Capacity Building for Socio-economic Development in Africa: A Case for Developmental State

Peace A. Jiboku[1] and Joseph O. Jiboku[2]

[1]International and Public Affairs Cluster, School of Social Sciences,
University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, South Africa
Telephone: Student Number: 212520820, E-mail: jiboku.peace@gmail.com
[2]Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities,
University of Fort Hare, East London Campus, East London 5200, South Africa
Telephone: Student Number: 201210493, E-mail: jibokujoe@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT Despite Africa's economic growth in recent years, it remains the least developed of the world's major regions. Africa still harbours most of the least developed countries in the world while it also houses a number of the world's fastest growing economies. The continent therefore presents contrasting trends. Its persistent political, socio-economic and environmental challenges reveal an indisputable reality: On the one hand, development initiatives implemented at the national, regional and continental levels have yet to impact on the majority of the people. On the other hand, there appears, perhaps, to be gaps in policy conception, formulation, implementation and evaluation. These are concerning issues which need to be addressed especially with the challenges posed by a fast globalising world. This paper presents a theoretical research and a critical review of the topic. It draws a linkage between democracy, governance and development in a conceptual framework and argues for capacity building for individuals and institutions on ground in Africa towards achieving sustainable socio-economic development in the continent. To this end, the paper advances the call for developmental African states that would trigger the much needed transformation of the African continent.

INTRODUCTION

Africa is well endowed with mineral and primary energy resources. With an estimated 9 percent of the world's population, the region accounts for approximately 28 percent of the total value of world mineral production and 6 percent of its crude petroleum output. In recent years, its share of the latter is increasing. Of sixteen important metallic and non-metallic minerals the share of Africa in ten varies from 22 to 95 percent of the world production *(*A 1964 United Nations survey of economic conditions in Africa quoted in: Rodney 1972: 28).

Africa's mineral potentials increased with new discoveries of more minerals and expansion of known ones. The National Geographic Society (1996-2017) in its work "Africa: Resources" provided detailed insights into the continent's physical geography, environment and resources, and human geography. In Nigeria, for instance, new oil fields have been discovered, bitumen and other minerals have also been discovered (Eboh 2016). These discoveries in Nigeria are similar to what obtain in many other African countries (see Munyaneza 2017). Despite the enormous resource endowments which are capable of catapulting the continent and its people to higher developmental pedestal, what a paradox of underdevelopment exists! Indeed, while some parts of the world especially in Africa, which are naturally endowed wallow in poverty, other parts of the world that have either exhausted their natural resource endowments or are not well endowed are wealthy and enjoying high living standards. Africa has been plagued by several challenges such as: inadequate food supplies, poor health facilities, ethnic and religious crises, intra-state and inter-state conflicts, economic underdevelopment, environmental degradation and resource depletion, and continued marginalisation in world affairs. After five decades of independence of most African countries, the hopes of achieving good governance and economic prosperity are yet to be realised. Although in recent times, a number of African countries have been named among the fastest growing economies in the world, such economic growth has not led to poverty reduction and job creation that will ensure meaningful socio-economic development and improved standard of living for the mass of the African people.

A cursory look at a number of global development reports reveals that Africa has for the past half a century remained one of the regions with the highest estimates of the share of world people living below the poverty line of One Dollar ($1) per day (Alexander - BBC News 2012). In fact, the Millennium Development Goals Report (UN MDG 2014:9) records that majority of Africans live on "less than $1.25 a day". A World Bank Report (2015) stated that "the rate of extreme poverty fell in the region from 56% in 1990 to 43% in 2012". Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest infant mortality rate of deaths before age one per 1,000 live births (UNICEF 2014:5; WHO 2014). In similar vein, Africa holds the lowest record of life expectancy relative to the rest of the world (WHO 2014). A large segment of Africa's population resides in rural communities where they may not enjoy the benefits of national social policies and some do not know that these benefits exist (Motsamai and Zondi 2010:8). Africa is home to a large percentage of the world's refugees (Africa Renewal 2016-2017), and accounts for majority of the people who live with HIV/AIDS (WHO Factsheet 2017). Also, a significant number of Africans still die from malaria, cholera and other related preventable and treatable diseases (Rull 2015). Sub-Saharan Africa houses a large number of mal-nourished people in the world (FAO/IFAD/WFB 2014: 12) as food insecurity remains a challenge in the continent.

Among other indices of underdevelopment is the low literacy level in the continent which has impacted negatively on the ability of the people to actively participate in the exploitation of the natural resource endowments. Skills shortages abound within the various sectors of socio-economic life, despite high levels of unemployment and large population (Ogunade 2011). This scenario gives room for foreigners to come in as expatriates to fill the skills gap and take advantage of the resources to the detriment of Africa. If the resources were to be exploited by Africans and used for the benefits of the continent, the story would, perhaps, have been different.

The effects of poverty and widespread diseases in Africa are further aggravated by environmental challenges such as drought desertification, deforestation, and poor agricultural practices (Penny 2009). These human security issues have triggered intra-state and inter-state armed conflicts which characterise many African countries (African Sun News 2017). The negative impacts of intra-state and inter-state conflicts on Africa's development efforts cannot be under-estimated. Beyond causing instability and insecurity in the continent, conflicts have also led not only to loss of lives and property but also to diversion of funds to peace-building efforts in place of provision of the basic necessities of life for the African people. It is therefore not surprising that with these challenges, Africa has remained a weak player in the international community.

The persistent political, socio-economic and environmental challenges confronting Africa are clear indicators of the continent's need of sustainable socio-economic development and the call has gone out for developmental states which would transform the African continent. The researchers argue in this paper is that Africa will confront its daunting challenges if at all levels – national, regional and continental, the political leadership promotes good governance, implement deliberate and appropriate policies which would align with the realities and needs of the continent and reflect the choices of the African people. Some useful lessons could be derived from the experience of the East Asian new industrialised countries (NICs) which were formerly colonised but have made significant progress and improved their economies. The issue of capacity building is important in this discourse. As such, various policy frameworks which could be effectively implemented and individuals, structures and institutions on ground in Africa which should be strengthened to cause a change in the continent are identified in this paper. The researchers argue that capacity building in Africa is dependent on effective leadership of the continent. As such, capacity development for socio-economic development in Africa should begin at the level of African states to act as beacon for other institutions and structures of development.

Objectives

Different scholars have written on issues which impede African development; democratisation challenges and poor governance of the continent. This paper contributes to such discourses by acknowledging that Africa is in quest for good governance and socio-economic development. Extending these ideas, the paper argues that what Africa needs are developmental

states that will trigger the much needed transformation of the African continent. It thus identifies different personalities, structures and institutions whose capacities could be enhanced to build such states. The researchers examine the issues which impede Africa's socio-economic development and proffer meaningful suggestions for a way forward.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This is a theoretical paper and based on desk research incorporating the work of scholars who have written extensively on issues with regards to Africa's governance and socio-economic dilemmas. Secondary data were obtained from relevant texts, journal articles, conference, workshop and seminar reports and institutional lectures. Secondary data obtainable from reliable internet sources were also used. The researchers undertook a thematic discourse analysis in order to explore salient economic and political issues analysed in the paper. Discourse analysis is a "methodology for analysing social phenomenon that is qualitative, interpretive and constructionist" (Hardy et al. 2004: 19). The interest in undertaking discourse analysis is exploring social reality and, in doing so, focusing on the relation between text and context. It enabled the researchers to connect the issues examined in this paper with previous discourses.

Definitional Issues

Capacity Building

Capacity is a concept which can be viewed from different perspectives. It is used to connote the capabilities, attributes, skills, abilities, competencies, of individuals, groups or organisations to solve problems, perform and achieve intended results overtime (Bush 2006:4). Peter Morgan, in his work: *Study on capacity, change and performance: The concept of capacity (2006)* identified five characteristics of capacity. Capacity, according to Morgan (2006: 6-7) can be used to denote "collective ability – that combination of attributes that enables a system to perform, deliver value, establish relationships and to renew itself. Or put another way the abilities that allow systems – individuals, groups, organisations, groups of organisations – to be able to do something with some sort of inten-

tion and with some sort of effectiveness and at some sort of scale over time".

On the other hand, the concept of "capacity building" is used interchangeably with "capacity development" or "capacity strengthening" to refer to the reinforcement, empowering, equipping and strengthening of institutions, structures, personalities, procedures that are meant to address problems, challenges or crises towards the realisation of development objectives (Bush 2006: 4; DFID 2010: 5; AIDSTAR/UNAIDS 2011: 1; Grantcraft 2015). Capacity building has become a buzzword in development discourses. It is employed by scholars, governments, local and international organisations from different perspectives and to define particular contexts. Enemark (2003:2) notes that capacity building, in some cases, has been "closely related to education, training and human resource management". It is typically viewed as "the development and strengthening of human and institutional resources" (WHO 2015). According to the DFID (2010:3), it involves "individual and organisational learning, is inevitably long term, and should be demand driven". Over the years, however, the concept of capacity building has assumed a broader perspective. The view of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (1992) is that:

Specifically, capacity building encompasses the country's human, scientific, technological, organisational, institutional resource capabilities. A fundamental goal of capacity building is to enhance the ability to evaluate and address the crucial questions related to policy choices and modes of implementation among development options, based on an understanding of environment potentials and limits and needs perceived by the people of the country concerned.

The UNDP prefers to use the concept "capacity development" as a broader term than capacity building in describing its approach (UNDP 2008: 2; UNDP 2008-2011). Capacity development according to the UNDP (2008: 5) "commonly refers to the process of creating and building capacities and their (subsequent) use, management and retention. This process is driven from the inside and starts from existing national capacity assets". Capacity development takes place at different levels. It includes the efforts of persons as well as organisations that exist within the enabling environment (UNDP 2008; Grantcraft 2015).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2015) notes that it should be recognised that the process of capacity development embodies both the efforts of both the public sector and private sector, including non-governmental organisations. In essence, the process of capacity development is one of "transformation of leaders and managers, communities and organisations from inside, based on nationally determined priorities, policies and desired results. It can be facilitated and supported, but it cannot be driven from outside" (UNDP 2008-2011: 2). Capacity building thus requires adequate commitment from the political leadership as the key actor promoting the agenda; notwithstanding, the success of the process is also dependent on the effective participation, cooperation and engagement of all state and non-state stakeholders (UNEP 2006:2; DFID 2010: 5). This is to ensure national ownership of development processes and a holistic and integrated effort towards realising key development objectives (UNDP 2008-2011: 5).

Capacity building is not only an important but also a continuous and dynamic process which involves a broad range of various groups in society (ECA 2006; UNEP 2006: 2; UNDP 2008). According to Eade (1997: 24), it is "an approach to development, not something separate from it. It is a response to the multidimensional processes of change; it is not a set of discrete or pre-packaged technical interventions intended to bring about a pre-defined outcome". Capacity building in any setting is a complex and difficult process (Bush 2006 :5; DFID 2010: 3), but if it is successful, impacts on sustainable socio-economic development (DFID 2010: 3). As the UNDP (2008:2) asserts, financial resources and official development assistance are important for realising developmental objectives, however, they are not sufficient to ensure sustainable socio-economic development. The UNDP (2008:2) underscores the point that "without supportive strategies, policies laws and procedures, well-functioning organisations and educated and skilled people, countries lack the foundation needed to plan, implement and review their national and local development strategies".

Development

Development is a multinational concept (Bellu 2011:2). It connotes positive trends such as improvement, progress and transformation at the level of individuals and society (Barder 2012; see also Rodney 1972: 9). Development, according to Barder (2012) consists of more than improvements in the wellbeing of citizens, even broadly defined: It also conveys something about the capacity of economic, political and social systems to provide circumstances for the wellbeing of a person on a sustainable, long term basis. Socio-economic development, in its comprehensive sense, entails "the attainment of equitable conditions in society where individuals have guaranteed respectable outcomes in income, health, food, personal security and participation in policy making processes in a democratic process" (CUTS 2007: 1).

The concept of development has been defined by scholars from different perspectives. Economic development is concerned with improvements in material living standards and therefore improvement in income, consumption, employment, savings and investments. It also relates to how resources, goods and services are distributed between different people and the processes that influence this distribution (see, Bellu 2011; Barder 2012). Social development focuses on "the social concerns of the people as objectives of development and people-centered participatory approaches to development. Indicators of social development provide comparative information about areas such as income, poverty, employment, employment security, education, health, crime, and civic participation" (Fritz 2004). In some cases, the environment is included in the list of social development indicators. It is a common belief that economic development will lead to social or human development. As such, socio-economic development implies the link between social and economic development emphasising progress in terms of economic and social factors within a geographic setting (Fritz 2004).

The interest in this paper is to identify individuals, structures and institutions on ground in Africa that are in need of capacity development and to examine the role of the African states as actors in driving capacity development agenda in the search for socio-economic development in the continent. The paper highlights that capacity development in Africa should take place at all levels – national, regional and continental but identifies that the role of African states is critical for the process to succeed. It therefore

advances the call for developmental African states that will drive the process of constructive change in the continent.

Democracy, Governance and the Developmental State Discourse

Scholars and writers have made attempts to establish a link between democracy, governance and development. Democracy promotes the values associated with good governance which is a necessary condition for development (Hope 2005: 284; Aredo and Adal 2009: 133-150; Landsberg 2012: 105-106).

Democracy does not lend itself to a universal definition. It is a broad concept used generally to refer to particular ways in which relations are organised between those who govern and those who are being governed (Schmitter and Karl 1991:4; see also, Schmidt 2002:1 47). The mark of democratic regimes, according to Schmidt (2002: 147) is "government of the people, by the people" (or elected representatives of the people) and for the people" (quoting Abraham Lincoln's famous definition of popular government). Democracy is a system of government that promotes majority rule; one in which citizens determine, through elections, who become their leaders. The adjective 'liberal' is added to show the emphasis of democracy on social justice, political liberties and popular or public participation in governmental affairs (see, Bollen 1993; Venter 2009: 28). The elements of liberal democracy can be enumerated, but essentially a liberal democracy does not entail only elections at particular intervals, but also the rule of law, individual rights and freedoms; constitutional checks and balances; transparency and accountability of political officials (Leon 2010: 5).

Democracy is a system of government that exists in line with the dictates of the social contract between state and society, as such, it could be argued that the seeming collapse of this contractual relationship in many African countries is what has led to different vices which have impeded the democratisation process and thus presented as obstacles to development. All definitions of democracy emphasise the participation of the people either directly or indirectly in the policy making process of government — an important element which could lead to the realisation of development. This is perhaps one of the reasons why most regimes want to be tagged 'democratic'. Liberal democracy is increasingly becoming popular as the "only, and unchangeable, good form of government" with on-going democratisation processes in many countries of the world (Chan 2002: 10-11). This has been influenced by the end of the Cold War and particularly by the emergence of the 'good governance' agenda within such international institutions as the World Bank as pre-condition for granting financial assistance to poor and developing countries (Chan 2002: 11). There is the argument that developing countries may fail to achieve economic growth and socio-economic development if they do not put in place structures and measures to promote good governance (Singh 2003: 2). As such, the pressure is mounted on such countries towards democratic governance, if at all, to attract international recognition (Singh 2003: 2; OSSREA 2009: 2).

Notwithstanding the positive values associated with democracy, this system of government has its weaknesses and may not necessarily guarantee development as witnessed in most African countries (see, Bollen 1993; Sankatsing 2004). Democracy and good governance are contested concepts among scholars especially in Africa. They are regarded as 'illusive' (Akokpari 2003:1) or rather 'elusive' (Venter 2009: 29) due to the inadequacies and failures of Africa's democratic experiments. African leaders have not only failed to put in place effective structures and institutions necessary to consolidate democratic governance, most regimes either fail to institute democratic norms or abide by democratic principles. With few exceptions however, the conduct of elections are characterised by violence while cases of election rigging are often reported (see, Santaksing 2004; Venter 2009). Not only is democracy equated with the conduct of elections, it is an issue of concern that the "values and ideals of liberal democratic governance have been misconstrued, even perverted, or negated by often corrupt political leaderships; leaderships interested neither in democracy and good governance, nor in the pluralistic dividends multiparty systems are supposed to deliver" (Venter 2009:39).

In the light of these shortcomings, it has been argued in fact that what Africa needs is a democratic developmental state (see, Amuwo 2010; Meyns and Musamba 2010; ECA 2013). The concept developmental state became popular in describing the economic progress achieved by the

Asian Tigers from the 1970s through self-sustainable efforts, promoting effective governance and strong and articulate policies. It reawakens the contestation among scholars and writers on the role of the state vis-a-vis the market in development (Page 1994: 219-220). While the developmental states of the Asian Tigers were not democratic (at least in their early years), the concern is that Africa requires states that promote democratic values such as broad-based participation and which would take centre stage in socio-economic development; promoting industrialisation, human capital formation and development.

According to Maphunye (2009:1-2), "the DS is by definition interventionist and pro-poor and seeks to address challenges such as poverty, low economic growth, lack of infrastructure and unequal development deliberately using state resources to address these challenges". The key features of a developmental state as Musamba (2010:21) outlines are: "development oriented political leadership, autonomous and effective bureaucracy, productive oriented private sector and performance oriented governance". For many scholars, therefore, it is possible to build developmental states within a democratic framework (Musamba 2010:27; Mkandawire 2010; ECA 2013:3). This is one of the key issues in the discourse of developmental states within the context of Africa. The question has remained whether it is possible to establish developmental African states and what form state intervention should take. Scholarly literature seems to be in favour of democratic developmental states (Musamba 2010; Mkandawire 2010; ECA 2013).

African countries such as Botswana and Mauritius have been considered to possess the qualities of a democratic developmental state (see, Routley 2012:10-11; George Klay Kieh Jr. 2015). More so, at different periods, governments of African countries such as South Africa and Ethiopia, Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda, have made reference to their commitments to establishing such states (Routley 2012: 10-11). In recent times, a number of African countries have been named among the fastest growing economies in the world (see, Radelet 2010); notwithstanding, the reality is that economic growth may have been achieved but has failed to translate to poverty reduction and job creation that will ensure meaningful socio-economic development and improved standard of living for the mass of Africans. Despite the existence of various national, regional and continental policies, the hopes of achieving good governance and economic prosperity are yet to be realised five decades after independence of most African countries. To this extent, the debate on the role of the state is significant in Africa considering the different development patterns (state-led and market-led) which the continent's leaders have followed in the post-independence period; poor governance record in Africa; leadership and policy failures; capacity deficiencies of both governmental and non-governmental institutions; and the continent's present political, economic and social conditions (ECA 2013-3-4).

African leaders are yet to emplace good governance and as such the continent lags behind in various indices of socio-economic development. It is concerning that despite the different economic Programs and development initiatives formulated by successive African governments at the national, sub-regional and regional levels, human security and human capital development challenges persist. Even though governmental policies may not have the same outcomes in different African countries (Motsamai and Zondi 2010:2), African governments and policy makers appear to have failed in prioritising the effective implementation of policies that take into account the needs of the African populace. Moreover, the civil society appears not to be actively involved in decision making processes. Thus popular participation, one of the key attributes of democracy and good governance is yet to take its firm root in African politics. Development processes in most African countries are considerably elite-driven.

The commonly expressed view among scholars is that Africa's problem is first and foremost that of governance (see, Kefale and Aredo 2009: 89; Salawu 2010: 348; Poku and Mdee 2011: 1-2). As Poku and Mdee (2011: 1) assert, "African leaders have proved themselves to be incompetent as state managers". It is believed therefore, that many of the solutions to the myriad of problems confronting the African continent could be found at the country level. The discourse on good governance in Africa, although has aroused several contentions among African scholars, centres on the need for strategic political and economic restructuring in African countries towards bridging the gap between the African state and its society and making the civil

society occupy its place in governance and development processes at all levels. The reality is that post-independence African states are weak and not yet adequately positioned to exploit both regional and global opportunities for continental developmental purposes. As such, the state has to be recreated.

DISCUSSION

Capacity Building for Socio-economic Development in Africa

This section of the paper addresses the question: What are those policy frameworks, structures and institutions which should be strengthened for socio-economic development in Africa? It explores the idea that capacity development should begin at the level of the state. Individuals, structures and institutions should be identified for the purpose of capacity development. The efforts of regional and continental organisations towards building democratic developmental African states should be strengthened. Discussions are made under the following themes:

Emplacing Effective Leadership Structures that Will Promote Good Governance in African States

Governments are put in place in order to attend to the needs of the citizenry, resolve conflicts and chart the direction for development. However, the priorities and policies of governments can themselves amount to serious problems for citizens and may negatively affect socio-economic development. This is the situation in many African countries where the concept of governance is still evolving and as a result the process of socio-economic development in the continent remains slow. Scholars agree that the collective influence of politics in development, poor governance, bad politics, corruption, weak state-society relations, weak economic policies and the lack of adequate provision for citizen' welfare (among others) are factors that impede Africa's development process (Salawu 2010; Poku and Mdee 2011; Cilliers and Schunemann 2013). The situation needs to be reversed. Africa is in dire need of effective political leadership that will promote good governance both at the state and regional levels. This is a key issue in

discourses on Africa's development as the success or failure of any group, organisation or society hinges on leadership. Africa is in need of democratic developmental states in which the people would have confidence in all arms of the government – legislature, executive and judiciary (see, Amuwo 2010). This type of state will promote good governance and drive the socio-economic development agenda in partnership with other institutions.

The concept 'good governance' has been variously defined by scholars as embodying several positive characteristics. Good governance, according to Srivastava (2009) is linked with "efficient and effective administration in a democratic framework. It is equivalent to purposive and development oriented administration which is committed to improvement in the quality of life of the people". The characteristics of good governance are "neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive, they are also complementary and mutually reinforcing" (Rwomire 2009:67). It includes "accountability and responsiveness of public officials to the citizenry, the rule of law and public access to information and transparency" (OSSREA 2009:1). Good governance is also closely linked to "political conditionalities as democratisation, politics of multi-party systems and commitment to free elections" (Rwomire 2009: 66). However, multi-party system which is important for democracy does not guarantee conditions for good governance or for popular participation in decision making processes of government (Nyamjoh 2009:39). It does not also mean that public officials would respect the rule of law, be accountable or that they would promote fundamental rights and political freedoms of individuals (Nyamnjoh 2009:39; Sankatsing 2004; Venter 2009: 28).

Good governance prevails under the conditions where there are mechanisms and processes for citizen participation in governmental affairs and in the policy making process. The governments recognise that they hold power in trust for the people while the citizens are aware of their rights to hold government accountable to implementing policies which affect their wellbeing (Venter 2009: 30). Where good governance exists, government is responsive, recognising the role of individuals as instruments of change and as such promote people-centred policies. This would ensure peace and stability, reduce potentials for internal strife and conflicts as well

as promote national integration. As Venter (2009: 30) asserts: "the different groups in the state demonstrate tolerance of one another in the pursuit of politics, and voluntary associations transcend the boundaries of kinship, ethnicity or race". Thus, good governance — its principles and conditions — are pre-conditions for socio-economic development (Landsberg 2012: 105).

Building Strong Institutions to Promote National Integration in African States

There should be more conscious attempts at nation-building in African states due to their extremely heterogeneous nature and political-economic history. While the differences in "languages, cultures, societal norms and natural resources endowments" (Adogamhe 2008:18) are important but not fatal features for the continent's sub-regional and regional development, the challenge however is that African leaders have failed to effectively manage the diversities in their states. As Jiboku and Uzodike (2015:6) note, "national integration has proven to be a challenge in many African countries in the face of endemic poverty, inequitable distribution of national resources, poor governance, political corruption, ethnic factionalisation, ethnocentricism and nepotism with consequent political-economic implications for national, sub-regional and regional development".

Africa suffers from weak institutions and this has impacted negatively in achieving the goal of nation building, a requisite element for socio-economic development (see, Salawu 2010; Ewusi 2014: 1-15). To this extent, the need for capacity building for institutions such as the military, police force, civil service, civil society and their various organisations, private sector, the media and educational sector becomes imperative. While the various challenges faced by these institutions are notable and the negative roles played by the police and military in African politics at different periods can be mentioned, the positive roles of strong institutions in fostering good governance, national integration and promoting socio-economic development need to be emphasised (see, Sakyi 2011). This paper advances the call for democratic developmental states supported by functioning institutions. This has become critical considering the political-economic history of the African continent and its present political and socio-economic challenges.

The new state according to Chimutengwende (1998) "must pursue cultural equality so that its members, although coming from different ethno cultural backgrounds, will feel that they are recognised both as political citizens and as cultural members". Thus, capacity building of various existing institutions becomes imperative and should begin at the national level in individual states. Political power will have to be shared satisfactorily among the component ethno-cultural communities and resources for development distributed equitably. A democratic developmental African state will provide enabling environment for the individuals and local communities to realise their potential. This will create a sense of belonging for citizens and equally attract their loyalty to the state.

A precondition for achieving socio-economic development in Africa is an end to the intra state conflicts that have continued to plague the continent. Efforts geared towards this direction should then be encouraged and sustained. Policies taken in this direction should be implemented sincerely by government while there is need for conscious desire by Africans to end the many conflicts in African states. Recognition of the moral worth and dignity of the individual human person will be imperative as these are the basis of any treatment – social, political, legal – that is meted out to the citizen of the state. The military, as an institution should be reorganised. Members of the police force should be trained and retrained on their duties in society. They should be strengthened and adequate welfare provided for them. These institutions should be trained on ways to fight crime in society and on the management of crises as they arise in society. Government should also be committed to fishing out the bad eggs in the police force. The civil servants in various government ministries and departments should be encouraged to maintain the principle of political neutrality in their administration. Emphasis should be placed on effective and efficient public service delivery.

Media houses should be adequately equipped to play key roles towards ensuring nation building (Nyamjoh 2009). Our educational institutions should be more equipped and government should be more committed to education funding. For instance, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) advocated for 26 percent of national budgets to

be allocated to education. Yet, many African countries have yet to comply with this idea.

Human Capital Formation and Development

Whilst it is arguable that most African governments in the post-independence period have made great efforts in the education of the youths of their countries, sub-Saharan Africa is lagging behind in the overall education of its people particularly in the areas of vocational and technical education which are crucial for the development of skilled manpower (UNESCO Report 2009-2014). Human capital formation and development is one of the key strategies that contributed to the economic growth and development recorded by the Asian Tigers.

Individuals are the basic instruments of the development of any nation (see, Adejumobi 2009) and they need to be empowered. It is important that their intellects, ideas, talents and visions be enhanced to promote development in society. As such, human capital formation and development of Africa's human resources remains critical for the much needed socio-economic development to be realised. It is this human capital that will be put in production of goods and services for the welfare of society. In essence, human capital implies investments that are made in people or that people make in themselves to improve their creative potential or skills, empower themselves in the labour market and by extension increase productivity (Rosen 1999; see Baah-Boateng 2013). Frank and Bernanke (2007:355) explain that human capital is "an amalgam of factors such as education, experience, training, intelligence, energy, work habits, trustworthiness, and initiative that affect the value of a worker's marginal product". To this extent, investment in human capital plays an important role in a country's economic development.

It is expedient that for Africa to realise its potentials in the 21st century, massive investment in training, capacity building, and skills development of the citizenry across sexes becomes an essential strategy. Skills development will not only assist in ameliorating social conditions, it will prepare the continent for re-emergence within the global community. Developing skills of the large population of the youth does not necessarily have to be limited to the formal educational levels. While formal education and training may be important, considering Africa's

historical and colonial experiences, emphasising formal educational setting based on attainment of specific academic level for training and skills development might exclude a substantial proportion of African youth. Many of the youth in rural areas, townships and cities (for no fault of theirs but the socio-political and economic conditions in which they found themselves) are deprived of basic formal education (Baah-Boateng 2013). Developing the skills and potential of the large youth population in order to make them productive, will no doubt lead to reduction in poverty and unemployment. It would strengthen the economic status of individuals and families and improve their standard of living. The spill-over effect of skills development at the level of the state cannot be under-estimated (OECD 2012:10-11).

Formulation and Implementation of Appropriate Economic Policies

The developmental state of the Asian Tigers were recorded to have made progress and improved their economies by formulating and implementing appropriate economic policies. They established economic relations with the rest of the world but the government played significant roles in ensuring that their states are positioned to exploit the benefits of global interactions (Meyns and Musamba 2010). This is one of the useful lessons which African leaders can adapt in order to derive advantages from regional and global opportunities. Africa's extroverted economies in which it continues to export raw materials and import finished goods is a setback to the continent's sustainable development (see, Greve 1980:24-27). In addition, the continent's over-reliance on external development assistance and aid whereas the natural resource endowments remain untapped at national, regional and continental levels are issues that need to be addressed (Murithi 2008:2; Jiboku and Uzodike 2015).

To this extent, conscious efforts at adding value to its natural resources and local production should be sustained. Africa would be able to fund its development projects if it addresses the issue of corruption and promote good governance (Aiyede 2010/11:63). These are the values associated with democratic developmental states. Effective implementation of policies on infrastructure development, information and

communications technology (ICT), sectoral development – agriculture, manufacture and industry should be prioritised. National laws geared towards mobilising resources for development need to be urgently implemented. Scholars such as Chimutengwende (1998), Evbuomwan (2007: 40), Akinkugbe (2010/11:131-132), Mwasha (2008: 78) and others have stated their positions on the imperative of accelerating the pace of Africa's regional economic integration process given the small size of African economies and markets and the current trends of regionalisation and liberalisation. Regional economic integration provides a strategy for strengthening Africa's economic position and exploiting both regional and global opportunities.

Strengthening Regional Economic Organisations

Major factors militating against effective regional integration in Africa include not only the lack of adequate political will, commitment and insincerity on the part of African leaders towards implementing regional agreements which they have signed but also African leaders' unwillingness to share national sovereignty (Adogamhe 2008; Gibb 2009). Regional integration arrangements in Africa have therefore recorded few successes. Intra-African trade has remained low so also is trade between Africa and the rest of the world (ECA 2010). Notwithstanding, Africa has no alternative than to embrace regionalism as a strategy to succeed in an era of increasing globalisation. Regional integration offers a viable framework for economic growth outside an exploitative global economic system governed by the wealthy industrialised countries of the North (Akinkugbe 2010/11).

This paper advances that African leaders and their citizens should make conscious efforts towards realising key objectives of regional integration. Regional economic institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Southern African Development Community (SADC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the African Union, and others need to be strengthened to achieve their laudable objectives. Their different structures and institutions are in need of capacity development to effectively perform assigned functions. It is taken fore-granted for instance, that the African Union is the continent's hope for the twenty-first century to cause a transformation in Africa and bring about significant progress to the masses of the people. The African Union, it is envisaged will perform the great task of bringing African states together, in unity, to foster economic cooperation and integration in all fields which will make the continent realise its long conceived visions and dream of a united and developed African continent (AU 2004). Despite the objectives of regional economic organisations which may have been well conceived, regional integration efforts at the sub-regional level and continental integration (as proposed by the African Union) are confronted with a lot of impediments which need to be addressed.

At the sub-regional level, policy makers should be committed to organisational goals and purposes. They should be committed to the implementation of the various policies and Programs mapped out for execution in the continent. Africa is not lacking in the formulation of regional integration initiatives; the challenge however, lies in effective implementation of regional agreements (Adetula 2008). African leaders and policy makers should be able to make sacrifices and commitments to promote continental goals rather than promoting nationalistic interests which may be detrimental to the continent's agenda. They would need to demonstrate their political will and commitment towards funding of regional initiatives.

The regional integration process needs to be democratised to encourage adequate civil society and private sector participation to realise the objectives. To this end, public enlightenments on the purpose of regional integration and establishment of regional organisations and the role of the non-state actors need to be enhanced. Regional integration in Africa should cease to be an elitist affair. Regional integration policies should emphasise the realities and challenges in the continent and reflect the needs of the African people. In essence, while regional integration institutions seek to address the challenges of African states and their peoples, it is evident that a democratic developmental state is imperative towards realising key regional integration objectives.
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CONCLUSION

This paper highlighted the different political and socio-economic challenges faced in the African continent and discussed their effects on the leaders and peoples of Africa and the subsequent socio-economic development in the continent. It argued that Africa's socio-economic

development problematic cannot be dissociated from the workings of post-independence African states and issues of poor governance and leadership in the continent. The paper identified the need for capacity building of individuals, structures and institutions and effective implementation of appropriate policies for Africa's socio-economic development. It thus advanced the call for democratic developmental African states to trigger and drive the continent's development agenda. To achieve this objective, the researchers recommend as follows:

RECOMMENDATIONS

African leaders and policy makers should address national challenges to derive maximum benefits from regional and global interactions. As the popular saying goes, *"Charity begins at home"*. Capacity building must take place at all levels beginning with the individual African states. The spill-over effects, no doubt, will be felt at the regional and continental levels. Two key recommendations are emphasised in this regard:

First, African leaders and policy makers need to be more committed to prioritising the implementation of deliberate and articulate policies towards improving the lives and conditions of the citizens. More of governments' intervention in human capital formation and development will go a long way in empowering African citizens to participate actively in developing the economy. The present low level of investments in education from elementary level to tertiary level need to be reversed.

On the other hand, the current curricular need to be reviewed in light of the skills requirements of the 21st century such that African schools and institutions will produce skills and manpower that are compliant with the technology age. It should be realised that the government cannot provide jobs for all its citizens; therefore, training and skills development Programs should emphasise employment generation, empowerment, and job creation. In this respect, the informal apprenticeship skills development Program needs to be revived and strengthened for the training of technicians and artisans to complement government efforts through the formal training institution.

In addition, multinational corporations which have benefitted extensively from the natural resources of Africa should, through appropriate legislations, be mandated to train not only their employees but also offer technical support to the masses through their training schools.

Secondly, the roles of different civil society organisations (CSOs) in advocating for people-centred policies need to be given formal recognition by government. Government should provide the enabling environment and support for civil society participation especially in countries where civil society groups' activities are yet to flourish because as much as government cannot function effectively without the civil society, the civil society needs the government to exist.

On the part of Africa's CSOs, there is need to build networks across African countries in order to pool their resources and function effectively, more so, to avoid duplication of functions of such organisations. A corollary to this is the fact that CSOs need to share best practices and ideas in order to improve on their efforts. Civil society should endeavour to live up with the confidence bestowed on them by the people. Civil society organisations need to be properly organised in their engagements with the state as they are often accused of criticising the policies and Programs of government. CSOs need to rethink their engagements with the state and their prioritisation of particular engagements.

African's civil society should be proactive and needs to own the processes of participation in order to be able to exploit the opportunities provided in regional initiatives of the African Union, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and its African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). This would be made possible more by African governments' willingness and commitments to own development initiatives formulated by them.

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