TOWARD A FRAMEWORK OF CONTEXTUALIZED ASSETS AND LIABILITIES IN GLOBAL LEADERSHIP: IDENTITY AND POWER IMPLICATIONS IN AN AFRICAN CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

Answering to calls for further contextualizing global leadership, this study investigates power dynamics and cultural identities in global leadership in an African context. We took a grounded theory approach to investigate how a specific cultural context shapes assets and liabilities of global leaders. Drawing on our data comprising semi-structured interviews of managers of multinational enterprises operating in Ghana, we identified key assets and liabilities for being local or foreign in one's global leadership role. Furthermore, we theorize four specific styles of leadership leveraging: identity leveraging, power leveraging, juxtapositional leveraging, and temporal leveraging. Finally, we integrated the above-mentioned elements and proposed a framework of contextualized assets and liabilities which illustrates how specific cultural context affects the assets and liabilities of localness and foreignness for global leaders, and how these assets and liabilities constitute the four styles of leveraging in such context. Implications of our findings for research and practice are discussed.

Keywords: Contextualized global leadership; assets and liabilities of foreignness; assets and liabilities of localness; leveraging; power; identity

Advances in Global Leadership, Volume 12, 79–108
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ISSN: 1535-1203/doi:10.1108/S1535-120320190000012006

INTRODUCTION

As businesses have grown more transcendent over geographical boundaries, the need for capable, global-minded talent has also burgeoned. In the scholarly realm, this need led to a flurry of research identifying characteristics, capabilities, competencies, and skills of effective global leaders (e.g., Beechler & Javidan, 2007; Bird, Mendenhall, Stevens, & Oddou, 2010; Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012; Suutari, 2002). Despite the progress, most research on global leadership treats it in a manner devoid of contextual contingency, such that very little work has investigated the suitability of global leadership types, styles, and approaches for specific global work contexts (House & Aditya, 1997; Reiche, Bird, Mendenhall, & Osland, 2017). The effect of contextual elements, such as those pertaining to culture, on the enactment of global leadership remains largely understudied.

Global leadership does not operate in a power vacuum. Culture creates a distinct pattern of norms and expectations (Schwartz, 2014; Sweeney, 2002), characteristics, values, and behaviors (Hofstede, 1983; Osland & Bird, 2000; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2011), and prescribes accepted modes in which members of a community can relate to one another. Culture thus specifies protocols for the distribution and recognition of power, which may be vested on bases such as seniority, competence, or heredity. These cultural norms may pose unique challenges for global leaders, especially when elements of host country culture deviate from those of the other countries represented within the organization. Research found that certain cultural affiliations may grant individuals unique advantages (or vice-versa) to exercise power and leadership in multicultural settings (Graz, 2003; Paunova, 2017), thus global leaders from less-favored cultural backgrounds may face more difficulty leading cross-cultural collaboration.

Similarly, one's cultural affiliation and cultural identities may affect leadership in multicultural settings (Fitzsimmons, Lee, & Brannen, 2013; Lee, Masuda, Fu, & Reiche, 2018). Social identity theory suggests four implications of cultural influences on members' behavior: internalization of and adherence to group values and norms; support of activities and institutions compliant with salient aspects of group identity; clear delineation of in-group and out-group boundaries and conferral of specific benefits on in-group members (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The preceding implies that in a specific cultural context, a global leader's state of being (i.e., local or foreign) may determine the quality of his relationship with subordinates and the effectiveness of his leadership.

Given the foregoing, our study aims to further contextualize global leadership (Brannen, 2004; Reiche et al., 2017). We empirically investigate power dynamics and cultural identities in global leadership in an African context, where perceived power inequality and cultural identity distinctions are present when global leadership involves interaction between foreign managers and local subordinates, and between local managers and their western counterparts. Specifically, we address the following research questions: How does specific cultural context (e.g. Ghana in Africa) shape assets and liabilities of global leaders?

How may global leaders leverage the assets and liabilities of their localness or foreignness in exercising their leadership roles?

We took a qualitative, grounded theory approach, comprising analysis of semi-structured interviews of managers of multinational enterprises operating in Ghana. In doing so, we aim to deepen the global leadership literature by proposing a framework of contextualized assets and liabilities of global leaders, and opening up avenues for connection with established constructs such as power and cultural identity.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Cultural Contextualization of Global Leadership

Global leadership can be defined as

> The processes and actions through which an individual influences a range of internal and external constituents from multiple national cultures and jurisdictions in a context characterized by significant levels of task and relationship complexity. (Reiche et al., 2017, p. 556)

Essentially, it involves managers with global integration responsibilities within organizations operating across national and cultural boundaries (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012; Suutari, 2002). Global leadership, in this sense, necessitates managing cross-cultural dynamics that occur in global settings at both individual and organizational levels.

Recent works have called for clear delineation between global leadership and management which merely occurs in international or multinational contexts. For example, Reiche et al. (2017) contextualize global leadership along two dimensions: task complexity, in terms of variety and flux; and relationship complexity, in terms of boundaries and interdependence. The aforementioned framework, although very useful for contextualizing global leadership, does not capture the full complexity of the phenomenon, and ignores unique features of cultural contexts in which global leadership takes place. For instance, in different cultural contexts (either single culture or a composition of multiple cultures), the same "integrative" global leader (ref. Reiche et al., 2017) may need to mobilize different sources of influence in engaging in the corresponding role behaviors proposed by the authors.

Attempts to understand the nature of global leadership in lower-resourced or developing contexts may require a preparedness to allow for nuances and additional complexity involving cultural backgrounds of the global leaders in question. More precisely, one's cultural background (i.e., being local vs. foreign in a specific culture) may relate to unique advantages or challenges for global leadership in that context. We further develop such thoughts further.

Assets and Liabilities of Global Leadership in Cultural Context

Each global leader is characterized by a number of personal features, including demographics, professional expertise, and cultural backgrounds. These elements may not play out in an equal way across different cultural contexts. In other words, the same global leader with exactly the same personal quality and

expertise may enjoy certain advantages in one cultural context yet suffer specific disadvantages in another. We draw on the concept of liability of foreignness to further elucidate this phenomenon. Liability of foreignness, situated in International Business and strategic management literature, originally refers to the disadvantages that firms operating in countries other than home face, compared to their local counterparts (Gaur, Kumar, & Sarathy, 2011; Hymer, 1960; Zaheer, 1995). Notably, liability of foreignness in this regard refers to costs incurred only by foreign firms, as well as benefits enjoyed only by local firms (Acheampong & Dana, 2017; Mezias, 2002).

We extend the use of this concept from an organizational level of analysis to the individual level in its application to global leadership. We particularly focus on the exercise of global leadership in one cultural context, where localness and foreignness of global leaders are relatively straightforward to distinguish; and where such distinctions are likely to be held as salient in interpersonal interactions. Similar to Kostova and Zaheer (1999) and Mezias (2002), we contend that in some circumstances, foreignness might be an asset. To generalize such logic further, we simultaneously investigated both assets and liabilities of being local as well as being foreign in a specific cultural context.

In the following section, we briefly discuss the specific cultural elements comprising the study's context, especially the within-culture and between-cultures outplay of power dynamics and cultural identity, as they relate to assets and liabilities of global leadership.

Power and Cultural Context in Global Leadership

The assets and liabilities of localness and foreignness in global leaders, associated with specific cultural context, have direct implications on their power. Power is defined as the ability and willingness to asymmetrically enforce one's will over entities; by utilizing one's relative capacity to provide or withhold resources or administer punishments (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003; Sturm & Antonakis, 2015). With regard to culture, power dynamics may find roots in the extent to which cultural members perceive and ascribe power. Hofstede (1997) describes high power distance as a cultural dimension characterized by the acceptance by less powerful members of a cultural group that power is distributed unequally. In such cultures, there is a prevalence and usually, a preference for hierarchy, as well as outward and other symbols distinguishing higher-powered members of society from lower-powered members. The level of power distance associated with specific cultures will affect the power dynamics of global leadership in those contexts.

The effects of power distance also spread beyond the scope of the culture in question. Given unequal distribution of power among nations (be it economic, political, or in other domains), interpersonal relations between people of different cultures may be characterized by a deference toward the person originating from the nation considered to be more powerful or higher-resourced (Paunova, 2017). Such perceived power inequality can be further enhanced by geopolitical factors such as post-colonial relationship between nationals of developed

countries and former colonies (Banerjee, Chio, & Mir, 2009; Ulus, 2015). Post-colonialism illuminates the aftermath of colonialism on social, cultural, political, ethical, and philosophical aspects of society (Chen & Mason, 2018; Jack, Westwood, Srinivas, & Sardar, 2011; Syed & Metcalfe, 2017).

Since gaining political independence, developing nations have continued to be financially dependent on former colonizers (Chen & Mason, 2018; Prasad, 2003). Additionally, western nations have been accorded some expert power; resulting in unidirectional flow of ideas, knowledge, and practices (Pollock, 2014; Ulus, 2015), even though inter-contextual applicability of transferred content has been questioned (House & Aditya, 1997). Banerjee and Prasad (2008) argue that the very use of hierarchical binaries such as "developed" versus "undeveloped" and "civilized" versus "savage" reinforces perceptions of inferiority among groups of people classified on the lower end of the spectrum in question.

The effects of power distinctions on relations between nationals of different cultures can therefore not be ignored, especially when one of those cultures is characterized by high power distance and is a former colony. As a result of the real or perceived difference in terms of development related to post-colonialism, global leaders in such a context may find themselves situated in unique power positions vis-à-vis counterparts depending on their personal cultural background (Graz, 2003; Paunova, 2017; Ulus, 2015).

Identity and Cultural Context in Global Leadership

Being local or foreign to a specific cultural context also triggers the consideration of identity in global leadership. Social identity theory posits that individuals, in striving for positive self-concept, discriminate in favor of those perceived to share a common group membership (the in-group) as opposed to those outside that sphere of membership: the out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Furthermore, social identification is described as a process in which a perception of oneness with or belongingness to some human aggregate is formed (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). This process, and associated perceptions, is considered to result in specific individual behaviors and to therefore hold consequences for organizations.

The level of individualism-collectivism, the most researched cultural dimension to date (Brewer & Chen, 2007; Green, Deschamps, & Páez, 2005), is highly relevant to the identity-related assets and liabilities of global leaders in specific cultural contexts. Individualists, who value personal uniqueness, do not adhere to in-groups in the same manner as collectivists (Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990). Collectivism is associated with a sense of duty toward one's group, interdependence with others, cooperation, a desire for social harmony, and conformity with group norms (Green et al., 2005). In collectivist cultures, "People from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty" (Hofstede, 1997, p. 51); therefore, the state of being a local or a cultural insider (hence sharing common cultural identity) may give global leaders unique advantages in their roles. The opposite effect may exist for foreign global leaders.

Taken together, it becomes apparent that cultural context is likely to affect the enactment and exercise of global leadership from both power and identity perspectives. However, the exact nature of this impact, as well as the manner in which it may be managed effectively, remains largely unknown. We therefore investigate the contextualized assets and liabilities associated with global leaders in unique cultural context, especially their implications in terms of power and identity, to fill this gap in literature.

METHODS

We adopted a grounded theory approach, with semi-structured interviews as the mode of data gathering, to suit the exploratory nature of our research questions. We applied the five fundamental tenets of grounded theory (i.e., constant comparative method, theoretical coding, theoretical sampling, theoretical sensitivity, and theoretical saturation; see Glaser & Strauss, 1967; O'Reilly, Paper, & Marx, 2012) in order to arrive at a rich description informed by data and connected with literature.

Data Collection

We chose Ghana as the country site for sampling for the following reasons. First, the cultural context of Ghana fits within the research framework of this paper, given its high power distance and collectivism scores together with a post-colonial nature. Second, little research in global leadership has been conducted in an African context. Hence, it is both conceptually relevant and empirically useful to investigate the phenomenon of global leadership in Africa. Third, as an emerging African economy with steady developmental prospects, Ghana attracts business activities of MNEs originating from culturally variant contexts such as Europe, North America, and Asia. Therefore, it serves as a fertile field for the study of global leadership. The first author is Ghanaian, ensuring deep insight on cultural nuances as well as facilitating access to interview participants and trust building (Easterby-Smith & Malina, 1999; Shenkar & von Glinow, 1994).

The unit of analysis for the study was global leaders in MNEs whose work involves managing people and tasks across parent and host country contexts. We applied three main criteria in the selection of informants in global leadership roles: type of employing organization, level of authority, and nature of role. All informants work for MNEs, were in managerial positions, and performed roles which involved the management of people and tasks across parent and host country contexts. This does not necessarily mean that informants were required to manage teams or hold functions in both cultural contexts; rather that their work, at the minimum, involved direct authority over processes or resources originating from one context (that of the parent country) for implementation in the other context (that of the host country, Ghana). We focused on Ghanaians and expatriates who lead global teams, projects, and operations (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016; Zander, Mockaitis, & Butler, 2012); or who play a transcendent, global role by serving as the bridge between the home and host countries of their employing

organizations. In the latter case, although such leaders' subordinates may primarily comprise local employees, their role transcends local concerns to interacting with colleagues and superiors in the larger, global organizational context.

In total, we collected and analyzed data from 20 informants to produce the findings in this paper. Data collection ceased after the 20 informants because we began to observe repetitive patterns of answers without new themes and codes being introduced, indicating that theoretical saturation had been reached. Table 1 shows the profiles of informants:

Due to the inductive nature of the study, we used the semi-structured approach to interviewing, as it allowed for the exploration of interesting and unexpected topic areas. The interview elicited informants' experiences of power and identity dynamics in three respects: in the performance of their job roles, in the broader cultural context, and from their personal backgrounds (see interview guide in the Appendix). The average length of interview was an hour. Informants were assured of confidentiality of their identities as well as those of institutions named during the interviews. We recorded each interview and took notes, which were included in the case database for analysis. Interviews were manually transcribed and subsequently coded using Atlas.ti software.

Data Analysis

We applied the constant comparative method by reflecting on each individual interview, then comparing emerging patterns to those from previous interviews, in order to obtain a more rounded picture of the emerging findings. We undertook open coding on each transcribed interview, making note of themes and topics that kept recurring across interviews. The list of codes was continually compiled and refined with each subsequent interview until a clear pattern began to emerge. After a series of consultations between the authors, with continuous references to quotes, interview notes, and memos, 36 first-order codes were derived from 201 quotes. In general terms, these first-order codes pointed to enabling or prohibiting factors for the work of either local or foreign global leaders. We identified four aggregate dimensions: assets and liabilities of localness, as well as assets and liabilities of foreignness, which jointly led to various forms of leveraging for global leaders. Furthermore, we classified the 36 first-order codes into 15 second-order codes, which then more succinctly mapped onto our aggregate dimensions.

FINDINGS

In our analyses, it quickly became clear that localness or foreignness of global leaders to the country in which they were based had marked effects on their relations with subordinates and how they exercise influence in global leadership roles. The resulting aggregate dimensions, termed assets and liabilities of localness and foreignness, are illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2:

The four aggregate dimensions, assets and liabilities of localness and foreignness, further demonstrated four styles of leveraging in global leadership:

Table 1. Informant Profiles.

Position	Industry*	Tenure in Company (Years)	Interviewee Nationality	Parent Company Nationality
(1) Investment manager	Financial and insurance activities	4	Ghana	France
(2) Executive director	Education	5	Netherlands	China
(3) Project manager	Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	4*	Ghana	Netherlands
(4) Program leader	Professional, scientific and technical activities	12	India	USA
(5) Country director	Human health and social work activities	17	Ghana	USA
(6) Partnerships and business development lead	Extraterritorial organizations and bodies	8*	Ghana	UK
(7) Corporate affairs manager	Education	10	Ghana	China
(8) Executive director	Education	5	Ghana	China
(9) Communications manager	Extraterritorial organizations and bodies	16	Ghana	UK
(10) Commercial manager	Construction	3	Belgium	Italy
(11) Managing director	Administrative and support service activities	21	Ghana	USA
(12) CEO	Financial and insurance activities	4	Ghana/ Netherlands	Netherlands, USA, Sweden, Switzerland
(13) CEO	Extraterritorial organizations and bodies	11	Ghana	USA
(14) Managing director	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	7	China	China
(15) Managing director	Wholesale and retail trade	9	China	China
(16) Managing director	Agriculture, forestry and fishing	19	Ghana	Switzerland
(17) CFO	Financial and insurance activities	9	Nigeria	Nigeria
(18) Global division head	Human health and social work	3	Ghana	Ghana
(19) Deputy general manager	Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	12	China	China
(20) Country Manager	Education	10	Ghana	Global

Note: *According to 2008 International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC).
**Intermittent contracting with parent company, but currently employed full-time.

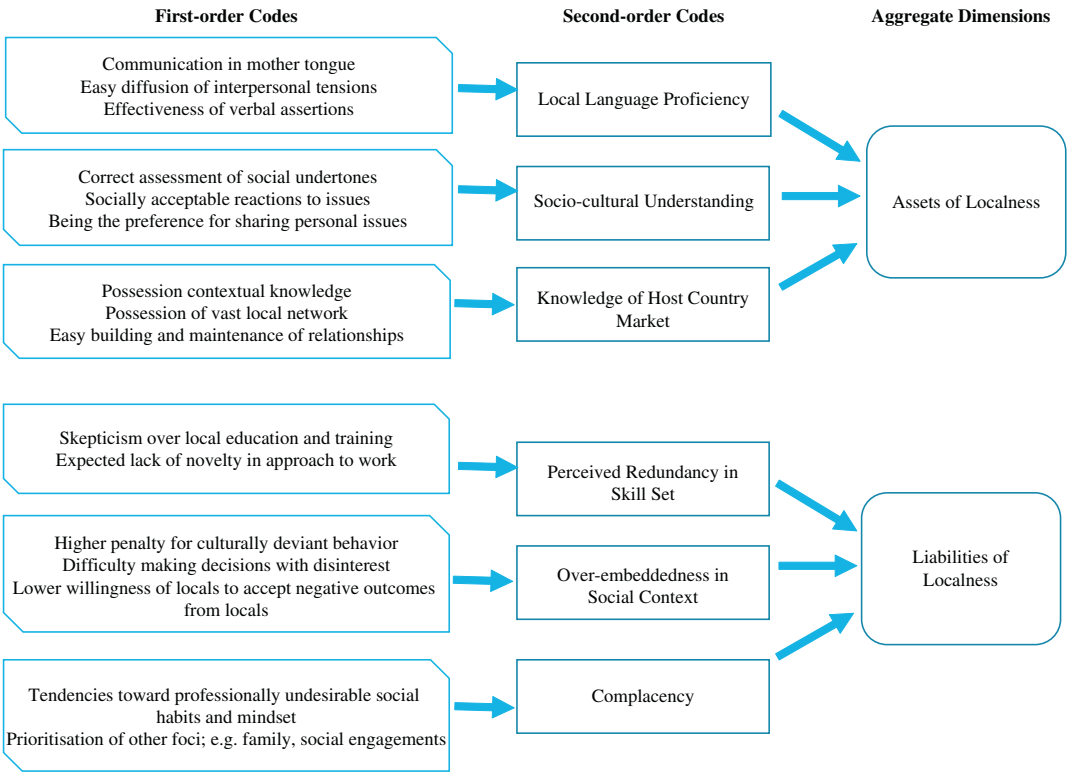

Fig. 1. Mapping of Codes to Localness of Global Leadership.

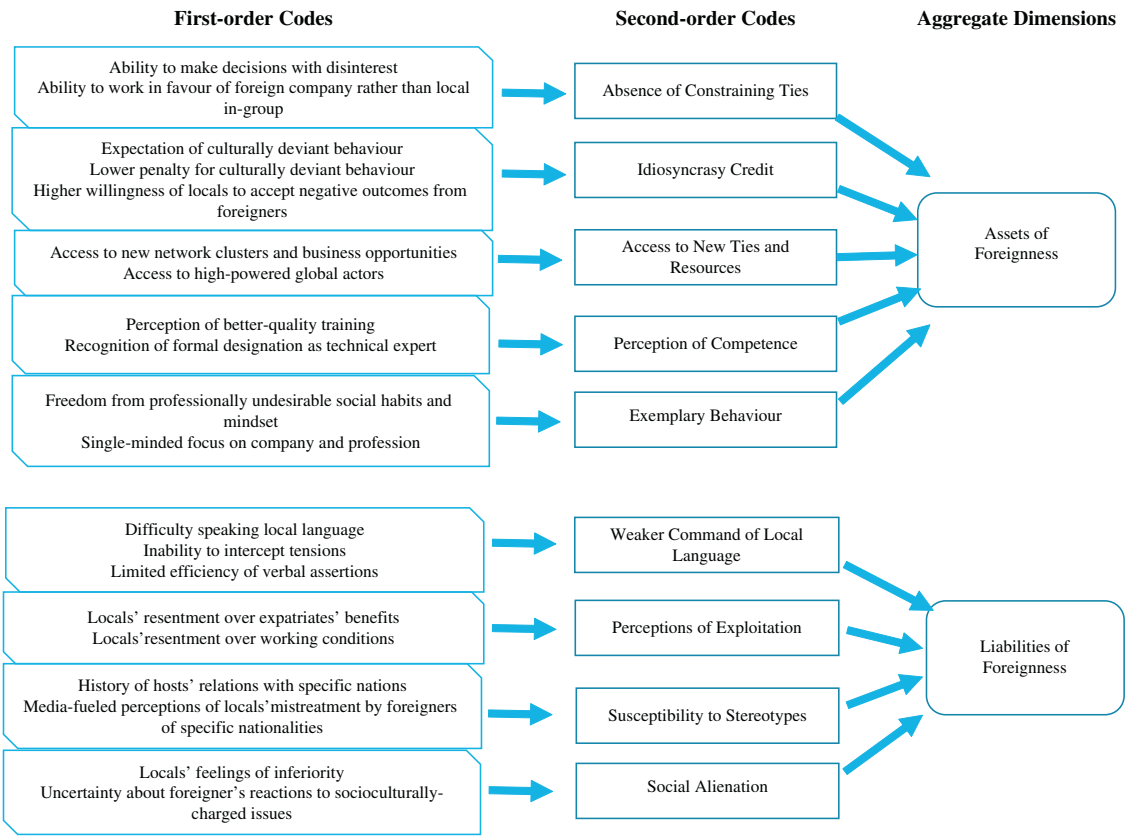

Fig. 2. Mapping of Codes to Foreignness of Global Leadership.

(1) identity leveraging and power leveraging when one single global leader is present, and (2) juxtapositional leveraging and temporal leveraging when both local and foreign global leaders are present.

Assets of Localness

Local Language Proficiency

The ability to speak local dialects was beneficial for global leaders for three main reasons: communication of ideas, diffusion of tension, and assertion of position. First, language aided in basic communication with local staff, especially in situations where they were not fluent in English. An informant explained it as follows:

> *I think that in this particular company there is a need of – the foreign staff has a need to cooperate and to develop the relationship with the Ghanaian staff, because we have staff that are not very conversant in English. And therefore there is a need of sometimes … Some form of basic communication and then relying on the Ghanaian staff to put forward the message to the workers or to the clients.* (I10, foreign)

Furthermore, local language proficiency seemed to provide global leaders with an amount of influence that enabled them to assert their authority effectively. A foreign global leader explained that understanding the nuances of language, and the peculiar ways of driving ideas across in the local context, allowed managers to circumvent social restrictions brought on by uncertainties about the social climate. They would therefore be able to establish their positions of authority more forcefully and clearly to their subordinates:

> *But once you are in a similar role, the local and Chinese manager, the local manager will carry more weight because he can explain more in Twi, in Arabic or whatever, and also the influence of him in the organization as well.* (I14, foreign)

> *As an indigene, in terms of the leadership role or carrying my group along, it might make it better or faster because sometimes if I speak their language, they can easily relate to me. They can relate to my emotions, so I don't need to fear anybody. We are all sons of the soil. You know where everybody is, so if you're doing anything sinister, I can tell you to your face: I don't like this, otherwise I'll take you out. I will speak your local language, everybody will understand. So in that case, everybody can quickly align to the goals and objective.* (I17, foreign)

Socio-cultural Understanding

It refers to the ability of global leaders to correctly assess and react to the social undertones influencing organizational life in their home country context. We found that it is clearly associated with local global leaders, based on informative illustrations in our data. First, local managers in the Ghanaian context were seen to be more understanding of and therefore more sympathetic to the far-reaching influence of the extended family on a Ghanaian employee:

> *There are certain things that they can't discuss with foreign managers, especially with things around the family and responsibility, because sometimes the foreign managers do not understand that in our society it's not only you and your immediate family. So the Ghanaian manager has a better understanding. So if they lose a long-distance relative or relation, you're still allowed to take time off from work and go but foreign managers do not understand that.* (I8, local)

Additionally, as a result of the shared understanding local global leaders are perceived to have, they appeared to be the preferred choice for local employees to vent their work-related challenges, such as problems with management policy:

> *The workshop is full of people of lower education. If you provoke them, they can easily go on demonstration, and they don't understand management sometimes. At this point, you need a good leader from the Ghanaian side.* (I15, foreign)

In this scenario, the local global leader was seen as the ideal party to champion local employees' interests to management, as well as explain from a less prejudiced perspective the viewpoint of management on the matter:

> *Like my Ghana leader now, he doesn't complain, he has a good heart and he cares about his people. In this place, I have a lot of workers there. If they have any problem, they will come and talk to the leader, the Ghana manager. Then the Ghana manager will try to counsel them, calm them down. Then the manager will come to talk to me saying: Madam, please, this is the situation we are facing.* (I15, foreign)

Knowledge of Host Country Market

Local global leaders benefited from the asset of knowledge of host country market, by which they were believed to possess contextual knowledge and the propensity to create business opportunities in ways that foreign global leaders could not. That is, by virtue of their educational or professional networks built over time and the ease with which local global leaders are able to infiltrate local business networks, they may be able to access information and opportunities locally, more easily than their foreign counterparts can. Informants expressed this as follows:

> *… I can't know this market more than a Ghanaian. If you want to derive that benefit optimally, it is Ghanaians who can bring that business.* (I17, foreign)

> *But I do think it is an important thing, especially for Funds. They are waking up to the reality that you can't helicopter in from London and Washington DC to invest in Africa …. And then, you can talk about the current economic and political climate in a way that a foreigner cannot. You can be candid about certain things or not. So it helps. (I1, local)*

Liabilities of Localness

Perceived Redundancy in Skill Set

Local global leaders are faced with the liability of perceived redundancy in skill set. In this respect, local subordinates may find it easier to dismiss the competence of local global leaders, especially when they are able to trace the leader's educational and professional background and find it in many respects similar to their own. Such perceived redundancy in skill set diminishes the credibility of local global leaders:

> *That is being as a foreigner because they believe that you came with technical expertise, which they do not have. But if you are local, they always see themselves as equal, so what are you saying? We went to the same school, so what else do you know?* (I17, foreign)

Over-embeddedness in the social context

A local global leader's over-embeddedness in the social context, especially in a highly collectivist society, was considered prohibitive to culturally undesirable behavior and possibly detrimental to the local global leader's overall performance. Conversely, the absence of constraining ties frees up foreign global leaders to speak and act in culturally deviant ways and yet remain accepted by local employees (explained further):

> *I think also that there is also this- embedded in this Ghanaian culture … let me give you my own thoughts about this stuff … embedded in this Ghanaian culture is this need to maintain familiarity, so we have problems with hiring and firing decisions. That I have seen across different companies. Hiring and firing decisions because you fire someone, their village chief comes, the pastor comes, their uncle comes… this is something that has happened time and again. So I've had entrepreneurs telling me that they purposefully go and hire folks from outside; like some guy from Thailand to run their production floor, because he doesn't have any allegiance to anyone, he can hire, he can fire and that's fine. But embedded in the culture, there's this familiarity issue where people have a problem with making those decisions.* (I1, local)

Complacency

Local global leaders were reported to exhibit the liability of complacency, which made them less suitable to take on global leadership roles where exemplary behavior was paramount. The situation of locals within their collectivist home country context made them likely to adhere to prevailing social habits and mindsets even if these were undesirable in the professional setting. Furthermore, the presence of other foci such as family and social obligations meant that they were not as able as their foreign or expatriate colleagues to single-mindedly focus on their professional progression:

> *I had been employing Ghanaians from Europe or the states for senior colleagues, that once they came back into the country, they have after a few years entered into the culture and the way of living in the country, while at the same time I had employed a Nigerian or Ivorian, who had continued after the similar time employed by the companies I have been working for, continue to be as efficient as the Ghanaian I had. What really happens is that after several years, either because of constraints or obligation to family or cultural obligations, the nationals of that country are entering into a pattern that is not anymore the person you had originally employed. In fact, many years ago I did question the CEO of a major corporate organization who had employed more than 5000 Africans. It is an international corporation. They have 5000 employees – African – out of 22,000 in those days… My question was: how do you manage to remain efficient in Africa having such a – nearly quarter of your workforce being African? And his immediate response was: do not employ a national within his country.* (I10, foreign)

Assets of Foreignness

The Absence of Constraining Ties

Foreigners were seen as ideal for filling in global leadership roles involving actions and decision-making which may be difficult for a cultural insider to undertake. In a collectivist culture such as Ghana, decisions such as

termination of employment and enforcement of demanding work policies are more difficult for a cultural insider to make, because such actions would have the potential to cause harm or disadvantage to other in-group members. Furthermore, such actions may be viewed as traitorous to the cultural in-group, which the insider may feel obliged to protect. In this vein, foreign global leaders are more able to act in the capacity of free agents to make such socially complex decisions, since they have no stake in the cultural in-group and therefore less motivation to act in the interest of other in-group members rather than their employing organization. A local global manager expressed the ease with which his foreign colleagues could deliver tough trading terms and financing conditions to local clients with whom the local leader built cordial working relationships:

> *Because a foreigner comes in, you know this guy is not beholden to anything, he's going to say what the actual thing is; that's it. But I'm on the ground. I cultivate these relationships, so you have to look at this with a different approach*. (I1, local)

Idiosyncrasy Credit

Related to the foregoing is the extension of idiosyncrasy credit to foreign global leaders. According to Hollander (1958), idiosyncrasy credit refers to the extent to which a given group member's behavior which may be perceived by the group to deviate from a given group expectancy is allowable in terms of gravity and frequency, before group sanctions are applied. As cultural outsiders, foreign global leaders were less expected to speak and act in accordance with cultural norms such as the preservation of in-group harmony. Consequently, local employees appeared to be more willing to accept negative outcomes from foreign global leaders. Particularly interesting was the perception that "bad news" was best received if delivered by a foreigner:

> *In my case, because I'm the CEO they will tend to take things from me. But I think in general, people are more receptive to negative things from the foreigner: "*obroni*", than from a Ghanaian… So the same message, if I tell you, they won't accept but if the* obroni *tells you … And I don't know if it's because they are free to challenge the* obroni*, they are free to question the outcome or they think the* obroni *is right, but if it's a foreigner they won't challenge.* (I12, local)

Access to New Ties and Resources

It emerged from the data that the foreignness of a global leader could be advantageous in his/her relations with local subordinates because of fresh social capital he could potentially bring to local stakeholders. From a social networking perspective, a foreign global manager is hereby valued because of his ability to be an effective broker between hitherto unbridged local and foreign network clusters (Burt, 2005; Stovel & Shaw, 2012):

> *Because as a foreigner, you bring new things here and if you explain this clearly and the benefits of this one, people will listen more. Because people always want something more.* (I14, foreign)

An informant spoke of the ability of his foreign colleague to avert the stalling of a project by local authorities as a result of his having connections with an international authority:

> *So this [local] entrepreneur comes and tells us that, "This is the problem I'm facing." So we told her that, "Tell them"- because we have connections sort of above them [local authority] at the World Bank- "Tell them if they make that issue, we're going to bring fire and brimstone on them". So the entrepreneur didn't have any issues with them.* (I1, local)

Perception of Competence

Local employees were reported to view, almost by default, their foreign counterparts as better trained and more highly skilled than themselves. This may in part stem from the fact that foreigners expatriated to the local context are usually technical specialists in their respective fields or highly experienced in international management. Foreign global leaders are therefore accorded respect in line with the expectation of competence:

> *The positive side to being a foreigner is, they [i.e., the locals] believe that you have a superior skill, a lot of technical skill, knowledge-wise, experience. Some of them are always willing to learn from you. So once they come with questions, you are able to address that question and back them with the policies and procedures, they appreciate that. ... Because they believe that you came with technical expertise which they do not have.* (I17, foreign)

Exemplary Behavior

It refers to foreign global leaders' ability to be held up as models of behavior desired by management. Foreign employees, especially expatriates who have worked in the company's home country, are likely to have imbibed work approaches compliant with the requirements of the parent company. They therefore served in the host country context as focal agents of mimetic isomorphism at the individual level. That is, they could be set up as examples of desirable behavior in cases where that behavior was not naturally ingrained in local employees. A Chinese CEO explained the role of Chinese managers appointed to each department in order to mitigate the laid-back approach to work, which is typical of Ghanaian employees:

> *Then I put a Chinese there. What he does is to set a good example for Ghanaians... He is Chinese, he has good skills. Day and night, he is working so that on the Ghanaian side, they see that Chinese are working hard and they follow this good example.* (I15, foreign)

Liabilities of Foreignness

Weaker Command of Local Language

As an asset or liability for global leaders, local language proficiency proved to be a much deeper question than whether or not one could use local dialects to communicate with staff who were not fluent in English. Language turned out to be a tool for tapping into the emotional psyche of local employees. In this

regard, it enabled global leaders to more successfully diffuse tense situations between local employees. A foreign global leader described a situation whereby local employees would, in his presence, switch to local language when their discussions devolved into conflict:

> *Sometimes if things got rough between people, they started to talk in the local language. And one of the things I would do different now is that I will try to learn local language when I would come. For that made it harder to really connect to people at times when there was tension.* (I2, foreign)

When pressed further for the perceived reason for the switch, the informant provided two possibilities: either an attempt by the local subordinates to keep him in the dark about aspects of the conflict; or an inclination toward expressing themselves in a language they felt more comfortable with:

> *It definitely was an intentional action. I remember people fighting with each other and I would be around and they would do it in Twi [a local language] so that I couldn't hear. Then I had to ask and it is more difficult to interact. You know, sometimes it's because people are more comfortable in local language, but I'm sure. I'm sure. There are a few colleagues who did it regularly; and a few who never did it.* (I2, foreign)

Perceptions of Exploitation

Foreign global leaders stood the risk of being negatively labeled by local employees. First, the material benefits accruing to them as expatriates appeared to create resentment among locals, as well as the perception among locals that they were being exploited by the "foreigners" or the foreign organization:

> *The difference is that sometimes when you have expatriates, people tend to feel that the expatriates treat them as second-class citizens, in terms of the whole arrangement, in terms of compensation, roles and responsibilities.* (I8, local)

Susceptibility to cultural stereotypes

Furthermore, certain foreign global leaders could fall victim to stereotypes held by locals about people of their nationality. Ghanaians were noted to classify certain nationals, such as Nigerians and Chinese, in a particularly negative light. This is either as a result of actual occurrences in the course of dealings between the two nations over time; or stereotypes perpetrated in the media about those foreign nationals.

> *"At the initial stage, if you meet a Ghanaian for the first time and introduce yourself as Nigerian, there is that initial setback: "Ah, Nigerian. Those guys are very aggressive; this and that". So they'll first of all withdraw. That is what I noticed about Ghanaians."* (I17, foreign)

Social Alienation

Additionally, in contrast to the often approachable, empathetic local global leader, foreign global leaders run the risk of social alienation from local

subordinates as a result of the feelings of intimidation their expertise, mannerisms or mere foreignness could inspire:

> *"You know, people felt a distance. I think people liked me, but they also felt a distance; and they were very polite all the time; which is nice but also sort of difficult because I always thought people were sort of hesitant to give their opinion. That is also – they felt a distance; they thought I was the European manager who had so much experience so who were they? At least, some of them had that notion. So quite a few of them felt more distance toward me than they would toward a local manager."* (I2, foreign)

Styles of Leveraging in Global Leadership

In the course of probing informants deeper with regard to the emerging codes and dimensions, a separate class of dimensions appeared in the data, pertaining to specific mechanisms for coping with benefits and fallouts deriving from localness or foreignness. This prompted us to reflect whether there were particular types of responses that global leaders consciously adopted to deal with the assets and liabilities of localness and foreignness. We went back to past interviews and found quotes that point to the possible ways in which global leaders leveraged assets and liabilities of localness and foreignness, depending on particular outcomes they wished to achieve in the given cultural context.

Leveraging refers to the use of a possessed quality, asset or attribute to maximize advantage (Fisher, Burnet, Huang, Chin, & Cagney, 2007; Froese, Kim, & Eng, 2016; Lang, Ofek, & Stulz, 1996) or, the use of that which is possessed to obtain that which is desired. In this paper, we recognize further nuance in the quality possessed (foreignness or localness); that is, not only the benefits that accrue thereof (assets); but also the demerits or limitations (liabilities) that inhere from possessing that quality (foreignness or localness). We therefore define leveraging, for our particular use, as the approach by which a global leader (or his/her employing organization) maximizes assets and/or minimizes liabilities accruing from the leader's localness or foreignness, with the aim of improving the leader's relations with subordinates and his performance outcomes.

We found three main patterns of leveraging. First, local global leaders tend to maximize assets of localness while minimizing liabilities of foreignness. By so doing, they capitalized on the identity of the local global leader as a cultural insider with its attendant benefits. We therefore termed this type of leveraging *identity leveraging*. Secondly, foreign global leaders tend to maximize assets of foreignness while minimizing liabilities of localness. In such process, they would capitalize on the resource and referent power inherent to being a foreign global leader and avoid the perceived or actual weaknesses inherent to being a local global leader. We termed this type of leveraging *power leveraging*.

Thirdly, we also observed the possibilities to maximize assets of both localness and foreignness, while minimizing their respective liabilities. Evidence further emerged that this type of leveraging could involve both local and foreign global leaders simultaneously or successively. We therefore uncovered the aggregate dimension of dual leader leveraging comprising *juxtapositional leveraging*

(having foreign and local global leaders fill comparable roles simultaneously) and *temporal leveraging* (grooming a local global leader to succeed a foreign global leader in order to have capitalized on assets of both foreignness and localness in the medium- to long-term).

Identity Leveraging (Single Leader)

Identity leveraging derives its name from its capitalization on a global leader's identity as an indigene of the host country. In this case, a local global leader, who shares common cultural identity with those being led, undertakes a role which is best served by maximizing one or more of the three assets of localness. The example provided illustrates an instance of identity leveraging where the local leader's socio-cultural understanding is being maximized. The quote is from a local country manager of an MNE whose role requires a deep understanding of her local subordinates' challenges and insecurities in interfacing with counterparts in the global team. This local global leader's exposure to foreign contexts furthermore enables her to understand the thinking and mannerisms of the foreign colleagues such that she is able to serve as a conduit of information; decoding and translating to each side the links missing during direct communication:

> *Most of the time, I'm quite neutral but I try to support people – the team here – as much as possible so that people will not be timid or intimidated and if somebody passes a comment from, let's say our headquarters... somebody who doesn't know Ghana very well, somebody who has never even been in Africa and is just talking, and people are not happy about it, I write quietly to the person, that this is what you have caused here and for this you are supposed to apologize. But if we are at fault, I write that this is not the case; they didn't really understand what you were saying, so we are sorry. So I do that quite a lot. I don't do that openly. It is only when someone tries to put us down that I come in openly and tell them my piece of mind but otherwise, this is what I do. I try to explain to our program officers and I write very quietly to the people.* (I5, local)

Power Leveraging (Single Leader)

Power leveraging involves a foreign global leader undertaking a role, in order to maximize the benefits deriving from the leader's belonging to a nationality perceived as more powerful than or superior to that of the host country. In this case, the foreign global leader's role is best served by maximizing one or more of the five assets of foreignness. From interview data, the following quote illustrates how power leveraging may be effective on the basis of idiosyncrasy credit granted to foreign global leaders:

> *If the Ghanaian worker is working for a foreigner and the foreigner asks him to work 12 hours without a break, he won't complain. If the Ghanaian entrepreneur asks the same Ghanaian to work for him for 10 hours, he will complain: "You, what do you think? I have to go to church. I have to do this. I can't." And that is our mindset. And sometimes it's* difficult for a Ghanaian to manage such process because then you need to use your other skills because sometimes foreigners might do certain things and they might get away with it while you can*'t go away with it.* (I12, local)

The quote below illustrates power leveraging where the foreign global leader's absence of constraining ties is being maximized:

> *So I've heard entrepreneurs telling me that they purposefully go and hire folks from outside; like some guy from Thailand to run their production floor, because he doesn't have any allegiance to anyone. He can hire, he can fire and that's fine. But embedded in the culture, there's this familiarity issue where people have a problem with making those decisions.* (I1, local)

Juxtapositional leveraging (Dual leaders)

Dual leader leveraging involves both a foreign and local global leader playing equivalent roles within the same functional area. Juxtapositional leveraging involves one local and one foreign global leader co-leading a work unit. The objective of this type of leverage is to counter the liabilities of local global leaders with the assets of foreign global leaders and vice-versa. The quotes below illustrate two different instances of juxtapositional leveraging. In the first instance, a foreign and local global leader work together in a specific role to maximize both local socio-cultural understanding and foreign idiosyncrasy credit:

> *I've found that that shock and awe effect works quite well (laughs). Rather than say, "Hey, this is what'll happen …", I give you the general terms, I give you the "Blah, blah, this is what is contained, this is what… we're not comfortable with…" I give it to you softly; but it's sort of a "Good cop, bad cop" role and you need the bad cop to play that part. And usually, a foreigner can play that part better.* (I1, local)

In the instance below, a foreign and local global leader work together in a specific role to maximize both the local asset of socio-cultural understanding in addition to two foreign assets: exemplary behavior and perception of competence:

> *Let me give you an example. The workshop is full of people of lower education. If you provoke them, they can easily go on demonstration, and they don't understand management sometimes. At this point, you need a good leader from the Ghanaian side. Then I put a Chinese there. What he does is to set a good example for Ghanaians… He is Chinese, he has good skills. Day and night, he is working so that on the Ghanaian side, they see that Chinese are working hard and they follow this good example. In the meantime, I choose a good Ghana leader. Like my Ghana leader now, he doesn't complain, he has a good heart and he cares about his people. In this place, I have a lot of workers there. If they have any problem, they will come and talk to the leader, the Ghana manager. Then the Ghana manager will try to counsel them, calm them down.* (I15, foreign)

Temporal Leveraging (Dual leaders)

With regard to temporal leveraging, we found that both a local and foreign global leader co-exist within a functional area; with the local global leader, typically, being temporarily subordinate to the foreign global leader. The aim of this arrangement is for the local global leader to learn from the foreign global leader and eventually fully take over the foreign global leader's role. The illustrative

quote below illustrates temporal leveraging where foreign competence is maximized in the present; and local market knowledge will be maximized in future:

> *"They sent us to this place to come and put structure, processes and standard that will align to home office. Once that is done – and one of the KPIs is to ensure that there is the succession plan. Because I can't know this market more than a Ghanaian. If you want to derive that benefit optimally, it is Ghanaians who can bring that business. So our responsibility is one to put structures, standards and frameworks in place and ensure that you have somebody who will take over from you. The ultimate aim is to ensure that the Ghanaians continue running the organization."* (I17, foreign)

DISCUSSION

Through our investigation of local and foreign global leaders based in an African context in Ghana, we identified key assets and liabilities for being local and foreign in their global leadership roles. Becoming aware of these contextualized assets and liabilities, certain global leaders appeared to strategically leverage these unique elements. By examining the assets and liabilities of both local and foreign global leaders in this specific cultural context, our study was able to shed light on how global leaders may differentially exercise their advantage related to identity and perceived power in fulfilling their roles.

We further theorize four specific styles of leadership leveraging – identity leveraging, power leveraging, juxtapositional leveraging, and temporal leveraging. Whereas the former two styles involve a single global leader, the latter two involve dual global leaders. We propose a framework of contextualized assets and liabilities of global leaders (see Fig. 3) that illustrates how specific cultural context affects the assets and liabilities of localness and foreignness for global leaders, and how these assets and liabilities constitute various styles of leveraging in such context. This framework serves as a starting point for deepening knowledge of how cultural context influences the enactment of global leadership, and brings the role of identity and power to the forefront of global leadership study.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Our research made a few significant contributions to theory. The first theoretical contribution is to further contextualize global leadership in specific cultural context beyond existent literature, which focused mainly on the nature of task (e.g., Reiche et al., 2017). With empirical data collected in an African context in Ghana, a postcolonial country characterized by high power distance and collectivism, we contribute to building a broader understanding of global leadership in cultures and regions that are currently understudied. More importantly, our results demonstrate that the very same global leader may experience distinct sets of assets and liabilities when operating in different cultural contexts. This research hence answers recent scholarly calls for contextualization of global leadership research (Gagnon & Collinson, 2014; Reiche et al., 2017).

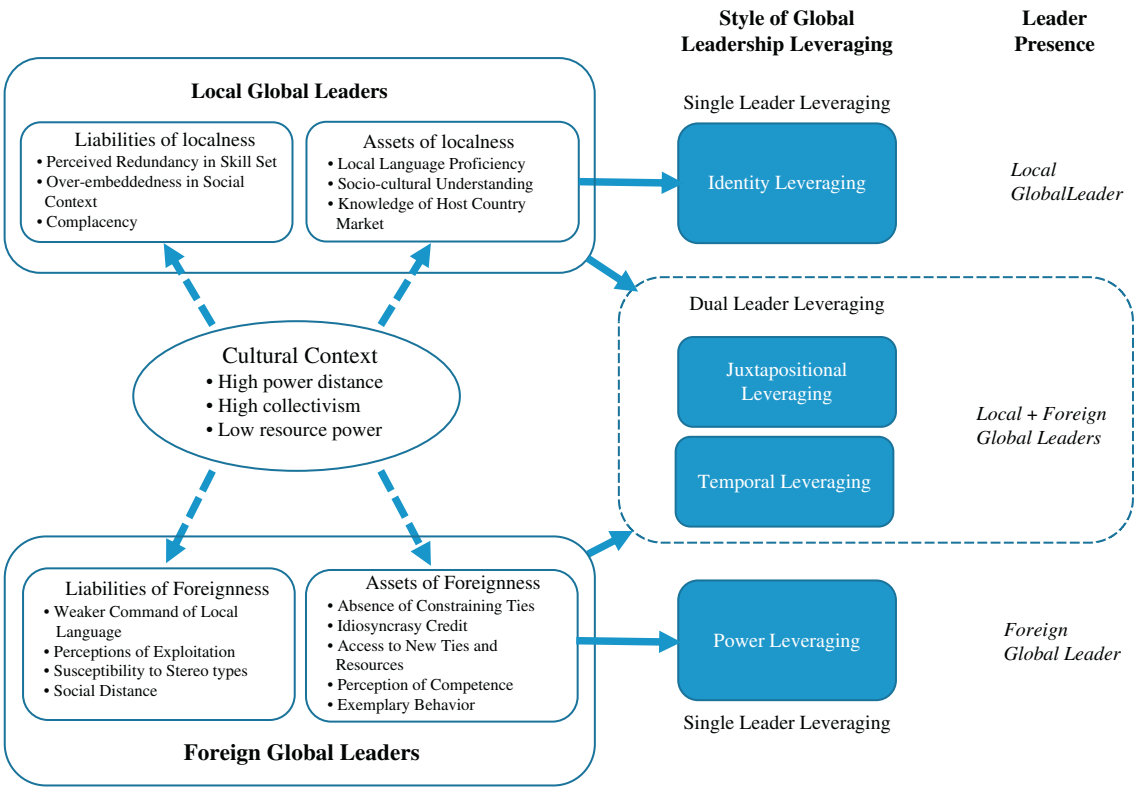

Fig. 3. A Framework of Contextualized Assets and Liabilities in Global Leadership.

Such contextualized understanding of global leadership (in terms of their unique assets and liabilities in specific cultural settings) brings additional insights for global leaders to function effectively beyond more universal qualities such as global leadership competences (Bird et al. 2010) and global mindset (Beechler & Javidan, 2007). The framework also extends the conceptualization of dynamic cross-cultural competencies (Caligiuri & Tarique, 2012; Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1999; Shaffer, Harrison, Gregersen, & Black, 2006). Rather than proposing a universal set of capabilities that global leaders are expected to adhere to, our contextualized framework recognizes that these capabilities are not *static* advantages or disadvantages, but *potential* assets or liabilities, depending on the context within which the leader is situated, as well as the outcomes to be achieved.

Second, in contextualizing global leadership, we expand the concept of liability of foreignness from firm level to individual level of analysis for a deeper understanding of global leadership. Furthermore, our model spells out not only both *assets* and *liabilities* of global leaders, but also covers both *local* and *foreign* global leaders. In other words, we explicitly push scholars to look into both bright and dark sides of being local and foreign in global leadership. Adopting this more balanced view may make the research in global leadership more comprehensive and avoid potential biases of being overly positive or negative.

Third, by examining the assets and liabilities of localness and foreignness and anchoring the global leadership phenomenon in specific cultural context, we expand knowledge of global leadership to include considerations of identity and power. Although previous literature has indicated the relevance of cultural identities to global leadership (Fitzsimmons et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2018), more research is needed to integrate the effect of identity in the global leadership phenomenon. Global leaders can be considered as actors in global work (Reiche, Lee, & Allen, 2019), each with their unique socio-cultural backgrounds and identities. These factors should not be overlooked in analyzing global leadership. Being local or foreign to a specific context matters for global leaders with far-reaching identity implications, to the point of constituting their assets and liabilities in that context.

In our study, we adopted a simplified approach toward identity in differentiating global leaders into local and foreign categories. However, the picture can be much more complex as individuals may carry more than one cultural identity, as biculturals or multiculturals (Brannen & Thomas, 2010; Chao & Moon, 2005; Ramarajan, 2014), with unique identity configurations (Lee et al., 2018). These identity-related factors will likely affect assets and liabilities, and consequently the approach of leveraging, of global leaders in specific cultural context. Our model hence paved the path for future research toward further integration of identities in global leadership research.

Fourth, power has long been recognized as a highly relevant contextual determinant of leadership enactment and outcomes (Bennis, 1984; Hollander & Offermann, 1990). In global leadership literature, virtually no attention has been devoted to power, especially when rooted in cultural dynamics. This study was purposely grounded in a cultural context where power dynamics and perceived power inequality are strongly enacted both within-culture and between-cultures.

The power dynamics will be very different for global leaders from higher-resourced contexts operating in lower-resourced contexts and vice versa. Also, global leaders may need to seek different bases of power to constitute their legitimacy and credibility when operating in different cultural contexts. This approach enabled the discovery of the manner in which capabilities and attributions could best serve global leaders as they wield their influence in such power-charged environments.

Finally, our model proposed various styles of leveraging, capitalizing different combinations of assets and liabilities of global leadership to achieve specific work objectives. This consideration makes an additional contribution to contextualizing global leadership: global leaders, no matter how competent they are, may not be suitable for all cultural or work contexts. Our research therefore provides important boundary conditions for capabilities and competencies of global leaders.

It is worth noting that, in this study, we highlight the existence of power inequalities stemming from colonial influences and reinforced by cultural characteristics. Rather than confirming or exploiting existent power differences, the proposed leveraging framework represents a tool for minimizing them. The framework offers a means by which the specific advantages conferred by the postcolonial legacy can be made visible and accessible to all global leaders in the MNE context, regardless of nationality. These global leaders in question, together with those working with them, would thus make conscious use of these assets without abusing them. Likewise, the disadvantages inuring from the postcolonial legacy may be easily identified and neutralized by global leaders and their local counterparts for the collective benefit of the organization and its members.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Our findings offer some practical insights to managers and practitioners. By applying the framework of contextualized assets and liabilities, managers can consciously and systematically analyze their assets and liabilities in a specific cultural context or in a global work setting before engaging in the global leadership role. In doing so, they can gain deeper insights on leveraging assets to build up legitimacy and credibility, and compensating liabilities to avoid dysfunctional dynamics.

Selection and development of global leaders is a pressing concern in multinational corporations (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016; Ramsey, Rutti, Lorenz, Barakat, & Sant'anna, 2017; Stroh & Caligiuri, 1998). Our findings imply that the selection of global leaders must be done considering not only their technical expertise and general global leadership competences, but also the contextualized assets and liabilities resulting from stakeholder expectations and other cultural factors of the specific setting. Furthermore, the training of global leaders should take into consideration the assets and liabilities inherent to specific cultural contexts, with sufficient attention to developing desirable assets and overcoming potential liabilities in those global leaders.

Finally, companies and managers may aim for matching the leveraging style of global leadership to the particular needs of the organization as well as its members. Multinational companies and global leaders themselves may carefully analyze the contextual parameters and determine the most adequate way of leveraging, either with a single global leader (i.e., identity and power leveraging) or multiple leaders (i.e., juxtapositional and temporal leveraging).

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study's objective was to investigate the effects of cultural context on the enactment of global leadership. Given the contextualized nature of our study, specific elements in our model (e.g., contents of assets and liabilities) may not be directly generalizable to other cultural contexts. For example, absence of constraining ties may not constitute an asset of foreignness in an individualistic cultural context where even locals hold familial and communal relations loosely. Furthermore, perception of competence may not resonate as an asset of foreignness in a low power distance cultural context, since egalitarianism and open access to information and assistance are prevalent. Similarly, when the global leader operates within a higher-resourced country, as opposed to the lower-resourced context studied in this research, some assets and liabilities cease to function as observed. In a higher-resourced country, access to new ties and resources may not be considered an asset of foreignness. Perceived redundancy in skill set may also not be considered a liability of localness.

Despite the foregoing, we believe that the general framework to identify assets and liabilities related to localness and foreignness (or more complex identity configurations) in global leaders can be widely applied in other contexts. Future research may expand the model to different cultural contexts, such as low power distance or individualistic host country context, as well as equally resourced or a higher-resourced host country context.

Many of the concepts proposed within this study could benefit from expansion. As mentioned above, by way of achieving some parsimony in our theorizing, we limited cultural identity to a static form denoted by nationality; however, it has been widely found that cultural identity is broader, more dynamic, and multifaceted in reality (Chao & Moon, 2005; Lee et al., 2018; Morris, Chiu, & Liu, 2015). Future research could take on a more nuanced view of cultural identity by exploring the effects of a global leader's multiple cultural identities, as well as factors such as education and exposure to foreign contexts, on the classification of assets and liabilities of localness and foreignness, as well as the leveraging style selected.

Several avenues exist for further theoretical development of the framework proposed. For example, there is room for an exploration of linkages existing between the four styles of leveraging. Juxtapositional leveraging, for instance, involves the combination of identity and power leveraging in a single time-frame. It would be interesting to investigate potential task and relationship conflict (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003) among juxtaposed global leaders.

Additionally, temporal leveraging was found to involve power leveraging in the present, with an intention to switch to identity leveraging at a defined future time. Further research could uncover instances when and reasons why identity leveraging could precede power leveraging in the temporal style. It is also possible to apply a temporal lens to juxtapositional leveraging, in order to determine possible future outcomes: either an indefinite extension of the juxtapositional style, or a future switch to power or identity leveraging once the benefits of juxtapositional leveraging are considered to be achieved.

Furthermore, quantitative approaches could be adopted to determine the relationships between leveraging styles and outcomes such as team performance, team satisfaction, perceived leader effectiveness, and cultural connection. Longitudinal research would also be useful for investigating pertinent questions such as the dynamism of assets and liabilities. Corporate-level liability of foreignness, for example, has been found to be dynamic (Jiang, Liu, & Stening, 2014; Zaheer & Mosakowski, 1997). Literature indicates its inverse relationship with time as a result of learning (Acheampong & Dana, 2017), development of ties in the host market (Wei & Clegg, 2015), and acquisition of tacit knowledge required to navigate the host environment and culture (Calhoun, 2002). It would therefore be interesting to uncover to what extent and under what conditions liabilities of local and foreign global leaders diminish over time.

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APPENDIX: INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

I am investigating the ways in which people in corporate leadership roles manage their relationships and interactions with colleagues or subordinates from differing cultures.

Please note that the questions here are indicative. Depending on the flow of the conversation, questions asked may not be ordered as below.

ROLE-RELATED QUESTIONS

(1) What is the nature of your current role?

   (a) To what extent are you exposed to or interacting with other cultures in your role?

   (b) Are there specific cultures that you come into contact with frequently?

   (c) Are there patterns in these cultures that you perceive to be different from your own?

   (d) What approaches or strategies do you employ in managing these cultural differences?

      - Which strategies work best?
      - Are there combinations that are especially effective?
      - Why is this the case?

(2) To what extent do you utilize the weight of your formal authority or power in managing cultural differences?

   (a) How is power (distance) perceived within your organization?

   (b) Is this perception typical of the cultural context you operate in?

   (c) Would you recommend this approach for other managers and organizations? What are the limits to this approach?

(3) To what extent do you incorporate or develop informal relationships in carrying out your role?

   (a) Would you recommend it for other managers and organizations? What are the limits to this approach?

CONTEXT-RELATED QUESTIONS

(1) What is your perception of Ghanaian in-group/out-group orientation? (To what extent are Ghanaians open to accepting foreigners without suspicion or exclusionary actions?):

(a) In general?
(b) In work settings?

(2) Do you perceive any differences in how employees interact with foreign versus local managers?

(a) Why is this the case?
(b) Which cultural elements account for the differences?

(3) Do you consider your nationality, relative to that of your subordinates, to be advantageous or disadvantageous in managing cultural differences?

(a) Do you leverage your foreignness in managing cultural differences arising in your role?

(4) Are there specific groups of foreigners or identifiable cultures that Ghanaians are especially accepting of or hostile toward?

(a) Why do you think this is the case?
(b) What is your personal experience in this regard?

BACKGROUND-RELATED QUESTIONS

(1) Please share with me your educational background.

(2) Professionally, what has been your background?

(3) How long have you worked in this company?

(a) What drew you to this particular company?
(b) What drew you to this particular role?

(4) What is your cultural background?

(a) Please state your tribal affiliations, explain your family structure, and the extent to which these associations are salient in the formation of your identity.
(b) How did your cultural background facilitate, or hinder, your tasks in handling cultural tensions mentioned above? Why?

(5) To what extent are you exposed to foreign cultures?

(a) Please share your foreign travel experience.
(b) Do you have foreign work experience?
(c) Do you have experience working for a foreign company or on a foreign project here in Ghana?