

Chapter 4

Global Leadership Competencies and Orientations:

Theory, Practice, and Future Implications

Idahosa Igbinakhase

University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Vannie Naidoo

University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

ABSTRACT

This chapter focuses on global leadership competencies and orientations with specific reference to theory, practice, and future implications. A critical analysis of existing studies on global leadership competencies and orientations indicated that several global leadership competencies exist such as global business expertise, global organizing expertise, and visioning while global leadership orientation/ mindset has been identified as an influencing factor in the learning and application of global leadership competencies by global leaders which often leads to effective global leadership. In determining the role of goal orientation in global leadership competencies, evidence from previous studies revealed that goal orientation inputs such as team learning orientation and team performance orientation contributes positively to collective global leadership effectiveness. Finally, the barriers to global leadership competencies and orientations were identified and solutions were proffered to limit the negative effects on global leadership effectiveness in business environments.

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INTRODUCTION

Developing world class global leadership competencies and orientations is increasingly becoming relevant in today's dynamic business environment. This is because effective global leaders are dominating diverse sectors in different business environments using effective leadership competencies and orientations. These global leaders are individuals who make significant positive change in organisations by building communities in diverse contexts using trust, organisational resources, cross-boundary stakeholders, different sources of external cross-boundary authority, and different cultures under conditions of temporal, geographical and cultural complexity (Mendenhall, Osland, Bird, Oddou, & Maznevski, 2008, p.16). Global leadership competencies have been described as the ability of a leader to carry out certain tasks across indigenous borders or with a global appeal (Hassanzadeh, Silong, Asmuni, & Wahat, 2015). In the same way, global leadership orientations serve as a guide that informs global leadership behaviour and encourages the preference for the development of globalization ideology and global leadership competencies (Allan, 2013). A combination of global leadership competencies and orientation is necessary to maintain global brand dominance.

Due to the competitive nature of the global business environment, there are several global leadership competencies and orientation that exist both in theory and practice that are critical for achieving success in today's business environment. According to Miska, Stahl, and Mendenhall (2013), intercultural competencies play a strategic role in global leadership. Furthermore, Jack (2014) notes that there are six (6) competencies global leaders need to succeed in today's business environment and they are strategic perspective, customer focus and understanding, ability to spot trends and connect the dots, engaged and committed teams, willingness to take risks and deep knowledge and expertise.

It is important to add that each global leadership competence/skill is a learned behaviour (Tubbs & Schulz, 2006) which should be based on global strategy (McCall & Hollenbeck, 2002) and which goes through various development stages (Caligiuri & Dragoni, 2014; Caligiuri & Lundby, 2015; Chen, John, & Stewart, 2016) and processes (Mendenhall, Weber, Arna Arnardottir, & Oddou, 2017) before being applied and refined in the business environment to boost superior achievements and results (Agrawal & Rook, 2014). While global leadership competencies and orientations are seen as significant to the success of many global brands in today's global business environment, developing the needed global leadership competencies and orientation does not come to global leaders without certain challenges and costs. Conger (2014) affirms that there are barriers to developing leadership talent such as lack of supporting structure, lack of rigorous and standardized performance management system and lack of culture of mobility. Conger (2014) further notes that

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