

National Managerial Talent Development in Ghanaian Gold Mining Industry: Comparing Western and Indigenous Approaches

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Abstract

Management development in improving productivity has become powerful tool for management effectiveness, as well as to address the management gap especially in developing countries. However, management development programmes follow Western concepts and curricula which, in most situations, are not relevant to African context. Data from interviews of 26 national managers in the Ghanaian gold mining industry produced definition of their talent development and how they expect the development programme to run in industry. The definition is just a reproduction of Western concepts of management development. Motivated by strong display of Ghanaian identity and cultural practices during author's interactions with some national managers, the main concern of this paper is to assess how these Western concepts of management development could be localised to be consistent with traditional Ghanaian learning methods to develop national managers (in the Western dominated Ghanaian gold mining industry). Applying indigenous methodology, the Western concept of management development is compared to indigenous approach. Results of comparative assessment of the two approaches reveal that traditional Ghanaian education has it strong and enduring versions of the elements of the Western approach to talent development, most of which the author speculates are stronger in driving the talent process than the Western versions.

Key words: management development, national managers, indigenous methodology, traditional learning methods, Western concept

1. Introduction

Management development in improving productivity has become powerful tool for management effectiveness (Grzeda & Assogbavi, 1999). As observed by Schellekens (2007), Africa experiences "management gap" between the demand for and supply of indigenous management talent at almost all levels and this is a major setback for economic development on the continent. Realising the issue of management gap and the need to address it, the government of Ghana made national managerial development a legal requirement for multinational companies entering the gold mining industry. Not just a legal requirement but a pre-condition for the granting of mining lease to these multinational companies (who dominate the gold mining industry) as enshrined in the Minerals and Mining Law, 2006 (Act 703). Two significant provisions include the *localisation plan* (details of expatriate positions, and nationals to understudy these expatriates for eventual takeover) and *expatriates quota* (allowable number of expatriates in any company at any given time).

This shows the seriousness the government attaches to addressing the national management gap, which is believed could be achieved through MNCs in industry. ("National manager" here means indigenous Ghanaian manager in multinational subsidiary in Ghana, as distinguished from expatriate manager".) The extent of compliance of these provisions by the Western multinationals is however beyond the scope of this paper. What this paper can reveal however is MNCs' argument that local managers lack the experience and expertise that expatriates have to drive efficiency in industry (Eshun & Jellicoe, 2011). The situation in industry shows a wide management gap (Schellekens, 2007) as demonstrated by the expatriate percentage in management which is as high as 70% in some companies. For instance, the work of Eshun & Jellicoe (2011) reveals that expatriates percentage in four major gold mining companies are 56%, 60%, 70% and 70%. A common reason assigned to this over reliance on expatriate managers is their competence as compared to national managers.

Successful development of national managers equipped with the relevant expertise will therefore be pivotal part of the industry as their managerial skills and expertise are key local resources and capabilities to industry (Amankwah-Amoah & Debrah, 2011) because these unlock the potential of managers who can efficiently implement strategic goals of the individual organisations (Walumbwa, Aviola & Aryee, 2011). This justifies the many management development institutes and programmes in Africa (Kiggundu, 1991; Schellekens, 2007). However, these programmes follow Western concepts and curricula which, in most situations, do not suit African context. How the situation could be made better, Grzeda & Assogbavi (1999) write that critical consideration

should be given to cultural roots of management development. Grzeda & Assogbavi (1991) believe that Western values, objectives, contents, approaches and outcomes inherent in Western management development process cannot be implemented in Sub-Saharan Africa without considering the host culture. The objective of this paper therefore is to attempt to indigenise/localise western managerial talent development process as given by national managers in the Ghanaian gold mining industry to suit the Ghanaian context.

2. Management Talent Development

The issue of identifying and preparing the next generation of leadership talent in today's increasingly complex business environment is consistently cited by executives and boards as one of their most critical business priorities (Busine & Watt, 2005). According to Buhler (2008) talent shortage is looming, especially managerial talent, and this will impact every organisation without regard to industry. It is explained that this stems from the fact that the skills set possessed by available managers may not match the advanced, more complex skills required by businesses. Buhler (2008) then advises that organisations should take specific initiatives now to better position themselves to meet the challenge of the management talent shortage. As observed by Dalton (2010), the growing awareness of managerial role is because management has become essential to business success, a suggestion that management development should be accorded the needed seriousness in businesses.

Charan (2010) emphasising the need for management talent says that in the fast-changing global marketplace, where familiar competitive advantages such as market shares and brands and patents are constantly at risk, talent has become the differentiator between companies that succeed and those that do not. According to him, "if businesses managed their finances as loosely as they manage their talent development, most would go bankrupt" (Charan, 2010, p.24). This gives weight to Ashton & Morton's (2005) view that, getting the right people in pivotal roles at the right time should be nothing new to HR professionals, but done differently, talent management can create long-term organisational success and this is very important – creating talent mindset in organisations. Considering it as simply a matter of anticipating the need for human capital and then setting out a plan to meet it, (Cappelli, 2008) believes that managerial talent development exists to support the organisation's overall objectives.

With specific reference to Ghana and Zimbabwe, Premoli (1998) notes that African countries have exceptional gold potential but the success demands contrasting talents because gold exploration techniques can easily be transferred from one continent to another, but people cannot easily relocate. It is therefore justified that "most major explorers in Africa feel that their greatest problem is a lack of suitable personnel, particularly at a senior level" (Premoli, 1998: 82). This complements Cullum & Turnbull's (2005) 'management gap', which suggests managerial training and development through learning in industry. It is however revealed by Schellekens (2007) that training in management (in Africa) is a complex process; as body of knowledge is not structured to suit context and its principles are only generalisations, a suggestion that management development should be contextual. With regard to contextualisation, although Africa south of the Sahara has similar cultural characteristics that could suit common training and development programmes, the various foreign countries' presence in African industries gives different dimensions to contextual needs of management training.

In this regard, and as pointed out by Myloni, Harzing, & Mirza (2004), the wider culture and values of society within which the organisation is embedded influence the operating culture of the organisation. This demonstrates how society dominates organisation in Africa. It will not be of much help, therefore, for one to talk about management development in business organisations in Africa without working knowledge of the dominant environmental factors which managers being developed much interact with (Kiggundu, 1991). Kiggundu traces the administrative systems of pre-colonial Africa and blames the marginalisation of the organisational forms, leadership styles, management processes, and managerial development programmes on the colonial masters. There is available evidence (Kiggundu, 1991) suggesting that the pre-colonial administrative systems though relatively small in size, was homogenous in terms of membership, co-existed in relative harmony with the environment and used local technology and indigenous knowledge systems that worked well in Africa for Africans. Formal management development in Africa was however destroyed by the West and planted their own colonial administrative systems. The phenomenon was on the premise that the colonialists were convinced of their cultural, biological and technological superiority over the utmost inferiority of African administrative systems. As a result Africa, at the time of independence, was without any capacity to manage on sustainable basis, the business institutions left behind by the colonisers (Israel, 1989). The reason being that because of the narrow and truncated view of management and administration by Africans due to being deliberately denied management development programmes were not expected to assume managerial responsibilities (Israel, 1989)

Against this background, Schellekens (2007) concludes that training managers for developing countries requires reconceptualisation of management training, expanding the concept to include an array of learning activities and not based on only formal classroom activities, which form Western approaches. Kiggundu (1991) on his part emphasises two reasons for re-engaging with indigenous knowledge and practices. The two reasons include first, to draw attention to the neglected long and rich history of the continent, noting that the present day Africa is deeply rooted in its past. Therefore, one cannot attempt to develop a critical resource like local managers without first understanding its distant past which has close link with its present and future. Second, to raise development question of how Africa can learn from its better past (before colonisation destroyed the indigenous administrative system) which can assist in the design, implementation and evaluation of effective management development programmes for the continent. To address these, one cannot limit oneself to books on management and administration which are rather recent and mostly Western approaches that do not cover and appreciate the diverse and complex African continent, its people and social organisations (Kiggundu, 1991).

3. Study Motivator and Methodology

Author's interactions with national managers during data collection exercise revealed national managers demonstrating strong Ghanaian identity and cultural practices but still portrayed Western ideas in their development. If national managers adhere to local cultural practices and at the same time follow Western development concepts, can they also be developed based on traditional methods to prepare them to work in Western multinational companies? This is primary motivator for the paper – to investigate how indigenous methods of developing people compare to the Western approach as a step towards the use of indigenous methods in developing national managers in business organisations in Ghana.

The paper applies indigenous methodology, which is a body of indigenous and theoretical approaches and methods, rules and postulates employed by (indigenous) researchers in the study of indigenous peoples. It is summarised as research by and for indigenous peoples and using techniques and methods drawn from the traditions of those people. This has the potential of producing assessment of the problem and production of solutions suitable to the people rather than non-indigenous people framing indigenous worldviews from a distance. This is because indigenous methodology has been proved to situate and reflect on the research at a location most relevant to indigenous experience (Evans et al., 2009). Use of indigenous methodology in this research therefore departs from Smith's (1999) observation that the vintage point of view of the colonised is that the term "research" is inextricably linked to the West.

To support the argument of this paper the methodology is explained, justifying its application. A clear distinction is made of 'indigenous' in the sense of insider knowledge that fits into a local community and "this embraces a concept of in-group in relationship to wider communities or out-group" (Jackson, Amaeshi & Yavuz, 2008: 44). 'Indigenous' used in this paper therefore means (group of) people in their local community in relationship to other foreign groups of people in the community. Jackson, Amaeshi & Yavuz (2008) investigating African management in Kenya paint clearer picture of distinguishing feature of indigenous people. They regard the Kenyan Africans (Kikuyu) as indigenous (in-group) in relation to Kenyan Asians and Kenyan British (the out-groups). This corroborates two other features of indigenous people. One such feature is that indigenous people are people with social or cultural identity distinct from the dominant society that renders them vulnerable for being disadvantaged in the process of development (Marais & Marais, 2008), and the second is the conclusion by Fenelon & Hall (2008) that because the indigenous people were the first to be in the community – a key aspect of indigeneity – they are the hosts. In the context of this paper therefore, the national managers are regarded as indigenous or in-group in relation to the many Western expatriates in their MNC subsidiaries in Ghana who dominate management roles and whose approach to managerial development eclipses local management thinking. Also, the national managers have Ghanaian social and cultural identities that distinguish them from the expatriates in industry (the out-group), while the national managers also host the expatriates.

Considering the three features of indigeneity, which are all present in the context of this paper, the paper has indigenous setting. Applying local (indigenous) cultural practices and learning method in tackling problem involving both in-group (affected by the problem) and out-groups (contributors to the problem) in the local community is therefore an indigenous approach. As the local community has been dominated by Western management development approaches, application of indigenous methodology offers alternative to addressing development issues of indigenous managers within the wider framework of self-determination and social justice in order to create managers that respond to indigenous priorities and problems. By so doing, this paper succeeds in pushing the analysis beyond the boundaries of Western management thinking, and to explore alternative ways

of looking at cross-cultural management development (Jackson & Aycan, 2006). This therefore permits the author to explore more fully the nature and efficacy of managerial talent development practices within an increasing multicultural industry, the goal of which is to show how a particular practice works in a given context (Smith, 2001). The use of indigenous methodology thus describes context-sensitive research. Out-groups in this paper are limited to 'Western' not that it is the only contrast. The author is aware of others such as Asia, which seems important in the light of China's economic colonization of Africa. However, the Ghanaian gold mining industry, the unit of analysis, is flooded by only Western multinational firms, therefore providing a defined scope.

4. Primary data

This paper uses primary data obtained by the author in 2010 through face-to-face interviewing of 26 national managers in four major gold mining companies in Ghana (collectively considered in the paper as "the industry"). All four companies were Western multinational subsidiaries. Purpose of the interviews was to assess views and expectations of national managers on their development as 'demanded' by the Minerals and Mining Law 2006 (Act 703). Interviewing as data collection technique is informed by the traditional Ghanaian method of providing information – oral narration (Omolewa, 2007). Transcribed interview data was analysed applying Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) which is approach to the study of discourse that views language as a form of social practice and dwells on the way social and political domination are reproduced by text and talk (Fairclough & Holes, 1995). Data presentation and analysis revealed national managerial talent development situation in industry.

5. Interview data presentation

Many interviewees commented on the benefits of talent management but said this should start from the Minerals Commission who had to enforce strict compliance of the law regarding managerial succession in the mines. Interviewees mentioned that the legal aspects needed to be complied with by MNCs. When done:

This will reduce the expatriates dumped on us instead of managing talent at our mines. New talent development model will bring solution to talent shortage in industry, which is not actual shortage but problem with identification of ignored locals.

To other respondents, similarly, development of local managers is not taken seriously. This degenerates into frustrating the national managers who should rather be developed.

You wouldn't believe that sometimes when a Ghanaian resigns the position is replaced with an expatriate. In some cases you have two expatriates replacing the Ghanaian... It is something that needs to be tackled at government level.

However, other participants were in favour of expatriates in industry but not to perpetuate their stay on the expense of the development of national managers.

We are not against expatriates because it's a good way of growing people; technology transfer; bringing certain work ethics that we lack here into our environment. However, expatriates in industry should be time-bound – identify and train local talents to take over at specified periods.

Respondents admitted the lack of national managerial competence and the need for managers to be developed to be effective in their respective multinational subsidiaries and this is why coaching is required from experienced expatriates.

As I will continue to say, national managers will require some level of competences to enable them function as required in their foreign companies ...understudying an expatriate is an option.

On what is meant by talent, respondents described talent by linking it to potentials. The following was given to describe talent.

These are high potentials. Once you are employed you have something to offer but obviously not everyone performs at par. We don't call them talents, we call them high potentials.

As participants also said:

Talents are special people in an organisation when managed properly become so efficient and maximise productivity. From the pool of X number of employees in an organisation there are special people who have the potential and whose potential is such that they are making significant contribution to the organisation today and will make in future.

Participants expressed that talent is reflected in contribution to the organisation. Since organisations are meant to work.

Talent is reflected in their performance today or based on prediction that they can make a significant contribution in future.

Interviewees explained that talent identification is linked to future needs of an organisation. A scenario was given of an organisation that decides that in a number of years they will need people in certain positions. So employees through their training; their output; their orientation; their enthusiasm a few can be picked as those who will do well if retained and given special training. They may be ready to fill the positions and/or direct the business towards its objectives. So:

Identifying talent is picking them one-by-one; matching the skills or competencies you have set up and if they meet these criteria then they are the people who will fall into that group, and they are the people that will be your future managers to fill the critical positions.

Interviewees stated that number of employees to be identified for grooming into a given role should be two to four because:

Based on their individual talents and competencies, you will realise somebody meets a longer period and someone a shorter period so you look at the readiness years. The process of who comes first begins with the training and developmental needs, analysis of the various individuals who have been selected as successors.

Participants expressed talent management as the identification of talent/right people. As interviewees put it:

Talent management is identifying the right people; placing them in the right positions at the right time; preparing them for future positions; and making sure they stay.

Therefore, management must not lose sight of the skills – the qualities the individual possesses that could fit in roles within the organisation but not just the position in question. So:

Focus on position alone may create the perception that the person is only useful for the role but not to the organisation ...they should be able to work in other roles when required.

National managers identified retention as important tool in the talent process. Retention function such as higher remuneration, career progression and better conditions of service that match expatriate packages likely to be received elsewhere should be provided to make talent less willing to leave the organisation.

For instance, give them the same package as the expatriate position they are trained to take over.

This retention strategy includes both monetary and non-monetary. The monetary component is for instance a retention bonus of 30% of the person's annual salary. 60% of the 30% is based on key performance indicators i.e. achieving one's performance target as results from company's performance review and the remaining 40% paid on completion of the full year while on the programme. The non-monetary ones include overseas exposures; attachment to other mining and engineering companies in Ghana.

To other participants:

Talent management means to fit into the work. So, it is to identify those who can fit into the position. After, how do you manage what they have and develop them because they have the potential.

According to some respondents:

Talent management is identifying the potential in individuals and harnessing these potentials towards the achievement of organisational goals.

Interviewees emphasised that if a person's potential is developed but the one is not motivated in tune with what he does, then you are not managing talent because if the employee leave what are you going to manage? Talent management was also described as:

Recruiting or identifying people with talent; training and developing them; retaining and utilising the potentials that they bring to the organisation; and rewarding their contributions.

Explaining further the definition, interviewees expressed that you identify talents if already in the organisation but they are recruited if not available in the organisation. Also, we don't reward employees but their contributions and that explains why employees seen as not making the desired contributions to their employers are laid off. Managing talent means giving them special attention to ensure their retention.

This is why if a high potential employee says he is quitting he could be sent to a posh hotel outside the organisation and persuaded to stay. But a non-high potential employee brings in a resignation letter and nothing is done but just accept the letter and prepare him to leave.

Participants also explained that talent, once identified, is considered to be in its raw state and this will not give the desired outcome. There is therefore a need for the development aspect to improve that talent. The development aspect is directed towards meeting the standards of the organisation and that is what talent management seeks to do because:

No matter how talented you are before joining a company your talent could be described as raw because the work ethics through which the talent is portrayed may not meet the standard in the new organisation.

On the need for retention of talent, especially in roles that are considered 'critical', the biggest consideration during the talent process should be focus on such positions.

We identify what positions we deem as critical and scarce. Now what it means is that if you lose that kind of skill, first it is difficult to get one, second if you don't have it on the mine it means you can't bear with. So if it even means that within the period you get a consultant, you must.

It was added that although there are critical roles, what matters most are the critical skills which are linked to the individual roles. Interviewees acknowledged the individual employee as target for the talent programme. This is the person perspective thus, they look at the person who can do the job. Key requirements for their talent identification are blend of behavioural traits and competencies assessed through their regular performance management processes and they are given focus training which is geared towards roles in the departments. The focus here is on the person that can be developed to fit into a number of roles so focusing on the role means considering only one role, therefore rendering the person less useful when the person does not fit well into the role or when the role ceases to exist. Therefore, management must not lose sight of the skills – the qualities the individual possesses that could fit in roles within the organisation but not just the position in question. So:

Focus on position alone may create the perception that the person is only useful for the role but not to the organisation, which is of various jobs.

Interviewees also pointed out that talent is manifest in performance and competencies, and these are the criteria for selection.

When we consider the performance he is delivering and competencies he is demonstrating we then begin to ask ourselves do these point to chief financial officer, HR manager, etc?

Interviewees also mentioned the organisation as the focus for talent programme. Participants explained that it is quite important that the right system is put in place to work the talk. If not, management should forget about talent development. In this direction, management should let employees know and believe that the organisation grows and nurtures talent and they are going to be supported as long as they demonstrate talent.

Talent development is about corporate culture and how these talents could be retained. Culture of the organisation should not only talk about talent management but should work the talk thus, there should be a clear strategy that allows people to align themselves with these organisational strategies. Because if you set individuals and the organisation's programme does not encourage them to stay what happens is that you run short of them. So we need organisations that can accommodate people with the requisite talent in a way to go with long-term objectives.

6. Industry Definition of Talent Development

Analysis and discussion of interview data produced the following description by national managers of their talent development, which is the way their development process becomes enacted.

Identifying potentials and harnessing their (raw) talent towards the achievement of organisational goals. The harnessing process involves training and developing potentials; retaining and utilising them; deploying them within the organisation; and rewarding their contribution.

This definition is of two main parts – identification of potentials; and harnessing their talent. The harnessing processes include training and development; retention and utilisation; deployment; and rewarding contribution. These processes form components of the talent development programmes (as prevails in industry).

This definition is however a reproduction of Western idea of management development. This is clearly in contrast

to cultural practices and social values of indigenous managers. This shows how the Ghanaian manager responds to the overpowering foreign influences. Schellekens (2007) links the phenomenon to African managers and management trainees attending schools in Western countries and experts from Western countries acting as management consultants in Africa. It is therefore not difficult to understand why African managers today cloak themselves with Western management concepts. Kwame Gyakye, a Ghanaian philosopher (see Gyekye, 1994) believes that this unquestioned acceptance of conformity with Western ideology and institutions is partly traced to preeminent African leaders, including Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana (the country's first president), who incorrectly regarded Western socialism to be compatible with traditional African communism, the result being Western socialist ideology as a framework for nation building in Africa including people management. This has developed, according to Lassiter (2000), into personal strategy for survival within the African community, and the individual conditioned not to challenge because he depends on and from which he cannot escape.

Despite this strong Western influence, national managers were seen deeply portraying their Ghanaian identity and cultural practices during the data collection. Some managers were willing to conduct the interview in Ghanaian languages; some dressed in their traditional clothes (*fugu, kaba, batakari*), taking *koko na maasa* for breakfast, ushering me into their offices with the traditional *akwaaba* (welcome), *wohotesen* (how are you), *maakye/maaha* (good morning/good afternoon) reception. One manager received a phone call in the local Akan language and told me after the call that the one at the other end of the line was the company lawyer giving feedback on an issue he was attending to in Accra (the national capital). One manager invited me for lunch after the interview and preferred the local "fufu" meal so we had to go to a local restaurant. All these indicate, albeit strong Western influence, how the managers preferred their traditions and customs, and how comfortable they were practicing them. This contrast has been the main motivator for this paper.

7. Comparison of Western concept of talent development to indigenous concept

Considering this strong cultural awareness and commitment how the Western concept could be approached from indigenous perspective if national managers are to be developed applying the traditional Ghanaian methods of learning? The Table compares the Western concepts of talent development produced by national managers with indigenous Ghanaian versions of developing people

While the West rely on documented and structured approach to identifying potentials for the talent process, the traditional Ghanaian believes he identification is responsibility of the *kyerekyereni* (the teacher), who is elder, wise and respected in the community (Fasokun, 2005). It is the traditional Ghanaian belief that knowledge is deposited in the mind of the elder and any decision given is accepted and trusted – his selection is therefore accepted and respected. The readiness level identified by managers as criterion for selecting potentials can be likened to the Ghanaian societal hierarchy which can be transferred to industry. Managers being developed will respect who is first in line without any conflicts when this is made clear. Tasks and responsibilities should be made clear and this will encourage participations because challenging the hierarchy could lead to sanctions. The learner will therefore not challenge the trainer or the training procedure. Readiness level could rather be branded as *gyinabre*, where one is meant to be (as demanded by elders or deities) and this is highly respected. Clear hierarchy therefore empowers managers through the talent development process.

The training and development phase of the talent process also has its traditional Ghanaian version. For instance, the coach-coached relationship in Western context coincides with the *kyerekyereni-adesuani* (teacher/learner) relationship in traditional Ghanaian context that brings about obedience and adherence to rules. Perceived as wise expert with experience in the trade instruction is taken without question or challenge, another attribute of Ghanaian indigenous education. Good discipline is part and parcel of the Ghanaian traditional education as learners respect the master and senior apprentices because the learner is taught about respect and is made to pay dearly for non-conformity. Sanctions are established through culture and taboos and each member appreciates the danger of failing to conform (Omolewa, 2007). Sanctions are not only from the master but also from the gods who are omnipresent and omniscient. This induces strict discipline since there is no wrongdoing that goes unpunished, either committed in the open or in secret, unlike the Western approach where wrongdoing needs to be proved or one seen committing the act before he can be sanctioned. Applying coaching based on the traditional system therefore brings about discipline, compliance and commitment to work.

Managers in industry mentioned retention tools such as shares, end-of-year bonus, etc to motivate employees to stay. The traditional Ghanaian method of education has its retention mechanism. There is life-long learning associated with the education – elders including grandparents, parents, uncles and aunts continue to teach younger adults essential knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (Nafukho, 2006), a continuous process even when

those trained are married and are full adults. Apprentices after their training often continue to live on the trainer's compound to serve and tap his wisdom. This is because it is believed that once one is elder he continues to be wiser and respected. So in Ghanaian society once we continue to live and grow, teaching and learning continues. This is a retention strategy that can be exploited by the gold mining industry to reap returns on investment in management talent development. Once the organisation is portrayed as a community within which there are people with wisdom that can be imparted, people will be prepared to continue to learn and will be committed to the organisation in order to be able to do so.

Redeploying developed managers increases returns on investment as it reduces the tendency of one becoming redundant if trained for only one job and the job ceases to exist. The process involves assigning talent to other roles within the company; to another site of the subsidiary within Ghana; or to a subsidiary abroad (including headquarters). Guided by the basic value of pursuit for excellence (Omolewa, 2007) in his inherited profession and concern for the family or the wider society, the traditional Ghanaian would be motivated to devote himself to the role he is deployed into. This is the spirit of *ubuntu* (Bangura, 2005) which inspires the manager to view the business organisation as a community to which he belongs not just as a person with a fixed legal contract but as a member by choice (Choudhury, 1986), mindset that could be created by senior managers of the individual gold mining companies.

Rewarding contribution leads to retention but the main purpose is to ensure that one's contribution (after development) is commensurate with one's reward. The Ghanaian traditional approach reinforces this. The Ghanaian context however adds that any such reward is identified prior to one's contribution which usually results from contest among men in pursuit of community projects such as who kills a wild animal threatening the community or who retrieves the body of a drowned community member from the river bed. This has encouraged the indigenous Ghanaian to be competitive and improve performance. During the talent process therefore, any reward should be pre-determined and something that is seen as commensurate with one's contribution. As some national managers suggested, a national who eventually take over from an expatriate manager should be given package offered the predecessor (at least, less the expatriate elements). This, they believe is value of the national manager's contribution, and this has its roots in traditional Ghanaian reward system which improves commitment during the development process (Owoyemi et al., 2011).

8. Conclusion and recommendation for further research

Senior managers of MNCs understanding or uncovering the invisible ideas behind the local managers' attitudes and practices is a way forward; because the companies are nested within societies (Hofstede & Peterson, 2000). Therefore the surrounding Ghanaian culture is an important external influence on the organisational culture. As the comparative assessment has revealed (refer to the Table), the traditional Ghanaian education has its strong and enduring versions of the elements of the Western approach to talent development, most of which the author speculates are stronger in driving the talent process than the Western versions. There is therefore the need for mining companies to gain minimal level of approval from the Ghanaian society (in the form of cultural practices) to function effectively (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2007). Such approval is necessary in order to develop managers the way they learn and perform. This is because the Ghanaian will always be guided by his personal values, which are desirable goals that direct the way he selects actions, evaluates people and events and explains such action and evaluations (Rohan, 2000). As emerged from Nzelibe's (1986) research, most management problems in Africa are attributed to conflicting principles that underlie Western and African management thoughts.

As a result, senior expatriate managers are to understand and appreciate local knowledge by identifying and supporting the themes which can provide a direct link to trainee managers in the talent process. This can allow managers integrate their "locally relevant experience" (Omolewa, 2007: 607) into the management talent development programme since these are knowledge and experience that have meaning to them. As Duit (1991) opines, learning achieves the desired outcome when there is construction of similarities between the new and the already known because learning is an active construction process that can only take place based on previous acquired knowledge. Even in today's Ghana where Western education is recognised, the indigenous Ghanaian does not see it as superior to traditional education as one with defect in traditional knowledge and wisdom is often insulted as *yantetew' wo fie* (one without home training), and a stranger in his own society. The indigenous approach could help defuse this tension.

So far this paper has succeeded in establishing that the Western context of management development has a Ghanaian traditional version that can be applied, and which could be accepted by Ghanaian managers in formal business organisations. Evidence-based research is therefore required to provide understanding and justification

for how indigenous methods of developing national managers (based on traditional Ghanaian education methods) can be applied and its effectiveness (or otherwise) in developing managers who can fit into both national and multinational organisations in Ghana.

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Table: Comparison: Western and Indigenous Ghanaian Approaches to Talent Development

Western concept	Indigenous view
Identification	
Reliable database including performance review records; documented individual development plan; potential to excel to select individuals for the talent process. Manager's readiness level is important and determines who among the two to three managers selected should be given priority.	Identification of managers would be based on wisdom and memory of the master or trainer who is regarded as knowledgeable and trusted to orally share information on the potential to the selectors. This is based on respect for the aged, whose decisions are seldom challenged.
Training and development	
Trainee managers on the job given acting responsibilities; coaching; mentoring; job rotation. Also undergo structured courses in higher education institutions in Ghana and abroad; as well as international assignments in other subsidiaries or headquarters.	Traditional method of passing on elder's wisdom and trade to the young, who usually spends a number of years in the <i>kyerekyereni</i> , the teacher's compound. This goes with respect, determined by age as the Ghanaian traditional education is an age grade system. Trainees usually work in groups to highlight the shared values which are fundamental characteristics of Ghanaian identify and culture.
Retention and utilisation	
Retention tools include light vehicles; accommodation, shares, production and end-of-years bonuses; as well as retention bonuses for talent. Retention also depends on senior management support, letting trainee managers know that the organization nurtures and keeps talent	Ghanaian traditional education promotes life-long learning. In Ghanaian traditional apprenticeship, end of training does not mean end of staying on the <i>kyerekyereni</i> , the teacher's compound and serving him. Training continues through observation, self-determination and search for wisdom as it is only through the master that this is possible. Learning becomes a continuous process – young adults after their training continue to learn from the trainers.
Deploying talent	
Managers favoured person perspective; where individuals become focus of talent development. The motive is multi-use of talent – not to focus on given role but to develop skills and knowledge of the individual (the manager) and make him useful to other roles in the organisation so that they can be deployed to occupy other roles as and when required.	Traditionally, Ghanaians specialise in various professions which usually belong to families e.g. <i>akuafu</i> represent family of farmers. People are willing to be deployed into role once they believe that it is their specialist role and most fit to perform. They see deployment into roles as not just means of economic survival but as an integral part of their lives and lives of their families and, in the spirit of <i>ubuntuism</i> , to the larger community.
Rewarding contributions	
Managers are rewarded for their potentials which translates into contribution to the company – rewards such as promotion, increase in pay. Rewards are based on individual's performance record and individual reward packages offered.	Rewards, usually in the form of titles, raising one's status in the community. Any such reward is identified prior to one's contribution which usually results from context among community members in pursuit of community projects. This encourages competitiveness among community members.

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