Teetering on Africa's Development Trajectories
A Search for an African Alternative

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses the so-called key drivers of development in post-colonial Africa in the contexts of African leaders' conceptualisation thereof. It exposes the divergent concepts of development that have appeared to uniformly retard Africa's progress. The article acknowledges the myriad of institutional factors such as leadership, corruption and neo-patrimonialism that have contributed to post-colonial Africa's development challenges. In pursued of its argument, the article's approach is explorative and descriptive, thereby justifying the adoption of qualitative literature assessment methodology. Theoretically, the article holds a Pan-Africanist worldview wherefrom Africanism is central to all development. It is worth noting that not much scholarship has been done within the fields of Public Administration and Management on how modernisation as a theory has created a scope for elite accumulation in post-colonial states on the African continent. This article is an attempt to close the gap in scholarly discourse with regard to Africa's development trajectories. Due to the multiplicity and complexities of Africa itself, there can be no universal monolithic description of Africanism; hence, the article recommends that post-colonial Africa's development process should, starting with the determination of philosophical orientation, planning and policy decisions, embrace public participation.

INTRODUCTION

Development is a complex concept and its practice has been elusive, especially for Africa. Being subjective, development means different things to different people. The World Bank (1997) refers to development as a qualitative improvement of the lives of the people, which includes quality education, better health services, alleviation of poverty, equal social and economic opportunities for all races, respect for cultural practices, maximum individual freedom and a clean environment. Willis (2010) follows the same line of thinking arguing that development should be measured by an improvement of quality health, education and reasonable standard of living, among others. This appearance of simplicity of development entails a complex and elusive reality.

This complexity derives from the divergent and, sometimes, contradictory conceptions of development. Proponents of development as a process of structural change conceive it as "historical change" (Thomas 2000, 2004). The view of "structural transformation" and "long-term transformation of economies and societies" and long-term as Gore (2000:794–795) observes, has been pre-dominated in the 1950s and 1960s. The key features of this perspective are that it is focused on the process of structural societal change as well as historical aspects and long-term outlook. This perspective implies a major societal shift in one dimension, for example from a rural-based society to an urban or industrially-based society. Sometimes, this perspective is stretched to embrace a problematic interpretation as a as shift from "traditional" to "modern" society with radical implications in dimensions such as societal structural changes in terms of class within relations of production. This understanding of development emphasises change in the relationship between the owners of capital and labour (Deane 1965), which tacitly suggests that capitalism is accepted as a form of societal development.

Theoretically, the article holds a Pan-Africanist worldview wherefrom Africanism is central to all development. It is worth noting that not much scholarship has been done within the fields of Public Administration and Management on how modernisation as a theory has created a scope for elite accumulation in post-colonial states on the African continent. This article is an attempt to close the gap in scholarly discourse with regard to Africa's development trajectories. Due to the multiplicity and complexities of Africa itself, there can be no universal monolithic description of Africanism; hence, the article recommends that post-colonial Africa's development process should, starting with the determination of philosophical orientation, planning and policy decisions, embrace public participation.

SLIPPERY CONCEPTS OF DEVELOPMENT

Development relates to a wide view of domestic changes, which does not relate to any particular set of objectives and is not necessarily prescriptive. Equally, there is no expectation that all societies would follow a predetermined development process. Countries for example do change overtime and, generally, experience economic growth and societal change. However, development is itself a contradictory process that may involve crises in the course of progress. Despite its generally non-prescriptive nature, this perspective has a strong resonance with the "meta-narratives" (meaning overriding theories of societal change) that dominated development studies) during the Cold War. These were the grand visions of societal transformation–either desirable transformation as modernisation, or desirable as a process of emancipation from underdevelopment. These are the different perspectives which, generally, attempted to prescribe their own common pathway to an industrialised society. These meta-narratives of development as structural societal change were deemed to be unsatisfactory in explanatory power in the late 1980s. According to Hickey & Moham (2003), the failure of this approach to development has been associated with reasons for a shift from conceptions of development as structural change.

Another perspective portrayed development as "a vision or measure of progressive change" (Gore 2000:791). This view is narrower in definition and technocratic or instrumental as some would argue. At its basic level the view is simply concerned with development as occurring in terms of a set of short- to medium-term "performance indicators" – goals or outcomes – which can be measured and compared with targets. It is therefore the best instrumental element which is favoured by practitioners within the development community notably is likely to be favoured by practitioners within the development community. The key feature of this second perspective is that it is focused on the outcomes of change so that it has a relatively short-term outlook and "ahistorical" (Gore 2000). This view is however problematic to others because it presupposes a set of (essentially bureaucratic or government) goals or objectives which may not be shared by many of the people who are supposedly benefitting from development. The thinking is that paternalistic assumption of what is good for people's well-being based on universal values and characteristics. This also raises a question of 'ownership' not so much in the context of the government but more in the context of the people, the poor in particular. According to Gore (2004), there is a concern that this short-term and instrumental view of development loses the (grand) vision of societal transformation and separates the conception of development from socio-economic structures, social relations and politics.

Furthermore, conceptions of development took a radical perspective which suggested that development consisted of "bad" outcomes resulting from the imposition of Western

ethnocentric notions and practice on Third World societies. This is the "post-term" conceptualisation of development (it can also be referred to as the "post-development", "post-colonial" or "post-structuralist" position). This conception emerged as a reaction to the deliberate efforts at progress made in the name of development since World War II and was triggered in particular by the 1949 Declaration by the United States (US) President Truman that: "... we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of under-development areas" (cited in Esteva 1992:6).

There has been a debate within the field of development about the dominance of a particular ideology, the exclusion of certain groups (for example, gender, ethnicity, religion or class) and the processes and procedures of development (for example, top-down, bottom-up and participative). Some of these have been presented as development alternatives and have played a significant role in drawing attention to some of the problems of development. John Brohman's book entitled *Popular Development: Rethinking the Theory and Practice of Development,* is divided into two parts: the first deals with mainstreams theories and practices, and the second with alternative theories and practices, leading to a new framework that he calls "popular development." He has however been criticised for making a clear distinction between the mainstream and alternatives even though it is evident that the adoption of alternative approaches by the mainstream has led to a blurring of the boundaries between them. Development alternatives have not remained alternative for long – many of them have been successfully and often quite rapidly absorbed into the mainstream. The alternatives are presented as popular and people-centred, including approaches such as gender and development.

Against this background, this article examines what have been the key drivers of development in Africa's post-colonialism and how African leaders have conceptualised the concept of development. For African leaders, development means modernisation which is nothing else but Europeanisation or Americanisation of Africa. The objective of development therefore is to catch up with European capitalism and lifestyle. Europeanism then became a prototype or model of development. This exploratory article is embedded within the anti-positivist ontological perspective, using a qualitative descriptive approach and a subjective epistemological standpoint. That is, analyses in the article are informed by value judgments rather than objectivism. To this extent, the article examines conceptions of Africanism in development.

Pan-Africanism represents the complexities of African political, economic and intellectual thought over two hundred years. Hence, the theoretical framework of Pan-Africanism is relevant in this article when examining the complexities of development

on the African continent. At a basic level, it is a belief that African peoples, both on the African continent and in the Diaspora, share not merely a common history, but a common destiny. This sense of interconnected pasts and futures has taken many forms, especially in the creation of political institutions. It is very interesting to note that Pan-African consciousness was born beyond the shores of Africa, pioneered by the African Diaspora (Breakfast & Mekoa 2016).

According to Abdul-Raheem (1996), the concept of Pan-Africanism first entered the political lexicon in the early 1900s when Henry Sylvester Williams, then based in London called a conference of African descent to protest stealing of land and racial discrimination, among other things. It was, however, in 1919 when African-American scholar and political activist, WEB Du Bois, convened what he called the first Pan African Congress in Paris, which was followed by a series of Pan African congresses (Breakfast & Mekoa 2016). While the period 1900–1919 can be cited confidently as an important reference point for the Pan African movement, other scholars will argue that the roots of the movement stretch beyond to that period during the slavery of Africans by Europeans five hundred years before. Hence, the founders of Pan Africanist movement have been Africans from the Diaspora who were the descendants of the Africans captured in the transatlantic slave trade (Abdul-Raheem 1996).

Afrocentric studies developed out of the desire to reconstruct the African consciousness. As Asante (1988:9) writes, "we have one African cultural system manifested in diversities". Asante further states that "we respond to the same rhythms of the universe, the same cosmological sensibilities, the same general historical reality". The goal is not necessarily about recreation of the African values and genius in the context of postcolonial world. Afrocentricity also does not use pigmentology as its defining element. As a discipline it operates from a unique perspective on a coherent culture (Asante 1990). By culture is meant "shared perceptions, attitudes, and predispositions that allow people to organize experiences in certain ways" (Asante 1990:9). It is not "simply the study of black people but the study of African people from an Afrocentric perspective" (Asante 1987:163). Asante explains: "the Afrocentricist seeks to recover and use codes, paradigms, symbols, motifs, myths, and circles of discussion that reinforce the centrality of African ideals and values as a valid frame of reference for acquiring and examining data" (Asante 1990:6). The conditions of the African people on the continent are rooted in three main problems: different expectations from independence by the political and bureaucratic African Leadership on the one hand, and on the other hand the popular masses; wrong concepts of development; and, the design of the imperial or neo-colonial powers on Africa (Machyo 1996:35). The problems of independent Africa have been a combination of the legacy of colonial rule and problems imposed by the international economic bodies like

the IMF and World Bank. This international economic order has also been very hostile to Africa particularly after gaining its independence. Thus, when African leaders gained political control the economic order was controlled by the international institutions. They had to preserve the political independence of their national state, preserve their national integrity and promote peace and well-being for their people but at the same time adhere to the dictates of their hostile international economic institutions. Thus genuinely speaking, Africa has never been ruled by single leadership but internally by African leadership which exercise political control, and externally by international economic institutions which executed economic power (Breakfast & Mekoa 2016).

The economic power has in most cases been more powerful than political power and even dictates political direction. It is against this background that contemporary Pan-African and political representations should be understood. Not as essentially a negation, but profoundly affirmation, of indigenous African knowledge systems through reversal of both epistemicide and linguacide. Hence the need for a research that speaks to and engages African authenticity: one that is not just combative but more importantly liberatory. Admittedly, and with all its imposed obstacles, the post-colonial era provides a poignant strategic opportunity to reverse epistemicide and linguacide, and duly reclaim indigenous African knowledge systems. The following section discusses critically the modernisation theory and its application to the African continent.

Modernisation Theory

Modernisation theory, one of the early approaches to development, is normally associated with Arthur Lewis and Walter Rostow and came into prominence during the early 1960s. However, it must be noted that modernisation was not a unitary theory. It was a process and not just an economic event. Both these development economists held a firm view that economic growth should be at the center of development in society (Breakfast 2013). They were of the view that the labour market in the traditional sector of the economy should be modernised in order to attract investment, and that economic growth would subsequently be expected to follow. Proponents of modernisation argue very strongly that Third World countries should follow the same development path as that followed by First World countries (Rostow 1960; Graat & Venter 2004).

Supporters of modernisation embrace the Darwinian theory of evolution in society. This implies that society is not stagnating but that it is dynamic and should evolve as time goes on. This reinforces the argument that culture should be subjected to change. In the discourse on modernisation there is an emphasis on new technology and science in the modern world (to promote development). Scholars of the modernisation school

tend to blame political leaders in developing countries for misleading their people by implementing centrally planned economies such as socialism as opposed to market oriented economies (Rostow 1960; Coetzee 2004; Martinussen 2004). According to these scholars, the reliance on the state does not accelerate development but rather hinders the process from occurring, because they hold the view that socialism does not attract foreign direct investment. Advocates of political modernisation blame the internal dynamics in developing countries for a lack of development. Central to this diagnosis is corruption in developing countries, especially in Africa. Corruption is singled out among other things as one of the main causes of underdevelopment (Warren 1980).

Developing countries, according to this school of thought, should embrace Western standards of government such as bureaucracy, multiparty democracy, liberal democracy and a vibrant civil society. According to the political theory of modernisation, liberal democracy is the only path to development, because it protects the right to own private property or business. Moreover, liberal democracy is perceived to be promoting free enterprise which is supportive of capital and its maximisation of profit (Harrison 1995; Chazan *et al*. 1999; Marshall & Scott, 2005). Fukuyama (1992) asserts that liberal de-mocracy is the only political system that can unify different people globally. Fukuyama (1992) further states that liberal democracy alongside the free market system principles has succeeded in promoting economic development in First World countries including some aspects of the impoverished developing countries.

However, both neo-liberalism and modernisation have been criticized by a number of scholars for emphasizing the dominance of the market while not changing the lives of poor people for the better on the African continent. According to Fine (1998, 2010), a proclamation made in 1998 by Joseph Stiglitz, a former senior vice-president, and senior economist at the World Bank, stated that the "Washington Consensus" had failed; and, that a "post-Washington Consensus" was needed and should encourage both the state and market forces to work together for economic development. Modernisation theory implied that African/developing countries were expected to follow the economic ap-proaches embraced by Western countries. Nonetheless, European countries, through multi-lateral institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund were misleading developing countries by telling them to open up their markets. While they themselves protected their own local markets, in trade relations, European governments are subsidising their own local farmers. These bilateral and multilateral trade agreements between the South and North are essentially unequal. This leads one to question the objective of modernisation theory in relation to development in Third World countries (Breakfast, 2013).

Dependency Theory and/or Approach

Dependency theory is a neo-Marxist-inspired theoretical framework. Frank (1980) blames the First World countries for lack of development in less developed countries. Frank (1980) goes on to say that developed countries are misleading developing countries by advising them to adopt capitalist economic policies that do not provide employment opportunities. He concludes that "in their view, unemployment has graduated from being merely normal to being natural as well, for business and certain politicians; unemployment has become not only natural but downright desirable. This being so, economists have had to catch up with the times" (Frank 1980:73). Proponents of the dependency school blame international forces such as multinational corporations for exploiting the resources of the developing countries. They hold colonialism and post-colonial relations between First World countries responsible for the lack of development. These multilateral relationships are based on exploitation of the natural resources of the developing countries. The root cause of underdevelopment in Third War countries is located in "imperialist expansion" (Baran 1957; Frank 1969; Chazan *et al.* 1999; Graat & Venter 2004; Martinussen 2004).

Wa Thiong'o (2005:20) argues that the international bourgeoisie appoints people in developing countries to manage their resources. He calls this particular class the "comprador-bourgeoisie". According to him, this class has a direct relationship with the "international bourgeoisie". He concludes by arguing that the comprador bourgeoisie receives its instruction from the international bourgeoisie on how to manage the economy of developing countries, consistent with Fanon's (1967) formulation. The economic exploitation between First World countries and Third World countries is made possible by the distortion of developing countries' economies to serve the interest of developed countries of the North. Again, neo-imperialism undermines industrial production in developing countries, which are flooded with imports of cheap manufactured goods from First World countries and by insisting on the cheap export of raw material. Proponents of the dependency theory criticise the architects of the modernisation school for misleading developing countries that poverty alleviation can be achieved by following capitalist ideology (Baran 1957; Frank 1969; Amin 1989; Abercrombie, Hill & Turner 2000; Martinussen 2004; Graat &Venter 2004; Marshall & Scott 2005). Warren (1980: 3–7) criticises the dependency school for placing "emphasis on external factors" such as imperialism. Internal political factors are also to be blamed for underdevelopment in developing countries and they include corruption, abuse of state institutions and patronage (Jackson & Jackson 1997; Kleinberg 2007). The main shortcoming of the dependency school of thought is the over-emphasis of the importance of external forces.

However, this observation does not mean that foreign capitalists are not also exploiting the resources of the developing/African countries. It should be borne in mind that public officials and the political elite in Third World/African countries are to be singled out for causing underdevelopment by stealing public funds meant for development. For instance, it is alleged that the Gupta family in South Africa has been appointed as a service provider within the state machinery due to its relationship with President Jacob Zuma. This was confirmed by some senior politicians in the African National Congress (ANC), namely Mcebisi Jonas and Vytjie Mentor who have been critical of the Gupta family by accusing them of "state capture" and influencing key government appointments. According to the State of Capture Report (Public Protector 2016:4), "the Public Protector received three complaints in connection with the alleged improper and unethical conduct relating to the appointments of Cabinet Ministers, Directors and award of state contracts and other benefits to the Gupta linked companies". This is an example of corruption, poor leadership and neo-patrimonialism on the African continent. Added to this, Bayart (2010:1–5) refers to rampant corruption in Africa as "politics of the belly". This implies that both the political and economic elites are using social capital to accumulate wealth via unethical practices at the expense of the poorest of the poor. Over and above, these are some of the gaps of the dependency theory with regard to underdevelopment in Africa. The next section discusses the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and how it is linked to modernisation.

CHALLENGES FOR THE NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT

NEPAD has its roots in the Millennium African Recovery Programme (MAP) and the Omega Plan for Africa, which was described by its authors as "an African strategy for globalisation". The Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme was a pledge by African leaders based on a common vision, and a firm and shared conviction that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and to participate actively in the world economy and body politic. It is anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalising world. The poverty and backwardness of Africa stand in stark contrast to the prosperity of the developed world. The continued marginalisation of Africa from the globalisation process and the social exclusion of the vast majority of its peoples constitute a serious threat to global stability (Taylor & Nel 2002).

Even though MAP was promoted as a joint initiative of Algeria, Nigeria and South Africa, it was a brainchild of the former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki (Gumede

2007). It was adopted by the Heads of State Implementation Committee (HSIC) in Abuja, Nigeria in 2001 (Kanbur 2001). NEPAD aims to provide an overarching vision and policy framework for accelerating economic co-operation and integration among African countries. Core issues in the marketing of NEPAD focus on the Partnership as:

- A "holistic and comprehensive integrated strategic framework for the socio-economic development of Africa" providing a vision for the continent;
- An African plan conceived and developed by its leaders, with ownership a primary concern.
- A platform for engaging with the rest of world in a partnership (Kanbur 2001:1).

NEPAD's four primary objectives are: to eradicate poverty, promote sustainable growth and development, integrate Africa in the world economy, and accelerate the empowerment of women (Kanbur 2001). It is based on the principles of a commitment to good governance, democracy, human rights and conflict resolution; and, the recognition that maintenance of these standards is fundamental to the creation of an environment conducive to investment and long-term economic growth. NEPAD also seeks to attract increased investment, capital flows and funding, providing an African-owned framework for development as the foundation for partnership at regional and international levels (Bond 2006). The basic idea of NEPAD is a coordinated development attempt rather than the haphazard country specific current economic planning and development which have put Africa in a bind, a kind of warp of regression and under-development. A central theme of NEPAD is that Africans must take control of their own destiny (Gevisser 2007). In the document, one finds such uplifting declarations as "Africans must not be the wards of benevolent guardians, rather they must be the architects of the own sustained upliftment" and hope of Africa's peoples for a better life can no longer rest on the magnanimity of others (Kanbur 2001:1). However, when it comes to the question of mobilisation of resources for development in the central theme also it NEPAD seems to contradict this statement with this assertion.

To achieve the seven per cent per annum growth rate needed to meet the IDGs (International Development Goals) – most importantly, to have poverty incidence by the year 2015 – Africa needs to fill an annual resource gap of 12 per cent of its GDP, or US$ 64 billion (Kanbur 2001). This will require increased domestic savings, as well as improvements in the public revenue systems. However, the majority of the needed resources will have to be obtained from outside the continent. The NEPAD focus on debt reductions and ODA as complementary external resources required in the short to medium term, and addresses private capital flows as a longer-term concern (Kanbur 2001:1). NEPAD has been criticised by African scholars and civil society in Africa as playing into the "Washington Consensus" model of economic development. NEPAD calls

on member countries to work with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the African Development Bank and the United Nations (UN) agencies to accelerate the implementation and adoption of the Comprehensive Development Framework, the Poverty Reduction Strategic and related approaches (Kanbur 2001).

Akindele *et al.* (2006:7) also shares the same sentiments that "… the failure of neo-liberalism as contained in the World Bank/IMF programmes in Africa and other victim states elsewhere painfully brings forth questions relating to the possibility of attaining the lofty objectives of NEPAD for sustainable local level governance". This is because these policies have failed severally to lift Africa and other victim regions from the quagmire of poverty (Akindele *et al.* 2006). Thus, it makes it doubtful whether any initiative built on the same framework would succeed. Hence, doubt whether the initiative that derives its impetus from outside Africa and smacks of falsehood to foist originality on this new-colonial conception. Africa-driven development initiatives were all killed by the same forces that are today encouraging the NEPAD scheme (Akindele *et al.* 2006). According to Akindele *et al.* (2006:7) "... another problem that could pose a challenge to the proper integration of African States as well as the successful implementation of NEPAD's aims and objectives is also the exiting conflict between member states which arise as a result of territorial and border conflicts most of which dates back to colonial days". One of the most serious problems facing Africa in the post-colonial period is the series of political conflicts which have plagued the continent since independence. Some of the conflicts have colonial origins as are evidenced by the involvement of ex-colonies. Ex-colonies though not directly involved in conflict have been implicated of supporting either side of the conflict. These political conflicts have contributed largely to Africa's underdevelopment.

This situation of permanent conflict has turned away African leaders' attention from developmental issues. A lot of time and resources have been lost in the process. This level of political instability and unpredictability on the continent is also a major cause of low investment as foreign and local investors continue to regard Africa as a risk. It is argued that the leadership that emerged after independence "was characterised by pretentious, megalomaniacal venality" (Ayittey 1992:101). It embraced foreign revolutionary ideas, and misperceived the process of development. Democracy, freedom for which African leaders fought was sacrificed.

CONCEPTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Machyo (1996:41) explains how African leaders conceive development: "The growth theory of development therefore means to produce more for export". The fundamental

structural are not permitted. The colonially imposed vertical division of labour supported by the theory of "imperatives advantages" must be adhered to. In that model, the people are treated as a means not as the object and of development. Accordingly, the aim of development is not to meet the people's basic needs: food, clothing, shelter, education, health and cultural requirements. These are not primary. The result is that "wealth accumulated by foreign investors is superimposed on the people, it becomes not only superficial, but ideologically, technically and culturally oppressive and exploitive" (Machyo 1996:41).

Therefore, development in Africa means service of the African people to serve foreign aid, IMF, World Bank and imperialists who are against genuine development in Africa. Genuine development means the development of the people with their concern and cooperation. The objective of development should not be just to develop a thing but people. Genuine development has to recognise that human beings have basic needs: food, shelter, clothing, health and education. Therefore, any process that does not lead to the fulfillment of these basic needs is a travesty of the idea of development. Western development only benefited the West and increased social inequality, thus being exploitative like its system of capitalistic economy. Industrialisation which is in effect what Western development means, does not bring about a greater measure of prosperity, and lift poverty well above the breadline, it has not in many other respects led to a better quality of life. For example, the movement from rural areas into cities and towns, led to family breakdown. Instead of mutual support of rural communities, the new urban dwellers live in very competitive and harsher conditions.

Western development has always been prejudiced against rural areas and in favour of the towns. The new industries that came with development were concentrated in towns and cities, where there were better facilities for production and ready markets for their goods. This led to the deterioration of rural life and economic endeavours, and led to migration to towns and cities to seek employment; thus, fostering urban-bias. This was not only a blow to traditional life but also traditional ways of farming. This Western developmental prejudice created a situation where the needs of rural areas, for roads, communications, goods and services, agricultural supplies and investments were neglected in favour of urban areas. Therefore, urban areas benefitted at the expense of rural areas. Development in Africa therefore has not only been unfair but also ineffective. It has failed to resolve the African problem of poverty. African leaders on the attainment of independence followed with passion and hope wrong Western concepts of development which in turn exposed Africa to extreme poverty. This was not because of lack of knowledge or alternative forms. Western monopoly of development left Africa an empty shell; hence, after three decades of independence Africa is still extremely poor. Since independence no African leader has worked outside the influence, direct or indirect, of

the advanced capitalist countries like the United States or United Kingdom in its internal affairs. Through the so-called foreign aid, IMF and World Bank have always wielded decisive influence on Africa's economic development. There has never been in Africa the indigenous development, that is a development thought and development by Africans for Africa. That is the kind of development that will meet their needs and not those of foreign investors. Both the United States or the United Kingdom or colonial powers were not prepared to see any real development take place in Africa. The reason was summed up by Baran (1960:11) in the following statement: "What is decisive is that economic development in underdeveloped countries is profoundly inimical to the dominant interests in the advanced capitalist countries supplying many important raw materials to the industrialized countries, providing their corporations with vast profits and investment outlets; the backward world has always presented the indispensable hinterland of the highly developed capitalist West". Therefore, when the colonial powers in particular surrendered political power to the African elites, they did not want to see any fundamental changes in the structures they had built in their colonies and in the dominant relationship between the ex-colonies and so-called mother countries.

They did not want to see African leaders tampering with the vertical division of labour bequeathed to them by the colonial officials. They wanted to see African ex-colonies continuing with their role of producing raw materials and providing a market for the manufactured commodities imported from the industrialised capitalist countries. Hence one can see that independence did not end the foreign domination and exploitation of Africa. Davidson points out that "the point ... to emphasise is that the extraction of wealth from an already impoverished Africa was in no way halted by the transfer of power ... a transfer of poverty continued as before, even while the means of transfer were modified or camouflaged" (Davidson 1992:219). The conditions of the African people who had hoped that independence would change their conditions of poverty brought by colonialism are now becoming worse. Under the IMF's "Structural Adjustment Programme" African people have become extremely poor. According to Turok (1987), the IMF programme failed in Africa because the policies pursued amounted to a massive betrayal of the interests of the people. As a result of this anti-people policies, the African people lost confidence in the governments run by African people (Turok 1987:17).

TEETERING ON AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORIES

It has become evident that Western styles or forms of development prescribed for African continent have failed to achieve its objectives. Thus, the present problem of dependency

and underdevelopment in Africa will not be solved by current strategies. Western developmental models were transferred to Africa without taking into consideration local needs and priorities. Some African scholars have questioned the suitability and viability of the liberal development model for Africa. They have forcefully argued that Africa has to go beyond liberal development to African-oriented development which would address not only the question of formal equality but that of social justice and equity as well. One of the critical problems with current development practice in Africa is the marginalisation of the local people in decision-making process by Western developers. Hence, Dei (1998) asserts that Northern development experts, researchers, and practitioners for example, cannot continue to examine or promote development in the periphery as if they are not implicated in the structures of global domination and exploitation of the South. The denial of complicity does not allow these so-called experts to examine the complex and sometimes problematic relationship between the researcher and the group with which he or she is working.

Abrokwaa (1999:666) offers some strategies for African-oriented development for use by African governments and policy makers: "African governments and policy makers should employ the African traditional methods of communalism which brings together the knowledge, skills, and labour of all community members and involve them in decision-making process". Involvement of members of community in decision-making process helps to create democratic participation and give insight into the viability and feasibility of the proposed developmental project: In Africa and any other third world area the local people are always kept out of decision making process, and forced to accept whatever is given to them. Communalism as one of the strengths and foundations of African societies can become an effective political tool to initiate and implement major developmental projects (Abrokwaa 1999).

Development must also be need-oriented, self-reliant, indigenous, and environmentally sound. This strategy would clearly define projects and expect outcomes or results. The developmental projects based on regional needs rather than large-scale national needs tend to produce good results. In addition, the emphasis must be placed on the production of commodities that are more likely to be consumed locally to ensure their marketability (Abrokwaa 1999). The strategies adopted must lead to sustainable development and focus on building local capacities, so that people can become initiators and implementers of their own development on their own terms (Abrokwaa 1999). African leaders are also urged to be committed to the economic upliftment of their people instead of exploiting them for individual selfish ends. If the central political system, which has the power to endorse all projects, is fully committed to the well-being of the people, it is more likely that concrete results would be realised

from implemented projects because such projects would be adequately financed (Abrokwaa 1999).

The final strategy offered by Abrokwaa (1999) is the urgent need to democratise both the domestic and the international economic order to allow equal participation in the decision making process. Industrialised countries should not trade with African states only on the terms laid by them (Abrokwaa 1999). It is evident that Western definitions and models of development have failed in Africa. They have impoverished the people of Africa and drawn them into insurmountable debts. It is therefore time for Africa to take the lead and define her African-centred development. According to Dei (1998:143–144),

> "It is development that reflects the lived realities and the goals and aspirations of the grassroots of African communities. It is a form of 'development' rooted in indigenous peoples' sense of moral and values, and the connections between the social and natural worlds. It is a critical perspective on development that argues that local communities should own and control the solutions to their own problems. But real and effective community control is possible only if the development agenda seeks to centre indigenous knowledge systems in the search for solutions to human problems. This means articulating an alternative conception and praxis of development, one that does not reproduce the existing total local dependency on 'expert advice'. Local input must be from the grass roots and should tap the diverse views, opinions, and interests manifested in the communities. How we can help to tap such local knowledge to assist the development process is our challenge".

One of the critical problems with current development practices in Africa is the marginalisation of the local people in the decision-making process by Western developers. Hence Dei (1998: 144) asserts:

> "Northern development experts, researchers, and practitioners for example, cannot continue to examine or promote development in the periphery as if they are not implicated in the structures of global domination and exploitation of the South. The denial of complicity does not allow these so-called experts to examine the complex and sometimes problematic relationship between the development researcher and the group with which he or she is working".

It is not by chance that Africa has remained underdeveloped. Consuming what it does not produce and producing what it does not consume, the continent exhibits an imbalanced, externally oriented economic structure that can, to a large degree, be attributed to the neglect of the development of its human resources and to its colonial legacy (Adedeji 1993).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The article explored the factors that present challenges to conception and practice of development in Africa, raising concerns with prominent theoretical formulations. It outlined the evolution of development thinking relating to Africa as well as the predominance of modernisation thinking and Western-driven paradigms. It argues that for African leaders, development is conceived as the work of foreign investors developing local people to catch up with their type of modernisation. The concepts range from the conception that development in Africa is a service of foreign Aid, IMF and World Bank. Even NEPAD's goals locate themselves a broad international development debate, while at the same time locating local ownership as an African-driven and African-focused initiative. What is clear from the various conceptions is that there is no room for African initiated development and African driven. Its prospects of success are based on foreign interventions. It fails to accept that foreign aid and intervention has failed in Africa. It is also clear that the present problem of dependency and underdevelopment in Africa will not be solved by current strategies. However, this article does acknowledge some of the institutional factors that have contributed to Africa's underdevelopment, namely poor leadership and corruption in particular neo-patrimonialism.

Among other things, the article proposes that the African political elite/bureaucrats need to take some responsibility for Africa's underdevelopment due to its corrupt activities. This implies that not all African problems should be attributed to Western universalism. There are other complexities at play, namely elite accumulation (via the state machinery) and poor leadership. Clearly, this cannot be blamed on the modernisation theory. It is an African problem caused by African people and has a negative spillover effect on development. This signifies that underdevelopment is not a simplistic concept. Suffice to say, it has complexities at play. Among other things, the article recommends that African political leaders and civil servants need to put the interests of the majority of people first, before their personal interests in order for development to take place. That is, a process of public participation needs to take place before the application of the development theory. People from different sectors and backgrounds need to play a meaningful role in making a development policy.

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