



Globalization and Work Attitudes: A Study of Ghanaian Diasporans in The Global Labor Market

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ABSTRACT: Ghana's global diaspora – highly educated nationals working abroad – are an increasingly important part of the international labor market. This study examines their work attitudes in relation to globalization. A review of literature shows that Ghanaian culture (high collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance) shapes work values, while globalization exposes diasporans to diverse work norms[1][2]. We conducted a cross-sectional survey of 150 Ghanaian diasporans (in the USA, UK, and UAE) using a structured questionnaire measuring work-related attitudes (e.g. work ethic, collectivism, adaptability, and global orientation). Simulated quantitative data were analyzed with descriptive statistics and ANOVA. Key findings (Table 2) indicate that diaspora in the USA reported higher individualistic orientation and stricter work ethic, whereas those in the UAE scored higher on collectivist attitudes; all groups valued clear instructions and teamwork (reflecting Ghana's high uncertainty avoidance and affiliation orientation[1][3]). These results suggest that Ghanaian diasporans blend home-country cultural traits with host-country norms. The study underscores the need for culturally-informed management of global Ghanaian talent and contributes novel insight into how globalization and Ghanaian heritage jointly influence work attitudes abroad.

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization has integrated economies and labor markets worldwide, enabling a flow of skilled workers across borders[4]. Ghana's population of emigrants – its diaspora – is substantial and growing. According to OECD data, over 400,000 Ghana-born individuals live in OECD countries as of 2020, predominantly of working age (80% between 25–64) and highly educated[5]. In 2020 Ghana received about USD 4.3 billion in remittances (~6% of GDP) from its diaspora[6]. These figures underscore the diaspora's economic significance. Diasporans often serve as bridges between cultures and can transfer skills, entrepreneurship, and investment back home. However, while much research focuses on their economic and political impact, far less is known about diasporans' own work attitudes and how these are shaped by both Ghanaian cultural heritage and exposure to global work environments.

Previous literature on work culture in Ghana emphasizes distinct cultural orientations. Ghanaian society exhibits high power distance and collectivism, which foster respect for authority and group loyalty[2]. Ghana also scores high in uncertainty avoidance: employees generally prefer clear instructions and structured tasks[1]. Studies of Ghanaian workers indicate strong communal orientation, relational loyalty, and team cohesion, but also suggest they may be perceived as less assertive and time-sensitive than Western counterparts[7][8]. For example, Ghanaian workers "often perceived as respectful, loyal, and cooperative" may also be seen as "less time-conscious and less assertive" by others[8].

At the same time, globalization exposes Ghanaian diasporans to diverse work norms. Anecdotal accounts from Ghanaian professionals highlight this clash of expectations: one returning entrepreneur noted that local Ghanaian colleagues needed explicit instructions and differed in initiative from the Western-accustomed work ethic he brought back[9]. Yet, systematic studies of Ghanaian diasporans' work attitudes abroad are lacking. In effect, while diaspora are key players in global labor markets, little research addresses how Ghanaian identity and global context interact to shape their approach to work. This study aims to fill that gap by investigating the work attitudes of Ghanaian diasporans, comparing groups in different host countries, and relating these attitudes to broader themes of globalization.

Problem Statement

Globalization and labor mobility have created workplaces combining diverse national cultures[10]. While studies have examined Ghanaian work values domestically and the economic contributions of migrants, there is a notable gap concerning Ghanaian diasporans' own attitudes toward work within globalized settings. Specifically, we lack empirical evidence on how Ghanaian heritage and exposure to host-country cultures jointly influence diasporans' work ethic, collectivism, adaptability, and global outlook. This gap limits understanding of multicultural workforce dynamics involving Ghanaian nationals abroad. Without such insight, employers and policymakers may overlook how to best engage this important segment of the global labor force.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the work attitudes of Ghanaian diasporans in the global labor market, in the context of globalization. We seek to describe their prevailing values and behaviors related to work (such as commitment, collectivism, and adaptability) and to explore how these attitudes may vary with host-country context and exposure to global work cultures. Ultimately, the study aims to provide a nuanced portrait of diasporans' work orientations and to shed light on how globalization influences Ghanaian professionals abroad.

Research Objectives

The study's objectives are:

1. **Assess** the predominant work attitudes (e.g. work ethic, team orientation, adaptability, and global mindset) among Ghanaian diasporans working in various countries.
2. **Compare** work attitude dimensions across diaspora subgroups (e.g. by host country region) to identify any significant differences.
3. **Investigate** the relationships between diasporans' globalization-related orientation (e.g. global identity, exposure to foreign work practices) and their work attitude scores.
4. **Explore** how Ghanaian cultural heritage (collectivism, uncertainty avoidance) manifests in diasporans' reported work behaviors, in light of globalization.

Research Questions

Based on these objectives, the key research questions are:

1. What are the characteristic work attitudes of Ghanaian diasporans in the global labor market?
2. Do Ghanaian diasporans in different host-country regions (e.g. North America vs. Europe vs. Middle East) differ significantly in their work attitudes?
3. How do globalization-related factors (such as length of stay abroad or integration in global networks) relate to diasporans' work attitudes?
4. In what ways do Ghanaian cultural values (e.g. collectivism, uncertainty avoidance) appear in the work attitudes of diasporans operating in global contexts?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Globalization and Diaspora: Globalization refers to the intensifying integration of markets, cultures, and labor forces across the world. Skilled migration is a core aspect of this phenomenon, as global labor markets draw workers internationally[4]. Ghanaian diasporans – whether in the U.S., Europe, or beyond – exemplify globalization's human side. Madeleine Wong (2017) notes that skilled Ghanaian migrants are an “integral part of globalisation and the global labour markets that connect and transform people and places”[4]. Their movements are shaped by both opportunities abroad and developments at home (e.g. Ghana's economic growth and government diaspora policies).

Diaspora Profile: The Ghanaian diaspora is roughly equally split between African and OECD countries[5]. In OECD destinations (e.g. USA, UK, Canada), Ghanaian migrants are predominantly male (53%) and highly educated: about one-third have tertiary degrees[5]. This indicates a positive self-selection of skilled individuals. The diaspora's contributions to Ghana are substantial: remittances from abroad constituted about 6% of Ghana's GDP (roughly USD 4.3 billion) in 2020[6]. Such figures underscore the diaspora's economic ties to home, but also their embeddedness in host economies and workforces.

Ghanaian Cultural Values and Work: Ghana's national culture affects worker attitudes and behavior. In Hofstede's framework, Ghana scores high on Power Distance and Collectivism, and high on Uncertainty Avoidance[1][2]. High Power Distance implies respect for hierarchy; indeed, Ghanaian workplaces often emphasize deference to authority. High Collectivism emphasizes group cohesion, family ties, and loyalty. As a result, Ghanaian workers tend to favor teamwork and interpersonal harmony[2]. However, this collectivism may come at the cost of individual assertiveness: one analysis notes that Ghana's focus on family and group harmony “may encourage cooperation and interpersonal harmony but could also reduce individual competitiveness or assertiveness in performance”[2].

High Uncertainty Avoidance means that Ghanaian workers prefer clear instructions and structured tasks[1]. The literature observes that Ghanaian employees “score relatively high in [uncertainty avoidance], indicating a preference for clear instructions, well-

defined tasks, and procedural certainty”[1]. While this can enhance reliability in stable settings, it may also mean workers are less willing to take risks or innovate under ambiguity. In contrast, workers from low-uncertainty-avoidance cultures (e.g. some Western countries) tend to be more adaptable and comfortable with change[1].

Work Attitudes in Ghana: Empirical studies of work attitudes in Ghana (domestic context) reinforce these cultural trends. Recent research finds that Ghanaian employees often exhibit strong loyalty, sense of community, and collective orientation[7][11]. For instance, Lomotey (2025) reports that Ghanaian workers show “strong communal orientation and relational loyalty,” which aids teamwork but “sometimes conflict[s] with Western norms of individual initiative and strict time discipline”[7]. Managers in Ghana often perceive Ghanaian staff as polite and cooperative but “less time-conscious and less assertive” than expatriates[8]. These findings highlight how Ghanaian cultural predispositions shape work behavior.

Diaspora and Cultural Hybridization: While Ghanaian values shape behavior at home, diasporans often experience cultural hybridization. Living and working abroad exposes them to host-country norms. For example, Ghanaian professionals in Western countries may adopt more individualistic and competitive work styles, while still retaining familial and community values. Anecdotal evidence illustrates these clashes: one Ghanaian returnee reported that after working in the West, he expected colleagues in Ghana to be proactive, but found that “Most Ghanaians come to work with a different attitude... You have to give them instructions”[9]. This suggests diasporans may oscillate between Ghanaian and host patterns of work attitude. However, systematic data on Ghanaian diasporans’ work values is scarce. Studies on African diasporas (or Ghanaian emigrants) tend to focus on remittances, skills transfer, or identity, rather than work ethic itself. The present study therefore addresses a novel intersection: examining how Ghanaian diaspora integrate cultural values into their approach to work in a globalized context.

Research Gap: In summary, globalization has connected Ghanaian workers to diverse labor markets, but the impact on their work attitudes remains underexplored[10]. Existing work suggests Ghanaian culture strongly influences work behaviors at home (collectivism, high UA, etc.), yet diasporans’ experiences abroad likely modify those attitudes. This study situates itself at the nexus of globalization, diaspora, and organizational behavior. By surveying Ghanaian diasporans, we aim to contribute new insights to global workforce literature and inform both Ghanaian diaspora policy and cross-cultural management practice.

Methodology

A quantitative, cross-sectional survey design was employed to examine the work attitudes of Ghanaian diasporans. For this simulated study, we assumed a purposive sample of 150 Ghanaian nationals working abroad, drawn from three host-country groups (USA, UK, and UAE), with 50 respondents in each group. These countries were chosen to represent different global regions and work cultures (North America, Europe, Middle East). Data were collected via an online questionnaire (constructed in English) disseminated through Ghanaian diaspora networks and associations. The questionnaire assessed key work attitude constructs, using established Likert-scale measures. These constructs included **Work Ethic** (e.g. diligence, punctuality, commitment), **Collectivism** (preference for teamwork and group harmony), **Adaptability** (comfort with change), and **Global Orientation** (openness to international practices and cultural adaptability).

Respondents also reported demographic information (age, gender, education, years abroad) and integration factors (e.g. length of stay in host country, participation in diaspora associations). For this hypothetical study, data were simulated to reflect plausible differences among the groups (see *Simulated Data Analysis*). Data analysis included descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and inferential tests. One-way ANOVA was used to compare attitude scores across the three country groups, with post-hoc comparisons to identify significant differences. All analyses were conducted using standard statistical software. Ethical considerations (e.g. informed consent) were assumed to be observed in the actual survey process.

Simulated Data Analysis

Sample Characteristics: Table 1 summarizes the simulated respondent demographics by host country. The overall sample (N=150) had a mean age of ~34 years (SD ≈ 6.3), with 53% male. Ages were roughly comparable across groups. The gender distribution varied slightly: for example, 58% of the USA group were male, compared to 48% in the UK and 60% in the UAE. Most respondents held at least a bachelor’s degree (simulated 80%). Years since emigrating ranged from 1 to 15, with a mean around 6 years (SD ≈ 3.2). The demographic profile reflects the positive self-selection of highly educated, working-age individuals noted in the literature[5].

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents by Host Country (N=150)

Characteristic	USA (n=50)	UK (n=50)	UAE (n=50)	Total (N=150)
Age (years, mean ± SD)	35.7 ± 5.7	33.9 ± 5.2	33.8 ± 7.3	34.5 ± 6.3
Gender – Male (%)	29 (58%)	24 (48%)	30 (60%)	83 (55%)
Gender – Female (%)	21 (42%)	26 (52%)	20 (40%)	67 (45%)
Education – BSc or higher	44 (88%)	42 (84%)	46 (92%)	132 (88%)
Years abroad (mean ± SD)	6.2 ± 3.0	5.5 ± 3.4	5.8 ± 3.3	5.8 ± 3.2

Note: Some values are simulated for illustrative purposes.

Attitude Scores by Country: Table 2 presents the mean ($\pm$ SD) scores on each work attitude dimension by host country. Scores were on a 1–5 scale (higher = stronger endorsement of the trait). Diasporans in the USA reported the highest **Work Ethic** ($M=4.18$, $SD=0.47$), closely followed by the UK ($M=4.08$, $SD=0.46$), with the UAE group somewhat lower ($M=3.86$, $SD=0.61$). For **Global Orientation** (openness to international practices), USA respondents again scored highest ($M=4.11$), versus UK ($M=3.77$) and UAE ($M=3.55$). Conversely, the UAE group scored highest on **Collectivism** ($M=4.07$, $SD=0.66$), compared to UK (3.79) and USA (3.46). **Adaptability** was fairly high across groups (USA $M=4.10$; UK 4.00; UAE 3.84).

A one-way ANOVA showed significant country differences for Work Ethic ($F(2,147)=5.12$, $p<0.01$), Global Orientation ($F=10.59$, $p<0.001$), and Collectivism ($F=10.94$, $p<0.001$). Tukey post-hoc tests indicated that USA and UK diasporans scored significantly higher on Work Ethic than UAE diasporans (both $p<0.05$). For Collectivism, the UAE group was significantly higher than both USA and UK (both $p<0.01$). Global Orientation was highest in the USA group, which differed significantly from both UK and UAE (all $p<0.01$). Adaptability differences were not statistically significant ($p\approx 0.10$).

Table 2: Work Attitude Scores (Mean $\pm$ SD) by Host Country (scale 1–5)

Attitude Dimension	USA (n=50)	UK (n=50)	UAE (n=50)
Work Ethic	4.18 $\pm$ 0.47	4.08 $\pm$ 0.46	3.86 $\pm$ 0.61
Global Orientation	4.11 $\pm$ 0.55	3.77 $\pm$ 0.65	3.55 $\pm$ 0.64
Collectivism	3.46 $\pm$ 0.67	3.79 $\pm$ 0.65	4.07 $\pm$ 0.66
Adaptability	4.10 $\pm$ 0.75	4.00 $\pm$ 0.59	3.84 $\pm$ 0.69

Higher scores indicate stronger endorsement of the attitude. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

Correlation Analysis: Intercorrelations among attitude dimensions were generally weak. For instance, Work Ethic had low negative correlations with Collectivism ($r=-0.18$) and negligible correlation with Adaptability ($r=0.02$). Global Orientation was modestly negatively correlated with Collectivism ($r=-0.19$). These patterns suggest that diasporans who emphasize group loyalty may slightly report lower individualistic work drive, but overall the dimensions appear relatively distinct.

Discussion of Findings

The simulated data reveal a nuanced pattern of work attitudes among Ghanaian diasporans, aligning with both Ghanaian cultural traits and host-country influences. Across all groups, mean scores on key attitudes were high (all means >3.4 on a 1–5 scale), indicating generally strong positive orientations. This supports the idea that Ghanaian diasporans are highly engaged workers.

Ghanaian Cultural Traits Reflected: The uniformly high **Collectivism** score (especially in UAE) underscores the persistence of Ghana's group-oriented values among diasporans. Even abroad, Ghanaian professionals retain a preference for teamwork and loyalty, consistent with Ghana's collectivist heritage[2]. The finding that **Work Ethic** scores were high across the board also resonates with Ghanaian values: diasporans exhibited diligence and commitment. However, the variations by country are telling. Diasporans in the USA scored significantly higher on Work Ethic than those in UAE. This might reflect the highly competitive, individualistic work culture in the US, where Ghanaian migrants often strive to demonstrate personal initiative. It could also be due to self-selection: those who succeed in the US may indeed have particularly strong work ethic. In Ghanaian context, this aligns with research noting that Ghanaian workers value productivity but may prioritize group harmony[2][3]. Here, USA diasporans show the Ghanaian strengths of loyalty and hard work, but also possibly internalize the American emphasis on individual achievement.

Uncertainty Avoidance and Global Orientation: All groups scored high on Adaptability (~ 3.8 – 4.1), suggesting Ghanaian diasporans generally cope well with change. This may reflect their selectivity and preparation: migrants often possess resilience. However, USA diasporans' higher **Global Orientation** ($M=4.11$) indicates they feel more comfortable in international or multicultural environments than those in UK/UAE. This could be because living in the US (with its diverse workforce) fosters a more global mindset. Conversely, the UAE group, while having substantial expatriate communities, may operate in environments (e.g. Middle East workplaces) that are still relatively segmented, or they may strongly maintain Ghanaian communal networks which emphasize local ties. The host-country differences in Global Orientation suggest that diaspora adapt their outlook to local contexts: USA diasporans likely engage across cultures more (consistent with USA's melting-pot culture), whereas UAE diasporans may remain more insular or focused on close expatriate communities.

Collectivism vs. Individualism: The highest Collectivism score for the UAE group ($M=4.07$) is notable. It may reflect both Ghanaian heritage and host cultural factors. The Middle East work environment often emphasizes group membership and authority, which could amplify the diaspora's collectivist tendencies. In contrast, USA diasporans scored lowest on Collectivism ($M=3.46$), perhaps due to adapting to the US's individualistic norms. This pattern parallels broader findings: individualistic cultures (like the US) "promote personal achievement, independence, and responsibility"[12], whereas collectivist cultures (like Ghana's and the UAE's) emphasize cohesion. The statistically significant country difference (UAE $>$ USA in Collectivism, $p<0.01$) supports the idea that host culture and professional networks influence how Ghanaian diasporans express their inherent collectivism.

Consistency with Literature: These findings resonate with prior qualitative insights. The Ghanaian returnee who demanded a "strict work ethic" and faced turnover[9] likely represented someone akin to our USA diaspora group: expecting Western-style initiative. Our data similarly show USA diasporans holding high standards (high Work Ethic) and lower reliance on group

instructions. The UAE diaspora's high collectivism is in line with Ghana's own orientation as well as reports that Ghanaian communities abroad maintain strong social ties[2][3]. Furthermore, Ghana's high uncertainty avoidance is reflected in all groups' preference for clear structure: while not directly measured, the consistently high Work Ethic and Adaptability scores imply that diasporans value well-defined goals. One could interpret the relatively uniform Adaptability as an adaptation outcome: despite Ghana's preference for certainty, diasporans have become quite adaptable (mean ~4.0), possibly through necessity.

Implications: These patterns suggest that Ghanaian diasporans bring positive attributes (strong ethic, teamwork) to any workplace, but also require some cultural alignment. Employers in global settings should note that Ghanaian employees may thrive in team-oriented environments and appreciate clear expectations (owing to Ghana's high uncertainty avoidance[1]). Training programs that combine emphasis on personal initiative (for contexts like the U.S.) with support for collectivist teamwork could engage Ghanaian diasporans effectively. At the same time, diaspora themselves may experience a "dual mindset," balancing Ghanaian loyalty with host-country competitiveness. Recognizing this can help organizations leverage the unique strengths of diasporans: they often connect international perspectives with local Ghanaian values.

Overall, the study illustrates that Ghanaian diasporans embody a hybrid work attitude – one shaped by their cultural roots and by their global experiences. This hybrid profile is a direct outcome of globalization: diasporans have internalized global labor norms while retaining key Ghanaian values. In sum, Ghanaian diasporans appear to "walk on two legs" of culture, enabling them to function effectively across diverse work environments.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined how Ghanaian diasporans integrate cultural heritage and globalization in their work attitudes. The simulated data indicate that while all groups exhibited strong work ethic and adaptability, notable differences emerged by host country. Ghanaian professionals in the USA showed a stronger orientation toward individual initiative and global practices, whereas those in the UAE emphasized collectivism and relational work values. These patterns align with Ghana's national culture (collectivism, high uncertainty avoidance) and the cultural norms of the host societies. In practical terms, the findings suggest that Ghanaian diasporans are a valuable, committed segment of the global workforce, but that managers should be mindful of cultural nuances. For example, providing clear task guidelines and appreciating team-based contributions can optimize diaspora performance, in line with their cultural predispositions[1][3].

This study contributes to literature by focusing specifically on Ghanaian emigrants' perspectives, an under-researched area. It highlights that globalization does not erase cultural differences; rather, diasporans blend them. Future research should validate these findings with real survey data, possibly extending to qualitative interviews for deeper insight. Longitudinal studies could examine how work attitudes evolve over time abroad. For Ghanaian policymakers, understanding diaspora work culture can inform diaspora engagement strategies – for example, by aligning skill transfer programs with the diaspora's strong collaborative values. In conclusion, as Ghana's economy and its diaspora continue to globalize, recognizing and harnessing the work attitudes of Ghanaian diasporans will be key to mutual development and organizational success.

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