

Seminar

Management and Change in Africa

Background

Good management in organizations across the globe is essential for human prosperity and well-being. Yet the study and development of management in sub-Saharan Africa has been a neglected area. Despite a recent emphasis on good governance within the development community, little work has been undertaken on management *per se*. In mainstream management research little attention has been paid to Africa as a geographical region of interest. As a result of this neglect, there is currently a lack of systematic empirical study and information in this area.

A growing interest in management

This is beginning to change, as the development community looks for new approaches to addressing the problems within developing countries as structural/economic 'solutions' applied to the 'African situation' have largely failed. Attempts to transpose Western approaches to management also appear to have been inappropriate, and management scholars are witnessing a surge of interest in these issues by corporations working in Africa. This may partly be influenced by events over the last decade in South Africa.

A conceptual failure of the developing-developed paradigm

The *developing-developed* world paradigm, implicit in much work on management in Sub-Saharan Africa, has been pejorative and obstructive to research and development. This contrasts autocratic and inefficient management with a need to modernize, and implement management and organization in line with 'modern' Western management.

Yet this denotes a lack of cross-cultural theory and methodology. Such theory recognizes the culture-boundedness of management principles and practices, and the realities of African countries that are multicultural at different levels. At the intercontinental level there are both historical and current interactions between Western and African approaches. These give rise to different combinations of management systems (*post-colonial* - often identified with 'African' management in the literature and treated derogatively; *instrumental* approaches that treat people as human *resources* - from 'modern' Western approaches; and *African Renaissance* - an emerging, ideal type, which provides a view of what Africa can offer global management generally).

A need for a cross-cultural approach

Modern cross-cultural theory is built on a concept of *crossvergence* of cultures. In Africa (as probably across the globe) this leads to different hybrid management systems. Some are highly adaptive to the context. Some are mal-adaptive. Often the nature of cross-cultural hybridization is dependent on power relations within the interaction. Cross-cultural analysis at inter-continental level focuses on the appropriateness of management systems.

Regional cooperation is developing in importance in Africa, and the ability to manage across borders is important. Cross-cultural analysis at this level is therefore seen as feeding into management development efforts.

African countries are multi-ethnic. Management in organizations therefore has not only to resolve conflicts in the workplace, but also to develop synergies from this multiculturalism to be effective. Cross-cultural analysis at this level is rare, and difficult, but should form an integral part of both research and management practice.

Developing research

The starting point for this seminar is a project primarily funded by Danida: 'Management and Change in Africa'. This takes a cross-cultural approach working with partners throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Its objectives to provide:

- ✚ comparative data among sub-Saharan African countries, to inform the management and organizational development initiatives of organizations, particularly organizations developing regional and pan-African cooperation.
- ✚ identification and analysis of the management systems in a process of hybridization, and success and failures of such systems; to inform organizational development processes through assessing the appropriateness of management systems in African contexts.
- ✚ analysis of inter-ethnic perceptions of management practices and cultural expectation, to facilitate the management and development of inter-ethnic synergies in effective cross-cultural management.

Purpose of the Seminar

The purpose of the seminar is to engage the development and management communities in discussing the importance, methodologies and findings of this and other studies on management and change in sub-Saharan Africa; to discuss the future direction of research in this area, and its importance to policy making and management practice in Africa.

The first day will be devoted to practitioner and policy related issues. The second half-day will be taken up with research-related issues and will appeal particularly to those interested in the more theoretical and methodological aspects of studying management in Africa.

Sessions will therefore cover the following areas.

- ✚ Why study management in Africa? Stakeholder perspectives, and implications for policy and practice.
- ✚ Concepts and methodologies for research on Management in Africa
- ✚ Managing across cultures in Africa
- ✚ Management systems and processes in Africa
- ✚ Developing effective organizations in Africa
- ✚ Developing managers in Africa
- ✚ The future for management research in Africa

Who Should Participate?

It is hoped that the seminar will create a dialogue among development and management academics, and development and management practitioners and policy makers; bringing together stakeholders in Africa and within the international community. Those undertaking research in this area, and those interested in the practical and policy implications of management research in sub-Saharan Africa, and other developing areas, are invited to attend.

Time and Place

Thursday 7th - Friday 8 November 2002. Copenhagen, Denmark.

For Further Information

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Programme

Day 1

Management and Change in Africa: Policy Issues

Thursday 7th 1700 - 2030

Times	Session	Presenters
17.00-17.10	Welcome and introductory addresses	Klaus Winkel, Danida Poul Brath, IDA
17.10-17.50	Management and Change in Africa: A Cross-Cultural Project Questions and Discussion	Terence Jackson, Centre for Cross Cultural Management Research
17.50-18.10	African Business Management: a Danish viewpoint	Sven Riskær, Managing Director, Industrialization Fund for Developing Countries
18.10-19.00	Dinner	
19.00-19.30	Reply	Moses Kiggundu, Carleton University, Canada
19.30-20.00	Plenary discussion	Chair: Klaus Winkel

Day 2

Management and Change in Africa: Implications for Research and Development

Friday 8th 0900 - 1700

	TOPIC	Introduced by:
09.00-09.45	Why cross-cultural research and development in Africa? Discussion	Terence Jackson, Centre for Cross Cultural Management Research
09.45-10.30	Management and cross-cultural values in Africa Discussion	Niels Noordehaven, University of Tilburg, The Netherlands
10.30-10.45	Break	
10.45-11.15	Management and Change in Cameroon	Olivier Nana Nzepa, ISMP
11.15-12.00	Management and Change in	Lynette Louw, University of

	South Africa Discussion	Port Elizabeth, South Africa
12.00-12.45	Developing effective organizations in Africa: the internationalisation process Discussion	John Kuada and Olav Sorensen, Aalborg University, Denmark
12.45-13.45	Lunch	
13.45-14.30	African Business Management: Strengths and Challenges Discussion	Charles Minor AMSCO
14.30-15.15	Lessons from Public Sector Reform in Africa Discussion	Simon Gill, DFID, UK
15.15-15.30	Break	
15.30-16.30	Reply and Discussion	Moses Kiggundu, Carleton Univeresity, Canada Chair: Merrick L.Jones
16.30-17.00	Where do we go from here? The future of management research and development in Africa	Terence Jackson