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A HISTORICAL REVIEW ON THE CAUSES OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, 2000-2015.

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Abstract

This paper takes a critical review on the causes of under-development in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study made use of qualitative research design in both data collection and analysis. In sourcing for data, the study made use of of both primary and secondary sources. The study argued that underdevelopment in Sub-Saharan Africa is caused by both internal and external factors. The external factors are the 400 years of slave trade, followed by the era of exploitative legitimate trade, colonialism and now neocolonialism. The period of neocolonialism in post-independent Africa has also witnessed massive economic exploitation through the instrumentality of the Bretton Woods institutions; the World Bank and the IMF, WTO, and Multinational Corporations. These neocolonial interest had overtime used subtle means to manipulating these weak and vulnerable economies through different strategies such as development aid and loan conditionality. The loan conditionality includes, trade liberalization, privatization, removal of subsidies, financial deregulation, technical assistance etc. Thus, further deepening the dependency and the underdevelopment of these poor countries. The internal factors responsible for Sub-Saharan African development crisis includes, the underdeveloped productive forces, leadership failure, infrastructural deficit, weak institutions, lack of economic integration, underdeveloped agriculture and the manufacturing sectors etc. The study further argued that after almost a century of political independence, the blame game on the external factors been responsible for Africa's development crisis, no longer holds water but rather the internal factors are more responsible for Africa's underdevelopment. This is evident in the economic prosperity been witnessed by the economies of the Asian Tigers like Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Hon kong who also went through the same colonial experience and was incorporated in to the global capitalist system but yet, today they are been classified as emerging economies with impressive HDI due to massive industrialization and economic development. This further debunk the long held claim by the Dependency theorists.

Keywords: *Corruption, Dependency, Sub-Saharan Africa, Poverty, Underdevelopment,*

Introduction

Sub-Saharan Africa, is Africa South of the Sahara Desert. It was once the cradle of human civilization that developed in the valleys of the Tigris-Euphrates and the Nile river between 3500 and 3000 B.C. Africa South of the Sahara has 48 countries with distinctive boundaries. They are all ocean coasts except for the northern boundary that draws the country's borders through the Sahara. The world largest desert forms a physical break that intercepts continuous settlement. The less dramatic economic and cultural break separates the Arab speaking Muslims countries along the Mediterranean Sea and the rest of Africa. (See, Michael, 2002). According to Michael, (2002, p. 78) Africa south of the Sahara is divided in the four sub-regions among which are:

a) **Central Africa:** composed of countries in the Congo River drainage basin and others that are without a coast linked to the rest of the world through them.

b) **Western Africa:** composed of countries in the western bulge of North Africa, mostly having British and French colonial experience.

c) **Eastern Africa:** composed of countries in the eastern horn of Africa and those that were part of Britain and German East Africa.

d) **Southern Africa:** composed of countries south of Congo and Tanzania, colonized mainly by Britain and Portuguese.

Ironically, today Sub-Saharan Africa has one of the worst socio-economic human indicators characterized by extreme poverty, hunger, resource conflict, unemployment, high child and maternal mortality rate, systemic corruption, leadership failure, low per capita income, heavy external debt burden, excessive government involvement in the economy, strong tendencies towards ethnicity and religious bigotry etc. (Okowa, 2005). Sub-Saharan Africa has nearly 10 percent of the world population but contributes only one percent of the world Gross national Product (GNP) (Michael, 2002). The region lost out in the 2015 targets set by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals as issues of extreme Poverty, hunger, child and maternal mortality, gender inequality, environmental sustainability remains an illusion. And it is likely that even the Sustainable Development Goals will also come and go without any tangible improvement on the socioeconomic well-being of the people. Her economy remained underdeveloped and dependent on the export of primary commodities like cocoa, oil, gold, diamond, copper, tin, rubber, iron ore etc. She depends on the imports of manufactured or capital goods from Europe, North-America and Asia. This unequal trade relationship has affected their balance of payments and worsening their terms of trade while intra trade mechanism among regional bodies or countries remains very insignificant.

Therefore, the objective of this paper is to examine and review the causes of underdevelopment in Sub-Saharan African countries like Nigeria, Ghana, South-Africa, Botswana, Kenya, Chad, etc. and to proffer lasting solutions to such problems. The study will also ascertain if the causes of underdevelopment is self-inflicted or driven by external factors.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed qualitative research design in both data collection and analysis. In data collection the study made use of both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources of data used include Key Persons Interview (oral sources) and personal observation. The secondary sources used include,World Bank annual reports, scholarly Journal articles, text books, internet sources etc. Though, the study relies more on secondary sources. In analyzing the data drawn from both primary and secondary sources, the study made use of historical descriptive method and content analysis method.

THE MEANING OF DEVELOPMENT AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT

According to Nzekwe, (2005, p. 83) the concept of development can be defined as: "the sum total of quantitative and qualitative improvement in the political, economic, social, cultural and psychological wellbeing of man while the quantitative dimension appreciates economic growth such as the provision of infrastructures (roads, hospitals, markets, airports, seaports, recreation centres etc. The qualitative dimension connotes equity, equality, fairness, social justice and good conscience in the distribution of these facilities." Okereke and Ekpe, (2002, p. 25) observed that, "Development at both national and global levels is uneven. Thus, while some countries and regions experience unprecedented level of economic and by extension industrial development, others are marred by retrogression and decay. The division of the world in to two asymmetrical groups of countries (North and South) has precipitated tension in the international political economy. The reason for the tension is that the developed part of the world comprises one quarter of humanity whereas the underdeveloped ones with high level of poverty and impoverishment constitutes three quarters of all humanity.

This argument has been strengthened by (Kukreja, 1996 as cited in Aniekan, 2013, p. 27) when he observed that: "An estimated 80 percent of the world's wealth is possessed and controlled by a minority of world's population most of whom lives in the industrial countries, while the vast majority of humanly living in LDCs share the other 20 percent of the world's wealth." Consequently, Sub-Saharan Africa with a population of nearly a billion is part of this globally economic divide of underdevelopment and periphery status. In spite of her huge population, she contributes only 2 percent to global GDP. Nzekwe (2005), opined that underdevelopment as a conceptual variable is not necessarily the opposite of development. It is worse than that. Underdevelopment according to him is a state of decay. The Advanced Learners Dictionary defines underdevelopment as the condition of been insufficiently underdeveloped. Aniekan and Ekpe, (2013) sees underdevelopment as a process by which the political as well the socio-economic transformation of a country is halted and reversed such that a state of decay set in. Sub-Saharan Africa is blessed with diverse natural resource ranging from Fuels (coal, oil and natural gas), metals (iron, copper, gold, manganese, diamond, tin, bauxite etc.) and Agricultural resources (raw materials and produce). Yet the continent has nothing to show for it in terms of economic growth and economic development.

It should however be noted that an increase in the per capita income of a country which is economic growth does not translate in to economic development because of the inequalities in the distribution of income because the income could possibly be coming from just one source of the economy, like in Nigeria where the oil sector accounts for over 90 percent of national income. This cannot bring about economic development. For example, in the 1960s the monumental "Asian Drama" demonstrated a case of economic growth with increasing poverty in South East Asia. Consequently, issues of income distribution, poverty and unemployment took a centre stage in the conceptualization of economic development (Okowa, 2005). According to Seers as cited in (Okowa, 2005, p. 12):

> The questions to ask about a country's development are therefore: what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all of these

three have decline from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these problems have been growing worse, especially if all three have, it will be strange to call the result "development" even if per capita income doubled.

In essence, the per capita income of a country is not a good measure of a country's socio-economic development. According to the World Bank countries with high per capita income in excess of $20,000.00 are classified as developed countries (OECD) while the developing countries have less and are classified as underdeveloped or low-income countries. In terms of regional distribution of the developed world defines North-America, Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. The developing world on the other hand defines Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia except Japan, China and Oceania except Australia and New Zealand (Okowa, 2005).

The World Bank classified the global economies in to a number of income categories as a measure of economic development.

TABLE 1: WORLD'S BANK INCOME CATEGORIES OF THE WORLD ECONOMIES.

S/N	Category	Per Capita Income Range (US dollars), 2005	Per Capita Income Range (US dollars), 2015
1	Low -Income (LIC)	≤ 755	≤ 1,045
2.	Lower-Middle Income (LMC)	726 – 2,995	1,026 – 4,035
3.	Upper-Middle Income (UMC)	2,996 – 9,265	4,036-12,475
4.	High-Income OECD	≥ 9,266	≥ 12,746
5.	Other High-Income Countries	9,266	12,746

Source: World Bank Report for 2005 and 2015.

What perhaps should interest us here is the fact that out of 48 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Negro or Black Africa) as many as 38 countries as at 2005, including Nigeria belong to the low-income category. None is in the high-income category. While the World Bank relies mostly on per capita income as the basis for defining the development status of the economies of the world, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) utilizes a more holistic measure; the "Human Development Index" (HDI). The UNDP formulated the HDI for the measurement of Development because it felt that the purpose of Development is to create enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives (UNDP, 1990). The HDI attempt to measure the level of development in a country by factoring in the following indices: The level of per capita income, the health status of the population as represented by life expectancy and educational attainment as represented by adult literacy and gross enrollment. On the basis of index, the countries of the world are classified into three categories. These are: Low Human Development Index, Medium Human development and High Human Development Index. Significantly, Sub-Saharan African countries like Nigeria, Cameroun, Togo, Congo, Niger, Chad, Botswana, and Zimbabwe etc. belongs to the Low Human development category, in spite of her huge potentials for economic growth and development. (Okowa, 2005, p. 17).

The World Bank, (2015, p. 3) in its 2015 report asserted that as at 2014, among the 48 countries in sub-Saharan African countries, 17 countries belong to a group of fragile and conflict affected states, 26 belongs to low-income countries, 14 lower-middle income countries, 7 upper-middle-income countries and only one high income country (South-Africa). The income level or monetary, poverty situation and development status of sub-Saharan African Countries is not different today. The resource curse thesis of underdevelopment in Sub-Saharan Africa has not been disputed or proved wrong by African scholars as Human Development Indices get worsen on daily basis.

THE ECONOMY OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The following highlights summarizes the characteristic features of Sub-Saharan African economy.

i) Dependence on foreign technology and capital for production

ii) Mono-cultural dependence on primary commodity for exports, thus earning less foreign exchange.

iii) Dependence on foreign sector for raw materials, thus stifling growth.

iv) Underdeveloped Agriculture using crude method instead of mechanization and commercialization.

v) Inequality in the distribution of income and wealth among the populace as the rich keep getting richer while the poor getting poorer.

vi) Inadequate supply of skilled labour, since the economy is now knowledge driven.

vii) Stunted growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

viii) Balance of payments disequilibrium and worsening terms of trade.

ix) High inflation rate and interest rate hampering SME's development and growth.

x) High level of unemployment and underemployment among the youths leading to high crime rate and general insecurity.

xi) Increasing and heavy external debt burden as debt to revenue ratio is abysmally high.

xii) Systemic corruption and weak institutions to hold public officials accountable.

xiii) High population rate of growth as natural increase is on the rise

xiv) Low level of capital formation and high incidence of capital flight.

THE POLITICAL LAND SCAPE OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

A number of features characterized and defined the contemporary Sub-Saharan African political system. These features are (Okowa, 1994, p.67):

i) Limited autonomy of the state, as various warlords perpetrate terror and violence by instilling fear on the people and the state forcing the state to negotiate.

ii) Strong leaders but weak and corrupt institutions such as the electoral bodies, security agencies and civil society groups who cannot hold the state accountable.

iii) Sit tight syndrome of African leaders. The likes of Paul Biya of Cameroun are a shining example of African dictatorship and sit-tight syndrome.

iv) Lack of democratic norms and culture as politics is driven by stomach infrastructure without recourse to ideology and principle by the political class.

v) Strong tendencies towards ethnicity and religious bigotry as the society is divided along religious and ethnic lines. As political appointments and government decisions are driven by these twins evil.

vi) Institutionalization of political prostitution as party men decamp from one party to another at will without a political ideology.

vii) Corrupt political institutions that are subject to the whims and caprices of the political leaders such as the Judiciary, Press, Parliament, police, military, secrete agencies and among others.

viii) Weak Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and absence of Press freedom as the media seems to be gagged.

THE SOCIETY OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Sub-Saharan African society, just like its economy and political system has a number of critical pathologies. Okowa, (1994, p. 73) identified three socio-pathological manifestations in African societies. These are: Collapsed of the moral base as the younger generation adopt and admire everything western in terms of fashion, lack of respect for elders, consumption etc. Normalization of crime as corrupt individuals are celebrated and proceeds of corruption seen as a blessing. The collapsed of culture of respect for the rule of law. The three elements identified above are mutually interrelated as they defined various facets of a very sick social system.

THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

The concept of development and underdevelopment in sub-Saharan Africa has received scholarly attention from both third world scholars of Africa, Latin America, Asia and European scholars. Scholars from both side of the political divide (North/South) has propounded different thesis and theories on the causative factors responsible for the development of the underdevelopment of the third world countries. According, to Aniekan, (2013, p. 92): "Scholars of different ideological persuasions have agreed that the economic crisis affecting third world countries is man-made. However, when it comes to identifying in specific terms those who are responsible for the dismal performance of the economy of the third world, contentious duel erupts between the liberal and the radical theorists." The liberal scholars in the likes of Walter W. Rostor, viewpoint is that crucial factors responsible for the development of the underdeveloped periphery countries are endogenous in nature. This may take the shape of human factors and institutional factors. The bourgeois scholars believed that internal factors are responsible for the underdevelopment of the third world countries. While the radical scholars notably Andre Gunder Frank, Dos Santos, Samie Amir, Dos Santos opined that the development of the underdeveloped countries are induced by external or exogenous factors. However, let's briefly summarize the thesis of these two opposing theories to juxtapose our position.

MODERNIZATION THEORY: The modernization theory was propounded in the 1950s by a U.S. Economist and bourgeois scholar, Walter W. Rostor. In his theory "*stages of economic growth*" he defined the process of development on the basis of historical experience of western countries. In his view, the "take off" from traditional economies towards the modern occurred from the late 1700s as Western countries manufactured goods and sold them abroad. This was the beginning of the Industrial Revolution (1750s) which started in Britain and later spread to other parts of Europe. This was also the era of European imperialism and monopoly capital in Africa, Asia and Latin America, when Europe made massive capital formation to kick start the industrial revolution (Nekabari, 2002) Consequently, personal wealth increased more than population growth, along with urban living and better education, health and ownership of consumer goods. The sequence of stages through primary, secondary and tertiary economic sectors that occurred in the countries of western Europe and Anglo America in the 1800s and 1900s was seen by Rostow as a formula for modernization that was recommended to the countries that became independent after world war 11 (Michael, 2002:50). Consequently, for them to modernize they were advised to invest in industries, improved agriculture, education, health care and sanitation, judicial reforms, technology transfer from the core countries etc. The bourgeois scholars opined that the underdevelopment and consequent dependency of most TWCs is as a result of internal contradictions. To them this problem can be explained by their lack of close integration, diffusion of capital, technology and institutions (Frank, 1979).

Therefore, the only way out for the TWCs or developing countries is for them to seek foreign assistance, aids, loans, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) etc. and to allow unhindered operation of Multinational Corporations. It is argued that MNCs are agents of development because they have the capacity to transfer technology, capital, managerial skills, design and marketing. However, this position has been refuted by TWCs scholars as Eurocentric and teleological. Some African scholars see his thesis "The stages of economic growth" as the most arrogant celebration of modernization theory from the "economic development" stand-point (Abubakah, and Taiwo, 1999). According to Abubakah, and Taiwo, (1999:50) "The current forms and penetration of foreign monopoly capital in developing countries is the major cause of their underdevelopment and dependency as these economies are being conditioned by the Bretton Wood Institutions; World Bank and IMF for loans, foreign aids, technical assistance as this further deepen their underdevelopment and dependency".

DEPENDENCY THEORY: The dependency theory was propounded by radical Latin American scholar,s of the neo-Marxian perspective in the 1960s and 1970s. Among these notable scholars are: Paul Baran (1962), Andre Gunder Frank (1971) Dos Santos (1973), Samir Amin (1974) etc. Who made their submissions in their various scholarly publications. The central theme of the dependency theory is that development and underdevelopment are twin elements of the same process. And that the process of development of the West through the period of slave trade, legitimate trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism led to the undevelopment of the Third World Countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America (Nekabari, 2002).

It was an attempt to dismiss the Modernization thesis or theory been a panacea to the development of the Third World Countries (TWCs). According to the Dependency theory, the asymmetrical relationship between the metropole and the periphery countries, will only inextricably link the TWCs to the chain of capitalist exploitation by the metropolis (Abubakah, and Taiwa, 1999). Andre Gunder Frank, a leading Scholar of the Neo-Marxian school of thought argues that the incorporation of the TWCs within the process of the international capitalist development is the cause of the development of the underdevelopment. The bourgeois scholars had opined that colonization was meant to bring civilization to the "dark continent" (the white man's burden). The Neo-Marxian scholars on the contrary, argued that colonialism severely de-capitalized the developing and introduced all sort of distortion and dislocation in its economic and social systems. Consequently, the developing countries' economies were disarticulated and forced to specialize in the production of unprocessed raw materials for export to the metropolis.

The Dependency theorists, therefore generally blame the economic and political underdevelopment of the TWCs on their contact and eventual incorporation in to the global capitalist economy in which they are conditioned for the role of suppliers or exporters of raw materials as primary commodities and importers of capital goods, technology and machinery therefore, creating unequal exchange and division of labour within the international system. According to them, this process of dependency as a condition is further been perpetuated by the Breton woods institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through their economic liberalization agenda on loan conditionalities and policy prescription of Privatization, Devaluation, Deregulation and removal of subsidy as panacea for economic development. The theory further asserted that the activities of the Multinational corporations in the Third World Countries further deepen the dependency linkage through the process of capital flight and profit repatriation from these poor economies.

However, the dependency theory has been challenged by modern scholars due to the massive economic prosperity been witnessed by the economies of the Asian Tigers like Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Hon kong who also went through the same colonial experience and was incorporated in to the global capitalist system but today they are been classified as emerging and developed economies due to massive industrialization and economic development.

BROAD ORIGINS OF DEVELOPMENT OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The theoretical analysis above, laid the contentious argument on the causes of development of underdevelopment of Sub-Saharan Africa to rest. The argument advanced by the radical scholars, who are mostly Latin America, Africa and Asian, was that the causes of underdevelopment in the continents was driven by European slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism. On the other hand, the bourgeois scholars who are mostly Europeans believed that colonization was meant to "**civilize the dark continent"** of Africa and brings about development but due to leadership failures by post-colonial African leaders and institutional factors the continent is yet to develop. The two sides of the argument are like the double-edged sword. However, the researcher believed that the factors responsible for the underdevelopment of Sub-Saharan Africa are both internal and external. The following are the factors.

THE SLAVE TRADE ECONOMY IN AFRICA

The radical or neo-Marxian scholars believed that the European slave trade that begins in 1441 A.D and lasted for four centuries or four hundred years resulted in the mass exodus of energetic, vibrant, viable and hardworking men, women and youths who constitute the labour force from Africa to the New World. What the Portuguese started in the 15th century on a small scale, was increased by other European powers in the 16th and 17th centuries and reached its climax in the 18th century. By the latter part of the 18th century, about 70,000 slaves were carried annually across the Atlantic to America and the West Indies. African scholars, believed that both the Trans-Saharan and the Trans-Atlantic slave trade was no good to Africa as no less than 40 to 50 million Africans were forcefully repatriated to develop the capitalist economy or mode of production in Europe and America that was gradually moving from the Agricultural to industrial capitalism. This was a huge drain on the human resources of Africa. Africa was depopulated, for example in Benin, the constant raids to obtain slaves for the coastal slave trade led to the terrible depopulation of Benin by 1700. (Michael, 1986).

The economy of the once (Africa) cradle of world civilization was disarticulated and disoriented as commercial trade in Africa had reached an appreciable level before emergence of slavery and colonialism. In Dahomy, depopulation resulting from slave raids undermined the economy of the state. In Asante, the economy of the state came to rest primarily on the slave trade and the abolition in the 19th century undermined its economy and led to its decline. In Oyo the coastal trade undermined the economy of the state as the economic axis of the empire shifted southwards to the coast (Umozurike, 1979). The slave trade also brings about unequal trade exchange and this brought about economic exploitation of the people. The Europeans brings in consumer goods and luxuries like tobacco, alcoholic spirits and ornaments which cannot be used for production or to create further wealth. In return the Europeans were given slaves as exchanges who were being employed, forced to work, creating wealth across the Atlantic on American's sugar and tobacco plantations. Hence the slave trade was an unequal exchange, in which expendable consumer goods were bartered against a means of production. Thus, apart from its moral aspect it was an economic exploitation.

The illicit trade also killed the thriving local industries as import of these manufactured goods led to the decline of local industries. The manufacture of local salt was neglected in preference to already manufactured European salt. The iron-mining industry suffered a decline because Europeans imported bars of iron ready for blacksmiths to use. Again, they imported already manufactured iron implements such as knives, hoes, machete etc. The slave trade also dislocated the fabric of African's cohesion and generated political instability as internal wars became profitable and widespread. The trade also led to the movement of person from the hinterland to the coastal regions which eventually led to the founding of coastal city-states of Bonny, Old Calabar, new Calabar, Elimina, Brass, Bonny, Nembe etc. In a nutshell, the slave trade stagnated and destroyed the economy of African societies whereas the European states were transformed in to industrial capitalist power.

COLONIALISM AND THE COLONIAL ECONOMY IN AFRICA

The collapsed of the slave trade economy as a result of various abolitionist movements in 1807 and 1833 respectively, by Britain, led to the era of legitimate trade which was followed by colonialism. This was preceded by the scramble and partition of Africa in to 50 states during the Berlin colonial conference of 1884/1885. This was the peak of the Industrial Revolution when capitalism has reached monopoly stage and became aggressively outward looking (Umozurike, 1979; Ake, 1981). Thus, the quest for colonies as source of pride as European power, demand for cheap raw materials and ready markets for goods produced was the beginning of European imperialism. In British West Africa the activities of Sir, George Taubman Goldie of the Royal Niger Company (1877) leave much to be desired as the company coerced and lured African Kings and chiefs to sign all kinds of treaties ranging from commercial to subjection treaties. Thus, during the conference Britain was able to claim part of West, Central and east Africa (Umozurike, 1979).

Consequently, the radical scholar's agitation is that colonial policies of the British, Belgium, French, German and Portuguese in Sub-Saharan Africa are responsible for the development of underdevelopment of the region. According to Lenin (1916) in his book "Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism" Lenin complaint that European expansion was associated with the latest stage in the development of capitalism with finance capital. The necessity of exporting capital also gives an impetus to the conquest of colonies, for in the colonial market it is easier to eliminate competition, to make sure of orders, to strengthen the necessary connections" (Umozurike, 1979, p. 31).

In order to guarantee the maximization of their colonial interest, the colonial masters adopted a number of strategies. According to Ake, (2001, p. 2) "The colonial state redistributed land and determined who should produce what and how" Thus in East Africa, Kenya and Southern Africa the British established the settler economy where peasant's land was forcefully taken and given to the white settlers and the peasants were made to work for the settlers. In Kenya this led to the famous Mau-Mau revolution. The colonial economy also promoted unequal exchange as colonies were made to specialize in the production of only cash crops like cotton, coffee rubber, ground-nut, cocoa etc. at the expense of other products that will serve local needs. The Europeans developed plantation system for their cash crops and mines for gold and diamond but few factories were established. The colonial economy also built few roads, bridges or communication systems to enable them move their products from their plantation to the coast. They viewed the colonies as source of wealth for the home country (Ake, 1981)

At the Berlin colonial conference when Africa was partitioned and colonial boundaries were established the Europeans ignored ethnic and cultural division as in most cases people from diverse group were joined together while others from same ethnic group were thrown apart and because of this a sense of national identity was almost impossible to develop (Roger, 1992). Consequently, at independence majority of the newly states were thrown into civil wars because the colonial masters promoted ethnic identity instead of national cohesion and integration. For example, Nigeria from 1967-1970, Belgium Congo, apartheid South-Africa, Angola etc. were all victims of colonial legacies of ethnic struggles and war.

NEO-COLONIALISM AND AFRICA

Another factor responsible for the development of underdevelopment in Sub-Saharan Africa was the concept of neo-colonialism or new colonialism. Radical Scholars like Frank (1967), Nkrumah, (1968), Galtung, (1979), Arnold (1977) and Pruitt (1989) are quite instructive in this regard. The central thesis of Neocolonialism is that although most developing countries have gained formal political independence but the erstwhile colonial powers have designed subtle mechanism by which the former colonies are still been controlled, manipulated and exploited by the centre. The former President of Ghana, Kwammeh posited that the essence of neo-colonialism is that the state which is subject to it is in theory independent and has all the trapping of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system, political system and public policies are directed from outside (Aniekan, 2013; Nekabari, 2002). Consequently, the economic and political policies of these former colonies that are now politically independent are being controlled, influenced, manipulated and exploited by neo-colonial institutions of the Bretton Woods. These institutions include, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group, General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT), now World Trade Organization and Transnational Corporations like Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC), Nigerian, Agip Oil Corporation, (NAOC), Chevron Nigeria ltd, ELF, Toyota, etc. They portray and act as agents of economic development but on the contrary they exploit the host communities.

They use various economic tools like technical aids, loan, grants, technical assistance, and technology transfer etc. as an apron string to perpetuate and further deepen their colonial ties thus, consolidating the dependency structure. For example, the IMF loans to the developing and underdeveloped countries, come with different conditionality such as: deregulation, economic financial and liberalization, privatization of public own companies, removal of subsidies, removal of tariffs and non-tariff barriers, devaluation of currency which in the long run has only worsen the the economies of the developing countries. Therefore, these economic relief known as "conditionality" are all attempts to further deepen the dependency and neo-colonial structure of the poorer countries. Significantly, this accounts for the underdevelopment of Sub-Saharan Africa.

LEADERSHIP FAILURE IN AFRICA

One major causes of underdevelopment in Sub-Saharan Africa is that of leadership failure. According to Chinua Achebe (1983, P. 1) in his book; The Trouble with Nigeria "The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian land or climate or water or air of anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership."

And that is the sad story, all through Sub-Saharan Africa and Africa at large. Consequently, from colonialism to post-colonialism African leaders have been self-centered, visionless, lacking democratic credentials, and unpatriotic. They are intellectually lazy, corrupt, ineptitude, lacking capabilities of creativity and innovativeness. They are always blinded and moved by primordial interest like ethnicity, tribalism, and religion to feather their political interest when convenient. This has been the bane of the continent's underdevelopment. These ethnically and religiously challenged leadership have thrown countries like, Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leon, D.R. Congo, Somalia, Nigeria etc. in to fratricidal civil wars causing death and destruction for their people.

Leadership failure has slowed down the region's economic growth and development. It has promoted political instability through coup d'état or violent change of political leadership in Nigeria, Angola, Ghana, Chad, Cameroon, D.R. Congo, Somalia etc. The military leadership has always accused the democratic leadership of brazen corruption, maladministration, ethnic and religious domination etc. and these accounts for the overthrow of democratically elected governments. In the 1960s and 1970s, it was coup and counter coup with ethnic, sectional and religious colorations. And till date, even the political parties that emerged before and after political independence were ethnically and religiously based posing challenges to national unity, cohesion and integration, all thanks to inept and corrupt leadership in the continent.

The bottom line is that once we can fix leadership at all strata, other myriads of challenges ranging from the economy, social, cultural and religious crisis will be a thing of the past. Thus, the antidote to poor governance, corruption, weak institutions, moral decadence etc. are all functions of good leadership that believes in democratic principles of rule of law, separation of powers, due process, accountability, free press, virile civil society, independence of the judiciary, parliamentary sovereignty, free and fair elections etc. which are all lacking in Sub-Saharan Africa. In a nutshell, "Economic development" is a function of visionary and purpose leadership.

SOLUTIONS TO THE CRISIS OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN SUB-SAHARA AFRICA.

Africa needs a transformational, functional and visionary Leadership that will fix the following social, economic and political problems through these measures:

i) ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

Diversification of the economic base of the continent, with emphasis on Agriculture and manufacturing sector through an aggressive policy of industrialization. Once these two sectors are properly integrated with the Agricultural sector (primary) feeding the industries (secondary) with raw materials, this will promote economic growth and development as jobs will be created, incomes distributed etc. The exports will become globally competitive, it becomes a source of GDP, foreign exchange and national budgeting instead of the mono-product economy whose price is subject to international fluctuations by the core countries. Nigeria is facing economic recession because of the global oil glut and this has affected her revenue earnings to the extent that even salary obligation can no longer be met. This is the sad story of Sub-Saharan African countries almost all over.

ii) IMBIBING DEMOCRATIC NORMS

Another remedy to the underdevelopment of Sub-Saharan Africa is for Leaders at all strata in the region to imbibe democratic principles of rule of law, separation of powers, respect for human rights, sanctity of the ballot box to decide leadership change etc. African leaders must ensure that democratic institutions are given free hand to operate to ensure checks and balances in democratic governance while exercising power. Thus, institutions like the Judiciary, parliament, electoral bodies, anti-graft agencies, press freedom, civil society must be all given free hand and space to operate.

The irony is that in most African countries these institutions are subject to the whims and caprices of the executive arm. In Europe, North America and part of Asia democratic institutions are all powerful and leaders are not above the law. The rule of law is supreme and nobody is above the law. This has promoted good governance, accountability, economic growth and development due to and access to justice. This is lacking in Africa, it scars away Foreign Direct Investment, foreign aids, technical assistance and sometimes even loans due to lack of transparency and accountability in public governance. Thus, for us to develop our leaders must consciously and deliberately build strong institutions instead of strong leaders like Mummah Al Gadaffi, Robert Mugabi, of blessed memory others are Paul Biya, Muhammadu Buhari etc. because democracy breeds economic development.

iii) POPULATION CONTROL

Another solution to the underdevelopment of Sub-Saharan Africa is for the government to adopt population control measures. Government must firstly sensitize families and couples in adopting contraceptive measures to ensure that the natural rate of increase does not out-grow available resources and public infrastructures. The region has a population of 911.5 million, almost one billion. Her population is bigger than that of Europe and North America but having one of the worst socio-economic indicators. Such as low per capita income; it contributes only 2 percent to global GDP, high unemployment rate, spiral inflation, poor school enrolment, life expectancy of 56 years etc. all thank to over population. Thus, for the continent to develop she must adopt the Chinese “One Child Policy” and the West (Europe). Nigeria’s population is growing at a geometric progression and this has put negative pressure on available public infrastructures and available jobs. No wonder the ugly increase in unemployment and crime rate. Thus, for us to develop government must create legal frame work through the parliament to combat population explosion in the continent.

iv) ENERGY SECURITY CHALLENGE

Another solution to the underdevelopment of problem of Sub-Saharan Africa is for government at all level to invest heavily in the power sector so as to attract Foreign Direct Investment through Multinational Corporations as agents of economic development. Power challenges in the continent have slowed down the industrialization drive of the continent. Power is key and critical to industrialization and economic growth and development as no nations of the world has had an economic break through without critical investments in the power sector. The industrial Revolution of the 1700s in Europe was driven by coal energy. Thus, for us to make an economic leap government must invest in the energy sector like coal, hydro, wind, solar, gas, etc. No investor would want to invest in a country where the power sector is in comatose. Investors are capitalist and are all seeking for profit. If an enabling business environment is created with power availability, investors will come without being invited. Power has a multiplier effect; its availability will spur the other sectors of the economy like manufacturing, tourism, services, agriculture, aviation etc. A stable economic environment will attract foreign and local investors, entrepreneurs, SMEs practitioners to invest and earn income.

v) STABLE MACROECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Another solution to the underdevelopment of SSA is for the managers of the economy to run an expansionary monetary policy and fiscal discipline so as to promote economic growth and development. For example, an increase in the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR) by monetary authorities will discourage or scare away foreign investors and local entrepreneurs from borrowing from commercial banks. This is because an increase in MPR is an increase in interest rate but a reduction in MPR is an incentive to investors who will take advantage to invest and make huge profit. Governments can also promote economic growth and development through fiscal discipline and restrictive fiscal policy. For example, a reduction in taxation such as personal income tax, corporate tax or tax holidays will encourage investors and entrepreneurs to invest in the economy. The multiplier effect on the economy is that jobs will be created, rise in national income (GDP), increase in national output etc. Thus, for SSA to develop her macroeconomic policies must be sound, friendly and realistic to support Small and Medium scale Enterprises (SMEs).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In summary, underdevelopment in Sub-Saharan Africa is caused by both internal and external factors. The external factors according to radical scholars or Neo-Marxist are slavery,imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism while internal factors are leadership failures, weak institutions, underdeveloped agriculture etc. According to them, European contact from the 15th century as spearheaded by Portugal, Spain and later Britain, France, Belgium, Germany and Italy, brought about Trans-Saharan and Trans-Atlantic slave trade. This slave enterprise lasted for 400 years of slavery and the consequent of this trade is depopulation of Africans, unequal exchange and the disarticulation of local economy that was already thriving. The abolition of the slave empire was the beginning of legitimate trade and economic imperialism. The Industrial Revolution in Europe in the 1700s which brought capitalism to an advanced stage necessitated the quest for colonies, search for markets for over produced goods and raw materials for the home industries. This was followed by the Berlin colonial conference of 1884/1885 at the demand of Belgium and Germany, Africa was divided among the colonial powers through conquest and voluntary submission.

The core countries through the instrumentality of the Bretton Woods institutions; World Bank group and IMF, GATT, WTO and the activities of Multinational corporations manipulate these weak and vulnerable economies through different strategies and conditionality. Among which are liberalization of trade, privatization of public corporations, removal of subsidies for the poor, financial liberalization, tied aids, loans, technical assistance, transfer of technology etc. thereby further deepening the dependency and the underdevelopment of these TWCs. Though decades after political independence, Sub-Saharan Africa remained underdeveloped while her counterpart who were also former colonies like Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Taiwan, South-Korea, North-Korea are now among the medium income countries and also been ranked as medium in the Human Development index. These Asian Tigers are fast industrializing; their agricultural, manufacturing, financial sector is fully developed and well-integrated in to the international capitalist system.

In conclusion, the question is that what went wrong with Sub-Saharan Africa after decades of political independence? In spite of her massive wealth in natural and human resources, the answer is failure of leadership at all strata of the society. This is because her leadership is characterized as inept, corrupt, visionless, intellectually bankrupt, dictatorship, lack of democratic norms, and no respect for the rule of law, lack of accountability, etc. as these account for her state of underdevelopment. Economic development all over is a function of visionary and purposeful leadership. The study further concludes that in spite of the blame game on the external factors after decades of political independence that argument no longer holds water but rather the internal factors are more responsible for African underdevelopment.

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