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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS



Daniel Rottig, Ph.D.,
Editor



John Mezias, Ph.D.,
Associate Editor

The past year has been an exciting one for *AIB Insights*. We published four very timely, interesting and relevant issues with highly insightful articles authored by AIB Fellows, including (in alphabetical order) Jean Boddewyn, Farok Contractor, Alvaro Cuervo-Cazurra, Pankaj Ghemawat, Yadong Luo, and Klaus Meyer, a number of highly accomplished and experienced authors as well as up-and-coming scholars. These issues included:

- a focused issue on ‘International Trade and Investment Agreements’ ([Vol. 16, Issue 1](#)), which discusses the controversies surrounding the investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) system in the context of recent international trade and investment agreements, and its implications for the sovereignty of nation-states in the 21st century, and so could not have been more timely given the recent backlash against globalization and a tendency toward protectionist and isolationist trade and investment policies by several governments around the world, including the new administration of the United States
- a focused issue on ‘Global Strategy and Emerging Markets’ ([Vol. 16, Issue 4](#)), which examines the environmental characteristics of emerging markets, juxtaposes the institutional features of emerging and advanced economies, and discusses the strategic implications for both emerging market multinational corporations as well as advanced market multinational corporations from various perspectives
- a focused issue on the ‘Peter J. Buckley and Mark Casson AIB Dissertation Award’ ([Vol. 16, Issue 3](#)), an annual focused issue series that we started in 2013 and that contributes to a timely dissemination of the latest, state-of-the-art dissertation research in international business by publishing extended abstracts of the award-winning and award nominated dissertations
- an eclectic issue ([Vol. 16, Issue 2](#)) which includes a set of highly relevant and interesting articles on topics ranging from the institutional environment of Russia and recent changes in the country and their impact on the local investment climate and entrepreneurial activities, tax evasion by multinational corporations and the importance of incorporating international tax issues in IB pedagogy, research, and strategy as well as technology-based international business simulations and suggestions for their effective use in the classroom

With this latter, eclectic issue, we started a new series of interactive lead articles, to which Jean Boddewyn and Pankaj Ghemawat contributed the first two articles (Volume 16, Issues 2 and 3, respectively) by asking important, topical, and insightful “BIG Questions” that are relevant to our field in an attempt to encourage our readership to respond to these authors and so create a fruitful dialogue and two-way communication on specific topics. To facilitate this effort, we have added an interactive “Comments” feature onto the *AIB Insights* webpage and encourage you to visit aib.msu.edu/publications/insights and actively participate in this conversation, which we will continue this year with an upcoming article by Andrew Delios.

Building on this great momentum, with this first issue of 2017, which commences the seventeenth year of publication of *AIB Insights*, we are excited to announce an entirely redesigned publication to better align *AIB Insights* with the publication portfolio of the Academy of International Business. *AIB Insights* continues to publish new, innovative, and path-breaking knowledge and ideas in its unique format of short, current, and thought-provoking articles that are free of professional jargon and technical terms, light on references, but heavy on insight from the authors’ experiences and research. *AIB Insights* has established itself as the publication that disseminates “ideas worth sharing” in international business research, education, and practice in a unique and accessible format, and we hope you enjoy our new design and interactive format of this publication, which is published by and for the AIB community.

In this first issue of Volume 17, we publish a focused issue on the Leadership Effectiveness in Africa and the African Diaspora (LEAD) research project. A total of 16 authors from 10 different countries contributed to this special issue, which was guest edited by Betty Jane Punnett, the founding editor of *AIB Insights*. In the first article, Betty Jane introduces the LEAD project and provides an overview of the articles published in this focused issue.

We hope you enjoy this focused issue and our newly redesigned publication. We look forward to an exciting year of 2017 and to receiving, publishing and so sharing your ideas in international business.

Go AIB, Go *Insights*!

Daniel Rottig

John Mezias

The Emic-Etic-Emic Research Cycle

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Introduction

This paper discusses a research approach that we believe is appropriate for IB researchers dealing with under-researched countries, from an indigenous perspective. We argue that combining emic and etic research approaches, in an emic-etic-emic cycle, is the best way to disaggregate contextual issues in IB research. We use the Leadership Effectiveness in Africa and the African Diaspora (LEAD) research project to explicate the cycle that we propose. The paper briefly discusses the nature of emic and etic research and outlines how these research approaches were used in the LEAD project. The focus of this paper is on a methodological approach, which provides both breadth and depth to IB research.

Over the past twenty years, management scholars have noted that management knowledge is severely biased toward “western” perspectives, and “while many business leaders have taken up the call to address the issues surrounding entrenched poverty in the world, management scholars have been slower to respond” (Bruton, 2010: 1). Similarly, Das et al. (2009) found that research papers published in mainstream economic journals were linked to level of development, and countries with the lowest incomes and weakest economies received the least attention. Scholars have also suggested that we need to understand management from an indigenous, or local, perspective as well as within the global context, and that we need to develop locally-driven management concepts and measures (Holtbrugge, 2013). We can achieve this understanding only if we do research in under-researched countries, and incorporate indigenous concepts and measures into our global research. We can then explain what is unique to some countries, and how countries compare on variables of interest.

Increased globalization makes it especially important to

understand the role of the context when conducting IB research, but the literature often does not sufficiently address the contextual factors (Teagarden, Von Glinow, & Mellahi, 2015). In historical terms, Birkinshaw, Brannen, and Tung (2011) noted that the IB field was founded on studies employing rich qualitative research, but more recently a trend toward positivistic empirical methods in the social sciences has led to quantitative methods becoming more the standard in the field. Scholars who have studied management in emerging markets have largely adopted an etic approach and used quantitative methods, and Shackman’s (2013) review of the international business literature found structural equation modeling to be the most widely used technique. Birkinshaw et al. (2011) argued that this evolution of the field has resulted in missed opportunities to better understand processes and contexts, and that qualitative methods can provide a grounded and deeper perspective. Similarly, Buckley, Chapman, Clegg, and Gajewska-De Mattos (2014) noted that emic approaches and qualitative methods can generate new conceptualizations and interpretations of the complex contextual factors involved in IB research and practice, especially in emerging economies.

This paper argues that cross-cultural studies should combine approaches to better understand the context in under-researched countries. The LEAD research project goes beyond the use of different methods, because we use the various approaches to build on each other. Some researchers (e.g., Greenfield, 1996) have recognized that selecting an approach depends on the stage of research. That is, the emic approach serves best in exploratory research, and the etic approach is best for hypothesis testing. We argue that the interplay between perspectives within the research process are especially valuable. We encourage researchers to consider using an emic-etic-emic cycle to further enhance understanding of management in different IB contexts. Figure 1 outlines the research process used in the LEAD project.

The Nature of Emic and Etic Research

There have been a number of papers through the 1990s, and more recently, discussing emic and etic research issues, notably a special issue on the topic (Elsbach, Sutton, & Whetten, 1999) and a paper on emics and etics in cross-cultural studies (Peterson & Ruiz Quintella, 2003). There are ongoing debates over the value of emic research versus etic research. Each approach has proponents and defendants, and opponents and detractors (e.g., Brannen, 1996; Jahoda, 1983). The discussion often focuses on which is the “better” approach. We contend that such arguments are misleading, because both approaches when used together are “better” than when used individually, especially in under-researched areas. One concern in the emic-etic debate is that the meaning of the terms is not always clear and they are not always used consistently. For our purposes, we describe the “emic” approach as beginning with a “blank page” and allowing research participants to define and explain the concepts of interest in their own words. In contrast, the “etic” approach uses definitions and explanations drawn from all the countries included in the research, and these are incorporated into a survey instrument that can be used in a large-scale study across cultures and countries. The etic stage allows for statistical tests for similarities and differences both within and between cultures and countries. Results of the etic stage are further refined through additional emic research. We believe that using emic approaches to develop etic ones, and exploring etic results through further emic research, provides a holistic look at research questions in under-researched areas. The combined emic-etic-emic cycle answers the calls for indigenous research in under-researched areas of the world while it also addresses researchers’ desire to compare and contrast management in different locations.

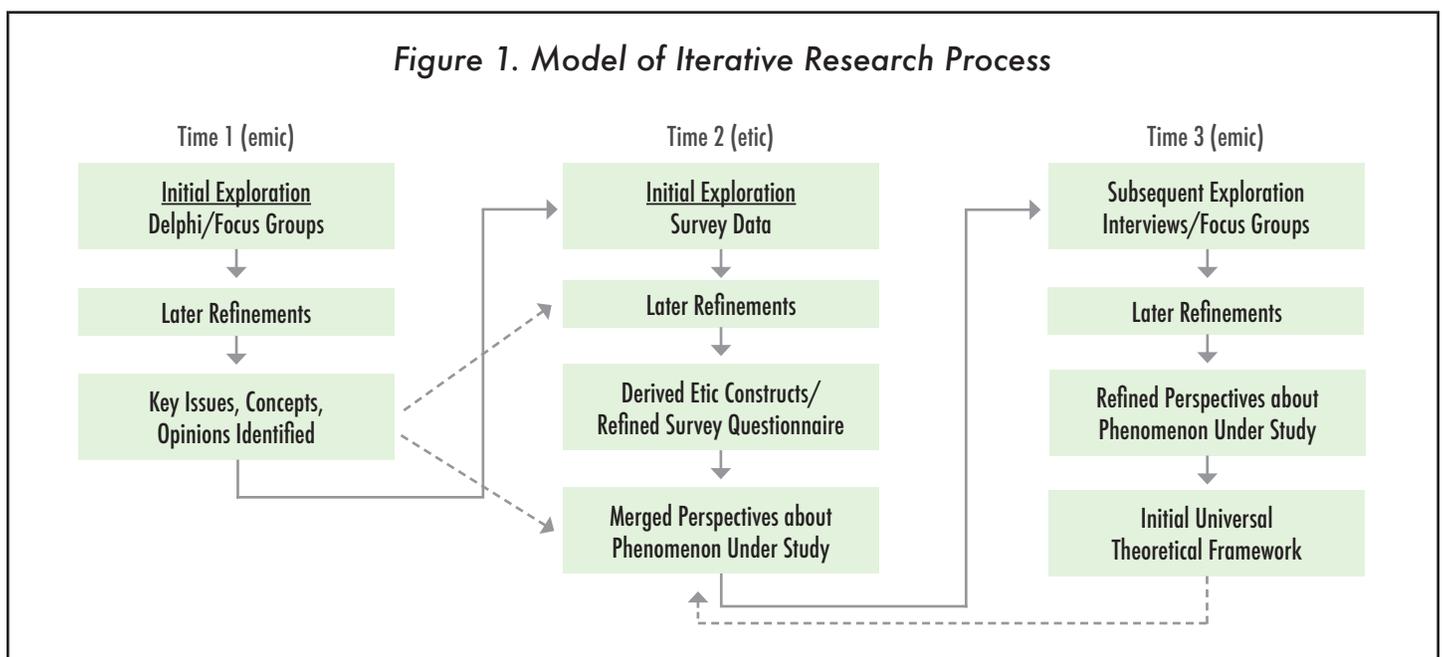
Using the Emic-Etic-Emic Research Cycle

Where little empirical research has been done, emic research is critical. We need to know how people in under-researched places view the constructs of interest; otherwise, researchers impose a particular view, developed elsewhere. While valuable, knowledge based on emic research alone often does not allow for statistical comparisons among groups. In order to more clearly understand how groups are similar or different, etic research across groups is also necessary. The LEAD project focuses on countries in Africa and groups that comprise the African Diaspora (people of African descent who reside outside of the African continent). These area are clearly under-researched; thus an emic approach to begin with was appropriate. The research approach was facilitated by having a cross-cultural team, in order to avoid as much as possible, researcher-imposed biases.

The research began with a Delphi Technique where “experts” (knowledgeable people) in leadership positions were asked to define, then refine, the details of the concepts to be measured (culture and leadership). The Delphi was followed by focus groups, consisting of lower-level managers, supervisors and employees, and students who responded to open-ended questions about culture and leadership. We selected the Delphi Technique to begin because we wanted participants themselves to define the concepts and we felt that initially this should be done by knowledgeable people in each country. The Delphi asked open-ended questions, and respondents’ answers were collated and returned to all respondents in as many “rounds” as necessary to obtain consensus.

Following the Delphi process, we wanted to get input from

Figure 1. Model of Iterative Research Process



people who would not be considered experts, and we felt the best approach would be to conduct focus groups. This allowed a group of people to discuss the same open-ended questions that had been used in the Delphi. As with the Delphi, we felt that this avoided the researchers imposing their own ideas, and that the results would reflect the thinking of the participants. We believe these two emic approaches – Delphi Technique plus focus groups – provided a valuable design for this research project where it was important to avoid researcher bias.

The responses from the Delphi and Focus Groups provided the basis on which to develop the etic phase of the research – a standardized questionnaire. This questionnaire is appropriate for use across countries and cultures, and at the same time it incorporates culture specific concepts developed in the emic phase. The questionnaire includes some established concepts and constructs but also reflects others identified from the Delphi and focus groups. We are, thus, using an etic approach that incorporates the results of the emic approach. To develop the questionnaire, results of the Delphi and the focus groups were content coded using a qualitative analysis software package. Three researchers then worked together on this content and developed a list of 60 items. These items were further revised, and reduced to a list of 36 items. Established constructs and measures were reviewed to see how well they covered the final list. Existing measures were selected, based on reliability, validity, and previous international use. Additional questions were developed for those concepts that were not covered by existing measures. The draft questionnaire, including existing surveys and newly developed items, was pre-tested. The initial questionnaire was quite long, and the items to be included were further refined and reduced by two researchers working together. The final set of survey items were reviewed by a third researcher for accuracy and completeness. The important contribution of this emic-etic approach is that the questionnaire includes Afro-centric concepts, which are not represented in established frameworks. New concepts included the role of gender, family, lineage and tribe, and religion; new effective leadership characteristics included the importance of honoring traditions and customs, education and knowledge, spirituality, wisdom, being bold and courageous, being a man, resilience, and having a strong personality. This sequential combination of an emic approach with an etic one allows us to incorporate ideas generated by research participants in several under-researched locations, and to translate these ideas into a broad cross-country examination of the issues.

The title of this paper uses the terminology “emic-etic-emic research cycle.” We propose that research should not conclude with etic results, but should proceed to an additional emic stage. For example, if being bold and courageous is considered an important variable in certain locations, we would pursue that finding with further emic research, asking questions such as “how is being bold and courageous important to effective leadership?” and, “what do you mean by being bold and courageous in a

leadership context?” Such an emic-etic-emic cycle allows one to achieve both depth and breadth in research. Each subsequent phase of the research cycle is informed by the results of the prior phase, and the final emic phase will provide theoretical grounding for, and ultimately influence, the final set of merged perspectives from the etic and emic phases. The project is currently collecting responses to open-ended questions on effective leadership from local managers (insiders) and expatriates (outsiders) in a variety of countries.

The focus of this paper is on a methodological approach, which we believe is particularly relevant for research in under-researched countries. In these countries, little is known of the context, and it is essential to incorporate indigenous concepts through emic research. It is also important to be able to make comparisons across groups and countries, using etic approaches. We suggest that by beginning with emic research and incorporating emic results into the etic phase of the research, one reaps the benefits of both. We also argue that continuing the cycle with a further emic phase provides even greater understanding of the phenomenon under study. An underlying premise is that researchers avoid imposing their own biases.

The LEAD Project in this Special Issue of *AIB Insights*

In this first paper for the Special Issue of *AIB Insights*, we set the stage for the other papers. This paper has explained our research approach and briefly outlined the LEAD research undertaken to date. We want to note that although this project has been underway for several years, it is still in a relatively early stage. Quantitative data is still being collected, and further emic research is envisaged. The team is seeking to expand the research to additional African countries as well as more of the Diaspora. Although some of the findings presented in the other papers in this Special Issue are based on relatively small samples, we believe that readers will find the discussions of these findings insightful.

The second paper in this Special Issue focuses on the team process that was used for the LEAD project. This process was and is necessary and advantageous to the type of research project described here. The research could not have been accomplished without effective management of the team and the team processes. It was, however, very much a learning experience, and the next paper discusses this, as well as the challenges, opportunities, and best practices that emerged over time. The other papers in this Special Issue summarize the results to date of the LEAD project. One paper looks at three East African countries, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania; a second looks at two West African countries, Ghana and Nigeria. The other two papers look at the insider (local managers) and outsider (expatriate) views, first in a variety of African countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda), then in

Mexico, as part of the Diaspora. As noted previously, the results that are presented are early results, and only a small number of countries are included thus far in our findings. Our intent is to expand the research substantially, over the coming years; nevertheless, we are pleased to be able to share our results to date with AIB members and readers of Insights. Readers with an interest in our project and Africa generally will be interested in our book on these topics, *LEAD: Leadership Effectiveness in Africa and the Diaspora* (published by Palgrave) – information available at <http://www.palgrave.com/us/book/9781137591197>.

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The Team Process: Insights from the LEAD Experience

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Introduction

Globalization in the business world, combined with technological developments, has resulted in a proliferation of multi-country, virtual teams (Han & Beyerlein, 2016), and this phenomenon has been increasing, particularly over the past decade (Schille & Mandviwalla, 2014). This has happened in academia as elsewhere. Technology has made it easier to communicate and collaborate across countries, and working with academics outside the home country has become more common. The Leadership Effectiveness in Africa and the African Diaspora (LEAD) project is an example of a multi-country virtual team academic project. It involves collaborators from seven African, three Caribbean, and three North American countries. The LEAD research project was initiated in 2007. It is diverse at many levels and today has participants who continue to learn and act together. The team's achievements include research and publications and a number of grants to support the research. This paper discusses the factors behind these achievements among a group of diverse participants, including task focus, team composition, individual motivation, and leadership. The paper emphasizes the beginnings of the LEAD team, its growth, leadership, academic achievements, and challenges, and provides insights for other scholars interested in virtual team collaborations. We also include comments from team members that illustrate aspects of the team process. These all elucidate aspects of the factors identified as important to the virtual team success.

The concept and practice of teamwork has become a key to organizations' performance, where the work of any group is a shared responsibility, with shared benefits (Sharma & Kirkman, 2015). There are several important aspects to successful teamwork: familiarity with and appreciation of each member, understanding the team's objectives, goals, and tasks, clarity about the time available for working together, and the resources available. In addition, Kayworth, Leidner and Mora-Tavarez (2002) found that effectiveness in virtual teams was

associated with mentoring and empathy, the ability to assert authority, articulating team members' relationships, and regular, detailed, prompt communication. The LEAD project has illustrated the importance of these aspects of teamwork. We would add the use of technology as a critical component.

The Foundations of the LEAD Team

The LEAD project began as an individual effort, but it has evolved into a great team. Initially, one of the authors was interested in the apparent cultural and behavioral links between the Caribbean and both Africa and European colonial powers (Punnett, Singh, & Williams, 1994) and designed a research project to look at these relationships from a management perspective. Over time, this became the LEAD project. For the project to be viable, it was clear from its inception that it would need input from many people in many countries. A critical element therefore was the search for collaborators in a variety of countries. Collaborators were identified through a variety of networking activities. Personal contacts were used, and the project outlined to them. This resulted in a small group of participants who recruited other researchers from their colleagues, essentially the equivalent of a snowball sampling technique. This process relates to the idea that familiarity with team members is a component of success. This is difficult to achieve in a virtual situation, but our approach meant that team members were known to at least some other team members. Another advantage of this approach is that collaborators joined the team because they wanted to be part of the project and were interested in the research topic; thus, from the beginning they were aware of the project's objectives, and accepted these.

The informal nature of the team formation process has meant, however, that team members might have quite varied personal objectives and expectations. There are also different institutional priorities which contribute to individual priorities. To deal with this, the early team members developed a detailed protocol, identifying levels of team membership and responsibilities

associated with membership. The protocol agreement, which each team member signed, included team structure, data ownership and outputs, acknowledgements, ethics, publication rights, and so on. We believe this is a vital aspect for managing a virtual team, collaborating from different parts of the world. The potential for varying values, goals and so on, requires a clear statement of expectations, responsibilities and authority.

The Team Makeup

The early project leaders have a special interest in Africa but were not based in Africa. They can be termed “outsiders” in the African context. This made the makeup of the rest of the team especially critical, as other team members had to provide the “insider” African perspective. There is substantial variance among team members in terms of gender (both male and female), age (ranging from early 20s to 70), academic levels (from masters degrees, through new PhDs, to Professor emerita), career stage (from junior faculty through mid-career to late career retired scholars), and regional dispersion (13 countries, different continents). This diversity has actually facilitated the cohesion in the team. Cohen and Bailey (1997) proposed a heuristic framework for team effectiveness which included diversity. In our experience, diversity works because team members are conscious of the diversity and seek to accommodate it in their interactions. One team member commented “I enjoy participating because the project is so relevant, and I enjoy working with people from so many countries ... but sometimes I feel it is so big that I have difficulty grasping the totality of the results.”

The LEAD team process has been both virtual and physical. The team maintains a group mail account for sharing information. The group holds meetings at given intervals by Skype, and physically, when possible, during academic meetings. However, the entire team has never met, and some members do not know each other by face, even though they have communicated and worked together. Virtual platforms provide a means to share and synthesize information, discuss differences, and make decisions. It is clear that technology has made this team process substantially possible.

The team was initially structured with a core team, and partners, with the former responsible for team interactions and all major directional decisions. The core team would sanction publications and be included as co-authors on works arising from the project. Other members would take on projects with a good deal of autonomy and be responsible for data gathered in their country jurisdictions. We believed it was critical, because of the virtual nature of the team, that there be some central authority and decision making, particularly relating to carrying out data collection and analysis, and publication of findings.

We wanted the project to meet the highest scholarly standards, and this central authority allowed a degree of control. These are critical to performance and satisfaction.

The written protocol provided a basis for team members to identify psychologically with the team’s values and has worked well to ensure the team’s success. Not surprisingly, however, changes have occurred over time because of external events as well as internal group dynamics. Members have left the team, sometimes formally, and sometimes silently. Newer members have joined and some may be unaware that there is a requirement to sign a protocol and its detailed provisions. The team is currently addressing this issue, by bringing it to all members’ attention.

Leadership of the team has been key to its longevity as well as for dealing with challenges. Original members have contributed to the growth of the team by raising funds, supporting team members with cash subsidies for travel (especially relevant for members from Africa who have little funding), initiating meetings and research tasks, encouraging communication, and driving the overall team process. One team member notes that “they relay strong, unequivocal reminders about tasks and deadlines, and threaten reprimands for non-compliance, but as well they always appreciate individual and group achievements.” Team motivation is anchored on three key factors – task clarity, member composition, and the team process. In the LEAD team, tasks are clearly spelt out and usually voluntarily assigned, contribution from all members is expected, and members provide support and peer reviews for others. This enhances learning, developing a common vision and a rational use of resources. Data storage and analysis was also centralized with one team member responsible for the data. This has been invaluable in keeping the data well organized, and available to all. Overall, a sense of team members helping each other to succeed has been a core value that has contributed to the team’s success.

“ Overall, a sense of team members helping each other to succeed has been a core value that has contributed to the team’s success.

One team member noted that “a sense of community, mentorship, mutual respect, focus on goals and collective responsibility has been the hallmark of the LEAD team. The core team members continue to maintain sharp focus on the

research outcomes while cascading the objectives to regional team members who then work closely with other scholars in data collection and analysis.” Another commented that “workshops, conferences and symposia have served as important avenues for capacity building. Clear communication and updates from the core team contributed to success. The team has benefited from reference materials that have been made available by team members both at the core and regional levels. Sharing announcements of conferences and calls for papers has been a great motivator.” Additionally, “the pairing of core members with regional members in co-authorship continues to build capacity of the team members who would not be able to easily author on their own.”

Achievements

We can learn from the team’s achievements. First, it seems important to create a “brand” for the team. The LEAD acronym is essentially this brand, and the team has worked to ensure that the brand is recognized across the scholarly management community. This allows team members to easily communicate their membership in the team. Other teams, such as the GLOBE team, have also benefitted from this approach. Achievements are also important to team cohesion and productivity, because team members can see the clear evidence of their contribution to the project. The team has completed empirical research, and developed an instrument to measure leadership; together and individually, members have published and edited books and chapters, journal articles, and a special issue. The team has also presented papers and hosted symposia and workshops during academic meetings. All of these activities have contributed to the sense that collaboration has tangible benefits.

Interactions which are not directly scholarly also contribute substantially to the team’s ability to continue working successfully together. The team has held meetings both online and physically, exchanged email, attended dinners and lunches together, and engaged in team building exercises, including a national park drive in Tanzania. These activities are relevant

because when team members get to know each other personally, they then feel more responsible for ensuring the success of others, and thus of the team.

Challenges

While LEAD can identify achievements, there have also been challenges. One major challenge has been financial constraints that have affected individual involvement, as members often cannot make it to conferences to present papers and attend joint activities. Members’ busy schedules at their respective institutions have made it impossible for some members to keep pace, or even to respond to the group mail information as and when expected. Culturally, there are also differences in work methods that have surfaced; members from the West tend to have a monochromic approach to work and time management, while Africans are polychromic at work and can seem disorganized and uncommitted to their western counterparts. Combined with a lack of good facilities in African universities, this militates against the commitment of members to get group tasks achieved in a timely and quality manner.

In addition, younger members of the team have substantial academic and non-academic responsibilities and time allotted to LEAD tasks may not be equal. This can sometimes lead to animosity and conflict. It may be that the objectives and deadlines seem somewhat arbitrary to some team members, and therefore they do not fully accept them, even though they virtually “agree” to them. Taras et al. (2016) reported from a study of an international student collaboration project that up to seventeen percent of participants can be what they term “free-riders,” and it may be that our team is experiencing this – a certain number of participants who want to be part of the team, but do not want to perform the work required of participants (of course, Taras’ sample was students, whereas LEAD is made up of researchers). Taras et al. found that the threat of exclusion from the team (and actual exclusion in a small number of cases) was an effective counter to free riding. A challenge for all virtual teams is eliminating non-productive members and ensuring

Opportunities	Challenges	Best Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint publications • Multi country collaboration • Access to grants • Mentorship advantages • Global collaborations • Joint projects like Special issues, Book chapters, articles, conference papers • Creating a research brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic cultural and other differences among members • Unequal access to information • Poor facilities in African setting • Differences in institutional priorities • Busy academic schedules • Differences in work ethics • Free riders • Perceived inequality in benefits • Time differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong leadership • Binding protocol • Centrality of direction • Multiple projects • Equitable share of direct benefits • Technological linkages • Person to person contact • Clear member recruitment • Team building

that newcomers are well integrated. This is a particular issue in terms of the core team members because of the vital role that they play in the overall process. The LEAD team is continuing to work out these processes.

The Way Forward

The framework for this paper was developed at a meeting of the LEAD team, with eight members present in Tanzania and others on Skype. In addition, two book chapters, two conference papers, and two journal papers were planned and timelines agreed on. The team also agreed to develop training materials based on the research. The next meeting of the group was fixed. These decisions exemplify the cohesive process that has led to the success of the team. Clear goals and tasks, shared decision making and responsibility, a core retaining final authority and control, expectations of tangible outputs, and continued strong leadership. The team will work hard in the next months, team leaders will circulate materials and reminders for deadlines, each member will peer review all the papers before final submissions. At the same time members will exchange ideas on expanding and developing the project. There are high expectations for the team, but challenges will also persist. In the next steps the group will identify more partners and collaborators from within Africa and the diaspora and this will add to the challenges. It will be important to return to the protocols, review them, and ensure that all members sign on. Continuity is a particular issue at this point. Initially, the structure and processes were relatively informal, and members joined because of personal interests. As the project has grown and continues to develop, it may be necessary to formalize much of this, so that leaders and the core can change as needed. Overall, the team process, along with others such as GLOBE, may provide the subject for a research project to understand better the specifics of these teams, and what works best for virtual academic teams. To summarize the practical and theoretical implications, the previous table points out the opportunities, challenges and best practices from the LEAD insights on virtual team processes.

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Attributes of Leadership Effectiveness in West Africa

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Introduction

Diverse culture and its influences across the West African sub-region challenge leadership effectiveness. The aim of this paper is to examine the perceptions of leadership effectiveness in two West African countries. The concept of leadership in Ghana and Nigeria provides a telescopic view important to managers and international business organizations. This paper focuses on the defining variables and characteristics of interest and outlines the results of the country studies. Based on an in-depth qualitative study, the results are discussed focusing on the idiosyncrasies of culture, traditions, and leadership. The findings indicate that culture influences leadership effectiveness, and it is intrinsically linked to employee performance. In addition, spirituality and belief in deity were found to be a major influence on cultural beliefs which, in turn, influence leadership perception and expected leadership characteristics. Thus, a lens is provided for developing specific directed training and learning aids for organizations.

The West African sub-region is made up of sixteen countries.¹ These countries' population and people adhere to various religious practices² in addition to traditional African religions. The traditional African religions are spiritual yet intrinsically linked to the social and cultural practices of its people. The traditions and cultural legacy of the people are so deeply felt that they permeate all activities. Culture and leadership are recognized as an indispensable part of their lives. Culture is socially transmitted and forms the totality of the people's patterns of behavior, religion, customs, and traditions, and it is the essential root of behavior and components of social organization. Leadership is also structured according to the traditions and customs where authority is derived from the chief, genealogical lineage, or religious leaders. As a result, the leaders are deemed to be imbued with wisdom, authority and strength. These key elements and concepts of leadership transcend to current management styles and practices. In this article, the concept of leadership

in the West-African sub-region is examined to determine the defining characteristics and variables. Culture, traditions, and its dimensions facilitate the review of participants' view of leadership. In the following discussion, the literature on dimensions of culture and leadership in West Africa are considered, followed by the results of the LEAD project.

Culture and the Concept of Leadership in West Africa

Leadership is one of the most important concepts that have attracted global attention over the past decades; however, it has been conceptualized differently in different cultures. According to House et al. (2004), leadership is "the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members" (p. 15). In West Africa, specifically Ghana and Nigeria, the concept of leadership is partly a function of the traditions and cultural values of the people. By implication, an individual's perception and understanding of leadership may be influenced by the cultural setting in which they find themselves. The process of socialization plays a significant role in this regard. For instance, while growing up in a typically traditional environment, one is socialized to respect elderly people and community leaders. In addition, a child is not supposed to correct an elderly person even when they are wrong. This social arrangement tends to leave an impression on people about the infallibility and sacrosanctity of the elderly, who are regarded as the leaders of the community. This is consistent with the traditional chieftaincy system. West Africans accord traditional leaders (in some parts of Nigeria – Igwe, Oba – and other parts of Ghana – Nana, Togbe) reverence because they are regarded as fathers and custodians of the communities they rule. It is commonly thought that the paternalistic and non-egalitarian nature of traditional rule has found expression in the leadership styles adopted by managers in organizations and this is generally seen as effective by subordinates.

Another major contributory factor has to do with the patriarchal nature of most West African communities. Traditional societies are characterized by male control and dominance in all spheres of life coupled with the marriage philosophy that the man must be the head of the family. The fact that there are few women in commercial organizations is considered a demonstration of patriarchy (Suleiman, 2010). Again, other authors posit that access of women to leadership positions is constrained by gender roles (Olojede, 2004). This perhaps creates a perception of the masculine characteristics associated with the concept of leadership among traditional West Africans. However, Nigeria is perceived to be a more masculine society compared to Ghana.

The dynamics of leadership is a function of the characteristics that pertain in the society or group. This is evident in the collectivist nature of West Africans (Hofstede, 2015). Both Nigerian and Ghanaian societies are characterized by high power distance which means that subordinates expect and accept the unequal distribution or hierarchical order of power and hence see an ideal leader as someone who must instruct them. Some studies have concluded that in Ghana, for example, a leader or manager who often seeks the opinion of his subordinates is likely to be seen as weak and incapable (Zoogah & Beugré, 2013). On the other hand, a great leader is someone who acts as a superior father figure and makes all the important decisions. Similarly, many Nigerian employees think that leadership refers only to the leader, leading to a premature conclusion that they should be blamed for any failure especially in organizations (Chukwu & Eluka, 2013). Thus the leadership style adopted by most Nigerian business leaders is pre-dominantly characterized by its task-oriented nature geared towards high job performance resulting in low job satisfaction among subordinates (Ogbeidi, 2012).

The Current Research

Qualitative methods were used to explore the attributes of leadership effectiveness in Ghana and Nigeria. This consisted of the Delphi Technique and focus group discussions as well as interviews with three insiders (Nigerians in leadership positions in Nigerian organizations) and three outsiders (foreign executives in leadership positions in Nigerian organizations). In Ghana, the study was carried out using six participants in the Delphi Technique and seven (five female, two male) in the focus group.

Responses to the question of ethnic or cultural background indicated that the most important response for Ghana was religious beliefs/love of God and tradition, beliefs, and cultural practices; for Nigeria, the cultural beliefs of ancestors and community views on moral behavior was highly valued. The

belief in a deity which engenders moral cultural practices is common to both countries and to a large extent, representative of what characterizes the West African sub-region. In both countries, effective leaders were described in terms that reflect the broader leadership literature – achievement and results oriented, focused, committed, and hard-working. Integrity and courage were also seen as important. Some characteristics that might be seen as reflecting West African values include masculinity, the importance of religion and spirituality, and having a sense of humor. Nigerian responses included education and knowledge, honesty, trustworthy, fair, persevering and sociable. The findings also show that in Nigeria, leaders are classified as heroes and celebrated when they show concern for the needs and wellbeing of people in the face of challenges and life threatening circumstances. Further, Nigerian leaders who receive fair treatment and are well remunerated are seen as being motivated to work hard. Overall, for those in leadership positions and their subordinates, extrinsic rewards, recognition, a sense of pride, a sense of belonging and power tend to be motivators. The results suggest that Ghanaian leaders adopt both participatory and authoritarian styles; however, the authoritarian style is predominant (consistent with findings from Hofstede, 2001, and the GLOBE project, 2004). The description of Ghanaian employees as submissive and obedient coupled with the culture of high power distance have contributed to shaping the authoritarian style of leaders in organizations. The respondents' view of the best leadership approach for managers is to use engagement and employee involvement strategies. Nigerian leadership style is more participatory/democratic, but there are some notable exceptions of autocracy, which almost amounts to dictatorship. In addition, Nigerian leadership is often power-driven, based on status, with little regard for skills and merit.

These results have some lessons for business leaders in West Africa. Primarily, the belief in deities, moral values, and traditional practices influence the cultural and ethnic orientations of most West Africans. Spirituality and religious considerations may generally have positive implications; however there may be a negative side to this. For example, when faced with job challenges, individuals can be quick to make external attributions for their failure instead of looking for practical solutions to address the issue (Asiedu-Appiah et al., 2017; Hassan & Lituchy, 2017). It is important for organizational leaders, especially “outsiders,” to understand the culture and traditions of their employees and respect the culture and taboos of the people, while developing strategies that promote positive work attitudes. It was also observed that some local leaders are sometimes not confident enough to point out mistakes or sanction subordinates – unlike their foreign counterparts (Asiedu-Appiah et al., 2017). In this regard, local leaders should be encouraged to build their leadership capacity, including respect for time and participatory management approaches to enable

Table 1: Leadership Characteristics found in Ghana and Nigeria from LEAD Responses

Defining Variable	Ghana	Nigeria
Culture and Leadership	Interlinked	Interlinked
Role of Culture and Leadership Effectiveness	Significant degree of convergence	Significant degree of convergence
Leadership Structure	Patriarchal (male dominated)	Patriarchal (male dominated)
Leadership Effectiveness	Results-oriented, committed, courageous, hardworking and integrity	Educated, knowledgeable, trustworthy, sociable and persevering
Leadership Style	Mixed (participatory and authoritarian)	Participatory/Democratic with exceptions of autocracy
Indigenous Leadership Practices and Concepts	Adopts paternalistic, non-egalitarian nature of leadership influenced by traditional chieftaincy system	Adopts patriarchal leadership style underpinned by belief in ancestors and community landmarks on moralistic behavior

them to play effective supervisory roles. Finally, the concept of effective leadership is believed to hinge on inter-personal relationships with subordinates, honesty, fairness, and commitment to duty among others. The work environment within which the leader operates is also considered a major motivator for hard work and effective leadership. Taking cognizance of these issues, organizations can endeavor to create a congenial work environment so that both employees and leaders work effectively towards achievement of organizational goals.

Conclusion and Implications

The West African sub-region has varied cultural practices that affect the concept of leadership. The defining variables and practices of leadership indicate traits and styles that go beyond Hofstede’s cross-cultural theories of leadership. Table 1 summarizes the concept of leadership and the defining characteristics and variables.

The implication of this review brings in the question of inclusiveness as a leadership mantra to integrate diverse factors to the concept. Diversity theorists suggest a unique collaboration between what is known about leadership, leaders (traits and attributes), the country-specific environmental factors and intuitive practices in a dynamic way. Hence, there is an inherent need to reexamine the elements of effective leadership in Africa and elsewhere to include factors that create a brand and contextualized identity for corporate leadership and leadership in general. The “African brand” would include, for instance, leadership concepts that incorporate cultural diversity recognizing the potential challenge posed by the diverse customs and cultural practices. A strategy of harnessing what we have, including others and showcasing it in its own unique way is the way forward. To put it in marketing parlance, strategizing to include culture, traditions and leadership to develop the

“African leadership style” is the next level of studies. The African brand can foster development of training materials to enhance the skills of business leaders.

For future managers in Africa, the onus lies in their ability to appropriately incorporate traditional and cultural practices, recognize and professionally apply styles that lead to valuable contributions to organizational goals. Specifically, there should be a marriage of African perceptions and styles of leadership with those that promote the strengths and goals of business entities. There is therefore the need to optimize the diverse concepts and practices of leadership in Africa and that which upholds organizational success for effective demonstration of corporate leadership and leadership in general.

Endnotes

¹ Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Cote D'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

² In Africa as a whole, Christianity (62.9%), Islam (30.2%), and other faiths (6.9%), according to The Future of World Religions: Religious Population Growth Projections in Sub-Saharan Africa, 2010–2050 (Pew Research Center, March 27, 2015).

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Attributes of Leadership Effectiveness in East Africa

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Introduction

Leadership effectiveness in East Africa is becoming increasingly important, leading to new initiatives and investments in recent years. In 2014, then-President of the United States of America Barack Obama announced the creation of four leadership centers in Kenya, Ghana, Senegal, and South Africa as part of his Young African Leaders Initiative to improve the availability and quality of training programs and professional development opportunities. This paper summarizes the findings from the LEAD research project in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, which suggest both similarities and differences in perceptions of leadership effectiveness. Participants from the three countries describe effective leaders as people who are visionary, goal-oriented, and results-oriented. Further, the tribe/language, sense of community, and traditions are important cultural dispositions in all the three East African countries. The study can assist managers and academicians to better understand how leadership effectiveness is perceived by East Africans and help managers to better prepare to succeed in their leadership roles.

Eastern Africa comprises 20 varied territories (United Nations, 2016); however, East Africa often refers (especially in English) to Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, colonial territories of British East Africa and German East Africa. This region is the fastest growing in Sub-Saharan Africa with average GDP growth of 6.2% in 2015 and a combined population of 148 million people (EAC, 2015). Christianity is dominant, although other major religions include Islam and Hinduism, and many people still believe in the ancestor world. From a business perspective, the ease of doing business is getting better, but still needs to be improved. According to Hofstede (2015, 2016) Kenya and Tanzania score high on power distance, while Uganda scores lower, suggesting

that Kenyan and Tanzanian societies accept hierarchical order with distinct places in the power relationships, while Ugandans have a low acceptance of inequality in power relations between leaders and followers. All three countries are collective, showing a preference for working collaboratively with others. On masculinity, Kenya is highest, followed by Uganda, with Tanzania lower suggesting that Kenyan and Uganda societies are more competitive and achievement-oriented, while Tanzanians emphasize quality of life and wellbeing. Kenyans and Tanzanians are indifferent toward uncertainty, whereas Ugandans generally have less tolerance. Data on long-term orientation are only available for Tanzania and Uganda, where both countries score low, suggesting that they maintain their links to the past and traditions. There are no data on indulgence for Kenya and Uganda; Tanzania has a low score, suggesting restraint. These scores are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1: Cultural Dimensions:
Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda**
Scores by Country

Cultural Dimension	Kenya	Tanzania	Uganda
Power Distance	70	70	38
Individualism	25	25	30
Masculinity	60	40	57
Uncertainty Avoidance	50	50	56
Long Term Orientation	-	34	20
Indulgence	-	38	-

Source: Hofstede, 2016

The Current Project

Kenya and Uganda were part of the Delphi research of the LEAD Project. In Kenya, two rounds of Delphi were used to achieve convergence. There were ten participants in the first round and six participants in the second round. All were born in Kenya, had a post graduate education, and worked in a variety of industries. In Uganda, two rounds of the Delphi were conducted. There were 23 participants in the first round and 16 in the second round; 22 were born in Uganda while one had lived there for 26 years. Participants worked in a variety of occupations and industries. Participants from both countries highlighted their ethnic group/tribe and language as important cultural characteristics. Kenyans described their ethnic and cultural background as being aggressive, hardworking, and cosmopolitan; Ugandans used words including *foods*, *cultivated land*, and *language* as descriptors of culture. Regarding effective leaders, participants highlighted vision, and being goal- and results-oriented. They described effective leaders as being able to inspire and motivate subordinates. Leaders were also seen as motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, including achievement and monetary rewards. In Kenya, a motivator for leaders was the joy of success, in Uganda it was the community.

One focus group was conducted in Kenya, with six participants (one female, five male). Two had master's degrees, three were pursuing doctoral studies, and one participant held a PhD; they came from various occupations. Similar to the Delphi, findings show cultural/ethnic background as part of a tribe and sense of community/belonging. Participants perceived effective leaders to be visionary, team leaders, results-oriented, influencers, and change agents. Example of what motivated leaders to lead were the need to serve and succeed and financial rewards.

Based on the findings from the Delphi and focus groups, a survey was developed that included the personal characteristics of an effective leader, leadership style, leadership behaviors, delegation and authority, and traditions and gender. To date, the survey has been administered in Uganda and Tanzania. In Uganda, 85 people participated; the majority worked full-time (98.8%), 61% were male, and almost 66% had completed a graduate/postgraduate degree. The average respondent was 38 years old and had nine years' work experience. In Tanzania, 221 people participated. All were professionals working in the public and private sectors; the majority worked full-time (87.8%); 67% were male, and 42% had completed a graduate/postgraduate degree and 40% an undergraduate degree. The average respondent was 37 years old and had 11.57 years work experience. All respondents were assured that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential.

Discussion

Our findings suggest both similarities and differences in the perceptions of effective leadership in the three East African countries. In line with collectivism, the tribe/language, sense of community, and traditions are important cultural dispositions in all the countries. According to our findings, this suggests that East African countries would prefer leadership styles that are consistent with communal traits rather than individualistic characteristics mostly found in Western countries. Extant literature suggests that a directive leadership style is more likely in collectivist cultures where the interest of the group supersedes that of an individual. A supportive leadership style is also used due to the emphasis on group relations and follower well-being. In Western, individualistic cultures, a directive style is less advocated in favor of more participative leadership, delegation of authority, and charismatic and transformational leadership (Wendt et al., 2009).

Both the qualitative and quantitative results indicate that leadership characteristic/attributes (e.g., being a team leader player) and leadership style (e.g., goal- and results-oriented,

Table 2: Cultural and Leadership Dimensions for LEAD East African Countries

Cultural Dimension	Kenya	Tanzania	Uganda
Role of Tribe/Group	✓	✓	✓
Language	✓	✓	✓
Sense of Community	✓	✓	✓
Traditions	✓	✓	✓
Ethnic/Cultural Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggressive • Hard-working • Cosmopolitan 	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foods • Cultivated Land • Language
Leadership Dimensions			
Visionary Leadership	✓	✓	✓
Goal-Oriented	✓	✓	✓
Results-Oriented	✓	✓	✓
Team-Leadership	✓	✓	✓
Servant Leadership	✓	✓	✓
Motivator for Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joy of Success 	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community

visionary and servant leadership) are key factors of leadership effectiveness in East Africa. Consistent with the cross-cultural leadership literature, our data suggest that effective leaders display both directive and supportive behaviors; however, more recent research suggests that there may be a shift toward more supportive leadership behaviors which emphasize charismatic leadership, servant leadership and team leadership (Bagire, Begumisa, & Punnett, 2017).

While leadership in East Africa may generally be described as directive, East Africans recognize the need for supportive styles which can inspire and motivate followers to bring about a positive change. These supportive leadership approaches are consistent with the Anglo-American leadership theories of: (1) team leadership, which suggests that the leader's role is to facilitate the team's dynamics in order to improve team effectiveness (Norhouse, 2004), and (2) servant leadership, as described by Greenleaf (1991), which is based on the assumption that leaders view themselves as stewards and serving their followers.

Some theorists suggest that the move toward more supportive leadership styles, with a decreased emphasis on directive leadership, is due to globalization and the move to flatter organizations regardless of cultural context (Jogulu, 2010), which is consistent with the GLOBE project which argued that inspirational and team-oriented attributes are found in effective global leaders (House et al., 2004). Others suggest that colonization has impacted African patterns of leadership and urge Africans to adopt more Afro-centric perspectives of leadership (e.g., Nkomo, 2011). Hence, future research should further explore indigenized models of leadership which can provide more culturally-oriented models. Our results also suggest that past traditions and gender can play a role in leadership effectiveness in the East African context. An overview of the leadership dimensions in Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda are summarized in Table 2. A comparison of East African leadership styles and Western-based leadership concepts are summarized in Table 3.

Conclusion and Implications

The preliminary findings of the LEAD study on culture, motivation, and leadership effectiveness have both theoretical and practical implications. In the future, international business (IB) researchers should further explore the role of cultural and tribal traditions on leadership effectiveness. For example, researchers may examine how Maasai (a tribe located in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania) leadership principles can contribute to leadership effectiveness in organizations. IB researchers should also further explore how personal characteristics (e.g., gender) impact perceptions of effective leadership in various African organizational environments (e.g., for profit, non-profit, and in government). In addition, IB researchers should establish and examine

Table 3: Summary of LEAD Findings
A comparison of East African leadership styles and Western-based leadership concepts/theories

East African Leadership Style/Aspects	Western-Based Leadership
Emphasis on directive leadership	Emphasis on participative leadership (Wendt et al., 2009)
Being a team leader player	Team leadership (Norhouse, 2004)
Stewards to followers	Servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1991)
Visionary leadership	Charismatic and transformational leadership (Wendt et al., 2009)
Traditions	
Gender Differences	Gender Equality

those dimensions of servant leadership that have the greatest impact on leadership effectiveness in East Africa. We therefore encourage researchers to examine the specific aspects of tradition, personality and leadership styles to bring out more clarity on how culture, motivation and personality inform leadership effectiveness in East Africa.

Our findings show that having respect for traditions, developing appropriate personal characteristics, and adopting a visionary and servant leadership style are important elements of effective leadership and would thus contribute to the success of organizations in East African. These results can assist managers to better understand how leadership effectiveness is perceived by East Africans in general, and further explore between-country differences. Based on these findings, human resource managers should focus on further developing the important leadership characteristics and styles associated with effective leadership in East Africa, in general, and for the specific East African countries.

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Views on Effective Leadership from Insiders and Outsiders

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Introduction

What African managers consider effective leadership may not be the same as what is seen as effective by expatriates. As part of the LEAD project, insights from local African leaders (insiders) and expatriate leaders (outsiders) were researched. We found that there were very few differences and mostly commonalities between insider (locals) and outsider (expatriates) leaders interviewed. Some commonalities included: using an authoritarian leadership style, sharing a clear vision, and understanding and respecting the culture, norms and taboos of the people, and the business environment to gain acceptance. In this article, insights to culturally-appropriate effective leadership are provided. Implications include incorporating best leadership practices from other parts of the world into African organizations.

As outlined in the first paper in this issue and elsewhere (Aseidu-Appiah, Agyapong, & Lituchy, 2017; Lituchy & Punnett, 2014; Lituchy, Galperin & Punnett, 2016; Mengitsu & Lituchy, 2017; Metwally & Punnett, 2017) the LEAD research project uses an emic-etic-emic research cycle. This paper presents initial results of the second round of emic data collection, interviews with local leaders and expatriate leaders, “insiders” and “outsiders,” respectively. These interviews sought to understand the two groups thinking on effective leadership and to identify commonalities and contrasts between them.

Thinking in the leadership field has evolved substantially over the past century. Current leadership theories and models of effective leaders focus on transformational, visionary, authentic, and adaptive leadership (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009; Northouse, 2016). Avolio et al. (2009) identified the field as becoming more universal, with more constructive leadership practices being incorporated into the leadership research, the follower becoming essential in the system, and growing interest regarding antecedents of leadership, e-leadership, and shared leadership in organizations. Leadership today is viewed as a

complex process that evolves in organizations. This view can account for some of the unexpected similarities. Northouse (2016) identified multiple dimensions of trait, skills, behaviors, situational approaches, path-goal, leader-member exchange, transformational, authentic, servant, adaptive, psychodynamic, and team leadership. This illustrates the complexity of understanding what makes an effective leader. Avolio et al. (2009) note that “new leadership models emphasized symbolic leader behavior; visionary, inspirational messages; emotional feelings; ideological and moral values; individualized attention; and intellectual stimulation.” However, charismatic and transformational leadership have been the most frequently researched theories over the past 20 years.

The focus has still remained on this relationship from the viewpoint of Western leaders (Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008; Zhang, et al., 2012). The cross-cultural literature suggests that further research is required in many under-researched areas (Lituchy & Punnett, 2014; Zhang et al., 2012), and Africa has been singled out for attention. This research needs to be independent of prevailing Western organizational models, to generate better understandings of leadership effectiveness in Africa. In addition to understanding local leadership in Africa, the issue arises as to what makes an effective expatriate. When expatriate leaders use the cultural norms and expectations of leadership from their home country and attempt to operate in that framework in a new country the results are often different than anticipated (Cox, Lobel, & McLeod, 1991). Osland (2008: 10), in a direct comparison of domestic and expatriate work, found that “expatriates reported significantly higher demands for social and perceptual skills, reasoning ability, and adjustment- and achievement-orientation personality requirements in their work.” Cultural norms vary among different groups depending on the profession or sector. This explains how an expatriate leader’s behaviors in a new country can be misunderstood by their employees, whom are accustomed to different cultural norms (Cox, et al., 1991).

The Current Project

The aim of this paper is to compare and contrast insights on effective leadership from two different perspectives: local leaders (insiders) and expatriate leaders (outsiders) working in several African countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda). This approach can contribute to an African-centered, culturally appropriate understanding of effective leadership. Insights from both insider and outsider leaders can also be incorporated into practice.

As part of the larger LEAD study, 17 insiders (local leaders) and 16 outsiders/expatriates were interviewed. Participants included a CEO, managers, financial officers, professors, deans, administrators, broadcast journalists, a public service director, an inspector, an auditor, bankers, government officers, advisors, and self-employed people. The sample was a purposive non-probability sample that targeted people in leadership positions who could provide the desired information. The participants were told that data collected would be used exclusively for research purposes.

Open-ended questions examined the participants' views about leadership in their countries of residence, challenges faced,

and suggestions/advice that they could give to existing leaders, future leaders, and expatriates. These questions were asked to insiders in each country: What is your description of the leadership style in the country you live in? How is this similar to or different from what you observe in foreign visiting managers? What leadership style is most effective in your country? What advice regarding leadership style would you give foreigners coming to your country? These questions were posed to outsiders: To what extent do you have other international experience (living and working outside the home country)? What similarities (to home country) in leadership have you observed in the host African country? What differences (from home country) in leadership have you observed in the host African country? What are your perceptions of the leadership style that is most effective in the host African country? Describe some leadership challenges that you have had in the host African country? What advice regarding leadership style do you have for other foreigners going to the host African country?

Participants were contacted by phone or email. Interviews were conducted face-to-face in English. Content analysis was used to organize and synthesize the data and identify the relevant commonalities and differences between the groups.

Table 1: Commonalities and Differences between Insiders and Outsiders *

Commonalities			Differences			
	Insiders %	Outsiders %	Insiders	%	Outsiders	%
Spend time understanding followers' ideas, problems, complaints	18	13	Expats should avoid condescending attitudes that suggest that as a foreign manager they know better than locals	41	Pay more attention to the basic rights of employees, have good communication skills, and be less disappointed when dealing with subordinates	6
Be firm, dictate work, command people, and adopt an authoritarian leadership style to get work done	59	13	The relationship between leaders and subordinates is influenced by their personal relationship with the subordinates, which is in-turn influenced by religious and ethnic ties	6	The traditional African style of leadership remains the most effective...for democracy and concern for human rights to mature to the next level in most parts of Africa, there will need to be some modifications	6
Share a clear vision	35	19			Expats should be approachable	6
Allow mistakes to happen for people to learn	12	6			Expats should brainstorm with locals	6
Do not tolerate malpractice	12	25			Expats should combine good practices from other parts of the world	6
Delegate authority gradually, respect authority	6	6			Expats should work with like-minded people	6

* 17 insiders (locals) and 16 outsiders (expatriates)

Interview Results

There were very few differences between the insiders (locals) and outsiders (expatriates). One difference was that insiders (41%) thought that outsiders should avoid condescending attitudes that suggest that as a foreign manager they know better than locals. This was not mentioned by outsiders (see Table 1).

Some commonalities include: Be result-oriented, goal-driven, and well-trained and skilled (76% insiders; 44% outsiders); Be serious; fair; honest; respect time; and show integrity in terms of managerial and public leadership (47% insiders; 50% outsiders); A mixed leadership style is appropriate (59% insiders; 19% outsiders); Be firm, dictate work, command people, and adopt an authoritarian leadership style to get work done (59% insiders; 13% outsiders); Focus on capacity-building, developing subordinated, and accountability (35% insiders; 31% outsiders); and, Share a clear vision (35% insiders; 19% outsiders).

In addition both insiders and outsiders thought expatriates should: Understand and respect the culture, norms and taboos of the people, and the business environment, in order to gain acceptance (35% insiders; 44% outsiders). An outsider stated, “The traditional African style of leadership remains the most effective mainly because it is familiar. However, for democracy and concern for human rights to mature to the next level in most parts of Africa, there will need to be some modifications to the traditional African style of leadership.”

All of the preliminary findings are presented in Tables 1 and

2. Table 1 presents commonalities in conjunction with differences between the two groups, and Table 2 lists the remaining commonalities. The information presented includes more commonalities than originally anticipated but this could be due to the small sample size.

Although “commonalities” refers to factors that were mentioned by both groups, it is also relevant to consider the differences in emphasis. For example, being firm, dictating work, and so on was more important to insiders (59%) than it was to outsiders (13%), and showing respect to subordinates was more important to outsiders (50%) than it was to insiders (24%). These differences in emphasis are worthy of further exploration.

Conclusion and Implications

Although we are at the beginning of this phase of the research and the findings are limited and need to be expanded, they support those of earlier emic and etic studies (Lituchy et al., 2017), and other studies on leadership (Avolio et al., 2009; Northouse, 2016; Osland, 2008; Van Vugt et al., 2008). For example, while many of the insiders and outsider said they use an authoritarian or mixed leadership style, they also suggested using many aspect of transformational leadership. This is also similar to the LEAD Mexico results (also in this issue), where both insiders and outsiders stated that managers who exhibit transformational behaviors are more effective leaders. While it was anticipated that transformational leadership would be prevalent, a greater difference was expected since most Western expatriates bring their individualistic home country view into an African setting, which is often more

Table 2: Commonalities between Insiders and Outsiders

	Insiders %	Outsiders %
Be serious; fair; honest; respect time; and show integrity in terms of managerial and public leadership	47	50
Show respect to subordinates	24	50
Understand and respect the culture, norms and taboos of the people, and the business environment, in order to gain acceptance	35	44
Listen to everyone who has been there long-term	6	38
Consider the level of education upon dealing with people	10	6
Give clear instructions and directions	12	19
Constantly check progress	18	19
The relationship between local leaders and their subordinates should not be influenced by their personal relationship	24	13
A mixed leadership style is appropriate	59	18
Be result-oriented, goal-driven, and well-trained and skilled	77	44
Hiring practices should focus on competency instead of personal relationships and nepotism	18	6
Focus on capacity-building, developing subordinated, and accountability	35	31

communal. In this limited study this key difference was not highlighted, however further research should be conducted with larger sample sizes to more extensively discuss how this factor can possibly cause miscommunication or misunderstanding between expatriate leaders and local workers.

Indeed, further research is needed in Africa, as well as the African Diaspora. This distinction is crucial as the views of Africans and those in the African Diaspora, with the largest populations in Brazil, the United States, and Haiti, for example have different cultural norms and perspectives that may create differing views on effective leadership. These groups have been extensively studied separately and concurrently in historical contexts, yet not in terms of leadership effectiveness.

This initial study provides some early insights on effective leadership that may be used to advance cross-cultural leadership theory as well as practice. Implications of these insights suggest incorporating effective leadership practices from other parts of the world into African organizations.

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LEAD Mexico: Insights from Insider and Outsider Interviews

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Introduction

This paper presents the results of interviews with local and expatriate leaders in Mexico. They believe that transformational leadership behaviors achieve superior levels of effectiveness, although leader–follower relationships in Mexico tend to be characterized by paternalistic behaviors. The expatriates also noted that transactional leadership was important to avoid misunderstandings regarding priorities and expectations. These insights can help leaders be more effective in this context.

The “D” in the LEAD research project is for diaspora. We broadly define the African Diaspora as anyone with roots going back to the African continent (Lituchy, Ford, & Punnett, 2013). Previous LEAD research only included the Diaspora in North America and the Caribbean. The current research includes Mexico broadly and will serve as a baseline against which further work specifically on the Mexican African Diaspora can be compared. The African Diaspora in Mexico came from the African slave trade in the early colonial period (16th and 17th centuries) with an estimated 200,000–500,000 slaves coming, mostly from West Africa. Many Africans inter-married with Mexicans and are referred to as “mulatto.” Black immigrants also fled to Mexico during the years of slavery in the United States.¹ We believe that including this population in the LEAD project will add a new dimension.

Guzmán (2006) suggested that research should consider leader characteristics and behaviors that may moderate the degree of influence the leader has on followers in Mexico. Robles Francia, de la Garza Ramos, and Quintero (2008) found that managers in Mexico more frequently engage in practices that involve creating consensus and shared goals, and less frequently in looking outward for new ways of conducting business and innovating. Ruiz, Hamlin, and Esparza Martinez (2014) studied managers and non-managers in Mexico to determine the commonly held conceptions of effective leadership. They concluded that both

groups perceived leaders who behaved in a manner consistent with consideration structure were more effective than those who were autocratic.

Over the last 50 years, companies have increased their involvement in international business, making cross-cultural competency an essential element of effective leadership (Conger & Riggio, 2007). Effective leadership in cross-cultural contexts requires that individuals make a conscious effort to participate in cultural experiences that are consistent with their roles as part of an international organization or management team (Conger & Riggio, 2007). Cross-cultural leaders operating in Mexico may approach their work through transformational leadership practices, which are characterized by placing the follower at the center of the relationship, which is based on higher order, moral imperatives (Burns, 2010). This approach is consistent with the realities of the leader–follower relationship in Mexico, where the leader tends to place a great deal of confidence on the input of selected followers during the decision-making process (Robles Francia et al., 2008).

In the present study, the insights of local and expatriate leaders in Mexico contribute to the study of effective leadership. Hsieh (2010) noted that the opportunity to gain insights on effective leadership is moderated by national, group, and organizational culture is a worthy effort. This approach guides our research. For the first part of the study, presented here, we are interested in examining insights of the local Mexican leadership style, how this is similar to or different from that of other countries, what leadership style is perceived as most effective in Mexico, and the leadership challenges encountered in Mexico. In future research, we will interview and survey the diaspora population in Mexico to get their insights on effective leadership.

This study contributes to the work developed by others that extended research efforts beyond the African context to another culture (Ward, Brown, & Kiruswa, 2015). By helping to

close the research gap in leadership and culture, multinational organizations and international managers can better prepare to influence followers and create favorable working environments (Javidan, Dorfman, De Luque, & House, 2006). The study represents an extension from the LEAD project that will be expanded to the Mexican African Diaspora in the future.

The Current Study

Three local Mexican leaders and five expatriate leaders working in multinational companies in Mexico were recruited for this study. All leaders have other professionals working under them and have an international exposure of at least two years. The companies were multinationals in the medical, automotive, aerospace and electronics sectors. The five expatriates or outsiders were from different countries: Colombia, Honduras, India, South Korea, and the United States of America. There were two women, and ages ranged from 30 to 48 years. The three local leaders or insiders worked in educational, aerospace, and electronics fields, at multinational companies, and at a university with a highly international orientation; ages ranged from 39 to 63.

The participants were recruited through professional networks. Each participant received an e-mail invitation with general description of study. Those who expressed interest in participating received a phone call to provide them with more detail regarding the nature of the study. It was made clear that participation was voluntary and that their identities would be kept confidential. If they agreed, one of the researchers met with each participant at a mutually convenient time and place. The interviews were conducted in Spanish for local leaders and English for expatriate leaders. The researcher recorded responses using pen and paper, or a computer. The transcripts were then translated into English when necessary. The interview was composed of open-ended questions that assessed effective leadership styles in Mexico, as well as the differences and similarities between local and expatriate leaders. The leaders were also asked to comment on the challenges they have faced, and to make recommendations for leaders on how best to lead in the Mexican context. The data were transcribed, content-coded, and analyzed.

Results and Discussion

The expatriates, or outsiders, see the Mexican culture as one in which leading needs to be in a non-aggressive, “friendly” manner. While they recognize the teamwork and innovation orientation of the Mexican culture, they also refer to it as a “vertical” culture; hierarchy is salient in organizations. This particular aspect is so important according to the interviewees, that, as one of them stated, “This may lead to more bureaucracy within companies.” While they recognize

people are generally responsible, they also see the priority structure of Mexicans as one where work seems to matter less than family commitments and other personal life.

The outsiders were from different cultural backgrounds, and found leading in Mexico presented different challenges. The Latin Americans find the challenge of adaptation relatively easy, but the Asians find that the management of cost, quality and on-time delivery is something with which they have to struggle. They find it necessary to assign goals and follow up on assignments every day. In addition, the issue of team building, making time to foster relationships, and fine-tuning their leadership approach is a priority for them.

When asked what leadership style is most effective in Mexico, one interviewee said that a technique that has been useful is the “labeling” technique, in which the leader puts a nametag on a person according to the behavior the leader expects from that person. For instance, the leaders might expect a person to be the one to “encourage” the team to find new opportunities for business. Another person said that what matters the most is to keep a balance between “aggressiveness” versus “friendliness.” In another instance, an expatriate leader said that it was important to take the time to get to know the team members, and to work together without visibly showing authority. The importance of focusing on results, leading by example and fostering communication were also mentioned.

The advice they would give to someone in a leadership assignment in Mexico can be summed up as: let people know the difference between freedom and autonomy, so that employees understand that they may be given autonomy, but also accountability, and that in any organization people are expected to behave within limits and in accordance with company policies, procedures and culture. As with any challenge related to working with other cultures, executives need to be aware

Table 1: Leadership approach as seen practiced in Mexico

Outsiders View	Insiders View
Non-aggressive and friendly	Paternalistic with a top down approach
Hierarchy and bureaucracy is salient in organizations and the culture in general is “vertical”	Authoritarian and transactional approaches are most effective
Work seems to matter less than family commitments and other personal life	Learning the culture is a must, along with the history and the general context of the country
Flexibility to learn and adapt to changing situations while getting to know the team members	Inspirational, committed facilitators of change, disciplined, seek alliances and manage conflicts

of the task at hand and quickly learn and adapt to the new situation. According to the respondents, it is important to get to know the local culture and to adopt good practices that are customarily accepted. Accepting feedback is therefore recommended as well as developing strong relationships with team members. This, in the view of one person interviewed, will lead executives to gain respect and trust from subordinates and that will render the leader's work more effective. Finally, another person said, in a cultural environment such as that in Mexico, it is always important to keep in mind the need for training and career development for employees.

Local leaders, or insiders, perceive the Mexican leadership style as rather paternalistic with a top-down approach in which instructions are given without much participation from the subordinate in the decision making process. All of the insiders interviewed said that the Mexican leadership style is authoritarian and that transactional approaches are most effective for getting people to comply and follow mandates from the top.

When comparing the Mexican leadership style with that of foreign managers they said that, to begin with, foreign leaders appear to have a broader vision of business, particularly when they have been exposed to international assignments. They are more oriented towards teamwork, team decision making and continuous and open communication. More focus and attention is put on costs and productivity. However, they also said that it depends on the country of comparison, for instance, executives from the United States of America executives focus on results, aligning people's activities with the objectives of the organization, and taking into consideration people's opinion to a reasonable extent. Executives from countries such as South Korea also focus on results, but people are not taken much into account when it comes to the decision making process. The most effective leadership style in Mexico, from the insiders' perspective, would be "transformational leadership", in which leaders try to develop other leaders at different levels of the organization. In essence, a leadership that looks for balance between results orientation and people orientation, so that results are obtained through the willing collaboration of people. A summary of leadership styles is presented in Table 1

The interviewees also mentioned that the focus on leadership in Mexico should be in developing local talent to take on higher levels of responsibility by applying situational leadership. In order to achieve this leadership development, education and, more specifically, self-learning, plays a key role, along with an attitude of openness to feedback from those being led. Additionally, for foreigners, learning the Mexican culture is a must, along with the history and the general context of the country. Finally, one local leader interviewed said that leaders need to be inspirational, committed facilitators of change,

Table 2: Practical Recommendations for Executives Leading in Mexico

Key Recommendations for Leading in Mexico	
1.	Determine goals and follow up on assignments every day.
2.	Focus on results, leading by example and foster communication.
3.	Make time to foster relationships and be open to feedback from team members.
4.	Use "transformational leadership", in which leaders try to develop other leaders at different levels of the organization.
5.	Develop talent to take on higher levels of responsibility by applying situational leadership.
6.	Take advantage of the teamwork and innovation orientation of the Mexican culture.
7.	Let people understand when they are given autonomy, but also accountability.

disciplined, seek alliances, and manage conflicts.

Conclusion and Implications

The current research examined the experiences of eight managers (three local, five expatriates) who have led their organizations successfully in Mexico. The findings, summarized in Table 1 above, suggest that both outsiders and insiders identify the hierarchical top down nature of the Mexican culture. Local leaders believe that individuals in Mexico respond favorably to a transformational leadership approach, with both a task and people orientation. The leader-follower relationship needs to be based on clearly understood roles. The expatriates felt that relationships were important, but that it is relatively easy for subordinates in Mexico to lose sight of their work responsibilities and dedicate more time to family or social commitment, thus it was necessary to enact more transactional roles.

As a result of this study some practical recommendations for leading in Mexico are presented (see Table 2). Taken from the considerations of both outsiders and insiders, what is essential is the relationship orientation focusing on developing the people towards higher levels of task complexity and responsibility, while keeping close follow up on organizational objectives.

The results from this study are consistent with earlier LEAD research in other Diaspora countries including Canada, USA, and the Caribbean (Galperin, 2017; Galperin, et al., 2014; Holder et al., 2014). For example, in the Caribbean, effective leaders are transformational, results oriented, and transactional to motivate others and lead by example. Our results are also consistent with the insider and outsider paper in Africa presented in this issue, which reported that local African leaders (see Table 3) believe effective leadership includes authoritarian and transactional leadership styles as well.

Consistent with the Mexican study, expatriate leaders working in African countries found a mixed leadership style is most appropriate. They must adopt a participatory style and engage subordinates in some situations, but, leaders must also give direction and closely monitor subordinates.

Further research is needed in Mexico and other Latin American countries, and specifically focusing on the African Diaspora. This study provides initial insights on effective leadership that may be used towards advancing cross-cultural leadership theory and informing managers regarding effective leadership styles in Mexico. These results also provide a Mexican baseline that will inform future research focusing on the African Diaspora in Mexico.

Table 3: Comparison on Mexican and African Effective Leadership Styles

Mexican Insiders View	African Insiders View
Paternalistic style with a top down approach is effective	Be firm, dictate work, command people...is effective
Authoritarian and transactional leadership styles are effective	Authoritarian leadership style is most effective
Learning the culture is a must, along with the history and the general context of the country	Expats should avoid condescending attitudes that suggest that as a foreign manager they know better than locals
Inspirational, committed facilitators of change, disciplined, seek alliances and manage conflicts	Spend time understanding followers' ideas, problems, and complaints
	Share a clear vision*

* Not mentioned by the Mexican insiders

Endnotes

¹ www.mexonline.com/history-blacks.htm

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