



LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA AND THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN THE LEADERSHIP MILIEU

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A. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is an essential feature of all government and governance: weak leadership contributes to government failures, and strong leadership is indispensable if a government is to succeed (Masciulli, 2009). Political leadership in post-independence Africa is a curious case that should be of interest to any aspiring leader on the continent, especially young people. Africa, though composed of 55 different states, faces problems that are common to all these sovereign units. These problems are generally in relation to governance, capacity building, food security, external debt burden, international trade and payment relations, regional and sub-regional economic integration, tribalism, corruption, unemployment among others, all of which would very easily be traced back to its calibre of leaders and leadership structures. The role of the youth in addressing and solving these chronic problems that seem second nature to Africa can never be overemphasized. This could be in their power as a majority electorate and also in their aspirations to take the reins of leadership. These call for the need to understand leadership objectively and within the African context with the sole goal of educating, enlightening and empowering Africa's next generation of leaders.

B. THE SCOPE OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

Leadership, generally, has been defined from different quarters using varied terms with the common concept being that is a variable that shapes various developments and governance outcomes (Sadler, 2003). It is a set of activities, observable to others that occur in a group or organization involving a leader and followers who willingly subscribe to common purposes and work together to achieve them (Sadler, 2003). This definition leaves out various important components in leadership such as multidirectional, reciprocal influence (Yukl, 2006) and persuasion or example (Gardner, 1993). Employing this definition within the African context would additionally be folly based on the fact that it focuses on a premise of leadership in a willing population which can only exist in a fairly successful democracy. That cannot be said of all African states.

Bogardus captures leadership broadly to mean both a personality phenomenon and a social process involving a number of persons in mental contact in which one person assumes dominance over the others and organizes their activities to move in a specific direction, changes their attitudes and beliefs and at every stage the followers exert influence, often a changing counter-influence, upon the leader (Bogardus, 1934). A complimentary definition is given by Daniel Moi who states that leadership is the dynamic and catalytic ability of an individual or a group to liberate, engage and direct the constructive endeavours of a people for the betterment of individuals or whole

communities, for their material prosperity and for their socio-cultural uplift, spiritual peace and mental productivity (Moi, 1986).

More specifically and based on this general background, political leadership is a part of a multicausal social processes that brings about concrete political outcomes (Greenstein, 2006). In this regard, leaders mobilize a significant number of followers to accept their diagnosis and policy prescriptions for collective problems or crises (Masciulli, 2009) and both leader and followers are in the end affected by what they create (Rousseau, 1987). A combination of these approaches gives a flexible definition of political leadership that could very easily fit any leadership style in Africa.

From the foregoing, the characteristics of political leadership are therefore; the existence of a group phenomenon meaning that there are no leaders without followers, the use of influence by the leaders to guide a group of people towards a certain course of action or towards the achievement of certain goals and the assumption of some form of hierarchy within a group (Nahavandi, 2014).

C. POLITICAL LEADERSHIP MODELS

Political leadership models generally practiced and of relevance to Africa are transformational leadership, participative leadership, servant leadership and authoritarian leadership.

a) Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is an ongoing process by which leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation; it basically converts followers into leaders and leaders into moral agents (Burns, 1978). Essentially the leader's task is raising consciousness on a wide plane and his/her fundamental act is to induce people to be aware or conscious of what they feel, to feel their true needs so strongly, to define their values so meaningfully, that they can be moved to purposeful action (Burns, 1978). Such a leader moves the follower beyond immediate self-interests through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, or individualized consideration (Bass, 1999). This heightening of awareness requires a leader with vision, self-confidence and inner strength to argue successfully for what he sees is right or good not for what is popular or acceptable according to the established wisdom of time (Bass, 1985).

Nelson Mandela, the first black president of post-apartheid South Africa is one leader who very easily makes the cut of transformational leadership. Bass puts forward four elements of transformational leadership which are charismatic (idealized) influence, inspirational motivation,

intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Bass & Bass, 2009). All these are mirrored in Mandela's leadership in South Africa, during and after apartheid.

Idealized influence as a component of transformational leadership calls for the leader to serve as a role model for high ethical behaviour, instil pride and gain respect and trust of the people (Simić, 1998). Mandela's charisma in this regard was renowned, so much so that it was named the 'Madiba magic' (Boehmer, 2009). One only needs to listen to broadcasts from around the globe about Nelson Mandela's example of influence in their individual trajectories. These include citizens of South Africa, political leaders such as Barack Obama (Obama, 2014), spiritual leaders such as the Dalai Lama (Dalai Lama, 2014) and even sporting organizations such as FIFA testament to the broad appeal of the principles he exemplified (Obhi).

Inspirational motivation within the context of transformational leadership means the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers in order to elicit a common goal (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders with inspirational motivation challenge followers with high standards, communicate optimism about future goals, and provide meaning for the task at hand. Nelson Mandela had a clear vision of a South Africa free from apartheid and was able to portray this vision despite his 27 years of incarceration by the same regime. He communicated this vision clearly to the people of South Africa and the world over, a vision that was realized as a result of among other things, this inspiration (Obhi).

Transformational leadership style should also have a component of intellectual stimulation whereby the leader encourages the followers to challenge the status quo and drive them towards innovation and creativity (Avolio, 2010). Mandela's reconciliatory approach to fighting apartheid was creative in that he sought to have a South Africa that was free from apartheid and saw the equality of all races. This resulted in an effective regime change without causing disharmony among the races (Obhi).

Bass' final component of transformational leadership is individualized consideration in which through the process of transformational leadership, the leader takes on the role of mentor by assigning responsibilities to followers as opportunities for growth and development through a process of self-actualization (Avolio, 2010). Mandela spearheaded the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which sought to heal the nation after the nation's long period under the apartheid regime. Through this, he recognized the ability of South Africans to live in harmony despite their differences and scarred past (Obhi).

This ideal form of leadership is without a doubt what the African continent needs in order to change the status quo on the continent. Additionally, such leadership should be emulated by young people seeking to be leaders.

b) Participative Leadership

Participative leadership involves efforts by a leader to encourage and facilitate participation by others in making important decisions (Yukl, 2006). This type of leadership focuses on consultation, consensus building through public forums and even referendums. One example of the best application of this leadership style is Kenya's constitutional referendum in 2010 in which the citizens voted in the current constitution in force (McGregor & Ombok, 2010).

Many countries in Africa have had numerous, even major and critical, constitutional changes brokered without any consultations with the public. The most commonly abused constitutional provision is perhaps the extension of presidential term limits. Between 1990 and 2009, 24 African presidents considered changing the provisions for tenure in their constitutions, 15 of which succeeded (Dulani, 2011).

c) Servant Leadership

The premise of servant leadership is that the leader is one who seeks to serve, and that this serving is a natural component of the leader (Greenleaf, 1977; Farling, Stone, and Winston, 1999). Being a natural component of the leader, this leadership style is considered virtuous with the leader possessing specific virtues of agape love, humility, altruism, vision, trust, empowerment, and service (Patterson, 2003).

The founding president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere is a good example of an intelligent and altruistic leader who practiced participative leadership. Under the auspices of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), Nyerere introduced the ideology of "uhuru na kazi" -freedom and work (1963). The main pillar of "uhuru na kazi" was "ujamaa and kujitegemea" (solidarity and self-reliance). In the pre-colonial era, Tanzania was largely a peasant agriculturalist society. This had changed markedly in its years under various colonial powers; the Portuguese (1652), the German, (1888) and British (1890) into a largely cash crop cultivating society supplying the industrial revolution in Europe.

It was against this background that Nyerere invoked his Ujamaa na Kujitegemea policy, aimed at returning Tanzania to a self-sufficient agricultural economy. This was a deliberate strategy by

Nyerere to break away from the colonial concept of modernization and dependency. The Village Executive Council established under the Ujamaa Villages Act equally made provision for each village to establish its own village assembly and a Village Executive Council. The VEC had power to initiate and co-ordinate their own social, commercial, and economic ventures. According to the World Bank Annual Report of 1980, between the periods of ujamaa 1970 and 1979, the indices of food production in Tanzania ranked one of the highest in Africa: 102 percent in 1970, 117 percent in 1975, and an annual average of 101.5 percent through 1979 (Etkepe & Okolo, 2010). The founding President's altruism was also evident in his voluntary decision to step down from power.

d) Authoritarian Leadership

This is considered the most common and most publicized leadership model in Africa. Authoritarian leadership has greatly contributed to the problems with succession in Africa as well as an attack on democracy. Several factors can be attributed to create this type of leadership style.

i) Mode of Acquiring Power

For the first 30 years after independence, the number of African presidents who were elected in free and fair democratic elections was few and far between. Only a third of one hundred and two political successions between 1963 and 1998 were regulated (Govea & Holm, 2010). In the first two decades of independence in Africa, there were forty successful coups and countless attempted coups (Meredith, 2006). Power in Africa was acquired by gun, rigging or giving power to handpicked successors.

This inadvertently led to paranoia and leaders constantly feared being overthrown. The end result was leaders' undivided focus on consolidating loyalty, scheming longer office tenure and silencing any dissension leading some to pursue violent methods. Idi Amin, for instance, acquired power by a coup, was prone to erratic behaviour and believed that his more educated ministers and military officers were plotting his upheaval (Meredith, 2006; Kaufman, 2003). Such thinking adversely affects the governance of a country seeing that the leader's attention would be on furthering his personal agenda rather than those of the state.

ii) Sycophancy

Sycophancy is based on a need for self-preservation leading people to do whatever it takes to remain in the good graces of a person. The rule of despotic leaders in Africa has been perpetuated by those close to and around them encouraging and cheering them on. In Nigeria, military generals

around General Sani Abacha were key in helping him hold on to power and enabled his authoritarian and corrupt rule to go on for 15 years (Dowden, 2009). For African leaders to break the cycle of dictatorship, they must break the circle of yes men, and women, around them.

iii) Weak Institutions

In countries like Angola, weak institutions have made it possible for leaders to loot public coffers at will with tax payers' money bankrolling lavish lifestyles of top officials (Dowden, 2009). Without clear mechanisms to separate institutions such as the Central Bank, the police force, the judiciary and parliament from the executive, leaders are able to control all areas of governance and are accountable to no one. For instance, the governor and deputy governor of the Bank of Uganda is a presidential appointee in a system that has little, if any, checks on the process (Section 27 Bank of Uganda Act).

e) Is Democratization a Solution?

In Francis Fukuyama's seminal work *The End of History and The Last Man*, he makes the assertion that we can declare an end to the evolution of human society when all nations have completed their transition to liberal democracy, or Western type democracy (1993). Without gainsaying the relative preference for democracy as a form of government vis a vis possible alternatives, Fukuyama's assertion gives way to the contested theories and realities of democratization. In its origins in Hellenic political culture democracy was viewed as "government by the people". However, democracy's modern 18th century definitions start to take life in the classical theory of Jean-Jacques Rousseau based on his idea of the "social contract" that creates an indivisible body that we are all a part of, and to which we cede our power to act. This collective will is to be exercised for the common good of all by the supreme wielder of power.

Samuel Huntington (1993) however warns of the challenges of ambiguity emerging when democracy is defined purely in terms of source of authority or in terms of purposes, as classical theory does. He simply states that the key procedure of democracy is that the leaders are selected by people they govern through the means of competitive elections. Indeed Dahl (1971) suggests five criteria that governance systems should strive to fulfil in order to fulfil basic tenets of democracy. These are: effective participation, voting equality, enlightened understanding amongst the population, control of the agenda and inclusion of adults.

This idea of polyarchical democracy is impossible to birth without critical institutions within the governance system that cater to varied needs. As such Dahl observes that modern states to be seen as democracies should have institutions that engender representation through elected officials; free, fair and frequent elections; freedom of expression; alternative sources of information; associational autonomy and inclusive citizenship.

This briefly sets up the framework within which we can test the measures and depths of democracy in African nations. Dahl's classification of critical institutions gives youthful Africans an analytical tool through which they may gauge the depth of democracy in their countries. For example the presence and regularity of free and fair elections is a useful tool in gauging the progressive maturity of a country, so too the independence of the media and alternative voices in the society.

D. YOUTH AND LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA.

The African Youth charter defines youth as every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years. About seventy percent (70%) of the population in Africa is comprised of young people under the age of 30 (Sommers, 2008). One of the major challenges that leaders of African countries face is how to cater for the continents more than 200 million youth. The needs that these leaders have to meet are generally in relation to education, employment and participation in the decision making process of the state by young people. These are needs that can be met with a synchrony of efforts from both the leaders and the young people.

a) Education

The need for education amongst the youth is a crucial one; most African youth lack secondary education and only a third of boys and just over a quarter of the girls in Sub-Saharan Africa ever enrol much less complete secondary school (Population Reference Bureau 2006). The numbers are even startlingly lower amongst the urban youth with an even smaller proportion joining secondary school while most never completing primary school (Sommers, 2008).

There is a direct nexus between education and employment in that human capital may directly increase productivity making individuals with greater human capital more valuable (Dias & Posel, 2007). Scarcity or lack of proper education therefore makes the transition to employment for young people in Africa difficult resulting in unemployment and underemployment.

b) Unemployment

Caraël and Glynn point out that the urban populations of sub-Saharan Africa have increased by 600 per cent in the last 35 years: a growth rate which has no precedent in human history (2008). As a result, African youth follow one of two paths in their transition into working life; some join the workforce after going through a formal education system and a larger number of African youth either never enter school, moving directly into the labour force or abandon school to start work (Garcia & Fares, 1951).

A report conducted by the Brookings institution, Washington, estimates that More than 70% of the youth in the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Rwanda, Senegal and Uganda are either self-employed or contributing to family work (Ighobor, 2013). According to the World Bank, youth account for 60% of Africa's unemployed, and the African Development Bank notes that the unemployment rate of the youth in Africa is more than twice that of older adults. A great number of the youth in rural areas are in unpaid family work such as farming or cattle rearing while their counterparts in urban areas are unemployed whereby even the employed few are most likely to be stuck in low productivity jobs (Garcia & Fares, 1951).

The nature of work that is commonplace in big African cities is difficult to quantify. It may be short-lived and irregular leaving urban youth to turn to the informal sector (Mari, 1997 also Karl, 2000) as their only source of income. Formal sector growth rates in developing countries (perhaps 2–3 per cent) cannot keep up with urban growth rates (which are often around 4–5 per cent) (Government of Liberia, 2004), and hence; alternative means must be found. In the near future, it is estimated that more than 90 per cent of jobs will be part of informal economies which are growing at a fast rate of 7 percent per annum (Karl, 2000).

This high rate of unemployment coupled with the equally high rate of illiteracy amongst African youth has forced most of them to turn to the informal labour sector. These low skilled labourers are most vulnerable to weakening demand for their labour. The difficulties they face stem from their premature entry into the labour market and lack of the skills required to meet the changing nature of labour demand as a result of globalization and technological changes (Garcia & Fares, 1951)

The staggering numbers of unemployed youth has been translated to resort to violence and conflict. The question consistently pondered over by various theorists is whether the risk of political violence increases with the number of possible perpetrators. A working theory amongst analysts of political violence is that large numbers of youth cohorts make an area more susceptible to political violence. A further study also suggests that large numbers of youth in a particular area make it more susceptible to internal armed conflict both in autocratic and democratic regimes (Urdal, 2006).

There is no question that large concentrations of unemployed or underemployed people may contribute to instability at some point. (Sommers, 2010). Kaplan describes the large numbers of out of school unemployed male youth as, loose molecules in an unstable social fluid that threatens to ignite which led him to conclude that the perpetrators of future violence will likely be urban born, with no rural experience from which to draw (1996:16). A specific group of young people who have also been associated with rampant violence in various African States is the unattached young males who have left their families behind and moved to urban areas seeking economic opportunities (USAID, 2005).

Therefore, a failure to recognize the vitality and necessity of informal markets constitutes a denial of fundamental economic realities (Sommers, 2010), and a failure to heed the needs of the fast growing majority that makes up the African youth is a denial of fundamental social realities. The tragedy is that while the young peoples' energy, creativity, and resilience are not adequately recognized by government, civil society, and international actors, their many assets may be well recognized by those who seek to manipulate them. For instance, the Mungiki has been one of the most prominent youth movements in Kenya since the early 1990s. Mungiki was an influential player in bringing the topic of youth onto the agenda in the 2002 election but due to the growing unemployment rate they have instead been widely accused of taking part in the post-election violence in 2007 (Rasmussen, 2010).

c) Participation in the Decision-Making Process

Perhaps the most transformative power of the youth in leadership on the African continent was the Arab Spring which radically reshaped the politics of the Middle East (Jobson, 2011). Popular media painted these uprisings as youth revolutions, in which young citizens, perhaps aided by social media, took to the streets in opposition to oppressive regimes (Hoffman & Jamala, 2012). This is not to say that the youth can only participate in violence against ruling regimes. In nations that embrace open governance, participation of the youth in decision making processes is generally approached under two guises; the first as youth development programmes equipping young people with life skills and self-confidence to take up leadership positions and the second as mechanisms of participation and representation, in which young people are selected to input into processes and represent their peers on decision-making bodies (Jobson, 2011). Both approaches have been adopted in Kenya by government and non- governmental agencies. Non-governmental agencies such as the National Democratic Institute have run civic education programmes and trainings on young people's participation in political leadership in Kenya (Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars,

2007). The Constitution of Kenya under Article 55 sets down the obligation of the government to ensure that the youth have opportunities to associate, be represented and participate in political, social, economic and other spheres of life. The implementation of this has seen the nomination of youth representatives to National and County Assemblies. Additionally, the youth form a big percentage of the electorate in any democratic state in Africa and as such have the power to shape political leadership within their countries.

The concept of defining the youth demographically also hinders their participation in government. The age based conceptualization of youth implicitly asserts that the youth are of tomorrow rather than of today. This denies them the opportunity to have their issues addressed with the urgency they demand. The inclusion of the youth in political leadership either through a quota system or through equitable levelling of electoral practices will definitely put the solutions of these problems within the time context it requires.

E. WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

a) Women in Leadership: Is it time to celebrate yet in Africa?

Among the heavily embedded challenges in the inclusivity of African leadership is gender inequality especially in the political arena. In 1960, the year around which most African countries were achieving independence, the number of women in African parliaments, ministerial positions and in government were paltry at best-less than 1% (0.94%) of legislators in Africa were female. By 1970 it was 2.21 %. This number grew minimally even within the next 30 years, standing at a mere 9.9 % by 2000- all of this a far cry from the recommended “critical minority” of 30% (IPU, 2000).

There was however a period of time, pre-independence when this was not necessarily the fate of African women. During the armed struggle in Africa, the position of women was emphasized and women enjoyed a period of equality and respect and women showed their ability to go toe to toe with male counterparts in war and had helped to break down stereotypes of them being incapable of leadership (Arnfred, 2010). In part, this could be attributed to the effects of war in general, in that it destroys social conventions and leads to members of society having to take on non-traditional roles in all societies regardless, but it was encouraging. African women therefore hoped and expected that their contributions would be recognized and appreciated post-independence and that the equality observed during the war would continue. This was not the case and once African states gained independence, the role of women was ignored and their representation on the political stage became minimal at best and non-existent at worst. Gender relations

returned to the situation before the wars (Arnfred, 2010b), and women had to begin over in terms of empowerment and achieving equal footing with their male counterparts in society.

b) African Women in the 21st Century: Qualitative Versus Quantitative Indicators

The 2000s have proven to be the years of the revival of the African women's agenda. In the last ten years, the statistics on African women in leadership and other fronts of empowerment are encouraging. The Gross Enrolment Ratio of girls in primary school stands at 99.8 in 2013 compared to 89.5 in 2000. The ratio of male to female enrolment in primary school stands at 90.8 while that of enrolment in secondary school stands at 86.0- not too far from the desirable rate of 100 for both (this is part of the Millennium Development Goals in the area of gender equality). The adult female illiteracy levels in Africa have dropped from 52.5% between 1995 and 2002 to 46.1% in 2013 (AFDB, 2014). In politics, female MPS in Africa stand at about 22.5% of legislators- although this still remains below the desirable 30%, it is significantly higher than only 14 years ago (9.9%). Further, Africa has the fastest rate of growth in the number of women in parliament of any continent (IPU, 2014). This trend must continue to be supported. It should be noted that in almost all countries with a higher percentage, a constitutional quota was in place to boost the number of female legislators (IPU, 2013). It must be asked, however, whether these quantitative victories made us overlook the qualitative ones. In this context, quantitative effects are those that deal with numbers and can be measured, that is, statistics. Qualitative effects are those that can be observed but cannot be measured, such as overall attitude and perception. These include a change in gender stereotypes in Africa, the normalisation of the female politician, a change in the traditional and cultural practices that continue to devalue women in the continent. Herein lies the true answer to the question of whether it is time to celebrate yet. As it is, these are the more difficult areas to impact but without a change in these, the statistics will stagnate soon enough.

Greater gender equality in the political sphere means stronger investment in development cooperation (Mason). Considering most African states are still underdeveloped, one solution to curbing that is promoting equal political leadership among the genders which in turn calls for the promotion of women as leaders in the political sphere. To ensure sustainability of women representation in political leadership, young women should maximize on this opportunity and even take up leadership roles to ensure there is no disconnect in leadership between them and the women currently in power.

c) The Female Political Candidate in Africa

The position of female candidates in political leaderships in Africa is far better position than it was a few years ago. The visibility of leaders such as Ellen Sirleaf Johnson of Liberia, Joyce Banda of Malawi and

Catherine Samba-Panza of the Central African Republic has helped to break barriers and help women visualize themselves as heads of states. The number of women seeking elective positions in Africa is on the rise and the number of those winning also continues to rise. For example, in 2007, Mali had their first female presidential candidate (Cisse, 2014). Despite these encouraging signs, female candidates still face barriers. Africans generally have deep reverence paid to religion, tradition and culture. 45% of Africans are Christians, 40.6% are Muslims and 10% follow African Traditional Religions (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2003). This means that 95.6% of Africans adhere to religions that in one degree or another have conservative, even restrictive and sometimes blatantly discriminatory views about the role of women in society. For example, while Islamic jurists differ on the acceptability of political female leadership (Martin, 2014), the Muslim Brotherhood, a major political party in Egypt has stated their support for women's right to education, employment, and even to become a Member of Parliament or government minister. This support does not however extend to the right to occupy the position of national sovereign (Morrow & al-Omrani, 2011). In Nigeria, the influence of staunch Catholicism and its emphasis on the place of women as the home, has led to Igbo women being less likely to seek elective positions (Uchemi 2003). These influences are replicated in varying degrees all across the continent. Custom, tradition, religion, family and community still remain more powerful in Africa than any law or government policy. So long as African women feel compelled by any of these factors to refrain from the political stage and are afraid to alienate their families and communities, then the political empowerment envisioned will falter. In many communities women on the political stage are still covertly seen as having neglected their families, abandoning their roles as caretakers and homemakers. Kenyan Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Professor Wangari Mathai, who was an environmentalist and outspoken activist for women's empowerment, once noted "It was easy to persecute me without people feeling ashamed. It was easy to vilify me and project me as a woman who was not following the tradition of a 'good African woman' and as a highly educated elitist who was trying to show innocent African women ways of doing things that were not acceptable to African men"(Maathai, 2008).

Second, finances continue to be a hindrance to entry and participation of women in political leadership. Most African women are still entirely or significantly dependent on their husbands for their livelihoods. Without access to resources, political dreams cannot be achieved. The economic indicators are not encouraging on this front either. Women make up 42.5% of Africa's labour force (AfDB, 2014), but they still overwhelmingly occupy the lower ranks of the employment ladder. Women are disproportionately represented in informal work and concentrated among lower-quality jobs within self-employment (ILO, 2007a as cited in UN, 2009). Most women in Africa simply do not have the resources to kick-start- or sustain- a political campaign. When it comes to donors, they are unlikely to finance a female candidate, as her chances of winning are lower. With limited finances, campaigns are not able to attract the kind of buzz

or chatter that would lead to media coverage and these candidates remain virtually unknown. Organizations like Make Every Woman Count (MEWC) are stepping in to bridge this gap in financing by recommending organizations that are likely to fund female candidates in Africa (MEWC, 2013). The list is not exhaustive, nor do they guarantee the funds, but it gives women a guide on where to start looking from.

Third, constitutional quotas ironically are also barriers. In Africa, The legislated quota system is employed in 11 African countries at the moment (The Economist, 2013). While it is true that these quotas were enacted in order to boost the female candidate, to some extent they are harming them. Some women in Africa loose the will to seek election on a competitive basis and those with political ambitions have become complacent in the knowledge that they will be nominated anyway. There is a failure to understand that these quotas should be used as placeholders while the number of those elected competitively gradually rises. There are also arguments that because of the quota system, women should then be denied election in all other seats because they will receive their share via quota. This is a dangerous notion that could lock African nations into quota systems even for decades to come. Further, changing laws in favour of women is not a substitute for real reform of patriarchal political norms and values that continue to prevent women from accessing political resources (International IDEA, 2004). This is not to disregard the quota system, without which most African countries would not have achieved some sense of gender equality; it is only to point out that if this fact is ignored and women are not persuaded to, parity may never be achieved at the ballot, as should be the goal.

d) Africa's Female Electorate: A Sleeping Lion

In a continent of more than 1 billion people, 50% are women (AfDB, 2014). Women make up half of the population- and half the electorate which is enough to win a candidate the electoral mandate in any country. African women make an adequate population to influence political leadership in a democratic society but their electoral impact is barely influential. Studies show that women are, on average, more likely to vote for other women due to the gender- based affinity effect (Seltzer, Newman & Voorhees, 1997 as cited in Matland & King, 2002). Therefore, for a female politician, the women electorate is the friendliest place to seek votes and an understanding of the female voter in Africa is necessary. In Western states, women's votes are of such value that Republican politicians in the US were trained on how to speak to women voters following a tongue in cheek comment by several political candidates that angered women in the US (Beaumont, 2014).

The situation is starkly different in African politics where a disaggregated women's vote is still virtually non-existent. While women have been largely successful as groups on the economic front- using the savings of women's groups to empower themselves, the political front is largely untouched. The benefit of female voters rallying around issues most important to them is that, at the very least, these issues are pushed to the forefront of political discussions such that politicians are keen to state their positions and potential policies in order to attract female voters. For example, in America, abortion and reproductive health rights have special interest for female voters (Volden, Wiseman & Witnner, 2013), and indeed a candidate in America cannot sail through elections without stating their position on these issues. If this was replicated in Africa, some of the issues that could unite the female voters and particularly the youth are land rights, oppressive cultural and religious practices, inheritance and succession laws, economic policies that are friendlier to women and violence against women. These issues are rarely discussed in the political arena because the women electorate in Africa has done little to use their population to influence these political decisions.

It should however be noted that some countries that have taken affirmative steps towards the promotion of women's participation in politics by dedicating entire government ministries to the women's agenda face the problem of having these even ministries viewed as the most junior or simply token ministries (Krook & O'Brien, 2012). If the women electorate in African countries were to use their large population to influence political decisions instead, a tactic that could be emulated by young people, they could then easily have leaders focus on issues that are of importance to them.

History however cannot be ignored such that tribe, party, clan and race have stronger pulls over the African electorate than gender. Most African countries are still deeply divided along tribal lines and here election results are read as a victory for tribal coalitions, powerful clans, majority races and powerful parties (Dowd & Driessen, 2008). Properly conducted civic education by the government and nongovernmental stakeholders should be used to empower especially young women on the influence their population could have on political leadership in any country seeing that majority of the problems that are faced by the general women population are faced by them.

F. TRIBALISM: THE AFRICAN LEADERSHIP CANCER

As most of the world progressively develops in political, social and economic sectors, ethnicity maintains a firm grip on both these sectors in the Africa. The African Continent is well known for its diversity with over a hundred ethnic tribes inhabiting it. This cultural wealth should ideally create united and borderless Africa, however, that is not the case with different factions using their tribal

tags to further selfish political agendas. The problem lies not in the ethnic diversity but the use of identity politics to promote narrow tribal interests.

a) Theories of tribalism

There are three main theories of tribalism; the primordialist, the constructionist and the instrumentalist. The primordialist theory views ethnicity as an ascribed identity that is inherited from one's ancestors. Here ethnicity is immutable. It is fixed and cannot change as it is given to you at birth. Also, ethnicity is determined by common ancestry.

The Constructionist school views ethnicity as a socially constructed notion which is thus flexible. Due to its dynamic nature it conforms to societal change and expectations.

The Instrumentalist school explains ethnicity as a means to an end; an instrument to gain resources. People only become ethnically affiliated if it produces significant returns.

b) The Kenyan Perspective

At the heart of Kenyan politics is an ever growing struggle over who controls the levers of power. Kenya is a multi-ethnic society and has more than 40 ethnic communities that have lived alongside each other for a long time. The most dominant ethnic communities in this linguistic and ethnic landscape are the Gikuyu, the Luyha, the Luo, the Kalenjin, the Kamba, and the Kisii (Yieke, 2010). There are however many other smaller ethnic communities in Kenya. Since the onset of independent self-rule in Kenya however power in Kenya has been associated with a particular ethnic group. The emergent political organisations pre and post-colonial Kenya reflect this reality. The post-independence political party Kenya African National Union (KANU) consisted of the countries majority tribes, i.e. the Kikuyu and the Luo whereas while the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) sought to represent all the other minority tribes.

Kenya was initially a protectorate and later colony of the United Kingdom. From self-rule in 1963 until the death of the first president Jomo Kenyatta in 1978, political and economic power was increasingly vested in a shrinking circle of fellow Kikuyu elites (Decalo, 1998:177). During the second presidential regime of President Daniel Arap Moi- and especially after the failed military coup in 1982, political power became even more concentrated in the hands of a few trusted Kalenjin élites. In the succeeding political regimes of Mwai Kibaki (Kikuyu) (2003-2013) and the now ruling coalition of President Uhuru Kenyatta (Kikuyu) and his deputy William Ruto (Kalenjin), the ruling groups have

sought to use the resources of the state for the special benefit of its own ethnic community and its allies. (Yieke, 2010).

This instrumentalisation of the state to serve narrow clientelist and patrimonial interests is often proffered as a major reason for the heightened ethnic awareness amongst Kenyans with the attendant recurring violent ethnic clashes which occur around the general elections. However as was common in the era of European colonialism in Africa, British administrators divided Kenya's territory along ethnic lines into eight provinces, creating a different majority in each. Each province was further subdivided into districts and divisions often disaggregating identities according to ethnic groups and subgroups based on dialect. (Yieke, 2010). To illustrate, the Luo are based mainly in Nyanza, which is shared with the Kisii. The Kikuyu, in Central Province; the Luhya were classified as belonging in Western Province; the Mijikenda (nine Bantu ethnic groups) in the Coastal Province. The Rift Valley is dominated by the Kalenjin (a Nilotic group comprising the Keiyo, Endoris, Marakwet, Nandi, Pokot, Sabaot, Terik, Tugen and Sebei). It is also home to the Maasai, Turkana, Samburu and a good size of Kikuyus. (Yieke, 2010). However, movements within these ethnically distinct areas were historically fluid (Ogot, 1996), with distinct interdependencies between neighbouring communities existing with regard to trade and intermarriage (Lonsdale, 1992).

The fragmentation of the state to serve selfish individual economic interests was what led to the 2008 post-election violence.

Currently, ethnic tensions in Kenya are as a result of economic hardships in the country. This calls for the control of the distribution and management of resources. Ferguson and Whitehead opine that it would be an extremely rare occurrence for members of one tribe to attack the members of another simply because they are different (2000). One school of thought plays to the notion that ethnic conflicts find their roots in the colonial period. The colonial government had economic policies that favoured the development of certain regions leading to uneven developments in different parts of the country. This theory also attributes ethnic conflicts to the divide and rule system that the British employed in Africa. Here tribe was pitted against tribe by favouring those who supported them and putting them in charge of the other rebels. Most of all, this theory claims that though Africa had no clear set borders, there were invisible dotted lines to show which ethnic tribe a specific area belonged to. Additionally, the colonial British government required that Africans leave their fertile farms and other social and economic resources available to them and leave in reserves where such resources did not exist. The competition for these resources added to the rift that had already started forming between members of different ethnic groups.

These negative tribal agenda was carried on in post-colonial Kenya by the government whereby leaders granted all economic and social benefits to their fellow tribesmen leading to the marginalization of other ethnic groups.

This negative ethnicity has been used to drive the youth to take part in destructive actions that does very little to promote positive development and solution of issues facing the country. The use of young kikuyu men as Mungiki during the 2008 post-election violence in Kenya is one such example.

It is clear therefore that the answer to an open democracy in Africa lies not in tribal affiliations but in development ideas that seek to solve needs. This would require intellectual input provided through think tanks, other research institutions and the inclusion of young people in active political leadership roles. The Kenyan Government could spearhead this by ensuring that leaders of government and opposition do not spew negative tribal statements in their public and private speeches but instead indulge in civil discussions and debates on how to best govern the country. This will in turn set a good example for the young people who seek to hold leadership roles.

It is a widely preconceived notion that the solution to eradicating tribalism lies in creating an open democracy that grants each individual equitable opportunities to realize their human rights. Open governance and sovereignty of the people is a concept well captured by the Kenyan constitution and therefore has adequate legal backing for its promotion. Such governance can be promoted by the youth who can then use their education and participation in government to this end.

G. A MULTIPRONGED ASSAULT ON AFRICAN LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES: POSSIBLE STRATEGIES

The 21st century and dramatic changes across the continent in the last ten decades have brought increasing acknowledgement of the multidimensional nature of both the problems and solutions available for the African leader. While the next generation of leaders will face major challenges, there are also significant opportunities to be harnessed in supporting renewed visions for Africa. These opportunities include the increasing role of the youth in demand and participation for open governance, for example as was with the Arab Spring, in economic advancements such as innovations and increased use of information technology where young people play a key role, among others. African leaders should therefore take note of this development opportunities propagated by the youth and use them to further development agenda within their respective countries.

In fostering the required leadership, African leaders need to come to terms with multidimensional processes of investing in the youth as an economic strategy. Investing in the youth involves creating a healthy political leadership environment and succession cycle and maximizing on the numerous contributions generated by young people who form a very large population of the continent and hence have a hand in determining the present and future political course. In moving forward therefore, political leadership in Africa may heed to the following recommendations.

a) Unemployment.

African governments should take the first step in promoting their young talents by being the biggest contractor for the youth. By implementing policies and rules that dictate that they should use companies primarily owned by youth in certain projects, they will promote their innovations and provide them with a platform to contribute meaningfully to the country's economics. For example, government is a big client when it comes to office spaces, actions such as procuring art work for all government offices from young artisans, all furniture should be locally made rather than imported, design of government offices done by young interior designers, entertainment at all state functions provided by young artists.

At the moment, African governments are undertaking massive infrastructural projects from railway lines, to pipelines to superhighways. Currently, The Republic of China is the major supplier of both materials technical expertise and financing for these projects. In some African countries the Chinese are reported to have brought with them everything from unskilled labour to basic construction materials. Additionally, where there is localization of labour there are increased reports of labour unrest centred around lack of overtime payments, unwritten employment contracts, arbitrary pay cuts (Otieno, Turana & Mayanja, 2010).

African governments need to have tougher negotiators and even take on board young people as negotiators. For example, putting in place employment quotas- requiring that these contractors hire a certain percentage of nationals from that country and also that a significant percentage of materials must come from the country itself. This will help create employment for the young people. Seeing as the youth count for over 80% of the unemployed, this will directly benefit them. There is need also for the Afro-Sino negotiations to reflect the need for skill and knowledge transfer between Chinese contactors and their African counterparts.

Most painters, sculptors, carvers, weavers and welders in Africa are self-taught. Most end up in these professions by default. Without institutions that provide training in these areas, many stagnate in their skill and cannot develop. Further, several more who would have been interested in this field are discouraged by the lack of formal institutions to learn these trades. By investing in training institutions for these arts,

governments will help build capacity for such talent and will decongest. Institutions like national theatres would also thrive if funded better as the quality of productions would improve and in turn promote the media and performance industry in Africa.

b) Tribalism as a malaise

The solution to tribalism in Africa is for the government to adopt laws, policies and programs that will craft the redistribution of resources and opportunities such as employment, education, infrastructure, access to health care among others. This should be done with a view to ensure equitability in the access to these resources across generations and within different regions. The effect of this would be that young and old, rural and urban population, are on equal footing thereby reducing any need for unfair advantage in accessing the resources.

The decentralization of power will also ensure that marginalized populations have a big hand in their own governance. A federal form of government should be adopted by African states that are strife with tribalism in order to grant the people power to govern themselves and therefore address problems that face them in a customized context.

African states should also adopt strict laws on non-discrimination and promote affirmative action to ensure the participation of the less favoured groups in governance and resource distribution.

c) Education

The education curriculum in African states should be revised to also include trainings that would develop a workforce that can solve problems from an African perspective. This therefore calls for a change of curriculum to teach about challenges faced on the African context and how best to have locally developed talents to solve these challenges.

In order to ensure that modern forms of education do not marginalize especially the rural youth, governments need to include traditional education in the formal curriculum. This will ensure a holistic approach to education that is customized to solve challenges that are unique to African set ups.

It is not enough that certain countries such as Kenya, have adopted free education policies. These states need to go a step further and ensure that the citizens maximize on this affordable opportunity. This could be done by setting down strict laws that will compel individuals to access such education.

d) Political participation by the youth

One way to encourage the participation of young people in governance is to carry out vast civic education on the rights, responsibilities and the electoral power possessed by the youth. Knowledge of these will form a starting point in addressing the problems of poor participation of the youth in political leadership.

The youth should also realize the power in their population to influence government policies and leadership in their respective countries. The youth should then seize this power and use it to ensure accountability in the government and most importantly that the government addresses the challenges that face them.

Current political leaders should be encouraged to mentor the youth to take up political leadership roles in their countries. This will fill the inter-generational gap in political leadership and ensure the smooth transition and succession of power in African states.

The government should lay down laws and policies in from of affirmative action to ensure representation of the youth in national and regional governments. This could take the form of reserving specific seats in parliament and positions in government for the youth.

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