MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Names and student numbers: Tilak Raj Bhatta - 53425, Sorin C. Buruiana – 56342, Mehedi Hasan - 48284, Jacob M. Løwe - 46787

Supervisor: Boel Jørgensen

Master's in Economics and Business Administration
ABSTRACT
Through this paper we plan to do a qualitative research on the issue of the management process, which is influenced by the cross-cultural diversity in two international non-governmental organisations (NGOs). To fulfil the demands of globalisation, international NGOs are bound to work with highly diversified groups. To get a better understanding of the organisational culture we have used Schein and Schultz’s theory concept of organisation culture. Then we have used Trompenaar’s ‘cross-cultural dimensions’ to make an inclusive multinational study of the cross-cultural diversity in the workplace. As it is shown in our study, the cultural diversity is viewed mostly in an affirmative way and succeeded to achieve interaction within the NGOs.
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Area
Nowadays, organisational culture has become a significant factor not only in the business organisations but also in the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) as organisational culture frames actions and behaviours of individual members of the organisation by sharing norms values, belief and view. This research project puts forward an empirical study on organisational culture that will seek for a better understanding about the impact of diversified culture on management of NGO. To disclose the relation between the management of the organisation and organisation culture, it is necessary to explain the external and internal factors that develop or change culture in the organisation.

As business and industry are becoming internationalized, it is hard for organisations to operate their business within one national boundary. There are several reasons why organisations are becoming international. One of the reasons could be to reduce the company’s risk by diversifying their sources and markets, or to minimize the threats from rivals (Phillips, 1992: 1). International expansion also provides new and potentially more profitable markets, increases the competitiveness of the firm and facilitates access to new product ideas, innovation and the latest technology. However, the firm have to prepare in advance if it wants to go into a foreign market (Hollensen, 2007: 5).

Internalization has made it mandatory to have additional skills for those who participate in cross-cultural activities. They have to deal with actions and attitudes of individuals and organisations operating in different context from their own. One of the important issues for managers in international organisations is the problem of integrating employees from several cultures. When the employees from various cultures work together, the problem of overcoming value and behavioural differences arises. Increased global complexity has made it necessary for managers to acquire new sets of skills to process information from a global network (Cray & Mallory, 1998: 2-7).

The term 'culture' is highly ambiguous as there is no single generally accepted definition of culture. Culture is defined in terms of cross-cultural management in business schools.
According to Alder and Gundersen (2008) as cited in Danowitz et al., (2012), culture is “something shared by all, or almost all, members of a given social group which older members of a group pass on to younger members that shapes behaviour, or structures one’s perception of the world, as in case of morals, laws and customs” (Danowitz et al., 2012: 97).

Culture allows people to share similarities and agreements on some matters but it also relies on differences. Culture needs to accommodate disagreements without making a particular identity, meaning that it places diversity among humans within a common framework of belonging that is expressed through a multitude of artefacts and symbols (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013: 159).

The effects of culture on management functions could be noticed when people try to impose their own values and systems on another cultural group. Deresky (2011) believes that international managers should first understand their own culture in order to avoid judging other’s culture based solely on their own cultural perspective or believing that their culture is superior. In her opinion, managers should understand cultural diversity and learn how to build constructive working relationship in cross-cultural environment. She continues, saying that managers should never expect to successfully transplant one country’s styles, practices, expectations and processes in another country. Instead, they should learn to adapt to local environment and people and manage accordingly, not only in culture, but also in business practices (Deresky, 2011: 107-109).

Due to increasingly diverse and globalized nations, diversity related issues pose great challenges to business managers, non-profit and government officials and academic administrators worldwide (Chen, 2011: 11). Broadly speaking, researchers such as Hofstede (1980), Aiken and Bacharach (1979), and Trompenaar’s (1992) have reported differences among continents and countries based on certain key dimensions. However, at a less broad level there is culture inside organisation which is reflected by what is valued, the dominant leadership styles, the language and symbols, the procedures and routines, and the definitions of success that make an organisation unique. Sub-units of an organisation such as functional departments, product groups, hierarchical levels and the teams have their own unique cultures. Cultural clashes among such sub-units occur due to
difficulties in coordinating and integrating processes and organisational activities (Cameron & Quinn, 2006: 17-18).

In modern world, only few organisations can remain untouched by cross-cultural considerations. The growing literature on NGO management rarely mentions 'culture' despite the fact that the main business of NGOs involve working across cultures. Cross-cultural management theory and approaches could be considered as central to NGO management as NGOs claim that their 'comparative advantage' lies in the local responsiveness, social focus and cultural sensitivity to people’s needs and the appropriateness of interventions. 'Management' is not universal and NGO managers cannot just have a technique or principle from the textbook which could be used as a 'quick fix' everywhere. Therefore, it is important for managers to understand the different management system and style within that culture (Jackson, 2003: 4-6).

'Western’ management (American, French Scandinavian, etc.) have different approaches to manage people and the organisation as they have instrumental view of people in organisations as a means to an end. They view human beings as a 'resource'. Whereas 'non-Western’ management have more humanistic view meaning that they often see people as an end in themselves. The overall operating context of NGO management ‘have to balance the needs of local communities, with complex financial and operational considerations, and the demands of government and aid donors and …face the challenge of working with some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in the world today in a range of projects (Jackson 2009:16).’ NGO managers should be mindful of the appropriateness of leadership style and methods, and have to be aware of cultural embeddedness of leadership and management styles that have impacts for management and staff motivation amongst other aspects (Jackson, 2009: 4&17).

In our project, we are focusing on impact of cultural diversity on management and its effects on organisational culture in NGO sector. We would also like to investigate the positive and negative impacts of cultural diversity on management and employee performance. This leads us to the following problem formulation and sub-questions.
1.2 Problem Formulation:
What is the impact of cultural diversity on management and how does it affect organisational culture?

1.2.1 Sub-Questions
1. Which cultural factors have contributions in developing organisational culture?
2. What impact does the cultural diversity have on the NGO employee's performance?
3. How can managers effectively manage the influences of cultural diversity in a non-governmental organisation?

1.3 Motivation
In this project we decided to take a theoretical approach mainly, whilst using NGOs as case backup information through interviews and questionnaires we have made with them. Our interest in the theoretical approach lies mainly due to our interest in seeing research that has been conducted in this area and how theorists has made conclusions of how the theories focus points have had influence on organisations. Then also which recommendations there has been made to utilize this theoretical research optimally. Then after having looking at the theories as our main focus, we use our case research of NGOs to see how applicable it really is and to which degree it actually has been used in NGOs.

In the last two decades non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have grown in both size and influence and have increased their profile on a local, national, and international level. NGOs have grown to such significance that they have become widely recognized and known as important actors on the international scene. “NGOs tend to be best known for undertaking one or other of these two main forms of activity: the delivery of basic services to people in need, and organizing policy advocacy and public campaigns for change.” (Lewis & Kanji, 2009: 17) Whilst NGOs have been increasing their profile on the international scene, they have also increased their activity and influences within specialized roles such as information provision, research, policy analysis, environmental activism, human rights work, cultural preservation, conflict resolution, democracy building, and emergency response.
NGOs have taken on board more and more functions that were considered in the past as belonging exclusively to business firms. Because they are dealing with an increased diversity of activities, they have also acquired a highly developed expertise. In many occasions, inter-governmental organisations such as the United Nations are asking for support from given NGOs, due to their quick-reaction capacity and lower bureaucracy or procedures for mobilising resources.

A more recent development in the framework of responsibility and ethics for business led to the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), where businesses are seen as fulfilling more roles than just of profit generation. They are called upon in taking a more active role in relation to society and communities. But often the businesses don't have the capacity or the expertise in creating CSR programmes, so they create strong links with NGOs. Therefore we can conclude that NGOs came to deliver, at given times, services to or on behalf of businesses.

As international businesses, the international NGOs have similar challenges when they are engaging with diverse cultures. And the competence of dealing with intercultural issues and multicultural staff is, in our opinion, similar for a manager from a company and for a manager from an NGO.

We are particularly interested in looking at NGOs in relation to the international perspectives they bring to the current globalised world. Often, the wages in the NGO sector are significantly lower than in the commercial sector, and this could mean that NGO managers need to have a more diverse range of motivational benefits for their employees, then the salary package and other financial rewards. This makes an international NGO case a highly interesting one, and it is one of the reasons why we have taken a deliberate choice of taking our curiosity, research motivation and reflections into the NGO sector.

1.4 Delimitations
First when making our decisions in which area we specifically wanted to direct our focus, we immediately had a common understanding that are interests lay within the culture in an organisation and in which ways cultural diversity plays a role in this. We also have been
very interested in the manner in which management deals with the issues of cultural diversity and in which ways it influences the culture of an organisation. We have all though been very clear that in this project we wanted to disregard and not focus on economics and marketing aspects of an organisation and of cultural diversity.

Then when taking these decisions and considerations into account, we also confirmed with ourselves that are main interest was the influences of cultural diversity and the ways it is dealt within an organisation only on the internal levels and we were not focused at looking at the external effects.

In order to narrow our focus so that we were not looking at the entire world of organisations, but so instead we could be specific and provide a large number of examples to back up our theoretical knowledge. We decided to focus on NGOs, we made this decision not only due to trying to narrow our focus, but also because NGOs are an interesting type organisation, due to them growing in size and influence across a broad spectrum of scenes. The fact that they have increased in number and developed to an increasing degree operating on the international scene, fit very well with our main interest of cultural diversity. This meant it would provide us with ample opportunities to illustrate the influence of cultural diversity.

Thus with our focus becoming centralized around cultural diversity and NGOs, we decided the best way to funnelling our projects focus and providing the clearest picture. We decided to focus international NGOs thereby highlighting the various aspects of cultural diversity, the manner in which cultural diversity influences, and how management in turn is influenced by it and deals with it.
2. METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATION

In order to draw an empiric-based conclusion on the managers, employees and other internal and external factors within the context of cultural diversity and organisational culture, it is indispensable to discourse some methodological approach of this empirical research.

Methodology will start by introducing the philosophical stand in this project and discuss the relevance of choosing this stand in this project by explaining the ontological premises and epistemology. As we are doing an empirical research, we discuss the ways of collecting our data for the analysis.

Furthermore, in this section, we will also discuss the application of the two-research method that is qualitative and quantitative research technique and method. For collecting the qualitative data we will use interview technique and for the quantitative data we will use the questionnaire technique. We will also discuss the validity and reliability of the research technique that we are going to use in this project. We will also introduce our project field for collecting our data for answering problem formulation in this research.

2.1 Philosophy of science and Methodology

2.1.1 Research philosophy
In this section we will introduce our research philosophy in the project. We believe that the research philosophy depends on how the knowledge has been developed and the nature of the knowledge. The research philosophy covers the understanding of the way one sees the world. This understanding will play an important role when we choose our research strategy and methods. To adopt a philosophical position in our research, we have been influenced by the relationship between knowledge and process of developing this. In the first part of the chapter we will refer to two aspects of the research philosophy, namely the epistemology and ontology. We believe both have specific importance, which will help us to define the nature of our knowledge and how it was developed.
Critical realism:

Ontology:
“Ontology is concerned with nature of reality” (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2008:120) which refers to the assumption of how the world operates and the commitment held to the particular observations.

According to Sayer, “The world exists independently of our knowledge of it. There is necessity in the world; objects—whether natural or social—necessarily have particular powers or ways of acting and particular susceptibilities” (Eston, 2009:120). He also believes that not only the event but also it is object and structure of the event is differentiated and stratifies the world and these also have powers to generate a new event.

Thus, Critical realists view is useful when the researcher need a very deep explanation and identification of causally efficient mechanisms of the social world. Because “these mechanisms are seen as at least relatively enduring, and as such are given far more explanatory weight than within a constructionist ontology and epistemology” (Reed, 2001 as cited in Wikgren, 2004: 13). We believe that mechanism of developing the new organisational culture is depending on the continuous change of the production of the meaningful experience (Elster, 1998:45).

According to Bhaskar (1989), to understand the social world we have to identify the structure of the social world at work which makes events and discourses for the natural world. Our intention of using critical realism is to get a easier way to “focus on social reality as consisting of social structures that exist independently of the various ways in which they can be discursively constructed and interpreted by social scientists and other social actors located in a wide range of socio-historical situations” (Reed, 2001 as cited in Wikgren, 2004: 14).

Epistemology:
Critical realism is the epistemological stance of our project as we seek to understand the reality behind the cultural diversity, it’s impact on management and on organisational culture. Critical realism helps to understand the deeper mechanisms that are made to create an empirical phenomenon. The founder of critical realism, Bhaskar, says there are
three domains in critical realism namely; the empirical, the actual and the real. The empirical domain consists of things that are observable by humans and things that occur and exist with human experience. The actual domain consists of things that are observed or recorded by the researcher. The last domain is real domain that comprises productive mechanisms of ‘different events and other surface phenomena’. Critical realism basically seeks to examine and identify relationships and non-relationships to find out differences between human experiences, the actual events and the mechanisms behind the events (Alvesson and Kaj 2009: 40). Based on the critical realism epistemology, we aim to investigate the mechanisms behind cultural diversity that affects management and organisational culture.

2.2 Introduction of organisations

Global Platforms and ActionAid International
Global platforms are promoting themselves as a worldwide network of training hubs for empowerment and activism. On their official webpage, it is mentioned that they are providing trainings and capacity building for organisations and young individuals who wish to take positive action in their societies, by providing them with knowledge, skills and attitudes as active global citizens.

The global dimension of these platforms is coming from their presence in Central America (El Salvador), Africa (Ghana and Kenya - Nairobi and Mount Kenya), Middle East (Palestine and Jordan), Asia (Nepal and Myanmar), and Europe (Denmark).

The main service that the platforms are offering is training courses, the staff being “specialists in using participatory methods as tools to empower people to realise their potentials as positive social change makers” (official webpage). The trainings are within topics such as: Governance, Human Rights, Global Citizenship, Campaign management, Youth Mobilizing, Volunteering, Communication and New Media Tools, Participatory techniques, Project planning and others.

The Global Platforms aim to be a catalyst for social and political empowerment, by inspiring young people to realise their ability to positively change their lives and those of
the people in their communities. The trainings are especially designed for youth activists and leaders engaged in social movements and civil society organisations - but everybody can participate. At the Global Platforms people live and learn together with other people from a diverse range of backgrounds.

The core strategic partner for the Global Platforms is ActionAid International and many of the national ActionAid country offices. ActionAid is an international non-governmental organisation (INGO), working with over 15 million people in 45 countries (in Africa, Americas, Asia, Australia and Europe) for a world free from poverty and injustice. They help people fight for the rights that they are denied. Some of the examples mentioned on the official webpage are “simple things”, like the right to eat, the right to stay on their land, to education, to have a say in the decisions that shape their lives. The organisation is particularly involved within women’s rights, emergencies and conflicts, climate change, HIV and AIDS, and they help communities take action together to hold their governments to account, and to give local organisations support where they need it.

The Global Platform concept was developed and initiated in 2008 by ActionAid Denmark’s training unit. The Global Platforms are a natural extension of ActionAid Denmark’s strong experience with experiential and participatory learning techniques that have evolved from the Danish ‘Højskole’ system and ActionAid Denmark’s focus on empowerment and social change in high, middle and low income countries.

Since the first Global Platforms were established in Tanzania and Denmark in 2009, ActionAid Denmark has had a main support function for developing, monitoring and expanding the Global Platforms around the world.

In addition the Global Platforms provide trainings for the People for Change exchange programme, a capacity building exchange programme of ActionAid Denmark.

**Global Platform Ghana** promotes itself as a provider of innovative trainings and capacity development for organisations, youth groups and young individuals who wish to take positive action in their societies. This is done by providing youth with knowledge, skills and attitude to be active global citizens with the ability to reduce social and economic inequality in the world. The organisation was launched in December 2013 and the trainers are
facilitated by young trainers, specialised in participatory trainings “that are guaranteed to challenge and inspire”. Their approach is based on 6 key principles, which are generally used by all the Global Platforms: participatory training, political empowerment, learning by doing, public action learning, innovation, creativity and social imagination, relevant and applicable knowledge.

The organisation has currently a staff of 4 trainers, one training quality coordinator, one administrative and logistics officer, one caretaker and one manager (See Appendix 10).

Global Platform Myanmar is ActionAid’s national training hub for empowerment and governance. Their description on the official website is similar to the one in Ghana, having the same vision, objectives and training principles (http://www.globalplatforms.org/myanmar). The difference is that the platform is strongly connected to ActionAid, and in fact has no legal status and any service they are providing and any official issues are dealt with under the patronage of ActionAid Myanmar. The Global Platform coordinator is reporting directly to the country manager of ActionAid Myanmar. It is important to stress that this legal status is not something one would see on the website or in public relations materials, but it was revealed to us by one of the interviewees - Marie Ditlevsen (Appendix 4, 7:12).

The organisation was started in August 2011 and has currently 17 staff members (see Appendix 10).

2.3 Research methods and design
In the context of our research project, we have considered an approach consisting of a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

2.3.1 Sampling
We started the research path with the intention of finding an international organisation active on another continent, which has cultural diversity within their staff. Our efforts in contacting organisations led us to ActionAid and their Global Platforms (active on several continents). We intended to gather empirical evidences that would be used against the theories that we have identified. We have chosen two Global Platforms, one from Ghana
and one from Myanmar, with a clear intention of analysing the situation in two different countries and continents, but within a similar organisation, with shared mission, values, structures and principles. We also intended to reach out to different cultures through our research methods, in order to gather perspectives from people having diverse cultural understandings. As our paper is dealing with cross-cultural management, we also decided to reach out to people at different levels in the organisation, and the starting point was to contact people from top and middle management and employees from the bottom organisational level.

2.3.2 Qualitative Methods

The qualitative methods used are:

- Interview
- Questionnaire (ours is both quantitative and qualitative)

Interviews are one of the main methods we are employing to get a deeper understanding of the organisational processes. “If you want to know how people understand their world and their life, why not talk to them?” (Kvale quoted in King and Horrocks 2010: 7). We have invited in this regard Danish and local management and employees. Therefore, from several types of interviews we have chosen the detailed interview, talking with several people at different organisational levels. We have conceived different approaches to the questions for each level, which would lead us to the relevant outcomes. The skill of asking the right questions is highly important, and knowledge production in interview research comes closer to a craft than to a process that follows prescribed rules (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009: 21).

The researcher must be prepared for engaging the interviewee by asking questions that will shed light on particular subjects, as well as be able to direct the interview by framing questions in a manner to imitate the natural flow of a conversation (Bryman, 2008:196).

There are 3 types of interviews: unstructured, semi-structured and structured. We see the semi-structured interview as the best fit for our purpose. This allowed us, on one side, to prepare a list of questions that could guide the discussion and, on the other side, to have the flexibility to ask follow-up questions or new questions. In the conception of the
interview questions, we took a starting point in the research questions which we have formulated next to the problem formulation.

The strengths of the interview method are that it is aimed at what is relevant, it could provide better insights in contexts as respondents experience them. There are a series of weaknesses we need to take into account when using the interview (Faculty of Education, University of Plymouth, 2006). The quality of the answer depends on how articulate the respondent is. It is seriously flawed if the respondents have poor memory and will offer answers that don’t represent facts as they happened. Another weakness to be considered is the reflexivity, meaning that the interviewee gives the answers the way the interviewer wants. This is due to the “power” of the interviewer to ask the question in a way that would influence the direction that the answer is going towards. A potential weakness could be the lack of experience of the interviewer, as the outcome depends on the skills on methodological options and a well-developed understanding of the conceptual issues of producing knowledge through conversation (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009:16).

In the conception of the interview, we have mostly followed the seven stages described by Kvale and Brinkmann: thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting (Idem: 97). As we have interviewed people who are in different places in the world (Ghana, Myanmar and Denmark), we decided to identify one single method for interviewing all of them. We wanted to eliminate the possible influence on the relation with the interviewees through different environments where the discussion would take place. Our final choice was Skype, as one of the most popular software, which didn’t require our counterparts to install new programmes and dedicate more time than it is necessary. As the interviews were taken online, we have in fact recorded them with specialised software called G-Recorder-Pro, which was designed for Skype users. The recording software is not a freeware, but there is a trial version which we could use for our purpose, without having to pay its cost. Taking this into account, the step described by Kvale and Brinkmann as transcribing was replaced in our approach with recording. These recordings could be found in the Appendices in the form of audio files.

We believe that Skype was the best choice, the alternative being too costly, either by travelling to the different countries or by paying for the software for online conference and
recording. Our choice did not exclude challenges, as technical problems occurred. At times the connection was dropped or the sound quality was poor due to weak internet signal. With one of our interviewees from Myanmar, we had to stop the conversation and postpone it for the next day. With two of them the connection was lost in the middle of the conversation, and we had to stop the recording, which resulted in 2 different audio files for the same interview. Sometimes we had to repeat the questions several times, for the person to fully understand despite the connection problems. The recordings were therefore affected as well, and we had to listen for repeated times in order to get the clear understanding.

The interviewees had different reactions and styles in answering our questions. Some seemed to be very straightforward while others were at times going away from the question and replying with less relevant information or with meta-level reflections, when we expected an answer coming from personal experience within the organisation. We will address our understanding of how the interviewees answered depending on their cultural background in the chapter ‘Discussion’. We have tried to formulate follow-up questions to bring the discussion back to tracks or to help the interviewee understand exactly what we meant by that question.

During the Skype interviews, one person took the interviewer role, while the other team members took notes of what is being discussed, so the information could already be structured and easier to use in the analysis process. We did the coding of interviews in the form of writing keywords and phrases from each of the interviews so that it would be easier to find the relevant data at later stage of analysis. To see how we did the coding of interviews please see the Appendix 11.

These questions, both in the interviews and questionnaires, stemmed out from the theories we’ve used in the project, and were carefully designed to reveal the empirical data that is linked to the above-mentioned theories.

While hearing the answers during the interviews, the team members clustered the information in predefined categories, such as structures and mechanisms in organisations. The team members could also suggest extra questions for the interviewer to follow-up on
the structured ones, during the interview, using an online software called Google docs, where several multiple could edit online at the same time. The interviewer had divided the screen in order to have the online document visible at all times, to be able to read the predefined questions, edit his own reflections and conclusions and visualise the suggestions from the other team members.

Information about the interviews realised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Interview length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Normand Andersen</td>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>Global Platform Ghana</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>13.05.2015</td>
<td>59:44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Hanegard</td>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>Global Platform Ghana</td>
<td>Training Quality Coordinator</td>
<td>13.05.2015</td>
<td>59:53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alisa Afusah Mogre</td>
<td>Ghanaian</td>
<td>Global Platform Ghana</td>
<td>Trainer</td>
<td>18.05.2015</td>
<td>a 30:31 b 25:20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Ditlevsen</td>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>Global Platform and ActionAid</td>
<td>Consultant, Strategic Partnership Development</td>
<td>20.05.2015</td>
<td>1:01:50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annie Julia Raavad</td>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>ActionAid Myanmar</td>
<td>Advisor (Youth Monitoring and Evaluation)</td>
<td>20.05.2015</td>
<td>a 10:06 b 23:47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Global Platform Myanmar</td>
<td>Trainer</td>
<td>20.05.2015</td>
<td>55:23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The questionnaire was used in our research as a quantitative and qualitative tool. We shall insist first on the qualitative aspect. As a qualitative tool, our questionnaire had open questions that require a detailed answer. Some of the questions were similar to the ones
we have conceived for the semi-structured interview. The questionnaire had the purpose of reaching out to more employees, especially the ones from the lower levels of the organisations. The findings were then compared with the ones from the interviews, with the intention of strengthening positions or challenging them. This could also help in detecting different positions between management and staff. Such findings could be very practical, as suggestions could be made to management, in order to understand better the diversity in their organisation, identify better approaches or simply have a starting point for manager’s reflection.

More information about the conception of the interview will be given in the section below, which is referring to the questionnaire as a quantitative method.

2.3.3 Quantitative method
The first quantitative method part of our research is the questionnaire. We should remind the reader that our questionnaire is fulfilling a double role, quantitative and qualitative, as the questions are structured consequently. This method is effective to generate and process larger amount of data. To get meaningful results, the questionnaire should be adapted to the group of respondents and should be in a format easy to use for the respondents. In some cases it is better to use an online questionnaire, while in other cases the printed document is a more appropriate option. In our case, it was convenient for our target group to complete an online form. The questionnaire was intended to be applied to a sample of 20-30 employees, in order to generate more data that will be used in conjunction of the results from the other methods. In the end, we have received answers from 12 respondents, which is a relevant sample number representing 50% of our target group, considering that the Global Platform Ghana has 7 employees and the Global Platform Myanmar has 17 employees (see Appendix 10).

There are several strengths, starting with the fact that it is very practical as it could gather large amounts of data from large amounts of people. Researcher or other people could carry it out with limited influence on its validity. It is easy to compare with other results generated.
The weaknesses should be taken into consideration as well, as it is inadequate to understand certain forms of answers, such as emotions or particular behaviours. It is difficult to say how truthful the respondent is and different people may interpret differently the same question.

The quantitative part of our questionnaire had 3 questions, which asked the respondents to rate their answer on a scale from 1 to 6. We have chosen to use this kind of scale in order to avoid a ‘middle’, which could be seen as a neutral ‘territory’ for people who are rather undecided about where should their opinion be placed between positive and negative.

The second quantitative method that was used in our research is Case Archives. This method is useful to provide a current overview and historical documentation to the case. In our context, we would look for the evidences of organisational development throughout the years, with a focus on the presence of Danish managers, the shift in numbers and percentage of staff between Danish and locals, the employment history and the longevity in the post and organisation. These evidences could provide relevant information in terms of the persons who could be chosen for the interview, what data could be used for the purpose.

The strength of this method is that it could provide precise and quantitative information. A potential threat is that the access could be limited by consideration of protection of private life.

We will undertake an analysis of the results from our research methods based on several theories. The organisational culture theory we will use as supporting theory laying the foundation for our core theory cultural diversity in this paper, and within our core theory multicultural dimensions and cross-cultural management will receive the central focus. We will look at the results through lenses of the three aspects of organisational culture defined by Trompenaar in 1997:

1. The general relationship between employees and their organisation;
2. The vertical or hierarchical system of authority defining superiors and subordinates;
3. The general views of employees about the organisation’s destiny, purpose and goals and their place in it
(Trompenaar 1997 quoted in Mead, 2005: 138-139)

We will seek to understand the link between our results and Trompenaar’s cross-cultural dimensions theory and his cultural diversity theory, but also comparing the results with Schein and Schultz organisational culture theory, through the analysis.

2.4 Validity and reliability
In this sub-chapter we want to reflect on some of the quality criteria of our research project.
First aspect we are looking at is the validity of the project. Validity reflects the breadth of a concept or set of data. We aim at ensuring that the data is good enough given the context and that it covers the phenomenon that the group decided to examine (Olsen & Pedersen, 2008: 195).

The first form of validity we are looking upon is regarding the technical validity, for which we have used more than one source for documentation (Yin 1994 quoted in Olsen and Pedersen, 2008: 196), namely the interview, questionnaire (quantitative and qualitative) and case archives. We have also run a pilot phase of the questionnaire, by asking two persons to go through the form and share their feedback with us. One person is a representative of the Global Platform Ghana - Solomon - who was also an interviewee. The intention was to make to test the questionnaire with somebody with is part of the process. We asked again for his feedback once the entire collection of data was completed. The second person was a representative from Global Platform Kenya - Moses Munene M’Kuciana - to be involved in the pilot phase as well, by completing the questionnaire and sharing reflections with us. By involving him, we aimed at getting input from a person who is familiar with the activity type of the organisations that will provide the data, who knows these organisations, their strengths and challenges, and who could have an emotional distance to the final outcomes of our research project.
The process described in the paragraph above could be also understood as triangulation. The triangulation was done through two different methods - of methods and of persons - in order to collect and analyse the data from different sources, different methods and ensuring a diversity of perspectives. We have mentioned already the use of different data collection methods, and we should highlight the triangulation of persons. This was done through inviting for interview employees at different authority and hierarchical levels.

We have asked the managers of each platform to provide us with information regarding all the employees, such as name, position, nationality or ethnicity, and the length or their employment. This way we created a good overview of who we have to reach out to, in order to gather the empirical evidence. In other words, we used the case archives to ensure that the research is sampled in the most effective way.

We have approached for interviews representatives of each category of the relevant sample, e.g. top and middle management and staff from the bottom of the hierarchy. We didn’t get an interview with the top manager of the Global Platform in Myanmar, as a new one just started at the moment of the interviews. We didn’t consider that the new person would have strong enough insights into the organisational culture, as he relocated from Australia. We have contacted the previous top manager, and even confirmed an interview time, but the day of the interview she had to cancel and we didn’t manage to find an alternative in due time. We have asked her to complete the questionnaire as well. Nevertheless, we have interviews with 2 middle managers, of which one has performed an informal interim top manager role while the organisation was awaiting the newly appointed manager.

The questionnaire was created with the intention of gathering more input from more people, especially from the bottom of the hierarchy that would allow us to compare the findings. Having 3 research methods applied to over 50% of the staff, we are strengthening the validity of our project.

The second form of validity is internal validity, which was analysed through:
- model comparison between theoretically predicted and observed connections, in other words that the theory and empirical data can support each other
In the analysis chapter, we have started with specific findings coming out of the theories we have chosen, followed by findings from the empirical data. The purpose is to underline how the data is backing-up the theoretical findings or how it could challenge these findings. Additionally, we wanted to understand how the questionnaire results are supplementing the outcomes of the interview, reflecting on the relation between input from the management level and input from the lower hierarchical level. This approach would serve in detecting eventual contradictions or would strengthen the arguments.

The third form of validity we are bringing for supporting our research is the statistical validity, which comes from the size of the selection and the possible causal relationship (Yin, Ibid.). It was already mentioned above that we have collected data from more than 50% of the target group and from several hierarchical level, which are offering the consistent base for highlighting the causal relationships.

As the fourth validity criteria, we consider that the research has external validity because our findings are not biased and are applicable in a wider sense to the analysed organisations at large.

When referring to the reliability of our research, the data collection process was described step by step, with sufficient details, so they same path could be repeated by other researchers or scholars. We have tried to stress any important choices, incidents and steps that were carried out. We have built a complete database that is accessible to any interested person, containing information that was used for the analysis, both reported and unreported data (Olsen and Pedersen, 2008: 196-197). The database is composed of information regarding the names, positions, nationality or ethnicity and the employment length for the entire staff of the two Global Platforms from Ghana and Myanmar. This information, which could be considered as ethnographic data, was attached as Appendix 10.
2.5 Strategy for analysis

Our strategy for analysis follows a rather deductive approach, theory driven, which is supplemented at times with a deductive approach, findings-driven. Our intention was to back-up the theoretical analysis with the findings from the interviews and questionnaires and to highlight eventual contradictions between theory and empirical data.

During the Skype interviews, one person took the interviewer role, while the other team members took notes of what is being discussed, so the information could already be structured and easier to use in the analysis process. These questions, both in the interviews and questionnaires, stemmed out from the theories we’ve used in the project, and were carefully designed to reveal the empirical data that is linked to the above-mentioned theories.

In the analysis of the interview, we have mostly followed the seven stages described by Kvale and Brinkmann and adapted to our context: thematizing, designing, interviewing, recording, analysing, verifying and reporting (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009:97).

One extra step should be mentioned here, that came between the recording and the analysis, which is familiarisation with the data, which could enable some firsts thoughts to emerge and help the researcher to become aware of interesting points (Altinay and Paraskevas 2010: 169-170). Each member of our team has in fact listen to the recordings of the interviews several times, making notes and sharing personal reflections with the other team mates. This way, we made sure that the analysis is going through several brain filters and that the knowledge is shared between team members, ensuring at the same time a continuous learning flow.

Having previously completed an analysis of the selected theories, we had already a list of theoretical findings that we wanted to understand how are backed-up by the empirical data collected. Therefore, to describe in an over-simplified way the process for analysis, we have put the empirical data against the theoretical findings. Each subsection of the analysis refers to a specific outcome of our theoretical analysis, and how the empirical evidence supports or challenges these outcomes. We have
referred, whenever relevant, to the findings from two research tools, the interviews and the analysis.

The diagram above illustrates our thoughts in the manner in which we intend to describe how the different concepts influence each other, but also in which way they would influence each other in an organisation and how it will shape the NGO culture. The top of diagram illustrates the necessity for understanding what an organisation actually is and what a NGO is about. Then through the diagram we show the necessity for the understanding of organisational culture and the factors that play a role in the influence it has. We also show how this is a basis for understanding the following concepts and the connections with each other. The diagram shows how there are two perspectives of organisational culture that is vital to be aware of, in order to get the complete picture of organisational cultures role. At the centre of the diagram is placed the cultural diversity concept, where we illustrate that this concept influences the other concepts in the diagram, in the sense that they are constantly confronted by this issue and influences the culture of an organisation and the management decisions not only in how to deal with it, but
throughout the entire organisation. Finally at the bottom of the diagram is cross-cultural management concept, which is the result of organisational culture and the influence of cultural diversity. Its function is to tackle the issues that arise from the influence of these concepts, through management. Although as the diagram illustrates and our project describes it is not where the issue is solved, in fact it is cycle that is constant, cross-cultural management influences organisational culture in turn, thus starting the process over.
3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Organisational Understanding and the concept of culture

Understanding an organisation:
There is a large variation of various types of organisations, and it is not as simple to categorize organisations into categories of which are best and worst, since they are all very different from each other in a number of ways. When looking at organisations, at what type they are and how successful they are it is vital to look at how well they are geared towards accomplishing their tasks and reaching their goals as easily, quickly, and inexpensively as possible. “Issues of power and formality, debates about the best type of organisation for public or private sector and whether the organisation has centralised or decentralised structure and, therefore power base, are all key to deciding what kind of organisation we work for or are acquainted with.” (Greener, 2010: 7)

According to Mintzberg when attempting to understand organisations it is vital to know that each organisation is comprised of 5 main sections:

1. The operating core - The function of this section is the section that actually does the work or in other words does the labour. In other words it is the people in a company/organisation that make the products or provide the services.

2. The middle line - This is the middle of an organisation and this section is the part of a company/organisation where managers dwell. Whenever an organisation grows and expands, then it becomes increasingly difficult for managers to oversee everything that is taking place and therefore usually their hired more managers to share the load. This results in the management roles being divided into middle manager and junior managers under senior managers.

3. Technostructure - “this is not a term with which everyone agrees but Mintzberg used it to refer to the people who decide how best to do the jobs. Sometimes this involves technology and sometimes it involves deciding how work processes are defined, standardized, and refined for further improvements.” (Greener, 2010: 8)
4. Support staff - The role of this section is to be of assistance for the operating core, making the operating core do their job efficiently and if possible its role is also to make the operating core do a better job.

5. The apex - This this section entails the top part of an organisation, in the sense that it involves the people who decide what is going to be done, when, and how. “This can be a single manager - who might be a owner - or it can be a series of board of directors and committees of heads of departments in more complex organisations. However it is structured it provides the strategic direction for an organisation - in other words where it wants to go and how it is going to get there.”

(Greener, 2010: 8)

Understanding a NGO:
In the last two decades NGOs have grown in both size and influence and have increased their profile on a local, national, and international level. NGOs have grown to such significance that they have become widely recognized and known as important actors on the international scene. “NGOs tend to be best known for undertaking one or other of these two main forms of activity: the delivery of basic services to people in need, and organizing policy advocacy and public campaigns for change.” (Lewis & Kanji, 2009: 17)

Whilst NGOs have been increasing their profile on the international scene, they have also increased their activity and influences within specialized roles such as information provision, research, policy analysis, environmental activism, human rights work, cultural preservation, conflict resolution, democracy building, and emergency response. NGO’s are very diverse and come in all sorts of sizes and very different focuses and vary widely in how they receive or acquire their funding. Basically NGOs come in small or in large size, formal or informal, flexible or bureaucratic, they come as extremely well funded or hanging on to existence each year by surviving on donations, and they come as being a very professional organized organisation or to be a gathering of volunteer staff.

NGOs can be classified into various types of groups; they can be national developing country organisations, international NGOs, self-help organisations, or local grassroots membership organisations. “NGO is often used interchangeably with “voluntary”, “non-profit”, “civil society”, and “community based” organisation, each of which has distinctive
cultural and ideological roots.” (Lewis, 2014: 293-294) It can be rather a difficult challenge to give an accurate description of what exactly an NGO is, since they differ a lot and have very different legal focuses and ways of funding themselves. There are although five focus points that are shared by all NGOs: first an NGO must be formal, which entails being institutionalized with meetings regularly; secondly it is vital that it is private organisation in the sense that it is institutionally separate from the government, this does although not mean it cannot receive funds from a government; thirdly the organisation must be non-profit distributing; fourthly an NGO must manage its own affairs and be self-governing; and finally it is important that an NGO is a voluntary organisation.

3.2 Organisational Culture

3.2.1 Schein’s concept of organisational culture

We have chosen to use Schein's theory about the concept of culture as well as follow many of his instructions for analysis. Schein’s opinion, culture arises through dynamic processes in the organisation or/and between people or employees in the organisation who are together. Culture is created through the mutual contact that we have with each other, mostly based on the intercommunication. this theory would be useful to explain the formation of the culture of ours selected NGO’s.

According to Schein, it is important:

“To achieve a fundamental understanding, what is going on in organisations, how to control them and how to improve them?” (Schein, 2004: 39)

Schein believes that culture creates leaders, and the leaders do not have this consciousness that it will be the culture that leads them. This is exactly why the cultural understanding is so analytically important for leaders. To understand the cultural conditions of the group at work or/and in the organisation is to gain insight into what important tasks is for me as a manager;

“Organisational culture is created in part by the leaders and one of the most important management tasks is to create, manage and sometimes even break down culture (Schein, 2004: 13)”.

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Schein highlights the cultural influence function as central to the concept of leadership (Schein, 2004: 10). Management has the central role in the creation, maintenance and changes in an organisation’s culture. The culture is described here as something that the organisation has, as a variable that can be shaped and modified for specific purposes. Schein believe that the formation of the culture developed in parallel with the process of creating groups. This takes place in the context of the organisation seeking external adaptation and internal integration. Here, external adjustment is needed to survive and adapt to the external environment and to ensure a common understanding of the world and survival. Internal integration is needed to integrate its internal processes to ensure that the group can survive as a group to ensure the system's survival, its self-education or continuing identity. (Schein, 2004: 11-12)

To present Schein's theory we start with his definition of culture:
“A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned, while it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore learned to new team members as the correct way to perceive, thinking and feeling in relation to these problems” (Schein, 2004: 20)

This definition of Schein about culture assists us to see four potentials surrounding of culture:

1. Culture attached to the group
2. Culture is related to learning
3. Culture updated and tested against reality
4. Culture compared to socialization

This means that there is no basis to talk about culture without being attached to groups in the organisation that shares the basic assumptions. Formation of the culture is a learning program, and learning is a process by which someone adapts to the way we operate as an organisation based on prior experience from work situations to new experiences or changes. The culture is sustained as long as it is deemed to be in line with reality, only. The basic assumptions in an organisation are continuously being tested in relation to reality, and if they do not fit in this, they will probably be changed or reformulated. When a group recruits, a new member is trained in the existing culture, for example through
mentoring. The new members are trained in the group view of the world and learn how things should be perceived and understood, and how to distinguish between right and wrong, as if they can discover what behaviours are appropriate for the group. (Schein, 2004: 20-22)

Schein indicates three levels in the structure of the culture-
1. Artifacts
2. Espoused Values
3. Basic Assumptions


**Level 1: Artifacts**
Artifacts are the ‘surface’ phenomena, as we can see, hear and feel when we come in contact with a new group (Schein, 2004: 25). These include a group visible universe and
the physical environment: architecture, group languages, technology and products. It's also the things that can be observed in the group's apparel, language, values, myths and history of the organisation. It can also be placed on behaviour that has become routine. It's not difficult for us to see, hear and feel about what is going on in the group but is difficult to understand. It is risky to interpret the basic assumptions simply by observing the artifacts; it becomes the viewer's own interpretation and the viewer's own world model that forms the basis for interpretation and thus it is not a neutral interpretation. Symbols can have multiple meanings and interpretations, which may be projecting their own attitudes and emotions (Schein, 2004: 26). Therefore, we first need to see the artifacts in the light of the espoused values.

**Level 2: Espoused values.**

Schein defines espoused values as- "expressed, publicly proclaimed principles and values that the group claims that it is trying to live" (Schein, 2004: 27). Espoused values are thus both the visible and invisible values, it is codes of conduct that are common for the employees, for example,

- Personnel Policies
- Strategic Plans
- Vision and goals
- Procedures to recruitment, introduction, illness, etc.
- Values, Management Code

Schein also says that learning in a group can be traced to personal values and perceptions of how things ought to be in terms of how they are. When a new task to be solved is delegated or a new group is formed, the problem solving reflects the individual's perception of what works or does not work. These individuals’ perceptions will affect the group to choose a particular way to solve a problem. These individuals can be identified as ‘leaders’ (Schein, 2004: 27).

The group does not have a common knowledge, as it has not yet had a common action in the solution of their problem or task. It will not be able to determine what is real and factual before the group has worked together. Schein’s opinion is that if the group solves a
problem together, and all the members of the group are perceived same result for example: successful, a gradual cognitive perceptual makeover process will be set in motion. Initially it will be transformed in a common value or belief, and if it continues to be a success, it could become a basic assumption and only these results or solutions and values that are physically or socially can be firmly established for solving group problems will become assumptions. Then the group(s) will use these assumptions to solve problems or uncertainties internally and externally (Schein, 2004: 27-28).

According to Argyris and Schön (Schein, 2004), assumptions that are not based on prior learning then the espoused Values predicts, “what people will say in a given situation, which does not fit with what they actually do” (Schein, 2004: 28). This will also sometimes mean that it is difficult to understand the culture, since we cannot get things to fit together. In cases where the spectacle values fit with the most fundamental assumptions, this will be the basis for the development of identity, core mission and action philosophy (Schein, 2004: 26-28).

He describes, however, the concept of espoused values, when we say something will or should be done, this means that there is a set of values that, in fact, are applied and are compatible with our actual behaviour. They are consistent with our basic assumptions (Schein, 2004: 33). Now, it can be said that we are dealing with a set of rules that says what to do, but that is not always equal to what in fact one does.

**Level 3: The basic assumptions.**

Schein says, “The assumptions that actually controls the behaviour and tells the group how to perceive, think and emotionally relate to things” (Schein, 2004: 29)

When a solution to a problem comes repeatedly, this faith or belief to the assumption that this is the only way of acting. We begin to see the world from our own assumption (Schein, 2004). We begin to believe that nature really works this way. A basic assumption that is strongly grounded in a group, could lead to different behaviour, will be interpreted and experienced as totally meaningless and incomprehensible.

The basic assumptions are that theories, neither them we challenge or debate, and on that basis of course also extremely difficult to change. If we learn something new in this field,
so it is required that you recreate, validates and change stable parts of our cognitive structure, if possible. Schein indicates that if we change the basic assumptions at the same time and temporary questioning our own stable world, thus triggering large amount of basic insecurity. Instead of inconveniencing ourselves with such insecurity, we choose to interpret and perceive the world around us as convergent line with our assumptions. Thus we open a falsification to ourselves, we adopt an interpretation of what is going on, and in this way to get it to fit into our existing image. Thus, it becomes the basic assumptions (hence culture) that define how we act in different situations, and similarly for how we feel adapt in a group or organisation (Schein, 2004: 33).

The basic assumption in our study is analytically constructed as a product of espoused values and artifacts. It is not known exactly how it should be interpreted. When we are familiar with the basic assumptions only then we can understand the meaning of group or organisation's culture. In other words, a culture lies in the core pattern that the basic assumptions form. Once we understand this deeper level, it would be easier to understand the surface level and deal with them appropriately. The way according, the culture is seen as a consistent pattern of conscious values and unconscious basic assumptions.

### 3.2.2 Majken Schultz' theory of organisational culture

Majken Schultz indicates (Schultz, 1995: 120) that functionalism is primarily useful if one wishes to compare different organisational cultures due to its standardized structure. He also said that symbolism is easier and exciting to work with because it requires interpreter’s general insight about the organisation before selecting the entry to cultural analysis and the formation of the organisational culture that is connected with meaning. Each interpretation spiral contains an independent subset, making us so quickly get analysis results, which cannot be interpreted in values alone with Schein theory.

Organisational culture from Schultz' theory is built on the symbolic method, defined as:

The symbolic perspective perceives organisations as human systems. Actions will not take place from a mechanical cause-effect relationship or a functional expediency, but by social notions of how various actions have for the organisation's members. The organisational reality thus becomes a symbolic construction (Schultz, 1995: 70).
This can be seen as a further development of the functionalist approach, much less fully developed than this. The symbolic perspective provides greater opportunity to study the ambiguity and confusion when recognizing that the same action can be attributed to many different meanings.

The focus of symbolist cultural analysis is to examine the meaning and importance of the various organisation members attach to the symbols, and subsequently interpret this. The symbolic paradigm assumes the individual as an active creator of his own reality. The individuals interpret and define actions of each other instead of only just reacting to them.

Unlike rationalism and functionalism, symbolism sees culture as a self-governing system. Social system might have a conflict with this system since it has its own self-conception of reality. Symbolism does not assume that the systems are in balance, creates integration and harmony in a given culture. Symbolism on the other hand, assumes that reality is subjective and multidimensional. The same reality has more possibilities for interpretation, and combined form of the socially defined reality (Schultz, 1995: 75).

In a symbolic perspective, an organisational culture is therefore not enclosed once and for all. There must be a continuous and systematic process to try to reconstruct the organisation members of meaning. The work thus requires the interpreter so that it involves its own inner dialogue. An interpreter will never through a clear-headed analysis could make identification. Like Schein divides Schultz culture description in three levels, and mentions all three as symbols: (Schultz, 1995:90)

- Physical symbols or artifacts
- Action Symbols
- Verbal symbols
Physical symbols - or artifacts (comparable with Schein)
The chosen architecture, refurbishment of an office, an employee's location, and code of clothing etc. are things that stand for something other than them.

Action Symbols:
This means the actions attributed more importance than their instrumental content, and often some rituals, which are not written down or prescribed by the formal structure, but rather a tradition bottom rule for how one should behave in a given situation, and what meaning should be attached to others act. For example: rituals and ceremonies, for example- for the reception of new employees, the way you hold meetings - for example- mode of phone during meetings (on or off), or way of greeting each other - or no greeting etc. Action Symbols can be described as informal rules that tell employees how they should react in certain situations. (Schultz, 1995: 91)

Verbal symbols:
According to Schultz, meaning is not a language itself but the language could be formed by the symbolic content e.g. myths, sagas, metaphors and idioms. Myths are aiming at transferring previous incidents to the current reality of being able to explain the different modes. Additionally myths have two important functions, one of which is to legitimate the choices its members take and the second function helps to maintain organisational culture
worldview. Myths are often used as storytelling. In contrast, sagas are grounded in the concrete stories and have a content of emotions, drama, laughter, disgust and curiosity.

Schultz explains that rituals, myths, sagas and idioms are typical inputs to cultural understanding in a symbolic perspective, and can form common patterns or codes to be interpreted in order to gain an understanding of the organisational culture. In the description of the cultural patterns he has discovered distinction between worldview and ethos. The cognitive worldview includes the organisation's members' view of how reality actually looks like. The moral-aesthetic ethos includes its members in qualitative and moral perceptions of themselves and life. The worldview and ethos thus forms a frame around the symbols and contributes to the understanding of it. Understanding the culture (world picture) is thus approaching this through the interpretation of symbols. (Schultz, 1995:96)

How Schein's values and basic assumptions derived from each other, the situation is the opposite with the World image and ethos, as none of these give a truer picture of the culture than the other. So these should be seen in a mutual interaction.

3.3 Diversity in Organisations
The first part of this section discusses the general concept of diversity in organisations and diversity management in order to get an overview of the concept. Later in the section, we will talk about the general understanding of the terms ‘culture’ and ‘cultural diversity’. Then we will talk about how cultural diversity could be managed in the organisations followed up by advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity.

Although precise definition of diversity remains elusive, diversity in organisations is discussed in terms of advantages of having diverse workforce in the organisation. Diversity has become an important issue for organisations, which have created need for diversity directors or managers and diversity training programs to address the challenges created by diversity. Due to changing organisational structures towards flat organisation and free movement of labour across borders in global economy have made it mandatory to have effective interaction among diverse work groups for smooth organisational functioning (Schneider & Northcraft, 1999: 2). Kreitz (2008) as cited in Podsiadlowski et
al., (2011) defined diversity as, 'any significant difference that distinguishes one individual from another' covering a wide variety of factors that might be obvious to other individuals or hidden under the surface. Diversity management has been defined as organisational practices for managing people to get the maximum advantages of diversity. There are many approaches to deal with diversity in the organisations. Dealing with cultural diversity in an organisation includes diversity committees, multicultural work groups, advocacy groups, language classes, intercultural training and diversity workshops (Podsiadlowski et al., 2011: 161-162).

3.3.1 Culture and Cultural Diversity
Culture consists of common beliefs and values of people that defines the 'shoulds' and 'oughts' of life, and guide the meaning that people attach to aspects of the world around themselves. Culture gives an identity to the members of a group. People often talk about country-based cultures in international business, however cultures also develop around professions, organisations, religions, etc. Due to increased immigration and temporary flow of people across borders, there are multiple ethnic or religious cultures (Stahl et al., 2010: 2).

In his work about management in Asia, Malcolm Warner defines culture as a pattern of taken-for-granted assumptions about how a number of people think, act and feel, that affects how they produce goods and services (Warner et al., 2003: 2).

It is important to understand that there are three levels at which people interact with each other and where cultural differences arise. The three levels of interaction are: universal, cultural and individual levels. At the universal level, all human beings are same as scientific studies have proved that over 99% human DNA is same around the world. At individual level, everyone is unique which is proved by the fact that even the identical twins have different personalities and aptitudes. Another level of which lies somewhere in between is Culture which makes us similar to one group of people than other groups of people. The groups can be based on culture, language, gender, generation, etc. The diagram below shows the three levels of culture (Laroche & Yang, 2014: 8-9).
When dealing with cultural differences, people often face several challenges. The first challenge is tendency to confuse between cultural and universal traits as people are brought up in a particular culture, they often think that everybody else thinks and behaves in the same way they do. Another challenge is that people confuse between cultural differences and personality traits. When people see somebody behaving differently than they do, they often judge them without truly understanding why is somebody doing so. “Cultural differences are based on the fact that people in one country are taught to behave in a certain way in a given situation, while people in another country are taught to behave in a different way in the same situation.” (Laroche & Yang, 2014:11). Therefore, it is important to distinguish cultural differences from personality traits in order to prevent taking the issue personally and better adapt to each other (Laroche & Yang, 2014: 9-12).

Cultural diversity influences the group in three potentially opposing ways. The first is similarity-attractions theory, which suggests that people are attracted to work with those who are similar to them in terms of values, beliefs, and attitudes. Second is social identity and social categorization theory that suggests that people tend to make special groups and categorize others as outsiders. People treat their group members with favouritism while judge others according to group traits or stereotyping. The above two perspectives suggest that diversity affects the team in a negative way as it makes social process more difficult. Third perspective, according to information-processing
theory argues that diversity brings different contributions to the team as it diverse team covers broader territory of information, taps into broader range of networks and perspectives, and enhances problem solving, creativity, innovation and adaptability (Stahl et. al., 2010: 2-3).

3.3.2 Management of cultural diversity in organisations
Looking at the different cultures it can be understood that management practices vary from culture to culture. This is an essential element to understand when attempting to accommodate cultural diversity aspects in management practices into any type of an organisation, including NGOs and striding to reaching a high level of management performance in the global business environment. Therefore the section below relates closely to issues NGOs have to deal with, since NGOs have developed to a stage where they operate on an international level, thus they are constantly confronted with cultural diversity. This they encounter either through employees diversity or through the societal cultures they are operating in.

3.3.3 Workforce diversity
“Within an organisation, there is a full mix of cultures and subcultures to which members belong. These subcultures are based on religion, education, ethnicity, marital and family status, sexual orientation, and other unifying life experiences, which provide extreme variation on how to go about achieving day-to-day goals.” (Saee, 2004: 41)

Looking at the composition of the continuously changing demographic trends countries around the world, illustrates that what the workforce is comprised of is on increasing scale changing and becoming more globally cross-cultural. This is closely connected to the rapid expansion of business on the global scene due to an ever increasing globalization. This is making easier for employees to find work in new countries, thereby increasing the need for cross-cultural management. “[...] The workforce is comprised of people who are different and who hold a wide range of attitudes, needs, desires, values, and work behaviours.” (Saee, 2004: 42) One of the main issues with cultural diversity is that it is perceived very differently by each manager and each organisation. Some managers and organisations
regard it as more of a problem than a benefit, whilst others see it as a necessity to be capitalized upon.

3.3.4 Disadvantages of cultural diversity
“Problems most frequently occur in convergence situations, when the organisation needs employees to think and act in similar ways. Communication and integration become more difficult. There is potential for increased ambiguity, complexity, and confusion when single agreement has to be reached or when overall procedures have to be developed.” (Saee, 2004: 43)

The presence of cultural diversity within an organisation, can result in a number of negative manners, if there are not any strategies in place equipped to deal with it or if the attitudes in the workplace do not leave room to accommodate it. The results can be a number of communicational problems such as language and misinterpretation and a number of perceptual problems such as stereotyping, status related problems, and gender role conflicts. This can lead to managers having increased anxiety about the issue of managing cross-cultural situations, since they can feel that they do not have sufficient information in order to be effective with this difficult matter. “They are afraid that they cannot possibly catch up and learn all there is to know about cultural differences; and intercultural encounters might lead them to make expensive and embarrassing mistakes. An extreme reaction to cultural difference and to culture shock is fear and even relational paralysis.” (Saee, 2004: 43)

3.3.5 Advantages of cultural diversity
When viewing cultural diversity, it can be seen that there are a number of ways in which it can be advantageous for organisations:

- “Selling goods and services in the increasingly diverse marketplace is facilitated by a well-utilized, diverse workforce”.
- Competitive advantage can be gained by firms in terms of the insights of employees from various cultural backgrounds who can assist organisations in understanding cultural effects on marketing strategies.
- Sales benefit can be achieved by firms, if consumers have some opportunities to interact with organisational representatives of their own communities.
- Enhanced creativity, flexibility, and problem solving can be fostered, especially for complex problems involving many qualitative factors.
- Acceptance of new ideas is easier when it is proposed by someone from other cultures than it is from someone within one’s own culture.
- “Diversity becomes most advantageous when the organisation wants to expand its perspective, its approach, its range of ideas, its operations, its product lines, or its marketing plans”.

(Saee, 2004: 43)

Taking these advantages into account and comparing them with the disadvantages, it can be concluded that the advantages and benefits and possibilities they bring far outweigh the disadvantages they could bring to an NGO. In order to truly getting the optimal out of the advantages of diversity, managers in NGOs must incorporate it into being part of their mainstream activities, functions, and managerial processes, thus making it part of their corporate culture, and make it a culture that celebrates and values diversity. This will not only benefit the internal operations of the NGO but also its external interactions. As such through effective management of a corporation's cultural diversity can lead to significant benefits for the organisation.

3.4 Cross-cultural Management
With the globalization of the world and world trade between markets and companies becoming more straight forward, this has led to an increased need for development in cross-cultural understanding and management skills. It is a simple necessity of managing employees and interacting with customers, whom stem from different cultural backgrounds. This is even more so becoming an essential element for NGOs due to they have grown to operate on a worldwide stage between societal cultures and influencing the political scene. There has come a higher need with the increase in diversity amongst employees, and with the need for communication understanding between each section of the organisations. Although the need for NGOs to have a deep understanding of the cultures they operate has also increased, with their increased political influence, leading
them to highly influential in the countries they operate in many aspects. For a manager in this global market there are six performance goals which are necessary to strive to obtain, those are:

- Understand the nature of culture and how it influences behaviour in the workplace.
- Learn about specific cultures and one’s own culture. Cross-cultural management should always entail learning one’s own values, without which no comparisons are possible.
- Recognize differences between cultures.
- Recognize which - and how - cultural factors influence the expressions of business structures, systems, and priorities.
- Implement the structures of the other culture.
- Recognize how far the structures of one’s own culture can be implemented within the other culture and vice versa - and then make the implementation.

(Saee, 2004: 27)

Cultural dimensions and orientations have a major influence on management style practices all over the globe. This is a result of the inescapable effect of cultural orientation in any society, where there is reflected the complicated interactions of behaviours, attitudes, and values which are continuously displayed by the members in each society. For each individual in society and in turn in workplace, they express normative qualities and culture through their own values they have to the world around them and life. These values which each individual considers important to them, influences their behaviour and understanding of what they consider appropriate and effective in any given situation they encounter, and this in turn also influences their work behaviour.

3.5 Hofstede’s Cultural dimensions:
Hofstede illustrated with his theory in which way the underlying values of cultures all over the world influences social values, relationships, and work. With his theory he compared work related attitudes within a range of management approaches. With this study he developed for his theory a proposition of four dimensions that were congruent with various cultural values in different countries, these cultural values could be analysed as:
- Collectivism versus individualism.
- Small versus large power distance.
- Weak versus strong uncertainty avoidance.
- Femininity versus masculinity.

(Saee, 2004: 30)

3.6 Trompenaar’s Cross-cultural dimensions
It is worth noting that Trompenaar is the most recent to make a comprehensive multinational study of the cross-cultural dimensions at a workplace. His research is a further development of the research that has already been conducted in field, Trompenaar’s theory displays that when looking at cross-cultural dimensions, there is a larger amount of perspectives to take into account than previously considered. His theory explains how people all over the world have different values, which in turn influences work behaviour and work interactions in organisations. This in turn has profound implications on the international management in organisation, it influences the workforces in such a way that they have to have high level of awareness towards the difference in cultural behaviours and understandings and be mindful of them. They must also develop a process in which to integrate these differences in the workplace into part of their mainstream management strategy and practices.

3.6.1 Cultural dimensions and management practices
Cross-cultural dimensions have major influences in number aspects of ways workplace functions and in the way management in an organisation functions. As the world becomes ever increasingly connected globally, the influence of it will continue to grow in importance, since a common understanding between people from different cultural backgrounds is necessary to make a workplace function. Below are the following opposing cultural dimensions that are central in understanding cross-cultural according to Trompenaar:

- **Universalism**: beliefs and ideas can be applied everywhere without alteration vs. **Particularism**: circumstances dictate how ideas and practices should be applied
- **Individualism**: people perceive themselves primarily as individuals vs. **Communitarianism**: people in communitarian society view themselves as part of a group

- **Neutral**: there is a high degree of control by individuals in their expressions of their emotions in a neutral society such as in Japan and/or United Kingdom that are considered to be neutral cultures vs. **Emotional**: emotions are expressed openly and naturally

- **Specific**: individuals have a large public space that they readily share with others, and a small private space they keep that they are willing to share with only close friends and family members vs. **Diffuse**: both public and private spaces represent nearly the same size and individuals guard their public space, as entry into it affords them entry into private space, too

- **Achievement**: people are given status based on their high performance vs. **Ascription**: status is attributed based on who or what a person is

- **Sequential**: time is seen as a series of passing events vs. **Synchronic**: past, present, and future are interrelated and influence the present actions

- **Internal**: people believe in controlling outcomes of their activity and the environment vs. **External control**: people let things take their own course

(Saee, 2004: 38)

Having illustrated and elaborated on the different cultural dimensions, that influence individuals, while getting the understanding of diverse people are all over the globe. It can be understood that there are a number aspects for NGO managers to take into consideration and it can also be seen the necessity for them to have a properly thorough understanding of the influences of diversity has on management decisions, especially considering the number of diverse to be considered. Therefore NGO managers must gain the adequate knowledge to deal with these issues and incorporate them into part of their mainstream operations and organisation culture.
4. ANALYSIS

With our analysis, we aim to answer our research questions -‘Which factors have a contribution in developing organisational culture?’, ‘What impact does the cultural diversity have on the NGO employee’s performance?’ and ‘How can managers effectively manage the influences of cultural diversity in a non governmental organisation?’, with the function of giving a complete answer to our problem formulation ‘What is the impact of cultural diversity on management and how does it affect organisational culture?’. We start our analysis by looking at organisational culture theory by Schein and Schultz and the various factors that influence that shaping of an organisational culture and the influence this shaping has on the employees with focus on non governmental organisations. With this aspect in mind we will have particular focus on the culture diversity influence and utilize Trompenaar’s theory on this to illustrate this factor’s significance. Then we shift our focus to the other part of an organisation which is the managers, and the way they deal with the issues of employee management. For this section we will have particular focus on Trompenaar’s theory of cultural diversity and his theory of cross-cultural management. We will look at NGOs when analysing the impact of culture diversity on management and organisational culture and how managers handle its impact. Through the entire analysis we will backup our arguments and elaborations, with the interviews we have conducted and with our questionnaire.

4.1 Factors/Mechanisms behind developing Organisational Culture

In order to answer our first research question, ‘Which cultural factors have contributions in developing organisational culture?’, it is important to understand how culture is created in an organisation and how common understanding about values, beliefs and organisational goals is created in the organisation. We have used Schein (2004) and Schultz (1995) theory in order to find out the factors behind developing organisational culture. Then we have used the interviews as the empirical data to back-up the theories.

From the theoretical chapter it was identified that culture is created by mutual contact and communication with each other. Schein (2004) argues that it is important “to achieve a fundamental understanding, what is going on in organisations, how to control them and
how to improve them?”. From the interviews, it was found that common understanding among the employees is created by formal and informal activities performed inside and outside of organisation. Julia from ActionAid Myanmar says “[...]ActionAid Myanmar is quite a lot of family organisation so we have lots of activities, events, social events and ways of behaving towards each-other that creates a family atmosphere no matter who we are, which nationalities, which ethnicity, which religion. So the organisation purposely have staff retreats, social nights, family nights where you bring your family in karaoke nights and so on [...] we also have a very strong common vision about why we are working in the organisation and what we are working towards [...]” (Appendix: 5a, 06:30). Furthermore, talking about the formal activities to create common understandings in the organisations, Julia adds that there is an induction process, “[...]which for our national staff is typically one to two days event where you get lots of information about the organisation, organisational values, different teams, different kind of workings. So there is like a kind of formal training event. Apart from that there are on going trainings in over time in ActionAid [...]” (Appendix: 5a, 08:17). However, Julia doubts that formal induction process would help to understand the people. She says, “[...] I don’t think that any formal induction process can completely prepare you for international position. I think it is very much about giving time to meet with people and listen and understand the culture and how you work with people of a different culture [...] and it is not something that is transmitted in a formal way very shortly [...] it is lot of something that you learn on the way” (Appendix: 5b, 04:14).

From the organisational culture theory of Schein (2004), we also found that leaders are created by culture although leaders are not aware of it. However talking about organisational culture, Schein (2004) says, “Organisational culture is created in part by the leaders and one of the most important management tasks is to create, manage and sometimes even break down culture.” On the other hand symbolic perspective (Schultz, 1995) assumes that reality is subjective and multidimensional as reality could be interpreted in several ways. Schultz (1995) believes that organisational culture is not enclosed once and for all as there is a continuous and systematic process to reconstruct the meaning.
Talking about levels of culture, both Schein (2004) and Schultz (1995) believe that there are three levels of cultural phenomenon that are visible to the observer. Both writers agree that first level of the culture is ‘Artifacts’ or the visible organisational structures and processes which is easy to observe but difficult to understand. Schein (2004) believes that observers can describe what they see and feel about the visible structures such as physical environment of the organisation, technology, products, styles embodied in the clothes, organisation chart and the daily work processes. However, Schein (2004) argues that it is dangerous to make the deeper assumptions about the organisation just from the Artifacts or visible physical environment, etc.

According to Schein (2004), the second level of understanding the culture is Espoused values which are transformed from personal beliefs and values into shared value and beliefs and finally into assumptions. On the other hand, Schultz (1995) highlights Action symbols as the second level of culture meaning that there are informal rules in the organisation, which make employees behave and react in a certain way in various situations. He gave example about action symbols as the way how meetings should be held, way of greetings, mode of phone (on/off) during meetings, etc. From the interview, we found that there is certain level of Action symbols used in Global Platform and ActionAid Myanmar as one of the employees tells about the comment on the clothes from one of the high level manager from Bangladesh. Marie from Global Platform and ActionAid Myanmar says, “[…] what I heard in the beginning was that [...] Danish girls [...] don’t wear enough clothes or something and so after that remarks we just made sure to always be completely covered when we were at work. That’s fine but actually in Myanmar culture that’s not necessary…so this cultural aspect is taken from their culture into the office […]” (Appendix: 4, 48:00). From her remarks it could be seen that although there were no formal regulations about how to wear clothes in the organisation, people sometimes bring their own culture in the organisation and make some kind of informal rules or Action symbols. This also confirms the definition of organisational culture as mentioned earlier, by Schein (2004) which says that organisational culture is in part created by leaders.

Schein (2004) says that the third level of culture are ‘the basic assumptions’ which are those assumptions that have become strongly grounded and these assumptions could
neither be challenged nor debated, and are extremely difficult to change. He further argues that these assumptions later become the culture that defines how we act in various situations and how we adapt in a group or organisation. According to Schultz (1995), the third level of culture is Verbal symbols that are formed by symbolic contents such as myths, sagas, metaphors and idioms. In contrast to the functionalist approach of Schein (2004), which includes same analytical level of all organisations, symbolic approach of Schultz (1995) believes that different symbols depend on the organisational setting.

4.2 Cultural diversity’s influence on NGO employees
In order to answer this issue we need to determine a NGOs structure and culture, we will use Schein and Schultz theory of ‘Organisational culture’ to view the various factors that influence organisational culture and the employees within it. We will then use Trompenaar’s theory of ‘Cultural diversity’ to show how an NGO is influenced by employees from different cultures and how it shapes the organisation. We will then use the interviews to backup or prove a different reality to our analysis and answering of the research questions with the theories.

It is first of all important to understand the drastic changes that NGOs have gone through in the last couple of decades in accordance with size and influence. NGOs have grown in size to such an extent that they have reached a point in which they have major political and international influence, they also have a major influence in the countries in which they operate. The two main functions as mentioned earlier are to aid in development and providing necessary resources to the people in an area. Since they function in these two areas and have grown to function on an international scale, this results in not only they confront cultural diversity in the countries they operate in but also through the funding they receive, the people they receive resources from and do business with, and also on the internal organisational level with employees originating from many different nations that arrive through either volunteer programs or are foreigners hired through a strong desire to work for such an organisation. Therefore cultural diversity has become a major issue for these organisations and influences the organisations from top to bottom.
In order to understand the influence cultural diversity can have on the employee level, we must first understand how organisations culture is formed and shaped by outside influences. Through the elaboration of organisational culture theory of Schein and of Schultz, we gained an understanding on which factors influence forming and shaping of it in an organisation.

According to Schein, he explains culture within an organisation as being a product of what happens through dynamic processes in the organisation and the processes that take place when employees/people interact in the organisation. A basic description of an organisation’s culture is a result of the mutual contact that occurs between people in an organisation mainly based on intercommunication. Thus when looking at the manner which it is created in an NGO, it can be seen, it taking place with the employees interactions with each other on a day to day basis. The culture is adapting and being shaped each time new employees enters into the organisation and especially in connection with employees bringing new cultural perspectives. The employees will interact with each other and adapt their working style so it fits with the organisation and with the other employee’s cultural understanding.

From the interview we found that when new expat employees who join the Global Platform Organisation in Myanmar have to adapt to the organisational culture present there. Soe San from Global Platform Myanmar said, “Well in Myanmar [...] if we have meeting at 9:00, people will come at 10:00 (laughs), so [...] they have started to realize this and they also come at 10:00 [...] it’s not a problem anymore [...] normally people are not on time [...]” (Appendix: 6, 35:07). This shows that organisational culture have influence of employees and they adapt to the local way of doing things. Another example of adaptation of expat employees to the local way of timekeeping and communication within the organisation was presented by Marie from Global Platform and Action Aid Myanmar. She said, “[...] the Burmese culture in itself is really complex and way people work in Myanmar is very different from what I have experienced in other countries [...] timekeeping and communication in particular [...] in my part of the world, in my country we have a culture of emailing, we actually reply to emails, they don’t do that in Myanmar. You have to go and find the person you want to speak with and do it in front of each other [...] that is something
I think lots of foreigners coming to Action Aid Myanmar to work have had to adapt to [...] I think cultural differences are extreme [...] but [...] of course we came to Myanmar, we have to adapt to Burmese culture” (Appendix: 4, 12:13). This shows that organisational culture influences the employees and how things are done in the organisation.

Schein elaborates when looking at the way culture is formed in an organisation, it is necessary to understand the formation of groups is a process that takes place in parallel with the shaping of culture in an organisation and in turn is part of influencing the development of culture. He then goes on to illustrate that organisations are heavily influenced by the adaptations they make in relation to external factors and the manner they integrate these influences internally. Therefore when looking at the manner NGOs are formed nowadays, with them having grown to be on an international scale, it can be seen that they are constantly influenced by external factors. With employees from a multitude of cultures, the NGO has to constantly adapt and internally integrate these cultural influences that stem from the various employee cultural understandings. As Schein emphasizes the way the external environment around an organisation is constant change and in order to maintain cultural and structural rigidity in the organisation, then the organisation must provide a constant self-education or continuing identity to itself. Schein also mention that, organisations always have a culture if it is not a new one and organisations always need to recruit new group member to make the group fit for reaching their goal or for the changing of external environment. They have to see the world how the others in the group see the world. Through the way they will learn appropriate behaviour, which will the new member to deal with the external environment. The process of adapting culture for a new member start by the impact of the physical environment of the organisation then the group and its new member will set some new rules or goals which will change the values a bit to become compatible with the situation and when this changed value become consistent with the situation, it becomes the their assumption that what they are believing is the right way to deal with the situation Then when looking at this in accordance with an NGO, it can be seen that in the environments where NGOs operate, they are constantly exposed to environmental changes and national situations, and must therefore be always ready to adapt internally and self-educate themselves. This is all due to the formation of culture and is a result of being in a learning process through the adaptations the organisation needs to
make in accordance with changes and external influences. This influences and changes are learned from prior experience from work situations and from new experiences that require change and adaptation.

Comparing the organisations in Ghana and Myanmar, we found that in Myanmar employees had to adapt to the culture present in Global Platform and ActionAid Myanmar meaning that employees were influenced from organisational culture present there. Expat employees did not have higher influence on organisational culture instead they had to adapt to the situation and change their own way of doing things. While in Ghana, although expat employee and manager had to adapt to organisational culture present there to certain degree, there was also some influence from management side in changing the organisational culture. Kevin who is manager in Global Platform Ghana shares his experience about how he changed the organisational culture by involving employees in decision making and asking for advices from them, which is not common in Ghana. He says, “[...] I always take things up to the staffs if we are doing any bigger decisions and I will ask them what they think and how they think it should be done [...] I don’t see Ghanaian culture as one where management asks people for advice about anything [...] it's not common so they are in the process of learning this” (Appendix: 1, 39:41). From this we could come to the conclusion that organisational culture has influence in the employees and also the management influences the organisational culture.

According to Schultz, when understanding organisations it is vital to view them as something that is created as human systems. An organisation does function through a functional expediency or mechanical cause-effect relationships, its actions and developed functions are a result of various actions that members of the organisation take and the social notions within it. By understanding that an organisation is a result of human systems and the social notions and social actions that take place within an NGO, it can be seen in which way such an organisation is shaped and changed with events that take place both externally and internally. Next is taking a further step with the theoretical analysis of this to the individual level. Then looking at the individual influencing the organisation and other individuals in an NGO, it can be seen in the way they interpret and define the actions that
occur with the interactions they have at a workplace and not merely in the way they react to the interactions.

Once having seen the factors that influence and shape organisational culture on the employee level, it can also be understood the reason for cultural diversity having such a significant role on the formation of a NGOs organisational culture. Then as Podsiadlowsk describes, the main influence of the diversity aspect to organisation stems from the diversity within the workforce, which when you look at NGOs, especially on the international level, can be seen as unavoidable and a central aspect. There are certain aspects of diversity and methods of adequately dealing with the unavoidable diversity within a workforce and these are such things as diversity committees, multicultural work groups, advocacy groups, language classes, intercultural training and diversity workshops.

Understanding the formation of culture and the features that lie behind it, it is necessary to know that culture consists of a set of common values and beliefs of people that describe the ‘oughts’ and ‘shoulds’ of life, and show the meaning people connect to the various aspects of the world that surrounds them. The influence of culture on the members of an organisation is essential as culture is an aspect that shapes the individuals in the organisation identity. Understanding the influence of culture and now it can be more clearly seen the influence it has on a NGO and in turn on the employees of the NGO, in the ways cultural diversity contributes to shaping their views on the organisation and the other members within it.

It is essential when trying to understanding cultural diversity and where cultural difference issues arise, that there are three levels in which people interact with each other, those are: universal, cultural and individual levels.

1. Universal differences: In this level, all humans are categorized as being the same as scientific studies, which have proved that over 99% human DNA is then same all over the world.

2. Cultural differences: “Cultural differences are based on the fact that people in one country are taught to behave in a certain way in a given situation, while people in another country are taught to behave in a different way in the same situation.”
(Laroche & Yang, 2014:11). This statement is supported from the empirical data that we had in the form of interview. Kevin, a manager from Global Platform Ghana shared his experience about how the local employees react when they don’t meet the deadlines with the contrast of how it is in his home country. He said, 

“\ldots back home in Denmark if you give someone a task, you expect it to be done and if it doesn’t get done the person would come and say I cannot do it because of this and this \ldots or we had this and this trouble. Here (in Ghana), silence is the answer, so nothing happens \ldots” (Appendix: 1, 30:14). This could be the situation of conflict if the manager doesn’t understand the cultural differences and how people deal in certain situations.

3. Individual differences: The individual level indicates that everyone is unique which can be seen through looking at the fact that even the identical twins have different personalities and aptitudes. From the interviews from Global Platform Ghana we found that Michelle who is Danish is task-oriented but Alisa who is Ghanaian is relationship oriented. Kevin from Global Platform had a comment about Michelle who is working in the same organisation. He said, “She works task-oriented so she will work very long hours sometimes and \ldots she is quite busy and passionate about the job \ldots” (Appendix: 1, 12:35). Similarly, Alisa said, “\ldots I am more relationship oriented \ldots” (Appendix: 3b, 00:58). It was not possible for us to conclude if these differences were due to cultural differences between Denmark and Ghana or if these were just individual differences.

Then when looking at how cultural diversity specifically influences a group there are three opposing views in the manner in which it does.

1. The first view is the similarity-attractions theory, which elaborates that people prefer to work together with other individuals that share similar values, beliefs, and attitudes as themselves. This view is confirmed from the interview with Kevin from Global Platform Ghana who shares his experience about working with his colleague from Denmark. He said, “[\ldots] my Danish employee is typical Danish, strong woman and she will tell me exactly what she feels at any given moment, so there is no
problem there, it is easy to go and ask her what she thinks about this, she will tell me about it [...] that’s a lot easier” (Appendix: 1, 11:45).

2. The second view is social identity and social categorization theory, which she describes that people have tendencies to form special groups and categorize others that do not fit in with the requirements of that group as outsiders. The findings from the interview suggests that expat employees from Global Platform and Action Aid Myanmar felt that they were considered as outsiders to some degree and it was hard to adapt to the local culture. But it was also discovered that local people have started to understand the cultural differences that comes with expat employees. Marie from Global Platform and ActionAid Myanmar said, “[...] in Myanmar culture it is so complex and no matter how long time we spend in Myanmar, I will never learn it, we can never understand it but we can only do our best. But I feel that in ActionAid I was accepted the way I am [...] it was OK that I was not Burmese, I don’t know all the cultural values [...]” (Appendix: 4, 35:54).

3. The third and final perspective, is information-processing theory that suggests that diversity provides a large number of various contributions to the team due to diverse teams are capable of having and covering broader territory of information, this in turn creates the possibility to tap into broader range of networks and perspectives, and enhances problem solving, creativity, innovation and adaptability. From the interviews, we found that there are positive and negative aspects of cultural diversity. When we asked Michelle from Global Platform Ghana about the positive aspects of cultural diversity, she said, “Oh! There are many [...] that’s the only kind of working environment I have ever worked [...] and I find it almost necessary to have a contingent work environment to have different cultural inputs. I think in our particular job it is really important [...] in order to have efficient ideas, different approaches, different opinions [...] I just think like it provides quality inputs, it provides innovation [...] I think it’s more interesting and more innovative working environment [...]” (Appendix: 2, 14:59).

There are a number of disadvantages that result as of the influence of cultural diversity within an organisation. A common occurrence with any organisation is the employment of new employees, and this often can result in difficulties occurring. The reason for these
difficulties lies first of all with the new employee having to adopt the same perspective as the organisation, which depending on the employees can vary in outcomes in success rate. “Communication and integration become more difficult. There is potential for increased ambiguity, complexity, and confusion when single agreement has to be reached or when overall procedures have to be developed.” (Saee, 2004: 43). Michelle from Global Platform Ghana shared a similar overview on disadvantage of cultural diversity. She said, “[...] when I give feedback sometimes I forget to do it in the appropriate way, which both in Kenya and Ghana would be to talk a long time about all the good things and ‘I see this and that potential in that. Maybe we should change this and that a little bit’. That would be Ghanaian and Kenyan way of doing it. The Danish way of doing it would be ‘this is not good enough, it need to be changed’. So that’s a challenge for me personally sometimes specially if we are under time pressure [...] taking a hour and half to discuss all the good things that I see seems like a waste of time [...]” (Appendix: 2, 16:22).

There were slightly different outcomes when we compare the results from the questionnaires and the interviews about the ease of communicating in a culturally diverse work environment. From the questionnaire where we put the scale between 1 and 6, 1 being very hard and 6 being very easy to communicate, we found that nobody said it was either very hard or very easy to communicate in a multicultural work environment. Majority or 5 out of 12 participants ticked on scale 4 and 4 out of the total participants ticked on scale 5 (Appendix:8). This shows that there were not many issues about communication problems in a culturally diverse work environment. However, the Skype interviews revealed slightly different result as many of the interviewees mentioned about the difficulties in communication in a multicultural environment due to several reasons. Soe San from Global Platform Myanmar shares his experience about challenges of cultural diversity in regards to communication. He said, “[...] we all speak Burmese language which was annoying to foreign staffs, they don’t know what we are talking [...] so we came up with a rule to speak ‘English’ in the office… but it is restricting people to have an open dialogue [...]” (Appendix: 6, 22:01). He also talked about another aspect of challenge in regards to communication. He said, “[...] normally we don’t work on emails that much [...] we talk on phones and sometimes we talk from table to table [...] but for foreign staffs they write emails and they want emails to be replied but normally people don’t reply it [...] we
did not have proper internet connection in the past so we don’t have any practice of writing emails […] the way we are introduced for Internet is ‘just for fun’ […]” (Appendix: 6, 37:34). Marie from Global Platform and ActionAid Myanmar confirms what Soe San mentioned. Marie said, “[…] well first of all there is whole thing about giving up emailing […] emailing weighs kind of heavily in our working lives, we email all the time, I had to give up that and communicate in informal ways […]” (Appendix: 4, 52:15).

It is worth mentioning here what Marie from Global Platform and Action Aid Myanmar had to say about impact of cultural diversity on employee performance. She stated, “[…] for me personally at least […] I feel like I have to be constantly aware of how I speak and act and of course it’s a thing to learn but it may sometimes hamper my performance because I am worried whether I am doing the right thing or not in this culture […] but I think generally, of course in a working environment and in regards to personal development, […] it’s really good to work with so many different culture because you learn how to respect each other in a different way and this is something that you can use outside of work too.” (Appendix: 4, 31:24).

Cultural diversity is not free from the challenges that come with multicultural work environment. Julia from ActionAid Myanmar said something about the challenges of cultural diversity. She said, “[…] I think it’s challenging to give advice […] when you are from another cultural background […] you need to be super respectful […] local people will always be experts than you because they are born and raised in that culture. Your can just from the sort of side-line try to provide inputs, ideas, frame things differently, connect to potential networks and so on […] it is challenging to remember that respecting the local culture […] in the beginning of my employment I would bring in lots of ideas over time that would not be really relevant because I did not really understand what is needed in the context […]” (Appendix: 5b, 07:05).

With cultural diversity being an unavoidable aspect of organisations, especially for NGOs, then if there are not adequate strategies in place to deal with this issue or if the employees within the organisation do not leave much room for accommodating the cultural diversity that appears, this can then result in a number of negative ways. The possible negative outcomes can be such things as a number of communicational problems such as
language and misinterpretation and a number of perceptual problems such as
stereotyping, status related problems, and gender role conflicts. These factors can
influence any organisation dealing with this issue, but NGOs and especially NGOs
operating on an international scene, it can have major influences on employee culture if
not dealt with properly.

The answers from questionnaire (Appendix: 8), revealed that there are no special
mechanisms or trainings to deal with cultural diversity in both organisations from Ghana
and Myanmar. From interviews also most of the participants told that there were no
training programs for dealing with cultural diversity in the organisation. However, Marie
from Global Platform and ActionAid Myanmar mentioned about informal approaches used
by management to deal with cultural diversity. She said, “[...] I have never found anything
on writing about how to deal with these cultural differences. It’s mostly happening orally
[…] if we have meetings and we discuss about the issues like time keeping, we will write it
down in the minutes […] but I have never seen it being put into formal documents […]
another part of this particular culture is that communication is best practiced orally […]
documents are not something that reports, people really don’t read it […]” (Appendix: 4,
15:38). Similarly Julia from ActionAid Myanmar said, “[...] I am paid by ActionAid Denmark
on the advisor program. There has been huge induction process actually as the part of the
advisor program. I went for two week program in Tanzania and online course but that
doesn’t go for all international staffs in ActionAid Myanmar. Those who are not advisors
haven’t been through that package […] in my case induction process was delivered not by
ActionAid Myanmar but ActionAid Denmark […] in ActionAid Myanmar induction process
was done by learning by doing, engaging with local colleagues, going to the fields, talking
with my line manager […]” (Appendix: 5b, 02:58).

If we then shift our view to the advantages that cultural diversity brings to an NGO it can
be seen that they outweigh the risks of negative impacts. The main advantages an NGO
can gain from cultural diversity is first of all it will give the organisation valuable insights
due to the employees various cultural backgrounds, these insights will aid the organisation
in understanding the culture they are operating in. This fact is emphasized by 9 out of 12
respondents of our questionnaire (Appendix: 8).
Secondly it will provide an enhanced flexibility, creativity, and problem solving capabilities that can be utilized when dealing with complex problems involving with a large amount of qualitative factors. When asked an open question about the benefits of cultural diversity in an organisation, just one of our 12 respondents highlighted the above-mentioned one (Appendix: 8).

Thirdly it will also increase the degree of acceptance of new ideas for the organisation, this is due to openness to hearing these ideas is easier when they stem from individuals from other cultures. One of the respondents of the questionnaire mentioned “I have often had to explain my behaviour, saying ‘In my culture we say things very directly, I apologize if this has offended anyone’. It is important to acknowledge the differences, and speak about them openly. This way none will take it personally, if they feel offended by a certain behaviour from a colleague with a different cultural background” (Appendix: 8). Even if not expressed per se, we could interpret this answer as increased probability that a certain opposite opinion will be easier accepted when coming from a person for another culture (Appendix: 8).

Finally diversity is very beneficial for an NGO when it aims to expand its operations and needs to find different approaches to dealing with operations in new cultural areas. This argument could be linked with 2 answers from the questionnaire respondents, who wrote that possible benefits are “get networks worldwide” and “We benefit by developing programs that easily fit into other context since we are a global organisation” (Appendix: 8).

Therefore once understanding the afore mentioned benefits, it can be seen as essential for NGOs to incorporate it into being part of their mainstream activities, functions, and managerial processes, then in the process of this making it part of their organisational culture. It must become a component of the organisational culture to celebrate and value diversity. If the employees understand this and it become part of their view of the world, it can prove very beneficial for the organisation.
4.3 Cultural diversity influence on managers handling of cross-cultural management

When looking to answer this issue of managers handling the aspect of cultural diversity’s influence on an NGO, we will look at using both Trompenaar’s theory of ‘cultural diversity’ and his theory of ‘cross-cultural management’ to illustrate are elaborations of the issue. We used our interviews and questionnaires to backup our arguments and also to provide in certain aspects a clear picture of the actual handling of cultural diversity in NGOs, whilst using these theories to analyse the influence of cultural diversity on management, at the same time.

According to Schein, culture is created as result of the leaders in the organisation. Due to this reason it is vital for leaders to understand the influence of cultural diversity on an organisation. The leaders in an organisation must understand the cultural conditions of the employee group at the workplace and in the organisation in general thus gaining the insight of knowing what important tasks must be handled in accordance with it. “Organisational culture is created in part by the leaders and one of the most important management tasks is to create, manage and sometimes even break down culture (Schein, 2004: 13)”. Therefore for the leaders of an NGO and the managers at various levels of the organisation, it is vital that they understand the employees cultural background and understandings, and are capable of dealing with the cultural diversity tasks and issues that arise along the way. When then seeing the role that leaders have within an organisation, it must be understood that as a following result of this is, that management’s role in an organisation and in accordance NGO is to main actor in creation, maintenance and changes in an organisation’s culture. The role that the NGOs culture then has is to provide for management a number of variables to shape and modify the organisation for specific purposes.

With the increase of cultural diversity in organisations as a result of internationalisation and globalisation, the necessity for organisations to find a manner to optimally manage this has become essential. By trying to manage cultural diversity, a new type of leaders has emerged, namely diversity directors and managers, but has also led to a new essential type of training for workplaces, which are diversity training programs. Not only due to internationalisation and globalisation, but also due to a change in structures of
organisations to becoming more oriented towards flat organisation and free movement of labour across borders. With organisations and society becoming increasingly global, the necessity for organisations to have constant interaction with the various diverse work groups, in order to maintain smooth operations and collaborative work in the organisation (Schneider & Northcraft 1999: 2).

As discussed in the earlier sections of analysis, there are no formal training programs in both organisations from Ghana and Myanmar. Although the necessity of diversity trainings has been highlighted in the theoretical section, we had a different finding from the interview with Julia from Action Aid Myanmar. She said, “[...] I don’t think that any formal induction process can completely prepare you for international position. I think it is very much about giving time to meet with people and listen and understand the culture and how you work with people of a different culture [...] and it is not something that is transmitted in a formal way very shortly [...] it is lot of something that you learn on the way” (Appendix: 5b, 04:14).

Likewise, one of the interesting things that we discovered from the interview was that organisational atmosphere and structure have also impact on the employees. Alisa from Global Platform Ghana shared her experience of working in two different organisations. She said, “I think this organisation have more of a learning atmosphere, there is room to make mistakes because our work deals with lots of creativity [...] so there is [...] more mistakes we make the more we learn [...] in my previous work experience it was so much more mainstream development, so they are looking at certain targets and outcomes, they are looking at numbers but with this place (current organisation) is about how creative you can get. So I think one difference is the learning atmosphere and the ability to build creativity [...] my earlier organisation was more hierarchical in nature, this is little fit flat, I am not saying this is totally flat (laughs) but it is closer [...] in this organisation team spirit is very strong… we virtually do everything in teams [...]” (Appendix: 3b, 14:15).

Once understanding, and seeing the manner in which NGOs have expanded and not only operate on an international scene, but also deal with a large number of cultural situations from political to societal to social. At the same time their employee and/or volunteers in the NGO have become increasingly more diverse group of individuals, the necessity for
diversity managers and diversity training programs has become even more vital. The NGOs must also ensure a common understanding through dialogue throughout the organisation, not only between manager/organisation and employee, but also between every employee in the NGO. When asked about how the common understanding is built in the organisation with culturally diverse employees, Alisa from Global Platform Ghana said, “[...] I think open communication and safe space has helped to build the common understanding [...] in terms of common understanding [...] everyone who has been recruited seems to have a kind of very positive attitude in terms of tolerance. So we seem to flow very well with each-other [...] this kind of team spirit helps us to come to the common understanding of issues [...] I think it’s more about attitudes here” (Appendix: 3a, 04:21).

Then when looking at what the diversity management actually entails, it can be described as organisational practices for managing people to get the maximum advantages of diversity within an organisation. It can then be understood that when looking at the practices for dealing with diversity, there are many diverse approaches to going about it. First of all, it is essential to note that cultural diversity is viewed very differently by every individual in the workplace and every organisation. The main focus to consider is whether the managers, organisation, or the individual in the workplace regard cultural diversity as a troublesome issue or as an essential element that must be capitalized on and utilized to its fullest potential. Therefore it is highly important for the NGO to define its understanding of cultural diversity and that this reflects the understanding of the management and employees on the respective topic. Then it must attempt to benefit from cultural diversity to utmost of its capability through appropriate fitted practices and strategies for the organisation.

Key Strategies for effective management of cultural diversity across the globe:
When looking at which managerial strategies that are most optimal in order to enhance multicultural organisational performance, there are five 5 main strategies to focus on:

1. When looking at an organisation's cultural diversity, the management must always do their utmost to capitalize on the advantages it brings to have it, the organisation must refrain from ignoring or stifling culture diversity, it will aid lessening the
possibilities of barriers developing as a result of people having different backgrounds, values concerns, attitudes, and behavioural styles. From the outcomes of the questionnaire (Appendix: 8), we discovered that organisations from Ghana and Myanmar has been successful in dealing with intercultural issues although the interviews revealed that there are no special programs to deal with cultural diversity. From a scale of 1 to 6, 1 being organisation have not been successful in dealing with intercultural issues that much and 6 being a lot, only 2 out of 12 respondents have ticked on scale 1; meaning that organisation have not been successful in dealing with cultural issues while 4 participants have ticked on the scale 4 and other 4 participants have ticked on scale 5; meaning that organisation have been mostly successful in dealing with cultural issues.

2. An organisation's resources, such as income, access to information, key jobs, and prerequisite, must be distributed equitably, and it is essential that it is not influenced and decided due to cultural characteristics such as ethnic background.

3. The process of decision-making, is vital that it is shared process with a wide spectrum of the employees with differing cultural characteristics.

4. It’s absolutely essential for the management to develop acceptance and tolerance for any type of cultural diversity. The organisation culture must develop into a culture of acceptance that appreciates and recognizes people of any type of culture. It needs to be a culture of recognizing the necessity for being different and the same, in such a way that it sees the necessity for individual and group concerns, interests, and backgrounds.

5. The institutional practices, procedures, and policies of the organisation are responsive and flexible to needs of all the employees, no matter what the culture they stem from. (Saee, 2004: 43-44).

In order to manage cultural diversity optimally and effectively in an organisation on both the national and on the international level, managers must view the differences as opportunities and challenges and stride to get the utmost out of this asset, rather than viewing it as additional problems than hinder the organisation and that need solving. This essentially means for the manager that they must be on a constant basis sensitive towards
any situations or issues that arise as a result of the cultural diversity in the organisation. Therefore it is vital for managers when making their overall strategic human resource plan, that they must incorporate cross-cultural training into it, so employees are prepared for the eventual situations and taught the values that the organisation holds towards this. The issues which must be addressed in such a cross-cultural training are:

1. The concept of ‘individual culture,’ entails the image of oneself and the role that one serves. When looking at this it can seen that personal values, needs, expectations, and standards are all influenced by cultural forces that are beyond one’s self control. Managers who have a comprehensive understanding of intercultural influences and are themselves experienced with it or multicultural, have a greater understanding of the influence cultural factors can have on human relationships and communication, and are to a greater degree more flexible to adapting to changing culture in an organisation as a result of growth.

2. The concept of ‘cultural sensitivity,’ involves integrating the various characteristics of corporate culture, with the different experiences of minority groups or individuals in the company’s workplace. Therefore intercultural competent managers must focus on developing their understanding in which ways cultural diversity can influence communication and individual behaviour and become more sensitive towards this aspect. As for managers on a global level they need to apply this cultural awareness towards producing effective professional relationships with anybody they interact with, since people of different culture could have different understandings about various things.

3. The concept of ‘acculturation,’ which refers to effectively adapting and adjusting to a certain culture or subculture. Managers which are interculturally competent and have a comprehensive understanding of this issue, know that when looking at this it entails self and group identity, and constantly aware to the influence that culture shock and/or differences can have on an individual's sense of identity. Therefore when handling multicultural employees, managers who are aware of this make it a central rule to avoid hinting to any ethnocentric values.

4. The concept of ‘cultural management influences,’ this concept implies the influences that cultural conditioning has on the management of information and of
resources be it human or natural. The manner that a manager views every vital issue in the management process, right from the decision making and problem solving point to the supervision and appraisal point, is all influenced by one’s own cultural background. “As there are differences underlying cultural diversity, an interculturally competent manager tries to adapt modern principles of management to the realities of a multicultural workforce. This tendency could be labelled “cultural contingency”.” (Saee, 2004: 44)

5. The concept of ‘effective intercultural performance,’ that takes it for given that managers possess the ability to apply intercultural communication research principles and findings to certain work situations that has to do with cross-cultural issues that affects employees performance on their job.

6. “The concept of “problem-solving” in multicultural contexts. Harris and Moran suggest a five-step method of problem solving across cultures:
- Describe the problem as understood in both cultures.
- Analyse the problem from two (or all) cultural perspectives.
- Identify the basis for the problem from both (or all) viewpoints.
- Solve the problem through synergistic strategies.
- Determine if the solution is working multiculturally.” (Saee, 2004: 45)

(Saee, 2004: 44-45)

For any manager involved in the global market being it a non-NGO or a NGO, there are always six main performance goals that are essential to be aware of and must stride to obtain:

- There is the understanding of the nature of culture and in which ways it influences the behaviour of employees in the workplace. Therefore a NGO manager must be constantly aware to the nature of culture in the organisation, and in which way the flow of employee changes can influence the behaviour of the other employees in the NGO workplace.

- A manager must ensure that they learn about the specific cultures of the employees and of the workplace and also their own culture. In cross-cultural management it is essential to always know one’s own values. The reason for this is if one does not know this it is not possible to make comparisons with other cultures. So for a NGO
manager there must be high focus on culture differences and what each culture entails, due to their being such a large amount of cultural diversity in the organisation and also since they encounter it with the societies they are situated in.

- “Recognize differences between cultures.” (Saee, 2004: 27) NGO managers must recognize these differences in the cultures a find a method to make the most of these differences, thus making it an advantage.

- “Recognize which - and how - cultural factors influence the expressions of business structures, systems, and priorities.” (Saee, 2004: 27) Once an NGO manager recognizes these cultural factors that influence the different expressions, they must make it part of the organisations mainstream cultural mentality and attitude.

- “Implement the structures of the other culture.” (Saee, 2004: 27)
- “Recognize how far the structures of one’s own culture can be implemented within the other culture and vice versa - and then make the implementation.” (Saee, 2004: 27) Again the NGO manager must do what they can to make it part of the mainstream structure.

From the interviews, we found that there were quite good advices for new managers who want to work in culturally diverse work environment in context of NGOs in Myanmar and Ghana. The advices from various employees and managerial level staffs could be very useful in answering our research question about effective management of cultural diversity in an organisation. We asked if they could give three best advices for a newly appointed manager in their organisation and the following were the answers that we got.

Kevin, the manager of Global Platform Ghana said, “[...] number 1 would be you ask lots of questions with follow-up questions to figure out how things work, the other one would be don’t assume anything, don’t assume that things would be done, don’t assume that anything is obvious. You have to approach everything and explicitly make it known that those things have to be changed and then respect procedures if there are any procedures in the organisation [...]” (Appendix: 1, 54:28).

Michelle, from Global Platform Ghana said, “Be humble, ask a lot of questions, listen to the answers and don’t say ‘no’ for answers (laughs)” (Appendix: 2, 51:10).
Alisa, who is also from Global Platform Ghana said, “[…] I think the first thing is manager needs to be culturally aware, I don’t know how he is going to do that but whether he is going to stay here for few months or he reads what people have written about cultural contexts, ask questions but he needs to be culturally aware of the context […] the second thing is I think that manager needs to be good with communication to be able to create an open communication atmosphere […] with open communication you realise that employees are able to discuss issues so that they don’t escalate into bigger issues […] the third would be open to learn because a lot of things are different […]” (Appendix: 3b, 20:44).

Marie, from Global Platform and ActionAid said, “[…] first of all to be very open and […] speak openly about the cultural differences so that if he or she speaks or acts in a certain way that rest of the organisation knows that ‘Oh this is his/her part of culture, this doesn’t necessarily mean that we should be offended’ […] the other thing is to listen, to find out the culture of the people living/working there so that he/she can know how is the working environment, e.g.: know about the informal communication style and the last thing would be […] to be more structured because it is a bit frustrating to be told one thing one day and the next day he has changed his mind […]” (Appendix: 4, 54: 39).

Julia, from ActionAid Myanmar said, “[…] in Myanmar context the thing that is most important for me is listening and following primarily the local people’s advice because that is only way to do something sustainable […] they lead and you can guide and facilitate […] and the way they see things because they know better […] and then I think that ownership is really important in Myanmar context. People don’t like to get orders, they like to develop things themselves […] show humility as what your role is as a foreigner […]”(Appendix: 5b, 21:08).

Soe San, from Global Platform Myanmar said, “[…] openness and sincerity […] if you learn about Burmese language it can be easier to communicate with other people […] it’s a symbol that you are learning and you are interested in Myanmar […] it’s like opening the door of our world […] language is a kind of tool that breaks the ice” (Appendix: 6, 44:22).
From the analysis of the above responses, it is quite obvious the most important thing for the managers to effectively manage cultural diversity and be successful in NGO management is to be open in communication and be aware of cultural differences. Apart from that it is also important for NGO managers to ask questions and understand the context and also listen to the answers. Managers should also be aware of different communication style particularly informal communication approaches used in the NGOs in Myanmar and Ghana.

Management style practices are heavily influenced and dictated by cultural dimensions and orientations in all organisations across the globe. The reason behind this is that cultural orientation in all societies, are continuously illustrated by the members in the society through their complicated interactions of behaviours, attitudes, and values. Every individual expresses normative qualities and culture with their own values that they are influenced by in the world around them and through their life, this goes for every individual in society and in the workplaces. Through these set of values that every individual forms and considers important, affects their behaviour and their understanding of what they consider appropriate and influence the manner they handle the situations they encounter, then ultimately it dictates the manner of their work behaviour. Knowing this gives a clearer image of managers and employees behaviour and what influences their decisions.

Trompenaar with his theory of ‘cross-cultural management’ highlights that a large number of different perspectives, much more than previously thought, has to be considered when looking at the various cross-cultural dimensions. He emphasizes that people from all the different cultures around the globe have different views and values, that is based on their cultural background, and these views and values influences their work interactions and work behaviour within the organisations. The manner in which it influences the international management of an organisation can be quite profound. It could lead to a high degree of awareness within the workforce of an organisation, towards the differing cultural understandings and behaviours between employees, and increases mindfulness in this area. It is therefore a manager's task within an NGO to develop a process that integrate these differences most optimally in the workplace, and in turn ensuring it becomes part of their mainstream management practices and strategy.
7. CONCLUSION

The main aim of this research was to investigate ‘what is the impact of cultural diversity on management and how does it affect organisational culture.’ We used the empirical data collected through interviews and questionnaires to discuss and analyse the findings from the theoretical framework. Some of the important aspects discussed in this research include the factors behind developing organisational culture, the impact of cultural diversity on management and the effective ways to manage cultural diversity in NGOs. Cross-cultural management is another issue highlighted in regards to cultural diversity in NGOs based in Myanmar and Ghana.

From the theoretical section and the interviews, it was identified that it is important for international managers to create common understanding in the organisation, which is achieved by formal and informal activities performed inside and outside the organisation. The theoretical framework also reflects that it is important for NGO managers to recognize the differences and particularities in the culture and also realise to what extent one’s own culture could be ‘imposed’ in another cultural context and vice-versa. Another interesting discovery in regards to organisational culture was that it has impact on management and the management also have influences on developing organisational culture. We found a two-way phenomenon where leaders impact organisational culture and organisational culture also affects leaders and their leadership style. The new thing that we find out was that foreign managers also have impact on developing organisational culture as they bring the culture from their home countries into the organisation and set informal rules and regulations on how employees should act and behave in different organisational contexts. Although the societal culture has influences on developing organisational culture, it is important to differentiate between cultural differences and the individual differences.

The common observation that resulted from the interviews was that NGO managers have to acquire additional skills in understanding the communication approaches in cross-cultural working environment in order to avoid conflicts. We found out that a so-called Danish management style uses more indirect approaches of communication in the form of e-mails and formal documents, while in Ghana and Myanmar the direct personal
communication is best practiced and people don’t use e-mails and formal documents so often, instead preferring to talk face-to-face with the person.

Therefore, it is necessary for international NGO’s managers to understand the whole context before taking any actions in regards to decision-making and problem solving. Talking about the impact of cultural diversity on employees, we found out that there were both positive and negative sides. It is especially useful in terms of getting efficient and innovative ideas, having diverse perspectives on the issues and increasing the competitiveness. However, we found that ‘language barrier’ is one of the issues that hampers open communication in culturally diverse working environments. This has been reflected by the interviewees in a double perspective: the language as such (English, Burmese, Ghanaian) and the particular meaning behind words and phrases. Similarly, it also hampers the employee performance when they have to be constantly aware of correct ways to act and behave in regards to respecting the local culture.

Furthermore, we also learned that due to cultural diversity in NGOs, employees have started to acknowledge the differences that come with the foreign counterparts and the level of tolerance regarding new cultures in the organisation has been increased. Employees have become more open to adapt to the local culture and managers have started to realize that they need to understand the cultural perspectives and use the management styles accordingly. However, we discovered through our sample that there is still tendency among employees to feel more comfortable to work with the people from their own culture or similar cultures.

Another issue that came up during the research was that although NGOs operate in cross-cultural environments, there has been less consideration of how to deal with cultural diversity and being efficient in managing diverse work groups. We found that apart from cross-cultural trainings, cultural perspectives and understandings are the subjects to be learnt on the way. It is not enough to understand the formal rules and regulations in order to be efficient in addressing and managing cultural diversity but it is also necessary to understand the informal things hidden inside the particular culture.
However, it is necessary to know that generalisations could be made from particular cultures but it is not possible to characterise them specifically. Generalisations could be used as guidelines for international NGO managers but could not be used as the recipe to manage cultural diversity.
8. LIMITATIONS

One of the most important limitations that we were confronted with was the late confirmation from the organisations we have contacted for providing the empirical data we wanted to collect.

We started our research path with the intention of using another research method, which is an ethnographic tool - participatory observation. There was a clear motivation and commitment from the team to travel and meet these organisations in their own environment, seeing them in action and engaging in a direct dialogue regarding our observations. We have mentioned this possibility from the initial moment of contacting the organisations, but it became unrealistic after a given point in time.

Another limitation came from the extremely short time between the interviews and the deadline for the completion of our work. This is naturally connected with the argument from the previous paragraph. We consider that reflections could go in even more depth and more follow-up could have been done after the interview.

The same time limitation affected the collection of questionnaire answers, being influenced by the late confirmation from the Global Platforms. Even though the number of completed questionnaires is highly satisfactory, the time left for analysis affected to a certain extent the thickness of our analysis and conclusions.
9. REFLECTIONS

When looking at in which ways we could have approached the project differently, and benefited from the alternative choices, we shared interesting reflections. First we could have seen a major difference in the knowledge we would have gotten and the much larger amount of data we would have received as a result of going to NGOs where they were situated, instead of doing Skype interviews and questionnaires.

Another choice that would have influenced the manner in which our project structure and approach would have looked like, was if we would have chosen to make it a more case study focus on project, instead of theoretical focus. This would have shifted our approach to an increased focus on a specific NGO, instead of basing it on theory. This would have produced probably different conclusions or insights, but at least would have given us a different perspective.

A third alternative perspective we could have taken in the project, is that we could have shifted our focus to the external actions taken in accordance with theoretical concepts instead of looking at the internal influences and alterations made by organisations in accordance with the concepts. This would have shifted our entire project approach and the conclusions we have reached.

In the start of the project we had many considerations, and also were eyeing to focus our project in accordance with theories on a non-NGO organisation. If we would have chosen this consideration our data and type of knowledge could have given very different results and could have given us a different perspective to the influence of the concepts and how they should be handled.
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Schein’s concept of culture; available from
11. LIST OF APPENDICES

1) Interview with Kevin Normand Andersen (Global Platform Ghana)

2) Interview with Michelle Hanegard (Global Platform Ghana)

3) Interview with Alisa Afusah Mogre (Global Platform Ghana)

4) Interview with Marie Ditlevsen (Global Platform and ActionAid Myanmar)

5) Interview with Annie Julia Raavad (ActionAid Myanmar)

6) Interview with Soe San (Global Platform Myanmar)

7) Questionnaire form (print of online form)

8) Summary of questionnaire

9) Questionnaire responses

10) Staff overview

11) Interview coding