

DLD 221:Leadership in Context

**Nigeria,
Africa and Global
Issues**

Introduction

- The quest for good leadership is a sine-qua-non for governance and sustainable development of any nation.
- Peace, security, good governance and social cohesion are prerequisites for (economic) development, but good leadership lies at the heart of it.
- Poor leadership at the centre of Africa's under-development

- Africa have been undergoing deepening political and economic crisis.
- Political, social and economic instability, ethnic, communal and religious crises.
- Staggering wave of violence, insecurity, increasing crime wave, economic recession, break in law and order.
- All are problem of leadership in Africa and call our attention to the issue of leadership in the continent.
- The quality of leaders has become a major issue in the establishment of the democratic process and its success in Africa.

- *There are no institutions in Africa devoted to preparing potential leaders with a global outlook, leaders who will be able to cooperate within and across national, regional and institutional boundaries (Afegbua & Adejuwon, 2012).*
- *Leadership development is a key leverage point in the development and transformation of our beautiful continent (Eckert and Rweyongoza, 2015).*

- The leadership problem however remains vague in the mentality of Africans because of the repercussions of colonialism and the resulting imitation.
- Leadership challenges in Africa can be seen in every aspect but these are traceable to political leadership deficiencies.

- This question is now linked to two issues which trouble contemporary African societies:
- i. the future of the post-colonial African states, because of the recurring socio-political crises in the continent
- ii. the need to invent a new method of governance, without which the democratic process that has been embarked upon since 1990 risks being compromised.

Political Leaders in Africa

- Nationalist (1960 to 1970): These first African leaders were all guided in their actions by the same demand, i.e. that of nationalism.
- Difficulties in building nationalism - under-equipped nature of newly independent colonies. - Training of newly independent elites who were more used to obedience than responsibility.
- Main obstacle faced by these first African leaders: the Cold War (East-West confrontation) between 1960 and 1990.
- African political leaders had a problem of what autonomous model for African development.

- Nationalist zealots considered the left-wing ideology prevalent in the East as only way of breaking away from the guardianship of the conquering Westerners.
- Therefore, almost all political parties which led Africa to independence were of a Marxist-Leninist persuasion:
- e.g, Ahmed Sékou Touré (Guinea), Félix Houphouët-Boigny (Côte d'Ivoire), Modibo Keita (Mali), Chief Obafemi Awolowo (Nigeria), Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Mau Mauof Jomo Kenyatta in Kenya.

- Afterwards, these African leaders were divided on the essential questions relating to the future of Africa.
- On one side: The pro-Westerners Casablanca - King Mohammed V and his successor, Hassan II, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Léopold Sédar Senghor (Senegal), Omar Bongo (Gabon) and Amadou Ahidjo (Cameroon).
- On the other side: the Monrovia group - Kwame Nkrumah, Sékou Touré, Modibo Keita and William Richard Tolbert (Liberia).

- In between these conflicting groups: The unbiased participants such as Sourou Migan Apithy (former Dahomey), Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe (Nigeria), Aboubacar Sangoulé Lamizana (former Upper Volta) and Ngarta Tombalbaye (Chad).
- Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was founded in Addis Ababa in 1963 against the backdrop of these considerable ideological differences.
- These different tendencies also influenced the intellectual elites and the training of leaders until the arrival of the military, starting in 1970.

Legacies of these First African Leaders

- Left important legacy that continues to serve as a reference today despite the challenges they faced in the management of their respective countries.
- The legacy of Pan-Africanism which has become a major requirement to better confront the risks of the balkanization of Africa.
- Establishment of the East African Community to protect the shared knowledge and experience left by Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere (Tanzania) and Milton Obote (Uganda).
- EAC is now a regional intergovernmental organization of the Republics of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

- In West Africa - examples of Kwame Nkrumah, Modibo Keita and Sékou Touré,
- Their beliefs motivated the creation of ECOWAS & AU – a continental government so dear to Colonel Muammar Gaddafi (Libya) and President Abdoulaye Wade (Senegal).

The military (1970 to 1990)

- These generation of African leaders ended the combat started by the first leaders in support of building a nation and Pan-Africanism.
- 1970 to 1990: Almost all African States, except Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, fell into the hands of the military.
- Marked the beginning of autocratic regimes.
- Countries whose leaders were not from the military, were characterized by the reign of single parties.
- These ended the hope born of independence.

- **Civilised-Military leaders: from 1990s:**
- Africa was subjected to the democratisation of State and society, with a return to multi-party politics.
- Arrival on the African scene of a new generation of leaders, made up of both “civilised” military officers, some old leaders of civilian origin and young politicians, many of whom had served as advisers to the military regimes.

- The arrival of democracy in Africa did not bring a radical transformation of the political leaders.
- The combination of leaders during this democratic period, between civilians and military, did not allow democracy to be a true factor for progress.
- Only four countries - Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde and Ghana are cited as given respect for democratic requirements.

Leadership Failure in Africa

- Understanding the challenges in store for a new generation of African leaders.
- The failure of African leaders could explain the poor position of African countries in world economic rankings.
- According to UNDP, sub-Saharan Africa remains one of the poorest parts of the world despite its vast natural and human resources.
- To continue blaming Western powers for under developing Africa decades after most countries have gained independence, is simply failure to take responsibility.

Leadership Problem in Africa

- **The policy of ‘rewarding friends and punishing foes.** The policy of rewarding friends stifles criticism and promoted a hand-clapper culture
- **Nepotism.** African Leadership has been infiltrated rather obnoxiously with sentimental sympathy and a biased thinking faculty which denies an equivocal decision making process.
- **Blurred vision.** It has been said that ‘where there is no vision the people perish.’ Most African leaders have failed to delve into literature that deals with developmental problems, or consult economic and social experts as to what should be done.

- **Competition for preeminence.** Unnecessary competitions and personal struggles for powers to be “first among equals” instead of embracing the spirit of teamwork and patriotism.
- **Corruption:** Most African leaders have used their political position to embezzle economic resources- a process that has often involved the mass pauperization of their ‘subjects’ and the deepening of their dependence on the patrimonial favours of the ruler.
- **Dictatorship:** In framing policies and designing measures, leaders must rely more on public opinion and the opinions of colleagues rather than on their imagined superior intellect.
- **Failure to Re-define Goals:** In the constantly dynamic world, challenges continue to evolve and leaders need to be equally dynamic and adaptable, laying out a series of goals, and recognising with relative precision when it is time to move from one goal to the other.

Nelson Mandela

- Mandela continues to symbolize the struggle for peace, reconciliation and social justice worldwide even after his death.
- Part of the resistance movement against the white, ethnic Afrikaner National Party's policies of segregation.
- His actions resulted in arrest and imprisonment(in jail for over 27 years).
- Upon his release in 1990, Mandela became head of the ANC and worked hand-in-hand with then-president F.W. de Klerk to end the country's long-held policies of racial segregation and apartheid.
- In 1994, he won the nation's first multiracial elections, becoming South Africa's first black president.

Mohandas'Mahatma' Gandhi

- Gandhi led the Indian independence movement while working as a lawyer in South Africa.
- He pioneered the concept of *satyagraha*, or, civil disobedience in response to tyranny.
- His peaceful protests abroad and his anti-poverty campaigns at home helped him become the spiritual heart of the Indian independence struggle.
- Working with Jawaharlal Nehru, the nation's future prime minister, Gandhi led the country in peaceful protest against foreign domination.
- His rise paved the way for India's independence in 1947.
- Though Gandhi was assassinated, his role in the bloodless revolution earned him the title "Father of India" and paved the way for other social movements, including America's struggle for civil rights

Margaret Thatcher

- Known as Britain's Iron Lady.
- Thatcher realized her long-held political ambitions in 1959 when she became a Member of Parliament in the Conservative Party.
- Twenty years later, she became Prime Minister (1979 to 1990).
- Europe's first female Prime Minister and the only British Prime Minister to serve three consecutive terms.
- During her service, she turned Britain into a more entrepreneurial free-market economy.
- Thatcher advocated for the privatization of state industries, pressed for lower taxes, faced trade unions head-on and reduced social expenditures across the board.
- She is also credited with helping to hasten the demise of the Soviet Union.

Sergey Andreyevich Gorbachev

- A great statesman and an outstanding leader.
- Played a key role in terminating the Cold War and the re-unification of the East and West Germany.
- Right from a young age, he displayed immense dedication and organizational skills and had a bent towards politics.
- In 1970, he became one of the youngest provincial party chiefs and in 1979 became the youngest member of Politburo.
- 1979 he was made the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which he served until 1991.
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- Gorbachev became the first and the last President of the Soviet Union.
- he sought to reform the party and the state economy by introducing the concepts of openness, restructuring, democratization and accelerated economic development.
- He brought about various technological advancements that secured increased productivity and reduced wastage.
- His efforts to democratize country's political system and decentralize its economy led to the downfall of communism and the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Conclusion: New generation of African leaders

- Africa must come up with a new generation of leaders.
- Who can give a voice to Africa in the contemporary globalised world.
- Who are also capable of defending its populations' interests better, based on unwavering respect for different State institutions.
- Leaders who are resilient against the persistent hegemony of the major powers because of its natural resources: oil, gold, diamonds, uranium, coltan, timber and so on.
- The responsibility of this new generation leaders will be based on the relationship between power and freedom, in particular the freedom of Africa's citizens.

- *“Africans have this thing called UBUNTU. It is about the essence of being human, it is part of the gift that Africa will give the world. It embraces hospitality, caring about others, being able to go the extra mile for the sake of others. We believe that a person is a person through another person, that my humanity is caught up, bound up, inextricably, with yours.”*
- - Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town

- This new generation of leaders is confronted with the following questions:
- “What will the configuration and nature of the different political, religious, economic and intellectual powers be on local, national, regional, continental and global levels?”
- “What possibility will there be for citizens to control these powers and ensure their balance so as to defend the fundamental rights of African people to life, education and health, indeed to spiritual and material happiness in dignity?”
- “What will Africa’s place be in today’s interdependent world?”.