

How leadership contributes to problems in Africa

Undeniably, leadership contributes to problems in Africa. According to Japhace Poncian and Edward Simon Mgaya (p106) African continent is experiencing problems in dependency, corruption, underdeveloped infrastructure and production sectors due to poor leadership; even though we pretend to have adopted. Our land is rich in capital (Greg Mills.), but poor choices has drowned us into problems. This paper will firstly identify key reasons on how leadership contributes to problems. Secondly, the paper will focus on how leaders promote economic hardships. Finally, we will use our personal experience to explore possible responses.

Corruption and mismanagement of resources. Collection and proper use of revenues remains one of the major challenges fuelling continental problems. Revenue collection is very vital to the government (Chijoriga, 2012), but it is the same government officials that are diverting public funds for personal gain thus, undermining development projects and eroding public trust. Below writings; Mbah, 2013; Afegbua & Adejuwon, 2012; Mills, 2011; Mills, 2010; Heleta, 2007 have held African leaders responsible for much of the continent's economic, political and social woes, under revenue management. Additionally, reports from Transparency International consistently highlight high levels of corruption in various African countries that has resulted in the loss of billions of dollars, that could have been invested in essential services. (Patrick Bond 2006)

Ultimately, Africa is poor, because its economy and society have been ravaged by local elites who are often propped up by foreign powers.

Lack of good governance and accountability continues to raise a concern about the effectiveness of economic diversification due to authoritarians' tendency to disregard rule of law, increasing disparity. Poor leadership has for so long failed to guarantee economic prosperity to our countries since other essential economic activities including agriculture, craft making, and fishing (Conrad, 2005) have been undertaken. According to Mbah, C. E. (2013), authoritarian tendencies continue to create an environment where leaders are not held accountable for their actions, which hinders development. Additionally, most African countries such as Uganda have weak institutions and judiciaries thus, weak checks and balances.

Failure to prioritize continental development. One of Africa's economic problems is fostered by leadership that has little to no vision in adjusting intra-African trade. In stead, they prioritize their enrichment and political power over citizens. Unfortunately, intra-African trade has declined from 22.4% in 1997 to 12% in 2011 (UNCTAD 2013, in Zonke, 2014: p. 89). Critics argue that (Zonke, 2014) due to corruption and mismanagement of resources; continental trade has become more costly than global trade. Ultimately, this results in inadequate investment in education, healthcare, infrastructure and many other vital sectors in our countries. To add, reports from African Development Bank reveals the persistence of problems is attributed to the failure of some leaders to prioritize development, especially intra-African trade. This therefore, calls for a unified investment in human capital and infrastructure including technology.

Japhace Poncian and Edward Simon Mgaya says that lack of visionary leadership hinders development, intensifying problems. More than five decades after independence, African states has been revolving in cycle of conflicts, that stun leaders off development. As a result, they

become blind focusing on the conflict, leading to destructive governance, enabling dictated politics, corruption, clientelism and politics of patronage (Mbah, 2013: p. 143). For us to shut down our problems Africa needs leaders with a long-term vision for sustainable development. This said, it is imperative that we have a long-term strategic planning and a focus on prosperity. The continent's vulnerability to global economic shocks and climate change underscores the need for proactive and visionary leadership. And that according to World Bank, our average GDP per capita is lower than global average GDP per capita depicting widespread poverty and severe economic disparity.

In today's 21st century, Africa needs to create strong and lasting governance and leadership institutions that can "outlive the lifespan/service term of leaders. This is very significant because many African countries have been lacking coherent, strong and long-term institutions that can withstand any external and/or internal challenges" such as tribalism and nepotism. Favouritism based on tribal or familial ties often leads to the appointment of unqualified individuals to positions of power. This undermines meritocracy and fuels social divisions. According to studies on political science in Africa, this practice can exacerbate ethnic tensions and contribute to political instability.

For instance, in our country Kenya, there are countless families that cannot afford medical care, school education and, basic needs like water. These sad moments are often experienced in Northern Kenya and some part of North Eastern Kenya. Since independence 1963, these regions are only considered during campaigns. Thereafter, they are forgotten, a sense of despair being

left. They have for long tested hardships beyond economic level. We would advocate for clear strategies from elected leaders to provide citizens what citizens deserve.

Africa is constantly continuing to experience harsh realities of life despite gaining independence over fifty years ago. This paper has argued that Africa's problems has more to do with its internal weaknesses, notably its bad leadership. Despite severe efforts to address leadership and governance challenges, there have not been any tangible outcome from our leaders. This paper has highlighted core foundation of poor leadership and how effectively it fosters problems. It has been argued that although we pretend to adopt to the situation, corruption and mismanagement of resources, lack of good governance and accountability, failure to prioritize continental development, lack of visionary leadership and, tribalism and nepotism are the major fuel to our problems thus harming us.

References.

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Studies on *political science in Africa often address the negative effects of ethno-political clientelism.*