried out. Section 4.1.1 discusses the concerns about how reliable the information received is. Section 4.1.2 explains the validity of the information received; 4.1.3 of the chapter also discusses how far the information received could be generalised.

4.1 Concerns about Reliability:

Concerns are raised about how reliable the data gathered is. The findings derived from using non-standardized research methods should not necessarily be used to analyse another. (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). The information might not be reliable if the interviewer attempts to impose own view and frame of references through the questions that will be asked and also where the researcher credibility falls short. In the case of this research work, all information gathered are authentic and true and from the aright sources. Secondly, The information gathered from Miljoy Group cannot be assumed reliable to be used as a guide to analyse Dastia´s point of view on workplace diversity despite some similarities in responses. Furthermore, Dabbousi International Company Limited point of view must be seen as such, the same applies to Ford Motor and Coca-cola. this is because every company has its own company culture, therefore, some of the information gathered from each company might differ slightly according to each company's current situation and believes regarding the subject matter. Some companies might not believe in certain facts about workplace diversity even though they implement it, whereas some would. In order to keep the responses reliable for use, they were not changed with the assumption that it could represent all point of views.

4.2 Concerns about Validity:

Validity of the information gathered can be measured by comparism. Some of the information gathered from the three small and medium companies can only be used in those companies and similar companies for a period of time, as companies tend to revise their company culture from time to time. The same applies to Ford Motors and Coca-Cola Company some of their information may be used in a higher or smaller degree based on the organisa-

tional culture, company size, beliefs and point of view of the company in question. This is because some of the responses given by the three companies on the interview questions are based on the company's current situation, and the information gathered from Ford and Coca-cola are based on the their believes and operations at that period of time. This means that although there are some similarities in some companies' rules and activities, different motives may be attached to different company's response regarding workplace diversity. In view of this, the information received is not valid for all companies.

4.3 Concerns about Generalisability:

In this context the findings of the research work could be generalized to some degree, and with some exceptions. This is because all five companies that were focused on in the research believe in workplace diversity and portray some similar practicalities if not all. The information can only be generalised for companies who believe in workplace diversity and its implementation and management. Some generalised data could be used for a longer period of time whereas some could be used for a shorter period of time and needs to be revised during certain limited time.

5 DISCUSSION

This research was undertaken to know the impact that workplace diversity has had on organizations around the in Finland and in Ghana. Five companies were focused on during the study, where two of the companies are big sized companies that have their operation plants in most parts of the world. The other three companies are small and medium in size and operate in Finland and in Ghana. The theory of the study which was discussed in (chapter 2) of the research work reviewed that organizations that are able to explore successfully in diversifying their workforce by taking into account the concept in diversity management, consider the advantages and disadvantages, and the required tools in managing a diverse workforce consistently work to locate and address the barriers that are entrenched within the practices, policies, services and programs that unintentionally ignore some individuals within a community. These theories were evident in the findings of the research work conducted on the five companies in (chapter 3) as all the companies practice the theories in one way or the other. The study also provided the means that an organization use in integrating diversity and inclusion, values and practices into an existing processes that allows organizational development and results to be measured.

It also sought to tackle the systemic obstacles that impede building a diverse and an inclusive workforce that are generally represented by the citizens within the communities that the companies operate. The research revealed that organization's success when they decides to diversify the workforce is contingent upon the kind of commitments and the willingness to dedicate time and resources crucial to safeguard the accomplishment of the Implemented Plan and was very much relevant Ford Motor company and Coca-Cola company. Furthermore, this study indicated that workplace diversity is about equipping staff at all stages with the tools and support essential for creating an innovative workforce that contributes to improve the competitive advantage in an increasingly viable labor market. It was also discovered that diversity management tools and techniques that the 5 companies used have been successful even though there were some challenges such as discrimination or nepotism, communication problems and resistance to change by coworkers, racism etc. existed.

5.1 Outcome of the Study

The outcome of the study discusses the findings of this research work, reflecting on the research question "has workplace diversity contributed to organisational success?" the Author is of the opinion that the rationale behind an organisation or a company's decision to diversify or not to diversify their workforce completely lies on the company's organisational culture and its business strategies, since workforce diversity could have a positive and negative impact on an organisation. Nevertheless, it is up to the company to figure out the best strategies that will successfully fit into the target market of the organisation. If the organisation then feels diversifying its workforce is the best strategy to improve productivity, then it has to implement it. The outcome compares and discusses the extent to which the companies view diversity at the workplace, and also the reasons for the variation in managing diversity in small and big companies.

5.1.1 Extent to Which Companies View Diversity

The findings of the study show that two big companies, Ford motors and coca-cola Company strongly agree to the research question that was studied and have adopted an unswerving set of diversity and human resource managerial practices. Both companies believe that Diversity and inclusion is at the heart of their company and its general operations and therefore strives to improve their diversity management strategies to manage their workforce. Different employee Resource groups are set up by Ford and Coca-Cola, with the motive of sustainably educating the employees on diversity at the workplace and also guide them in their personal lives as well as their professional careers. As a global business, both companies believe that surviving in a multicultural world requires diversity in a more sustainable manner. Most organizations will do very well when they diversity their company's operation, but diversifying a company's workforce involves putting in place strategies to improve utilize and exploit workforce diversity. The approach to which an organization adopts to tackle diversity will determine its negative or positive outcome. Ford Motors Company and Coca-Cola Company see diversity at the workplace as the norm of the company and therefore cannot be ignored, which has motivated them to be among the leading and successful companies worldwide. They confirm that diversity management requires the strong support of management, an unceasing and dedicated workforce toward incorporating diversity or the objective in an organization in a very Sustainable manner.

The three small and medium sized companies, Miljoy Group, Dabboussi International Company Limited and Dastia Siivous Oy also agree to the research question. All the five companies agree to the research question that workplace diversity has contributed to their company success.

5.1.2 Diversity at Big Companies, compared to Small ones

Diversity management in the Bigger companies differ from the management in the smaller companies. Below are discussions on how they differ and the reason why they have different diversity management practicalities. The information is based on the findings of research conducted by the Author. To aid the explanation, Ford Motors Company and Coca-Cola company is classified as (Big Companies), whereas Dabbousi, Miljoy, and Dastia as (Small and Medium Companies. SMEs). The Author chose to use tables as the comparism tool to enable an easy understanding for the reader by vividly stating the point.

1. How Diversity management differ in big companies from Small ones

The table below points out how diversity management in big companies differ from diversity management in small and medium companies (SMEs).

Table 2. The difference in diversity management in big companies and Small companies (based of the findings of the research work)

Big Companies	Small and medium size companies (SMEs)
1. The companies have organised different Employee Resource Groups to provide mentoring programs and seminars to guide their workers	Human Resource managers and supervisors guide employee
2. The companies create a working environment that provides equal working opportunities and access to information.	The companies mostly contact the suitable employee they feel could perform well on a specific task.
3. The companies provide facilities for disabled employee to enable them feel comfortable and safe at work	The companies do not employ disabled persons, due to the challenges that come with it. Dastia Siivous Oy ´s employees' work outside the office premises and the work is labour intensive.
4. The companies has provided a diversity library where different kinds of diversity books and information can be found	Managers do not extensively educate their employees on diversity but they mostly give professional guidance to workers to get tasks done. They only tackle diversity issues when the need arises.
5. The companies put in more effort and money to ensure that diversity is effectively managed to have a successful outcome.	They do not spend so much on diversity education and training, but organises diversity meetings ones a while

2.   Why diversity management differ in big companies from small ones

The table below points out some reasons why diversity management in big companies are different from diversity management in small and medium companies (SMEs).

Table 3. The Reasons for the difference in diversity management in big companies and Small companies (based of the findings of the research work)

Big Companies	Small and medium Companies (SMEs)
1) The companies have operation plants in most parts of the world	The companies operate only in one to three countries
2) The Companies employ Workers in every country in which they operate	Their recruitment is confined to one to three countries.
3) Their workforce Diversity covers almost all the individual differences, both primary and secondary dimensions explained in (chapter 1.0), due to the nature of the company's operations explained in (chapter 3.2 & 3.3)	They mostly consider physical ability, gender, geographical location when recruiting their Workforce due to the nature of their company´s operations explained in (Chapter 3.4 to 3.6) the companies profile
4) Each company employs over 350,000 people in more than 200 countries	Dastia Siivous employs about 400 employees only in Finland. Dabbousi company and Miljoy employ about 100 employees in Ghana and in Finland.
5) They encounter numerous challenges due to the size of the company and employees	Their challenges are minimal challenges because the companies are not so big

5.2   Conclusion and Recommendation

The objective of this thesis was to create the awareness as well as the influence diversity management has on a healthy working environment whilst considering some practical companies view in order to ascertain the impact diversity have had on the companies. The main objective of the research is to examine the different ways of dealing with work place diversity as well as to provide management with the necessary guidelines for effective diversity management in small and big International companies in order to show the reader how to build an effective workplace diversity by applying different diversity management tools. Also, to identify the trends and perception of diversity management as it is in some demographical segments, the advantages and disadvantages and then suggest some recommendations that management can apply which shall be centered on the various influential trends and factors within an organizational framework.

The research emphasized on the implications management should be mindful of in order to build a healthy working environment within the circles of workplace diversity. More so, the research suggested that managers have a more positive and proper perception regarding the implementation of workplace diversity. Companies constantly device ways to effectively manage diverse employees

Based on the information gathered and the responses given by various companies with regards to the interview questions, the Author noticed certain areas where all the five companies are lacking and needs some improvement. These aspects consists of:

- The inability of some managers to effectively manage diversity due to the nature of the company and its activities.
- Some of the managers do not have enough knowledge about how to manage their workforce effectively.
- There is lack of open communication between managers and employee. Due to the means manager use to communicate to its workers.
- The Employee Resource Groups that are created by the big companies to guide the employees are not enough to eradicate diversity management challenges

While managers are positive about the existence and implementation of workplace diversity, one of the interview questions (question 2) raised some concerns that involve bar-

riers to effective diversity management. Question 5a also raised some concerns due to the fact that two companies out of the three had some bad experiences with employees accepting each other's culture and religion. However some of the employees felt they have been discriminated upon as explained by the managers.

Cultural mentoring is one of the proven ways to orient manager and employees both new and old to cope with the working environment and their responsibilities. So many benefits are derived from a mentor of whom some are as follow:

- The mentor could give counselling about personal problems as well as job related ones.
- The mentor could provide opinions or suggestions to the company when things go wrong
- Managers or employees tend to perform very well by developing more self-confidence when they are being mentored.

With regards to the lack of knowledge on the part of managers about workplace diversity management, the companies could sponsor their managers to attend workshops and annual conferences; Regular internal emails should create Awareness when the need arises.

Managers need to communicate more to employees, to give the workers the room to confide in them with their challenges.

Managers should be prepared to change some part of their company techniques, when the diversity management techniques adopted are not working effectively but before doing so, the vision for the change must be communicated effectively. Moreover, managers should adopt some change management principles to guide them on the decision making of the change. Some of the Steps involve constantly developing the company's Strategy and vision, appointing a person with high influence to lead the change. And finally the company should give tangible reason as to why managers and employees should accept the change.

On the part of the big companies Ford Motors and Coca-Cola Company, besides the employee Resources groups they already have, custom built software program could also serve s a means of communication, where employees could constantly share their views, challenges and experiences, the software could also serve as a platform to send informa-

tion by the company to the employees. In some cases it would also serve as a platform for employees who want to share their challenges anonymously.

Suggestion for further Research

In the course of the research process, some interesting research area came in mind

- The implications of workplace diversity on employee

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APPENDIX

Cover letter and Questioners

Cover letter

Dear Sir,

Please your company has been selected to participate in a research project that is aimed to determine how your company manage diversity. You are in no way compelled to complete this questioners but your assistance will be beneficial and highly appreciated.

The questioners will be used to complete a research project in Arcada University of Applied Sciences in Finland. It should not take more than 20 munites to complete it. Kindly provide your honest opinion.

Thank you so much for participating.

Priscilla Dike
Researcher

Questioneer

1. Do your company has a diverse workforce and promotes its implementation?

2. What kinds of experiences have you had working with others with different backgrounds than your own?

3. What do you see as the advantages of working with employees from a different cultural background

4. What do you see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse workforce?

4b. What steps have you taken to meet these challenges?

5a. Has there ever been a situation where an employee was not accepting other employee's diversity?

  (Yes / N0)

5b. If yes, how have you handled a situation when a colleague was not accepting of others' diversity?

6. What strategies have you used to address diversity challenges? What were the positives and negatives?