

CHALLENGES FACING AFRICAN MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS SCHOOLS: THE NEED FOR AN AFRICAN-CENTERED MANAGEMENT EDUCATION AND PEDAGOGY

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Abstract

The world over, business and management schools play an important role in the economic development of many countries. Most of the graduates from these schools helm some of the leadership positions in public and private sector organisations in these countries. Some of these graduates have started enterprises, most of who go on to employ a lot of people in the respective countries that these businesses operate in. Lately, business and management schools around the world are faced with numerous challenges. These challenges include the shortage of academically qualified staff, as well as the need to constantly adapt their curriculum to meet the challenges of a continuous changing business environment. Business and management schools also have to contend with innovations in technology that have brought about the delivery of business and management education over the internet. Another challenge is the resource constraints that many of these schools face as well as the unethical businesses that the graduates of these school are engaged in which have caused financial crises. When it comes to African business and management schools, the challenges are accentuated. The most important of which include the lack of African business case studies, as well as management and leadership theories. Business and management schools around the world and indeed in Africa need to change and reform their respective curriculum or they face the threat of outliving their usefulness.

Management and Business schools the world over play an important role in the socio-economic development of both developed and developing countries. They train the numerous managers and leaders needed to helm our public and private sector

enterprises. A testimony to this point is the role played by business and management schools in the USA right after World War II.

But in an increasingly interconnected world, business and management schools around the world are face with new challenges. Challenges such as programmes that are archaic and ethical challenges as it pertains to the graduates of these schools to mention a few. They will either have to reform or face the threat of outliving their usefulness. After the experiences with Enron, Tyco, WorldCom, and Parmalat and the sub-prime crisis, most of whom were created by management and business school graduates; management and business schools have been blamed for training some of the most unethical managers that run these organisations.

Although most of the highly publicized companies that collapsed were in the West, African management and business schools are equally guilty in this respect. The late Sumantra Ghoshal commenting about this challenge management and business schools face, particularly Western management and business schools said, “by propagating ideologically inspired amoral theories, business schools have actively, freed their students from any sense of moral responsibility” (Ghoshal, 2005).

This paper will look at the current challenges facing business and management schools worldwide. It will start by looking at the specific challenges that these schools are faced with world-wide, especially in the West. It will then look at the specific challenges these schools face in Africa. After going through these specific challenges, the paper will call for an African-Centered Management Education and pedagogy as a solution to these challenges that management and business schools are facing in Africa. After elucidating on what an African-Centred Management Education and Pedagogy entails, the paper will show how this can be realized. Then the paper will conclude.

Global Challenges to Management and Business Schools

Management and business schools and indeed business education in general around the World are facing challenges of which African management and business schools are not immune. The first is the shortage of academically qualified faculty to teach in these schools. One of the reasons is that there is an explosive growth of management and business schools around the world and yet there is a shortage of Ph.D. holders to teach in these schools. Universities are not able to graduate Ph.D. holders fast enough to meet the increased demand for them. It is also the case that most of these freshly minted Ph.D. holders may not have enough real-life experience to infuse in their lectures. But the problem the lack of enough Ph.D. holders poses is that, most of the management and business school faculty are professionally qualified but not academically qualified. That means most of them hold professional qualifications. The situation in Africa is worst. Majority of the management and business school faculty do not have a Ph.D.

The few that have Ph.Ds. are poorly paid resulting in most of them accepting better paid jobs in the private sector. Those who prefer to stay in academia because of personal convictions, moonlight teaching in other schools to augment their income. There is therefore limited or no time to undertake research to enhance their subject matter. Quality of the programmes at their mother institutions suffer and the students are the ones who pay for such poor quality education.

The second challenge that management and business schools face globally is the ability to constantly adapt their curriculum to a constantly changing business environment, both globally and in the respective domestic environments that these schools operate in. This is due to the advancement in technologies and the dynamic changes in the global economic environments. It thus renders irrelevant most of the programmes of these schools, thus they need to constantly innovate their curricula to meet the increasing demand of the marketplace to prepare their students for careers in the challenging and changing environments of today. In Africa, the challenges are even much more heightened. First, most of the management and business schools are new and demand from them by both the public and private sectors to develop innovative African-Centered management education programmes that will contribute to development as well as growth are immense. Secondly, they are asked to do so with limited fiscal resources and inadequate infrastructure as well as qualified academics.

The third challenge is the impact new technologies are having on management and business education. For example, the Personal Computer (PC) has now moved from the desktop to the palm. Today, dozens of mobile technology gadgets have flooded the marketplace. The Internet is a necessity in work and education environments. Today, many students can access management courses through e-learning platforms and some have not even step-foot on campuses. New technological gadgets and the Internet have not only changed the way people learn, it has also changed the way management education is delivered. Today, management education programmes/lectures can be delivered via virtual classrooms. Some faculty of management and business schools deliver their courses through webinars, on-line discussions, and through digital portals. Most of these academics assign readings from e-books and many other digital portals. To some extent, this is advantageous to Africa and management education pedagogy if handled properly. It will reduce cost as well as accessibility. Today, Africa is the fastest growing market for mobile telephones and other devices. Farmers are now using such devices to check on the prices of their products or receive payments or send money to relatives. The proliferation of the *M-Pesa* in Kenya is a case in point. Hence, management and business schools in Africa can employ this new technological gadget to open management education in Africa to populations beyond the cities where most of them are located in. The challenge is the poor bandwidth of most of these countries, and the

exorbitant cost of access to the Internet for many in these countries at this point in time.

Another important challenge facing most management and business schools around the world, both public and private is the issue of resources to sustain quality, balance more complex portfolio objectives, respond to diverse stakeholders and their numerous perspectives as well as expedite efforts to create innovative programmes to differentiate themselves among numerous competitors (GFME, 2006). Many management and business schools around the world are competing fiercely for quality and good academics to give them a competitive edge in an increasingly crowded business and management school market. Because of the rather limited supply of these academics and the huge demand for their services as mentioned earlier, the salaries they command are steep. This puts a financial strain on the budgets of most of these schools. For poorer business schools, particularly those in developing countries and in

Africa, resource constraints forces them to settle for the second best in academics or make do with inadequate infrastructure. The quality of their programmes and their delivery suffer.

Resource constraints also take the form of inadequate funding for research. Research undertaken by management and business schools enhances their curricula and pedagogy in an increasingly competitive business environment where the curricula of these schools must constantly adapt. Research is also important for the schools to maintain or attain accreditation, enhance their status in numerous international rankings or just to contribute to the canon of public knowledge on burning current issues. In most cases, it could also be an income generator for management and business schools. Schools like Harvard Business School and MIT Sloan School of Management comes to mind, where a significant amount of their income is generated from the sale of the output of the research findings of their faculty in numerous publications.

Inadequate resources thus lead to poorly enriched programmes and outdated material which impact on the image and mission of most of these schools. It could also subsequently lead to revenue shortfalls. For schools that are public sector institutions, government cut-backs are having a huge impact on the budgets and consequently the quality of their programmes, academics and research. In most developing countries, particularly Africa where the culture of giving is limited, resource constraints is particularly important and has an enormous impact on the total operation of management and business schools as well as the quality of programmes and their delivery.

Africa Specific Challenges

Lord Lugard, Britain's leading colonial administrator in Africa used to tell his British contemporaries to avoid the "Indian disease" in Africa. Lugard's view was that if Britain developed an educated the middle class in the "Dark Continent," this educated middle class would catch the virus of nationalism. He further stated:

Let it be admitted at the outset that European brains, capital, and energy have not been, and never will be, expended in developing the resources of Africa from motives of pure philanthropy . . . (Lugard, 1922).

The result was that Africa's colonial master deprived the continent of such an education. Thus the development of post-colonial tertiary education in Africa was thus rather slow with few universities dotting the continent. The establishment of most of these universities was through the efforts of Africa's nationalist leaders' right after independence. Today, there are numerous public and private sector tertiary institutions in Africa.

The new generations of Africans born after the post-colonial period are well educated and travelled but are at the same time attuned to the challenges of development on the continent. This generation has observed that Africa's management and business schools have an important role to play in the continent's growth and development efforts. Unfortunately, these schools are failing in this effort. This is because they are mimicking Western management and business schools in the content and delivery of programmes. I will turn Lord Lugard's comment on its head, so to speak and tell our African contemporaries, to avoid the "Westernisation of African management and business school's disease." But for management and business schools in Africa to be able to do that, they must overcome the global challenges that management and business schools in general face as elaborated on in the beginning of this paper; as well as the specific challenges peculiar to Africa that they face. The first peculiar African specific challenge they face is the perception that, "whatever comes from the West is the best" mentality. There is this perception amongst most Africans that stuff from the West, be they goods, food and even management and business education in this case, are the best. Whatever comes out of Africa, indeed that, of their continent and respective countries is not good. Even the best of the same product that rivals or surpasses the best in the West is not good enough. This is the sad truth but it is often the case. The argument can be made that some stuff from Africa when it comes to quality leaves much to be desired. But having said that, it cannot be the case where everything that comes out of Africa is inferior or not good.

Furthermore, most African organisations and governments will rather hire a less qualified Westerner than a more qualified African in the same field of expertise; even in cases where the African and the Westerner might have attended the same universities abroad. What could be the cause of this? I must admit that I am not a psychoanalyst but what I simple offer as an opinion is that, it has to do with the

psychological malady that I will term self-hate. This may be changing with the new generation of African managers who are in some ways trying to rectify the problem but the practice still pertains in certain quarters. Franz Fanon writing in his book, *Black Skin, White Masks*, talks about how black people, Africans, are trained from childhood to unconsciously associate blackness with wrongness. In the book, he also cites how comic books and cartoons are used as devices by white society to cement this warp idea, especially in children's minds that black people are villains. These images then causes trauma in these children and becomes inherent in their behavioral make up. This experience of trauma from the early age creates a collective nature among colonised people (Fanon, 1952).

Writing in his book, *Africa Tomorrow*, the Togolese diplomat and former head of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), today known as the African Union (AU), Edem Kojo observed, "in truth, colonization has been highly successful since almost all of independent Africa has set European models of society as their objectives, and all the education systems established since then continue along the lines laid down by the colonizer, and seem to be an imitation of what is done elsewhere, despite the genuine efforts here and there or verbal proclamations," (Kojo, 1987). The late West Indian writer, Aimé Césaire expands on this observation. He writes, "by imitating the culture of the other at all levels, by making himself an image of the other at all costs, by making his personality a reflection of the foreign on the psychic, psychological, intellectual, cultural and moral planes, the African, having adopted social systems of foreign origin, buffeted between East and the West, believes that he has found a poise and strength for his spirit in a mimicry that only goes to the making of, and that accounts for derelict societies, 'without any known alexins,'" (Césaire, 1956). There are those like the late Afro-beat musician, Fela Kuti of Nigeria who refers to such kind of warp perception as "Colonial Mentality," a perception created by the impact of colonisation on Africans. But if such is the case, what about those Africans who did not grow up during the colonial era but who still practice this "self-hate?" This kind of self-hate is referred to by psychoanalyst as "Contraidentification," where one wishes to dissociate themselves from their group. It is more of a self hate by some black people rather than anything that has to do with colonialism; and you find a lot such black people not willing to associate with anything that is black or African. What a shame!

Another Africa specific challenge that management and business schools on the continent face is that of the appointment of heads of universities, and indeed management and business schools, particularly public ones not based on merit or experience. They are based more on political affiliations or ethnic/tribal relations than in most cases on competence. For most private institutions in Africa, it is based on family ties and relations than it is on merit. The quality of the graduates that these schools produce leaves much to be desired as the leadership of these schools have no clue about the intricacies of running business and management schools. In most cases,

they are just clocking time to get a pension. Their concept of management is often warped and they are easily threatened when knowledgeable colleagues outshine them at domestic or international fora or in the efficient dispensation of their duties. This is because most of these political appointees have not published but call themselves professors, either through dubious promotions or colluding. Because bureaucracy and politics is what these schools are managed with, quality and impact of programmes in some cases are lost. Students then graduate from these schools with the requisite paper qualifications but limited knowledge and expertise in their subject areas. Most of these graduates end-up in being unemployed. At issue is also the relevance of the kind or quality of management education offered in this knowledge era. Without the relevant quality, substance and relevance, their contribution to the development process of the continent is left wanting.

One very important specific challenge that management and business education in Africa face is the lack of African case studies to form a substantial part of the pedagogy of management and business schools on the continent. The advantages of these African specific case studies to form a significant part of the pedagogy of these schools at this point in Africa's development trajectory, is their timely relevance, their contextual and cultural relevance. Equally important is the psychological impact they will have on students using such case studies in their programmes, particularly future and current Africans who are going to manage public and private sector organisations in Africa. These students can relate to the featured organizations or businessmen and women in these case studies because they are their own. African case studies will fit these managers and leaders with the requisite lenses and enhance their ability to operate effectively in the African environment with a deeper understanding of Africa's unique socio-political, economic and cultural realities. Currently, most management and business schools on the continent use case studies by Western management and business schools, particularly from Harvard Business School. The core argument here is that case studies by Western management and business schools should be used to compliment African ones. There are current efforts in that direction to have academics and professionals in management and business schools in Africa write African case studies. The African Association of Business Schools (AABS), is one of the organisations on the continent who is in the fore-front of such efforts. There are also individual efforts by some business schools on the continent to write African case studies for their students but these schools are few and far in between. More needs to be done in this area. Even though it is a challenge to write African case studies, it cannot be emphasized enough that efforts must be put in place to ensure that quality ones are produced. But it is not only the lack of African case studies that is a challenge to management and business education in Africa. It is also the lack of or the failure of management and business schools in Africa to develop and undertake African Study Tours as part of their programmes and pedagogy. I am yet to see an African management or business school that has as part

of its pedagogy a study or emersion tour of other regions or countries on the continent. Rather, what is common is that, most of these schools are quick to send their students on study tours to Europe, the United States or Asia, as if these students upon graduation are going to work as managers of organisations in those regions. What argument can management and business schools in Africa give for sending their students on study tours of Europe, United States or Asia? That there is nothing to learn that is of relevance in Africa?

My take is that the inferiority complex as alluded to earlier in this paper is at play here. African leaders of these management and business schools think of Africa probably as “backward” and that perhaps nothing good can be learned from it. If this is indeed the case, then I think these leaders need to un-shackle their minds of the psychological chains of mental slavery which make them see themselves and their continent as having nothing to learn from. The argument here is not that management and business schools in Africa should not learn from other countries. I think it is important to learn from other countries and regions of the world about some best as well as worst practices in management education; but such learning must begin at home in Africa. It is by learning from the best and worst in Africa that it will prepare management and business students to appreciate and enhance their understanding of the best and worst management education practices in both Africa and abroad. This will enhance their growth tremendously.

The final specific challenge that management education in Africa faces is that of stability. Political, economic and social stability on the continent can have an important impact on the long-term planning and growth of management education. For example, the recent civil upheavals in Cote d’Ivoire, Kenya and in Somalia for example have had serious impact on management education in the short term and to some extent, long-term in those countries. Vital info-structure and infrastructure were destroyed, a lot of people lost their lives and others were displaced. It usually takes a while for some of these vital infrastructures to be restored and for sustainable stability to return. Most important of all is the loss of human capital or critical talent to the country because of the war. Some of this talent might have left the country or might have lost their lives during the conflict. It is thus going to take years to rebuild such capacities. The experiences of countries like Sierra Leone and Liberia in West Africa, who are emerging from years of conflict, are cases in point. Most of their infrastructure, systems, educational institutions, public administration bodies and institutions has to be re-built afresh.

In these times of financial crisis and austerity around the world, finding the requisite resources to undertake such reconstructions are hard to come by. But the challenge of re-building these economies goes beyond financial. It will take years to heal the psychological scars left on the people due to the years of trauma caused by the war. The economies of these countries will take years to recover. The impact on management and business education and their contribution to the growth and

development on the respective countries and to the continent can be seriously impacted.

Furthermore, the fact that most of the public management schools in Africa depend on government funding to sustain themselves, they find it hard to plan for the long-term as the funding of the government to these schools fluctuate depending on the global and domestic economic impact on the finances of these countries. Until national budgets are read and approved by the requisite legislative bodies of these African countries and the requisite government subventions disbursed; public institutions in the country are held hostage. They cannot undertake any new projects in the new academic year or continue with projects that have depleted their budgets for the previous academic year. Most of these African countries also depend on external assistance to supplement their budgets. With the current challenges in the global economic environment, especially where countries in Europe who have generally been generous with aid to African countries are now in economic turmoil. Most of these countries are undertaking deep cuts in their fiscal budgets. Some are introducing steep austerity measures to trim their huge deficits as well as implementing workable solutions to stimulate their economies. Thus most of the funds going to African countries are going to be cut, if not already cut. This will definitely have an impact on the quality and delivery of management education programmes in most African countries as government subventions to these schools will also be cut or reduced. Hence whatever strategic planning that was put into place by these institutions will have to be revised and specific line items thrown out of the window as there will be no budget to fund some of these projects or programmes. A better solution is to have most of these public sector management and business schools in Africa to be operational autonomous or partially autonomous. It will force them to find ways to fund themselves and be self-reliant.

The Need for an African-Centered Management Education

From the outset in this paper, I have argued that management and business education has an important role to play in Africa's current growth trajectory. But this can be done sustainably if management and business schools on the continent stop mimicking their Western counterparts. Numerous reasons have been advanced in this paper to support such a view.

Even numerous Deans and Directors of Western management and business schools have equally argued that Western management and business schools need to change. For example, Thierry Grange of the *Grenoble École de Management* in France have observed that, "In Western economies, many businesses are shifting away from traditional methods of building wealth, which relied on good leadership and strong product, to more "virtual" models that often rely on nothing more than good press and an Initial Public Offerings (IPO). In the process, we've lost even a minimal consensus regarding what is ethical in business – we've lost a sense of

purpose in business education” (Grange, 2011). He adds, “business education today has become both a commodity that we ‘sell’ to our students and a ‘luxury’ product that we offer to the elite. As we try to maintain that elite image, we design portfolios of management programmes that seem more and more sophisticated. But are they necessarily better? I argue that without a shared view of integrity and ethics, we cannot achieve real learning in our classrooms. Without a shared view of the purpose of business, we cannot train leaders whose contributions will lead to a better world” (Grange, 2011).

Grange’s observations are some of the reasons why the mimicking of Western management and business education by African management and business schools is the wrong model for the continent. The other reasons why it is the wrong model for Africa is that, such a management education model emphasizes shareholder value and the bottom-line to the detriment of ethical behavior and human as well as environmental dimensions of development as mentioned elsewhere in this paper. Thus re-thinking this simplistic, short-term paradigm of shareholder value and profit maximization, according to Judith Samuelson (2009), may be the single biggest challenge we are facing in recent times in both business and education. These and many reasons offered so far in this book are why I argue that Africa needs a new paradigm shift in management education – an African-Centered management education. But what is this African-Centered management education? How different is it from management education in general and what are its major features or components? By an African-Centered Management Education I mean a management education who’s main focus is the development and delivery of programmes that contribute to the sustainable growth and development of particularly Africa as well as the world. At its core, it will borrow best practices and methods from all parts of the world. But these methods and practices will be rooted in an African foundation and ethos, which takes cognizance of Africa’s history, socio-economic and political realities, condition, environment and cultures. But the definition does not end there. Its emphasis will also deal with the practice of management within the context and realities of the African continent. It is also a management education concept and practice that accepts that in a Knowledge-era, it can learn from best practices from all corners of the world, not mimic such practices. But at the end of the day, all such best practices have to be anchored on an African base and core or blended with it.

The difference between an African-Centered Management Education and management education in general is the former’s emphasis on Africa’s history, socio-economic and political realities as well as its environmental and cultural realities. The major features of the African-Centered management education that this paper will like to elaborate on are that, it comprises of an African-Centered management pedagogy, employs African business and management case studies, emphasises on African study tours and emersion studies. Above all, it emphasizes the need for the development of African theories and methodologies of management, entrepreneurship and leadership.

It also calls for the development of innovative management programmes that will contribute to Africa's sustainable development and competitiveness taking into consideration its socio-economic, political, cultural and environmental conditions and realities, without sacrificing quality and their impact. This is the kind of management education that Africa needs not the current one in which management and business schools on the continent continue to mimic the West.

(i) African-Centered Management Pedagogy

An African-Centered Management Pedagogy is a teaching and learning method of management directed at Africans and African institutions, which places the African experience, condition and culture at the core of this pedagogy. This is in recognition of the fact that the African experience is unique and different from, the Asian, Latin American, European and American experiences, condition, environment and culture. This uniqueness therefore implies that using a one-size fits- all pedagogical approach will be in-effective. Obviously there might be some similarities but the uniqueness is what sets African management and business schools apart from their counterparts in Asia, Latin America, Europe or America. I want to make it absolutely clear that by espousing such a view is in no way calling for the ethnocentrism of African management pedagogy. It is important to stress this point because as some experts have aptly observed, culture in the sense of the inner values and attitudes that guide a population, frightens scholars (Landes, 2000). In an African-Centered pedagogical approach, the important role that culture play is pronounced. By culture, we mean the values, attitudes, beliefs, orientations, and underlying assumptions prevalent among people in a society (Huntington, 2000). But does culture really matter? Culture matters because according to Michael Porter (2000), "what people believe about what it takes to be prosperous has much to do with how they behave. And beliefs become reflected in attitudes and values. Unproductive economic culture, then, often arises less from deeply embedded societal traits than ignorance or the misfortune of being guided by flawed theories." Culture also matters because, "one can view economic development as partly shaped by a tug-of-war between productivity-enhancing aspects of economic culture in a nation and productivity-eroding aspects of culture," (Porter, 2000).

Furthermore, culture matters, especially in the case of Africa because it is a vehicle for economic development. According to the United Nations Economic, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), "culture is a powerful global economic engine generating jobs and income with a value of US\$1.3 trillion in 2005. Global cultural industries account for more than 7 percent of global GDP. During the 1990s, the cultural industries grew at an annual rate twice that of service industries and four times that of manufacturing in OECD countries. UNESCO further reports that Cultural tourism generated 40 percent of global tourism revenue in (2007 UNWTO). It adds that UNESCO World Heritage sites, produces revenues from visits,

sale of local crafts, music and cultural products generating employment for communities. International tourism represented approximately 10 percent of the EU's GDP in 2004 (2009 UWR). It also adds that culture offers opportunities for economic growth through microenterprises especially in low income communities. Cultural goods and services often need low capital investment by building on materials and skills available within the community. The successes of micro-credit enterprises that benefit women have been especially valuable. The rotating credit systems used by women to mobilize capital, called *Susu* in West Africa and *Tontines* in Francophone African countries is a case in point.

Despite such an important role culture, and cultural values and attitudes contributes to development and progress; it has been largely ignored by some governments, development finance institutions and some aid agencies. Integrating values and attitude change into development policies, planning and programming is, . . . a promising way to assure that, in the next fifty years, the world does not relive the poverty and injustice that most poor countries, and underachieving ethnic groups, have been mired in during the past half century" (Harrison, 2000). Thus "culture in all its dimensions, is a fundamental component of sustainable development. As a sector of activity, through tangible and intangible heritage, creative industries and various forms of artistic expressions, culture is a powerful contributor to economic development, social stability and environmental protection. As a repository of knowledge, meanings and values that permeate all aspects of our lives, culture also defines how human beings live and interact both at local and global scales" (UNESCO, 2010). For these reasons and more, culture will play an important role in an African-Centered management pedagogy.

African-Centered management pedagogy will also develop and deliver programmes that will deal with the change of the African mindset. A mindset that makes us think that some people (non-Africans) like Africans more than we Africans like ourselves; hence, we are always waiting for "donors" to help us out, either with supplementing our national budgets or funding our continental organisations and we don't even feel ashamed about it. It is an open secret that, a large portion of the budgets of our African organisations is mostly funded by bilateral or multilateral donors. For example 56 percent of the budget of the African Union is funded by Africa's development partners. Obviously, these partners may have their interest that may not necessary be the same as the continents. Furthermore, these partners sometimes default or do not honour their commitments; when that happens, it puts the continental body in dire straits and an inability to achieve its set goals. This reliance on development partners happens partly because most African countries refuse to pay their dues to continental African organisations. But leaders of these countries are quick to want to benefit from these organisations and their programmes. Personally, I tend to see the continuous funding of our organisations by donors as a crutch. Until we let go of these crutches, we will never be able to walk.

The African-Centered management pedagogy must make it clear that if we Africans want to “sweet” we must “sweat.” We must value thrift and hardwork as well as discipline. I have always told my friends in conversations allegorically about hardwork in the following way, that “anyone who wants to go to heaven must die. Unfortunately, most of us do not want to die.” Then I am quick to add, there is no way we will go to heaven. My emphasis is on the fact that if we want the good things in life, we have to make sacrifices as well as work hard for them. If we do not want to make sacrifices and work hard, how are we going to get these good things in life? On this issue, Etounga-Manguelle, a Cameroonian writer observes, “the African works to live but does not live to work. He demonstrates a propensity to feast that suggests that African societies are structured around pleasure. Everything is a pretext for celebration: birth, baptism, marriage, birthday, promotion, elections, return from a short or a long trip, mourning, opening or closure of congress, traditional and religious feasts. Whether one’s salary is considerable or modest, whether one’s granaries are empty or full, the feast must be beautiful and must include the maximum possible number of guests.” We must change such behavior if we are to grow and develop.

But it is equally important to caution here that, being rather critical of Africa and Africans is not painting with a wide brush. Certainly, the categorization and critic here is not representative of all Africans and all things African. There are numerous Africans and African institutions that are responsible, productive, hardworking and industrious that does not fit into this categorization. Yet, it does not take away the fact that these are some of the challenges that we face in Africa. Thus sweeping them under the carpet will not do us good. It is good to expose these challenges for us to find sustainable and workable solutions to them. The African-Centered management pedagogy must teach Africans to manage their natural and human resources efficiently and effectively. This starts with planning for the long-term, and keeping in mind how future generations can benefit from what is planned today. That is, building tomorrow’s Africa today. We must move away from “shortermism” in our thinking and planning as that does not foster sustainable growth and development. A good example of long versus shortterm planning and the efficient use of resources is the comparison often made between South Korea and Ghana. It is reported that in the 1960s, the two countries had similar economies and comparable levels of per capita GNP. The two countries also received comparable levels of economic aid. Today at this writing, well over 53 years later, the story is different. South Korea is now an industrial giant and has one of the largest economies in the world, with numerous multinational corporations that have emerged from that country. It is also a major exporter of automobiles, electronic equipment, and numerous sophisticated products and a per capital income at this writing of US\$30,290 in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) dollars at current prices (Huntington, 2000). Indeed it is not only South Korea that has surpassed Ghana in this comparison. Several South-East Asian countries like

Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand had similar or almost similar economies like their African counterparts right after independence. In most cases the economies of these Asian countries were in worse shape than their African counterparts. For example, around 1960, Japan had a GDP per head of \$380; South Korea in 1962 had a GDP per head of \$60 (Economist, 1993, p.6). Today, the story again is different. Most of these countries are way ahead in terms of their growth and economic development. Many in Africa and elsewhere would argue that some factors contributed to the success of these countries. True, but at the end of the day, these countries took responsibility for their own development. That is what an African-Centered management pedagogy will do—teach Africans to take responsibility for their own development as well as success and coming up with African workable solutions to African problems.

Finally, an African-Centered management pedagogy should be a dynamic pedagogy willing to learn from the best practices of other cultures and other regions of the world. It is a pedagogy that will not hold on to “old formulas” that have not worked, but equally, it should not throw out some of those “old formulas” that are tested and are still working efficiently for new “flavor of the month,” approaches and “new formulas” and cure-all elixirs peddled by slick Snake Oil sales men and women, who claim to have the solutions to Africa’s current and future developmental challenges. We should also be weary of some of the “new formulas,” because some of them are like “feel-good opium,” with devastating impacts. An African-Centered management pedagogy must be cautious of these “flavour of the month” approaches. At the end of the day, the best practices that Africa learns from other countries and cultures should complement the core of those African formulas that are working and have sustained the African people for generations. These best practices would be anchored on an African foundation.

Above all, an African-Centered management pedagogy must be practical in its approach and delivery; moving away from idealistic pronouncements and projections which are just that-idealistic.

(ii) Need for African Management and Business Case Studies

The importance of case studies to the teaching of management and business education cannot be emphasized enough. Case studies enable management and business students to deal with real-world challenges in business and management without leaving the classroom. Through case studies, students are able to work with scenarios, events in their peculiar context, the people as well as the specific factors that have influenced or caused those specific cases. The students are then put into a situation to discuss, suggest and make decisions on the specific issue. The issue or situation does not need to have an obvious solution and outcome; but what it does is that it orient’s their understanding or view of the business environment using the study of real cases or situations. The aim of case studies is to stimulate and engage the students and challenge and even enhance their understanding of the business issue at

stake. Most of the top management and business schools in the world use case studies as part of their teaching and learning tools. Using case studies as a teaching tool and method (The Case Method), was pioneered at Harvard Business School when it was founded. When the school was founded, the faculty realized that there were no textbooks suitable to teach such a graduate programme.

The teachers decided to write detailed accounts of their interviews with businesses and managers of that time. It became the genesis of the case method. In Africa's current growth trajectory, the importance of case studies and the use of the case study method to teach the new generation of African leaders and managers cannot be overemphasized enough because of the aforementioned importance.

Unfortunately, most of the case studies African management and business schools use are from Harvard, IESE, INSEAD and a host of other Western schools. Very few if any African case studies are used in the teaching of management and business education in Africa. This is despite the unique African environment, its experience and the varied contexts of the continent's socioeconomic and political challenges as mentioned elsewhere in this book. Thus for current and future African managers, most of whom are going to be working in public and private sector organisations in Africa; African case studies will fit these managers and leaders with the requisite lenses and enhance their ability to operate effectively in the African environment with a deeper understanding of Africa's unique socio-economic, political and cultural realities.

Mention should be made that some of the management and business schools on the continent are beginning to realize the importance of the teaching of African case studies in their various MBA programmes. Some of them are also beginning to write African case studies. But such schools are few and far in between, and most of them are located in South Africa. The African Association of Business Schools (AABS) is also encouraging management and business schools on the continent to write African case studies.

Finally, the need for African business and management case studies is premised on the fact that an African-Centered management education and Pedagogy requires that Africans should be able to tell their own stories and learn from those stories, warts and all. Africans must understand that, no one, however well-meaning, well-intentioned, and concerned can tell the African story and condition better than Africans themselves can. If this is then the case, we (Africans) should not be defensive about hearing the truth of what is wrong with us, and what is truly holding back our possible development efforts. We should not be ashamed to write about our success stories and failures as they can serve as a motivator and a learning curve for others.

We should then be willing to search for sustainable solutions to what is holding us back from our development. Learning from African case studies at our management and business schools is one way of helping current and future African managers and

leaders learn from African successes and failures to help them come up with innovative and workable solutions to Africa's numerous developmental challenges.

(iii) African Emersion and Study Visits and Tours

One of the important aspects of an African-Centered management Education is through the undertaking of African study tours or emersion studies and tours. This will afford practical, and experiential, types of learning from best practices as well as failures of businesses and management practices in various African countries. More important of all, African emersion and study tours will afford management and business students to learn first-hand African-Centered management issues in the diverse environment, regional and cultural settings of the continent. They will then be able to understand similarities as well as draw differences where necessary to what exist in their own countries, regions and cultures. They will then be able to come up with innovative and sustainable solutions to solve similar problems in their countries or regions. This experiential type of learning offer exponential benefits at this juncture in Africa's efforts at growth and development.

Furthermore, it will enhance the cross-cultural experience, communications and understanding amongst and between Africans from different parts of the continent. It will also expose these students to see the different regions of Africa that they might not have had the opportunity to have visited. The advantage of this cross-cultural experience under the African-Centered management education study and emersion tour aegis will also dispel the wrong perceptions that Africans have about each other, the different countries and regions. Some of these perceptions have no basis, and have been due to the lack of interaction with each other. In addition, lasting business contacts and partnerships as well as friendships can also result from such visits that will go a long way to enhance cross-border trade and indeed pan-African business efforts as African soccer matches are doing. It will also go a long way in contributing to the aspirations of building the United States of Africa; a dream held by African leaders from the time of their independence from colonial rule.

In addition, African study tours and emersion programmes will go a long way to serving as the nucleus for a united effort amongst like-minded Africans in the sharing of information, networking and strategizing to combat the negative effects of globalization on African growth and development efforts. This aspect of African-Centered Management Education is a departure from the notoriety of management and business schools in Africa, who as part of their pedagogy send their students on study tours to Europe, the United States of America and Asia. Some may ask that what is wrong with sending African management and business students on tour to these countries outside of the continent? On the surface, there is nothing wrong with that. Practically, a lot can be said about such a move. First, most of these management and business students upon graduation are going to be working in Africa not

Europe, the United States of America or in Asia. Hence, it will be more beneficial for them to then undertake study tours of African countries and regions. It should also be made clear that there is nothing wrong with African management and business students undertaking study tours to learn from best practices from other countries or regions of the world; this book even advocates the learning of best practices from other parts of the world. Thus important as it may be to undertake study tours to countries outside of Africa, it is more important that such learning begin at home. After all, it is only through a better understanding of the challenges and conditions at home in Africa, the strengths and weaknesses of Africa's management practices that what these students eventually learn in foreign study tours can enhance their own. An African-Centered management education emphasizes that management and business schools on the continent must make African emersion and study tours compulsory as part of their pedagogy.

(iv) Need for African Theories and Methodologies on Management and Leadership

Another important aspect of an African-Centered management education that this book will like to touch on is the need for African management and business schools to develop African theories and methodologies on management and leadership. To many in the West, and indeed in Africa, either the continent has no management and leadership theories or what is available are regarded by some as primitive. Consequently, Western management and leadership theories are imported and practiced in Africa. Unfortunately, most of these theories and practices have not worked and have contributed little to the development of countries in the region. Why so? According to Hofstede (1993), management practices and validity of theories stop at national borders. In his well-received article on this issue in *Organisational Dynamics*, titled, "Do American Theories Apply Abroad" (1980), Hofstede argued that generally accepted U.S. theories like those of Maslow, Herzberg, McClelland, Vroom, McGregor, Likert, Blake and Mouton may not or only very partly apply outside the borders of the country — assuming they do apply within those borders. This is because, according to Hofstede, management scientists, theorists, and writers are human too: they grew up in a particular society in a particular period, and their ideas cannot help but reflect the constraints of their environment (Hofstede, 1993). Hence, it will go without saying that these foreign management theories and methodologies used in Africa do not apply to the condition, environment and context. Where some of them do partly apply, there is usually a gap left. Thus Africans need to write as well as popularize their management and leadership theories and methodologies.

Yet some African management and leadership methodologies have been around for centuries. Most of these methodologies and theories, especially in business and management, were developed in Africa over centuries of trading with each other. For

example, in the ancient kingdom of Ghana, before the Europeans arrived, international trade in cloth, copper, gold, salt and brocades was a central reason for ancient Ghana's success. Caravan expeditions and trade routes linked cities in West Africa to each other and to Europe and the Middle East. When the Ghana Empire fell around 1240 AD, the empire of Mali took its place and it was famous for mining, weaving and architecture. But it was through increased trade with its neighbours and foreign lands that made Mali very wealthy. The story is often told of Mansa Musa of Mali and his famous pilgrimage to Mecca in 1324. On this pilgrimage, Mansa Musa was accompanied by 60,000 men and a personal retinue of 12,000 slaves, clad in brocade and Persian silk. His retinue was preceded by 500 slaves; each was reported to be carrying gold-adorned staffs.

There were also 80 camels carrying 300 pounds of gold each. He departed from the capital of Mali at that time (Niani) to Walata in Mauritania, to Tuat (Algeria) and to Cairo (Egypt). For those who may question the significance of this journey repeated here; it is easy to point to such flamboyance as marketing and advertising of his kingdom and the African continent. But the significance here is Mansa Musa's ability to marshal all these resources, assembly of his retinue and the ability to lead them to Mecca and back successfully points to his management and leadership skills. Yet such management and leadership skills portrayed by one of Africa's great leaders, often referred to as the "Black Emperor" has not been written about in any leadership theories.

When the kingdom of Mali fell, the Empire of Songhai took its place by the close of 14th Century. One of its rulers Askia Muhammed was regarded as a gifted administrator who centralized the administration of his empire and established an efficient bureaucracy. He was also known to have encouraged trade and during his reign, trans-Saharan trade flourished. It is reported that, Askia set up an efficient tax collection system in his empire as well as the administration of justice. Yet, Askia's leadership and management prowess and how he set-up this efficient tax system have not been written about in any theories or methodologies.

One last example that I will like to give here is that of Shaka Zulu. Shaka is regarded as one of the most influential African leaders emanating from South Africa from among the Zulus. Born in 1828, Shaka Zulu is credited with uniting numerous ethnic groups and people in his part of the world called the Zulu kingdom. He was regarded as a military genius, a statesman, an innovator but also a ruthless leader for his renowned brutality. He is often referred to in certain quarters as the "Black Napoleon." Yet, very little if any is written about Shaka Zulu's leadership in leadership theories or his innovativeness and strategic prowess in strategy theories by African management and business schools. These examples point to the fact that complex and well thought out management and leadership as well as strategic principles were responsible for the success of the African leaders portrayed here. It was not luck or happenstance. Sadly, very little if any has been written or documented as theories

or methodologies of how these leaders led or managed their kingdoms that future generations of African managers and leaders can learn from. Management and business schools in Africa have ignored the development and documentation of African management methodologies and theories and gravitated towards Western ones. African management and business methods, theories and principles are not taught in European management and business schools neither are they taught in African management and business schools either. Sadly, it is rather easy to find books and lots of research on Asian business methods, European as well as Japanese business methods and so on and so forth. Unfortunately, there is none on Africa business methods—thus Africa’s contribution to global trade and business, methods and theories are largely ignored by the West and sadly also by Africans. Such knowledge is therefore lost to the world and to Africa, African management and business education and its future managers and leaders. The world in general, not just Africa is poorer for it. In this advocacy for an African-Centered management education by this author, it is now also the right time to re-vitalise and bring to fore as well as develop new African management and leadership methodologies.

How African Management and Business Schools can go about Realising an African-Centered Management Education

So far in this chapter, I have elaborated on what is at the core of an African-Centered management education, or what it comprises of. Now comes the hard part, the realisation of an African-Centered management education. To be able to attain that, first, African leaders and policy makers must ask themselves some difficult questions. These include: What kind of management and business education they need in Africa today to help educate its current and future managers and leaders to advance the continent’s developmental goals? Does Africa need an African-Centered Management Education that will take into consideration its culture, experience, context and condition in its programmes and pedagogy or rely on Western management and business schools and their programmes or pedagogy? Of course the pedagogy and contents of most of the programmes of these schools were not developed for

Africa. Or can African countries an indeed their leadership and policy makers continue to allow their management and business schools to mimic Western management and business schools?

If not, then the most important first step for African leaders and policy makers is to know what they really want. As the old adage goes, “if you don’t know what you want and where you are going, any road will take you somewhere.” It might not necessary mean that, that is where you want to go.

But even knowing where you want to go is not enough. You must plot the road that leads there, but also you must be courageous enough to take the trip. Policy makers and leaders in Africa knowing that for example, they like or prefer an African-

Centered management education is not enough. They must muster the political will and the requisite resources, including policy prescriptions to make it happen. On Political Will, Carl von Clausewitz, a German-Prussian military theorist (1780-1831) observed in his famous unfinished treatise *Vom Kriege (On War)* that, “once it has been determined, from the political conditions, what a war is meant to achieve and what it can achieve, it is early to chart the course. But great strength of character, as well as great lucidity and firmness of mind, is required in order to follow through steadily, to carry out the plan, and not to be thrown off course by thousands of diversions.”(Paret, 1984).

Political will therefore on the part of African leadership and policy makers to realize an African- Centered management education requires a sustained commitment on their part to support such an effort with laws and policy as well as providing the requisite resources to educational institutions and educators in their respective countries to make that happen. Political will as used here also means “walking the talk,” and moving away from “No Action Talk Only” (NATO) to Measurable Assured Talked Outcomes” (MATO). Too often in Africa, wonderful plans are hatched and drawn which if implemented effectively will lead to wonderful results, but most of them die premature deaths due to limited or no resources put aside to see these plans succeed. Sometimes, when the country realizes a political change, with a new political party coming into power, they often neglect what was started by the previous governments even if these projects are conceptually sound and will benefit the country.

Furthermore, realistic time-lines must be established to implement and realize an African- Centered management education. These time-lines must be practical in respect to the conditions that pertains to the respective African countries as different countries have different challenges and nuances. Realistic time-lines also mean that, there should be a built-in flexibility in the implementation of the concept, but also the realization that where necessary things should be adjusted based on set checkpoints in the process. But it should be made clear that some of the time lines to achieve some of the core components of the African-Centered management education might take time. For example, researching, testing and coming up with African management and leadership theories and methodologies might take time. The same can be said of the writing of African management and business case studies. These will also require sustained resources and commitment on the part of the respective institutions, the leadership and academics as well as political leadership to see these efforts bear fruit. Yet, these are some of the challenges that must be surmounted to realise this ideal.

In addition, African governments must invest in the training of the leaders and academics of the various management and business schools on the continent in every step of the way in the implementation of the African-Centered Management Education concept to see it become a reality. This training must focus on the change of the mindset of the academics and leaders of these management and business

schools in Africa to change from mimicking and the use of Western programme contents and pedagogy to an African-Centered one. This will not be an easy task, because change is unsettling with many people. It will thus require a lot of dedication and commitment on the part of policy makers and educators in these countries. But the commitment should be based on the realisation that in the end, results will benefit their respective countries and contribute to a sustainable development trajectory of their respective countries.

Finally, there must be a period in the implementation of the concept where the policy makers must evaluate the impact of the concept. This evaluation must comprise of the collection of data, analyzing such data to ascertain the success and effectiveness of the concept. If there are some challenges that hindered the smooth implementation of the concept, those challenges must be carefully evaluated and the reasons documented and the requisite solutions sort and applied. Where there are unintended outcomes, they should be investigated and solutions found. I think there should be no illusion that the realisation of an African-Centered management education and its benefits will be overnight. There might be numerous challenges and pitfalls on the way but the leadership and the respective institutions, academics and leadership must “keep their eyes on the prize,” so to speak. Mahatma Gandhi’s advice to a fellow Hindu leader during his country’s quest for independence is worth recounting here, “do not lose sight of the destination . . . there will be many turnings along the way. It will be easy to get lost on attractive bypaths that lead nowhere. Resist deflections” (Kimbrow, 1991). The final prize is the successful implementation of an African-Centered management education of which the benefits to Africa at its current growth trajectory are well documented in this paper.

Conclusion

The call for any new paradigm shift is a call for change. Change as the following quotes point to is not easily accepted by society or wherever it is introduced. Machiavelli in his book *The Prince* observes: “There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things. For the reformer has enemies in all those who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new order... (Machiavelli, 1532). Peter Drucker observes: “Everybody has accepted by now that change is unavoidable. But that still implies that change is like death and taxes—it should be postponed as long as possible and no change would be vastly preferable. But in a period of upheaval, such as the one we are living in, change is the norm” (Drucker, 1999).

The call for a new management education paradigm in Africa- an African-Centered management education and pedagogy is definitely going to face some resistance, but as Peter Drucker said change is the norm in the current period of upheavals that we live in, speeded in our case by globalization. African management

and business schools must grab this opportunity for change and change with the times to be able to contribute to the growth and development efforts of the continent. Granted it will not be easy but therein lies their main life-line for survival.

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