



**Organization culture types and the replication of transferred human resource management practices in multinational subsidiaries in Nigeria**

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## Organization culture types and the replication of transferred human resource management practices in multinational subsidiaries in Nigeria

### Abstract:

**Purpose** - *Given that institutional and cultural factors affect the transfer of HRM practices between multinational companies (MNCs) and their subsidiaries, our paper set out to investigate the explanatory mechanism for the replication of transferred HRM practices and the factors likely to influence the choice of transfer mechanisms.*

**Design/methodology/approach** - *Using an exploratory qualitative approach, 40 interviews were conducted with senior managers and employees in two MNC subsidiaries located in the alcoholic beverage and oil industries in Nigeria.*

**Findings** - *Our findings suggest that organizational culture (OC) was the mechanism for MNC HRM replication and inhibition. In addition to explaining the mechanisms for HRM practice replication, we developed a conceptual framework to explain how clan and hierarchical OC influence the extent to which human resource (HR) practices are replicated or inhibited and how institutional and cultural factors influence the choice of OC.*

**Originality/value** - *Our study uncovered that MNCs deploy hierarchical OC to oversee the replication of transferred practices. Interestingly, we found that institutional and cultural environments were key factors that influenced the choice of mechanism for overseeing the replication of HR practices. Our conceptual framework can help managers of MNCs to understand how to replicate transferred HRM practices in developing countries.*

**Keywords:** HRM transfer; Institutional theory; Multinational companies; National culture; Organizational culture.

## Introduction

Multinational companies (MNCs) generally face pressure to transfer **best** human resource (HR) practices from headquarters to overseas subsidiaries to drive desired HR outcomes and achieve sustainable advantages (Poor et al., 2020). However, achieving a successful replication of HR practices in subsidiaries can be problematic due to institutional, cultural, and organizational factors (Latukha et al., 2020). The inability to replicate HR practices transferred from headquarters can hinder the attainment of the intended outcomes and sustainable competitive advantage in subsidiaries. This is because replication often violates or prevents local responsiveness, which is the best method to achieve local competitiveness. A practice is considered replicated if the subsidiary maintains the core principles associated with it, whereas relevant modifications are made to adapt such practices to the local environment (Beletskiy and Fey, 2021). Some scholars (e.g. Chiang et al., 2017) have argued that transferred practices that fail to achieve the intended outcomes are a waste of the resources invested in the transfer process. However, this is not always the case, as some benefits accrue from the deployment of certain best human resource practices (Lertxundi and Landeta, 2012). Thus, MNCs develop a common corporate culture across subsidiaries to foster the organizational learning required to enhance productivity (Zhu, 2019). However, in terms of HRM, not all HR practices can be easily transferred from headquarters and replicated in subsidiaries. Despite this, subsidiaries face competing pressures on whether to adopt parent company practices or adapt to local norms (Latukha et al., 2020).

A vast body of research on whether subsidiaries behave like local firms or headquarters exists in transfer literature (Poor et al., 2020). Similarly, there is some research evidence on the role of institutions, national culture, and corporate organizational factors in explaining the extent to which certain HRM practices are transferred or localized within subsidiaries (Nwagbara, 2020). While prior research has identified mechanisms underpinning the transfer and replication process, there is limited literature (except Beletskiy and Fey, 2021; Schneider, 1988; Song, 2021; 2022) that explains the organizational culture (OC) types responsible for replication and factors that are likely to influence the choice of different mechanisms through which practice is replicated (Chiang et al., 2017). Moreover, prior research investigating the influence of different contextual elements has been predominantly Western-centric (Chiang et al., 2017). Given this, a greater diversity of samples is required to extend and test the current contextual limitations in the literature (Beletskiy and Fey, 2021; Song, 2021).

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3 Findings from such an examination will provide broader and more representative  
4 MNCs with strategies to effectively manage the transfer and practice replication process. We  
5 address these gaps in the literature by using institutional theory to further our understanding of  
6 the types of OC that facilitate the replication of transferred HR practices and the factors that  
7 are likely to influence the choice of such mechanisms in a developing context, using Nigeria  
8 as an empirical focus. HRM transfer remains an important agenda in Nigeria, as contemporary  
9 Nigeria is still involved in social, political, and economic transformations. According to Myloni  
10 et al. (2004), institutional and cultural environments are crucial for understanding HRM  
11 transfer and replication in host countries in a transitional state, where institutions are in a  
12 continuous state of transformation.  
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21 Drawing on institutional and OC frameworks to understand the subject area in the  
22 developing context of Nigeria will contribute to the literature in some important ways.  
23 Interestingly, we contribute to the literature by revealing that while clan OC is an inhibiting  
24 mechanism, hierarchical OC is a facilitating mechanism in the diffusion process. To the best  
25 of our knowledge, only a limited number of studies (except Beletskiy and Fey, 2021; Schneider,  
26 1988; Song, 2021; 2022) have provided insights into how various OC types affect the  
27 implementation and lack of implementation of transferred HR practices. Additionally, we  
28 contribute to the literature by highlighting the importance of institutional and cultural  
29 environments in determining the choice of OC as the mechanism through which practice  
30 replication would take place. Lastly, given the paucity of research on this topic in developing  
31 countries, our research provides a developing country's perspective in the literature (Latukha  
32 et al., 2020).  
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### 42 **Theoretical foundation**

43 HRM transfer revolves around debates on the convergence or divergence of HR practices  
44 deployed in subsidiaries compared to those at MNCs headquarters (Ayentimi et al., 2018a).  
45 Convergence centers on the assumption that there are universally accepted HR best practices  
46 that are not context-specific (Latukha et al., 2020). Thus, MNCs seek to apply the most  
47 effective HRM practices across their various operations through an exportation strategy to  
48 promote a common culture, foster learning, enhance coordination, and build sustainable  
49 advantage (Ayentimi et al., 2018a; Lertxundi and Landeta, 2012). By contrast, the divergence  
50 approach assumes that institutions and cultures in MNC home and host countries are  
51 significantly different (Latukha et al., 2020).  
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Consequently, MNCs also adapt certain transferred practices to respond to local institutional and cultural demands and achieve local competitiveness in host countries (Khan et al., 2019). Adaptation strategies are applicable when MNCs do not perceive their HR systems as core competencies based on the understanding that HRM differs from country to country depending on the institutional environment (Latukha et al., 2020).

Owing to the simplistic outlook of the divergence and convergence approaches, scholars (Brewster, 2002; Katz and Barbishire, 2000) have focused on the cross-vergence approach. For example, consistent with Latukha et al. (2020), the increasing convergence of sets of HRM practices among countries is flanked by a growing divergence of some practices within these countries. Thus, it is not uncommon for MNCs to deploy an integration strategy – a mix of home and host country HR practices in subsidiaries (Zhu, 2019). This stream of the literature ascertains that transfer and local responsiveness are both beneficial (Latukha et al., 2020). Thus, when MNCs adopt global best practices in subsidiary units, they are usually adapted to local institutional environments to some extent (Poor et al., 2020).

Institutional theory (regulatory, cognitive, and normative perspectives) is a relevant approach for understanding and explaining convergence and divergence and thus the transfer and replication of HR practices (Ahmad et al., 2018; Ayentimi et al., 2018b; Nwagbara, 2020). Consistent with institutional theory, institutional dissimilarity explains the differences or similarities in HR practices between subsidiaries and headquarters (Ahmad et al., 2018). Thus, the institutional context plays a significant role in HR practice transfer and replication processes (Zhu, 2019). Specifically, institutions create 'rules of the game' that facilitate or restrict the use of certain human resource practices from headquarters to subsidiaries (Gooderham et al., 2018). Scott (2001) identified three dimensions of an institution: regulatory, cognitive, and normative.

The regulatory dimension, according to Gooderham et al. (2018), refers to laws established to protect the interests of workers. Regulations are regarded as important predictors of variations in managerial behavior in national contexts (Morris et al., 2009). From an institutional perspective, the choice of management practices in different countries conforms to their different regulatory pressures (Gooderham et al., 2018). Hence, research evidence suggests that only a few HRM practices are suitable for implementation in different countries (Morris et al., 2009). Rosenzweig and Nohria (1994) argued that MNCs are less likely to successfully replicate transferred HR practices that diverge significantly from local norms and

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3 institutions in subsidiaries, although this may differ from practice to practice. According to  
4 Siebers et al. (2015), the acceptance of this perspective reinforces the view that the subsidiary  
5 institutional context plays a significant role in the HRM practice transfer process. Specifically,  
6 institutional factors in the subsidiary context (Zhu, 2019) determine the extent to which  
7 organizations successfully replicate their practices across subsidiary units.  
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12 The cognitive dimension explores how organizations, groups, and individual employee  
13 behavior is influenced by the behavioral patterns of others in their subgroup as a result of wider  
14 societal culture (Ayentimi et al., 2018b). Consistent with Hofstede (1980) and Stone et al.  
15 (2007), people mimic predetermined social norms in their subgroups to enable them to fit in  
16 with the group. Although these social norms are mostly informal, they are widely held as  
17 acceptable behavior in societal settings and consequently form the basis of social interactions.  
18 The normative dimension on the other hand highlights the important role that certain groups in  
19 society may have on the behavior of organizations and employees (Scott, 2001). These groups  
20 may be professional or religious bodies and provide a basis for membership behavior. Viciana  
21 and Urbano (2008) note that cognitive and normative dimensions share a common relationship.  
22 Ayentimi et al. (2018b) agree, arguing that both dimensions of institutional theory inform  
23 Hofstede's (1980) four cultural dimensions: power distance, individualism, collectivism, and  
24 uncertainty avoidance. As a result, we acknowledge the three dimensions of institutional theory  
25 but integrate cognitive and normative dimensions to form one cultural perspective.  
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38 Cultural contexts in home and host countries play a significant role in the transfer and  
39 replication process (Latukha et al., 2020). Schneider (1988) refers to culture as the underlying  
40 assumption underpinning the way people perceive and evaluate themselves, others, and the  
41 world. These assumptions regarding the nature of human relationships differ from nation to  
42 nation. For example, the importance of relationships over tasks, the emphasis on individuals  
43 versus groups, and the perception of the hierarchy are different between nations and cultures.  
44 In Western cultures, emphasis is more on task, the individual, and less on hierarchy (Hofstede,  
45 1980). According to Schneider (1988), there is variation in these dimensions between the  
46 United States and Europe. In contrast, in Eastern cultures (including Nigeria), importance is  
47 placed on the relationship over the task, on the collective, and the hierarchy (Hofstede, 1980;  
48 Schneider, 1988).  
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57 Culture is a critical predictor of variation in managerial behavior and human resource  
58 practices between countries (Poor et al., 2020; Vaiman and Brewster, 2015). Theoretically, the  
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3 cultural distance-the difference between the cultures of the host and home countries–  
4 determines the extent of transfer and replication between two cultural contexts (Latukha et al.,  
5 2020). The transfer and replication of certain HR practices are difficult without significant  
6 adjustment if the cultural gap between the host and home countries is broad (Liu, 2004). Hence,  
7 it has been suggested that some HR practices are more culture-bound than others (Latukha et  
8 al., 2019) because the unique norms, values, and beliefs in different cultures influence  
9 employee expectations as well as the way employees are motivated and controlled (Chiang et  
10 al., 2017).

### 11 **Organization culture as a facilitating/inhibiting factor**

12 Consistent with institutional theory, institutional elements in subsidiary organizations influence  
13 the host country employees working in them (Gerhart, 2008). Therefore, MNCs seek strategies  
14 to control these institutional elements and their impact on organizational activities (Zhu, 2019).  
15 Prior studies have classified mechanisms for replicating transferred HR practices into formal  
16 and informal mechanisms (Beletskiy and Fey, 2021; Chiang et al., 2017; Song, 2021). Formal  
17 mechanisms include the use of company policies, formal structures, reward systems,  
18 performance evaluation schemes, HR capabilities, global teams, and training programs (MNC  
19 home country cross-cultural awareness training) to oversee practice transfer and replication  
20 (Latukha et al., 2020; Vance and Paik, 2005). Minbaeva (2005) adds that these HRM practices  
21 and policies should be deployed systematically to elicit the appropriate behavior required to  
22 facilitate replication during transfers. MNCs also oversee the transfer and replication of HR  
23 practices through informal mechanisms, such as the management of subsidiaries through  
24 expatriates and home country managers, networking, and social interactions (Chiang et al.,  
25 2017).

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This study notes that MNCs also deploy formal structures in the form of OC as a  
mechanism to oversee the replication of transferred HR practices. Kosiorek and Szczepanska  
(2016) suggest that the OC of a given organization could facilitate or inhibit the implementation  
of HR strategies, but did not highlight the kind of OC that can facilitate or inhibit the replication  
of transferred HR practices and how. Organizations should be guided regarding which  
dimensions of OC facilitate or inhibit replication. Kosiorek and Szczepanska (2016) define OC  
as the standards, convictions, values, principles, and rules shared by employees in an  
organization. Drawing on Cameron and Quinn's (1999) conceptualization of OC, this study  
seeks to understand the role of OC as a replication mechanism. While there are four dimensions  
of OC (market, clan, adhocracy, and hierarchical) (Cameron and Quinn, 1999), the two

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3 applicable dimensions within the context of this study are clan and hierarchical OCs (Ogbeibu  
4 et al., 2018) with emphasis on collaboration and control, respectively, to drive organizational  
5 effectiveness. Clan OC mirrors a responsive workplace, in which employees share many  
6 common values and beliefs (Jabeen and Isakovic, 2018). Such OC is internally focused and  
7 characterized by flexibility, discretion, collaboration, and human development to drive  
8 effectiveness (Chatterjee et al., 2018). Organizations with this type of culture are managed like  
9 family units or groups of best friends. Hierarchical OC is internally focused, and this reflects a  
10 formal work system with strict rules and structure/control that governs employee behavior  
11 (Chatterjee et al., 2018; Ogbeibu et al., 2018) to obtain relevant business outcomes.

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19 Drawing on the Competing Values Framework (CVF), subsidiaries dominated by a  
20 hierarchical culture are more likely to depend on formal work structure/control to mitigate  
21 cultural and regulatory influences on HR practices transferred from headquarters (Ferner et al.,  
22 2011). In contrast, subsidiaries characterized by a clannish culture without any form of control  
23 are more likely to localize practices transferred from headquarters with negative implications  
24 for employees working closely together in a group-oriented culture (Kosiorek and  
25 Szczepanska, 2016). Organizational culture scholars have used CVF to understand how OC  
26 influences organizational outcomes by exploring the value dimensions that impact  
27 organizational effectiveness (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983). The model classifies the four OC  
28 dimensions identified above to provide an understanding of an organization's corporate value.

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37 In light of vague evidence regarding how OC may facilitate or impede the replication  
38 of transferred HR practices, it would be worthwhile to examine how clan and hierarchical OC  
39 dimensions account for the replication of certain HR practices and the factors that may  
40 influence the choice of these OC mechanisms (Chiang and Birtch, 2017). Considering the  
41 above critical review, this study attempts to answer the following questions: (a) How do clan  
42 and hierarchical OC dimensions facilitate and inhibit the successful replication of transferred  
43 HR practices to MNCs subsidiaries in Nigeria? (b) Which factors are likely to influence the  
44 choice of these mechanisms?

### 51 **Study context: Nigerian institution (culture and regulation) and HR transfer**

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53 The context of this study contributes to its importance. Nigeria was a former British colony  
54 and, as such, the former followed the political and administrative practices of the latter before  
55 independence (Shokpeka et al., 2009). During this period, the British government established  
56 an indirect rule system in Nigeria to implement colonial rule through local chiefs (Obiakor and  
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3 Agajelu, 2016). This system allowed local chiefs to control how people were recruited into  
4 different colonial offices (Ayentimi et al., 2018c). Upon the arrival of missionaries and traders  
5 to Nigeria, they started introducing Western ways of managing people. It is at this time that  
6 organizations in Nigeria started to formalize their structures in line with British practices  
7 (Ehrensaft, 1972). The most pertinent function was the personal management function that was  
8 introduced to help recruit locals who worked as interpreters, messengers, and clerks for  
9 missionaries and traders (Ayentimi et al., 2018c). The locals had to be on good terms and loyal  
10 to the chiefs for them to be able to gain employment.  
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18 When Nigeria gained independence in 1960, the country continued to rely on British  
19 institutional systems for work and employment (George et al., 2012) even though traditional  
20 ways of doing things continued to prevail. For example, people were employed and promoted  
21 based on loyalty and whom they knew (powerful relationships) and not necessarily through  
22 formal assessment and performance. A major factor that also affected work and employment  
23 practices was the bias that chiefs displayed toward people of their region and ethnicity (Ladebo,  
24 2006). During the pre- and post-independence periods, employees and leaders of organizations  
25 were drawn mainly from where the administrative head of an organization came from (Falola  
26 and Heaton, 2008). That is, where a northerner was the head, the majority of the employees  
27 and those in senior roles came from the north, with the same playing out in the organizations  
28 where the heads came from the eastern, western, and southern regions of the country  
29 respectively (Nkweden et al., 2018).  
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39 These traditional practices are still evident in contemporary organizations and they form  
40 the basis for acceptable behavioral patterns in the workplace, thus, underscoring the complexity  
41 of work and employment relations in Nigeria (Mordi et al., 2013). For instance, there is a high  
42 prevalence of ethnic self-identification in modern Nigerian organizations, which sees  
43 employees feeling a sense of loyalty more to people from their ethnic region than to their  
44 organization itself (Pepple, 2018; Pepple, 2020; Pepple and Davies, 2019). This is due to the  
45 prevailing sociocultural orientation in the country. For example, Nigeria scores high on  
46 collectivism and power distance (Hofstede, 1980). From a collectivist stance, employees who  
47 are members of workplace in-groups are more likely to support one another. This means that  
48 employees of similar ethnicity consider themselves as a family and may not implement  
49 sanctions to erring colleagues from their ethnic group because of a sense of family orientation  
50 (Pepple, 2020). From a power distance perspective (Hofstede, 1980), in Nigeria, there is an  
51 emphasis on age seniority. Nigeria's culture supports the use of seniority-based pay and  
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3 promotion, which may hinder the provision of critical feedback following the appraisal process  
4 as well as using appraisal outcomes for termination decisions, as employees see themselves as  
5 a family unit (Pepple and Davies, 2019; Oseghale et al., 2019). Such institutional  
6 distinctiveness may make it difficult to use appraisal outcomes for individual performance-  
7 related pay (I-PRP) in collectivist environments. Consequently, Western MNCs with a more  
8 individualist culture may find it difficult to transfer I-PRP, promotion based mainly on merit,  
9 provision of critical feedback following appraisal, and the use of appraisal results for  
10 termination of employment to subsidiaries in Nigeria (Gooderham et al., 2018).

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18 Regulations also make the Nigerian context unique in terms of HRM practices (Oruh  
19 et al., 2020). Nigerian labor laws, to some extent, determine how organizations operationalize  
20 management practices (Nwagbara, 2020). Labor laws require union bodies to play an important  
21 role in the employee-employer relationship, including making important decisions around pay,  
22 dispute resolution, and termination of employment. However, with unemployment levels that  
23 are high at 33% (Sasu, 2022) the regulatory institutional environment is weak in enforcing  
24 labor laws (Ezeoha et al., 2022). Arguably, this may give employers some liberty to easily  
25 introduce work-related policies (e.g., termination following appraisal) that will drive  
26 productivity (Nwagbara, 2020). An attempt by MNCs to replicate transferred practices  
27 violating labor laws (use of appraisal outcomes to terminate employment) can be easily resisted  
28 through strike actions, as not much is required to decide to go on strike. However, union bodies  
29 in some industries (e.g., the oil industry due to their economic importance to society) can be  
30 more effective than others (e.g., the alcoholic beverage industry). Striking for only one day in  
31 such industries with effective union bodies can create a huge loss to the Nigerian economy and  
32 MNCs themselves.

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45 The Nigerian context is important for further investigation because it remains the  
46 destination of choice for MNCs (Sassu, 2022). MNCs' decision to invest in Nigeria is due to  
47 its large population, estimated at 216 million, of which 56% are young people of working-class  
48 age (Sasu, 2022). These attributes contributed immensely to making Nigeria the country with  
49 the largest GDP per capita in Africa. The National Bureau of Statistics report showed that  
50 Nigeria's GDP stood at N 40 trillion in the first quarter of 2021, of this value the oil and gas  
51 sector, and food and beverage sector accounted for 9.25% and 7.1%, respectively (NBS, 2021).  
52 MNCs own and operate most organizations in these sectors, which is critical to the overall  
53 economic outlook of Nigeria (Eluka et al., 2016). It is for this reason that we focus on exploring  
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3 how HRM practices are transferred and adapted in selected oil and gas and beverage companies  
4 in Nigeria.  
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### 6 7 **Method** 8

9 This study draws on a qualitative research approach to understand the mechanism for  
10 overseeing the replication of transferred HR practices and the factors likely to influence the  
11 choice of mechanisms. The factors influencing the mechanism investigated in this study are  
12 informed by the prevailing contextual issues in an under-researched region, where there is  
13 limited literature to formulate hypotheses (Reinecke et al., 2016). Therefore, qualitative  
14 research is considered appropriate (Meribe et al., 2021). Moreover, the qualitative approach is  
15 suitable for capturing the perspectives of managers and employees around OC types and is  
16 useful for the replication of transferred HR practices and probing beneath surface appearance  
17 (Bryman et al., 2019).  
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25 To answer our research questions, we focused on subsidiaries of MNCs in the oil and  
26 gas and alcoholic beverage industries, which are dominated by foreign MNCs in Nigeria. The  
27 government ban on the importation of beer (Oyeyinka, 2002) and President Olusegun  
28 Obasanjo's liberalization efforts from 1999 to 2007, which required foreign investors to  
29 manufacture from within, led to the dominance of foreign MNCs in the Nigerian alcoholic  
30 beverage industry. For example, such policies and stagnation of the beer market in Europe led  
31 to the expansion of Heineken in Nigeria and the entrance of SABMiller into the industry.  
32 However, according to Okpara and Wynn (2008), some MNCs left Nigeria due to poor  
33 infrastructure at that time. Notably, the oil industry has been identified in previous studies  
34 (Oseghale et al., 2018) as an industry dominated by foreign MNCs since its inception.  
35 Therefore, both industries represent a good context for understanding the HR practices  
36 replication issues associated with HR transfer. Consistent with Ayentimi et al. (2018c), we  
37 anticipate that HR practices in the two industries may differ slightly as the oil MNC operating  
38 in a more global industry may deploy more standardized global best practices compared to the  
39 beverage MNC operating in a more multi-domestic industry. In addition, given that only  
40 limited research has been conducted on the replication of HRM practices in Africa (Adams et  
41 al., 2017) and that most African countries are still in a continuous stage of transformation,  
42 Nigeria is considered a suitable context for understanding the transferability issues of HR  
43 practices.  
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### 58 **Selection of informants** 59 60

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3 Given the nature of the study, we follow Adams et al. (2017) by focusing on subsidiary HRM  
4 practices in Nigeria. This approach allows researchers to effectively identify and explore the  
5 replication of HRM practices in a subsidiary's local context (Adams et al., 2017). Thus, our  
6 research is based on 40 semi-structured interviews (20 in each organization) carried out in 2020  
7 with two subsidiaries of a French oil and gas MNC and a UK alcoholic beverage MNC in  
8 Nigeria. Semi-structured interviews allowed for a certain degree of consistency with the room  
9 to explore issues emanating during the interviews (Myers, 2019). Both companies were given  
10 pseudonyms: OilMart and BeerCo, consistent with the industries in which they operate to  
11 conceal their identities. The two MNCs were selected for study because of considerations of  
12 the country-of-origin effect, as the researchers wanted to study MNCs with different  
13 institutional environments from the institutional environment in Nigeria to better understand  
14 the OC mechanisms responsible for replication in Nigeria. Moreover, these MNCs were  
15 selected for preliminary investigations, suggesting that they were involved in the transfer of  
16 HR practices to subsidiaries in Nigeria. This is required to understand the mechanisms driving  
17 replication within the subsidiary units.  
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30 Participants were drawn purposively from senior managers and staff who were  
31 knowledgeable about the subject based on the third and first authors' knowledge of both  
32 industries. The aim of using a purposive sampling technique is to sample participants in a more  
33 strategic way to ensure that those interviewed can provide the relevant information required to  
34 answer our research questions (Bell et al., 2019). While a purposive sampling strategy enhances  
35 internal validity, external validity may be limited (Andrade, 2021). Therefore, our findings  
36 should be interpreted with caution outside the case study MNCs and the industries studied.  
37 Ethical approval was obtained from a university in the UK. Table 1 shows the demographic  
38 details of the participants.  
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### 53 **Data collection procedure**

54 We used a two-part interview protocol for all interviews. The first part covered general  
55 information about MNCs, subsidiaries, and informants, while the second part covered  
56 questions about institutional differences, transfer and replication of practices, and factors  
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3 responsible for replication and resistance. Where necessary, follow-up questions were asked to  
4 deepen the information (Witzel, 2012). All interviews were conducted in English via MS  
5 Teams because of the pandemic and audio recorded. Interviews lasted between 45 minutes and  
6 an hour and were conducted individually to provide anonymity, which enabled participants to  
7 respond candidly. We stopped after interviewing 40 participants when theoretical saturation  
8 was attained, as no new information was produced at this stage (Bell et al., 2019, p. 399).  
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### 14 **Data analysis**

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16 Recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by all authors during the initial stage of analysis  
17 using the grounded theory approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). As a result, the researchers  
18 were able to immerse themselves in the data and decipher emerging insights before the actual  
19 coding process (Flick, 2014). Consistent with the grounded theory approach, the first and  
20 second authors adopted a three-step coding process in line with Gioia et al. (2013) view on  
21 making sense and processing collected data from both case organizations. During each stage,  
22 the first and second authors developed codes or aggregated themes separately before meetings  
23 to enhance the reliability of the process. The first step involved identifying first-order codes  
24 from transcripts after repeated reading to identify salient phrases, comments, and sentences that  
25 were consistent with institutional factors, cultural factors, organizational factors, OC types, HR  
26 transfer, HR practices, replication, etc. Drawing on the principles of grounded theory, we did  
27 not apply any preconceived codes (Glaser et al., 1968). The second step involved developing  
28 aggregate themes from first-order codes, following a critical review of first-order code text  
29 segments for differences and similarities. The themes that emerged from this stage included  
30 HR practice transfer, OC types, HR practice replication, and cultural and institutional factors.  
31 Finally, the themes were merged to be broad enough to encapsulate recurrent issues in the data  
32 in the third stage. Themes such as OC type, replication, institutional mechanisms, and choice  
33 of OC type emerged during this process.  
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### 48 **Findings**

49  
50 Our study revealed that headquarters transfer HRM practices, such as compensation and  
51 performance appraisal, to the subsidiaries investigated in Nigeria, but it is OC in both  
52 subsidiaries that determined the extent to which these practices were replicated or resisted.  
53 However, institutional and cultural factors are important factors influencing the choice of OC.  
54 We present our findings under the key themes identified in the data.  
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### 60 ***HR practice transfer, regulatory and cultural influences***

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3 Local labor laws, consequent union activities, and local values were important factors that  
4 greatly influenced the extent to which certain practices are transferable to subsidiaries in  
5 Nigeria.  
6  
7

8  
9 **Theme: Local labor laws**

10  
11 According to an HR manager at BeerCo:

12  
13  
14 *"Most of our HR practices and strategies are usually transferred from our parent*  
15 *company.... adequate attention is usually given to relevant laws and regulations in*  
16 *Nigeria before any transfer."* (Participant 1)  
17  
18

19  
20 Another manager added that:

21  
22 *"The regulatory environment is very important. No multinational company wants to be*  
23 *in the bad books of their host government. So, adequate attention is given to the*  
24 *regulatory environment and how it will impact any transferred practice before transfer."*  
25 *(Participant 21)*  
26  
27  
28

29  
30 As the above quotations illustrate, headquarters are usually careful not to transfer  
31 practices that openly violate the regulatory environment in Nigeria. Generally, MNCs want to  
32 be in the good books of stakeholders in their host communities, as it is good for business  
33 (Oseghale et al., 2018).  
34  
35  
36

37 **Theme: Union activities**

38  
39 One of the implications of violating labor laws in Nigeria is a nationwide strike by union  
40 members that could adversely impact business in both industries, although union bodies in the  
41 oil and gas sector are more powerful than those in the beverage sector.  
42  
43  
44

45 According to the logistics manager at OilMart:

46  
47  
48 *"You cannot take away the issue of the business environment in Nigeria as it greatly*  
49 *influences the extent to which some practices are transferred to the different affiliates*  
50 *of OilMart... in Nigeria, you have a situation where one organization in the oil and gas*  
51 *industry is having problems with employees and the entire oil and gas workers in the*  
52 *country will want to go on strike..."* (Participant 24).  
53  
54  
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56

57 In this quotation, the role of union activities in the form of strikes becomes evident,  
58 revealing the role of active unions in transfer decisions at headquarters. Regarding the  
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3 difference in union activities in both industries, a recruitment manager in OilMart noted the  
4 following.  
5

6  
7 *"Union in the oil and gas industry is aware of the importance of the oil industry which*  
8 *generates most of the nation's revenue and they know how to use this to their*  
9 *advantage."* (Participant 22).  
10  
11

12  
13 While union bodies in the alcoholic beverage industry may be less powerful, they  
14 equally carry out their collective bargaining responsibilities in the employment relationship in  
15 compliance with labor laws in Nigeria.  
16  
17

18  
19 The difference between union bodies in both industries is that, during negotiations, the  
20 position and needs of the oil and gas industry union will be quickly taken into consideration  
21 and addressed to avoid any form of strike action and its adverse implications for the economy.  
22  
23

#### 24 25 **Theme: Local values**

26  
27 The value and belief systems in Nigeria became evident in the factors informing transfers.  
28 According to the training manager at OilMart:  
29

30  
31 *"We consider local values when we transfer HRM practices. In Nigeria, the group*  
32 *respects the people's way of life and will not transfer any practice that strongly*  
33 *contradicts our values."* (Participant 23)  
34  
35

36  
37 Another added that:

38  
39 *"The decision to transfer HR practices to Nigeria or to transfer with some flexibility*  
40 *to adjust slightly also depend on our values such as seniority, influence, and strong*  
41 *cohesion and making frank judgment and how they impact specific HR practices*  
42 *when they are transferred."* (Participant 30)  
43  
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46  
47 These views mean that headquarters are usually careful not to transfer practices that  
48 will openly usurp the belief systems and values of employees. Moreover, they consider how  
49 certain cultural values in the host country influence the transferred practices. However, one  
50 of the managers from BeerCo suggested that labor laws and union activities played a more  
51 dominant role in the process.  
52  
53

#### 54 55 ***The mechanism for overseeing HR practice resistance and replication***

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57 Consistent with the OC types in operation in the subsidiaries studied, it emerged that  
58 hierarchical OC was useful for the replication of more Westernized HR practices, for example,  
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3 I-PRP, which did not align with certain aspects of the Nigerian cultural environment at OilMart.  
4  
5 In contrast, replication was not possible in BeerCo with the clan OC.  
6

7 **Theme: the use of hierarchical OC in performance appraisal replication**  
8

9  
10 The performance appraisal system and compensation strategies were transferred from  
11 headquarters to both OilMart and BeerCo for performance management. A career manager at  
12 OilMart explained that:  
13

14  
15 *"We use the same performance appraisal tool-ANAEL HR, with headquarters and*  
16 *other affiliates within the group."* (Participant 21)  
17  
18

19  
20 Similarly, an HR supervisor at BeerCo stated that:

21  
22 *"The performance appraisal process here is similar to that of the headquarters."*  
23 (Participant 6).  
24  
25

26  
27 Employees in OilMart during the appraisal process would sit with their line managers  
28 to set performance objectives at the beginning of the appraisal year and work with line  
29 managers to achieve the set objectives. In a discussion with line management, employees were  
30 assessed for their yearly performance. However, aspects of the appraisal process with a more  
31 westernized outlook, such as using appraisal outcomes for termination, were successfully  
32 replicated in OilMart through hierarchical OC deployed to downplay local cultural influences  
33 in the appraisal process.  
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39 A recruitment manager at OilMart explained that:

40  
41 *"After receiving feedback from line managers, the employee's line manager supervisor*  
42 *with an executive committee also reviews the line manager's decision before a final*  
43 *rating is released by HR. In France, the decision completely rests with the employee's*  
44 *line manager.* (Participant 26).  
45  
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49  
50 When probed further about the reason for the difference, he further explained that:

51  
52 *"We try to use these different levels of appraisal review to mitigate any subjective*  
53 *judgment that may have been informed by cultural or personal bias. We expect some*  
54 *objective review at the more senior level."* (Participant 26).  
55  
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57  
58 According to the Career manager at OilMart:  
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3 *We have this bureaucratic culture that our appraisal process is built on to help us check*  
4 *that the appraisal process is doing what it is meant to do by ensuring that performance*  
5 *decision taken at the individual manager or supervisor level is not biased in any form*  
6 *through multiple stages of review.*  
7  
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10  
11 The above quote suggests that, through a hierarchical culture, OilMart ensures that the  
12 underlying philosophy guiding appraisal is replicated by ensuring that decisions regarding  
13 appraisals are made at different levels to reduce cultural and personal bias.  
14  
15

### 16 **Theme: the role of clan OC in performance appraisal system replication**

17  
18  
19 In BeerCo, with clan OC, it was not possible to completely replicate performance appraisal.  
20 Like OilMart, employees at BeerCo and their line managers would normally set performance  
21 objectives at the beginning of the appraisal year. Through line management support the  
22 employees can work towards achieving the set objectives. This is followed by a one-to-one  
23 discussion to review and rank employee performance at the end of the financial year. According  
24 to the managers interviewed at BeerCo, headquarters expects management to terminate the  
25 appointment of poor performers after two years. The managers, in defiance, had to set up the  
26 "good people" management program — a local mentoring/support program set up to help  
27 underperformers consistent with the collectivist culture in operation in Nigeria.  
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35 According to senior staff at BeerCo:

36  
37 *"We do not want to be responsible for the downfall of our brothers... We see ourselves*  
38 *as one big family here."* (Participant 16).  
39  
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41

42 The quotation above provides evidence of a clannish OC. With a clannish OC and, thus,  
43 a friendly work atmosphere, managers declined to replicate the underlying philosophy behind  
44 the appraisal system at headquarters in Nigeria. Subsidiaries can decide not to replicate a  
45 practice because of regulations or cultural issues. For example, Edwards et al. (2007) found  
46 that American subsidiaries in the UK refused to deploy appraisal outcomes in terminating non-  
47 performing employees due to labor law after their British managers failed to convince  
48 managers at the headquarters that using appraisal results to make employees redundant is not  
49 consistent with UK employment laws. While this deviant behavior in Nigeria was due to  
50 cultural influence, in the UK, it was due to labor regulations.  
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3 Interestingly, from the data, no strategic move was made by the BeerCo headquarters  
4 to draw on OC to facilitate replication. Rather, training was emphasized. According to the HR  
5 manager:  
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8  
9 *"We aim to facilitate an inclusive culture to create an environment where a relationship*  
10 *is built among employees to drive productivity like what we have at headquarters in the*  
11 *UK. However, those in charge of managing employees are required to provide them*  
12 *with adequate guidance and training to enhance their ability to do the job in*  
13 *compliance with corporate policy on the use of the international best practice."*  
14  
15

16  
17  
18 (Participant 1)  
19

20 Overall, our data suggest that training without hierarchical OC to enhance control did  
21 not drive the replication of performance appraisal at BeerCo following the failure to sanction  
22 underperformers. In summary, OC facilitates or inhibits the influence of culture on the  
23 replication of HR practices.  
24  
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26

### 27 **Theme: the use of hierarchical OC in performance-based pay replication**

28  
29 It emerged that it was easy to deploy I-PRP in OilMart because the company has a pay structure  
30 that provides for the use of both base pay as provided by remuneration laws in Nigeria and I-  
31 PRP consistent with a more individualized HR system at headquarters.  
32  
33  
34

35 According to an employee relations manager at OilMart:  
36  
37

38 *"In Nigeria, we have a combination of individual performance pay and the negotiated*  
39 *base pay."* (Participant 25)  
40  
41

42 Consistent with collective bargaining laws in Nigeria, senior management negotiates  
43 base pay with union representatives. An employee at OilMart added the following:  
44  
45

46 *"We negotiate base pay every two years. We go to the negotiating table with our*  
47 *employee representatives to determine increment."* (Participant 36).  
48  
49

50 Our data show that I-PRP is paid out as an annual incentive. Employees share the profits  
51 declared by the companies every year. What employees receive depends on their performance  
52 over one year. Employee performance was ascertained by the rating they received from an  
53 annual appraisal.  
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3 At OilMart, using hierarchical OC to replicate performance appraisal, the I-PRP is  
4 replicated based on true performance driven by hierarchical OC. A compliance officer at  
5 OilMart explained as follows:  
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8  
9 *"To ensure that we pay for the correct performance, we developed the extra*  
10 *management review layers of our performance appraisal system."* (Participant 28)  
11  
12

13 *"We have a structure in place to see that adequate measure is taken to ensure that the*  
14 *outcome of our performance appraisal system is devoid of any subjective outcome that*  
15 *can bias our performance pay system and we achieve this through this culture of having*  
16 *senior management review the outcome of the appraisal process."* (Participant 21)  
17  
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19

20  
21 The above quotation suggests that a hierarchical structure enables correct assessment of  
22 performance. Consequently, individualized compensation practices are replicated due to a  
23 hierarchical OC that allows the use of appraisal to effectively measure performance to support  
24 the use of I-PRP.  
25  
26  
27

### 28 **Theme: the role of clan OC in performance-based pay replication**

29

30 BeerCo also has a pay structure that enables the use of both base pay and performance-based  
31 pay. BeerCo's management staff explained the following:  
32  
33

34  
35 *"...monthly pay is subject to increment through negotiation in collective bargaining,*  
36 *once in every two years. The increase will usually depend on the performance of the*  
37 *company within the period under consideration."* (Participant 13).  
38  
39

40  
41 In response to a question about how BeerCo ensures that employees are rated correctly  
42 under a performance appraisal system in a clannish culture to support the use of I-PRP, an HR  
43 supervisor noted the following:  
44  
45

46 *"After appraisal rating on-site, we conduct Skype meeting with the HR team in Lagos*  
47 *to rectify appraisal ratings awarded to employees."* (Participant 6).  
48  
49

50 However, a management staff at BeerCo added that:  
51

52  
53 *"At this stage, appraisal decisions taken in our branch do not change following this*  
54 *meeting on Skype. For me, this is more like a tick box exercise."* (Participant 11)  
55  
56

57 The above quote suggests that the effort to rectify the appraisal process does not add  
58 value to the process. Arguably, with the clannish culture of BeerCo, it was difficult to ascertain  
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3 whether the performance rating in the company truly reflected what was on the ground to  
4 facilitate the replication of I-PRP.  
5

### 6 7 ***Host country institutional context and MNC choice of transfer mechanisms***

8  
9 Finally, it emerged that the choice of the mechanism to deploy in overseeing the replication of  
10 transferred HR practices in subsidiaries relied heavily on collectivist culture and strike  
11 activities in the host countries.  
12  
13

#### 14 15 **Theme: The role of collectivist culture**

16  
17 In response to the question regarding the role of culture in the use of hierarchical OC, a training  
18 manager at Oil Mart explained the following:  
19

20  
21 *"Because you have a system that you think might not be objective in terms of rewarding*  
22 *performance, yes, culture plays a significant role in the determination and use of*  
23 *several layers in the review process."* (Participant 23).  
24  
25

26  
27 The above quotation suggests that being aware of how subjective culture may adversely  
28 impact performance appraisal replication and the use of I-PRP, headquarters decided to  
29 establish a hierarchical OC to support the appraisal process.  
30  
31

#### 32 33 **Theme: The use of industrial strikes**

34  
35 Workforce strikes appeared to be another key factor influencing ideas about how to replicate  
36 transferred HR practices. A compliance manager observed the following.  
37  
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39  
40 *We do not only consider cultural values but also the consequences of breaking the law*  
41 *on our business. For example, all our operational facilities in Nigeria have been shut*  
42 *down before. You lose a huge amount of money when that happens for 2 – 3 days.*  
43 *(Participant 28)*  
44  
45

46  
47 These views suggest that union actions and strikes are critical factors in decisions  
48 regarding the choice of replication mechanism. While it emerged that BeerCo did not  
49 strategically use OC to facilitate replication, corporate headquarters made an effort to avoid  
50 violating institutional factors to deploy HRM practices in driving the replication of transferred  
51 practices. For example, in the words of a training supervisor at BeerCo:  
52  
53

54  
55 *"Corporate headquarter ensures that our policies comply with all relevant regulations*  
56 *and laws. Once they know that no law or regulation will be violated, they try to shape*  
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3 *the behavior of employees through training and workshops... to get them to comply*  
4 *with our international best practice."* (Participant 3)  
5  
6

7 This view implies that institution is key to deciding which mechanism to deploy in the  
8 decision on how to drive replication. Figure 1 provides a conceptual framework summarizing  
9 our findings and the mechanism (and factors responsible for the choice of mechanism) for  
10 transferring HQ HRM practices to subsidiaries in the Nigerian context.  
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16 Insert Figure 1 about here  
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## 22 **Discussion**

23 This study sought to explore the factors responsible for the replication of transferred HRM  
24 practices from HQ to subsidiaries, and the factors likely to influence the choice of such a  
25 mechanism. The findings of the study are shown in Figure 1. Consistent with extant studies  
26 (Myloni et al., 2004), our evidence suggests that MNCs transfer HR practices such as  
27 performance appraisal and I-PRP to their subsidiaries in Nigeria, but would usually consider  
28 the implications of union activities, labor regulations, and cultural values such as strong  
29 cohesion and making a frank judgment that affects workforce personal actions before making  
30 such transfers. By doing so, MNCs explore leeway within host country institutional settings to  
31 facilitate a successful replication process. Our study suggests that union activities vary from  
32 one subsidiary context to another depending on the economic value of the subsidiary and the  
33 industry in which it operates. Hence, in responding to union activities during the transfer and  
34 replication of HR practices, a one-size-fits-all approach by Nigerian MNCs may not be  
35 appropriate.  
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47 To explain the mechanism responsible for the replication or resistance of transferred  
48 HR practices, we found that the two dimensions of OC in operation in the two subsidiaries  
49 studied were dominant. While clan OC was perceived as negative and challenging in the  
50 replication process, hierarchical OC was useful for blocking the adverse impact of collectivist  
51 culture in the form of strong ties with employees and associated issues around providing critical  
52 feedback in the replication process. The collectivist perspective in the Nigerian context  
53 influenced managers' decision to refrain from sanctioning underperforming employees  
54 explicitly at BeerCo, contrary to the headquarters' termination policy. While Edwards et al.  
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3 (2007) link such deviant behavior to UK regulations, our study highlights the influence of belief  
4 systems and values in Nigeria. Failure to correctly appraise performance at BeerCo due to  
5 clannish OC driven by strong ties between employees may also have limited efforts to replicate  
6 I-PRP in the company. By contrast, to overcome the adverse impact of strong ties between  
7 employees and union activities on the appraisal process at Oil Mart, the appraisal system was  
8 structured in line with hierarchical OC to include different layers of performance review before  
9 the performance review outcome was approved. We found that such performance outcomes  
10 shaped by hierarchical OC were responsible for the successful replication of performance  
11 appraisal and I-PRP in OilMart. Thus, to corroborate existing studies that suggest that MNCs  
12 deploy performance appraisal to pursue replication (Chiang et al., 2017), we extend this  
13 literature by revealing that using performance appraisal alone in MNCs in Nigeria may not be  
14 adequate to replicate transferred practices without efforts to monitor the appraisal process  
15 through an effective check and balance system supported by OC.  
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26 An extant study by Minbaeva (2005) argues that training and compensation practices  
27 can be deployed to drive the relevant behavior required to drive replication. Our study suggests  
28 that this may not be the case if training is not designed to help host country nationals increase  
29 knowledge, accept headquarters' culture, and increase openness to the flow of HR practices  
30 from headquarters, following evidence from BeerCo. To achieve this, Vance and Paik (2005)  
31 highlight the importance of MNC home-country cross-cultural training in subsidiaries.  
32 Moreover, to fully achieve replication, MNCs may add some form of control through  
33 hierarchical OC. Our study also adds to the transfer literature by providing insight into how  
34 union activities/laws, regulations, and strong ties between employees serve as important  
35 mechanisms that influence the choice of OC. Drawing on the institutional perspective, laws,  
36 regulations, and culture were key factors considered by MNCs before making important  
37 decisions about how to replicate transferred HR practices.  
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### 48 **Managerial implications**

49  
50 It is useful to carefully consider how MNCs operating in Nigeria can replicate their transferred  
51 HR practices. Our study highlights the importance of carefully planning the HR transfer  
52 process to enhance replication in subsidiaries. We uncover the importance of hierarchical OC  
53 as a key mechanism in the replication process. Managers of MNCs in Nigeria can deploy  
54 hierarchical OC to reduce the adverse effects of strong ties among local employees to drive the  
55 replication of performance appraisal, and thus, performance-based pay. Drawing on findings  
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3 from the extant literature by Chiang et al. (2017), training and performance appraisal are  
4 important mechanisms that MNCs deploy to facilitate replication. We recommend that  
5 practicing managers while using performance appraisal to facilitate replication should inject an  
6 element of hierarchical OC with several layers to check for bias in the process. Training should  
7 be designed to enhance the acceptance of the home country's culture to increase the chances of  
8 replication. Strong ties between employees at BeerCo and the associated bias could not be  
9 resolved to replicate appraisal, irrespective of the training provided. The reason for this is  
10 perhaps that training was not designed to help employees embrace behaviors associated with  
11 the individualist culture prevalent at headquarters. Consequently, performance appraisal and  
12 performance-based pay were not replicated.  
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## 20 21 **Conclusion**

22  
23 Our study contributes to the literature by explaining the OC dimensions underpinning MNC  
24 HR practice replication in subsidiaries (Beletskiy and Fey, 2021; Minbaeva, 2005). We  
25 highlight the institutional factors that are most likely to explain the transferability of HR  
26 practices and the mechanisms that can oversee replication in the transfer process from the HQ  
27 to subsidiaries in the Nigerian context. Our novel finding is that hierarchical OC is a key OC  
28 dimension in responding to local institutional environments to enhance the replication of HR  
29 practices in Nigeria. Our study also uncovered the institutional factors that inform the choice  
30 of mechanisms used by MNCs to replicate transferred HR practices. We extend the institutional  
31 perspective by offering insights into the institutional factors that are likely to explain the  
32 transferability of HR practices and the choice of mechanisms through which replication is  
33 achieved. By uncovering that hierarchical OC drives the replication of human resource  
34 practices, our study will help MNCs seeking to set up operations in Nigeria to understand the  
35 type of OC that will support the successful replication of HR practices to enhance performance.  
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46 Although we believe that our study has made some important contributions, it is not  
47 without limitations. First, only two of the MNC subsidiaries operating in Nigeria were  
48 investigated, which may limit the generalizability of our findings beyond the MNCs and  
49 industries investigated. Future studies on the replication of HR practices should consider  
50 investigating subsidiaries in other industries to enhance generalizability. Second, the focus was  
51 on hierarchical OC and clan OC in operation in the subsidiaries investigated. Therefore, we  
52 still do not know the role of the market and advocacy OCs in the replication process of  
53 transferred HR practices. Therefore, we call for future studies to explore the role of market and  
54 advocacy OCs in the HR replication process.  
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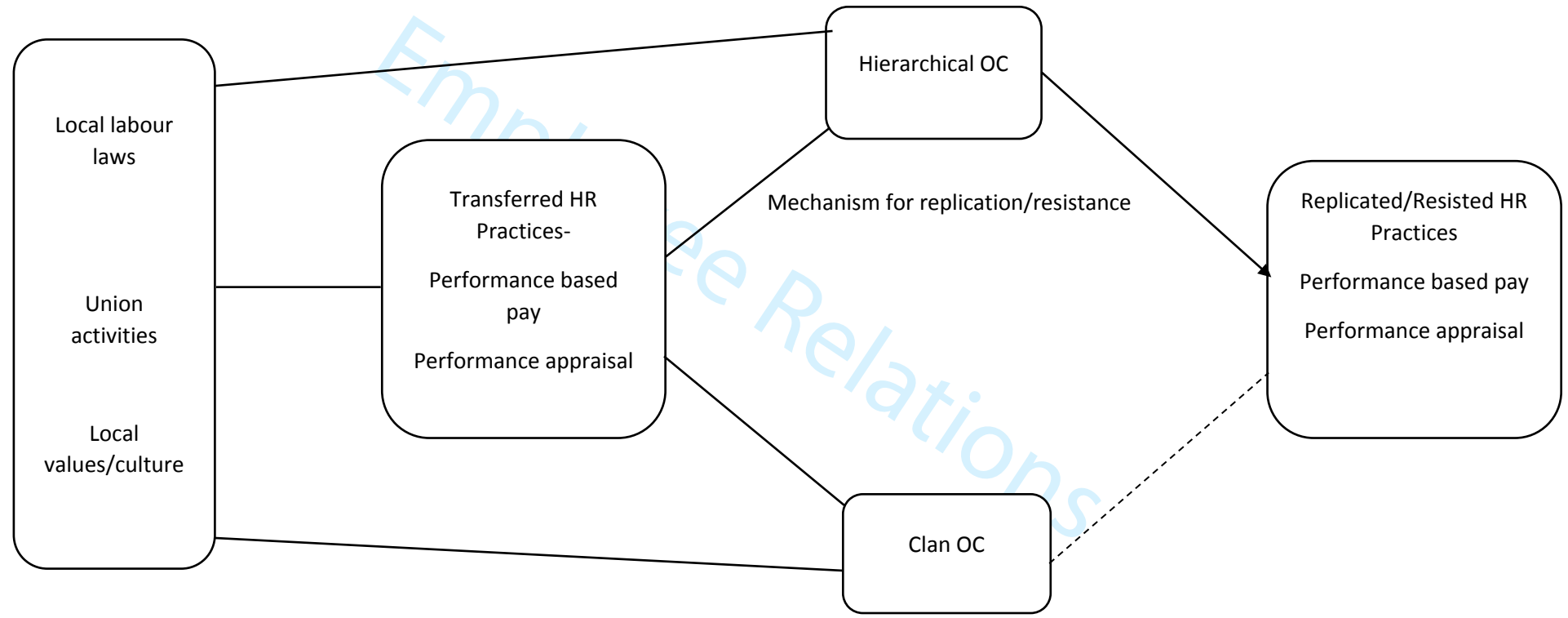
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**Table 1. Informants' demographic information**

MNCs	Participant ID	Position	Education/Years in service
BeerCo	Participant 1	HR manager	MBA/22
	Participant 2	Production manager	BSc/24
	Participant 3	HR supervisor (training)	MSc/20
	Participant 4	HR supervisor (ERs)	BSc/18
	Participant 5	HR supervisor (Recruitment)	BSc/17
	Participant 6	HR supervisor (Reward)	MPA/14
	Participant 7	Junior staff 1	HND/7
	Participant 8	Junior staff 2	BSc/6
	Participant 9	Junior staff 3	MSc/9
	Participant 10	Junior staff 4	BSc/7
	Participant 11	Management staff 1	BSc/18
	Participant 12	Management staff 2	BSc/12
	Participant 13	Management staff 3	MSc/13
	Participant 14	Senior staff 1	BPA/10
	Participant 15	Senior staff 2	B.Eng./10
	Participant 16	Senior staff 3	MSc/8
	Participant 17	Senior staff 4	BSc/11
	Participant 18	Plant manager	MSc/13
	Participant 19	Store manager	MBA/15
	OilMart	Participant 20	Plant Engineer
Participant 21		Career manager	BSc/CIPD/16
Participant 22		Recruitment manager	MSc/18
Participant 23		Training manager	MBA/12
Participant 24		Logistics manager	MBA/15
Participant 25		Employee relations manager	MPA/25
Participant 26		Head of mentoring	MBA/22
Participant 27		Procedure's manager	PhD/33
Participant 28		Compliance manager	B.Eng/COREN Reg/24
Participant 29		Training co-ordinator	MSc/14
Participant 30		Corporate affairs manager	MBA/22
Participant 31		Drivers training school coordinator	MSc/27
Participant 32		Human capital manager	MBA/CIPD/ 28
Participant 33		Human capital project officer	MSc/10
Participant 34		Employee 1	BSc/6
Participant 35		Employee 2	MSc/8
Participant 36		Employee 3	MSc/7
Participant 37		Employee 4	BSc/6
Participant 38		Employee 5	BSc/6
Participant 39		Employee 6	BSc/8
Participant 40		Employee 7	MSc/6

Figure 1- Conceptual framework explaining the transfer and replication of HRM practices from HQ to Nigerian Subsidiaries

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Note Resistance  
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Dear Editor

The authors have incorporated my comments in this revised manuscript. As I indicated in my previous comments, the argument behind the originality of their work has been properly articulated and the framing of the paper on HRM practice transfer is now clearly outlined. However, I have a few minor comments that may be helpful.

We are grateful that the reviewer's comment about the originality and framing of our research has recommended the acceptance of our paper.

Abstract

1. Findings: It was based on your data that you developed the conceptual framework; I will therefore suggest that you put the sentence this way in line 3. "We developed a conceptual framework to explain how clan and hierarchical OC influence the extent to which human resource (HR) practices are replicated or inhibited and how institutional and cultural factors influence the choice of OC"

Thank you for this suggestion, we have revised the findings statement as recommended. See page 1

2. Originality: you can also put it this way in line 4 "Our conceptual framework can help managers of MNCs to understand how to replicate transferred HRM practices in developing countries".

Thank you for this, we have revised the originality statement as recommended. See page 1

3. Keywords: use "HRM transfer", to avoid a whole sentence, use "institutional theory", use "organizational culture"

Thank you for this, we have revised the keywords as recommended. See page 1

Introduction

4. Line 1, use "best" instead of effective

Thank you for this, we have replaced effective with best as recommended. See page 2

5. Any time the word scholars or the literature is used in the sentence, you need to reference them for the reader to know who these scholars are or the source of the literature. There are many of such sentences all over the manuscript without references. For example, this sentence requires a reference, "Owing to the simplistic outlook of the divergence and convergence approaches, scholars have focused on the cross-vergence approach". Who are these scholars?

Thank you for your comment, we have provided references (Brewster (2002) and Katz and Barbishire (2000) to show the source of the literature as recommended.

6. There are inconsistencies in the in-text referencing e.g. (Ahmad et al. 2018) in page 4 and compare that to (Ayentimi et al., 2018b) in the same bracket page 4.

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Thank you for this, we have corrected the in-text references as recommended. See page 4.

7. Page 8, the intext referencing is inappropriate (Pepple, 2020, Pepple and Davies, 2019, Pepple, 2018).

Thank you for this, we have corrected the in-text references as recommended. See page 8.

Employee Relations