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Looking at African Value System through Cultural Dimensions: How Do African Countries Culturally Differ Among Themselves and from the United States?

Habte G. Woldu

The study through a variety of cultural dimensions, measures the cultural differences and similarities of four different African countries: Cameroon, Ethiopia, Nigeria and South Africa. The national cultures of the four African countries are analyzed through a methodology for systematically assessing cultural differences. The African countries are compared with that of the United States of America. The output of the study clearly shows that there are cultural differences among the African countries as well as between the African countries and the United States. African respondents demonstrated significantly higher cultural traits in collective & hieratical relations, being/feeling & risk avoidance related activities, in categorization of human nature as good or bad as well in subjugative relations to their environments than respondents of U.S. origin. The study also found that cultural variations exist among certain demographic groups within African countries.

INTRODUCTION

In order to manage human resources effectively and minimize failure rate of international businesses in less developing countries, it has become very important for expatriates to understand the cultural value system of countries which are traditionally less known for researchers. Understanding the value system of employees can help managers in designing strategic human resource policies that can positively impact productivity, the process of business negotiation and building a good relationship between management and labor.

THE ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF AFRICAN NATIONS

In order to have a full picture of the African value systems in perspectives to the national cultures,

one has to have a broader view on the current socio-economic background of the continent. Although researches conducted on African socio-economy development are of electrical nature, it is our belief that by presenting a short review of such literature the reader might have a better understanding why the African continent experiences slower economic development and why international investors are not highly determined to invest in Africa.

Within the community of the African Scholars, there is a widespread opinion that most of the regions is a wasteland where the future scenario for any business or investment objective is hopeless and uneconomical (Svedberg, 1991).

Reports of international experts, foreign aid donors and the World Bank, as well as the International Monetary Fund alarmed the whole world by suggesting that African nations would need another 40 years to recover to the level of their colonial era (Sahn, 1992). Svedberg (1991) believes that the first priority of a majority of Sub-Sahara African (SSA) countries is to undertake those domestic policies that would increase per capita production of tradable goods to the levels that were achieved in the late 1960s. African experts and intellectuals, including, Hodd (1991), Shaw (1993), Degefe (1994) and McCarthy (1994), as well as, the ruling African elite would place blame on the international communities for the situation; the majority of residents who live in rural areas would attribute the disaster to natural catastrophes. Nonetheless, both view the current economic situation as disastrous.

The causes of African economic stagnancy are presented in different versions by different

researchers. Traditional thinkers see African problems exclusively from historical perspectives. Professor Adedeji, a prominent African economist who served as the secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa for many years sees the future of the continent exclusively in its past. According to Shaw (1993), from such perspectives, the future in most futures studies is still essentially defined in terms of a world system dominated by northern institutions and interests (Shaw, 1993). Brandt (1980), in his essay "North-South Dialogue", could not perceive of an optimistic future without changing the economic orders. Sahn (1992), further specifies the new order to include the "Three New Orders"- regional, national and international economic orders. Sahn (1992) in his remark emphasizes that the economic deterioration in Africa is deeply rooted in colonial and postcolonial economic policy failures. The abrupt and contentious departure of the French from Guinea and the Portuguese from Mozambique, resulted in destruction of the infrastructure and productive capacity of the colonies, these acts stand as a testament to the extremes of vindictiveness and of the hardship brought by the fight for freedom. At the very least, the colonialists left the former colonies as "accommodators". Niger and Cameroon in the Franco-phone Zone, and Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania in the Anglophone zone developed institutions, which were framed by colonial powers to generate economic policies, though outward looking; they forwarded monoculture primary export products. Consequently, postcolonial African countries took two different paths. Some countries like Kenya, Malawi and Zaire endorsed the will of the colonialists (economic dependency), while others such as Algeria, Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Mozambique and Tanzania attempted a self reliance development based on a rural economy. Still others expanded the concept of blaming the colonialists by referring to the African current problem as neo-colonial policy. (Klickman (1988), states that the major oil shock of 1973, for the first time, revealed or intensified the hidden crises of the continent for the first time in modern history. Regardless of the choice of economic policy orientation, almost all African economies were fragile. According to Glickman (1988), even in those African nations, that pursued free market economy, there was little prospect for the emergence of indigenous capital. However, Sahn's (1993) studies on Africa indicate that African countries that inherited trade-dependent economies initially performed reasonably well. Recent failures occurred, due to the lack of institutional structures, designed to manage the export-oriented economies. The revenue, which was generated from the export of primary products, didn't promote growth and technological advancement. Rather, it facilitated the abuse of power and contributed to the devastating impact of policy on the economies (Sahn, 1994).

Others blame the state-centered development strategy that is a direct derivation of mono-political authority systems. This strategy adopted the perception that development was an "international problem and an international responsibility". In such systems, governments often use this argument as a source of strength in bargaining for increased assistance and more beneficial relationship with developed countries (Glickman, 1988). Assessments of various studies conducted in the post-crisis period clearly demonstrate that neither the self-reliance policy (African Socialism), nor the continuation of unmanaged post-colonial trade policy has been successful in promoting economic growth. Glickman (1988) warns that single factor causal theories are emotionally appealing, but intellectually deceptive.

In order to explain Africa's modern problems, one has to look at the objective problems of the continent and enumerate all factors related to the continent's physical, natural, international, human resource management and culture. However, this paper focuses specifically on understanding the cultural value systems of the African people. African countries can utilize their human resources effectively only after understanding the current cultural value systems of the African people. Thus, while traditional researchers attribute African failure to colonialism, others point towards the behavior of African leadership (McCarthy 1994). It is difficult to accept the argument that the current African complex problem is solely attributed to its past. The critics argue that the major social, economic and political crises of current African countries originate from within Africa itself (Hill, 1999; Lindauer and Roemer, 1994). The African countries, during the post-colonial periods (in the 60s), seemed to have very similar economic development levels to those of today's "Asian Tiger Countries". However, after 30 years, the African level of economic development either remained constant or

regressed. By contrast, the “Asian Tiger countries experienced a ten fold growth of GNP (Hill, 1999). Hill attributes the African problem to the inward looking economic policies of African countries while; Lindauer and Roemer (1994) argue that the real problem of Africans is within the African culture. According to Lindauer and Roemer Africans compared to Asians demonstrate emotionally charged intolerance to their own governments’ mistakes.

Structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) have been implemented, with varying degrees of intensity, in almost 40 countries in Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA). The results have been less than satisfactory. An impartial assessment shows that the objectives of such programs, (i.e. structural adjustment within an environment of stable prices and of a sustainable balance of payments), were only remotely related to what actually happened (Helleiner, 1996; Hodd, 1991).

Now there is less controversy regarding the limited developmental impact of structural adjustment programs in SSA. Even the most enthusiastic proponents describe their results as disappointing. Within the World Bank, the most careful econometric tests carried out to date, show that adjustment programs in SSA were not associated with economic growth in the second half of the 1980’s. According to these studies, they were associated with significantly lower investment rates, marginally significantly lower savings rates, and significantly higher exports (Helleiner, 1996).

According to Degefe (1996), the current crisis in the SSA countries is the cumulative result of inappropriate late 60s domestic policies that have been exacerbated by a hostile external environment. McCarthy (1994) maintains that progressive development is partially contingent on strongly supportive external environments. McCarthy, however, describes these environments to be composed of: internal legitimacy of the government; international legitimacy regarding both internal political positions and human rights conditions; and acceptance into external organizations, such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the UN. Against this historical backdrop, it is expected that the African continent would exhibit a unique culture.

CULTURE AS A DETERMINANT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

With the increasing globalization of the world economy, both academicians and practitioners are eager to know how managers in various parts of the world cope with similar issues and problems related to the management of their organizations. They are also eager in the identification of relevant management systems suitable for different parts of the world. This is further complemented with the recent developments in the world economy, marked by the rapid growth of ‘dragon’ nations, liberalization of economy by nations such as China and India and developments in Central and Eastern European countries and Latin American economies. All such developments suggest that there is now a strong need for more cross-national management studies (Cavusgil and Das, 1997).

Undoubtedly, scholars have been involved in comparative management research over the last forty years. However, most of such investigations were conducted between developed nations in Western Europe or North America (Oshikoya, 1993). Essentially, these studies have focused on management in advanced industrial societies in the Western world (Adler, 1993; Fatehi, 1996). As relatively very little work on comparative management research in developing countries has been done, some researchers have suggested the need for more comparative cross-national management studies (Budhwar and Debrah, 2000; Mendonca; 2000; Napier et al., 1998). Among the developing countries, African countries are undoubtedly at the lowest priorities for researchers. As a result, very little empirical research has been conducted on African cultures. The marginalization of African cultural studies owes much to the continent’s last three decades of severe economic stagnancy, as stated earlier in this paper.

Whether due to the above-discussed issues or beyond, it is assumed that the Africans like other nations should have their own unique cultural behavior. Kobrin (1996) understands national culture within the context of popular sovereignty. Popular sovereignty is referred to as the ultimate in legitimacy and acceptability of any particular form of human government by its people. Popular

sovereignty is the basic principal of democracy. It does not necessarily explain how democracy is to be articulated. Sovereignty can promote a degree of stability towards the potential enforcement and enactment of economic or political policies and therefore inveigle a country's investment-attractiveness for development Kobrin (1996). The process of people entering modernization is a natural growth attribute of capital development. This process will necessarily begin with the acculturation and adoption of Western corporate cultural traits by the African people. Kobrin (1976) ultimately proves foreign direct investment as the vehicle for cross-cultural transfer of values, attitudes, and institutions of social change in developing countries. By nature, a sovereign society with proclivities toward modernization will also embrace industrialization, emphasizing the direct relationship of acculturations and adoption factors (Kobrin 1976). While the transfer of machines, products, technologies, managerial skills, and formal organizations has been taking place for a long period of time it is also known that there is a positive correlation between those external transfers and economic growth, however two significant cultural changes have been registered in all African countries. Either the transfer of the above resources has not been beneficial to the African societies or the resources have not been rationally utilized (Kobrin 1976; McCarthy, 1994). In fact, such ill-fitted transfers have been instrumental in breeding African corruption and societal, regional and national conflicts among African people (Adam, 1995).

DEFINING CULTURE

Many different experts have come up with their own interpretations of what culture is and how it is defined. According to the American Heritage Dictionary, "Culture is the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or population; a style of social and artistic expression peculiar to a society or class" (Frost et al., 1985).

Maanen and Barley (1985) as well as Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1952) employ an anthropologist approach that studies the evolution of culture over time. According to their research, "culture can be understood as a set of solutions devised by a group of people to meet specific problems posed by the situations they face in common. Therefore, cultural manifestations evolve over time as members of a group confront similar problems and, in attempting to cope with these problems, devise and employ strategies that are remembered and passed on to new members" (Frost et al., 1985). Harry C. Triandis (1972) states that group members of a particular culture will speak in the same dialect, share in activities such as job occupations, or they will have the same belief system. Kilmann, Saxton, and Serpa (1985) state culture can be defined as the shared philosophies, ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes, and norms that knit a community together. They further define culture as occurring at different levels of depth. Just below the surface are the norms, and these are the unwritten rules of the game. Norms describe the attitudes of employees and the behaviors that are generally accepted within the organization as right. According to Connors and Smith (1999), culture is composed of experiences, beliefs, and actions. They believe that these three components work together in somewhat of a continuous circle. The idea behind this theory is that experiences will foster beliefs, which in turn drive actions. Actions produce results, and those results become new experiences. Then the cycle repeats itself. According to this theory, culture creates and builds on itself.

CULTURAL DIMENSIONS USED IN THE ANALYSIS

Although the questionnaire was originally aimed to construct eleven cultural dimensions, five of the eleven dimensions, activities-doing, human relation-individualism, human nature-changeable, relations to nature-mastering and harmony are not reported in this paper due to the complexity that arises from multiplicity of factors. The exclusion of the five factors however does not diminish the value of the study as for every dimension excluded, at least one complementary or competitive cultural dimension is included in the report. The dimensions used in the construct of the research methodology are defined as follow.

Being – The Activity-Being (AB) indicates the extent to which an individual believes in a “work to live” philosophy. The higher an individual scores in AB, the higher his/her tendency to take time to enjoy all aspects of life, even if it means not getting work done. Such individuals prefer quality of life over economic stature and believe that work environment should be enjoyable.

Thinking –Activity Thinking (AT) group is made up of planners. They believe that even if it takes more time, business decisions should always be based on analysis, not intuition. This group believes that logical analysis and planning can predict the outcome of any business decision.

Good/Evil – Human nature Good/Evil (HNG) group believes that a good person will always be good, and a bad person will always be bad. This group displays distrust in other individuals. They believe that if employees are not heavily monitored, they will have a tendency to slack off or lie about what they have done.

Collectivism – Human Relations (RC) group believes that the interest of the group is more important than the interest of the individual. Individual sacrifices will be made in order to better the team. This group believes that society functions best when people willingly make sacrifices for the good of everyone.

Hierarchical – Human Relations (RH) group believes that hierarchy is the best form of an organization or management style. Members of this group believe that people at lower levels in an organization should carry out the requests of people at higher levels, without question. Significant distance should be kept between employees at high levels and employees at lower levels.

Subjugation – Relations to Nature (RNS) is the opposite of a control society. Members in this group believe in fate. They believe that people’s lives are predestined, and that people should not try to change the path of their lives. This group believes that success or failure has nothing to do with individual performance. When a problem arises, people should let the problem work itself out, instead of trying to control it.

Based on the above defined cultural dimensions, the study attempts to examine whether the Africans culturally differ from the Americans or whether there are significant cultural differences among themselves. Thus the following research questions were posed:

1. Do African countries manifest universal African cultures that differ significantly from the Western world, as represented by the U.S. based respondents?
2. Do the African countries culturally differ from one another? Does the historical background of the African countries explain the scope of cultural differences?
3. Does the Ethiopian culture, which has not been under any colonial rule stand by itself when compared to the other African countries, which have been ruled by colonialists?

In order to deal with the above discussion questions, a research methodology was developed.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The discussion of this paper is based on the outcome of 926 surveys collected from four African countries representing three regions apart from each other: East Africa-Ethiopia (136); West Africa-Cameroon (60) and Nigeria (98) and South Africa-South African Republic (102) and North America-U.S. (530). The surveys were administered through individuals who had some type of connections with the countries mentioned above. Though the surveys of this study mostly reflect the behavior of middle-class urban population, it is assumed that the cultural attitude adequately represents modern organizations and institutions of the respective countries. By conducting surveys that include a cross section of various population group respondents representing different ages, genders, educational backgrounds, professions, occupations, organizations and different levels of experience, we hope to avoid bias. The original English version questionnaire which was prepared by Maznevski, DiStephano & Nason (1995), was conducted in the US and the other African countries in its original version as English is spoken by almost all educated people residing in the urban centers in the respective countries.

Cross-country cultural differences and similarities are measured in three phases. In Phase one and two, we examine the cultural differences between the African countries and U.S. as well as among the

African countries while phase three looks into the cultural differences that might exist within demographic groups in Ethiopia. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) followed by Student-Newman-Keuls (SNA) test at significance level $\alpha=0.05$ is applied to conduct the analysis. In phase three, multilinear regression was applied to specifically investigate the cultural behavior of the demographic groups of people within Ethiopia.

INTERPRETING HOW THE AMERICANS DIFFER FROM THE AFRICAN CULTURES

The four African countries were found to differ culturally from the Americans in activities-being (AB), activities-thinking (AT), relations to nature-subjugation (RNS), human nature-good/bad (HNG), human relations-collective (RC), human relations-hierarchical (RH), and relations to nature-subjugative (RNS). In short, the American culture differed from the African cultures in all of the six studied cultural dimensions, except in the case of activities-being (AB), where Cameroon and U.S. respondents show no cultural differences. The American respondents demonstrated lower mean scores in all dimensions where cultural differences between the two groups appeared. Thus, the American culture when compared with the represented African countries demonstrates weaker cultural traits in feeling, thinking, collectivism, hierarchy, subjugative relations to nature and categorization of human nature as good or bad. However, it is very important to note that, the American respondents relatively scored the highest mean in AT followed by RC and AB, but scored relatively the lowest in RNS followed by RH and HNG. Interestingly, even though, the African respondents significantly differed from the American culture, all African countries also scored the highest in AT followed by RC and AB, but scored the lowest in RNS, followed by RH and HNG. This pattern indicates that given time and economic development, all nations in the future might culturally converge and create a global culture that leads to universal behavior, which is more predictable.

The above findings would mean that the American culture compared with the African cultures is less sensitive to human relations, but demonstrates weaker cultural traits in categorization of people as good or bad, and hierarchical behavior. These findings are also in accordance with earlier studies (Adler, 1983; Hofstede, 1983; and Trompenaars, 1994). The outcome of the study indicates that the Africans compared to Americans, when doing negotiating and business with others might be highly inclined to make important decisions with the consent of upper level management and after group or collective consultation. Furthermore, the result of the study indicates that Africans are most likely to accept unequal distribution of power.

INTERPRETING HOW AFRICANS DIFFER FROM ONE ANOTHER

The second phase of the study examines the cultural difference within the African countries. As the four represented African countries come from four different cultural backgrounds: Nigeria (former British colony); Cameroon (Belgium-French-British colony); South Africa (with a dominant British-Dutch influence); and Ethiopia (with no colonial heritage), we anticipate that the four countries somehow will reflect the sub-Saharan African culture.

Although the study found that the respondents of the four countries culturally differ from the Americans, a closer observation of the output also indicates that all of the four countries culturally differ from one another. The study has not found a visible observation that supports the assumption that geographical proximity or colonial link could have created cultural universality among African countries. The finding clearly shows that the cultural relationship of the West African countries of Cameroon and Nigeria with East Africa Ethiopia and South Africa shows irregularities. For example, while Ethiopia (with no geographical or historical proximity) has more cultural commonality with Nigeria, it shares less cultural similarities with Cameroon. From the output, the following findings are worth reporting:

- 1) The two West African countries differed variably with South Africa and Ethiopia. This could mean that colonial rules might have affected the cultures of both West African countries

differently as both colonizers (British and French) are culturally different (Hofstede, 1983; Laurent, 1983).

- 2) South Africa and Ethiopia demonstrated more cultural similarities among the four African countries; this observation demonstrates that geographical distance is not necessarily a cause for “cultural distance” between/among African nations.

With regard to cultural dimension AB, Cameroon, Ethiopia and Nigeria showed higher mean scores than South Africa. Given the fact that South Africa has a relatively more advanced economy, it is expected to show a relatively lower AB than relative less advanced economy countries, as they are categorized as countries that prefer relationships and feelings to bottom-line business philosophy based on aggressive and assertive business practice (Hofstede, 1983; Adler, 1983; Trompenaars, 1994; Woldu and Biederman, 1999).

With regard to RH, the two West African countries and Ethiopia showed significantly higher hierarchical behavior than South Africa. Given that three of them either were under colonial or feudal rule or significantly under religious influence, it is obvious that the people who live under such environments will be hierarchical in their behavior (Woldu and Biederman, 1999). Interestingly, the South African respondents who lived under apartheid for many decades were found to be less hierarchical than the other African countries. The low traits of hierarchical culture manifested by South Africans could be due to the relatively higher exposure of the people to the South African capitalist system, which is much more advanced than the other African countries.

With regard to RC, Ethiopia and Nigeria scored significantly higher traits of collective behavior than did South Africa and Cameroon. While the variation of the former group from the later comes as no surprise, Cameroon’s observation does not fall into any logical pattern that could explain the situation. The unique nature of Cameroonians could be due to the fact that the country has passed through three colonial powers (Belgium-French and English).

With regard to AT, respondents from both Cameroon and Ethiopia scored higher means than both Nigeria and South Africa, but Ethiopia does not significantly differ from Nigeria and South Africa. This finding would mean that, Cameroonians compared to the other two African countries would require more time when they make important decisions. This also indicates that Cameroon is likely to show stronger risk avoidance behavior than others (Hofstede, 1983). This suggests that Western businesses management, specially (North American style) might fit more to Nigeria and South African than to Cameroonian. Ethiopia shows a neutral position among the African four African countries.

With regard to HNG, the study found that Cameroonians compared to the other African countries showed significantly higher belief in categorizing people as naturally good or bad. This would mean that, Cameroonians might apply more traits of cultural bias on people than do the rest; in such cultural behavior, the style of management will lean towards McGregor’s “X” theory, which advocates strict control of employees (McGregor, 1960). However, it is important to note that even the other three African countries when compared to the U.S. respondents, show significantly higher traits of HNG cultural behavior. This kind of behavior is practiced among less democratic societies and less dynamic economies (Laurent, 1983; Hofstede, 1983).

With regard to RNS, the West African countries, Cameroon and Nigeria were found to demonstrate significantly higher traits of subjugation than those of Ethiopia and South Africa. The high subjugative nature of West African countries can be attributed to the legacy of slavery followed by colonial cultural dominance and to the role of European missionaries, which undermined the indigenous national or regional cultures. This finding would mean that the West African cultures of Cameroonians and Nigerians more than those of Ethiopian and South African are likely to accept the uneven distribution of power. Furthermore, Ethiopia and South Africa showed significantly higher subjugative cultural trait than that of United States. The high traits of African subjugative cultural behavior is not only attributable only to the historical background of the countries, it could also originate from the countries’ recent difficult economic conditions, especially from the different debilitating diseases which have slowly been consuming the most productive segments of the

populations as well as from the influence of missionaries and the strong African respect to nature and spirituality (McCarthy, 1994).

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES WITHIN THE ETHIOPIAN DEMOGRAPHIC SUBGROUPS:

In the third phase of the study, regression analysis was used to examine cultural differences among demographic groups categorized by age, education level, occupation, and gender as well as the interaction of the above groups. The output of the regression shows that gender, education, and occupation significantly affect cultural dimension.

The regression analysis employed on Ethiopian respondents, as outlined in table 3, shows that Ethiopian female more than male respondents scored significantly higher mean on RC while respondents with higher years of education associate themselves with RC negatively. The study further found that managers more than non-managerial employees believe in AT and RH and professionals more than other categories of employees looked upon AB positively. These findings suggest that Ethiopian women more than men value team work and collective decisions in the workplace environment. On the other hand, according to the output, Ethiopian managers seemed to believe in hierarchical organizational structure and lean towards strong risk avoidance, whereas Ethiopian professionals more than their non-professional counterparts exhibited higher feelings in activities related issues. The regression output also demonstrates that Ethiopian managers and professionals more than non-managerial and professional groups believed more in establishing relationship before doing serious business. Furthermore, the study found that managers more than non-managers scored higher mean on AT. This could mean that managers and professionals in Ethiopia are careful when they make any important decisions.

Although the Ethiopian culture, historically is known for preserving its own unique culture, as the country managed to avoid colonialism, the results of the study did not show significant cultural patterns that can uniquely identify the Ethiopian culture from the four African countries included in the study. The most important finding of the study with regard to Ethiopia is the observation that there is some degree of cultural dynamism within its urban demographic groups. This signalizes that foreign business investors or negotiators need to realize the diversity of culture within the framework of the national culture.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that Africans are culturally more different than the Americans. Furthermore, the study found that there are cultural variations among the four African countries. However, the assessed cultural similarities and differences among the four African countries do not categorize any of them into a certain cultural patterns that could resemble those of United States. The comparative analysis of the two populations allows us to deduce the following facts.

- The extreme cultural differences between the four African countries and the U.S., reveals the fact that the American corporate culture will not be smoothly transferred to the current African cultural reality.
- Africans are likely to be more cautious in making any decisions more than Americans; as a result, business negotiation between Americans and the Africans is expected to take longer time.
- The respondents from four African countries when compared to the U.S. respondents are highly hierarchical. This would mean that Americans when dealing with Africans in business or any intra-government relations need to be aware of the extreme formality and bureaucratic nature of the African countries' negotiation style and business practices.
- The high mean score in activities-being by Africans should alert Americans that in Africa, building relationship before talking business is an expected procedural behavior.
- American corporations operating in African countries can effectively manage the African human capital by promoting group competition and teamwork rather than individual based competition. Earlier study made by Hossein and Gustavsson (1994), demonstrates that group competition as opposed to individual competition was found to be an effective

way of increasing productivity and enhancing communication in traditional countries, where in the workplace, diversified nationalities exist.

- The high score on RNS by Africans indicates that Africans compared to the Americans will have the propensity to accept injustice, not equal reward and such behavior will be reflected in their negotiation style with the outside world in their trade relations or in political dialogue with others.
- The fact that considerable cultural variations have been found among certain demographic groups within Ethiopia supports the assumption that there could be cultural differences among certain demographic groups within the urban demographic populations of the other African countries. This signalizes that there is cultural dynamism within the African urban culture. Hence, policy makers and foreign investors who seek to utilize the existing human resource effectively should remember the fact that there are cultural differences among African countries as well as within the individual countries. Understanding those differences and adapting to the local environment is a primary step in building a long term and healthy relationship with the local people.
- The study strongly supports the notion that countries that scored higher mean in AB, AT, HNG, RC, RH and RNS have slower economic growth and lower level of economic development than those with lower mean scores.

Limitation of the Study

The samples used for the study come exclusively from the urban centers in the respective countries; as a result, the finding might not reflect the cultures of the majority of the African population, which is significantly rural. The cultural analysis of the specific demographic group deals with exclusively Ethiopia. These results might differ from the corresponding demographic groups in other African countries. Future studies should include other African countries and more data should be gathered for further analysis.

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Table 1. Differences in cultural dimensions in analyzed countries

Measure	Country	Count	Mean/sd	USA	Cameroon	Ethiopia	Nigeria	South Africa
Environment								
Subjugation	USA	530	2.34/0.83					
	Cameroon	60	4.28/0.88	*				
	Ethiopia	136	3.39/1.17	*	*			
	Nigeria	98	4.12/0.97	*	ns	*		
	South Africa	102	3.19/1.14	*	*	ns	*	
Human Nature								
Good/Evil	USA	530	3.21/0.95					
	Cameroon	60	4.84/0.95	*				
	Ethiopia	136	4.14/1.10	*	*			
	Nigeria	98	4.34/0.95	*	*	ns		
	South Africa	102	4.33/1.25	*	*	ns	ns	
HUMAN RELATIONS								
Collectivism	USA	530	4.18/0.77					
	Cameroon	60	4.77/0.82	*				
	Ethiopia	136	5.24/0.79	*	*			
	Nigeria	98	5.09/0.62	*	*	ns		
	South Africa	102	4.69/0.91	*	ns	*	*	
Hierarchy	USA	530	3.20/0.89					
	Cameroon	60	4.21/0.57	*				
	Ethiopia	136	4.22/0.92	*	ns			
	Nigeria	98	4.43/0.84	*	ns	ns		
	South Africa	102	3.78/0.91	*	*	*	*	
ACTIVITIES								
Being	USA	530	.97/0.76					
	Cameroon	60	4.36/0.69	*				
	Ethiopia	136	4.51/0.90	*	ns			
	Nigeria	98	4.39/0.80	*	ns	ns		
	South Africa	102	3.96/0.99	ns	*	*	*	
Thinking	USA	530	4.67/0.89					
	Cameroon	60	6.21/0.57	*				
	Ethiopia	136	6.06/0.92	*	ns			
	Nigeria	98	5.77/0.84	*	*	ns		
	South Africa	102	5.73/0.91	*	*	ns	ns	

* denotes significant difference based on Student-Newman-Keuls multiple comparison procedure ($\alpha < 0.05$)
ns denotes not significantly different

TABLE 2
CORRELATION MATRIX

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Older ≥36								
Educated ≥16	-.067c 127							
Manager	.456a 120	-.172c 118						
Professional	-.241a 128	.259a 125	-.417a 120					
Female	-.098c 134	-.143c 127	-.041 120	-.263a 128				
Man-Older (Interaction)	.489a 123	-.162c 126	.976a 120	-.403a 121	-.044c 123			
Prof-Older (Interaction)	.360a	-.201b 126	-.226b 120	.549a 128	.549c 130	-.214b 123		
Prof-Educated (Interaction)	-.125 128	.581a .125	-.304b 120	.735a 128	-.219b 128	-.294a 121	.479a 128	

Note: a significant at the .001 level; b significant at the .05 level; c. not significant

**TABLE 3
REGRESSION**

Cultural Dimensions						
	AB	AT	HNG	RC	RH	RNS
R-sq	.100	.080	.036	.148b	.124b	.06
F	2.5b	1.95	.848	3.89	3.157	1.44
Constant	3.8a 3.48	5.77 .263	4.08a .455	4.57a .288	3.63a .364	3.17a .475
Older	-3.75E-02 .181	.130 .136	.370 .236	-7.701E-02 .149	-.279 .188	-.182 .242
Educated	7.19E-02 .163	.111 .123	-.163 .213	-.416a .135	-7.87E-02 .17	-.512b .222
Manager	.528b .229	.375b .173	.101 .299	5.494E-02 .189	.845a .239	-3.09E-02 .312
Professional	.457b .190	.162 .143	.233 .248	9.017E0-2 .157	.306 .198	.218 .258
Female	.211 .203	1.08E-01 ging	-6.315 .265	.542b .167	.252 .212	.248 .276

Note: a denotes significant at the .001 level; b significant at the .05 level