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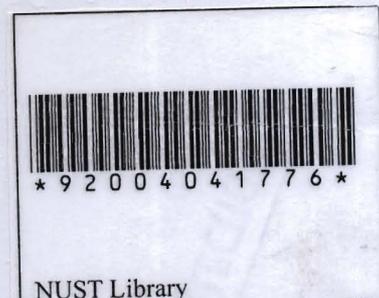
Evaluation of the impact of societal and organisational culture variances on business leadership and managerial practices: The case of Delta Corporation in Zimbabwe.

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ABSTRACT

This study was motivated by the researcher's desire to understand why the performance of Delta Corporation's middle managers who had undergone the managerial leadership development programme was the same as those middle managers still to be trained. Literature reviewed revealed that societal culture influences organisational culture and leadership practices in business organisations. Therefore, this study was an analysis of similarities and differences between the Zimbabwean societal culture and leadership practices and Delta Corporation's organisational culture and leadership practices. The methodology of the study was based on a single stage case study on Delta Corporation. Due to the nature of the research problem which is about the performance of managers, the researcher had no access to performance scores of managers in other organisation. Hence, a case study research at Delta Corporation where the researcher was employed and was granted permission became appropriate. This was done to provide a grounded contextual understanding using mixed method approach. Employing both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies was done to ensure in depth analysis and cross checking of data. An adapted GLOBE research tool was used for the quantitative research to provide established measures of organisational culture. Focus group discussions and key informant interviews were used for the qualitative research to provide voices of research participants and outline data that cannot be quantified such as thoughts, opinions and experiences.

The sample results showed that there were similarities between the Zimbabwean society and Delta Corporation on: Humane orientation, Power distance and Gender egalitarianism cultural practices. There were statistically significant differences on 12 out of 15 of the cultural and leadership GLOBE dimensions signifying that organisations may not always mirror societal cultural and leadership practices specifically in bicultural societies. The significant differences on cultural dimensions were on; Performance orientation, Assertiveness, Future orientation, Institutional collectivism, In-group collectivism and Uncertainty avoidance. Delta Corporation sub-sample scored higher on the six cultural dimensions than the Zimbabwean society sub-sample. On leadership practices, the Delta Corporation sub-sample scored higher than the Zimbabwean society sub-sample on; Charismatic/Value based leadership, participative leadership, Humane oriented leadership and team-based leadership but scored lower on Autonomous leadership and Self-protective leadership. The results imply that Delta Corporation is inclined to the open leadership systems than the Zimbabwean society. The sample results also showed there were no differences on cultural and leadership values between the Zimbabwean society and Delta Corporation. This signifies convergence of values between the Zimbabwean society and Delta Corporation. The study recommends that Delta Corporation embrace African culture and incorporates some aspects of African culture like *Ubuntu* leadership philosophy which promotes participative leadership. Delta Corporation should take advantage of the strong African family unit as basis for building high performing teams and that will mould the desired leadership for the business.