ABSTRACT

Researches into the relationship between culture and management practices are recently dominating the management practices literature especially with the current impact of globalisation, multi-nationalisation and internationalisation of businesses. This study examines the impact of culture on management practices with special reference to employment relations practices in Nigeria and the United Kingdom. This was achieved through a case study of employment relations practice in Cadbury (Nigeria) Plc and Cadbury (UK) Plc while employing semi-structured interviews. A review of the extant literature on culture and management practices revealed a dearth of literature on comparative study of employment relations practice (and other management practices) between the developed (e.g. UK) countries and the developing countries (e.g. Nigeria). Previous researches were focussed mainly on comparative study of employment relations practice (and other management practices) between the economically developed countries of the world. This study is an attempt to fill the gap in the literature. The study relied on Cadbury Worldwide (Cadbury UK and Cadbury Nigeria) as the case study. The findings relying on narrative analysis established a strong relationship between culture and employment relations practice (and other management practices). The study concludes that it is impossible to formulate a template of employment relations practices (and other management practices) with the intention of transferring same from one country or cultural area to another country or another cultural area.

Keywords: culture, diffusion of culture, employment relations practice, management practices, multinational enterprises, Nigeria, United Kingdom.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Culture has been variously defined as the way of life of a group of people (Akporherhe, 2002). Olurode (1994) suggests that culture is that whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom and other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of the society. Geertz (1973) proposes that culture is the entire way of life of a people, including their technology and material artefacts. This is not to overlook the fact that cultures do undergo constant change as people are more or else forced to adjust to new environments and new ways of doing things (Steward, 1972). Swindler (1986) concludes that culture consists of such figurative vehicles of meaning, including beliefs, ritual practices, art form and ceremonies, as well as informal cultural practices such as language, gossip, stories and rituals. Becker (1986:13) acknowledges that culture ‘explains how people act in concert when they do share understanding’.

Culture is one of the major determinants of how people think and behave (Kessapidou and Varsakelis, 2002). Hofstede (1991) comes up with an analogy between culture and mental programming; he submits that culture is the patterns of feeling, thinking and acting to mental programmes which constitute what he referred to as the
software of the mind. Culture he said is the collective programming of the mind which differentiates the members of one group or category of people from another.

Edwards et al (2004:1) suggest that ‘one of the key aspects of the role of multinational companies (MNCs) as employers is their ability to diffuse management practices across borders’ and that this process not only has the potential to drive change in national employment systems but can also influence, both positively and negatively, the competitive position of the firms themselves’. Edwards et al (2004:1) admit that the diffusion of management practices is ‘a crucial test of how MNCs integrate the operations across quite distinct national systems’.

Edwards et al (2004:3) further suggested that MNCs ‘bear the legacy of the culture of the country of origin and the nature and extent of diffusion is shaped by this as well as the cultures of the host countries in which they operate’. The attitudes and values prevalent in a country tend to restrain the ability of a multinational company to engage in the diffusion of management practices in general and employment relations in particular (Tayeb, 1998). A study by Bae et al. (1998) demonstrated how culture shapes the diffusion of employment relations practice especially how the culture of the home countries gives a new identity to the MNCs.

The major limitations to the cultural theoretical approach are: (1) the way culture is usually captured as in Hofstede’s (1980) work which erroneously assume cultural homogeneity within a country (see McSweeney, 2002). In this paper, the former British colonial masters assumed that all the ethnic groups merged together to become one are culturally homogeneous; this is to infer that Nigeria has one homogeneous culture. Unfortunately, this is very wrong. In actual fact the over 250 ethnic groups merged to become one country were from different cultural backgrounds (Horowitz, 1985). (2) It is also difficult to trace the sources of national effects while it also failed to trace the sources of the values and attitude and how these could change over time. In this study, the country of origin of the ERP is the United Kingdom; the multinational company during the colonial period was Royal Niger Company, while Cadbury Worldwide, Cadbury (UK) Plc and Cadbury (Nigeria) Plc. are the contemporary MNE’s, and the host country is Nigeria. Relying on the studies of Edwards et al. (2004:1); Bae et al. (1998) and Tayeb, (1998), the transfer of the British Voluntarist ERP to Nigeria would be problematic if not difficult mainly because the culture of the people in the country of origin, (UK.) is different from the culture of the people in the country of destination, (Nigeria) just as the cultures of the people of the various ethnic groups merged to become one Nigeria are different.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of employment relations

Blyton and Turnbull (2004) suggest that the recent increase in the use of the term ‘employee relations’ was as a result of the ‘disintegration’ of industrial relations system and the need to reposition the discipline in order to be able to embrace ‘the formal and informal processes of people management in the workplace’; Debrah and Mmieh (2009: 1555) also agree with this view. This disintegration of industrial relations is also ‘attributed to among other things the changes in organisational environment in recent years as well as the critiques of the theoretical underpinning of the discipline’ (Debrah and Mmieh, 2009:1555; Edwards 1995; Wajcman, 2000; Ackers and Wilkinson, 2003). The term ‘employee relations’ is now more popular in the literature and also used interchangeably with HRM but the term ‘employment relations’ could be a better term (Edwards, 2003).

Employment relationship refers to the relationships that exist between employers and the employees in the working environment, these relationships may be formal as in contracts of employment and procedural agreements (Gallie, 1998). These relationships could also be informal as in psychological contract, which states ‘certain assumptions and expectations about what managers and employer have to offer and are willing to deliver’ (Armstrong, 2005; 287). Employees are a significant part of the employment relationship but they are not to be seen as commodities or just another factor of production as it is assumed under the traditional orthodox theories of supply and demand (Budd and Bhave, 2006; Kaufman 1993).

Budd et al. (2004: 3) argue that the starting point for the treatment of the employment relationship should be the objectives of the relationship and that in neoclassical economics the objective was reduced to ‘allocautive efficiency’. They further claimed that the unseen hands of competitive markets will point ‘self-interested individuals towards efficient outcomes in which aggregate welfare is maximised and scarce resources are used to their most productive ends’. They concluded that the key objective of the employment relationship is therefore efficiency.

There are three key actors and stakeholders within a typical modern employment relationship: (1) employees typically represented by trade unions, (2) employers often represented by the employers’ associations on an
industrial, regional or national basis, and (3) the State and its agencies through mediations, as a public sector employer and through labour legislations (Ciulla, 2000, Kelloway et al., 2004). According to Kochan and Katz (1988:6) employees have diverse interests and four categories of employee interests were identified by Budd and Bhave (2006:5-5) as follows: (i) survival and income, (ii) equity and voice, (iii) fulfilment and social identity and (iv) power and social control. The second primary actor in the modern employment relationship is the employer and the interests are: profit maximisation, stakeholder/shareholder, executive and manager (Budd and Bhave, 2006:5-11).

The third major actor in the employment relationship is the State with five major roles which include regulative roles; passing of laws regulating workers, workers’ representatives, and companies (for example the market-based capitalist economy) (Goddard, 2005). According to Budd and Bhave (2006: 5-16-17), the interest of the State includes the promotion of freedom and rule of law as well as the promotion of equitable playing ground for both the workers and their employers (Kochan et al., 1986). Employers’ role: the state is also an employer of public sector organisations. Facilitative role; the state establishes social norms and provides support services for the employment relationship. The structural role consists of economic policies that determine the business environment. Finally, the constitutive role; the State determines how the employment relations is constituted; this is achieved by the type of economic system embraced by the State.

2.2 The context of employment relations practice in the UK and Nigeria

The British Voluntarist employment relations practice was developed based on the prevailing social, political and economic philosophy at the period of industrial revolution of the 18th and early 19th centuries in Britain (Florence, 1957:184). This was that of laissez-faire with respects for individual liberty, which was based on the Benthamite utilitarian principle: which postulated that the individual knew what was in his/her best interests and if left free, would pursue and maximise those interests (Florence, 1957). This philosophy brought about individual freedom of contracts which included the employment contract and also restrained the State from intervening directly in employment relations practice. The forces of supply and demand were believed to be enough to determine wages and working conditions at economically and socially acceptable levels without the State or any other institution intervening; the State has therefore played a very minimal role in the British employment relations system (Yesufu, 1982:31).

The rapid growth of industry in Great Britain at the end of the 18th and the early 19th centuries as well as the relatively new modes of industrial structure contributed to the creation of the British employment relations system, while the factory system became predominant (Briggs, 1953; Clapham, 1939). The factory system brought about major changes in agriculture, manufacturing and mining, which had a profound effect on the socioeconomic and cultural situation of the country.

There was a major transition from manual labour and draft animal-based economy to machine based manufacturing, which brought about a new socio-economic organisation and system (Carlsson, 1995). The factory system also separated employers, who in most cases were the owners of the means of production, from the employees who were made to work together and expected to co-operate with one another in the processes of production. The factory system economically increased total output through specialisation and economies of scale but socially it imposed a collective personality on the production processes and ‘emphasized divergences of interest between masters and men and which sometimes lead to open conflict between them’ (Briggs, 1953: 4).

The earlier cottage industrial system was grounded on the traditional network of social relationships which was held together by ‘deference and hierarchy’, while the factory system tore apart existing relationships and failed to replace them with new ones which could have influenced ‘the subordinate status of the worker while augmenting the influence of new and often rough masters’ Bamford (1893:101-111). This was emphasised by Bamford (1893:101-111) in an interview with an employer as he (the employer) stated that ‘this insatiable thirst after money and power, which is now making great progress amongst mankind, will, in the end divide the masters and workmen in this country, making the former into a set of tyrants and the latter into a fearful multitude of moody, hateful slaves’. The cottage industry in Britain was similar to the Nigerian Paternalistic employment relations system in that manufacturing was undertaken within the family and there was no need to move a long distance from ones home to work. The emergence of the factory system in the UK came between 1790 and 1830 up to the onset of the Industrial Revolution (Crouzet, 1972).

The reasons for its emergence according to Crouzet (1972) and Hudson (1992) are as follows: the growth of wealth which was derived partly from the geographical explorations as well as from growing commercial and banking activities. Secondly, the increase in demand brought about by increase in population due to falling
death rate and a drastic reduction in infant mortality rate; and lastly, the introduction of new products and the development of new technology. The new factory system brought about a new spirit of order and discipline. Marx (1930:403) comments that ‘in place of the individual machine, we now have a mechanical monster, whose body fills the whole factory’.

The new factory system brought about centralised employment which Williamson (1998) claims brought about more efficient production as leakages were reduced, skills were better utilised, transportation expenses were reduced and co-ordination made easier. Landes (1969) also suggests that the factory system brought about advanced technologies especially through the power driven technologies which required more space. Other scholars like Marglin (1974) perceives that the factory system brought about the opportunities for greater supervision and greater output can be extracted from workers at a lower cost which translated to more work but less pay. The capitalists were able to take over complete control of the production process and workers were left to decide whether to work or not to work.

This is not to conclude that there were no ‘good’ employers whose ‘goodness’ was based on religion, paternalism or both. They realised that ‘good’ industrial/employment relations practices were good for business (Hutt, 1926). Unfortunately the ‘good’ employers realized that the ‘bad’ employers in the same industries especially in the textile industry were undermining their efforts and that there was little they could do other than for government to intervene. Examples of such state interventions include: the Factory Acts of 1802, 1819, 1833, 1850 and 1853.

Employment relations in post war Britain in the 20th century developed in two distinct directions, one is the formal practice embodied in the official institutions, and the second is the informal system, created through the behaviour of trade unions and employers’ associations, manager’s shop stewards and workers at lower employees level (Donovan Commission Report,1968 Paragraph 46: 2). The British voluntarist employment relations practice is hinged on the following principles: the first is that priority is accorded to collective bargaining over other methods of external job regulation (Flanders, 1970: 94). The main feature is that trade unions and employers through their associations act as ‘joint authors of rules which are made to regulate employment contracts and ---- their own relations’ (Flanders, 1970:95). Both parties may solicit for the use of third party assistance for conciliation, mediation, and arbitration purposes to reach agreements. The second principle is that ‘the British system of industrial relations has traditionally accorded a priority to voluntary over compulsory procedural rules for collective bargaining’ (Ibid 1970:96): Kahn-Freund (1954) referred to this as collective laissez-faire. The third principle is that ‘the parties to collective bargaining have generally preferred to build their relations more on their procedural (rather) than on their substantive rules’ (Flanders, 1970:98).

The three key institutions in the British ‘Voluntarist’ employment practice are employees through their representatives, employers through the employers’ associations and the State through its agencies and legislations. The intervention of the State is very minimal when compared with some other developed countries. This was what made Kahn-Freund (1954: 44) to suggest that ‘-----. There was perhaps no major country in the world in which law has played a less significant role in the shaping of industrial relations than in Great Britain and in which today the law and legal profession have less to do with labour relations’. The role of the state in the British voluntarist employment relations practice is therefore limited to mere ‘providing an institutional framework for bilateral relations between management and labour’ (Keller, 1968:77). It can therefore be concluded that the British Voluntarist ERP was fashioned after the British culture. The ERP in Nigeria before its colonilisation will be discussed below.

2.3 Employment relations practice in Nigeria: pre-colonial era
There was in existence an employer-employee relationship in Nigeria before the colonial era which was based on the predominantly agricultural economy, culture and traditions which were the basis for systems of work and reward (Ubeku, 1993). In most cases the employer was the family head while the employees were members of his immediate family and the extended family. In some areas farming was carried out on a cooperative basis; people of the same age organised to work for themselves in turns. On such occasions, remunerations were mainly foods and drinks as the economy was rural with no acceptable monetary currency (Iwuji, 1968).

As there were no acceptable means of exchange or monetary currency, rewards were mostly in terms of provision of food and shelter and probably to reciprocate good gestures by working on another person’s farm when required, or at the extreme end by providing security in terms of invasion of the friend’s farm or household by an enemy and in some cases as part of the dowry for a very beautiful fiancée (Iwuji, 1968); there was therefore no wage employment. In the case of a large farm or plantations the services of slaves were employed and this was integrated in the social and political systems (Lovejoy, 1974).
The employer/family head was at his discretion all-in-all as he determined the reward system, recruitments, selections, promotions, which were not necessarily based on merit or seniority. He provided food, housing and security for all the employees and even determined when they would get married and to whom (Ubeku, 1993). When the traditional leaders (Obas, Chiefs, Obis and Emirs) were appointed as the recruitment agents by the colonial masters, the family heads usually sent the troublesome sons and children of less favoured wives some of whom later became educated and joined wage employment. This system of employment relations practice was referred to as the Paternalistic System (Ubeku, 1993).

This employment relations system was in practice in the territories (the Northern Protectorate, the Southern Protectorate and the Lagos Colony) that the British colonial masters merged together between 1906 and 1911 to become Nigeria before the colonisation of the territories (Iwuji, 1968). With the colonisation of these territories, the British Voluntarists ERP was introduced which could only survive through the introduction of monetary economy in form of payment of wages and salaries (Katz and Darbishire, 2002).

3.0 METHOD AND METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed in this study is the qualitative case study following the traditions of Ram et al (2001) while relying on semi-structured interviews of 40 participants and employing Narrative/discourse analysis to analyse/interpret the interviews. A multi-method approach (combining primary and secondary sources) was also employed in this study. This is as a result of three main reasons: first is to ensure validity and reliability as much as possible since the weakness of one method might be the strength of another method. One method will therefore be used to improve another method; secondly each of the methods is expected to afford different nuances or insight which will make the ultimate result richer; thirdly, one method is expected to lead to another sequentially, and this will make the findings more robust than if one method is used alone (Whitfield and Strauss, 1998:24). This study combines secondary sources of data collection with primary sources; some key informants were interviewed while the data collected employed narrative analysis following the traditions of Denzin and Lincoln (1998) to analyse the data.

The 40 core informants interviewed included representatives of workers, management and consultants of both plants and in both countries while semi-structured questions were prepared and used. The durations of the interviews vary from 1hour – 2hours depending on the level of co-operation of the informant and the time allowed by the managements of the plants. All the interviews were on one-to-one basis. Each participant was asked if he/she will want his/her name mentioned in the write-up and those who do not want to be named were not named in the write-up. Participants were also told that if at any stage of the interview they wanted to reconsider their participations they were free to and fortunately nobody opted out in the middle of the interview. They were also told that if they needed to add or remove any information given they could do so by contacting the researcher at a later date. All the participants gave their informed consents freely without any intimidation and without been coerced while their confidentiality was guaranteed and respected. The study used Cadbury Worldwide (Cadbury (Nigeria) Plc and Cadbury (UK) Plc) as the case study because it is a British MNC and one of the few multination companies to establish a manufacturing plant in Nigeria. It is expected that based on the suggestions of Ferner and Quintanilla (1998) that multinational enterprises (MNE) in most cases adopt the management practices prevalent in the parent companies; Cadbury Worldwide is therefore expected to transfer the British ‘Voluntarist’ ERP to Nigeria. Nigeria has been chosen as the case study because the country is a former British colony and because the authors are Nigerian.

Narrative/discourse analysis following the traditions of Riessman, (1993); Labov and Waletzky, (2003); Geertz, (1973 & 1983); Cortazzi, (2008); Labov, (1997); and Cortazzi, (1993) will be employed to analyse/interpret the data collected through semi-structured interviews. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) identified three traditional major social science approaches to textual-discourse analysis as: content analysis which is usually associated with - though not restricted to- quantitative studies, semiotics associated with structural tradition in literary criticism and narrative or discourse analysis which is usually associated with the current post-structural development in interpretative theory. Narrative analysis is a global phenomenon and the narratives of the world are numerous although it is ‘first and foremost a prodigious variety of genres, themselves distributed amongst different substances – as though any material were fit to receive man’s story’ and ‘able to be carried by articulated language, spoken or written, fixed or moving images, gestures, and the ordered mixture of all these substances’ (Czarniawska, 2004: 650).

Narrative is found in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, comedy, painting and cinema; it covers every age, in every place, and in every society (Riessman, 1993). Its origin is from the history of mankind and there is ‘nowhere --- nor has been a people without narrative’, all classes and all human groups have their narratives; it is therefore ‘international, transhistorical, transcultural: it is simply there, like life itself;
all human endeavours and expressions are narratives or better still can be treated as narratives’ (Barthes, 1977:79; Czarniawska, 2004: 649). Narrative analysis started from the literary theory and spread to the humanities and social science including sociology, politics and political science (Fisher, 1984). Narrative is just a mode of communication; people tell stories to entertain or to teach or be taught or even just to ask for interpretation or to give interpretations to phenomena or incidents (White, 1973, 1987; Curtis, 1994; Silvers, 1995). Narrative knowledge explains a human’s intentions as well as his deeds and ‘situates them in time and space’ while ‘relating the world as people see it, often substituting chronology for causality’ and mixing the objective and subjecting aspects (Czarniawska, 2004: 650).

Narrative analysis came into the fields of management and organisation theory because according to Perrow (1991), modern societies are becoming more organised beginning from the hospitals where we are born, to the schools we attended, the places we work and the undertakers that will take care of our burials and secondly there existed close ties between culture and economics and presently the ties are becoming closer. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) state that document of experience can be analysed using the narrative analysis. The themes and issues that are reoccurring within them can be indicated, counted and interpreted (Geertz, 1983). There was also nothing stopping the researchers from narrating and analysing the account, temporal and dramatic structures of a text while abandoning the rigor of counting (Geertz, 1973). Narrative analysis is seen as interdisciplinary because it does not quite fit neatly into the boundary of any single scholarly field and therefore extends the interpretive twist in the social science (Geertz, 1973; Rabinow and Sullivan, 1979, 1987).

Narrative analysis became very popular because a lot of the realist assumptions borrowed from the natural science to social science in other to understand social life ended up being limiting in their usages and invariably not very useful (Godzich, 1989). A group of leading United States of America scholars out of frustration turned to narrative analysis as the organising standard for human action and other social events (Huberman and Miles, 2002). Todorov (1969) coins the term ‘narratology’ in an attempt to elevate the term to the prominent position of a new science (Godzich, 1989; Cortazzi, 1993: 2; Cortazzi, 2008). Cortazzi (1993: 2) suggests that narrative analysis can be ‘seen as opening a window on the mind or ----- opening window of culture’, Chafe (1990 : 79) sees it as overt manifestations of the mind in action: as windows to both the content of the mind and its ongoing operations’.

Mitchell (1981: 8) perceives narrative analysis as ‘a means by which human beings represent and structured the world, while Bruner (1990: 35) suggests that it was an ‘organised principle’ by which ‘people organise their experience in knowledge about, and transactions with the social World’. Polkinghorne (1988:11) suggested that narrative analysis was the ‘primary scheme by means of which human existence is rendered meaningful’. Cortazzi (1993:2) concludes that narrative analysis became very important that scholars ended up regarding “naratology” as an independent discipline studying the theory of narrative texts’. Huberman and Miles (2002) view research as story telling in other words; it is simply what we do with our research materials and what informants do with us; narrative analysis therefore simply takes as its object of investigation the story itself. The purpose of which is to demonstrate how the respondents in the interviews conducted imposed some order on the flow of their experiences in order to make sense of the events and actions in their lives (Todorov, 1978, 1990; Prince, 1973).

Bryman & Bell (2003) suggest that narrative analysis is a method of gathering and analysing data that were seen as sensitive by the people without them knowing or offending them; this is done by them simply telling the stories of their lives to the researcher. The methodological approach simply examines the respondent’s story – they are referred to as the core informants in this study - and go ahead to analyse how it is put together that is the linguistic and the cultural resources it brings in and how this will convince a listener of its validity. Analysis is simply narrative as it opens up the forms of telling the interviewer about the forms of experiences and not necessarily the context of the language (Huberman and Miles, 2002).

After all, according to Stivers, (1993) nature as well as the World does not tell stories: individuals do; interpretations are therefore inevitable because narratives are representatives. Ibid (1993) concludes that there was no clear distinction in post-positivist research between fact and interpretation. Bruner (1987) perceives human agency and imagination as what determine what is incorporated and excluded in narratives, as well as how events are plotted and what they are supposed to mean. To Ibid, (1987) segment and purpose are responsible for building the events of life; individuals only become autographical narratives through which their life stories are told. These private constructions typically interconnect with a community of life stories with deep structures about the nature of life itself (Labov and Waletzky, 2003).
From the above features of narrative analysis, it is obvious that it will be best suited for this kind of research which is principally the influence of culture on management practices or the ‘story’ of how ERP was transferred to Nigeria (and other former British colonies) and also the ‘story’ or the ‘narrative’ of how enduring socio-cultural issues could be because in as much as the British colonialists could lay claim to the successful transfer of ERP, socio-cultural factors still played a major role in the success or failure of the transfer.

4.0 THE CASE STUDY

Cadbury Worldwide is an English confectionery and Beverage Company and the world’s second largest confectionery manufacturer, after Mars/Wrigley (Cadbury, 1992; Dahya et al., 2002). The company was known as ‘Cadbury Schweppes Plc’ from 1969 until its de-merger in May 2008, which separated the company’s global confectionery business from its beverage unit; the beverage unit was renamed Dr. Pepper Snapple Group while the confectionery unit was referred to as Cadbury Plc; the company employs about 45,000 people as at 2008 (Financial Times, 10/06/08). The company is represented in over two hundred countries directly or indirectly, - represented in more countries than member countries of UNO as at 2006, but with manufacturing facilities in 60 countries - with business interests in a number of packaged food and beverage sectors and with about 35,000 direct and indirect suppliers in its global network. About 160 people are in the executive management team, as at 2008, 13% of which are women (Management Today, July 2007).

The global staff turnover is about 2-5% per annum; the company is among the top 10 in UK’s Management Today’s most admired companies in 2006/2007. The mission statement as regards employment is that: ‘Our people practises are guided by our key values, which are to be open and honest, to act with complete integrity and to provide quality products and services’. (Cadbury Magazine, 2008 pg. 10; Company profile of Cadbury Plc retrieved on 1/10/2008). In 2008, the company had a free cash flow (after payment of dividends) of about £1.5 billion and a revenue growth of between 3 and 5% per annum excluding impacts of acquisitions and disposals. Nestle is the closest rival of Cadbury Worldwide in the over US$5.6 billion chocolate market in the United Kingdom (Tiffen, 2002). This conglomerate had a humble beginning from Birmingham, United Kingdom. The international manufacturing offices are at Bournville, Birmingham and at Hertfordshire in the United Kingdom. The Company was declared the UK’s most admired company after ousting Tesco in 2004; the company is on track to declare £2bn profit, in 2009. Cadbury Worldwide consumes about 60,000 tonnes of cocoa beans yearly. The company is usually referred to as a small family business which developed into an international company combining the most sophisticated technology with the maximum standards of quality, technical skills and innovation (Rowlinson, 1993).

Cadbury Worldwide was recently (January 2010) in the news over speculations that the American-owned Kraft Foods Inc. has made a bid of £10.2 billion to take over the company, which has been rejected. Kraft also pledged to safeguard the closure of Cadbury’s Somerdale factory and safe about 400 jobs. Another US confectionery giant, Hershey, is also speculated to be interested in the take over of Cadbury. Todd Stizer, who is presently the Chief Executive of Cadbury Worldwide, was quoted to have said that there are ‘clear similarities between the Cadbury culture and Hershey’. In all of these, the Cadbury family has been against another American intervention in any form or shape. Kraft Foods Inc., later in 2 February 2010, purchased Cadbury Worldwide for £11.7 billion (BBC News, 3/2/2010).

4.1 Business History of Cadbury (UK) Plc

Cadbury (UK) Plc in 2010 employed about 5000 people in the United Kingdom alone with eight manufacturing sites in Britain and Ireland; it has always been in either the top or second position in the market share of 24 of the World’s top 50 confectionery markets. In the United Kingdom, it is the clear leader in the confectionery market with a 29.5% market share, ahead of major competitors Master Foods (19.7%) and Nestle (14%). The company is ranked 26th in the FTSE –100. The full-year result for 2004 showed turnover was up 5% to £6,738 million, and underlying operating profit was up by 6% to £1,115 million. (A.C. Nielsen, October 2005) The Company’s ‘number one goal for 2004-2007’ is ‘not about excellence, innovation or developing its people’ but “to deliver superior shareholder performance”. The fifth- placed priority is to enhance its reputation with staff and society’. (Cadbury Magazine, 2008:10)

4.2 Business History and Personnel Practice of Cadbury (Nigeria) PLC

Cadbury (Nigeria) plc is a member company of Cadbury Worldwide; it is a group member of the Europe, Middle East, and African region where its profile has been rising, especially since Cadbury Schweppes plc bought 50.2 per cent of the company on 18 March 2006 and thus became a majority shareholder (Cadbury (Nigeria) plc ‘Handbook’, 2007). The remaining 49.98 per cent is owned by a highly diversified spread of Nigerian individuals and institutional shareholders. Cadbury (Nigeria) plc had sales of around $150 million in 2003 and a top contributor to Cadbury Worldwide business in Africa (Cadbury (Nigeria) plc ‘Handbook’, 2004).
The company was established in the 1950s mainly to source for cocoa and prospect for a market for Cadbury (UK) plc products while the manufacturing facility was established in January 1965 on a 42-hectare Inikeja, north of Lagos, Nigeria (Chukwu, 2005). The main product then was Bournvita with staff strength of fifty and a modest turnover of £120,000; Cadbury (Nigeria) plc was listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) in 1976, and among the top ten out of the 258 quoted equities by market capitalisation towards the end of 2003 (Nigerian Stock Market, 2008).

Today (20 August 2008), the staff strength is about 1,200 workers (7 are Executives, 275 are management staff, and the remaining are non-management staff); they are engaged in the production of the following brands: ‘Bournvita’ was launched in 1960 (local production started in 1965), ‘Goody-Goody’ was launched in 1966, ‘Tom Tom’ was launched in 1970, ‘Trebor Buttermint’ was launched in 1976, ‘Malta’ was launched in 1979, ‘Éclairs’ was launched in 1989, ‘Trebor Peppermint’ was launched in 1989 (acquisition), ‘Trebor Luckies’ was acquired in 1989, ‘Trebor Koffsticks’ was acquired in 1989, ‘Richoco’ was launched in 1996, ‘Trebor Koffdrops’ was launched in 2000, ‘Trebor Celebrations’ was launched in 2003, ‘Halls Ahomka Ginger’ was launched in 2004, ‘Bubba Bubble Gum’ was launched in 2004, ‘Chocki’ was launched in 2004, ‘Halls Take 5’ was launched in 2004, and ‘Passcall Crème Rollers’ was launched in 2005 (Cadbury (Nigeria) plc Handbook, 2008).

The company was (until the Bunmi Oni-led management was sacked on 12 December 2006) managed by a non-executive chairman, a managing director, a finance director, an expatriate non-executive director, an operation director, a marketing director, a non-executive director, a sales director, a Nigerian non-executive director, a logistics director, the managing director of Stanmark (cocoa processing arm of Cadbury (Nigeria) plc). President of EMEA Region and a member of the Chief Executive’s Committee and a Company secretary who also serves as Company secretary of Stanmark Cocoa Processing Limited; it should be said that all the management staff were Nigerians until 12 December 2006 (Cadbury (Nigeria) plc Handbook, 2008).

One good personnel practice that Cadbury (Nigeria) plc must have inherited from Cadbury Worldwide is the fact that the company usually recruit to keep; for example as of 2006, out of the seven executive directors; four joined the company as management trainees. They are Bunmi Oni (the Managing Director), Tunde Falase (Marketing Director), Biodun Jaji (Sales Director), and Moudu Ugdodaga (Operations Director). This is true of very many senior members of staff of Cadbury Worldwide. For example, Vidyut Arte, the Marketing Director of Cadbury China, whose first job was with Cadbury China; Martin Spencer, Demand Planning Manager of Cadbury Trebor Allan Inc., Toronto, Canada; Pippa Greenslade, the Regional Human Resources Director based in Singapore; all of them started their working careers with Cadbury Worldwide (Cadbury, 2008 December issue).

All the above mentioned workers have at various times in their carriers gone for various courses and worked in so many branches of Cadbury Worldwide outside their countries of origin. It is likely that if you are recruited by one subsidiary, you can work or go for work experiences in any of the subsidiaries of the company Worldwide (Cadbury, 2007). The company’s Human Resources Strategy (2007–2008:2) states that ‘to improve our performance by enhancing the effectiveness of our day-to-day working experience, the capability of our people and the quality of their output. Working environment at Cadbury Schweppes reflects our core purpose and values, and enhances our culture. HR leadership team combines regional HR generalist business partners and central worldwide functional experts’ (People, June 2007).

5.0 FINDINGS: Culture and management practices based on the case study
During the course of the various interviews, the Americans managers at Cadbury (UK) Plc, Birmingham interviewed were not happy with some of the ‘work culture’ of the British workers while the British workers were also not happy about the ‘capitalistic nature’ of most American managers. One American manager commented that:
‘The British are too lazy, they take time out to smoke, and they take time out every thirty minutes for tea and coffee. They take time out whenever their dogs and cats are sick, and God helps the company when their great grandfather is sick.’ (an American manager).

Another American manager commented that:
‘The British hold on to little things that have nothing to do with the work and the profitability of the company, for example one of my colleagues asked for compassionate leave just because his neighbour of fifty years lost the wife to cancer; can you imagine that? What of if he looses his own wife? Then he will ask for one year leave’ (what has the death of your neighbour got to do with this place? (an American manager).
A very senior American said that:

'The British cannot make money the way they want to run this place (Cadbury UK Plc); look at what happened some months ago, their football team (Birmingham City FC) was promoted to the Premier League and most of them were drunk and cant come for Sunday shift, most of those who came took permission to go early' (an American manager).

The British managers and workers also do not accept the ‘work culture’ of the Americans which has no ‘human face’. One of the British managers commented that:

'The Americans have neither compassion nor human face to work, they translate every work relationships to £’s and Pence’s they are too money conscious for us; their capitalism do not have any human face, we (British) cannot wait for the de-merger exercise to be concluded. We (British) are godly; we are our brother’s keepers, and we are very family oriented’ (a British manager).

A British worker said that:

'The Americans do not have any sense of humour; they always frown at work' (a British worker)

The above narratives demonstrates the ‘siamese/conjoined twins’ relationships between culture and management practices; the British do not believe that because they are at work they should not show some element of compassion while the Americans felt that work is work and every minute must be domiciled in terms of money; there should be no compassion or sentiments at all and in any way. The Nigerian situation will be discussed below:

In Nigeria, the transferred British Voluntarist ERP was fashioned after the British culture as mentioned earlier and because it was brought to another cultural area, it had to be coloured with the Nigerian culture as will be demonstrated below

Me: I dey go home every week end and my second wife self dey village (a worker at Cadbury (Nigeria) plc).

Interpretation: I go home every weekend; moreover, my second wife is in the village.

I be Chief for my village, I fit become ‘Bale’ self, I dey pray make i retire quick and go home go settle (a Cadbury (Nigeria) plc worker).

Interpretation: I am a Chief in my village, and I will soon become the ‘Bale’ (village head). I am praying to retire and go back to my village.

Evidences from interviews: Me to come to this world again and still dey work for Cadbury God forbid, my pickin no go work for Cadbury o (a worker at Cadbury (Nigeria) plc, speaking in Pidgin English).

English language interpretation: If I come back to this world, I will not want to work at Cadbury (Nigeria) plc, and I will not want any of my children to work at the company.

Me I want work for myself o never again this work get too much wahala, (a Cadbury (Nigeria) plc speaking in Pidgin English).

English language interpretation: I will want to set up a business; this work is too strenuous (a worker at Cadbury (Nigeria) plc).

Me I just dey look for money to set up my business, I don spend eighteen years I just dey wait for two year more make I take my pension and gratuity. I dey go back to my village (a Cadbury (Nigeria) plc worker speaking in Pidgin English).

English language interpretation: I am only waiting for two more years I have spent eighteen years already. I want to collect my pension and gratuity and then I will go back to my village (a Cadbury (Nigeria) plc worker).

I no want my children work here as me too dey go village soon; this Lagos wahala too much, you no see as man don old to chop ma wahala, to enter bus na wahala, to pay rent na wahala I don finish my house for village (a Cadbury (Nigeria) plc worker speaking in Pidgin English).

English language interpretation: I want to go back to my village, and I do not want my children to work at Cadbury (Nigeria) plc. Life in Lagos is too hectic; for example, rent is too high, transportation is expensive, and I have completed building my house in my village (a worker at Cadbury (Nigeria) plc).
Definitely, yes, I want to come back to Cadbury (Nigeria) plc; and yes, I will allow my children to work at Cadbury (Nigeria) plc, but I will want to work for myself if I have the means (an employee of Cadbury (Nigeria) plc).

Yes and no. I will want to work as a manager and wish my children too will work as managers (a worker at Cadbury (Nigeria) plc).

My mum and her father worked with Cadbury, so I won’t mind if my children want to work here, after all it is their choice (a worker at Cadbury (UK) plc).

Yes, if I come to this world again, I want to work at Cadbury and as a machinist. For now I don’t look forward to retirement because I will miss my friends and my machines (a worker at Cadbury (UK) plc).

My parents met here and I am also happy working here; I can’t imagine working elsewhere, so I will encourage my children to work here (a Cadbury (UK) plc worker).

It is interesting working here and in Birmingham, so my children can work here; I will encourage them to work here (a Cadbury Worldwide UK worker).

These quotations/narratives justify the various reasons why workers at Cadbury Worldwide (UK) plc could be said to be more satisfied with wage employment in general and working at Cadbury (UK) plc in particular. The narratives also justify why workers at Cadbury (Nigeria) plc do not enjoy working in industries located in the cities generally, and Cadbury (Nigeria) plc in particular.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS RECOMMENDATIONS AND DIRECTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCHES


This study has demonstrated the ‘siemese/conjoined twins’ relationship between culture and management practices; it also argued that because of differences in culture the transfer of employment relations practice and other management practices from one cultural area to another cultural area will be problematic. The study went further to identify the legacies of imperialism on employment/industrial relations practice and was able to account for the failures in Nigeria.

The study also discussed the fact that most of the writings on comparative employment/industrial relations practice including that of Bamber and Lansbury (1998); Bamber and Leggett (2001) Van-Ruyseveeldt et al. (1995); Brewster (2007); Thelen and Kume (2003) and Locke et al. (1995) were focussed on the economically developed countries of Europe, USA, Australia, Canada, Asia Pacific Region and New Zealand. Not much has been written on African countries and the economically developed countries of the world. Unfortunately, as this study has revealed much can be done between African countries and the economically developed countries of the world especially with the present (2010/2011) global economic crunch which has badly hit most multinational companies. The MNCs have to search for new geographical areas in which to invest, the Africa continent is therefore a good alternative. The study concluded that if the future economic development of the world is located in the developing countries with different cultures, then there is a need to come up with more culturally friendly management practices since it is now obvious that the transfer of ERP and other management practices is determined by the culture.

The British Voluntarists employment relations system has come to stay in Nigeria yet the Nigerian Paternalistic employment relations system is refusing to die; researches should be conducted with a view to harmonising the Nigerian Paternalistic employment relations system with the British Voluntarists employment relations system. This is because it is obvious that the Nigerian Paternalistic employment relations system cannot stand the demands of the present day global economic realities, the level of industrialisation and the technological development; and that said the socio-cultural realities of Nigeria and Nigerians will still make the pre-colonial Paternalistic employment relations system very relevant no matter the modernisation or stage of economic development.
The researchers in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) discipline should carry out researches on the reasons for both War Over Palm Oil and War Over Crude Oil as both wars was and still is in the same region. This is with the hope of coming out with what the multinational oil companies could do to avert the unnecessary loss of lives, time and scarce resources. Their counterparts in Political Science should come up with the best home-grown type of democracy that will incorporate the socio-cultural, political and economic realities on ground. Nigeria tried the British Parliamentary System of government immediately after independence in 1960; it failed and its failure led to the first military coup in 1966. The failure made the country to embark on the trial of the Presidential System of government in 1979; this also seems not to be working effectively and efficiently because of socio-cultural, political and economic factors. As democracy is now the order of the day globally, there is a need to fashion out one that will take into consideration the socio-cultural, political and economic realities of Nigeria and Nigerians.

There is also a need for researches into what the role of military in the political terrain of the country should be. Elaigwu (1991) recommends the Latin American model where a very senior military officer is appointed as the Minister of Defence. Elaigwu (1991) also suggests that Nigeria should think about the Indonesian model where the Parliament comprises of elected military officers who are elected strictly by their constituencies, the armed forces. This is to make the military boys (as they want to be called) to be committed to the civilian regimes and probably this might stop the frequent military coups in Nigeria; this suggestion needs to be well researched before implementation.

Nigeria is said to be the most sufficiently endowed territory carved out by the European colonisers, although the living standards of most of its citizens differed from that of the other 80% of Africa’s black population (Joseph, 1978). Nigeria has a population of about 140 million people (see Nigeria’s population), a lot of minerals and natural resources among which are crude oil and natural gas. Nigeria has 22 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and about 22 billion of crude oil reserves. (See crude oil and natural gas in Nigeria). Despite the above statistics, the GDP is just about $191.4 billion (2006est - see GDP in Nigeria). Nigeria was ranked 157 out of 177 nations in the HDI ranking of countries’ capacities in 2006. This was recently reported in the Human Development Report (HDR). The Human Development Index (HDI) is compiled annually by the UNDP and HDR represents the estimate of the country development capacity (Orabuchi, 2006). From the above statistics, Nigeria and Nigerians have no business with poverty. The major twin problems to economic development are corruption and bad management; both of which could be traced to the ‘importation’ of th foreign British economic system.

Researches should be conducted by sociologists and economists as to how best to tame the twin beasts. The researchers should also come out with how to make governance less expensive and less attractive so that the politicians and the civil servants will not see their positions as one that should be used to amass wealth; rather it should be seen as an opportunity to serve. Researches should also be carried out by the social-scientists on how to make more people participate actively in the electoral processes and have the courage to vote out corrupt politicians rather than allowing them to acquire or better still ‘buy’ chieftaincy titles and be granted prominent positions in their various communities. The politicians are becoming too complaisant as they are too confident that they cannot be voted out no matter how badly they have performed; once they have the money to buy votes they will always be re-elected (Vaughan, 1991).

According to Wilks, (1962:337), the Portugese were the first explorers and the first Europeans to begin trade in West Africa and especially in Nigeria around 1471 and 1475 yet little was later heard of them. There is a need for further researches to be conducted as to how and why the British and the French later dominated trade in West Africa and probably the fortunes of West Africans in general and Nigerians in particular would have been better under the Portuguese.

Lastly, researchers should come up with recommendations as to what should be the relationships of the individual subsidiaries to their various parent companies and recommend how these relationships should evolve. It is obvious from what happened at Cadbury (Nigeria) Plc that Cadbury Worldwide granted too much independent and too soon to its Nigeria subsidiary – Cadbury (Nigeria) Plc. The situation in one subsidiary might not be the same in other subsidiaries bearing in mind the differences in socio-cultural terrains. A general and blanket recommendation for all the subsidiaries is not acceptable just as one will not advocate for an early autonomy from the parent company.

Edwards (2001) is of the opinion that multinational enterprises (MNEs) present a range of economic benefits to the countries where they locate subsidiaries. One of the economic benefits should be the training of the indigenous managers in the arts of contemporary management practices based on the fact that the parent companies are located in the economically developed environments with access to the latest theoretical and
practical techniques of scientific management of complex organisations. Cadbury (Nigeria) Plc should therefore benefit from the parent company – Cadbury Worldwide. The limitations of the research will be discussed below.

7.0 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
This research was hampered by the twin problems of lack of enough financial resources and time. The author would have loved to find out why political democracy, industrial/economic democracy and the British Voluntarist employment relations system succeeded in some former British colonies like Canada, India, Australia and New Zealand and failed mostly in the African former colonies like Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and Somalia. From the look of things it seems that the failures were recorded in most black former British colonies and succeeded in most white former British colonies.

There must have been some interesting reasons for this distinct line of successes and failures drawn along colours – black and white- and race. With more financial resources and the availability of more time, the case study would have included at least three countries from the black former British colonies and three countries from the white former British colonies and the result would have been very interesting. It would also have been interesting to look into the fact that in the 15th and 16th centuries Spain and Portugal pioneered the exploration of the globe and established a large overseas empire but subsequently lost most of these colonies to England, France and the Netherlands who started the exploration of the world later (Abernethy, 2000). With more financial resources and the availability of more time, one would have loved to make a comparison between the former French, British, Spanish and Portuguese colonies; and the outcome would have been interesting.

REFERENCES


