

Political and Religious Leadership Factor in Africa's Development Crisis

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Abstract

Most African countries experienced political independence heralded with high optimism that the leaders will devise practical measures for harnessing abundant human and material resources in the continent for the good of the people and growth and development of the societies. Incidentally, several decades after political independence of many African countries, this optimism seems not to have been vindicated. The continent has been enmeshed in conflicts of varying magnitude, endemic economic and political corruption, weak state institutions, policy summersaults, ethno-religious loyalty, nepotism, illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, disease, poor healthcare services and low life expectancy. This paper interrogates the link between political cum religious leadership deficit and development question in Africa. It argues that the failure of Africa's political and religious leaders to imbibe proactive visionary leadership to committedly engineer and vigorously pursue indigenou and pro-people development programmes has continued to stultify development aspirations on the continent. Appropriating the Marxian post-colonial state theory, the paper posits that the state of despondency in Africa is not unconnected with the leadership deficit in many of her states. It relies on documentary method of analysis which entails the analysis of documented information in textbooks, journals, periodicals and other internet sourced materials. The paper submits that purposeful leadership capable of leveraging indigenou and sustainable development essential to mitigating the comatose state of crisis of development in Africa. It recommends a radical shift from the existing anti-progressive leadership system to a more people-oriented and sustainable paradigm as well as a new sense of visionary leadership capable of lifting Africa from the prevailing developmental abyss.

Keywords: Development crisis, Leadership, Politics, Religion, Underdevelopment

Introduction

Africa is a vast and varied continent made up of countries with specific histories and geographical conditions as well as uneven levels of socio-economic and political development. The European explorers and missionaries did massive work in discovering the potentials in Africa prior to the Berlin Conference 1884-85 and discovered that sub-Saharan Africa was a good sport for economic exploitation (Nair, 2017). As a result, through Berlin Conference 1884-85, Africa was divided among European power like a piece of cake. As should be noted colonialism was an economic, political, social, religious policy where the European nations in their ambitious capitalist endeavour explored, conquered, settled and exploited large world resources including the African continent. This led to the erosion of the indigenou cultural knowledge, values, and laid the basis for underdevelopment (Meurs, & Ranasinghe, 2003). Thus, colonialism became the genesis of massive exploitation of sub-Sahara Africa by the Europeans. Since then Africa has continued to face massive enslavement and exploitation and seemingly unmitigated development crisis evident in economic crunch, political instability, social discrimination and education bastardization.

Incidentally, the 1950s and 1960s marked the era of political independence in Arica. The end of colonialism in Africa in the late 1980s heralded a new dawn in the continent. Optimism was upbeat that African leaders will devise practical measures to break the shackles of colonialism and harness the abundant human and material resources in the continent for the good of the people and growth and development of the societies. Several decades after political independence of the countries in Africa, this optimism seems not to have been vindicated. Post-colonial African states are still enmeshed in conflicts of varying magnitude, endemic economic and political corruption, weak state institutions,

policy summersaults, ethno-religious loyalty, nepotism, illiteracy, poverty, unemployment, disease, poor healthcare services and low life expectancy.

This suggests that most post-colonial regimes across the African continent have allegedly mismanaged state resources orchestrated by weakened governance institutions manifest in dearth of administrative tact and political will to propel development. The consequence has been economic stalemate, political apprehension and breakdown of social peace and stability which have ultimately constituted a major setback in Africa. A significant feature of development entails a shift from undesirable stage of life to condition of life that is materially better. Even though the African continent appear to have moved away from the use of stone tools and weapons that characterized the stone age era to the 21st Century marked by technology, creativity and innovation, it cannot be said that the continent is in a condition that is materially better especially when compared with other continents of the world.

The core components of development which consist of education, organization and discipline seem to have been neglected in Africa. Investment in education, health, communication, technology and industrialization has been at the lowest ebb in the post colonial Africa with attendant consequences of poverty, unemployment, high mortality rate, sluggish economic growth. Transparency International report (2018) indicates that countries in Africa have been the most corrupt continent in the world with the lowest scoring region on the corruption perception index in the world.

However, the inability of the people to overcome hunger, shelter, meet their health needs and protection in Africa is very worrisome owing to rampant short supply of food and the prevalent malnutrition in the continent. Most countries in Africa have continued to suffer from severe macroeconomic disequilibria, low Gross Domestic Products (GDP) and per capital income, foreign debt service burdens, unfavourable balance of trade, over-reliance on imports which has remained unfavorable to the development of the continent. The inherent socio-economic cum political weakness evident in poor economic planning, policy summersaults and retardation in most African countries depict leadership deficits. The political and religious leadership in the post-colonial Africa has failed to fashion out effective economic policies and programmes that could facilitate industrialization, infrastructural development, and people-centred development. This scenario has kept Africans vulnerable to endemic political and economic corruption, unfavourable global trade bargains, value fluctuations, rampant money laundering, dearth of industrial and infrastructural development with attendant high rate of poverty and unemployment. It is thus discernible that leadership features prominently as factor for development in the African continent.

The interplay of leadership and development shows that leadership is critical to development in any society. Incidentally, renewed drive to address plethora of leadership challenges in Africa seems to be efforts in futility. This is not unconnected to the fact that key institutions in Africa are largely frail and are mainly constrained by lack or inadequate authority to execute its actions. This weakens more the capacity to effectively coordinate and implement collectively prosperous policy in Africa. Nwanegbo (2006) noted that beyond the challenges of weak institutional arrangement, poor commitment by leaders is factor of underdevelopment of Africa.

The role of the political and religious leadership is particularly important in the governance project. The primary responsibility rests on the ability of the leadership to see beyond the perceptual vista of the people, appreciate their needs, and inspire and motivate them to cherish and desire these needs as goals that should be achieved (Chikendu, 1987). This serves as a pedestal for achieving peace, security and sustainable development in any society.

Indicatively, both political and religious leadership features prominently as factor responsible for development crisis in the African continent. Thus, this paper is poised to unravel the political and religious leadership question in Africa's Post-Colonial Development Crisis

Development, Development Crisis and leadership

Development entails an evolutionary process in which the human capacity increases in terms of initiating new structures, coping with problems, adapting to continuous change, and striving

purposefully and creatively to attain new goal (Thomas, 2004). This implies that development could be understood as a social condition within a nation, in which the needs of its population are satisfied by the rational and sustainable use of natural resources and systems. It is a significant occurrence that involves transformation, changes, progress and growth towards nation building. Development is a process of economic and social transformation that is based on complex cultural environmental interaction. It represents the whole gamut of change through which an entire system moves away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory, towards a situation of life or condition regarded as materially and spiritually better. Thus, any event or period that will lead, or may lead, to an unstable and dangerous situation affecting an individual, group, or all of society amounts to development crisis. Development crises entail negative changes in the human or environmental affairs, especially when they occur abruptly, with little or no warning.

On the other hand, De-development depicts a process which undermines or weakens the ability of an economy to grow and expand by preventing it from accessing the necessary resources for development. It underscores the relationship between development and underdevelopment. Meurs and Ranasinghe, (2003) argued that de-development is a reduction in the stock of capital available to a group or population and inflows, or income, loosely associated with those stocks. Declines in the stock of available infrastructure also interact with other variables to affect long-term prospects. Reduced infrastructure availability undermines investments in health and education, cuts off populations from employment opportunities in nearby areas, and reduces incentives for investment. The de-development problem results when investment flow declines below the level needed to replace depreciated capital stock. This situation is largely influenced by the developmental policy decisions made by governments.

Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership attributes, such as beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge, and skills. Leadership is essentially a continuous process of influencing behaviour. It may be considered in context of mutual relations between a leader and his followers. The leader tries to influence the behavior of individuals or group of individuals around him to achieve desired goals. Obiakor (2004) stated that leadership is a dynamic process, which deserves study. It is a relational process involving interactions among leaders, members and sometimes outside constituencies. Leadership implies the ability to pilot and navigate the society into desired circumstances and conditions of living. It requires the ability to be knowledgeable, innovative, explorative, flexible, accommodating, altruistic and skillful.

Underdevelopment refers to a socio-economic structure which is subjugated and dominated by another social formation. Rodney (1972) averred that underdevelopment is not the absence of development, because every people have developed in one way or the other and to a greater or lesser extent. Rather, it refers to the low level of development characterized by low real per capital income, low life expectancy wide-spread poverty and underutilized of resources (Tomislav, 2018). Underdevelopment is characterized by a disarticulation mode of production, absence or low levels of proletarianization, over marginalization of the peasantry, low levels of productivity, high rates of unemployment and under-employment, chronic foreign debt and balance of trade problems, dependence on raw materials, exports and industrial product imports, low levels of living, absolute poverty, inadequate food and poor nutrition, low income, dictatorial and corrupt leaders amongst others.

Theoretical Framework: Marxian post-colonial state theory

This study is anchored on the Marxian post-colonial state theory. This theory is an offshoot of the classical Marxian political economy approach. The proponents of the post colonial theory such as (Jakuboski, 1973; Alavi, 1972; Ake, 1985; Ekekwe, 1986) have separately posited that post colonial states are characterized by class struggle between the dominant class and the proletariats. Essentially, the theory of post colonial state views the state as an instrument of primitive accumulation by the dominant class and their collaborators (Alavi, 1972). As Jakuboski (1973) succinctly explained, the “ruling class are both politically and economically dominant and constantly creates new avenue for holding down and exploiting the ruled or proletarian class. The major contention of these scholars is

that the post-colonial state is a creation of imperialism and as such, has followed a developmental strategy dictated by the interest of imperialism and its local allies against the over all good of the people.

According to Ekekwe (1985), the post-colonial state rests on the foundation of the colonial state. It was on the basis of this that the post-colonial state came into being in the first place. The central focus of the Marxian Post-colonial theory of the state is premised on understanding the nature, structure, history, composition and character of the state in order to ascertain the dynamics of development and processes within the states. The theory suggests that the post-colonial state is a creation of imperialism. In this regard, an understanding of the history, nature and character of the state becomes imperative grasping the trajectories of socio-economic and political formations, their configuration and transformation in Africa. As was the case with the colonial state, the distinguishing characteristic of the post-colonial state in Africa is its lack of autonomy; power was highly fused and used by those in control of the state simply as the instrument for serving their own interests thereby perpetuating the post-colonial quagmire, (Oladipupo, 2011).

The post-colonial state, despite the anti-colonial struggles altered very little in the arbitrariness of its predecessor (the colonial state). This is especially the case in countries of Africa where independence was negotiated with the colonialists. Negotiated independence, implied that the structures of the colonial state were not changed in any fundamental sense; it was just a change of personnel. The African political leaders tend to focus on control of political and state power for protecting and promoting the interests of members at the expense of the masses. They have kept virtually all the state apparatus at hostage through skewed electoral process and undemocratic leadership thereby weakening the capacity of the state to ensure rule of law. This has resulted to lack of accountability, unprecedented abuse of power for selfish pursuit and personal aggrandizement, as well as crass misrule. The consequence is development crisis for it negates the core ingredients of salient attributes of development such as education, infrastructure, discipline, accountability, responsiveness and transparency. This is a threat to development in Africa.

Ake (1985) averred that one basic character of the post-colonial state is that it has very limited autonomy. This implies that the state is institutionally constituted in such a way that it enjoys limited independence from the social classes, particularly the hegemonic social class. This lack of relative autonomy is one reason why the post-colonial states in Africa is beclouded with leadership deficits orchestrated by endemic corruption, money laundering, skewed policies, arbitrariness, disregard for rule of law and prebendal politics and consequent development crisis.

The situation is rooted in the neo-colonial capitalist character of the post colonial states. Despite its analytical power, the Marxian Post-colonial theory has been attacked for been ambiguous, vague and tendency of changing through “new forms of social collectivity in the postcolonial world. Nonetheless, this theory is relevant and suitable to understanding leadership factor in Africa’s post colonial development crisis because it shows that state power becomes is lucrative desire of leaders as an instrument of power and wealth against the interest of the citizenry whom they are expected to serve. This raises the question of why African leaders use state power for personal aggrandizement instead of the general good of the people and development.

Understanding Africa’s Development Crisis in the Context of Her Post-coloniality

Postcolonialism entails the historical period or state of affairs representing the aftermath of Western colonialism. It refers to the struggles of indigenous peoples in many parts of the world in the early 21st century. Postcolonialism is concerned with both how European nations conquered and controlled "Third World" cultures and how these groups have since responded to and resisted those encroachments. Nair (2017) noted that Postcolonialism focuses on the human consequences of the control and exploitation of colonized people and their lands. It has to do with how societies, governments and peoples in the formerly colonised regions of the world experience international relations.

Also, the colonial and imperial histories still have in shaping a colonial way of thinking about the world and how Western forms of knowledge and power marginalise the non-Western world. As a concept,

postcolonialism is concerned with the disparities in global power and wealth accumulation and why some states and groups exercise so much power over others. Post-colonialism has gone and continues to go through three broad stages: an initial awareness of the social, psychological, and cultural inferiority enforced by being in a colonized state, the struggle for ethnic, cultural, and political autonomy and a growing awareness of cultural overlap and hybridity. The foregoing suggests that heterogeneous ethnic composition of African states, inept political leadership, corruption, poverty, human rights violation and proliferation of small arms and light weapons are responsible for policy summersaults in Africa have constituted a hindrance to development of the continent as seen in the critical short supply of the core values of development.

Africa's Development Vicissitudes in the Post-Colonial Era

Development in Post-colonial Africa is seen in the improvement of physical infrastructures particularly in the areas of health, education and communication. New universities, agricultural research centres, national transport networks and local government structures were established to facilitate the national development project' (Annan, 2004). African states subsumed foreign trade to national priorities and sponsored import-substitution industrialization through the production of consumer goods for the domestic market. Fiscal and monetary policies, tariff barriers, and preferential taxation were used to get foreign investors to manufacture products domestically, and where they could as in Algeria and Ghana established state-owned heavy industry.

In the twenty-three years between 1960 and 1983, African states quadrupled the primary school enrolment rates they had inherited from eighty years of colonial rule. Secondary school enrolment multiplied six-fold and the number of university students increased twentyfold (Arrighi, 2002). Arrighi, (2002) further noted that 'up to 1975, the African performance was not much worse than that of the world average and better than that of South Asia and even of the wealthiest among First World regions (North America). Economic growth with per capita growth between 1960 and 1975, at 1.5 per cent to 2 percent annually was experienced across Africa, (Atardi and Saia-i-Martin 2003). The Agricultural sector also witnessed a boom as Africa had become a net food exporter by the turn of the 1970s (Alan & Carlos, 2020). For instance, Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda, Guinea and Ghana adopted superficially similar policies broadly known as African socialism which encouraged state ownership of larger organisations and a drift towards one-partyism. However, Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire adopted policies supporting market-driven economic development. Both were the favoured regional centres of the colonial era, and both continued to outpace their neighbours in economic growth terms. During this period, the Kenyan economy grew faster than that of Malaysia and the economy of Côte d'Ivoire grew faster than that of Indonesia (Alan & Carlos, 2020).

More so, the period between 1975 and 1995 which was characterised with stagnant per capita income in Africa, the 1990s witnessed some growth patterns in the continent. As growth began to accelerate, incomes rose and poverty began to decline though in slow but steady fashion (Alan & Carlos, 2020). Between 1965 and 1973 the industrial sector as a whole expanded twice as fast as GDP, and although much of this expansion was in the mining sector, manufacturing in food processing and textiles also grew at an annual rate of seven percent between 1960 and 1980 (Cooper 2002). But over the long run, import substitution did not advance as African states had hoped. In Mali, for instance, production of foodstuffs dropped from 60,000 tons in 1967 to 15,000 tons in 1975 as a result of the expansion of cash crops such as cotton and peanuts, although the revenue these generated could not cover the costs of expanded food imports (Abdul-Raheem, 1996). Alan and Carlos (2020) argued that despite the global financial crisis, many African countries continued to grow reasonably strongly after 2008. Most commodity prices fell, but not nearly to pre-boom levels. Some of the continued growth derived from continued government expenditure on consumption and investment drawing on borrowings. Many African governments issued sovereign bonds for the first time. But a further sign of African growth taking a new direction is that a considerably higher proportion of government debt is now locally funded, reducing currency risks and increasing government accountability.

Africa's development in the post-colonial era focused on modernisation which is transforming Africa to look like Europe or America (Cooper, 2012). The economic legacy of resource dependency and the

isolation of growth to small extractive enclaves continued (Becker, 2014). Limited institutional capacity, small domestic markets, shortages of skilled labor, and weak or on-existent infrastructure and failed to stimulate backward, forward, or lateral linkages, or to attract foreign capital outside the extractive enclaves. These structural limits were exacerbated by the veritable corruption of state elites who used the state institutions to extend their patron-client networks rather than enhance development. As such, the post-colonial African states still represent institutional amalgams that are vulnerable to periodic convulsions and military incursion into politics with two hundred aborted or successful coups across the post colonial Africa, (Cooper, 2012). Berry (2002) enthused that the prevailing communal or smallholder systems, and the limited institutional capacities of states, frustrated the various projects intended to remake the moral economy of African peasantries.

Leadership-Development Conjecture in Africa's Post-Coloniality

The primary responsibility of leadership in any society is the creation of favourable conditions for investors and the people to engage in development. This shows that there is an inextricable nexus between leadership and development in any society because leadership is expected to champion the wellbeing of the society. In other words, the nature and character of leadership in any society determines its level of peace, stability, and development (Crocker, 2019). This affirms the position that leadership is the key to assessing implementation of set targets in any society. Thus, development requires the political leaders to be the primary holders, controllers and distributors of state power and resources in the society (Iheriohanma, 2010). In this sense, Leadership should be able to predict the future and the effects of its policies on the socio-economic and political existence and harness resources of for the greater good of the majority of the people (Iheriohanma, 2010).

The quality of leaders has become a major issue in the establishment of the democratic process and its success in Africa. Incompetence in leadership in most African countries is not only the problem of people who occupy positions in government; it is a reflection of the leadership culture. The expectation from African leadership to strategically confront the developmental needs of Africa and ensure poverty reduction has is still elusive.

The emergence of democracies in post-colonial Africa produced two groups of leadership in Africa which consist of those elected leaders such as Patrice Lumumba and Kwame Nkrumah who were nationalist and charismatic leaders. To them, leadership meant more than power; it meant loyal service to their nations and their continent. The legacies of such leaders brought positive development to their countries and have remained reference points even in the modern day leadership discourse. The second group comprised Africans brought to leadership positions by colonial powers who have remained loyal to their masters and through them, the former colonial powers have been exercising control over African nations.

The coexistence of these two groups of leadership has had negative effects on the fate of African people and development. The African continent has been therefore known for poor leadership vacuum laced with foreign manipulations with negative impact on development in the continent, (Salawu, 2012). Van Niekerk, (2009) noted that Africa's underdevelopment lies in the comprador leadership style of African heads of state and government. Evidently, Leadership and Development in Africa seem not have asymmetric nexus but are organically linked so that the former precipitates the latter and the latter, an indicator of the former. This tends to explain why underdevelopment in Africa is linked to leadership failure in the continent despite availability of huge human and material resources.

In effect, the greatest hindrance to Africa's development revolves around the inability of the leaders to direct concerted energy to African-oriented development which would address inequality, social injustice, inequity and marginalization of the local people in decision-making process. The African leaders seem to have neglected the African traditional methods of inclusive development that should bring together the knowledge, skills, and labour of all community members and involve them in decision-making process (Bayart, 2010). This has led to erosion of need-oriented, self-reliant, indigenous, and environmentally sound development in Africa. The leaders placed lesser premium on the production of commodities that are more likely to be consumed locally to ensure their marketability.

Africa's development has failed to be rooted in indigenous peoples' sense of moral and values, and the connections between the social and natural worlds.

Breakfast, Meko and Theletsane, (2018) argued that the myriad of institutional factors such as leadership, corruption and neo-patrimonialism have contributed to post-colonial Africa's development crisis. The scholars pointed out that the African political elite/bureaucrats need to take some responsibility for Africa's underdevelopment due to its corrupt activities characterized by elite accumulation (via the state machinery), lack of public participation and poor leadership with the attendant negative spill over effect on development (Breakfast, Meko and Theletsane, (2018, p.34). The challenges emanate from faulty leadership recruitment process, insincerity of leadership, resurgence of secessionist agitations as seen in Nigeria, Cameroon, Sudan, DRC, Central African Republic amongst others, ethno-religious loyalty as against loyalty to national constitution, lack of national narrative resulting to individual narrative, lack of social cohesion, perpetuation of institutional discrimination-classification of people as indigenes and non indigenes.

More so, the Post colonial Africa has remained underdeveloped because the continent has kept consuming what it does not produce and producing what it does not consume. As such, the continent exhibits a neglect of the development of its human resources. Poverty of leadership in Africa has made it unstable for development to take place on the continent as only 12 countries (Botswana, Mauritius, Cape Verde, Seychelles, Namibia, SaoTome& Principe, Zambia, Ghana, Benin, Rwanda, Comoros and Sierra Leone) have Political Stability Index Score of more than -0.0 on a scale of 2.5 and the highest value is Botswana with 1.03 points and the lowest value was Libya with -2.33 points (Breakfast, Meko and Theletsane, 2018).

In this regard, leadership failure has been the major challenges in the African continent leading to development crisis. Chris, (2013) noted that over the years, Africa has been seemingly unlucky with good leaders. From East to West, Central and North Africa, the continent has been inundated with uncharismatic leaders; of little or no vision to move African states to greater heights and perhaps as equal participant in the comity of nations. Consequently, the post-1960s African leaders, both those that came to power through fraudulent election and via the barrel of the gun are all locked up in the culture of plunder and power intoxication. They set their ideas and values more on 'self' rather than in 'national' context; as such taken retrogressive steps that plunges the states further into socio-economic and political decay (Chris, 2013).

The Africa as a continent that has so far had more than a fair share of all that is bad leadership resulting to backwardness, kleptomaniac, outright destructive tendencies and autocratic siege, (Chris, 2013). While the West African sub-region has the worst record of recurrent military coups, the East, North and Central Africa, in spite of less frequent coup d'état, seem to have the worst record of the worst dictators and sit-tight rulers that have be devilled the continent. These areas have produced Idi Amin of Uganda, Emperor Jean BedelBokassa of Central African Republic, Daniel ArapMoi of Kenya, Hastings Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, Menguistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia, SiadBarre of Somalia, Mobutu SeseSeko of Zaire and Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe.

Nigeria alone has had nine military coups and six military heads of state. Ghana has had five military coups and four military heads of state. Sierra Leone has had five military coups and four military heads of state. Burkina Faso has recorded the deaths of two heads of state - President Yameogo and Thomas Sankara. Mauritania had had three military heads of state. This list continues with assassination of some leaders. If poor leadership by the civilian was the core reason of the various military coups and counter coups as well as the associated taking over of power by the military, then they should have been some level of positive change in Africa. Unfortunately, most African states remain highly under-developed and her citizens living far below poverty line.

The sit-tight syndrome of some African leaders such as Robert, Mugabe of Zimbabwe), Yahya Jammeh of the Gambia, Paul Biya of Cameroon amongst others have failed to bring about development in these countries. Sadly, some who cannot capture power by violent means render their country ungovernable

by sustained guerilla warfare as in the case of Jonas Savimbi of Angola. Ngugi (1986) aptly captured Africans leaders' proclivity for self-glorification, inefficiency, vindictiveness and lack of foresight which eventually leads the entire society that such leaders control towards self- destruction. As such, African states such as Nigeria, Cote D'Ivoire, Sudan, Kenya and others tend to have moved towards retrogressive development than sustainability.

Due to leadership failures the post colonial Africa has been burdened by unmitigated despotism, debt burden economy, deteriorating social services and infrastructures, huge unemployment, dwindling fortunes of agriculture due to repeated and unabated herders-farmers crises, fractionalization of the ruling class, bad governance, large scale corruption and near collapsed security apparatus; full of helpless youths with unfulfilled dreams; very vulnerable and ready to challenge the state albeit violently.

Chris (2013) argued further that African states have remained in a vicious cycle of stunted development characterized by all indices of destructive governance; not as a result of colonial invasion, but by the character of its leaders manifest in prebendal power politics, endemic corruption, clientelism and politics of patronage. Iheriohanma (2010) lamented that with specificity that about 500 million people who work but earn less than a dollar per day are found more in Sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, Africa is described as one of the poorest, the most technologically backward, the most debt distressed and most marginalized region globally. Africa has about 12.5% of the world's population that lives on less than USS 1 per day, accounts for about 1.5% of the global trade in goods and services, exports less than 20% of its GDP annually and produces only 3.2% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Iheriohanma, 2010).

This is puzzling because it was Africa's rich endowments that attracted the colonialists but the continent is still enmeshed in a seemingly complex maze of development crisis. This is largely attributed to the comprador leadership styles of African political elites and how such leadership has impeded African quest for development. African leaders in the course of more than fifty years of independence have plundered the continent into development crisis. In deed, corruption has permeated the system while leadership has been at best authoritarian. This has created a wide gap between a few rich and (a greater) majority of the poor population within and between African economies

Implications of leadership deficits for Africa's development aspirations

The problem of Africa, according to Chinua Achebe (1983), is simply and squarely the failure of leadership. To him, nothing is basically wrong with the African land or climate and collective psyche or anything else. Instead, African problem is the heartless unwillingness and unacceptable inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibilities and challenges of personal example, which are the hallmarks of true leadership. Achebe's assertion lays the foundation for understanding the inevitable negative implications of leadership failure on development in Africa. The underpinning variable for achieving development in any society is its leadership because no matter its ideological formations.

Incidentally, the post-colonial African leaders have been submerged in the culture of plunder, power politics and chronic corruption. Over the years bulk of the funds allocated to capital projects has been looted by political leaders. From the military heads of state to civilian presidents, Most African countries have recycled leaders who have held the country hostage for decades living in its wake a ruined economy and dysfunctional political institutions. As a result, apart from few cases in Africa, the education sector is still in shambles, the health sector has virtually collapsed, unemployment rate heightened and crime rate unabated. Fundamentally, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and many other African states namely Niger and Kenya among others tops from the bottom in the UN Human Development Index (HDI [UNDP:2011]) in the last decade with the exception of Botswana that has shown signs of sustainable growth and development.

Therefore, the failure of African leadership has drained huge developmental resources by way of embezzlement and hence making every capital project on the continent a potentially abandoned government project. Favouritism, nepotism, ethnic and religious dichotomisations have also bereaved the leadership of its objectiveness in maintenance of law and order and peaceful coexistence among

Africans for meaningful development to thrive in Africa. Poor leadership has been at the root of Africa's problem, resulting to poor management of public resources, the inability to ensure development and maintenance of a transparent economic and regulatory environment through sound policies. Lack of purposeful leadership in Africa since independence that has subjected her people to poverty, unemployment, poor infrastructure and weak institutions characterized with gross violation of human rights and absence of the rule of law. Development crisis is a serious indictment of the quality of leadership that those at the helm of African countries since the post-colonial era. This is because the effectiveness of every other sector is anchored on the quality of leadership in the society.

Unethical Behaviours in the Governance Process

Corruption is when an individual illegally or illicitly puts personal interests above those of the people and the ideals he or she pledges to serve. It is behaviors which deviate from formal duties of the public role because of private interest regarding pecuniary status or gains. The causes of unethical behaviors in the public service are many and varied but here we shall identify three main factors as being central to it. These include political, economic and cultural factors.

Politics as a key factor of corruption affecting ethics in the public service has four dimensions. The first one has to do with the situation whereby emphasis is laid on politics rather than administration. Usually, political values are emphasized and they tend to take precedence as well as dominance over administrative values of anonymity, impartiality and neutrality. The ascendancy of political values over those of public administration is mainly for exploitation and the use of power for personal gains. Another dimension of the political factor is that the existing political environment has also promoted corruption in governance and administration. When a political leader comes to power, he faces two main problems. Firstly, there is usually lack of a national political culture that especially promotes an institutionalized political system which guarantees safe entry into power and safe exit. What this means is that you cannot guarantee the political leaders' safety or survival on the seat of power: hence, the tendency to bend the rules of fair play and administrative values to perpetuate himself in power.

Another political dimension to the issue of ethics in the public service administration has to do with the general lack of national unity in most parts of Nigeria, and Africa generally. Especially, given the problem of ethnicity and the general scarcity of resources and also, given that the state has a dominant role in the ownership and control of the commanding heights of the economy; there is usually a battle for political power and positions. Those in government want to shut-out those outside and those outside want to come in by all means. The leadership usually is able to do so by mainly bending the rules of the game.

The final political dimension to the ethical problem in the governance process has to do with the lack of effective political leadership. Political corruption is more prevalent in situations where the leadership is weak and ineffective. This leads to widespread disobedience, violation of rules and directives by public officials including collusion with powerful individuals. Under such circumstances, the erosion of basic civil service regulations becomes quite a normal exercise. In view of this therefore, we can say that political leadership especially in Africa have personalized the political system in order to give legitimacy to their actions. The resultant effect of this has been the creation of bureaucratic elite which relies on politics to keep its exalted positions (Orji, 1997)

Apart from the political factor, the religious leadership factor is also central to explaining the erosion and decay in ethical standards and the lack of accountability in the states of Africa and Nigeria in particular. Fundamentally, we can say that central to the corruption of civil servants is the decline in religious standard. Jev (2011) is of the view that, given the general high levels of impunity due to poor religious leadership, it has become difficult to expect public servants to resist the temptation to bend or violate the rules and regulations for extra gains when given the opportunity to serve in the public office. It has also been found that when people are exposed to unethical behavior that earn them extra income, sooner or later the behaviour becomes habitual. The usual tendency is to demand for bribes as a right.

Conclusion and recommendations

Africa is a continent that is not only naturally endowed but also stocked with the human resources who are committed, devoted and determined to succeed in every sphere of life. The exploits of Africans in various sectors even outside of the African soil are testament to the undeniable potentials of the Africans. However, irrespective of the abundance of human and natural resource including favourable climate in most African countries, the continent is still grappling with development crisis occasioned by lack of purposeful leadership. This has led to the comatose state of development in Africa. African underdevelopment lies in the comprador leadership style of African leaders which has bastardized education, infrastructure and cultural values. The failure of African leaders to vigorously pursue indigenous and pro-people development programmes has continued to stultify development aspirations on the continent. The challenge is heightened by the predominance of recycled old corrupt political elites and in some cases sit-tight rulers. From Nigeria to Niger, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Equatorial Guinea, the story is the same: corrupt and incompetent leadership. The present crops of leaders are seemingly stagnating the continent in a pit of perpetual poverty and de-development; living African economy heavily unable to improve the quality of lives of Africans or cater for their short and/or long term needs. The spill over effects manifest in poverty, unemployment, poor infrastructure, low life expectancy, escalating insecurity situations in Africa.

To combat the post-colonial Africa's development crisis, this paper recommends a radical shift from the existing anti-progressive leadership system to a more people-oriented and sustainable paradigm as well as a new sense of visionary leadership capable of lifting Africa from the prevailing developmental crises. Also, there is need for massive investment in education, infrastructure and value re-orientation mitigate Africa's post-colonial development crisis. Above all, there is no substitute for good leadership and strong institutions as critical engineers of development. Africa requires leaders that are guided by the true tenets of leadership such as transparency, accountability, inclusive governance and national patriotism.

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