Universal Injustice and the Challenge of African Improvement in the Context of Africa

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Abstract
The quest for development in Africa is addressed in this paper. It observes that Africa has several challenges that engender feelings of disillusionment and hopelessness. Therefore, it contends that European actions in Africa, ranging from slavery to colonialism and, more recently, globalization, intensified unfair relationships and disparities that have sparked an international injustice against Africa. Therefore, the stance taken in this study is that Africa has been and continues to be treated unfairly by the international world. At the level of international relations, Africa does not enjoy the same rights and privileges as Europe and other superpowers in the areas of economics, policymaking, and other relevant matters. In the face of this terrible injustice in the world, how will Africa develop? With all of the terrible injustice in the world, is it possible for Africa to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)? Hence, this work eloquently denounces the abhorrent global injustice brought about by the imperialism of the self-centered international powers that invade and exploit Africa under the guise of messengers of hope who are spreading the message of the MDGs. Therefore, this paper suggests a framework for African development, but it contends that ending global injustice is a prerequisite for attaining the MDGs and starting sustainable development in Africa. It also rethinks justice as a value that is necessary for universal human development.

Keywords: *African Development, Global Injustice, Globalization, Millennium Development Goals, Sustainable Development*

I. INTRODUCTION

Global issues of injustice, inequality, and intolerable exploitation that are linked to imperialist capitalism afflict the modern era. Africa and other developing nations, which have turned into the chessboard of Europe, America, and other global powers, are acutely affected by these issues. Even as early as 1895, British statesman and entrepreneur Cecil Rhodes believed that exploitation abroad was required to address internal issues. Then, it is clear that Western interest in Africa is not centered on African welfare. Additionally, although Europeans benefited from imperial colonization, Africans were pillaged. As a result, colonialism helped Europe grow while underdeveloping Africa. It is understandable why political theorist and revolutionary writer Frantz Fanon called for reparations and a redistribution of wealth, claiming that "Europe is literally the creation of the Third World." She is suffocated by money that was taken from less developed nations. But a new form of imperialism has emerged in this age of globalization. The underlying causes of poverty, starvation, diseases, and excess population—all indicators of African underdevelopment—were made worse by European activity in Africa. These activities also aggravated unfair economic, social, political, moral, religious, and historical linkages.

In turn, globalization leads to a dynamic process of global integration, but there is still a significant gap between the industrialized nations of Europe, America, and Japan—the so-called world powers—and the impoverished and helpless Third World, such as Africa. The fate of everyone is decided by a select few. In actuality, Africa is forced to accept the opinions and choices of its former colonial overlords. Because of this, Africans are not afforded the same opportunities and privileges as their Western counterparts; instead, they are forced to view themselves as belonging to a lower social class that is inherently inferior to Europeans. The situation necessitates action driven by the moral duty to avoid unfairness, injustice, and inhumane exploitation. Development in Africa has been a mirage due to the global mentality of exploitation and imperialism towards the continent. This is due to the fact that European imperialist objectives frequently obstruct prospects for progress. The situation is so bad that, despite Africa's abundance of natural resources, 33 of the world's 48 severely indebted countries (HIPCs) are in Africa.

It is for the above reasons that this paper calls for a re-think on justice as a value that is required for universal human development. What is the expectation of justice in human society and the world at large? Taking into cognizance the centre-domination of Europe and America, could it be said without contradiction

that justice is applicable at the global level of international relationships? Why is there injustice and plundering at the global realm? Is it not human and demanding to grant all peoples equal considerations and privileges in trade, policy-making and social arrangement than submerge, dominate and man oeuvre some people for self aggrandizement? Why should Africa not have equal right and dignity with the West? Can the Millennium Development Goals be achieved amidst this heinous global injustice? Consequently, this paper engages in a critical evaluation of human development in Africa arguing that the odious global injustice is antithetical and an impediment to development in Africa. It is the thrust of this paper, therefore, to critically investigate the concepts of justice, global injustice, development in Africa and the Millennium Development Goals, the consequences of global injustice on the Millennium Development Goals, argue for the eradication of global injustice, and then advance a schema for African development amidst the challenging scenario.

INJUSTICE AS THE ANTITHESIS OF JUSTICE

Throughout history, scholars have maintained that a concept's meaning is implicitly included in its opposite. In instance, Friedrich Hegel had maintained that a notion must logically carry its own negative when it is proposed as a possible explanation of reality. As a result, academics who study concepts generally agree that understanding what something is not is one approach to determine what it is. Therefore, we are talking about justice here in order to distinguish it from injustice. Therefore, the contrary, denial, or lack of justice would be implied by injustice.The concept of justice is difficult to understand since it is so vague, ambiguous, and multifaceted. However, as it is the foundation of social morality, it is the basic ordering concept that works best in any human civilization. "Justice talk is hard talk, strictly speaking." Because justice is a virtue that never dies. It might be postponed. It could be misused. They might pretentiously deny it. But it's always there, looking right into your face. Until it is finished. As a result, justice is essentially a ghost that haunts every human community. Demanding fairness, equity, equality, and impartiality in the social order is a prerequisite for justice. It addresses how people and objects should be arranged in a society. Recent research has shown that being treated fairly satisfies a basic need; as such the desire for fairness is founded in the human brain just like the desire for food in rats. Thus, justice is instinctual in human nature. Iroegbu Pantaleon proposed a classical conception of justice that:

It is the granting of each person or people, their respective rightful part, entitlements or shares in a given system. For the system itself, it is the ordering of its basic structure and arrangements to ensure the rightful good of all the members and parties. Thus, social justice is done when all are given the appropriate chances, places and items that should be theirs: both by nature and by the demands of societal care and provision.

As a result, social morality is based on fairness, which grants each person rights that are entitlements. Therefore, justice is meant to ensure that those who are in need or who deserve it have the rights to which it believes they are entitled. To put it another way, justice promotes impartiality, equality, and equity—all of which are completely at odds with discrimination. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights "denounces all discrimination of whatever kind among human beings," according to M. Rene Maheu, the Director-General of UNESCO at the time, in 1968. Because individual rights are predicated on fairness and equality, and because justice should be a fundamental concept in all human societies, discrimination is prohibited in any setting where justice is upheld. Despite the existence of other conceptions of justice, distributive justice is the one we are most concerned with because it is essentially relevant to development-related issues. The notion that wealth and other products are allocated unfairly on a global scale cannot be denied. For instance, while 18 percent of humanity, that is, about 1.1 billion people live below the World Bank"s $2 per day poverty line, the Canadian government provides farmers with $3 per cattle for food. These are issues that must be addressed. In the final analysis, justice is concerned with the proper allocation of things between different people. Things here refer to a class of wealth, goods, power, and respect, reward, to mention but a few. However, the question "what is justice?" amounts to a wide range of answers. Barry Brian poses the question more technically by asking: what does justice demand of individuals and societies? What is the proper distribution of wealth and resources in society? The answers to these questions have flooded the intellectual space on the protracted debate on the theme of justice. As a result, global injustice is a pressing issue in our contemporary because injustice is prevalently practiced at the global level.

UNIVERSAL INJUSTICE AND THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

Africa's current state evokes feelings of disillusionment and complete hopelessness. Africa has been and continues to be significant to the world as a large area for exploration and the assertion of imperial supremacy from its first encounter with Europeans. Slavery, colonialism, and now the modern kind of imperialism known as globalization have all been part of Africa's lengthy and complex journey to become a part of the world community. It is clear that egotistical Western imperialists who are primarily interested in exploitation of Africa control the world community. As a result, the rest of the world has mistreated Africa in spite of the strong clamor for globalization and the creation of a global village. These cruel practices, which

have historical roots, continue to be carried out today as reality, transcending fiction and fantasy. Africans are devalued as less than human, unimportant, and only valuable for their exploitative purposes. This scenario is what this paper calls global injustice. It is necessary to raise some pertinent questions here: Why is the global community unfair to Africa? Why can Africa not have equal rights and privileges with Europe in economic and other related issues like policy-making especially in international assemblies like the United Nations Organisation? Why are European languages encouraged even in the African world to the detriment of African languages? Since Africans are ontologically the same with the Europeans, why not give them equal opportunities and fair treatment at the level of international relationships?

Additionally, the worldwide phenomena of imperialism enriches the West while impoverishing Africa. This starts a division in which one group is ostracized by the others. According to Akoda and Imbua, "the global community has the oppressor and the oppressed, the predator and the prey, the rich and the poor, the globalizer and the globalized, and more recently the globalizer and the globalized." Indeed, global injustice is facilitated by globalization. In addition to the fact that colonialism and the slave trade contributed to Africa's underdevelopment, globalization aims to distribute gains in an unequal way, making Africa the target of manipulation and exploitation. Since Africa has no say in the global design, international economic policies pertaining to trade and finance do not take policy autonomy in Africa into account. Therefore, economic globalization is merely the means by which Africa will always be reduced to a market for Western capitalism. Furthermore, a global economy's operations are unbalanced since it creates a worldwide economic rivalry that benefits the world's leading economies, such as America, Europe, and others. It introduces the "survival of the fittest" philosophy, which holds the regrettably impoverished African nations accountable for their lack of competitiveness. Sam Aluko captures it thus: "the hallmark of globalisation is the promotion of free market, individual initiative, private enterprises and ruthless competition...." In the same vein, Chuka Enuka argues that "...while global wealth has undoubtedly increased, it has become concentrated in fewer countries." In fact, global injustice makes Africa a dumping ground for all types of products. Also, with the adoption of World Trade Organization (WTO) Treaty, African economy has become vulnerable and porous in the importation of goods that could otherwise be produced locally. In addition, Yakpo argues that:
The prices at which African commodities are sold are determined by industrialized countries.... These prices have fallen steadily while the costs of manufactured goods from industrialized countries have risen from year to year to keep their pace with inflation. The result is that African countries have to sell more and more commodities in order to purchase equipment from abroad. This is poverty trap from which it is difficult to escape.

Therefore, it is easy to claim that economic interest is essential to Europe and America's continued presence in Africa. The US Assistant Secretary of State, Walter Kanstenier III, for example, firmly declared that "African oil is critical to us and it will increase and become more important as we go forward." [16]But as a result of oil exploration and exploitation in Africa, the environment has been destroyed, and oil-rich communities are quickly turning into ecological wastelands. Several major rivers are severely contaminated, oil spills on farmlands occur frequently, carbon dioxide emissions are high, and gas flaring causes temperatures to rise suddenly. For instance, it was estimated that 2,369,470.40 barrels of crude oil flowed into the rivers and lands of the Niger Delta between 1976 and 1996, while an additional 45.8 billion kilowatts of heat was released into the sky each day from the flaring of 1.8 billion cubic feet of gas. The official figures on oil pollution, environmental damage, fatalities, and destructions brought on by the operations of multinational oil and gas companies aim to conceal the severity of these occurrences, making the situation much more heinous than this. In the midst of these sufferings, the western world's only concern is controlling Africa's oil wealth. The world operates contrary to the rhythm of justice. According to Kumi Niadoo, Secretary General of Civicus; the World Alliance for Citizenship Participation, "former super powers continue to exercise disproportionate power on citizens in the developing world."

According to Niadoo, sustainable development is "the just and equitable harnessing and use of the planet's resources by all world's peoples, which recognizes our obligations to future generations." This situation runs counter to that definition. The slowness and inefficiency of international institutions, which are set up and organized in favor of economically dominant nations, hamper efforts to promote sustainable development, according to an assessment of the current global order. Generally speaking, perceived unfairness in the global system is referred to as global injustice. When equals are treated differently, it occurs. Thus, racism, oppression, prejudice, and discrimination are all signs of global injustice.

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) IN THE CONTEXT OF AFRICA
In recent years, the topic of international development has gained popularity. Therefore, it is necessary to look for the fundamental objectives or aims of international development. Ten years before to the start of the

third millennium, this was the main objective of a number of UN conferences. The Millennium Declaration was adopted during the United Nations Millennium Summit in New York in September 2000. According to Sachs and Reid, the Millennium Declaration prioritized development, peace, and security concerns related to human rights, the environment, and responsible public affairs management. It sought to integrate into one programme a variety of complementary development goals, which were regrouped into the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Thus, the MDGs strike at the heart of developmental issues in Africa, since Africa largely classified as underdeveloped, is craving for avenues for development. In all, there are eight MDGs which include: (1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger (2) Achieve universal primary education (3) Promote gender equality and empower women (4) Reduce child mortality (5) Improve maternal health (6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (7) Ensure a sustainable environment (8) Develop a global partnership for development.

Achieving these Millennium Development Goals in the context of Africa is a herculean task but a challenge worth undertaking. The existential condition in Africa gives the MDGs a seamless zone which, definitely, is discouraging. Amoako K.Y., the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (1999) reports the situation in Africa that, four out of ten Africans live below the poverty line; one out of every four African children does not go to school; 14 of the 20 lowest ranked countries in terms of the gender development index are in Africa; Africans can only expect to live for 51 years, an average which is fast declining due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic; at least 30 percent of Africans have no access to medical services, while more than 40 percent of the population lack access to safe water; there is rapid environmental deterioration and undermined agricultural productivity due to high population growth rate; more than 20 percent of Africa's population is affected by civil war; with 53 countries demarcated by 165 borders, Africa is the most divided continent; and Africa is the most marginalized continent in terms of its global finance and trade.

In the light of the above features, how can the MDGs be pursued and achieved in Africa? How will Africa's international competitiveness be enhanced to make Africa become an equal player in the global scene? How do we hope to promote regional co-operation and integration in Africa? How do we ensure durable peace and sustainable development in Africa? How does Africa achieve a harmonious balance between population growth and food production, and better stewardship of the environment? How do we raise Africa's life expectancy, to bring it in line with that of developed countries? How do we address gender disparities that prevent women from attaining their full potential in Africa? How do we ensure access to quality education for every African child? How do we ensure health care and universal access to water for all in Africa? How do we eradicate poverty from Africa? These are some of the questions demanding urgent and substantial answers, which are pre-conditions for achieving the MDGs in Africa.

The MDGs, if achieved, no doubt, would improve the development of Africa to a great extent. The point, therefore, is that the issue of African development has remained a fairy tale because of external factors, linkages and relationships connecting the Africans at the global scene. A careful diagnosis of the situation would uncover the fact that the problem with Africa's development is one of global injustice. This is because global injustice recasts the Africans as mere means to an end. As a result, the rest of the world considers Africa for plundering and exploitation. Consequently, this paper argues further that global injustice has grievous consequences on the pursuit of the MDGs in Africa.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF GLOBAL INJUSTICE ON THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN AFRICA

Here, our main focus is on examining how global injustice hinders Africa's progress toward the MDGs. The MDGs may or may not have been created with good intentions. However, it is most appropriate to make inferences from the various examples of unfair acts committed against Africa. The MDGs, which were created as a global goal, are centered on the eradication of poverty and the advancement of human development. However, the pertinent questions that come to mind at this point are: If the MDGs were meant to eradicate poverty and to promote human development, why is there still a cycle of exploitations and manipulations of the weak and poor Africa by the strong and rich Europe and America? When will Europe and America have the bitter but liberating bite of veracity and stop the pretentious parade as emissaries of hope disguised under the gospel of the MDGs? In addition, the majority of Africans are materially poor. The activities and excavations of the Western world have left the continent poorer than before, as such, there is dramatic increase in both the total number of poor people and the fraction of its population that is poor. Over the years, various initiatives have been adopted to intervene in the African bedlam, such as debt relief, make poverty a history campaign, etc, yet Africa's condition has continued to deteriorate and the problems multiplied. Debt and inequitable trade are at the heart of Africa's problems. It is time to „take the bull by the horn." The United Nations Organisation (UNO) feigns to be interested in African development. For instance, it makes efforts to provide funds for African countries, whereas huge amounts of money carted and looted out of Africa by some callous politicians are deposited constantly in foreign accounts in Europe and America. Why would UNO not make policies to regulate and curtail such money laundering if it has African development at heart?

Of course, the present Europeans and Americans are descendants of the capitalist colonial imperialists, as such; their primary interest remains the plundering of Africa. Such money deposited in foreign banks is instead economically advantageous to the foreign countries that pretend to be interested in resuscitating Africa. UNO would be just and fair to Africa if only it can liaise with Africa and report any case of foreign money laundering by shameless and unpatriotic Africans. This is a task it must do to prove its good will for Africa. Furthermore, it is an unblemished piece of truth that Africa is mired in economic stagnation. The international community claims to be making several attempts to remedy the situation but to no avail. Is African development a hopeless thesis which deserves to be discarded? What could be done to help Africa move from this stagnation to sustainable growth and development? In September 2000, the MDGs were endorsed a s a viable therapy for the African problem and it was hoped to be realised by 2015. A cursory look, however, reveals that Africa in 2014 is hardly different from Africa in 2000, which is after fourteen years of pursuing the MDGs with barely one year left to the expected time of realisation. It becomes arguable that the global order has no precise goodwill for Africa. The only option for Africa and Africans now is to read the signs of times and realise that they are being fooled by the Western world.

Besides, the MDGs presuppose historical reparations. Africa, since its earliest contact with the west has had different doses of European mercantile interests, which often leave the Africans in anguish. In fact, "The effects of history have plunged Africa into a psychological trauma of inferiority which in turn occasioned an allround retrogression ... of the African life." [25] How does the world hope to reconcile the ill-treatments given to the Africans by the Europeans during the Trans-Atlantic slave trade era and the colonial experience? In fact, some of the Multinational Corporations in Britain were established with proceeds from slave trade and these Multinational Corporations are today the major actors in the global scene. Is it justified then to use the proceeds stolen from Africa in subjugating or re-colonizing Africa?

One would think that distributive justice calls for an equitable distribution of goods and wealth, and so reparation is imperative if the global order is to move ahead with its globalization agenda. It is important to note that justice "... may be delayed ... denied. Yet it is ever there, staring in the face. Until it is done." The global agenda otherwise called human agenda seems like a club; an inner caucus affair. Without economizing the truth, the global scene is regulated by fundamental racial underpinnings. The colour difference is in fact a basis for discriminating between peoples. The Whiteman sees nothing good in the Africans because majority of them are black. As such, the African is trapped in a world that discriminates against his black skin. For being black, the white believes that Africans are naturally an inferior and lower class of humans. It is hard to believe that a perspicacious philosopher like David Hume had commented that the Africans lack ingenious manufactures, arts and science among them, and some other western thinkers have argued likewise that what is pitched as African civilization is a mere imitation of the Whiteman as a monkey does a man. However, the truth of the matter is that this racism that calibrates the Africans as bestial creatures that had lived in stagnation before their contact with the Europeans, which is often buttressed by tales of savage misery, is nothing but a crafty technique to conveniently execute the heinous Western imperialism and hegemony.

Additionally, racism has increased recently. For instance, racial profiling and visa restrictions make it difficult for Africans to participate in international events held in wealthy nations. For example, an American citizen can easily travel to any country in the world simply because they are an American. The injustice in the world is getting worse. It's also critical to recognize the domestic aspect of African issues. In an attempt to further pillage the remains of Africa, some dishonest and self-centered Africans have formed some kind of partnership with the West. In actuality, some disloyal Africans have violated African interests by serving as the conduit for Africa's exploitation since the continent's first interactions with the West. The chain of African dictators that continuously embezzle the common money for their own benefit adds another layer to the domestic issue. As a result, they wind up ignoring the Africans' fundamental requirements. Such circumstances are detrimental to the growth of Africa. In the middle of this agonizing African predicament, it is critical to look for the path ahead at this point.

TOWARDS A SCHEMA FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

Africa's history has been one of constant conflict and suffering. According to Franklin E. Frazier, the political and economic dominance of Europe over Africa resulted in disruption and breakdown at every level of society. The colonial powers' alteration of Africans' perspectives, social groups, emotions, and beliefs left them confused, and their annoyance and dissatisfaction have since played a significant role in global politics. Today, African development seems to be of global concern both to those who consciously and resolutely destabilised and underdeveloped Africa and those who perhaps are of good will. But what is actually a clear picture of the African impasse? J.O. Oguejiofor responds to this pertinent question that:

The enormous problems of Africa are failure of states, endless wars, epidemic of all kinds, HIV/AIDS pandemic, democracies that atrophied, systems of education that are in disarray, health systems that are not

much better than the witchcraft, decaying infrastructure if it ever existed, reality of corruption, nepotism, exploitation of the weak, abuse of power and position, lawlessness.

Considering the experiences of the new industrializing countries of Asia, there is the need to improve indigenous technology in Africa. African development history contains accounts of design, fabrication and production technology that negates the erroneous presumption that indigenous technology requires foreign guidance. There is need, therefore, to learn from the experiences of Asian countries like Japan and South Korea who were at the same level of development as major African countries up to the 1960s and 1980s respectively. Also, since post-industrial technology is dehumanizing and grafted in a culture of individualism and materialism of the West, there is need to build an indigenous technology founded solidly on African cultural bases and driven by passion for ideals, values, justice and sustainable development, so that Africa will advance technology and not technology advancing Africa.

Also, serious attention should be given to education and training especially science and technology. J. Isawa Elaigwu urges that the 21st century is for countries which possess international power and skills, as such, there is urgent need to invest in education and training. In short, the decaying educational system in Africa makes development an uphill task. It is important also to focus on research because Africa may not record any meaning progress in development without adequate attention to research. Furthermore, in any international relationship and dealings, Africa's interests must be pursued and not sacrificed. Consequently, African foreign policy must centre around and priorities the core interests of Africa. Finally, African countries should reposition their governments to ensure good leadership and political stability. Most of the newly industrializing countries of Asia were re-organized by visionary and purposeful leadership coupled with a stable political atmosphere. Thus, the realization of African development depends largely on good leadership together with a stable political environment.

II.   CONCLUSION

Thus, the argument has been that the world community has minimized Africa as the main victim. The West has unfairly and unjustly categorized and exploited Africa. Africa is largely underdeveloped because of its current state, which is appalling in every way. With the ongoing global transformation, it is more important than ever to promote sustainable development for Africa. The majority of the plans for African development that have been laid out by various international organizations have failed. However, the world continues to yearn for actions that would allow Africa to achieve sustainable development by repositioning it in the international community. This paper's stance is that the main barrier to African development is global injustice brought about by prejudice and imperialist inclinations that are evident in the economic, social, political, moral, and historical interactions between Africa and the West. Therefore, it is imperative to discourage and end global injustice. Also, there is the need to propose a pragmatic schema for African development, which will include improvement of indigenous technology, education and research, etc. The combination of the termination of global injustice and the adoption of a pragmatic schema for African development would make a sure pathway to attain sustainable development in Africa.

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