The Discourse of "OGA" As Relations of Power in Organisational Praxis: Towards A Theory of Organisational Leadership

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Abstract

This study proposed a framework for understanding the process and outcome of interaction between indigenous Western leadership behaviours in an organisation undergoing change. The concept of Oga was used to examine the process of organisational change in order to understand the mechanisms promoting and/or sustaining the coexistence of two seemingly incompatible leadership behaviours drawn from two different cultures. Using Weber's ideal constructs of leadership and authority relationships of rational bureaucracies in combination with studies in cross-cultural and comparative management, a conceptual and theoretical framework was developed to examine the interaction and coexistence of Western and traditional models and practices of leadership behaviour within a cultural context. Methodologically, the case study approach in the tradition of qualitative research was used through ethnographic and phenomenological techniques of data collection and analysis. It is argued that qualitative research method is appropriate for this research as it captured the dynamic process of the coexistence of two different types of leadership behaviours drawn from two different cultures. Findings indicated that the coexistence of Western and traditional practice of leadership behaviour as embedded in the concept of Oga produced and facilitated mechanism for organisational commitment. This coexistence created and sustained the realization of the goals of the organisation through the practice of organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) by both superiors and subordinates. Conclusively, the concept of leadership syncretism was proposed as a framework for analyzing leadership behaviour and authority relations in situations of organisational change within a cultural context. It is recommended and suggested that concepts of convergence, divergence and crossvergence as they are used in the literature need to be re-visited.

Keywords: Oga, leadership theories, leadership behaviour, authority relationship, culture, convergence, divergence, crossvergence, organisational commitment, organisational citizenship behaviour.

Introduction

"Leaders do not lead people: They lead organisations that, in addition to people, include social roles, cultural values, beliefs, hopes and expectations" (Crooke, Csikszentmihalyi, & Bikel, 2015, p. 146)

Every organisation has a purpose and it is the desire to achieve this purpose efficiently and effectively that creates the need for leadership. Leaders of organisations plan, organize, provide direction, and exercise control over organisational resources, material and human, in order to achieve the mission, goals and objectives in an acceptable manner. The main aim of leadership behaviour, however, is to *influence* the actions and behaviour of members of the organisation because it is through the behaviour of the members that organisations' goals are attained. This, in turn, demands commitment to the mission, and goals of the organisation. The relationship between leadership behaviour and employee organisational commitment (EOC) has long been established in the literature dealing with leadership behaviour, motivation, employee commitment and organisational performance (Bass, 1984; Avolio & Bass, 2004; Koech & Namusonga, 2010).

Now, with the imperative of globalisation, accompanied by a growing interest in the behaviour of leaders and authority relationship across culture, the subject of comparative management has also heightened the debate on the "compatibility" of Western leadership practices in non-Western cultural and organisational contexts (Ogbor & Williams, 2003). In this debate, there are the proponents of "compatibility theses", implying that to be functional, the values, norms, ideologies, beliefs, practices and antecedents of Western leadership behaviour and authority relationship should be compatible with that of non-Western leadership behaviour and authority relationship (Abrahamson & Lane, 1990; Adler, 2002; Adler, 1983; Ogbor, 1999). This perspective nourishes itself with the assertion that globalisation invariably entails Westernization and as such the

global economy is a manifestation of Western ideological value systems which are also played out in organisational behaviour: leadership behaviour, employee behaviour, motivational practices and employee organisational commitment. This is the essence of the "convergence theses" whose roots can be traced as far back to the emergence of cross-cultural and comparative management as a discipline (Cummings and Schmidt, 1972; Dole, 1973; Helmich and Papageorge, 1979; Ohmae, 1990; Ogbor, 1990/2003; Guillén, 1994; Hofstede, 1980/1993; Shenkar, 1995).

As Ogbor and Williams (2003, 7) have shown, the imperatives of globalisation and the forces driving the global economy have given new impetus to the debate on whether the cross-cultural transfer and application of management practices results in cultural convergence (i.e. cultures becoming more alike) or divergence (i.e. cultures becoming more dissimilar and distinct) (Francesco & Gold, 1998; Ralston, Holt, Terpstra, and Kai-Cheng, 1997). The idea that economic ideology drives cultural values due to the imperatives of globalisation and by implication, increased Westernization is deeply rooted in the convergence thesis (Ogbor & Williams, 2003).

Convergence implies that as nations become industrialized, there is a significant change in values towards behaviour that embraces free-market capitalism (Abrahamson & Lane, 1990; Hodgetts & Luthans, 1997; Ohmae, 1985/1990; Ralston, et al., 1997; Sassen, 1991). The foundational argument for this theses is that since industrialized nations, until recently, have been equated with Western capitalistic countries, convergence has meant that non-Western countries would be expected to assimilate ideologically driven values (such as leadership norms and beliefs) common to industrialized Western countries. Taken to its extreme, American management and leadership models, ideologies and behaviours (as forces of globalisation) would comprise the force for this change. Other studies in this tradition have indicated that traditional norms are dysfunctional to the transfer and application of Western managerial practices in a non-Western context.

In the context of Africa, some studies have argued that most African leaders assumed their role with limited experience and training in the art and science of directing and effectively managing the affairs of a modern state (Kamuntu, 1993:103). Others blame the Africa's leadership crisis as a result of the leader's "lost or lack of control of effective leadership. For a example, Afegbua and Adejuwon (2012: 151) posit that: "The trouble with Africa is simply and squarely

a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the African character or political system in operation. The character of political leadership became a problem as most of them lost or lacked control of effective leadership. This led to the scramble and partition of state resources to suit their purpose."

Eze (1995:96) has this to say about leadership in Nigeria;

> "In considering the Nigerian situation, there seem to be certain issues in Nigerian leadership which require experimental investigations. For instance, it has been generally asserted that Nigerian management is marked by authoritarian leadership characteristics and practices. They are said to have maintained a rigid dictatorial approach, as well as master-servant, rider-horse relationship with subordinates. In fact, it is been said that a Nigerian man is by nature and training an autocrat who demands nothing but respect and obedience from his subordinates, and those younger and lower in status than him. Also in public sector, the leadership has been associated with certain undesirable traits such as double-standards, pursuance of selfish goals, lack of seriousness and indiscipline."

In fact, as far back to the mid-sixties, the African culture has been implicated for the leadership challenges with which the continent is confronted. For example, Fleming (1996) reports that the internal efficiencies in East African bureaucracies conflicted with the need for traditional authority and this conflict resulted in the inability of the bureaucracies to achieve their goals.

More recent studies in international management, cross-cultural management, comparative management and globalisation have argued in favor of a convergence global economy – pointing to how traditional cultural practices in a non-Western setting are antithetical to economic growth and progress (e.g. Osland, Oddou, Bird & Osland; Jung & Avolio, 1999; Ohmae, 1995; Hodgetts & Luthans, 1997; Jeannet, 2000; Robertson, 1992). Similarly, studies have speculated about various conditions that may promote or inhibit a given culture's acceptance of new forms of organisational behaviour. Some observers have named these conditions "human resource management" (Oddou & Mendenhall, 1992; Shenkar, 1995), "compatibility" (Levine, 1980), "norms of consistence" (Staw, 1984) and "cross-national ideological support" (Cole, 1984).

On the other side of the debate are those who argue that indigenous organisational and value systems and

practices will continue to persist irrespective of the transfer and application of Western ideological and value practices in a society and organisation. This is the tenets of the *divergence theses*. Proponents of the divergence approach to the understanding of cross-cultural and comparative management practices argue that national culture, not economic ideology, drives values, and that even if a country adopts capitalism, the value systems of those in the workforce will remain largely unchanged (e.g. Hofstede, 1984). Guillén (1994) demonstrates that institutional arrangements, cultural values and religions, not only the type of economy, technology and industrial efficiency create ideologies that become guidelines for the way people "manage" organisations. This line of reasoning is not, however, a new one. Some of the "classics" in cross-cultural and comparative management studies such as Cummings and Schmidt (1972), Helmich and Papageorge (1979), and Hofstede (1980) have long shown the persistence of cultural practices in the midst of industrialization.

The general idea involved in the notions of convergence and divergence in the application of cross-culturally transferred organisational practices, seems to imply that the greater the "compatibility" (the degree of congruence between the norms, values and goals of innovation and those of its hosts), the greater the likelihood of its acceptance. The "compatibility theses", is not totally different from the position advocated by the convergence theses because they both hold to the assumption that Western leadership practices must either be compatible with indigenous practices or not. In these theses, there seems to be no "middle ground."

A third explanation of the behaviour of cross-cultural management and organisational practices has been termed "crossvergence." Its proponents argue that there can be an integration of cultural and ideological influences resulting in a value system that is "in between" the values supported by national culture and economic ideology (Ralston, Gustafson, Cheung, & Terpstra, 1993). Ralston and his associates have suggested "there will be an integration of cultural and ideological influences that results in a unique value system that borrows from both national culture and economic ideology" (1997, p.183). In a similar manner, Afegbua and Adejuwon (2012) point out that "The challenge to African leaders is thus to develop the capacity that would enable us to strike a balance between the values of African societies and the governance that our nations must follow. However, the concern must be to blend the two rather than to treat them as if they were mutually exclusive".

Like the convergence and the divergence approaches, the crossvergence proposition is limited in its explanation of the existence of two incompatible leadership and authority practices in an organisation. In particular, the crossvergence proposition is silent on the conditions in which two forms of leadership behaviour can coexist. In addition, whether this "melting pot philosophy of value formation" implies a full realization of both alien and host country's cultural norms in a situation of cross-cultural transfer and application of organisational practices remains unclear; the processes involved in the realization of this "unique value system" are not known. Furthermore, the process by which one must "blend the two, rather than treat them as if they were mutually exclusive" is not treated. And, more importantly, questions pertaining to the fate of those aspects of the opposing norms and values not assimilated in this process of "selective" borrowing and adaptation remains largely unanswered.

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM, OBJECTIVES AND SETTING OF THE STUDY
The Research problem
From the preceding discussion, it can be inferred that the extant literature has not paid enough attention to the challenges encountered when one leadership norms and value systems are confronted with another one, to put it mildly. In cross-cultural and comparative management studies, several works have been done in areas that distinguish "American management practices" from other parts of the world. However, most of these studies, including those of Hofstede are "Asian-centric"; concentrating more on the Japanese and Chinese management and leadership practices (e.g., Brakeman, Chen, George, Luo, & Tsui's, 2015; Bai & Xi, 2012; Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999; Keane, 2006; Lee & Sharif, 2014; Liu & Ipe, 2010; Miah & Bird, 2007; Rossberger & Krause, 2015). Studies done with a focus on the experience of African societies within the general framework of cross-cultural and comparative management studies are scanty (Ogbor, 1999). In other words, there is need for research that draws example from Africa's experience of organisational and leadership change in the context of cross-cultural transfer and implementation of Western managerial, organisational and leadership practices.

A second major problem is that the use of convergence and divergence, and even crossvergence, as theoretical concepts for the analysis of the interaction between "imported" leadership practices and indigenous leadership norms and behaviour, fails to leave room for circumstances or contingencies that could mitigate potential clashes of different cultural norms and values. As noted in the introduction,

discussions regarding convergence, divergence and crossvergence did not provide answers to a number of questions. Specifically, questions pertaining to the fate of those aspects of the opposing norms and values not assimilated in this process of "selective" borrowing and adaptation remains largely unanswered.

A third area of concern, also considered as a problem, is in the area of research methods and methodology. The problem is that most cross-cultural or comparative management studies seem to employ only quantitative techniques for data gathering and analysis. It has been suggested by management and organisation behaviour researchers that such methodological approaches that overly rely on statistical data is deficient in understanding the nuances of cultural phenomena in organisations in transition. Specifically, Astley (1984) points out that the rigorous statistical analysis which proliferates in the academic journals of management science are generated less because of their predictive value in explaining objective reality than because of the support they lend to the abstracted hypotheses which constitute the rarefied world-views of analytical perspectives. Thus, what is needed here is a research method and methodologies capable of explaining the dynamics of organisational and leadership change in context.

Research Objectives

The major objective of this study is to set forth a possible framework for understanding the interaction of indigenous leadership behaviour and authority relations with that of Western leadership values, ideologies, norms and orientations in an organisation undergoing change. This objective is informed by the fact that most organisational behaviour studies with a focus on organisational performance, motivation and employee organisational commitment (EOC) have held the behaviour of leaders as the culprit for organisational failure in Africa in general and in Nigerian society and work organisations in particular (Folarin, 2010; Koechi & Namusonga, 2010).

The second objective is to analyse the process of change in an organisation in order to understand the mechanisms promoting and/or sustaining the coexistence of two seemingly incompatible leadership behaviours drawn from two different cultures.

The third objective is to achieve an understanding of the fate of those aspects of the opposing norms and values not assimilated or blended in the process of interaction between two seemingly incompatible leadership behaviour and authority relationship in an organisation in transition.

The fourth objective is to look for new methodological approaches in studying organisational change and leadership behaviour within a cultural context. That is, aim is to develop a research approach capable of understanding the meanings organisation members ascribed to their actions when confronted with two opposing leadership behaviour in a period of organisational change.

The Nature of the Organisation and the Setting of the Study

The setting of this study is Hayibo Corporation.[1] Hayibo Corporation was established in Nigeria in the late fifties, before the country became independent in 1960 from the then British Colonial Administration. The salient features of the organisation mirror those commonly found in state-owned agencies and departments, which, in this case, included: (i) it is owned and controlled by the Federal Government of Nigeria; (ii) its accounts and conducts/activities are subject to executive and parliamentary oversight; (iii) its employees are recruited under terms and conditions determined by the organisation itself; and (iv) it is administered and managed by a board of directors, employed by the government upon parliamentary approval. These characteristics were believed to enable the organisation function as an autonomous body while remaining under broad public control. The organisation is ultimately accountable to the public through a federal ministry, which oversees its operations. However, the relationship between the ministry and the organisation is such that the latter enjoys as free a hand as possible in its day-to-day operations.

Hayibo Corporation has an executive board whose chairman serves as the chief executive and is appointed by the Federal government upon approval by the National Assembly. The heads of the functional departments are also members of the board, including two other members drawn from outside the organisation. A major feature of this arrangement is that the body responsible for policy is not separate from management. At the time of the study, the organisation had an executive board of thirteen members.

THE THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL SETTING

Most studies that examine the application and interaction of Western organisational, management and leadership practices in the context of "traditional" non-Western societies are usually done in a comparative framework. In the literature such theoretical framework and mode of conceptualization are derived generally from the works of Weber (1949), Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) and

Hofstede (1980; 1983; 1984, and 1985). Hofstede's work has been instrumental in comparing management and leadership practices across national cultures. Hofstede's work, however, as useful as they are, are not encompassing enough to examine the deeper sociological, institutional and cultural underpinnings informing leadership practices in a non-Western "traditional" environment, such as Africa. As far as this researcher is concerned, Weber's "ideal types" conceptualization of the differences between Western and Non-Western societies (not particularly nation-states) is more "ideal" for this present study. The reason is that its application is encompassing – treating, from a sociological and anthropological perspectives, the "deeper" structures of the functioning of organisations and leadership/authority behaviours across a wide range of societies. Over the years, Weber's constructs have not only been applied in different contexts, they are also enduring and have stood the test of time over the years.

The Cultural Context of Western Organisational Leadership

In cross-cultural and comparative management studies, culture, long defined as 'the totality of man's products' (Berger & Luckmann, 1967), 'a set of control mechanism for the governing of behaviour' (Geertz, 1973) or as 'the way people in a society are collectively programmed' (Hofstede, 1980), has been used to explain managerial and organisational behaviour across cultures, especially in the area of leadership and authority behaviour.

The cultural context of Western leadership and authority behaviour can be examined using Weber's concept of rational authority and rational bureaucracy. In Weber's rational bureaucracy, leadership and authority behaviour have been used to distinguish between authority relations in Western societies (rational authority) and those found in non-Western societies (traditional or patrimonial authority). The term, *rational authority* describes the leadership and authority features in modern Western societies and, according to Weber (1949), underpins the rational bureaucratic organisation with the following assumptions and characteristics:

Achievement Orientation: It is assumed that people in modern Western societies usually insist on evidence of "what a person can do" (e.g. scholastic examinations, quality and quantity of output, etc.) in determining the criteria for leadership role recruitment and allocation, and in determining the criteria for distribution of rewards. Similarly, promotion within the context of the bureaucracy and forms of work organisations is based upon merit.

Specificity orientation: Official relationships in Western societies are normally such that the duties or functions which a subordinate may be called on to render at the request of a superior are well defined, fixed and circumscribed by formal contractual undertakings. In the bureaucratic "culture", a paraphrase of Weber reads that job description should exist for each position, which should create a high degree of specialization. Moreover, the bureaucratic conduct is to be governed by impersonal rules and regulations. Thirdly, order and reliability are to be maintained primarily through written communication.

Universalistic Orientation: The principle of universalism requires that the eligibility, worth, and treatment of persons in regard to social role or institution should not be determined by considerations irrelevant to the stated functions of that role or institution.

Secular Authority: The obligation to obey authority in Western societies is normally derived from mundane claims and acknowledgement rather than on some sort of religious or supernatural ordination of the person exercising the authority.

These "ideal types" of leadership and authority behaviour as proposed by Weber and his intellectual heirs (e.g. Parsons, 1951; Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961) have influenced the thinking of management theorists in their attempts to explain the development and patterns of international management, globalisation, industrialization and the behaviours of organisations across cultures (e.g. Trompenaars, 1990; Hofstede, 1980; Ohmae, 1990).

The application of Weber's "ideal" types in comparative management studies resulted in the use of these constructs in designing frameworks for analysis. To the extent that they are "ideal" constructs, some researchers have argued that organisation development (or change) in a non-Western context often presumes a total acceptance of Western values and a total displacement of non-Western ones (Dunlop, 1987; Ohmae, 1985; Sassen, 1991).

As noted in the introduction, the application of the convergence and divergence explanations of cross cultural transfer of organisational practices would imply that a non-Western culture intent on adopting a Western model of leadership must also assume a Western culture of work, motivation, and authority relationships which these ideal types describe - namely, a rational bureaucracy. The implication of such propositions has been noted by Ogbor (1999, 367) when he argues that "If innovation inevitably produces a kind of chain reaction of mutually

reinforcing consequences, then all pre-existing antithetical qualities will necessarily be driven out or displaced in order to give room for a Weberian ideal type of rational authority."

It is interesting to note in this context that the very terms characteristically applied by researchers in this tradition to such situations as modernization, industrialization, globalisation, convergence and divergence, is indicative of the notion that societies subjected to Western influence are on their way from one state of affairs to another predefined end. Inherent in this idea is that non-Western societies are presented with an ultimate and unavoidable choice between mutually incompatible attitudes, institutions and principles of action (Sassen, 1991). In other words, the basic alternatives available to such people are either total displacement of their cultural order (to industrialize in the direction of the Western experience) or complete rejection of the alien cultural order (to maintain their cultural norms).

To conceptualize the experience of non-Western societies' modernization, industrialization and globalisation as an unavoidable choice between incompatible social and cultural arrangements, however is to rule out other conceivable possibilities (Ogbor, 1990; Ogbor & Williams, 2003).

For instance, in certain contexts of transfer and application of cross-cultural management models, a conflict of existing and novel arrangements might not arise because: (a) a given element of Western cultural norm coincides with an existing non-Western cultural norm, (b) a given element of Western culture is normatively neutral for the non-Western cultural norm, or (c) the imported Western cultural norm is positively instrumental, functional, or reinforcing in relation to a host culture's existing norms and ideologies. It is suggested here that the conventional conceptualization of organisational change across cultures fails to leave room for contingencies that could mitigate potential clashes of different cultural norms and values.

The Cultural Context of Authority and Leadership Features in the Nigerian Society

The six most salient features of traditional leadership and authority in the Nigerian traditional culture are: (1) theocracy; (2) gerontocracy; (3) hereditary legitimacy; (4) paternalism; (5) symbolic titles; and (6) affectivity and diffuseness in the quality of official relationship (see Ogbor, 1990; Ogbor & Williams, 2003).

Theocracy: One common feature of administrative leadership and authority relations in the Nigerian traditional societies is the pervading influence of religion. As an authority concept, it implies a system of administration and leadership based on religious legitimation. Among the three dominant ethnic groups in the Nigerian society (the Hausa-Fulanis, Igbos, and Yorubas) as well as in other groups, one of the basic sources of authority is the ability to invoke supernatural power sanctioned by a particular religious system. Among the Hausa-Fulanis, the *emir* (the traditional and religious head) possesses a wide range of power, augmented by appeals to the ideals of Islam, which combine temporal power and religious authority in the person of the ruler (Ogbor, 1990). Among the Igbo people, for instance, law and custom are believed to have been handed down from the spirit world, from time immemorial and from ancestor to ancestor. Traditionally, the Igbo people believe that their gods and ancestors are directly involved in the running of their community affairs. Hence when an Igbo man dies, he is said to "be joining his ancestors".

Gerontocracy: The Igbos' age-grade system exemplifies social stratification where age groups perform specific duties within the community. Future influence in the community is determined by membership in age groups. Implicit in this authority relationship is the belief that because of their age, the elders stand between the gates of the physical earth and that of the unseen world. Thus, disobeying the authority of the elders is taken to mean a departure from the behaviour approved by the gods and ancestors.

Hereditary Legitimacy: The traditional society of the Hausa-Fulani is divided into a ruling class (*sarakuna*) and a commoner class (*talakawa*). Membership in either class is usually fixed at birth. Eligibility for the highest office of state, the *emirship*, is confined to descendants of an emir whose mantle was attained in more or less ancient times. The hereditary principle also determines access to the bulk of the other high offices of state, including those reserved for heirs of ancient freeborn holders of certain offices and titles. In most traditional Nigerian societies (and indeed in African societies), ascendancy to position is mostly determined by lineage and inheritance. Positions, in the traditional sense of word, are mostly predetermined following family lineage.

Paternalism and Personalism: An incumbent authority holder is expected to give protection to that he or she is chosen to lead. The allegiance of persons to superiors in this context is secured through and expressed in the receipt of patronage ranging from gifts, the award of office and title to full economic support. Beneficiaries of such support, protections and favors in return owe the authority holder loyalty.

Leaders maintain their positions while they render their obligation to the people, i.e. continuous provision of the protection and assistance they are "morally" and not "duty" bound to provide. Should their ability to do this diminish, should leaders no longer be able to fulfill this paternalistic role, the members of the group will transfer their allegiance to some other individual who can more adequately play the paternalistic role. Through the paternalistic role, a "personality cult" is built around the leader.

Symbolic Titles: Great importance is attached to titles in the Nigerian culture, both traditional and religious ones. A title is a symbol that distinguishes the individuals in authority from non-authority holders.

Affectivity and Diffuseness in the Quality of Official Relationships: Traditional Nigerian authority patterns are based on subordinate loyalty to superiors rather than some impersonal standard of official relationship. This affective value facilitates expressive relationships over instrumental ones. A related facet is that the duties and obligations involved, and the rewards and benefits attached to the performance of duties are not precisely defined; they are instead characterized by a cultural orientation of *diffuseness* of functions and rewards.

LEADERSHIP, ORGANISATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

The concept of leadership is generally accepted as old as the discipline of the social sciences itself. As a social construct, it has been seen from different theoretical perspectives and it is futile at this juncture to employ a single overarching definition. In contemporary discourses on organisational leadership, the most prominent theories in use are (i) trait leadership theory, (ii) contingency/situational theory, (iii) path-goal theory, (iv) task-oriented/people-oriented theory, (v) transformational theory, (vi) transactional theory, and (vii) social exchange theory (for an extensive discussion of these theories, see Northouse, 2004; Sashkin, 2004; Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009; Aycan, Schyns, Sun, Felfe & Saher, 2013).

Ubegbu (1999 provides a definition that seems to capture the core elements in variegated conceptualization of the term "leadership". According to Ubegbu (9999), leadership is the process of creating the subordinates' identification with the group's mission and creating their desires to achieve the group's goal. Graig (2005:132) considers leadership as a social influence process in which the leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates in an effort to reach organisational goals. While Robert et al (2004) affirms that leadership involves a complex interaction among the leader, the followers, and the situation.

For reasons of comparison, leadership behaviour is discussed here using Weber's constructs. These constructs will then be used as parameters to describe the actual behaviour of the leaders in terms by which they fit into the existing discourses and praxis. We will start the discussion here by relating the concept of leadership behaviour to organisational citizenship behaviour in order to understand the cultural context of leadership behaviour in a non-Western environment.

Leadership and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

In industrial and organisational psychology, organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) is a person's voluntary commitment within an organisation or company that is not part of his or her contractual tasks. Over the past three decades, interest in these behaviours has increased substantially as organisational behaviour has been linked to overall organisational effectiveness in the workplace. Organ (1988) defines OCB as "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation". Organ's definition of OCB includes three critical aspects that are central to this construct:

i. First, OCBs are thought of as discretionary behaviours, which are not part of the job description, and are performed by the employee as a result of personal choice.

ii. Second, OCBs go above and beyond that which is an enforceable requirement of the job description.

iii. Finally, OCBs contribute positively to overall organisational effectiveness.

Leadership behaviours have also been found to be an important predictor of OCB. These behaviours fall into four categories: transformational leadership behaviour, transactional leadership behaviour, behaviours having to do with the path-goal theory of leadership, and behaviours having to do with the leader-member exchange theory. In the context of leadership behaviour and OCB, three specific leadership behaviours (transformational, transactional and social exchange) are particularly relevant in our analysis.

Briefly, *transformational* leadership behaviours include articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering the acceptance of group goals, high performance expectations, and intellectual stimulation

(Antanokis, Avolio & Sivasubramaniam, 2003). In transformational leadership behaviour, the leader enhances the morale, performance, and motivation of employees, inspires change driven by a strong purpose, and is able to create a culture of trust and innovation within the organisation. Five components are identified in transformational leadership behaviour. These are: idealized attributes, idealized behaviours, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These are considered to be transformational leadership behaviours.

Transactional leadership is a leadership behaviour or style that focuses on supervision, organisation, and performance. In transactional leadership behaviour, a leader promotes compliance by followers through both rewards and punishments. In many cases, the reward is through extrinsic motivation, whereby the transactional leader aims to elicit desired organisational commitment and performance from the team by motivating them externally (e.g., through rewards that are outside of the contractual and official basis of engagement). Transactional leadership behaviour has two types of behaviours: contingent reward behaviour and non-contingent punishment behaviour (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt & Van Engen, 2003).

Social Exchange Leadership Behaviour: In social exchange leadership behaviour, subordinates' job satisfaction or commitment will mediate the relationship between *leadership behaviours* and (a) *social exchanges* and (b) economic *exchanges*. Employees respond to *leader* expectations and *behaviours* by modifying their *behaviours* and views of the *exchange* relationship. Give and take on both sides are vital, because as Homans (1961, p. 286, cited in Hollander, 1980) puts it, "Influence over others is purchased at the price of allowing one's self to be influenced by others." In a relationship of social exchange, the leader receives approval in the form of status, esteem, and the potential for greater influence. The followers in turn receive the benefits of the leader's efforts, if successful, in the form of favorable group results. A lack of group success removes the major benefit provided by the leader, and thereby puts his or her position at risk (Jacobs, 1971, cited in Hollander, 1980). Social exchange leadership behaviour is a type of power relationship in which both leader and subordinate depends on one another in a mutually agreed-upon, unconditional, morally-sanctioned and reciprocal exchange relationship (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999).

Leadership, Organisational Citizenship Behaviour and Organisational Commitment

Multiple studies and meta-analyses have been conducted to look at the relationship between OCBs and organisational performance and success. Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1994) looked at an insurance agency and found that the OCBs civic virtue and sportsmanship were both significantly related to indices of sales performance. Podsakoff, Ahearne, and MacKenzie (1997) examined paper mill workers and found that helping behaviour was significantly related to product quality. Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Paine and Bacharach (2000) found that civic virtue and helping behaviour were significantly related to the percent of team quota sales. Waltz and Niehoff (2000) examined 30 different restaurants and found that helping behaviour was significantly related to operating efficiency, customer satisfaction, and quality of performance. Researchers found that helping behaviour was also negatively correlated with wasted food.

More recently, Podsakoff, Blume, Whiting, and Podsakoff (2009) found that OCBs were positively related to unit-level performance and customer satisfaction. Nielsen, Hrivnak, and Shaw (2009), in their meta-analytic review of the existing group literature, examined the relationship between OCBs and performance at the group level. These researchers found a positive and significant relationship between overall OCB and performance at the group level. In addition, Nielsen et al. (2009) found that similar patterns of relationships existed for each dimension of OCB: civic virtue, sportsmanship, altruism, conscientiousness, and courtesy.

In summary, the relationship between leadership behaviour, OCB and organisational performance can be stated along the recent and emerging interest in ethical leadership behaviour. Brown and Treviño (2005) defined ethical leadership as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication" (p. 120). The moral ground of this concept is close to the tenets of traditional leadership behaviour and authority relationship as embedded in the concept and practice of *Oga*, which is an extended form of patron-client social exchange relationship. From social exchange relationship, we believe that in terms of ethical leadership influence, the extent to which the Nigerian society adheres to traditional moral values will determine their responses to ethical leadership and OCB. Ethical leadership, in this context, embodies the call for organisational citizenship behaviour. In other words, it is difficult to discuss the values of Nigerian

traditional leadership values without recourse to ethical leadership and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

METHODOLOGY AND SETTING

The setting in which any piece of research is done will undoubtedly influence or determine the nature of methodological approach to be adopted. The setting of this present research is on organisational changes that took place in a large organisation in the public sector in Nigeria. During the process of change numerous novel practices were introduced, most especially in the area of leadership behaviour and authority relationship in the organisation.

As research has been indicated in a number of studies, there will always be problems in organisational practices resulting from varieties of situations that call for organisational change. These situations may include poor employee commitment, poor leadership behaviour, general human resource management practices, incompatibility between indigenous and foreign organisational and leadership practices, ethics, etc (Mustafa & Lins, 2005; Newman & Nollen, 1996; Graig, 2005). As noted in several studies, these problems most often surface during the formulation and implementation of changes in organisations, especially when novel organisational and leadership practices are introduced into environments with different institutional and socio-cultural arrangements (Ogbor, 1990; Goodman, 1984; Staw, 1984).

Defining and Articulating the Organisation's Problems

The initial research contact with the organisation was to investigate the outcome of organisational changes that were brought to bear in the organisation. The changes introduced into the organisation were a response to perceived organisational problems identified by the policy-makers and a multinational consulting company. The organisational problems identified by the consulting company were seen as rooted in the influence of the wider societal culture on the culture of the organisation.

Among other things, elements of the traditional culture, value systems, institutional norms, language, work values and ideologies, ethnic, and other variables were seen as impediment to the effectiveness of the organisation. After initial organisational diagnosis by the consulting firm, the problems facing the organisation were defined and articulated in a handbook, which became the working manual upon which changes were to be implemented. The organisational culture was seen as having been produced, reproduced and sustained by elements of the societal culture. These "dysfunctional cultural

elements", according to the consulting company were manifested in the form of promotion and tenure based on political cleavage and ethnic patronage, policy inconsistencies, lack of accountability, inadequate definition and description of jobs, an authoritarian, coercive and autocratic form of authority and leadership structure and a general problem of motivation. These problems were identified by the consulting company at the request of a new government that has just been sworn in. According to official documents, the change was necessary before a decision could be made either to privatize the organisation or allow it to remain as a public bureaucracy.

To eradicate these problems, solutions were proposed, designed, and implemented in line with the idea of bureaucratization (i.e. to make the organisation more efficient and more rational). It was believed that through the introduction of more rational organisation/bureaucratic practices in line with more formalization, rationalization, promotions based on achievement criteria, consultative and rational authority relationships, more participative approaches to decision making, a non-secularized organisation culture, the organisation would be more effective and efficient in achieving its stated goals.

This study focuses only on a sub-set of these issues, specifically how the indigenous organisational practices, the object of change, actually worked at cross-section with the novel authority and leadership patterns to achieve the goals of the organisation. Specifically, the focus was on the process that led to how the modern Western notions, values, attitudes, and ideologies of authority and leadership behaviour coexisted with indigenous organisational and leadership practices and the outcome of this interaction and coexistence in terms of employee organisational commitment (EOC).

The Research Methodology and Process

There were two stages to the investigation. In the first stage, a general anthropological approach was used to interpret how authority and leadership were conceptualized in the Nigerian society. As a native, who had lived and participated in this particular culture, my social stock of knowledge about the Nigerian culture enabled me to understand its cultural nuances in terms by which they are socio-culturally constructed and made meaningful.

The second stage of the process of investigation examined how these cultural interpretations of authority and leadership behaviour are interpreted in a modern work organisation, using Hayibo Corporation as a case study. A single case study, in this context, is

considered appropriate as it allows cultural, social and organisational issues to be studied intensively and simultaneously in a work-organisation (Morgan & Smircich, 1980).

Primary data were triangulated from in-depth interviews, observations and official documents detailing the processes of the changes introduced. Secondary data (published material) in the form of books and journal articles were also used to provide background knowledge on leadership and authority behaviour in Nigerian and Western contexts. To understand the dynamic interaction of Western and indigenous leadership and organisational practices, a methodological approach derived from ethnography and phenomenology, using qualitative and interpretive techniques was used.

The appropriateness of these techniques, both in cultural studies, generally, and in organisational studies in particular, is well documented in Geertz's (1973) "thick description" and in Gregory's (1983) "native-view paradigm", respectively. These techniques produce rich descriptive data that "natives" deem appropriate (Gregory, 1983; Smircich, 1983), permit an understanding of life from inside the organisation as accounted for by its members, and capture the meaning of cultural phenomena and nuances involved in interaction between cultural norms in organisational praxis.

Through a theoretical sampling procedure (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), the data collection and their analysis and interpretation were done simultaneously: the types of data sought and collected were built around major themes that emerged during the course of the investigation. Critical incidents were also used to describe and accentuate themes of interaction between Western (leadership/authority) managerial practices and those of the indigenous culture.

Originally, the purpose of the study was to examine the main features of Western and non-Western leadership and authority behaviour, and their intersections in this organisation. As the research progresses, the interplay and interactions between Western notions of leadership behaviour and those derived from the Nigerian culture were seen to coexist without one displacing the other and that this interaction can actually contribute to organisational citizenship behaviour, and by implication, organisational commitment. Specifically, in the course of the study, we were confronted with how Western "imported" leadership ideologies, norms and values were re-interpreted and re-defined to meet the exigencies of traditional conceptions and notions of leadership behaviour. As stated earlier, the process of this re-interpretation and re-definition thus constituted the main objective of this study.

We have noted earlier that the purpose of leadership in an organisation is above all, to deliver results through others by making them committed to the goal of the organisation. Organisational leadership is a dual focused management approach that works towards what is best for individuals and what is best for a group as a whole simultaneously. It is also an attitude and a work ethic that empowers an individual in any role to lead from the top, middle, or bottom of an organisation. Thus, effective organisational leadership is seen in the context in which it promotes and sustains organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and employee organisational commitment (EOC).

THE CONCEPT OF "OGA" AS A LEADERSHIP/AUTHORITY BEHAVIOUR

Organisational praxis (or organisational practice) is different from organisational theory and its discourses. While organisational discourse is a presentation of what has been written or said about an organisation as a phenomenon, organisational praxis on the other hand, reflects the actual practices in work organisations. In this context, we are looking at how the concept of "oga" is manifested in organisational practices. These practices, by their very nature, are multifaceted, including decision making practices, employee relations, leadership practices, motivational practices, OCB practices, HR practices, etc.

We now turn to the concept of *Oga* as it is used in management and organisational praxis. To start with, the concept of *Oga* is used to examine and interpret the process of the interaction between Western leadership and authority practices and those embedded in African (Nigerian) cultural traditions. We will then examine the dynamics facilitating the co-existence of these two presumably alien and indigenous leadership patterns. We start with the cultural context of *Oga*, followed by a description of how the concept was brought into modern working organisations.

The Cultural Context of Oga

The concept of *Oga* has a historical and cultural concomitance. Literally, *Oga* implies "master". In the Nigerian society, *Oga*, as a concept defines the meaning of relationships in situations where the exercise of power serves as the mechanism for interaction. Hence it is not unusual that subordinates call their superiors *Oga*, household help call their employees *Oga*, apprentices call their tutors *Oga*, students call their teachers *Oga* - or for that matter, friends call each other *Oga*, depending on the specific

situation of power relationship. The term possesses both an affective (emotional) and instrumental relationship.

Socio-culturally, the word *Oga* could mean "Baba" (owner, father, and elder) as in the Yoruba language or "Babangida" (owner of the house) as in the Hausa/Fulani language. An *Oga* finds himself in a position to act both as a leader and as a protector. Traditionally, the persons who assume such responsibilities are traditional rulers, titled chiefs, wealthy men or people with influence. Being a masculine-oriented society, the term *Oga* is used exclusively for male-authority holders. For the female equivalent, the term "Madam" is used to emphasize their role positions of authority or influence.

Such statuses derive from both divine and sacred sanctions of authority such as head of the family, traditional leaders, kings, royalties and religious heads. In traditional work organisations, the *Oga* might have been the owner of farms, rubber, cotton and sugar-cane plantations who provided employment to those in need of it. Those not working on voluntary basis regarded their "employers" as 'bread-givers'. The relationship was defined in a paternalistic context, with the responsibilities of such "bread-givers" extending beyond the tasks being performed. The criteria for participating as a member of the organisation were ascriptive and particularistic, e.g. consisting of members of the same family lineage, age group, gender, etc. Reciprocity was defined in terms of how one's contribution enhances healthy collective behaviour. The leader's responsibility, in this context, was the obligation to cater to the well being of the followers.

The concept of *Oga* in modern work organisations began to take gradually on a different meaning during the British colonial infiltration to the Nigerian society, and by extension, the transformation of the labor market from being predominantly agrarian to bureaucratic. During this time, European (mainly British) expatriates were heads of the colonial bureaucracies and were considered superior. They were, after all, the employers, the owners of government, the city and regional administrators, the Crown Police, the tax collectors, etc. As superiors they were addressed as *Oga* as a form of deference. The European expatriates also kept indigenous domestic servants as cooks, messengers, houseboys, etc. Thus, the Europeans assumed the role of "bread givers", providing shelter and financial support in exchange for services rendered. Like the "Baba-ile" (owner of the house), the European expatriates became known also as *Oga*.

The traditional meaning of *Oga* was altered by its use in describing authority relationships between expatriates and indigenes. The bureaucracies built by the colonial and Crown government were regarded by the indigenes as '"theirs" – meaning that they belong to the British Colonial government. The expatriates, on their part, were mainly concerned with how the duties allocated to subordinates were performed. This instrumental relationship was at odds with the affective relationship that characterized the traditional form of organizing labor. Thus, the stage was set for the *conflicting* definitions of authority and leadership behaviour in non-Western society.

CASE PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In the case illustrations that follow, one major incidence depicting the major themes of this study are presented. Following the tradition of qualitative research approach, data for this case were simultaneously gathered and analysed to indicate and illuminate emerging themes that are relevant to the purpose of the study. Since data analysis is an on-going process in qualitative research, the implication here is that data collection and analysis go hand-in-hand (see e.g., Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Case Illustration: A Case of Reciprocity and Organisational Commitment

Mr. Paul Ovie worked in the Department of Internal Audit in Hayibo Corporation. The office consisted of sixteen members, including a Director – Chief Rufus Ogaga, who was also the Head of the Department. Mr. Ovie was attached to the office as the company's official driver. Sometime he would be called upon to double as a filing clerk when the latter was busy with some other duties. His contractual obligation was to drive Chief Ogaga and other senior staff to and from the office strictly on official duties and official hours. Chief Ogaga and Mr. Ovie were both from the Urhobo ethnic group in Southern part of Nigeria. Sometimes, Paul would render services that are outside of his official job description. He would use the company car to drive Chief Ogaga to social visits. Other extra-official duties that were voluntarily rendered by Paul included taking Chief Ogaga's wife (madam) to the market, doing school runs for Chief Ogaga's family and some other minor repairs in the house such plumbing, electrical repairs, etc.

One early morning, Paul Ovie sat at his desk with a very sad look on his face indicating that something was wrong. Mr. Ovie had personal issues and these were weighing on him, to that extent, it was affecting his job performance. Mr. Ovie was not his normal self this morning. Usually, he was the office jester – making jokes at everybody, everything and every occurrence around the office. For the past three nights since he received a letter from his parent in the

village, Paul had not had a decent meal, neither had he a peaceful sleep. That very morning, Paul had not started his work even though the filing clerical officer was not at his desk.

It was the booming voice of Chief Rufus Ogaga and greetings of "good morning Oga!" from his colleagues that woke him from his thoughts. Chief Ogaga came to his desk, noticed that something was not right with Ovie and inquired what the problem was. The Chief was known as a "good oga" – because he cared for the welfare of his subordinates. They were not just employees of the organisation; they were in fact "his workers!" It was said that he looked after his subordinates as if they were members of his family and Chief Ogaga, indeed, had a very large family; at the age of fifty six, he was already a titled man; two wives, and eight children and still counting. He had a large income from one of the most admired Federal Government agencies. In addition to his official salary he had investments in the real estate and transportation businesses.

That very morning, the attention of Chief Ogaga was drawn to the look of sadness on Ovie's face. After demanding from Paul what the problem was. Paul pleaded with him if he could visit the Chief at the latter's residence later in the evening to explain what the problem was. To the request, the Chief obliged. That evening, Paul paid a visit to the Chief, with him, was a bottle of Champaign, native kola nuts and a calabash of palm wine. After presenting these to the Chief, Mr. Paul Ovie began his story, thus:

Paul Ovie did not marry early in life as many young men in his position and tribe usually do. He left his village for Lagos immediately upon his graduation from secondary school at age of eighteen. Paul was now thirty one, working in a Federal government establishment. Back home he is darling of everyone, but he had no wife. There were already whispering as to whether he was "capable". His parents were also very worried: "how could their only son do this them?" Among Pau's kinsfolk, a man's wealth, position and standing in the community is measured by among other things, the number of children and grandchildren one has. The Ovie family had none although their only son was well-placed among his peers.

Five months ago, when Paul visited his village for his annual leave, he was introduced to a girl by his parents. Although Paul was not ready for matrimonial home, he reasoned along with his father – not wanting to disrespect him. Similarly, Paul promised to come back to the village and perform the necessary marriage rituals; introduction, payment of dowry,

church wedding as so forth. It was now over five months and Paul's family had written him a letter threatening to commit suicide rather than to be object of scorn in the community. But Paul had no money and he did not know where to turn. And that was why he came to the Chief.

After Paul was done with his story, Chief Ogaga cleared his throat and began:
> "I am indeed pleased with you, my son. As everyone knows in the office, you are regarded as one of my most dedicated and committed staff. I have not heard of any complaints about you from anyone, neither have you complained to me in all the years you have been working with me. You are like my son. My son, one good thing deserves another. Fix the date and we will go ahead and make the necessary arrangement from the office!"

For Paul Ovie, he would like the date to be two weeks from now to give the chief apple time to prepare for the occasion – not that the chief really cared about time. The following morning, everyone was at his/her desk as usual when Chief Rufus Ogaga demanded the attention of "his workers." As a father would address his children, the Chief began:
> "Good morning, my children, it is my pleasure to see a young lad –a very hard working and dedicated worker comes to me for help. It is my pleasure to invite all of you to accompany Paul and myself to his traditional wedding in his village. I will personally provide the means of transport. I insist that everyone in this office must come with me to give our son a befitting wedding ceremony!"

On that day, everyone in the office was present at the wedding; both senior supervisors, supervisors, clerical officers and janitors/cleaners attended. Traditional marriage/wedding among Paul's people is an expensive financial commitment. In addition to the dowry, both in cash and in kind, the size of those who accompany the bridegroom is also very significant. A lot of cash was raised to support Paul by his colleagues at the office. At the end, a lot of money was raised for Paul to enable him refund the Chief's expenses. But the Chief, being a "good oga", did not accept the money. For him, it was a gift well deserved by his "son". To the rest of the staff, a message has been sent.

CASE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION
The case incidence as provided above indicates the extent to which a Western and non-Western cultural norms of organisational leadership co-existed in a modern organisation located in a non-Western society. A simple, yet powerful, reason for this was

that practices derived from traditional and cultural values were sometimes more practical in achieving the objectives and goals of the organisation than the exigencies of the organisation's formal criteria for job description. The possibility for this functional utility can be derived from organisational citizenship behaviour (OCD) as manifested in traditional definition of moral leadership. Instances of this general observation were indicated in the preceding case.

The Power of Mutual Dependence and the Culture of Reciprocal Commitment
The presence of power imbalance within the network of relationships in the organisation seems to encourage organisational involvement and commitment and by extension, OCD. Power inequality in the relationship gives rise to the existence of subordinates' dependence on their superior, which also leads to the establishment of bonds of obligation and commitment between higher-level and lower-level organisation participants. The subordinates, for their part, are committed to these bonds of obligation by demonstrating their loyalty. This symbiotic relationship shifts from an exploitative one to a mutually recognized paternalistic form of behaviour. This relationship moves from an exploitative/coercive power to co-power. In other words, the superior exercises his power because he is "superior" while the subordinate exercise his power because he is subordinate.

Thus, power inequality to the subordinate is not dysfunctional to organisational commitment. Emerson (1962), in an analysis of the mechanism of mutual dependence resulting from a relationship based on inequality in power within a context of patron-client systems, argues that patron-client systems in which there is a strong bond of reciprocal commitment between a patron and a set of logic clients softens but does not remove the patron's power. In other words, what would otherwise be a harsh exploitative relation is converted into a paternalistic form of power by commitment formation. The paradigm of such relations based on loyalty and interdependence where bonds of obligation and commitments are formed, according to Eisenstadt and Roniger (1980), implies unconditional obligations rooted in the basic components of personal and collective identity and upheld by moral sanction.

The commitment and involvement of organisation members in the performance of organisational duties (organisational citizenship) may be seen in the context as an admixture (or blend) of both traditional and modern notions of authority relationship. A superior (director, manager or supervisor) who is an *Oga,* by

definition, is morally obligated to "protect" his or her subordinates. Such protection frequently extends to matters and practices beyond the formal contractual undertakings (e.g. performance/salary) within the organisation. Here, one could argue that the concept of *Oga* is antecedent of *organisational citizenship behaviour* (OCB).

Since the subordinates appreciate that it was the *Oga* who controls tenure and occupational advancement, they naturally responded to this situation by cultivating the support of the *Oga* through exhibition of the qualities most immediately likely to impress and endear. In a similar manner, the subordinate's moral obligation was to reciprocate the *Oga* for the "protection" he or she receives. The conditions for the possibility for reciprocity on the part of the subordinate were the existence of power inequality in the social setting. This phenomenon of patriot-client relationship in social exchange has long been recognized by classical exchange theorists (e.g. Cook, 1977; Emerson, 1976). For Blau (1964), Emerson (1962) and Eisenstadt and Roniger (1980), such a relationship is neither exploitative nor coercive, but a manifestation of bonds of obligation from which meaningful exchange experience is realized. Such reciprocal relationships do not, however, imply the setting up of rules and conditionalities by which reciprocity is measured or evaluated in any *specific* manner as they are based on unconditionality rooted in the cultural orientation of *diffuseness.*

The need to reciprocate for benefits received in order to continue receiving these serves as a starting point for the mechanism of cooperation for the performance of organisational duty. Reciprocity serves as a mechanism for interaction (Blau, 1964). It is the very continuity of this relationship that enhances organisational allegiance and commitment, not the discontinuity of the cultural norms promoting reciprocity. Thus, it could be argued that an important source of organisational commitment emerges from the various patterns of interaction which are emotionally, personally, ascriptively, collectively and particularistically based, as contrasted to instrumental, universalistic, and specific ones as manifested in a typical rational leadership behaviour and authority relationship in the model of a Western archetype of organisational leadership.

A Shared "Passion to Please": From Coercive Power to Co-power in Leadership Behaviour
From the discussion above emerged the following observations: The conventional discourse on leadership behaviour and authority relationship in the context of African work organisations have often been cast as coercive, manipulative and at best autocratic

and repressive in the literature on organisational leadership behaviour and motivation ala African. However, this paper clearly disagreed with such characterization. As illustrated in the concept of *Oga* as a leadership and organisational praxis, the leadership behaviour and authority relationship that ensued is both a psychological and social contract manifested as an outcome of a mutually bargained process of social and organisational exchange relationship.

For example, the leader is willing to offer protection for his follower, by sowing a seed of reciprocity from the subordinate (e.g., loyalty, organisational commitment and involvement). The subordinate is more than willing to be associated with the demands of the leader, and by extension, that of the organisation as "pay-back", which the later does not see as exploitative but benevolence and "caring". In fact, as long as the one in authority shows these benevolent and caring leadership attributes towards the subordinates, he is assured of the latter's unconditional allegiance and commitment, which is transferred to the realm of organisational citizenship behaviour. Here lies the logic behind what could be termed as "the shared passion to please." The term "passion to please" was initially used by Carr (1999) to describe a psychological behaviour which has a Freudian narcissistic underpinning.

In our case, however, we are using the term to describe a mutually negotiated agreed-upon social exchange. Similarly, both Chief Rufus Ogaga (the leader) and Paul Ovie (the subordinate) shared the passion to please one another as this leads to a bond of exchange relationship which transcends their official contractual relationship. This mutually negotiated social exchange relationship is not coercive power in the real sense of the word, but shared power or what could be termed as "co-power". In the language of organisational leadership, this is a *transactional form* of leadership style – "a-give-and-take" exchange relationship derived from mutual obligation and morally sanctioned. Fundamentally, it indicates that the space in which power is manifested is shared/occupied by both leaders and the subordinate. To be sure, the participants in this negotiated exchange relationship do not see it as a dichotomy between autocratic/democratic or directive/participative leadership behaviours. In nutshell, such relationships do not fall into the usual pigeon-holed archetype which is a characteristic of Western discourse on leadership behaviours.

From a Foucauldian perspective (Foucault, 1977, p. 14), power is seen here not as a fixed object, rather it exists in circular forms – in interrelationships and in social interactions. Power, in this sense, does not belong to anyone person; it operates in a circular form (Ogbor, 2002) and its "circularity" in the work organisation is what produces this interdependence leading to what might be called "co-power". In other words, this mutually and morally sanctioned relationship is far from being autocratic and authoritarian in the sense that both superiors and subordinates are co-participants and co-active in the creation of the conditions that enhance interdependence and the concomitant organisational commitment and involvement.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The discussion in this article within the context of cross-cultural transfer of organisational and managerial practices would seem to have some critical bearing on the conventional ideas and the general theoretical propositions inherent in the convergence and divergence theses. As observed in the theoretical discussion, the conventional idea presupposes situations of transfer and application of cross-cultural management and organisation practices in which the Western managerial practices *should* displace or are in the process of displacing the existing traditional practices in order to achieve convergence or divergence. But clearly, not all situations of cross-cultural transfer of management and organisational practices are ones in which even gradual displacement takes place. On the contrary, the introduction of Western-type managerial practices in an organisation alongside the ubiquitous custom of traditional authority practices is one example of the possibility that in some contexts an existing institution or old practice may continue actively to operate co-extensively with an innovation with which it does not share any important cultural features.

Towards a Theory of Leadership Syncretism

The preceding discussion has shown how the institution of *Oga* actually coexisted side by side with modern managerial and organisational leadership. The patron-client relationship, which developed out of this paternalistic authority relationship, has also helped in significant ways to balance the power and authority relationships between superiors and subordinates. What is implied here is that the goals of a modern work organisation in its Western context may be realized through the use of elements inhering traditional authority, the differences in their cultural norms notwithstanding. To be sure, the paradigm of this type of leadership is to be found in paternalistic leadership behaviour (Ogbor, 19990). Paternalistic leadership combines strong discipline and authority with fatherly benevolence and moral integrity couched in a "personalistic" atmosphere". Paternalistic leadership is composed of

three main elements: authoritarianism, benevolence, and moral leadership. At its roots, paternalistic leadership refers to a hierarchical relationship in which the leader takes personal interest in the workers' professional and personal lives in a manner resembling a parent, and expects loyalty and respect in return.

The study thus points to the desirability of recognizing situations in which the co-existence of two different organisational practices derived from different cultural contexts serve the same purpose, namely, organisational commitment. This suggests the usefulness of a framework broader than that currently used in the literature on cross-cultural transfer and implementation of organisational practices.

The term "***leadership syncretism***" seems to more fully encompass the range of possibilities inherent in the co-existence of two alien authority and leadership practices. What is suggested here is that existing propositions regarding the transfer of Western models of organisation and managerial practices to non-Western societies fail to leave room for circumstances or contingencies that could mitigate potential clashes of different cultural norms. *Leadership syncretism*, as it is used here, refers to a situation where the deliberate retention of important elements of cultural traditions may be serviceable in promoting change and modernization of an organisational system whose features derive much from the traditional culture in which it is located.

Unlike, the convergence, divergence and crossvergence theses, in the present proposition, however, it is suggested here that leadership syncretism tends to facilitate coexistence and unity between otherwise different cultures and worldviews (intercultural competence). Although, different cultural norms and practices may be different in *form*, may however not be so different in function.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The following points may be seen as this study's value-added to existing discourse in leadership-management-organisational-commitment nexus.

First, although previous and existing studies have indicated a unique combination of alien and indigenous models of organisational behaviour, the process through which this assumed "unique combination" occurs has not been fully explained in the literature and research on cross-cultural leadership and comparative management in the context of Africa. In this study, attempt is made to demonstrate not only how this process occurs, but also the conditionalities

favoring its occurrence. This is done by introducing the concept of *leadership syncretism* through an ethnographic and phenomenological re-interpretation of the concept of *Oga* in organisational praxis.

Secondly, analysis of convergence, divergence, and crossvergence has been limited to the experiences of Eastern and Oriental cultures (especially, the Japanese and Chinese cultures). To date, knowledge about the experience of cross-cultural transfer of managerial and organisational practices in an African culture seems to be lacking. Thus, if the analysis presented in this study concerning an experience of the coexistence of two different cultural values in the area of leadership and authority relationship in an African context can shed further light on this area, a particular objective may have been achieved.

Third, most studies in cross-cultural or comparative management have employed only quantitative techniques for data gathering and analysis. It has been suggested by several management and organisation behaviour researchers that such methodological approaches that overly rely on statistical data are not only incapable of, but deficient in capturing the nuances of cultural phenomena in organisations in transition. To close this gap in extant literature and research, this study employs both an interpretive, ethnography and phenomenological approaches to understand the deeper meanings members of organisations accord to their actions both in organisational praxis generally and in leadership behaviour in particular.

Suggestions for Further Research and Some Caveats

One particular suggestion that can be deduced from this study is that the conclusions derived from it seem to cast some doubt on the adequacy of the one-sided proposition by which focus is only directed on the fate of a new leadership innovation transferred to a non-Western culture. Doubtless, there are several circumstances in which reinterpretation and acceptance may be based on the compatibility theses, but it would appear that such is not invariably or categorically so as the case of *Oga* has indicated.

Hopefully, the analysis presented in this study regarding the dynamic interplay and interaction between a Western leadership behaviour and elements of traditional leadership practices has illuminated some of the complexities of such an interaction, interrelationship and coexistence. Having said that, it is appropriate, however, to caution that at this stage, acceptance of any aspect of this proposition and the conclusions upon which they are based may be premature. What needed are more inquiries using

more cases and combinations of different types of data.

Having confessed the need for more data and for caution against theoretical oversimplification, I should nevertheless reiterate the one of the major conclusions derived from this study – that the culture of a society (value systems, ideology, beliefs, religious practices, institutionalized patterns of behaviour, attitudes) decisively influences the reception, interpretation and definition of attributes, values and practices in an alien leadership behaviour, or, more generally, that the particular nature of a society's culture is a crucial determinant of a society's or an organisation's experience of change. The implication is that as potential models of leadership behaviour, authority relationship and organisation behaviour, they must be questioned in terms in which they are socio-culturally constructed and made meaningful.

The reason for this questionable interference as implied here is to enable those involved (practitioners) in organisational change management to acquire a forehand knowledge regarding the *context* and the possibility for re-interpretation and re-definition leading to meaningful experience or problems of meaning that may arise due to compatibility or incompatibility of values, norms and assumptions by which such models are based vis-à-vis the values and assumptions of reality typical of the host society.

Finally, it should be stated, that terms such as "leadership syncretism" "shared passion to please" and "co-power" which I have used generally to characterize the experiences of coexistence between two different cultural practices to produce situations of organisational citizenship behaviour and organisational commitment are conceptualizations, of rather crude ones. As such, they are no less open to empirical scrutiny, disconfirmation or refinement. To have great importance attached to these terms or the general suggestions made in the light of their usage, much less to have them taken as a general conceptual substitute for a framework for analysis of change has not been my intention here. But if the terms and the analysis from which their usage here stems helps draw attention to the shortcomings of de facto application of cross-culturally transferred model of leadership behaviour without taking cognizance of the possibility for interpretation and reinterpretation, this study may have served a generally useful purpose.

Footnote (1): The name, *Hayibo Corporation* is a pseudo characterization of an actual organisation. The actual name of the organisation is disguised in respect to agreement made with the parties involved to hold anonymity. Ditto goes for the names of the actors in this case.

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