Africa's Political Environment and the Challenge of Underdevelopment

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Abstract: Over the last sixty years the principal agency of underdevelopment of Africa has been the international capitalist countries. Before the advent of the Europeans in Africa, the continent had robust economic, social and political structures because it was endowed with numerous inexhaustible both human and natural resources. These were seriously disrupted by the colonialists in the course of creating wealth for themselves through the means of exploitation. It is imperative to assert that the debate on the unprecedented political decay created by African political elite (the agents of colonialists) in power has dominated the political discourse among scholars from the region. Africa's environment has been shrouded in political violence, poor electoral system, incessant military intervention, ethnic/tribal segregation and unity in diversity, rising political cleavages resulting from multi-party system, bad political culture, corruption, alienation of African women from politics, greed and sit-back leadership, dictatorship, foreign influence, religious diversity, administrative mediocrity, secession threat resulting from marginalization of minority, and bad governance. The political instability in the sub-Saharan African States has been the function of political environment, manifesting itself as a chronic symptom of the underdevelopment of political life within the imperialist context. Political environment in the sub-Saharan African States can be explained based on the legacy of political authoritarianism inherited from the colonialists, a factor which resulted to political conflicts, instability and dictatorship. The political authoritarianism of the colonial states is a direct source of the authoritarianism that has plagued Africa. Colonialism created and shaped identities and cleavages in dysfunctional way as political centralization involves one clan dominating another. The conjunctivitis created by the underdevelopment trajectories has called for in-depth investigation into Africa's underdevelopment in the light of political advancement of the 'Asian Tiger' so that efforts towards experiencing political environment with high propensity of political advancement in the sub-Saharan African States could be attained. The study intended to apply the theories of modernisation and dependency to explain Africa's underdevelopment. Qualitative method will be utilised in the study.

Keywords: Africa, Political Environment, Underdevelopment

1. Introduction

Underdevelopment is a nomenclature associated with Africa, Latin America and some countries in Asia. The term, though derogatory, was coined by the Europeans to showcase the economic, social and political backwardness of those continents and also to express the superiority of the Europeans over the colonised. According to the Dependency theorists, the challenge posed by underdevelopment emanated from the contact of these continents with their colonialists. This view was however faulted by the Modernisation theorists, who posited that the unwillingness of African countries to emulate the advanced countries (agents of colonisation) by adopting their modern techniques to transform their societies have limited the region from experiencing development.

Whatever has the defence of the Europeans, African scholars strongly believe that it was a wrong conclusion on the part of the European scholars that Africa did not develop, because what development meant to the Europeans was at variance with the African notion of the concept. However, African scholars argued that there is no country that should be considered as underdeveloped or undeveloped; rather those countries should be seen as developing. It is imperative

to say that the slow development of African continent is not unconnected with the existence of colonialism since the event resulted to religious, cultural, political, economic transformation of African societies. From the period of invasion through slavery to scrambling and partition to attainment of independence, Africa had suffered a great humiliation in the hands of its colonisers. During the period of colonial domination African belief system, democratic values and economic models were thwarted and replaced with the European values by means of assimilation and mimicry. Black African and Marxist scholars criticised the colonialists for being responsible for the poor state of Africa. They argued that colonisation led to social disruption and displacement, destabilisation, political crisis, resource exploitation among others in the African continent.

The post-colonial African states are shrouded in political violence, religious crisis, threat of secession, marginalised groupsand unity in diversity, endemic corruption, poor electoral system, terrorism, insurgency, economic regression, tribalism, alienation of women from politics and bad governance. Most of these challenges were function of colonialism.

However, Africa needs to forget about the past by adopting strategies that would transform their continent. Thus, there is need to restructure the governance through productive governance strategies. Claude Ake [1] in his book titled "The political economy of crisis and underdevelopment in Africa", wrote

'One of the paradoxes of the African social formation is that despite the monopoly of power by the state and its concentration within the state, a Political order does not appear to have emerged. Rather, violence is endemic, anarchy lucks just below the surface and the political systemis as disarticulated as the economy and as fragmented as the culture.'P.19

The South-East Asian countries provide examples on the feasibility of structural transformation through a developmental State. For instance, Johnson [2] cited in UNECA [3] associates the success of structural transformation in Japan with the State's ability to provide independence to the economic bureaucracy. The leadership ensured a continued developmental ethos in key institutions.

2. Conceptual Clarification

Development and underdevelopment are two concepts with varying definitions. The concepts are sometimes conceived from individualistic perceptions. Consequently, what is considered as development or underdevelopment or developing to one scholar might not necessary be to others. According to Walter Rodney [4], development in human society is a many-sided process. It implies increased skill and capacity, great freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being. Rodney went further to view development from the interaction of social group. Thus, it means the "increase in the ability to guard the independence of the social group and indeed to infringe upon

the freedom of others- something that often came about irrespective of the will of the persons within the societies involved" p.2. Development can also be viewed from freedom angle. The Nobel prize–winning economist Amartya Sen has twice changed our thinking about what we mean by development. Traditional welfare economics had focused on incomes as the main measure of well-being until his ground-breaking work in the 1980's which showed that that poverty involved a wider range of deprivations in health, education and living standards which were not captured by income alone. Sen [5] describes human freedom as both the primary end objective and the principle means of development; economic measures are merely the means to this end. Development has economic connotation. While economic growth is simply an increase in aggregate output, economic development is concerned with quality improvements, the introduction of new goods and services, risk mitigation and the dynamics of innovation and entrepreneurship Feldman, Hadhimichael, Kemeny & Lanaham, [6].

According to Todaro and Smith [7], 'development must therefore be conceived of as a multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of poverty'. This presupposes that development is not purely an economic phenomenon but rather a multi-dimensional process involving reorganization and reorientation of entire economic and social system and it is a process of improving the quality of all human lives with three equally important aspects- which are basic components or core values serve as a conceptual basis and practical guideline for comprehending the inner meaning of development. These core values are sustenance, self-esteem and freedom and these represent a universal goal sought after by individual and society Shirley [8]. Walt Whitman Rostow [9] developed an economic model in his work "The Process of Economic Growth". He highlighted the following stages of development:

1. The Traditional Society
2. The Preconditions for take-off
3. The Take-off
4. The Drive to Maturity
5. The Age of High Mass Consumption

Lucian Pye in his work 'Aspects of Political Development' has systematically explained the different ways in which political Development has been defined by various political scientists. Political development is regarded as "that state of the polity which might facilitate economic growth". Paul A. Baran, Norman S. Buchanan, Howard S. Ellis, Benzamin Higgins, Albert Hirschman, Barbaran Ward and several other social scientists have advocated this view of Political Development. Social scientists like James S. Coleman, Karl Deutsch, S.M. Lipset and some others regard political development as the typical or idealised politics of industrial societies and that political development is synonymous with political modernisation. K.H. Silver, Edward Shills and William McCord hold that political development consists of

the organisation of political life and the performance of political functions in accordance with the standards expected of a modern nation-state. Marx Weber and Joseph La Palombara view political development as process of institution-building and citizenship development. Max F. Millikan and Donald L.M. Blackmer advocated that development is much the same as modernisation and it takes place within a historical context in which influences from outside the society impinge on the processes of social change just as changes in different aspects of a society-the economy, the polity and the social order-all impinge on one another. Hoogewelt [10] defines Political development as the evolution of a political system to adesired state of being characterised by advanced political culture andpolitical structure which entail "cultural secularisation" (the process whereby members of the society become increasingly rational, analytical and participant oriented in their political actions) and "structural or role differentiation" (the process whereby old roles are transformed and new types of roles emerged coupled with an expanded capacity of the political system to perform conversion function, system maintenance function and adaptation function). All these are necessary for state building, nation-building, political participation, economic production, and authoritative distribution of resources.

On the other hand, according to Walter Rodney, underdevelopment is not absence of development, because every people have developed in one way or another and to a greater or lesser extent. Abdul-Rahoof, Okeke, Otubanjo & Okeke [11] posited that, Underdevelopment is not absence of development, nor the absence of human and natural resources. It means the inadequate or insufficient level of development in the Third World as a result of the exploitation or the under-utilisation of their human and material resources, or a combination of both factors. Underdevelopment depicts an appalling situation where the human and socio-economic potentials of a given society have either been externally exploited to the detriment of its inhabitants, or have not been fully or optimally harnessed by the government for a better and quality living of its citizens. Underdevelopment makes sense only as a means of comparing levels of development. Underdevelopment according to the Marxist school is when nations seeking to develop come into contact with Western developed countries, and hence become parasitized. In consonance with the above view, Walter Rodney, in "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa" posited that:

Imperialism was in effect the extended capitalist system, which for many years embraced the whole world – one part being the exploiters and the other the exploited, one part being dominated and the other acting as overlords, one part making policy and the other being dependent.

The concept of underdevelopment is more like an active process by which the global lesser-developed nations are exploited by their contact with an abusively capitalist group of already-developed nations. It is very much tied to the fact that human social development has been uneven and from a strictly economic view-point some human groups have advanced further by producing more and becoming wealthier. Political underdevelopment is the inability of a political system in any society to adequately carry out policy formulation, policy amendment and policy execution roles as well experience good governance, financial probity and adopt constitutional government.

3. Features and Causes of Underdevelopment

All the underdeveloped states irrespective of the region of the world have the similar characteristics. Abdul-Rahoof, Okeke, Otubanjo & Okeke, have been able to state the following features of underdevelopment:

i/ Imperialism, slave trade, colonialism, exploitation and dependency ii/ Export of primary commodities (such as cotton, rubber, cocoa, groundnut, palm oil, crude oil etc) iii/ Low manufacturing activities iv/ Corruption and bad governance v/ Political and social instability vi/ Inadequate social infrastructure (such as electricity, potable water, good roads, well equipped schools and functional hospitals, etc) vii/ Weak economy viii/ Weak institutions ix/ Obsolete technologies x/ Low per capita income xi/ Low standard of living xii/ Low life expectancy xiii/ High poverty rate.

Meier and Robert [12] and Myint [13], cited in Dickson, [14], outline the causes of underdevelopment as follows:

i/ Traditional socio-economic environment ii/ Structural and institutional rigidity iii/ Homogeneity of the people (case-like-structure) iv/ High propensity of traditional values, beliefs and attitudes v/ Illiteracy or low intelligence quotient vi/ Neglect of social alteration vii/ Technical incapacity (Crude technologies) viii/ Labour immobility ix/ Belief in the superiority of the western model of economic development.

Marxist neo-classical scholars believe that underdevelopment resulted from a particular form of capitalist development known as dependent capitalism. Scholars like Todaro [15], Andre [16] linked underdevelopment to a state of backwardness, retardation and economic distortion caused by the exploitation of the economies of the underdevelopment areas. Marxist scholars associated underdevelopment with:

i/ Increase in the transfer of the resources of the underdeveloped countries ii/ Economic and political subordination and dependence (absence of economic and political economy) iii/ Rapid development of metropolis or core at the expense of the periphery iv/ Stagnation, deprivation and regression in these Third world region v/ Lack of diffusion of the Euro-American technologies to the Third world (cited in Nnamani, [17]).

4. Theories of Development and Underdevelopment

In this study, two theories have been employed to explain the concepts of development and underdevelopment.

4.1. Dependency Theory

Dependency theory could be traced to Karl Marx, Federick Engel and Vladimir Lenin in their work 'The Communist Manifesto', 'The Critique of Political Economy, Capital, and Imperialism: The Highest stage of Capitalism'. Dependency theory arose in Latin America to correct the views of modernization theorists. Those scholars of dependency theory believe that the advanced nations are not interested in the development of the less developed nations. Hence, they frustrate or thwart any attempt at meaningful development. Gunder Andre major argument on dependency model is that underdevelopment is a product of historical relations between the underdeveloped satelites and the present developed cores. He argued further, that the development of the peripheries is directly on the cores. The emergency of dependency theory emanated from imperialism. The dependency theory is associated with demeaning terms such as 'Periphery', 'Third World', 'Dependent', 'Less Developed', 'Backward', 'Underdeveloped', 'Undeveloped', 'Inferior', 'Poor' to mention a few. On the other hand, the advanced countries are regarded as 'Developed', 'Independent', 'Core', 'Centre', 'First World', 'Metropolis', and 'Technologically advanced'. The argument of the dependency scholars centre on the fact that the less developed countries operate in traditional economic status which necessitated their ties to the metropolis or advanced countries. Again, scholars believe that the less developed countries did not use the 1930s economic depression to improve on their economies by introducing new technologies but rather depended on the developed nations for survival.

Dependency scholars have been criticised for concentrating on the exploitation of the resources of the Third world societies instead of addressing the issues of bad governance, political instability and endemic corruption associated with leadership in those regions.

Again, dependency theorists posited that colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism and globalisation are excuses for underdevelopment in the Third world countries but failed to take into cognisance the issues of legitimacy and sit-tight leadership that have thrown the affected regions into a state of political decadence and stagnation over the years.

4.2. Modernisation Theory

Modern theory scholars involve Lucian Pye, David Coleman, Gabriel Almond, Bingham Powel, Adam Smith, Rostow W.W., Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, Henry Maine, Ferdinand Toennies, among others. The scholars were able to perceive development from Western civilisation angle. Some of them viewed development from Western capitalist end on the basis of ethnocentrism. According to these scholars, nations that are not industrially sound or technologically advanced are regarded as poor and underdeveloped. They believe that the Western countries are modern societies while the Third world counties are traditional societies, a factor which led to the former being seen as developed and the latter underdeveloped. The modernisation theorists argued that the Western societies are more developed because of their socio-political and economic attributes that are amenable to positive change and development. They argued further that since the underdeveloped societies lack these attributes, the only way to develop is to mimic the West by adopting their capitalist ideology.

The argument of modernisation theorists on the conception of development is faulted by the dependency scholars who saw them as being ethnocentric, Eurocentric and teleological in nature. The notion of limiting development to Western economic, political and social cultures by modernisation theorists is considered erroneous and baseless. Dependency theorists believe that development can take different forms.

Secondly, modernisation theory does not recognise traditional technology of the less developed societies basing their rejection on its crudeness and inferiority. For the modernisation theorists, technology must not be 'African', 'Latin American', but Western type for it to gain consideration.

Thirdly, the theory is value-laden, as it is ideologically-based. This makes it impracticable, unscientific, unrealistic, unacceptable, parochial and imperialistic in every ramification.

Other theories that can as well be applied for the explanation of development and underdevelopment are:

The *globalisation theory* can also be used to explain development and underdevelopment. Globalisation can be seen as interdependence of nations. Thomas Friedman is the leading analyst of the theory. The advocates of globalisation believes that the existence of liberalism in economic and political policies in nations would prevent undue hindrance to integration and interdependence to international trade and open wider doors of communication to different nations of the world. Globalization scholars argue that the main modern elements for development interpretation are the cultural links among nations. The theory posits out the importance of communication among nations and between governments and their citizens is a source of development. According to globalisation school, modern communications system should consist, structural and important modifications in the social, economic and cultural patterns of nations in the globe. Thus, the absence of this, tend to result to underdevelopment.

This theory has been criticised by the radicals as an imperialistic idea to subject the developing nations to a state of underdevelopment since global economic decisions are made by the capitalist advanced nations.

5. Political Environment

For us to understand the concept of political environment, we need to understand the term 'politics'. David Easton [18] cited from Dick Howard [19] defined politics as the 'authoritative allocation of values'. By this, he meant that politics encompasses the various processes through which government responds to pressures from the larger society, in particular by allocating benefits, rewards or penalties. 'Authoritative values' are therefore those that are widely

accepted in society, and are considered binding by the mass of citizens. In this view, politics is associated with 'policy' that is, with formal or authoritative decisions that establish a plan of action for the community. Bernard Crick [20] defines politics as 'the activity by which differing interests within a given unit of rule are conciliated by giving them a share in power in proportion to their importance to the welfare and the survival of the whole community. As Adrian Leftwich [21] proclaimed in *What is Politics*? *The Activity and Its Study*, 'politics is at the heart of all collective social activity, formal and informal, public and private, in all human groups, institutions and societies'. In this sense, politics takes place at every level of social interaction; it can be found within families and amongst small groups of friends just as much as amongst nations and on the global stage. However, what is it that is distinctive about political activity? What marks off politics from any other form of social behaviour? However, politics has to do with the application of power. This view is supported by Harold Lasswell [22] in his book Politics: Who Gets What, When, How? Politics can therefore be seen as a struggle over scarce resources, and power can be seen as the means through which this struggle is conducted.

Max Weber' s definition took into consideration the relevance of the political environment to the success of any democratic system. According to Weber, the threat of certain physical forces can be a catalyst to favourable political system in any society. Weber views politics from the relationship or association context existing among people in the society. "A political association exists if... the enforcement of its order is carried out continually within a given territorial area by the application and threat of physical force." (Max Weber). From Weber's perception, there is a strong correlation in existence between political environment and political development.

The political environment in the sub-Saharan Africa is a function of the challenge of underdevelopment. African political environment has been shrouded in political violence, poor electoral system, incessant military intervention, ethnic/tribal segregation and unity in diversity, rising political cleavages resulting from multi-party system, bad political culture, corruption, greed and sit-back leadership, alienation of African women in politics, dictatorship, foreign influence, religious diversity, administrative mediocrity, secession threat resulting from marginalization of minority, bad governance, and economic crisis.

It is very imperative to say that a nation's political system tend to have an impact on its political environments. Robert Dahl, cited in Jayapalan [23] defined a political system as a "persistent pattern of human relationship that involves, to a significant extent, control, influence, power, or authority." The political environments in democracies tend to conform to higher standards of regulation and efficiency than the environments of opposing political systems where there is totalitarianism or dictatorship. A political system presupposes actors, roles, political structures, political orientation and interaction between actors. Every political system is characterised by comprehensiveness and boundaries.

5.1. Political Violence

Democracy should be an instrument of development in Africa, but the existence of political authoritarianism among the leaders in the continent has resulted to persistent political violence. The fundamental reason for this lies in wilful oppression of African political leaders who conceived politics as warfare and winning elections as a right rather than as decision from the electorates. This unholy act of political leaders has often generated distractions from pursuing and implementing developmental policies, which has been the major value for state creation. The use of violent and intimidating methods by political leaders to sustain their leadership position usually has negative consequential effect on the development of the region, for it sometimes resulted to full blown and uncontrollable terrorism from the opposing groups. In their desire for power, the African leaders employed all forms of manipulations ranging from assassination, intimidation, maiming, arson, arrest and imprisonment of political rivals. Marshall [24], ACLED [25] gave the following data of political violence in West Africa: Guinea-Bissau War of Independence/Civil War, 1962–74, 1998-99; Biafran War Nigeria 1967–70 Civil war; Casamance conflict in Senegal 1982; Mauritania and Senegal War, 1989–90; Liberian Civil War 1989–96, 1999-2003; Tuareg rebellion in Mali 1990–95; Sierra Leone Civil War, 1991–2002; Ivorian Civil War, 2002–07, 2010-2011; Niger Delta conflict in Nigeria, 2004–09; Tuareg rebellion in Niger, 2007–09; Boko Haram uprising in Nigeria, 2009; Conflict in Northern Mali, 2012–13.

5.2. Corruption

There is a growing consensus that corruption is a constraint to economic performance and political development in the African continent, Tanzi [26]; Svensson [27]; Gyimah-Brempong [28]. Corruption has often been the major impediment of Africa's development. Most African leaders are corrupt due to their inability to use the available resources judiciously to engender development and improve the standard of living of their citizenry; they mismanage the commonwealth and convert it into their private estate to the detriment of the continent's development. Most African leaders and scholars have always seen imperialism as the cause of the deficit of development in Africa. Concerning sub-Saharan Africa in particular, corruption appears to be a social phenomenon deeply rooted in the historical process of colonisation. African leaders believe Post-independence African countries inherited deeply corrupt institutions, laws and values from colonial and apartheid governments (Gumede [29]; Osoba [30]; Robb [31]; Nabudere [32]).

5.3. Ethnic/Tribal Segregation and Unity in Diversity

The weakness of postcolonial nations was as a result of colonialism—which left a political heritage of weak states with limited control over territory and regimes that relied on ethnic divisions, a centralized authority, and patronage systems inherited from colonial rule. When former colonies emerged as independent states, they found themselves

comprised of various tribes, ethnicities, social structures and cultures that were emotionally distant from each other. The fragmenting impact of colonialism cost Africa dearly in terms of achieving unity. Governmental and legal structures bore the marks of the colonial era, an imprint extended to the present day in some cases. "Tribalism" intersected with political rule in the postcolonial period such that district and local-level leaders continued on in appointed (unelected) roles, accountable only to the newly formed central government, Wengraf [33]. The Europeans impeded the growth of national solidarity as they preferred disjointed relationships that existed among the various tribes. In order to promote this, they created an atmosphere of internal tribal jealousies, suspicions, and distrust as strategies of elongating their stay in Africa. The implication of this is that African tribes found it difficult to establish a formidable front against the European leaders. This trend of disunity among the various tribes in Africa continued after independence. Hence, the existence of political and economic setback in Africa.

5.4. Administrative Mediocrity

Africans were not trained adequately to know what administration entails during the colonial days. The few educated ones who should handle administration were side-lined by the colonial masters who only preferred the Europeans and less educated Africans in the handling of government institutions and political offices. The effect of this is that African educated nationalists never went through the necessary administrative and political trainings that could grant them the skill of administering the affairs of their various countries after the departure of the colonialists. The effect of this experience was devastating on those political leaders who took over from the nationalists. This has led to the existence of administrative mediocrity and bad governance in Africa after independence. Among the countries that witnessed bad governance in the last three decades are: Kenya, Algeria, South Africa, Nigeria, Swaziland, Equitorial Guinea, Sudan, Egypt, Cote d'Ivoire and Zimbabwe. Most of the leaders lacked the requisite skill to administer aside from the issue of corruption.

5.5. Bad Political Culture

African bad political culture was made accentuated by the structural constraints inherited from colonialism which in many instances had lurched into crisis. According to Inglehart [34], African culture was based on survival values rather than tolerance and interpersonal trust. Almond and Verba [35] also argued that mutual trust and tolerance of diversity were responsible for good democratic governance in the advanced society. It goes without saying traditional systems and cultures and colonial elements that survive into the present form a combined base for future socio-economic and political change in West Africa Owusu [36].

5.6. Poor Electoral System

The electoral system in the sub-Saharan Africa nations has

been the stereotype of the colonialists, a factor which has contributed to the challenge of political development in this region. Electoral system in Africa has been affected by absence of transparency and improper electoral management. The fragility of many democracies in Africa has been a function of poor leadership and conspiracy by some political cabal. Electoral politics in post-colonial African states is very much linked to the character of the post-colonial state as the basis for the primitive accumulation of capital and for amassing economic power and wealth. In other words, the character of the post-colonial African state encouraged a winner takes all mentality to competitive electoral politics and by extension, the violation of the rules of democratic engagement, particularly political succession.

5.7. Incessant Military Intervention

Coups have contributed immensely to sub-African economic and political challenges as it made the affected countries to be insecure for foreign investors and continuously decline in development. Illegitimate military intervention in Africa commenced few years after the colonialists relinquished power and control of their various colonies following the granting of independence. Hubert Maga of Dahomey, (now Benin) was the first civilian political leader to be removed in 1963 in West Africa. After the successful removal of President Maga, West Africa has witnessed consistent military take-over in the region with Ghana, Nigeria, and Benin topping the list with five successful coup attempts each. On the whole, not less than 25 violent successful coup d'état have taken place in the sub region since 1963.

5.8. Rising Political Cleavage Resulting from Multiparty System

The democratisation euphoria on the sub-Saharan African countries was shrouded in multi-party system. During the onset of multi-party democracy in the so called third wave of democratization, most regimes in the African Nations did not embrace the changes that accompanied the transition. For instance, most nations accepted multi-party democracy out of western pressure and agitation for change Huntington [37]. The shift to multiparty competition led to a change in the intensity of intergroup violence Chua [38]; Glickman [39]; Ottaway [40]; Sisk & Reynolds [41]; Smith [42]; Young [43]; Posner [44]. The introduction of competitive multiparty elections has set ethnic groups against each other and cause communal strife to intensify in some African states. It is interesting to say that African political instability and other related crisis is a consequence of its leadership problems. Internally most of the African countries are governed in ways that have been regarded as far from the modern western state systems upon which they are modeled Tutu [45]; Oteno II [46]. From independence through 2004, the sixteen West African states have experienced forty-four successful military-led coups, forty-three often-bloody failed coups, at least eighty-two coup

plots, seven civil wars, and many other forms of political conflict McGraw [47].

5.9. Greed and Sit-back Leadership

The issue of tenure elongation is more prominent in those African nations where political parties are weak or other social forces are inadequately organised. Political leaders are always clinging to power due to weak constitutional arrangement, unlimited power granted to the executive, existence of "winner take all" after election, unwillingness to share power with others, fear of being probed and jailed for mismanagement, and desire to constantly retain ideological belief. African politics is fundamentally president-centered Callaghy [48]; Chabal & Daloz [49]; Jackson & Rosberg [50]; Manning, [51]. "Throughout the region," Van de Walle [52] writes, "power is highly centralized around the president. He is literally above the law, controls in many cases a large proportion of state finance with little accountability, and delegates remarkably little of his authority on important matters" (p. 310). The 10 longest-serving dictators are: Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, Angola, 1979-2017 (36 years); Paul Biya, Cameroon, 1982 till date (36 years); King Mswati III, Swaziland, 1983 till date (35 years); Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, Equatorial Guinea, 1979-till (39 years); Blaise Compaoré, Burkina Faso, 1987-2014 (27 years); Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, Angola, 1979-2017 (38 years); Denis Sassou Nguesso, Republic of the Congo, 1979-till date 39); Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Sudan, 1989-till (29 years); Idriss Déby Itno, Chad, 1990-till date (28) and Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe, 1980-2017 (37 yeaars).

5.10. Dictatorship

The sub-Saharan African States are beset with the challenge of dictatorship. This is one of the fundamental of problems hindering development in this continent. This act of leadership in Africa during the colonial periods was based on dictatorship. This was made possible through censorship and resistance of the indigenous nationalists who built opposition against foreign rules at that period of colonialism. The traumatic experience which African political leaders were exposed to and that which should have been used to develop Africa through liberal democracy after the departure of the colonial masters was used against African citizens based on their dictatorial leadership. The fundamental reason for dictatorship approach among African leaders is to enable them to succeed themselves so that they can have dominance over the resources of the nation. Agbaje and Roberts [53], pointed out that:

'post-independence leaders in Africa not only personalized power but also privatized the state for the purpose of primitive accumulation, clientelism, repression and all forms of opposition. Instead of using the state for initiating development, African leaders utilized it as a vehicle for terrorizing the citizenry, thereby leading to the disengagement of the populace from the public realm'. (p.154)

5.11. Foreign Influence

The political system in Africa has been influenced by the dictate of the neo-colonialists and imperialists from advanced countries. The sub-Saharan African nations experience this through the financial aid and assistance rendered to them. Nkrumah [54] explains this better by contending that foreign aids and loans come to the neo-colonial state with "strings" attached. Some of these "strings" revolve around the pursuance of policies in the neo-colonial state to the benefit of the imperialist, and also the payment of higher interests on loans granted to the neo-colonial states for development purposes. Thus, foreign aid and loans according to Nkrumah are "revolving credit, paid by the neo-colonial master, passing through the neo-colonial state and returning to the neo-colonial master in the form of increased profits" (pp. xv). Scholars like Dos Santos [55], McCoy [56], Wallerstein [57], Allahar [58] among others wrote intensively on how the advanced countries strategically and indirectly use their economic influence in comity of nations to dominate the political situations in the African region.

5.12. Religious Diversity

Religious intransigence or polarization could undermine development by promoting a culture of violence and terrorism. Adam Smith in his book titled "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" identified the above point as one of the problems of religious diversity. Several contemporary authors have dwelled on different aspects of the religion – development nexus. Amongst them are Tavares & Wacziarg [59] who considered the relationship between religion and democracy; Montalvoa & Reynal-Querol [60] who wrote on religion and growth (or development). Most contemporary insurgencies fight on the periphery of fairly well consolidated states, as in Senegal, Nigeria, Angola, Namibia, Mali, Sudan, and Uganda emanated from religious conflicts.

5.13. Session Threat Resulting from Maginalisation of Minority

There are a number of theoretical approaches that grapple with the issue of self-determination and secession. These include democratic theory, liberal theory Beran [61], communitarian theory Raz [62]; Margalit & Raz [63], realist theory Buchanan [64]; Shehadi [65] and territorial justice theory, Lehning cited in World Order [66]. Bereketead [67] explained that "Democratic theory stresses the democratic right of people to govern themselves and the right of free political association, while liberal theory advocates the right of the individual to determine her destiny and communitarian theory conversely seeks the right of self-determination for the collectivity, the nation". Realist theory focuses on the principle of the territorial integrity of states Free-man [68], while territorial justice theory advances the idea that people have the right to supremacy on their territory, Steiner [69]; Castelino [70]. The conditions for secession bid are: marginalization of the minority in politics, economic and

social development. This marginalization is a function of erroneous boundary partitioning and non-recognition of the minority caused by the colonialists and sustained by the African leaders after independence. Trezcinsk [71] threw more light on this view when he submitted that "The conditions that invariably determine the outcome of secessionist movements in Africa include: interests of powerful states; attitude of the central government towards the secessionist movement; military balance between the secessionist movement and central government; strategic importance of the seceding region; external support for the secessionist movement or central government; recognition of the secession by the international community, particularly the UN; economic significance of the seceding region for the economy of the parent state. Strauss [72] pointed out that the large wars that pitted major fighting forces against each other, in which insurgents threatened to capture a capital or to have enough power to secede, and in which insurgents held significant territory – from the Biafra secessionists in Nigeria, to UNITA in Angola, RENAMO in Mozambique, the TPLF in Ethiopia, the EPLF in Eritrea, the SPLM in Sudan, the NRM in Uganda and the RPF in Rwanda – are few and far between in contemporary sub-Saharan Africa

5.14. Economic Crisis

A substantial part of the explanation for economic retardation in Africa lies in the nature of Africa's economic interaction with the Western world. The colonial power wipe out indigenous industry by undermining the self-sufficiency of the sub-Saharan African States through their creation of world economic order that reduced the less developed to primary producing periphery and poverty-stricken satellites (Mazrui [73]; Harrison [74] cited in Otonti [75]).
The implication of trading with the Europeans is that it reduced the African leaders to the status of middlemen. The negative impacts of colonialism on the continent of Africa are very palpable in every sphere of life. Colonialism created a dual-economic system in Africa, but one was disarticulated and grossly repressive.

5.15. Alienation of African Women Politics

To enable the Europeans to subjugate African women, their electoral policy favoured African men as only a few women could participate in politics. The effect of this development on African States electoral system after independence was devastating as it made African women to develop apathy towards politics, Scott [76]; Lovett [77]; Cutrulli [78]; Anunobi [79]. The political leaders that took over from the Europeans never deemed it fit to promote the interests of the women folk by formulating favourable policy that would gear women interests in politics. Again, it would create equality between men and women in politics. According to Rodney," what happened to African women under colonialism is that the social, religious, constitutional and political privileges and rights disappeared during the colonial era.

6. Africa

African post-colonial politics can be well understood by appreciating the long sweep of African history, including centuries of pre-colonial and colonial administration in the region. John Herbeson and Donald Rothchild [80] in their book 'African in World Politics'; Basil Davidson [81], 'The search for African: History, Culture, and Politics'; Gordan Hyden [82], 'African Politics in Comparative Perspective'; Jeffrey Herbst [83], 'States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons', Young Crawford [84], 'The Post-Colonial State in Africa: A Half-Century of Independence, 1960-2010' among the scholars wrote extensively on African experience with colonial powers.

Africa was the cradle of the human race and historically the cradle of civilisation. The continent of Africa, second only to Asia in size, has an unusual combination of features and environments, including many extreme contrasts. It lies astride the Equator but, unlike South America, has northern and southern limits at almost identical latitudes (37°N and 3 5° S). However, this symmetry does not apply to area, for the northern portion is twice as large as the southern. Much of the interior of Africa, especially in the south, is an elevated plateau, capped in the east by the great piles of volcanic material that form the highlands of Ethiopia and East Africa. Cutting through these highlands are the trenches of the Great Rift Valley, occupied in part by important lakes, both deep and shallow, Fage & Oliver [85].

Africa consists of 54 countries with enormous resources for robust development. Africa had established, well before the advent of colonialism, a pattern of home-grown political systems, governance process and generally acceptable institutional rule-making arrangement, such that there was progression in the pace of civilisation of Africa and self-styled tempo of technological development. In spite of the abundant resources, both natural and human, Africa remains the least developed continent in the world. With the advent of the Colonialists, Africans were oppressed, abused and killed due to European's quest to expand their empires. Joseph Conrad wrote 'Heart of Darkness' to expose the horrors to the world. African countries were administered by European countries through slave trade, industrial revolution, and missionaries' means, for Africans were made to forgo their traditional culture.

As African societies evolved into distinct ethnic groups with their own linguistic and cultural characteristics, much of the continent was being transformed through the gradual integration of Africa into the world capitalist economy dominated by Europe. In 1500 most of African societies were relatively independent of the rest of the world. But by 1800 much of Africa had become integrated into circuits of the world market which securely linked it to Europe, America and Asia. In the 1870s only 10% of the continent was under direct European control. By 1990, Europeans controlled more than 90% of the continent. According to David Livingstone, the only way to liberate Africa was to introduce the 'three Cs': Commerce, Christianity and Civilization, Department of

Education, Louisiana Believes [86]; Nkomazana [87]. In 1889, there was Brussels Conference which declared slave trade as illegal in Africa. In 1926, Geneva Convention under the auspices of League of Nations outlawed international trade. However, Ethiopia was the last African nation to witness the abolition of slave trade in 1932.

Following the partition of Africa, Britain annexed British East Africa, Somalia, Rhodesia, Egypt, Sudan, Gambia, Sierra-Leone, Nigeria, Gold Coast (Ghana), Nyasaland and Orange Free State and Transvaal. The consequence of this occupation shows that over 30% of Africa's population was under the control of the British. According to Ogot [88], the new relations were characterized by 'dominance and dependence both internally and in a new world order in which Europe dominated'. The implication of this is that Africa's encounter with the British Colonialists stifled the development of African entrepreneurs. Although, independence was granted on the terms of the colonisers after decolonisation, the colonial structures remained in existence. It is equally important to point out that Hodgin [89]; Harben [90] cited in Oxford Bibliographies. They included in their studies that the decolonization processes were animated by the shortcomings, contradictions, and profound socio-cultural, economic, and political impacts of colonial rule itself; the manner in which African nationalism grew in opposition to it; the processes and terms by which the European colonial powers retired in favour of independent African governments in response both to African nationalism and their own shifting post–World War II priorities; and the visions, governing priorities, and performance of the newly independent governments.

Since the 1960s, a large number of African countries went through devastating civil wars; while some including Angola, Mozambique and Nigeria, seem to be on the mend, the democratic republic of Congo and Sudan remain perilously unstable. Some African countries end up with dictator leadership which really affects the growth and development of African states Tupy [91]. Poverty, over population, unemployment, technological backwardness, lack of infrastructural facilities, low GDP, low income earning, low life expectancy, dependent economy are other vises distorting the African continent. Political crisis and leadership problem are worth mentioning in African case, Adamu [92].

However, since the start of the new millennium average economic growth across Africa has been stronger than the global growth rate. Growth across the continent averaged 5%. This fuelled the "Africa Rising" narrative that permeated public discourse. Among the growth drivers were a commodity super-cycle that powered the economies of resource-rich countries. And political and economic reforms paved the way for a growth in foreign investment. Since their independence, the countries of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) continue to face severe social, political, and economic developmental problems, notwithstanding the abundance of natural resources in the region. While some SSA countries are making significant progress toward socioeconomic development, the antecedents of underdevelopment are

widespread even in the successful ones. It is not a stretch to characterize any of these nations as a microcosm of region wide experiences, opportunities, and challenges. Accordingly, post-independence sub-Saharan Africa can best be described as a region overburdened with multifaceted, causally related precursors of underdevelopment, Agbor-Baiyee [93].

Africa is emerging as a rapidly growing region, still facing major challenges, but with a potential for significant progress. The winds of changes are blowing across Sub-Saharan Africa. For the new African leaders, decolonization offered a chance to implement development programs that would benefit the citizens of independent states, although these countries faced several constraints in their efforts to develop, not least of which were access to capital and technical expertise. But with advice supplied by Western Bank, the International Development Association, and other international agencies, African governments embarked on ambitious programs of industrial and agricultural development.

The competition to promote good political environment among African heads of States is rising on daily basis. In fact, Mo Ibrahim Foundation, which was established in 2007 usually grants award to African leaders for maintaining conducive political environment that would steer up nation's growth and development. Among those African heads of states or governments that secured this ward are: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia (2017); Hifikepuneye Pohamba, Namibi (2014); Pedro De Verona Rodrignes Pires, Cape Verde (2011); Festus Gontebanya Mogue, Botswana (2008); Nelson Rolihahala Mandela, South Africa (2007); and Joaquim Alberto Chissano, Mozambique (2007).

7. Conclusion

The post-colonial African states have persistently been limited to primitive and stagnated level due to many factors such as colonial legacies and self-created challenges. Colonial legacies involve bad governance, untrained political leaders, political repression, corruption, boundary dispute resulting from partitioning of Africa, economic exploitation, non-productive economy, economic dependency, and European values and culture. This view was supported by Claude Ake, who posited that Africa's long decline over the centuries and our domination by outsiders has produced elite who cannot function because it has no sense of identity or integrity and no confidence, neither does it know where it is coming or going. p.30

The ideology foisted on Africa was western values. Claude Ake in his view believed that African problem lies with the major agents of development: Our governments, multinationals, IMF, the World Bank, and the imperial powers. Each of them propagated an idea of development that corresponds to its interests and image of the world.

On the other hand, the African leaders have generated problems ranging from bad public policy formulation, implementation, inconsistent policy, election rigging, lack of

focus, conspiracy against the state, censorship and subversion of the press and citizens, high level of stealing of government money, non-separation of power, money laundering, elongation of tenure, fragrant disobedience to law, hegemonic social classes, excessive centralisation of power, assassination of political rivalry, illegal possession of arms to destabilise the state, mentality of ruling by violence, disregard for human rights, unwillingness to learn from the past failure to non-performance.

It is imperative to say that the development trajectory of Africa is gradually moving the continent away from the effects of colonialism and neo-colonialism through the various efforts and initiatives of some African leaders who are now advocating and adopting good governance.

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