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**CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP STYLE
EFFECTIVENESS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY
BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND POLAND**

**SKUTECZNOŚĆ KULTURY ORGANIZACYJNEJ
I STYLU PRZYWÓDZTWA: BADANIE
PORÓWNAWCZE ETIOPII I POLSKI**



STRESZCZENIE

Rozdział przedstawia analizę porównawczą wpływu kultury narodowej na skuteczność stylów przywództwa w Etiopii i Polsce. Autor przyjmuje za punkt wyjścia założenie, że efektywność przywództwa – rozumiana jako zdolność danego stylu kierowania do generowania pożądanych rezultatów organizacyjnych (wydajność, motywacja, satysfakcja pracowników, realizacja celów) – jest silnie uwarunkowana kontekstem kulturowym. Podstawą teoretyczną rozważań są typologie przywództwa transformacyjnego, transakcyjnego i leseferystycznego według Bassa i Avolio, osadzone w ramach kulturowych Hofstede’a oraz badania GLOBE. Wybór Etiopii i Polski jako obiektów porównania uzasadniony jest ich odmiennością kulturową, zwłaszcza w zakresie dystansu władzy, indywidualizmu/kolektywizmu oraz unikania niepewności. Etiopia reprezentuje kulturę wysoce hierarchiczną i kolektywistyczną, Polska zaś – kraj postkomunistyczny, o umiarkowanym indywidualizmie i wysokim unikaniu niepewności, znajdujący się na etapie transformacji ku zachodnim normom zarządzania. Autor podkreśla, że dotychczasowa literatura przedmiotu koncentruje się głównie na porównaniach krajów zachodnich lub azjatyckich, pomijając kultury afrykańskie, mimo rosnącego znaczenia gospodarczego Afryki i wzrostu aktywności polskich przedsiębiorstw na tym kontynencie.

Przedmiotem badania jest zależność między wymiarami kultury narodowej a postrzeganą skutecznością stylów przywództwa. Sformułowane cele badawcze obejmują: identyfikację i porównanie dominujących wymiarów kulturowych obu krajów, ocenę, który styl przywództwa najlepiej odpowiada oczekiwaniom kulturowym w każdym z nich, analizę roli dystansu władzy, indywidualizmu/kolektywizmu i unikania niepewności jako zmiennych pośredniczących, a także wyprowadzenie praktycznych implikacji dla menedżerów działających w obu kontekstach.

Główna hipoteza (H1) zakłada, że w kulturach o wysokim dystansie władzy i kolektywistycznych (Etiopia) skuteczniejsze będą style transformacyjny i dyrektywny, natomiast w kulturach o niższym dystansie władzy i większym indywidualizmie (Polska) – style partycypacyjny i transakcyjny. Hipoteza druga (H2) zakłada istnienie uniwersalnych cech przywódczych (uczciwość, wizja, zdolność inspirowania), cenionych niezależnie od kultury, zgodnie z ustaleniami badania GLOBE.

Rozdział ma charakter teoretyczno-porównawczy i opiera się wyłącznie na źródłach wtórnych. Metodologia obejmuje analizę porównawczą kultur w oparciu o wymiary Hofstede’a i GLOBE, zastosowanie modelu Full Range Leadership Bassa i Avolio oraz krytyczny przegląd literatury.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

Przywództwo międzykulturowe, Kultura narodowa, Skuteczność przywództwa, Przywództwo transformacyjne, Wymiary kulturowe

ABSTRACT

The chapter presents a comparative analysis of the influence of national culture on the effectiveness of leadership styles in Ethiopia and Poland. The author's starting point is the assumption that leadership effectiveness – understood as the capacity of a given leadership style to generate desirable organizational outcomes (performance, motivation, employee satisfaction, achievement of goals) – is strongly conditioned by cultural context. The theoretical basis of the discussion consists of the typologies of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership developed by Bass and Avolio, situated within the cultural frameworks of Hofstede and the GLOBE study.

The choice of Ethiopia and Poland as objects of comparison is justified by their cultural divergence, particularly with regard to power distance, individualism/collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance. Ethiopia represents a highly hierarchical and collectivist culture, whereas Poland is a post-communist country characterized by moderate individualism and high uncertainty avoidance, currently undergoing a transition toward Western management norms. The author emphasizes that existing literature on the subject focuses primarily on comparisons between Western or Asian countries, largely overlooking African cultures, despite Africa's growing economic significance and the increasing activity of Polish enterprises on the continent.

The subject of the research is the relationship between dimensions of national culture and the perceived effectiveness of leadership styles. The formulated research aims include: identifying and comparing the dominant cultural dimensions of the two countries, assessing which leadership style best corresponds to cultural expectations in each of them, analyzing the role of power distance, individualism/collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance as mediating variables, and deriving practical implications for managers operating in both contexts.

The main hypothesis (H1) assumes that in cultures with high power distance and collectivist orientation (Ethiopia), transformational and directive leadership styles will be more effective, whereas in cultures with lower power distance and greater individualism (Poland), participative and transactional styles will be more effective. The second hypothesis

(H2) assumes the existence of universal leadership traits (integrity, vision, the ability to inspire) that are valued regardless of culture, in line with the findings of the GLOBE study.

The chapter is theoretical-comparative in nature and relies exclusively on secondary sources. The methodology includes a comparative cultural analysis based on the Hofstede and GLOBE dimensions, the application of Bass and Avolio's Full Range Leadership Model and a critical literature review.

KEYWORDS

Cross-Cultural Leadership, National Culture, Leadership Effectiveness, Transformational Leadership, Cultural Dimensions

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

1.1 DEFINING CULTURE: NATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DIMENSIONS

Culture is not a unitary phenomenon; it operates on multiple levels, from broad values shared across a nation to specific behavioral norms within a single organization. Two levels are relevant to this comparative study: national culture and organizational culture.

Hofstede defines national culture as the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes members of one group from another^[1] – an inheritance transmitted through family, education, religion, and work, shaping how individuals perceive authority, relate to others, and cope with uncertainty. Schein's three-level model of culture – artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions^[2] – is useful here, since the deepest level (underlying, often

^[1] Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

^[2] Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (4th ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

unconscious beliefs about hierarchy, trust, and human nature) exerts the strongest influence on how employees respond to leadership behavior.

Organizational culture, while shaped by national culture, is not identical to it: managers can deliberately alter organizational practices, but the value systems employees bring from their national culture are far more resistant to change^[3].

1.2 KEY CULTURAL DIMENSION FRAMEWORKS

Three frameworks underpin the cross-cultural comparison developed in Chapters 2–4: Hofstede’s Cultural Dimensions, the GLOBE study, and the Trompenaars–Hampden-Turner model.

Hofstede’s model, based originally on a survey of IBM employees in over 50 countries^[4], identifies six dimensions: Power Distance (tolerance for unequal power distribution), Individualism–Collectivism (the strength of ties between individuals and groups), Masculinity–Femininity (competitiveness vs. cooperation as social values), Uncertainty Avoidance (tolerance for ambiguity), Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation (attachment to tradition vs. pragmatic adaptation), and Indulgence vs. Restraint (control over gratification of desires)^[5]. Despite criticism regarding the representativeness of the original IBM sample and the risk of treating national borders as cultural boundaries^[6], the framework remains the most widely used comparative instrument in cross-cultural management research and is applied here with these limitations acknowledged.

^[3] Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

^[4] Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture’s Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

^[5] Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov (2010), op. cit.

^[6] McSweeney, B. (2002). Hofstede’s model of national cultural differences and their consequences: A triumph of faith – a failure of analysis. *Human Relations*, 55(1), 89–118.

The GLOBE study, led by Robert House and based on data from over 17,000 managers in 62 societies^[7], expands Hofstede's dimensions to nine (adding Institutional and In-Group Collectivism, Gender Egalitarianism, Assertiveness, Future Orientation, Performance Orientation, and Humane Orientation) and, crucially, distinguishes cultural practices (*as is*) from cultural values (*should be*)^[8]. Two GLOBE findings are central to this thesis: the identification of six global leadership dimensions tested for perceived effectiveness across cultures, and the discovery of a set of leadership attributes – trustworthiness, vision, inspirational capacity – rated as universally effective across all 62 societies^[9], which directly supports the thesis's secondary hypothesis.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's model, derived from surveys of over 15,000 managers^[10], proposes seven dimensions (e.g., Universalism vs. Particularism, Achievement vs. Ascription, Specific vs. Diffuse relationships). This thesis draws mainly on the Achievement–Ascription and Specific–Diffuse dimensions, which are especially relevant to understanding authority relations in Ethiopia and Poland respectively.

1.3 LEADERSHIP STYLE THEORIES

Leadership theory has evolved from trait-based approaches, through behavioral models (the Ohio State and Michigan studies, which identified task-oriented and people-oriented behavior)^[11], to situational and contingency theories. Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model and Fiedler's Contingency Model both argue that leadership effectiveness depends on fit

^[7] House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (Eds.) (2004). *Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

^[8] House et al. (2004), op. cit.

^[9] House et al. (2004), op. cit.

^[10] Trompenaars, F., & Hampden-Turner, C. (2012). *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Diversity in Global Business* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

^[11] Northouse, P. G. (2021). *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (9th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

between style and context^[12] – a principle that underlies cross-cultural leadership research treating national culture as a key contingency variable.

The framework most directly applied in this thesis is Bass and Avolio's Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM), distinguishing transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership^[13]:

- Transformational leadership elevates followers' interests toward organizational or collective goals, through the *Four I's*: Idealized Influence, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualized Consideration^[14]. It is associated with higher motivation, commitment, and performance, particularly in contexts requiring change or collective mobilization.
- Transactional leadership rests on an exchange relationship between leader and follower, comprising Contingent Reward and Management by Exception^[15]. It tends to be effective in stable, predictable environments with clear, measurable performance standards.
- Laissez-faire leadership denotes the effective absence of leadership and is consistently linked to the poorest organizational outcomes, serving mainly as a baseline against which the other styles are measured.

Two further models are briefly noted for their cultural relevance: servant leadership^[16], which resonates strongly with the African philosophy of Ubuntu (*I am because we are*) and will be revisited in Chapter 2; and authentic leadership^[17],

^[12] Hersey, P., & Blanchard, K. H. (1969). Life cycle theory of leadership. *Training and Development Journal*, 23(5), 26–34; Fiedler, F. E. (1967). *A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

^[13] Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). *Improving Organizational Effectiveness Through Transformational Leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

^[14] Bass & Avolio (1994), op. cit.

^[15] Bass & Avolio (1994), op. cit.

^[16] Greenleaf, R. K. (1970). *The Servant as Leader*. Westfield, IN: The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership; Spears, L. C., & Lawrence, M. (Eds.) (2004). *Practicing Servant-Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

^[17] Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), 315–338.

whose core concept – authenticity – is understood and expressed differently across cultures, a point relevant to interpreting GLOBE's universal vs. culturally contingent leadership attributes.

1.4 THE LINK BETWEEN CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

Building on these frameworks, this section outlines how culture shapes leadership effectiveness. GLOBE's central argument is that cultural values generate implicit leadership theories – shared mental models of what distinguishes good from bad leadership, absorbed through socialization rather than conscious learning^[18]. Den Hartog's analysis of GLOBE data across 62 cultures shows that these implicit theories vary systematically with cultural dimensions: in high power-distance cultures, followers expect and adapt to strong, directive leadership, while participative approaches may be read as weakness; in low power-distance cultures, the reverse holds, with autocratic leadership viewed negatively^[19].

This is not merely a matter of preference – Dorfman's review of GLOBE sub-studies found that culturally consistent leadership (behavior aligned with prevailing implicit leadership theories) produces significantly higher follower motivation, satisfaction, and performance than culturally inconsistent leadership^[20]. Hofstede identifies specific mechanisms: power distance shapes the acceptable boundaries of leader authority; individualism/collectivism determines whether motivational appeals should target individuals or groups; and uncertainty avoidance shapes followers' desire for structure and predictability from leaders^[21].

^[18] Den Hartog, D. N., House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Ruiz-Quintanilla, S. A., & Dorfman, P. W. (1999). Culture specific and cross-culturally generalizable implicit leadership theories. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 10(2), 219–256.

^[19] Den Hartog et al. (1999), op. cit.

^[20] Dorfman, P. W., Javidan, M., Hanges, P., Dastmalchian, A., & House, R. (2012). GLOBE: A twenty-year journey into the intriguing world of culture and leadership. *Journal of World Business*, 47(4), 504–518.

^[21] Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov (2010), op. cit.

The relationship is bidirectional: leaders do not merely conform to cultural expectations but also reinforce organizational culture through what they consistently attend to, measure, and reward^[22]. Finally, GLOBE's identification of universally valued leadership attributes – vision, integrity, inspirational capacity – suggests that cultural contingency is not absolute, lending empirical support to this thesis's secondary hypothesis: that despite substantial cultural differences, certain leadership qualities are positively received in both Ethiopia and Poland.

2.1 OVERVIEW OF ETHIOPIAN SOCIETY, HISTORY, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

It is through its incredible depth of history, its maintaining of political independence during the colonial period, and the intricacy of its ethnic, linguistic, and religious makeup that Ethiopia occupies a special place in Africa and, in fact, the world at large. To comprehend Ethiopian organizational culture, it is necessary to place it within this historical and social context since the values, hierarchies, and norms of relationship that structure Ethiopian workplaces did not appear in a vacuum but are the result of centuries of imperial rule, religion, and social structure.

Ethiopia is the oldest independent state and one of the oldest in the world, with a documented political history dating back to more than two millennia in the Aksumite Empire^[23]. Ethiopia, unlike practically all other sub-Saharan African countries, has never been colonized, which is a fact of a great cultural and psychological importance. The short Italian occupation (1936-41) not only was opposed militarily but has also never been a part of Ethiopian national consciousness as a time of justified foreign occupation^[24]. This sovereignty

^[22] Schein (2010), op. cit.

^[23] Marcus, H. G. (1994). A history of Ethiopia. *University of California Press*. Available at: https://www.sahistory.org.za/sites/default/files/archive-files3/harold_g._marcus_a_history_of_ethiopiabook4me.org_.pdf [accessed 25th May, 2026]

^[24] Zewde, B. (2001). A History of Modern Ethiopia, 1855-1991. 2nd ed. (pp. 151-153). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv136c203> [accessed 25th May, 2026]

history has created a powerful sense of national identity, a strong sense of pride in native tradition, and a cultural disposition that is, in one way, more continuous with pre-modern social organization than is the situation in other neighboring countries that saw their institutions more completely reorganized by the colonial government.

Politically, most of the modern history of Ethiopia has been ruled by an imperial monarchy, most notably Emperor Haile Selassie I, who ruled from 1930 to 1974; then a Marxist military junta, the Derg (1974-1991); and finally by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) under a federal system that officially recognized the ethnic diversity of Ethiopia through ethnically based regional states^[25]. All these political phases imprinted on the Ethiopian organizational life, institutions, and cultural marks. The empire strengthened the patron-client and hierarchical deference. The Derg brought a centralized command-and-control system to the state administration. The federal era since 1991 introduced a higher level of formal decentralization, but informal norms of hierarchy were much more resilient than institutional changes^[26].

Ethiopia is a country that harbors more than 80 ethnic groups, yet the two largest peoples are Oromo and Amhara, who comprise about a third of the total population of about 120 million. The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, which has existed for more than 1,600 years, has been a major institution in Ethiopian culture, and its principles of hierarchy, communal duty, spiritual power, and respect for elders have influenced Ethiopian culture extensively^[27]. One third of the population follows Islam, which adds an additional level of communal and power-based values. Both religious traditions support the reverence towards the established authority, the primacy of the collective over the individual, and the significance of relational trust in social and professional relations.

^[25] Clapham, C. S. (1998). African guerrillas.

^[26] Fiseha, A. (2012). Ethiopia's Experiment in Accommodating Diversity: A 20-year balance sheet. *Regional & Federal Studies*, 22(4), (pp. 435–473). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13597566.2012.709502> [accessed 25th May, 2026]

^[27] Tulu, B. A., & Roro, A. G. (2022). Regionalization or marginalization? The case of the Oromo living in the Amhara region of Ethiopia. *Heliyon*, 8(11), e11472. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e11472> [accessed 26th May, 2026]

Over the past few decades, there has been a tremendous change in the Ethiopian economy. Ethiopia has experienced among Africa's best GDP growth rates in the 2004-2019 period, averaging around 10 percent per year, fuelled by government spending on infrastructure, agriculture, and manufacturing^[28]. This economic growth has generated an expansion of the formal private sector and a hitherto dominant public sector and generated larger amounts of foreign direct investment—not only from China, India, Turkey, and some European countries that have produced organizational spaces in which cross-cultural leadership processes have become more and more of an issue.

Though this has grown, Ethiopian organizational culture is still largely influenced by the public sector, which still dominates the formal workforce and establishes the major norms regarding workplace hierarchy, authority, and management practice. The features of public sector organizations in Ethiopia include centralized decision-making, high deference to positional power, low upward communication, and a management culture where relationships, not rules or performance measures per se, are the primary medium of organizational existence^[29].

2.2 ETHIOPIA ON HOFSTEDÉ'S AND GLOBE'S CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

The original IBM dataset of Hofstede did not encompass Ethiopia, which is a major drawback of the straightforward application of his framework to the Ethiopian context. Later studies, however, such as the later extensions of Hofstede, regional studies in the framework of the GLOBE project,

^[28] Senbet, D., Wodajo, T., NOAA, & Department of Commerce. (2022). Growth Accounting: Sources of Economic Growth in Ethiopia. *In African Journal of Economic Review* (Vol. 10, Issue 3).

^[29] Ababora, T. M., Mamo, T. R., & Teferi, M. T. (2026). Organizational culture in Ethiopian public research universities: testing Denison's framework in a non-Western context. *Discover Education*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-026-01610-x> [accessed 26th May, 2026]

and cross-cultural surveys by other researchers have painted a fairly stable picture of the Ethiopian cultural profile on the major dimensions^[30].

POWER DISTANCE

Power distance is very high in Ethiopia. Empirical research using the Hofstede model of Ethiopian contexts has continuously revealed that hierarchical relationships are viewed as being natural, just, and to a large extent untestable^[31]. There is a strong sense of social distance between superiors and subordinates in Ethiopian workplaces: the subordinates are supposed to be respectful and deferential, not to openly criticize their superiors, and wait to be instructed instead of acting independently. Managers, on their part, are supposed to be authoritative, paternal, and personally interested in the well-being of their subordinates, not in a participative or egalitarian way but as a benevolent authority figure that has responsibility over his or her subordinates.

This trend is in line with the findings of the GLOBE study of the Sub-Saharan Africa cluster, which encompasses Ethiopia. House et al. (2004) discovered that this cluster ranked top in the world in terms of power distance practices and in-group collectivism practices with high levels of support of hierarchical leadership and relationally embedded authority^[32]. In a study that specifically focuses on business culture in Ethiopia, Sigger, Polak, and Pennink discovered that age and positional authority deference were almost universal aspects of Ethiopian organizational relationships and that leaders who attempted to flatten hierarchies were often viewed as abdicating their duties in addition to empowering their employees^[33].

^[30] Ibidem³

^[31] Africa – East African Geert Hofstede Cultural Dimensions explained. (n.d.). Available at: https://internationalbusinesscenter.org/geert-hofstede/hofstede_east_africa.shtml

^[32] Ibidem¹⁵

^[33] Sigger, D. S., Polak, J. B., & Pennink, B. J. W. (2010). *Ubuntu or Humanness as a management concept: Based on empirical results from Tanzania*. (CDS Reports; No. 29). *Centre for Development Studies*.

INDIVIDUALISM VERSUS COLLECTIVISM

Ethiopia is a highly collectivist community. Group membership is the major form of social identity, an individual belonging to a family, clan, ethnic group, or religious congregation, and not according to personal performance or self-identification^[34]. This collectivism is realized in various ways in the organizational environment: the preference of group decision-making over individual decision-making, the preference of relational harmony over task efficiency, high in-group loyalty that may lead to nepotism and favoritism in hiring and promotions, and the tendency to view individual success or failure as a group problem.

The *Ye-lugnta* concept, which is a unique social norm of the Ethiopian community that explains a kind of shared shame and social responsibility of a community, is a great example of how deep-rooted the collectivist culture of the Ethiopian people is^[35]. Organizationally, it is a norm that promotes conformity, deters individual dissent, and rewards positive relational networks with colleagues and superiors. It also implies that the quality of the personal relationship between the leader and his or her followers is a strong source of mediation of leadership effectiveness—a leader who is relationally trusted would be followed much more willingly than a leader who is simply authoritative in a formal way.

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

Ethiopia has moderate uncertainty avoidance, but the aspect of uncertainty avoidance is more intricate in the Ethiopian context than in most of the Western contexts. On the one hand, well-rooted religious systems, both Orthodox Christian and Islamic, offer extensive normative systems, which minimize existential uncertainty, and Ethiopian organizational culture tends towards predictable patterns of hierarchy and established processes over

^[34] Beyene, K. T., Shi, C. S., & Wu, W. W. (2016). Linking Culture, Organizational Learning Orientation, and Product Innovation Performance: The Case of Ethiopian Manufacturing Firms. *The South African Journal of Industrial Engineering*, 27(1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7166/27-1-1334> [accessed 26th May, 2026]

^[35] Wole, D. (2018). *Yilugnta and other predictors of class participation and achievement in selected courses at Addis Ababa University*. Available at: <https://izlik.org/JA39FN85CD> [accessed 27th May, 2026]

ambiguity and improvisation^[36]. Conversely, the long political history and institutional fragility of Ethiopia have also given rise to a pragmatic flexibility in coping with uncertain conditions – especially in individual survival tactics that makes a simple high-uncertainty-avoidance characterization difficult^[37].

Practically, Ethiopian workers are more likely to want strict guidance by those in authority; they are uneasy with open-ended or unspecified tasks and expect leaders to offer not only technical but also moral and social guidance. Leaders conveying confidence, belief, and purpose are likely to be more successful in such an environment than those who express doubts or who encourage subordinates to find their own way through the ambiguity.

MASCULINITY VERSUS FEMININITY

The patterns of Ethiopian society are generally masculine in the sense of Hofstede, and male authority, assertive leadership, and social prestige linked with position and status are highly valued by the society^[38]. This, however, is subject to the much more communal and relational nature of Ethiopian organizational culture, which makes the highly masculine cultures characterized by pure competition more tempered in Hofstede terms. What emerges is a cultural arrangement where powerful male control is anticipated and admired but where the application of the same is supposed to be founded on relational accountability and community interest as opposed to individualistic desire.

LONG-TERM ORIENTATION

Long-term orientation is relatively high in Ethiopia. These values are expressed in the organization through a desire to have long-term relationships over short-term transactions, a sense of loyalty to existing institutions, and a relative lack of interest in change that doesn't connect to history.

^[36] Ibidem¹⁶

^[37] Ibidem³⁶

^[38] Ibidem⁶

Figure 1: A Radar (Spider) Chart of Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions



Source: <https://shohanasite.wordpress.com/2018/05/07/understanding-hofstede-cultural-dimensions/>

2.3 DOMINANT LEADERSHIP NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS IN ETHIOPIAN WORKPLACES

Drawing on the cultural profile constructed above, several dominant leadership norms and expectations can be identified in Ethiopian organizational settings.

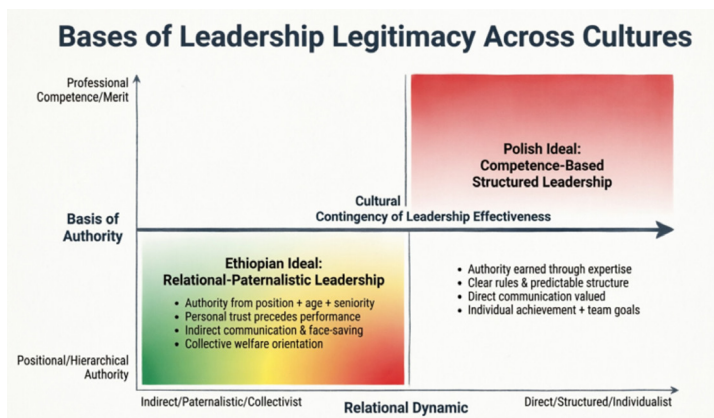
HIERARCHICAL AUTHORITY AS THE BASIS OF LEGITIMACY

Leadership legitimacy in Ethiopian organizations is mostly based on the hierarchical position as opposed to competence on its own^[39]. The main sources of authority that are respected are age, seniority, and formal rank. This does not imply that incompetency is not an issue, but incompetent leaders

^[39] Sigger, D. S., Polak, J. B., & Pennink, B. J. W. (2010). *Ubuntu or Humanness as a management concept: Based on empirical results from Tanzania*. (CDS Reports; No. 29). *Centre for Development Studies*.

will more readily be tolerated under quiet than competent ones, and competent junior workers will be more tolerant of senior authority than aggressive in promoting their own ideas. The dynamic has significant implications for knowledge management and organizational learning in Ethiopian organizations because hierarchical deference usually filters and mutes upward communication of vital information.

Figure 2: A Conceptual Model of *Bases of Leadership Legitimacy*



Source: Author.

PATERNALISTIC LEADERSHIP

The most culturally aligned leadership model in the Ethiopian situation would be characterized as the paternalistic one: the leader is a powerful, protective, personally interested authority figure who cares about the well-being of the subordinates in exchange for their loyalty, deference, and hard work. Both the religious principles of communal obligation and the historical paradigm of the imperial rule, where the monarch was not only a political power but also a father of the state, support this paternalistic condition.

In a cross-cultural survey of paternalistic leadership in ten countries, Aycan discovered that the greatest support of paternalistic leadership was noted in societies with high power distance and high collectivism and a family-based

model of social organization—a scenario that perfectly describes Ethiopia^[40]. In Ethiopian organizations, subordinates often seek the advice of their leaders not just in professional matters but in personal matters to work their way around situations in life—a diffuse and not specific relational orientation that can be found in the work of Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner^[41].

RELATIONAL TRUST AS A PRECONDITION FOR EFFECTIVENESS

The centrality of relational trust is perhaps the most crucial aspect of Ethiopian organizational culture to comprehending the effectiveness of leadership. Leadership effectiveness in collectivist high-power-distance cultures cannot occur outside a personal relationship between the leader and the follower^[42]. Such a manager, technically competent but not having made any effort to forge honest personal relationships with his subordinates, who is seen as cold, distant, or merely transactional, will see his authority eroded by informal opposition, loss of discretionary effort, and destruction of the loyalty networks through which organizational action is possible in Ethiopian culture.

Such relational need is not only a cultural nicety but also a structural aspect of the functioning of Ethiopian organizations. In settings where formal institutional structures such as well-defined job descriptions, enforceable contracts, and open performance systems are less established or reinforced, personal relations serve to bridge this gap, where trust and mutual accountability in coordination are always achieved.

^[40] Aycan, Z. (2015). Paternalistic leadership. Wiley Encyclopedia of Management, 1–2. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118785317.weom060156> [accessed 27th May, 2026]

^[41] *Ibidem*¹⁹

^[42] Engida, M. A., Debas, A. T., & Tiruneh, T. B. (2026). The leadership paradox in Ethiopia: a systematic review of full-range leadership styles and employee outcomes (2015–2025). *Future Business Journal*, 12(1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43093-026-00754-4> [accessed 27th May, 2026]

COMMUNICATION NORMS: INDIRECTNESS AND FACE-SAVING

In Ethiopia, organizational communication is highly indirect in nature, especially upward communication and in circumstances where there is disagreement or bad news. Speaking outright against one who is above him, giving feedback that is openly critical or exposing unpleasant truths in social situations is usually deemed socially unacceptable and relationally harmful. Rather, Ethiopian communication practices are based on indirect signaling, being diplomatic, and saving face for everyone involved – communication norms that are often misunderstood by foreign managers who are used to direct communication as avoidance or untruthfulness.

To be an effective leader, this communication culture implies that leaders cannot use direct feedback channels to understand the level of engagement of the subordinates or the problems in the organization. Good leadership in the Ethiopian context means social savvy to pick up nonverbal cues, to establish informal forms of space where honesty may be played, and to recognize silence not as consent but as a culturally required non-dissent.

3.1 OVERVIEW OF POLISH SOCIETY, HISTORY, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

The modern organizational culture of Poland cannot be explained outside of the turbulent history of the country in the twentieth century. Perhaps no other European country has been influenced by a series of major political discontinuities as Polish workplace traditions, institutionalization, and forms of authority perceptions have been due to the effects of Nazi occupation, communist rule, and the shift to democratic society, which left indelible traces on how Polish individuals feel towards institutions, hierarchies, and each other in the workplace.

The population of Poland, about 38 million, is ethnically and linguistically homogenous to an extent that is rare in Europe, a result of the changes of borders and migrations of people during the settlement after the war and is mostly Roman Catholic, with the Church having been a focal point of

national identity, moral authority, and civil society under communist rule and later. The Catholic social values, which focus on family, community, moral obligation, and respect for legitimate authority, intertwine with the secular, market-oriented values brought by EU integration and economic globalization in a complex manner, resulting in a cultural space where traditional and modern value systems exist in continuous conflict.

3.2 POLAND ON HOFSTEDÉ'S AND GLOBE'S CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

In contrast to Ethiopia, Poland was not only included in the expanded versions of the Hofstede research, but it is also well-represented in the cross-cultural management literature. The above profile of the country in terms of cultural dimension scores reflects the historical complexity as described above^[43].

POWER DISTANCE

Poland is a moderate power distance country with a PDI score of 68 on the Hofstede scale—higher than in the Western European context and far lower than in strongly hierarchical societies like Ethiopia, and a score that indicates a high degree of organizational ambivalence, whereby formal hierarchies are accepted and preserved, but authority figures and their legitimacy are more conditional than in highly hierarchical societies.

Polish power distance scores are difficult to interpret due to the communist legacy. On the one hand, the culture of official obedience and top-down decision-making became the new order of things due to decades of centralized bureaucratic control. Conversely, the exposure to an essentially illegitimate political power, which was both officially all-powerful and privately scoffed at, created a unique Polish ability of formal obedience and a personal cynicism about power. The outcome is a workplace culture where employees can show

^[43] Nasierowski, W., & Mikula, B. (1998). Culture dimensions of Polish managers: Hofstede's indices. *Organization Studies*, 19(3), (pp. 495–509). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/017084069801900306> [accessed 30th May, 2026]

outward compliance to hierarchical directives and their own continued evaluation of the competence or judgment of their superiors in secret—a dynamic that leaders working in Polish organizations must be aware of and actively fight against by building trust and by demonstrating credibility to their subordinates.

The GLOBE study, which placed Poland in the Eastern European cultural category with Hungary, Russia, the Czech Republic, and some others, discovered that this cultural group had a relatively high score on Power Distance practices but a much lower Power Distance rating—that is, the Polish managers and employees usually think that power should be shared more evenly than it is. It is the gap between practice and value that, in turn, is informative of culture: it indicates a society in the act of transition, where aspirational values are gaining traction on institutional practices.

INDIVIDUALISM VERSUS COLLECTIVISM

Poland is moderately individualist, recording an IDV score of 60 on Hofstede scale – over the midpoint and higher than most non-Western societies, but lower than the strongly individualistic scores of Northwestern European nations like the United Kingdom (IDV 89) or the Netherlands (IDV 80). This middle-ground individualism is an embodiment of an authentic cultural duality. The Polish culture is big on individual accomplishment, personal accountability, and self-sufficiency, which were strengthened by the post-1989 shift toward market capitalism and the rhetoric of individual entrepreneurship and merit. Meanwhile, robust in-group loyalties, based on family, small friendship groups, and regional identity, continue to coexist with formal individualism, resulting in a culture that is individualist in its collective hopes but much more collectivist in its actual relational behaviors.

This two-sidedness has significant implications for the effectiveness of leadership. Polish workers are more likely to react well to awards of personal performance and leadership styles that value their individual freedom and professionalism. Nevertheless, the informal social networks that regulate organizational life in Polish workplaces, the *znajomości* (connections) civilization, where knowing people is sometimes as important as knowing them,

are indicative of a collectivist logic of in-group reciprocity, which leaders need to negotiate very carefully.

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE

Poland has a very high uncertainty avoidance with a UAI score of 93, one of the highest in Europe and in the global dataset of Hofstede. This is, perhaps, the only most unique aspect of the Polish cultural psychology as a leader, and it is immersed in the historical experience. A country that is a survivor of partitioning, occupation, genocide, and imposed ideological transformation within the memory of its inhabitants is well justified in its fears of uncertainty and its insistence on predictability, order, and well-articulated rules.

Organizationally, high uncertainty avoidance in Poland is characterized by a tendency of having well-defined job descriptions, precise performance expectations, clear procedures, and explicit communication of the leaders on goals and priorities. The Polish workers are not comfortable with ambiguity on the part of leaders, changing organizational priorities in a short period of time, or leadership that is vague, inconsistent, or lacking focus. Leaders who may be precise and consistent in their communication, who may create clear structures and who may keep their promises and who can create as little ambiguity as possible are more likely to foster much greater levels of trust and performance in Polish organizational environments.

High uncertainty avoidance and the communist legacy in particular interact in a certain manner: the communist system, despite all its other pathologies, equipped Poles with a high level of employment security and predictable institutional structures and roles. Institutional flux on an enormous scale, together with the post-1989 transition of uncertainty into the market and job insecurity, was introduced on a scale that, at any rate, has not weakened but instead hardened the Polish cultural sensitivity to uncertainty.

MASCULINITY VERSUS FEMININITY

Poland has a moderate masculinity score, and its score on MAS is 64. Polish organizational culture places a strong emphasis on professional success, career growth, and competitive performance, which have been enhanced greatly by the change to the market and the aspirations of a professional stratum towards Western European standards of living. Meanwhile, the workplace culture in Poland still has some communal and relationship elements, especially in small and family-owned enterprises, that mitigate the pure competitive orientation of highly masculine cultures.

LONG-TERM ORIENTATION

Poland has a moderately long-term orientation with an LTO score of 38, which is below the mid-range and significantly lower than the East Asian societies, which are at the top of this dimension. This is indicative of a cultural orientation that is neither over-respectful of tradition nor institutional continuity nor over-insistent on short-term results of action—a balance that is also in keeping with the Polish experience of negotiating between historical memory and the imperatives of post-communist modernization.

INDULGENCE VERSUS RESTRAINT

The score of Poland on indulgence is low, and the IVR score is 29, which puts it in the category of more restrained cultures of the dataset of Hofstede. This is indicative of a cultural inclination towards seriousness, moral responsibility, and the subjugation of personal pleasure to duty and social responsibility—values that can be found not only in the Catholic moral tradition but also in the sober historical experience of the Polish nation.

4.1 DIRECT COMPARISON OF ETHIOPIAN AND POLISH CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

The cultural portraits created in Chapters 2 and 3 indicate two societies, which are very distinct in almost all significant cultural dimensions but which have some structural aspects due to which the comparison between them is analytically fruitful. It is worthwhile to put the two profiles face-to-face in all the dimensions of Hofstede before analyzing the leadership implications of these differences.

The biggest difference between the two nations is perhaps **power distance**. The organizational culture of Ethiopia is marked by very high power distance – the hierarchical authority is considered natural and legitimate and to a large extent beyond question, and the social distance between leaders and subordinates is strong and actively upheld. Poland, having a PDI of 68, is in the middle-high range, though with a significantly different attitude to authority, whereby formal hierarchy is honored and leadership legitimacy is conditional upon competence and personal integrity, not on the basis of position. The practical organizational implication of this distinction is considerable: what may be seen as proper, decisive, and authoritative in Ethiopia may be seen as arrogant or lacking sufficient credibility in Poland, and what may be seen as admirably transparent and consultative in Poland may be seen as weak or irresponsible in Ethiopia.

The same can be said of Individualism vs. Collectivism. The highly collectivist orientation of Ethiopia implies that organizational identity, motivation, and loyalty are formed primarily in terms of group membership—family, clan, and community, and that leaders gain a significant part of their effectiveness due to their capacity to establish themselves as reliable custodians of the group. The moderate individualism of Poland generates an alternative logic of motivation: Polish workers are more motivated when they can see that individual performance, respect for individual professional competence, and leadership that involves them as competent, autonomous actors and not as part of a group in need of direction and protection. However, neither culture

loses the important dynamics of in-group loyalty that is embedded in Ethiopia in the form of clan and community ties, and in Poland in the form of the *znajomości* culture of personal contacts, so relational investment by leaders does matter in both cases, but the structural reasons behind it differ.

The most extreme score of Poland is Uncertainty Avoidance, which creates a comparatively counterintuitive image. Although Ethiopia has a higher power distance and hierarchical orientation, Poland is the country that has the most dramatic score on the need to have clarity of structure, predictability of rules, and clear direction of leaders. The moderately high uncertainty avoidance in Ethiopia is softened by a cultural habit of being pragmatic in workarounds of institutional vulnerability and political unrest, which results in a populace familiar with working in uncertainty despite a preference to avoid it. The very high score of 93 on the UAI dimension of Poland represents a more intense cultural anxiety over ambiguity and historical traumas augmented by the disorienting process of post-communist transition that imposes unusually high demands on leaders to be clear, stable, and structurally precise in their communication.

There is a general similarity in masculinity scores between the two countries—both moderate in masculinity, but the manifestation of this dimension varies. In Ethiopia, male assertiveness is built into a paternalist system of relations whereby the power of the leader is manifested as a kind of guardian charge rather than as a contest for supremacy. Masculine achievement orientation in Poland is manifested more directly with regard to professional ambition, career progression, and performance-based rewarding in line with the values of individualism and market orientation of the post-transition era.

The following table summarizes the comparative dimensional profile:

Dimension	Ethiopia	Poland
Power Distance (PDI)	Very High	Moderate-High (68)
Individualism (IDV)	Very Low	Moderate (60)
Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI)	Moderate-High	Very High (93)
Masculinity (MAS)	Moderate-High	Moderate (64)
Long-Term Orientation (LTO)	Moderate-High	Moderate-Low (38)

This comparative profile sets the stage for the leadership effectiveness analysis that comes next. The main idea for this chapter is that these differences in dimensions do not just create different leadership preferences but different organizational logics, as the same leadership act has different meanings within different cultural contexts, is met with different reactions, and produces different outcomes.

The style that has received the most continuous cross-cultural research interest and attention is transformational leadership, not for the lack of interest but because it is the style most often cited as universally applicable across cultural differences and the one best defined by the greatest degree of variation in cultural expression and reception.

Ethiopian values match the Four I's of transformational leadership in the following manner. Ethiopian expectations of a hierarchically relevant role model are particularly linked with idealized influence, the leader as a powerful, trusted role model, which corresponds directly with Ethiopian expectations of a role model. Ethiopian organizational culture holds that the leader is expected, by the culture, to embody the values that he or she represents; and a leader whose personal behavior is not in line with his public statements will quickly lose the relational trust on which his or her effectiveness relies.

Ethiopia is a collectivist society where appeals to collective purpose and community success are more motivational than appeals to individual achievement. Individualized consideration—attending to the personal developmental needs of followers is related to rule of paternalism (paternalistic leadership), in which followers expect their leaders to be genuinely interested in their well-being beyond the scope of the formal work relationship. The last element of transformational leadership that does not fit as well in the Ethiopian culture is intellectual stimulation, which involves followers challenging the leader's assumptions and thinking outside the box, something that is not encouraged by the high power distance norm, and being a challenging leader will suggest that the leader is undermining his or her own authority.

Transformational leadership also works broadly in Polish organizations but in other ways and in a different culture. Ethiopian transformational leaders have power mainly based on personal authority and relational investment, while Polish transformational leaders have power mainly based on the intellectual and professional credibility of the vision being communicated and the competence with which it is carried out.

Polish workers doubt any authority that is based solely on position and are most receptive to those leaders who are respected because of their proven knowledge and integrity. A Polish context-transformational leader who has a vision to give that vision to the followers but not have any solid professional justification to support that vision will be met with private reservations, especially by the large, more highly educated professional class that dominates formal employment opportunities. On the other hand, a leader who is intellectually rich but also motivating and structuring the communication clearly is capable of generating an exceptionally high level of organizational commitment and discretionary effort, in particular in a country with very high uncertainty avoidance such as Poland.

This is the case for the intellectual stimulation component of transformational leadership, which works poorly in the Ethiopian context but well in Poland. Positional authority and top-down communication alone will not create a higher level of engagement among Polish workers when it comes to

leadership. Workers are moderately individualist; they are confident of their own abilities to make decisions at work, and they are generally more open to challenging accepted beliefs of their peers in other countries than leaders who actively encourage the use of critical thinking, accept challenges to accepted ideas, and provide room for experts to contribute to decision-making.

The tension with transformational leadership in Poland is the vision-structure balance: transformational leaders are prone to communication with a broad horizon and with inspirational components, while the employees deeply value the certain sense of structure, which is why the inspirational elements in the communication of transformational leaders have to be accompanied by a sense of structure. If a visionary leader does not have a clear framework of operations, measurable milestones, or follow through, he/she will create anxiety rather than inspire Polish followers.

TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ETHIOPIA

Transactional leadership has received a more mixed reception than transformational leadership in the Ethiopian organizational context, which is based on a very specific type of *transaction* that involves a clear exchange of some kind between the leader and the follower whose rewards are based on performance and corrective action when standards are not met.

The transitional leadership aspect of contingent reward, which sets clear performance expectations and rewards performance, is a valid organizational value in Ethiopian situations, specifically in formal sector organizations in competitive and international contexts. The need for structural guidance in Ethiopia's moderately high uncertainty avoidance profile, as well as the explicit recognition of contribution, aligns with reciprocity norms in Ethiopian collectivist culture and is addressed through clear performance standards and consistent recognition.

TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN POLAND

In the organizational context of Poland, the transactional leadership approach seems to be more natural than in Ethiopia. Poland's high uncertainty avoidance means that there is a high level of cultural preference for exactly

those traits that transactional leadership delivers: clear role delineation, clear performance expectations, explicit performance feedback processes, and predictable consequences for performance. The Contingent Reward component is especially suited to Polish employees who have a moderate level of individualism, making performance-based rewards psychologically important, and a high level of uncertainty avoidance, making it psychologically comforting and supportive to have a clear and predictable reward structure^[44].

It is important to note that the worker in post-communist Poland has a particular relation with transactional leadership. The explicit connection between performance and reward was removed or significantly weakened under communism: salary differentials were relatively small, irrespective of individual effort, and promotion was done more on the basis of political allegiance than on professional merit. For a large number of Polish employees, the transition to the market with a genuine performance-reward relationship proved to be motivating and valid. Leaders who set clear, fair, and consistently applied performance criteria in Polish organizations are thus not only fulfilling a cultural preference but also a need, which has originated from history, to experience a real meritocracy^[45].

POWER DISTANCE AND THE ARCHITECTURE OF AUTHORITY

Ethiopia has a significantly different concept of power distance than Poland, which results in different models of authority in institutional contexts, which are in turn different conceptions of leadership, leadership purpose, and legitimate leadership.

The high power distance norm in Ethiopia implies that the organization hierarchy is not only a practical but also a moral structure. Leaders are not

^[44] Kebe, I. A., Liu, Y., & Kahl, C. (2025). Culturally attuned leadership and employee behavior during organizational change initiatives in a developing economy. *Behavioral Sciences*, 15(3), p. 349. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs15030349> [accessed 4th June, 2026]

^[45] Domanski, H. (2010). Rise of meritocracy in Poland: 1982-2008. *European Sociological Review*, 27(3), (pp. 400–411). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcq015> [accessed 6th June, 2026]

only senior people with greater power to make decisions; they are people of social weight who possess personal attributes, interpersonal investments, and ethical practices that spread throughout the organization. It is a privilege as well as a responsibility: When a leader demonstrates personal integrity and relational warmth, a follower's loyalty and collective mobilization are in the offing, but when a leader fails to do so, the consequences can be catastrophic.

The moderate power distance norm in Poland does not result in a hierarchical system of authority but one that is more conditional and transactional. In organizations where positional authority is not matched by professional credibility, there can be a significant difference between respect and trust for the leaders in authority; respect is usually from the top down, whereas trust is earned from the bottom up.

COLLECTIVISM, INDIVIDUALISM, AND MOTIVATIONAL LOGIC

The individualism/collectivism gap between Ethiopia and Poland has implications on the motivational logic that leaders need to adopt to elicit discretionary effort and organizational commitment.

Collective (group, organizational, community, or national welfare) motivators are the most powerful motivators in Ethiopia. Polish motivational logic must be a compromise between the individual and the collective, with the emphasis at an appropriate level, given the moderate individualism of the culture. It is motivational in ways it is not in strongly collectivist cultures like Ethiopia because of recognition for individual achievement, clearly defined individual career development paths, and respect for individual expertise and autonomy.

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE AND THE DEMAND FOR STRUCTURAL LEADERSHIP

This extreme contrast in uncertainty avoidance scores (Poland: very high and Ethiopia: moderate-high) creates a distinct difference in organizational communication and clarity needed for followers to function with their leaders: in Poland, structure and clarity are needed more strongly, while in Ethiopia, they are needed more moderately.

Leaders are required to be very consistent, precise, and structurally explicit in communicating with employees who have very high uncertainty avoidance (as is found in Poland). The ambiguous leadership, with unclear goals, unclear priorities, and unclear feedback, results in real anxiety at the organization level in high UAI Polish organizations and thus lowers individual performance and collective cohesion. Managers of this dimension in Poland are those who set clear rules from the beginning of any project, say why decisions are made, and keep consistency in what they say and do over the years.

Ethiopian workers, like other workers, also value clarity and predictability from their leaders, but they do have a little more tolerance for working in institutionally vague conditions, a pragmatic response to a lack of formal institutional trust in Ethiopia. Ethiopian believers do not embrace leadership ambiguity, but when the anxiety caused by the uncertainty of structure is dealt with, it is done in a way of relational trust and not in a formal structural way. A leader who has the confidence of their followers in their own integrity would be able to maintain the trust of followers and the functioning of the organization in the context of formal uncertainty in Ethiopia, while this would not be as easily possible in the more formally oriented organizational culture of Poland.

CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to investigate the connection between national culture and the effectiveness of leadership by means of a comparative analysis of two societies, Ethiopia and Poland, which are significantly different in terms of most of the major cultural dimensions but more and more intertwined by the fact of international business, development cooperation, and the international flow of professional talent generation. The analysis, based on the cultural dimensions framework of Hofstede, the GLOBE study, and the Full Range Leadership Model of Bass and Avolio, has shown that national culture is not a peripheral variable in organizational life but a fundamental one; it affects the expectations, perceptions, and responses that followers have towards any leadership

relationship; it influences the effectiveness of the leadership style in achieving the desired outcomes of organizational commitment or mere compliance.

The general hypothesis put forward in the Introduction has been generally corroborated. An organizational culture of high power distance and strong collectivism (as found in Ethiopia) is most conducive to transformational leadership that is embedded in a hierarchical, paternalistic, and relationally intensive approach. In Poland, the most critical requirements for leadership effectiveness are the evidence of professionals' competence, the clarity of structures in communication, and the existence of a transactional ground for leadership—a ground that is based on the workers' extremely high level of uncertainty avoidance (although it is also transformational leadership when built on the basis of intellectual competence and not only on charisma). The secondary hypothesis has been supported, albeit tentatively and without qualifications: integrity, vision, and authentic ability to inspire trust in followers are believed to be important in both cultures, and the GLOBE study suggests that they are essentially the same across cultures, though they may manifest in different forms.

The general implications of these results go beyond Ethiopia and Poland. They join an emerging field of cross-cultural leadership studies that suggests that many assumptions of the universalist's approach used in much of the management literature remain hidden in many theories and practices—the tacit assumption that models of leadership developed in western academic and organizational environments are culturally intact and can be exported elsewhere. They, however, believe that leadership effectiveness must be understood in a culturally rich context, not as an add-on, but as the context in which leadership takes place. This isn't just an academic idea; it's a reality for multinational organizations, international development institutions, and managers who move from country to country: being able to lead effectively across cultural borders is one of the most impactful skills that people and institutions can acquire in an increasingly intercultural world of increasing cross-cultural organizational complexity.

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